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THE
RELIGIOUS CONFLICT OF THE AGES:
AND OTHER ADDRESSES,

BY

THE GUIDES OF MRS. R. SHEPARD LILLIE.



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THE
RELIGIOUS CONFLICT OF THE AGES.



INVOCATION.

From the fountain of light, O angels of power,
Feed us, instruct us, and bless us this hour!
Lead our thoughts upward, we earnestly pray,
Give light, strength, and courage for our future way!

Unto those who may send forth inquiring thoughts this morning, may there come from thy bounty, from thy stores of wisdom, those words of encouragement, which, falling even from weak human lips, may yet bear with them strength and power. May they find in them encouragement to press onward in the struggle of life!

To-day, as ever, thou givest to us an answer to our petitions. As ever, the clouds are parted, and we behold the ether blue. Beyond, as ever, the Star of Hope gleams out through the rifts in the clouds. As ever, there is extended to us the helping hand. Oh, may our lives prove worthy of the teachings given us! May there shine forth in them, the religion of *living* and *doing*, in this, the pathway of time. Unto us is given the ministry of angels. Unto us may there be given power to live according to these ministrations, so that our lives and our acts may be in harmony with them. Enable us, by thy illuminating power, to enter the secret chambers of the soul, and if there are idols there, aid us to bear them out into the light of day; that its rays falling upon them, may show us their enormity, and enable us to leave them behind us. May the light enter into the waste places of our thoughts, and illuminating the same, make us wiser. Give us that strength which shall make us better able to endure the burdens of life, and stronger to labor for others. By thy loving and untiring ministrations, O Angels of Wisdom and Power, may we be made more powerful for good, for

well doing, and righteous living. And unto the Living and Loving who watch us and guard us to-day, who are now, as ever, extending the helping hand, — unto these our glad thanksgivings, and songs of praise, forever and forever more.

LECTURE.

THERE ever have been, are now, and will continue to be for long ages yet to come, the unsettled problems, — questions which will continue to arise, — on which men ever differ, because of their inability to grasp or comprehend but in part. All religious systems of the past and present are the result of man's effort in this direction. Not yet has man been able to settle the question of the Godhead, or of who and what God is. None yet have given an idea of, or such evidence as could be accepted by all as proof of positive knowledge. There are many systems, many theories, numberless speculations in regard to God, and man's relations and obligations to him, what is required, and what is not required. Those who *think* they know endeavor to *compel* others to accept their thought, follow their form, and thus the *conflict* continues. Man to-day is thinking a great deal more than ever before, and the result of his thought is agitation. Agitation creates conflict. This conflict that is going on to-day has been going on in religion for a long time. Necessarily, it increases, as man evolves into a higher state of being, where his reason is called into play. We find him to-day a reasoner, compared with what he was in the ages of the past. As a religious being, he has accepted the ideas, teachings, and doctrines of his forefathers, from generation to generation, save as an occasional man has risen from the mass

of mankind, whose soul, dissatisfied with all this, refused to be fettered by it. These strong, brave souls, full of yearnings and strivings for something higher and better, have appeared at intervals all through the ages; the aspirations of their souls have expressed themselves in their lives, and these lives have left their impress upon the thought of the world. But the mass of mankind, the untold millions of human beings, who have covered this earth, passed through its experiences, and departed from this mortal stage of existence, have left no record behind them. They have been content to take what was given them without thought or question. Whether the water of life, or no, it mattered not. So it has been with untold millions.

The exceptional man who has appeared at intervals, always differing from those around him, always standing out boldly from them, has invariably been the radical of his time. He has always startled and shocked the community. He has been considered insane; he has been tabooed by all who lived in his time and age. He is too radical for his period. He will not submit to error and injustice. He stands out in opposition to the preaching and the customs of his time. Looking at these, and the mass of mankind who accept them, he denounces error and evil, and speaks violently to those who continue to submit to their reign. Such men are always hated and despised in their time.

Though Jesus may be worshipped in the distance of the nineteen hundred years that have elapsed since his time, though slowly, through all the ages, this worship has been increasing, in his own day he was the hated and despised radical of his age. He dared to openly

defy the Jews, condemning their customs, their religion, even entering the temple itself, and condemning their usages and forms, showing no respect even to the high priesthood. Everywhere he spoke openly in defence of right and justice and truth as he beheld them. All his teachings were a great deal in advance of what had preceded them, and he was hated accordingly. In this spirit of hatred, they persecuted him, they put him to death. They did it in the name of God; they did it in the name of religion; they did it as worshippers of the Most High. Washing their hands, they made prayers to God, and brought offerings unto him. To pacify their God, they must put to death this blasphemer, as they termed him,—this man who was in league with devils.

This, throughout all ages, has been the experience of the radical, the man who has dared to stand up in opposition to prevailing customs and usages. To-day the Christian worships the character of the old-time radical whom the Jews hated, worshipping him as the second person in the trinity of the Godhead. What this trinity of the Godhead may mean, no theologian has ever been able to rationally explain. No one can understand it. No one pretends to understand it. There is not a theologian living who can give a sensible, reasonable idea as to what is the meaning of the "Trinity," or as to what and whom God is, in what shape or form is his personality, or what is the meaning thereof. No one can give a rational or clear description of it. Man says, "It is God the Father." But who and what and where is the Father? May we behold him? No answer cometh to us. It is one of "the mysteries of godliness,"

always has been, is now, and ever must be. No one can solve this riddle of riddles.

The second person in the Trinity they claim to know a little more of. History tells of the man of Judea, and the Christian and the Christian's Bible of his miraculous, strangely mysterious parentage, almost unknown, one-half thereof shaded in the "mystery of Godliness" that no one can understand. This life must find expression in order to bring harmonious conditions into the bosom of an *angry* God,—a God so angry with all created beings, that his rage could not be appeased until one sufficiently high, one who was "very God and very man," had in the form of humanity been sacrificed upon the altar of his vengeance. This is the history as given to us. God was then partially satisfied—so far satisfied that whosoever believeth in this sacrifice shall be saved. But woe unto the one so organized that he cannot believe! That man so organized by nature that he must be the radical of his time and period, woe unto him! according to the doctrines of the church of the day.

We ask next who is the third person in the Trinity? Who can tell us anything about it? Who is this that has been spoken of as "God the Holy Ghost"? I ask and wait for a response. I listen adown the ages. If they try to give me an answer, it is a disturbed, confused answer that leaves me in the greatest doubt and uncertainty. I know nothing about it. I find no one who does. Well has it been described as the wind, and no one can tell "whence it cometh, whither goeth," or what it is. It is simply the "third person in the Trinity." These three persons make one person—the

Godhead. Nobody can tell me what this personality is. We cannot get the idea of a personal God any farther than our own personality will give expression thereto. A personal God must be a God in the form of man, with hands, head, body. We look upon our little selves, and imagine a great big self, and call it God. It is infinitely larger than we, but such a one must necessarily be limited. If we describe him as sitting upon a great white throne in the heavens, and having the earth for his foot-stool, still he will have limitations. The throne or heaven is his home; the earth is his occasional abiding place—the place to which he pays an occasional visit! And the earth is the abode of sin and misery. Everywhere men are wandering over its surface, doing evil, following after evil continually, persistently falling into it easily and naturally. If, perchance, he does a good act, it is very much against his human nature.

This is the being as God made him, according to tradition, and we cannot help wondering why God did not do a better job while he was about it. We look out at poor humanity, suffering and struggling, battling with the tide that is all around. Then there is this thought: “We are as God made us.” Somebody says, “No, we are as sin, the violation of law, has made us.” But we must go back of this, and recognize the fact that God made man with these sinful possibilities embodied within him. He made our good mother Eve so frail that she fell before the first temptation. He has put all this human weakness within her which made it impossible for her to resist even the first temptation.

We are what is called "sinful" because we were so constructed.

Now, then, what is this personality? Who has done this? Men have long been turning over the rubbish of past ages, trying to find out. They haven't done it yet. We were told in our childhood that the earth was a little less than six thousand years old. Man had been upon the earth only this short period of time. Many of you, gray-haired men and women, have sat down as innocently as ever your parents did, and told your children this. You have said: "God made you, my child. He made the heavens, the blue heavens, and the stars. He made everything, in love and holiness." And then it did not take a child of six years to confound you with questions about the sin and wrong and injustice he could see all about him. You had told the child God was all wisdom, all love, and then with the same breath had said, "Don't do this, my darling; if you do, God will be angry with you, and you cannot go to heaven." Thus the child would have its head and heart burdened with these mysteries even in its earliest years.

Such are the experiences of children even to-day. Go out upon your streets this morning. You will see the Catholic hugging his prayer-book as fervently as ever before, and the Protestant that looks down upon the Catholic and smiles at his superstition, smiles with the egotism of pride, and then, with up-turned eyes, thanks God for the revelations that have come to him through the greater light of Protestantism. This is the child looking in the face of its mother, the old parent church, and thanking God it has broken away

from her apron strings. All believers in Protestant Christianity are truant children from the Catholic Church. They have shaken off her robes of priesthood, *some* of them, and stand as men behind the altar administering the sacrament to *other* men. They will tell you that all the outer paraphernalia of the church of Rome belongs to the past. There are others who still wrap themselves in the gown and surplice, glorying in this, but still making up faces at the old parent church.

So, step by step, little by little, halting often, sometimes appearing even to be going backward, man has slowly progressed toward light and freedom. Take the map of Christendom to-day; spread it out before you, and survey the picture for a single moment. See how Protestantism is growing. How it is growing in church *building*, in *numbers*, in power, in everything as far as *externalism* is concerned; and the old parent church, stronger than *ever* before, as far as externalism is concerned, until Protestantism, with all its developments, stands trembling for the future of the Republic, trembling for the rights of the people, trembling for their liberal institutions, knowing something of the spirit of Catholicism. And well they may; for even now are they making a bold and determined approach, menacing, threatening, yea, boldly attacking, the free school system, making demands which no Protestant can accede to, and yet demands which the Protestant portion of the population have invited by their determination to introduce *their* views, *their* Bible, and their form of religion into the public schools, — a place which, so long as the people of the land are of every form of religious belief, should be left unsectarian;

teaching science, art, literature, together with the fundamental branches, leaving religious doctrines to be taught in the home and by the church, whose work it is to do this, making it thus certain that parents of any religious belief should have the control and direction of the minds of their children as they would naturally desire.

Protestantism has for a long time been determined to have religion taught in the public schools, and has succeeded in a measure. Now the Catholic says, if religion is to be taught in schools supported by public funds, then the Catholic religion must be taught; if not, then we must have a portion of the funds for Catholic or parochial schools. This they have a right to ask, even to demand, if the same right is to be insisted upon by Protestants, or if they insist upon the reading of the Bible, prayer, and Protestant forms of religious teachings in the public schools.

Our nation is composed of all classes of religionists, — Jews and Gentiles, Catholics and Protestants. Then look at the tree of Modern Liberalism. See how firmly it is rooted, how it is spreading its branches over the earth, taking hold upon the people, working like leaven in the entire mass. Are these to be overlooked entirely? Are these to be taxed for the support of schools into which must be introduced a form of teaching which the parents have long since left in the background; which to them is in reality an empty shell, that once contained life, but which life has gone out?

This is where the church is to-day. It is like a seed planted in the soil in springtime, whose life has gone out into new forms. The shell that once *held that life*

remains, but the life has been diffused, new forms have arisen; these cannot be crowded back into the old form or shell. The people are wiser and better, most of them, than the church gives them credit for.

We have said the church of to-day is a shell. The spirit, the power it once possessed has departed. We look at the temples of Christendom, arising in grandeur and magnificence all over the land. Their many spires pointing upward show that they are continually growing in numbers, and one would say the power of this religion is increasing.

If organization, numbers, and standing externals constitute power, then it is; but if adherence to the principles embodied in the creeds and rigid obedience to them, led by blind faith as in the past, then it is not. The people subscribe in form, knowing that there are social advantages to be gained; knowing also that the demands upon them now are not what they once were. What is demanded now of the church member compared with what was demanded of him in past ages? Then man must live somewhere down in a little narrow groove, thinking and believing only what was told him. To-day he does not pretend to do it. To be sure, some still contend for this narrowness of the old theology, assenting to it in word and letter, as in some of your public institutions; but while the few are doing this, the heart of the people goes out in broader fields, in clearer ways, and the world is gradually changing, gradually moving outward, and we can confidently say there is not a single old-time Christian to be found on the earth,—not one, who, two hundred years ago, would have been considered a sound, solid, orthodox Christian

at that time, with their puritanic rules and regulations, their strict adherence to the letter of the law, their ideas of Sabbath laws and holy days, their belief as to what constituted sin. It is only necessary to refer to these for you to say with us that the man whom we call Christian to-day would scarcely have been tolerated in the church of the past. So *that* church of the past is as dead as the bodies of the men who made it, only remaining as a form. To that extent has Liberalism changed it. When you hear the clanking of the old chains of superstition, as at Andover to-day, you may know it is a sign of progress. Somebody is making a struggle for liberty. The old fogies may, for a time, hold the balance of power, but sooner or later they will have to move out, and broader men will fill their places. Even this controversy will let in the light. It cannot be for long that the majority will think that by their vote or decision nations gone and those unborn can be damned in a body, and even now they make themselves an object of ridicule for all intelligent people. This struggle of the human mind for freedom of thought and action, this "Conflict of the Ages," is as natural as the growth of the plant, as natural as life itself, as perfect as the law of Evolution. This evolving of the lesser lower forms of life into something higher, nobler, grander, is going on as constantly in the world of mind as in the world of matter.

And so Liberalism, in its highest, best sense, is constantly spreading, and must *necessarily* do so. It is the law of Evolution or growth.

There are men and women to-day, who, standing upon the mountain's brow, and beholding the wrongs

and evils of 'life, as we term them, express themselves energetically. These are they whom some of you fear even to-day. But while their strong blows must hurt in some directions, you must remember there must be some who will strike at the root of the tree. It seems harsh, it seems almost unnecessary, at first; but every blow will do good until the tree of error is felled to the ground. While it is possible that nerves may be shocked, while it is possible that there are those to-day who may cringe a little while the sharp blows are ringing out, yet there is no soul in this universe who can or dare speak too bravely or too strongly for the truth itself. There are evils that cannot be touched with gloved hands. These evils must be disturbed before they can be eradicated, and some of them will send up strong odors when they are turned over, — *and they are going to be turned over* by somebody who is not afraid of the work. Spiritualism, as an *ism*, is doing a great deal of that work. "Blessed are ye, when men shall revile you, and persecute you, and shall say all manner of evil against you falsely, for my sake." And have we not had all manner of evil said of us for the sake of the truths which the returning spirits have seen fit to utter? for the wrongs existing in society under the guise of right, which they have dared attack, whether in pulpit, creed, or the practice of men; whether those wrongs have been legalized by statutes, and thereby attained a degree of respectability, or otherwise, for the necessary agitation in the course of right, justice, and reform?

The searchers after truth have ever been treated with contumely and hatred. There is not a Spiritualist

among you who has not been warned to abandon this new cause, this evil, as they call it. And just here we will say that, while we have been accused of much that is false, many of the charges brought against us have been true. It is *necessarily so*. They think it is evil, because they do not understand the truth, or what constitutes it.

There is not a Spiritualist among you who is not now hated by some who once loved you, who would be glad to have almost anything happen to you to change your belief. Not being able to do that, they say you are lunatics, or possessed of devils. It has said this of the reformers in all ages, they who have dared to stand up in opposition to the prevailing customs of the times.

Spiritualism goes to the very foundation of life, to its basic principles, and talks to them of generation instead of regeneration. It says to the human race, you will never be redeemed, until you are redeemed by proper generation. There is no regeneration for you. Until this lesson is learned, it will be given again and again. You must learn to live purely, that you may bring forth the pure; to walk uprightly, that your children's feet may not forsake the path of rectitude.

Drunkenness can never be eradicated until you have learned to bear your children so they will not be born drunkards. If the seed of intemperance is implanted within them, it will just as surely bring forth its fruit as the thistle will produce its thorns; it cannot be otherwise. People hold prayer-meetings, and talk to God about it; they beseech him to come down and remedy this evil; with what result, we see daily. To believe is naught; to *do* is a great deal. Until men

learn to do righteously, they have no religion that is of any value whatever. To be of value, it must have a practical application to their lives.

It is for such doctrines as these that Spiritualism has been assailed by those who value their idols of inherited beliefs more than they value the truth itself; and these thoughts, as given through our modern philosophy, have caused much of the present conflict in religious circles. Error dies hard; but Truth has mighty weapons, and when she marshals her hosts and arrays her facts, she deals through these sturdy blows.

The conflict continues; determined foes oppose progress on every side. But gradually the right prevails, gradually the light dawns upon minds that have hitherto sat in darkness; and then they acknowledge their errors and speak boldly for truth. Yet the determined ones are making a desperate resistance by every means; seeking covertly or openly to make chains by legislative enactments, and otherwise, that shall bind all to the chariot-wheels of the past; compelling all to wear their yokes and drag their burden up life's steep. But the intelligence we believe is too great, too strong, for it. That which resists the authority of popes, priests, and man-made, unjust laws, is reason. When it asserts itself, there is rebellion, there is conflict; and such will continue until the right comes uppermost, and justice is done.

CHARITY.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED JAN. 29, 1888.



INVOCATION.

We ask your presence, O spiritual beings, that through your ministrations we may be enabled to apprehend more fully the truth, and receive those thoughts which cannot come to us without your assistance. As we here assemble, looking toward you for instruction, may truth's divine rays touch our souls, illumine our understandings, and lead us into paths of knowledge and wisdom; and may the thoughts given us for consideration bring rest to the weary, strength to the weak, courage to the discouraged, and light to the spirit wandering in the darkness of ignorance and superstition. Lead us and guide us, and our glad songs of thanksgiving and words of praise will ascend to you now and evermore. Amen.

DISCOURSE.

WE take for our subject this morning "Charity." We know it is an old theme. We may go to the Bible and read the texts that have been used in its elucidation by the ministry since the dawn of Christianity; we may say as they have said, "Charity suffereth long and is kind," "Charity covereth a multitude of sins"; but in taking up the various thoughts of that book, in watching the carrying out—so far as it is possible for mortals to do—of this principle, which we believe is in itself a sufficient creed for any body of religionists, embracing as it does all that is good in any religious

belief, we find that various interpretations of it have been given, and that men's ideas of it differ as their ideas of God and many other subjects necessarily do and must.

As Spiritualists we are in need, first, of systematization or organization, with a view to establishing systematized charities as a means of doing a work that must be carried out upon the love principle, in order that justice may be done upon the earthly plane among ourselves at least. There are organized charities among the different churches, denominations, and religious systems; but we, as a body of thinkers, find ourselves outside of these organizations, the tenor of our thought making a division wall between us and them. Consequently, when one of our number appeals for aid to one of these institutions, the first question asked is: "What is your religious belief? to what religious body do you belong?" Thus, as these lines of demarcation, which have always separated and made divisions in the ranks of mankind, are still being drawn, it becomes necessary for us, as believers in a peculiar system of thought, to organize in such a way as to enable us at least to care for our own in a systematic manner.

We know it will require patience and persistent endeavor for a long period to accomplish this result, but we think it is time that more was done in this direction among professed Spiritualists. There has already been a great deal of talk, but much of it has risen like smoke and disappeared, and but little has been carried out practically. Homes, which should be made homes in the real and true sense of the word, should be founded for the aged of both sexes. We would like to see your

“Ladies’ Aid Societies” and your “Industrial Unions,” for instance, take, not only rooms where lectures should be delivered, social gatherings held, and suppers given once a week, but a house which should be made a home for those whose necessities make them dependent upon the kindness, love, and charity of others.

It is a hard, cold world when we come to depend upon what is called charity on this plane of being. In some way it has come to be considered a disgrace to arrive at a condition where it becomes necessary to ask for assistance; but what, I pray you, is every one of us, in the beginning, but an object of charity? We come upon this stage of life unable to put even a mouthful of food to our lips, and so dependent upon others that, left to ourselves, death would ensue in a few hours. Man is the most helpless of all animals. Nearly every form of life beneath him has an independence of livelihood that makes us almost question, at times, the wisdom of the Infinite. So, I say, as helpless dependents we start out in life, let our surroundings be what they may. Some of us, it is true, have advantages over others, and the best of these, the one for which we should be most thankful, and the possession of which should make us charitably disposed toward those born without it, is a bodily organization that makes us capable of becoming independent. I affirm that in the organization of the individual is the *all* that settles the question at birth as to whether that being is to be dependent or independent. The pre-natal conditions, influences, etc., at work even among our ancestry, the very incidents and accidents that may befall our mother in the sensitive weeks and months prior to our advent

upon the mundane sphere, may wreck or injure our organization to such an extent that we may literally be cast upon the shores of time helpless and dependent. Not only this, but even some little circumstance that may arise, making a mother at that time feel *her* dependence, as the present condition of society is likely to do, may actually disqualify her unborn babe for a man or woman of business. Some deed, incident, or event, little as you think, may be the turning-point that shall decide whether or not your child shall be born with an inheritance that will give it anything like its rights in this material world.

When the conditions surrounding birth are known to have so much influence upon the expression of our better selves here in this journey of life, we ought to exercise the broadest charity in our dealing with those who are so constituted that all the preaching, teaching, and arguing possible cannot aid them in acquiring independence, for it is impossible for them to grasp and make use of these ideas. We see the necessity, then, which the spirit-world has constantly pointed out, of a form or system of society that shall permit a growth into that oneness of interests that will make the entire race one large family. We are aware that many objections have been and will be raised to any mode of life such as that of Communism; yet we hold that man must ultimately grow into a condition where all who are unable to gain a livelihood will be cared for as considerately and tenderly as are our insane and our weak in body. Those who are deficient in the faculties whose development and exercise are necessary for the acquirement of the comforts of life will, in the future

of man's development, be surrounded by conditions conducive to the unfoldment of their moral, intellectual and physical nature. These ideas will be regarded as impracticable and visionary by some, but many of the greatest improvements that we now enjoy were called visionary in the past, and all the wonderful inventions were, in the first place, called fanatics' or fools' ideas. I believe society can grow to this condition, and when it does, we shall have taken the most important step toward overcoming crime and sin of every character. Want, and his untrained, undeveloped, undisciplined nature, drive man, in many instances, to the commission of crime of which he would not otherwise be guilty. We most earnestly beseech all Spiritualists to take into consideration these thoughts, and let brotherly love and charity govern all. Again, circumstances over which the individual has no control many times, leave him at last in a condition where, unless kindly assisted by a stronger hand, he would certainly suffer.

We, as a people, have a sensitive class, unknown outside the ranks of Spiritualism, that cannot be cared for as they should by those who are not familiar with their susceptible condition. When it is found that by the use of their mediumistic powers they cannot earn sufficient for their support, or that, in the exercise of their spiritual gifts, they have been wrecked, — physically speaking, — our public mediums should be given a home such as this of which I have spoken. I could name two or three now, yes, more than that number right here in Boston, who need and deserve such care and attention; and I do not think I shall be doing wrong if I call the name of our gifted and faithful

servant, Mrs. Cushman, who, during a cold, bleak, stormy, hard winter like this, gets but a pittance at best. When, in such a case, one comes to the necessity of appealing for aid, we should take her and care for her tenderly and lovingly, and she should be made to feel no more dependent than our grandmother, our father or mother would in our family circle, when he or she is no longer able to sustain the burdens of life.

In the exercise of mediumistic powers, the vital magnetism, which is the spiritual force of the organism, is largely drawn upon, thus devitalizing the body. "But why do the spirits," you ask, "allow their mediums to use this force, or power, until it is exhausted?" Because, as we said once before, having undertaken this work, it is impossible to give it up. All the bodily, as well as mental powers and forces of the individual, have been turned into different channels during the process of development, and it is beyond the power of spirit to turn back the tide from its natural course.

We can only touch lightly upon the subject at this point, the time at our disposal not permitting us to take it up and explain it as we would like. After one is worn out in the service, it is no longer a question of why didn't you stop before you fell down? It is better to work in the harness until the work is done, and then if the old body does not break down and let the spirit go free, we, as Spiritualists, should take it and care for it as tenderly as though it were a treasure committed to our keeping — as it really is, if we look at the matter aright. If the cold, hard winter that is upon us, together with the high price of fuel, make those of you in moderate circumstances feel that life's battle is hard,

what must it be to those who have much less or none at all, and especially to those who are so sensitive that they will nearly perish ere they ask for aid from mortals to help keep soul and body together?

So we say, our first duty is no longer to talk, but to go to work upon a practical basis; then, when wealthy Spiritualists see that there is organization, system and purpose underlying this movement, we believe they will take hold with you and labor for mankind. We would impress upon the minds of all Spiritualists of means the necessity of working while it is day. You may hold on to your wealth while you live, and in your will be very generous; but the world is not generous, your heirs are not generous, and nine chances to one it will be contested and set aside on the ground that you were a Spiritualist, and therefore not of sound mind. Hence, I repeat, care for those who need assistance, build homes for the homeless and aged, and do the work while it is yours to do, while the day of earthly life is upon you.

While we have spoken of lines and divisions in the ranks of mankind that must necessarily be considered by us in our work, still we are looking forward to the time when these barriers will be swept away, and we desire you as Spiritualists to set the example in this direction. I hope there will be that breadth of liberality in the distribution of your charities that when you have succored your *own*, to learn that human beings are in distress will be all that you require to know of them.

We know that we shall meet with opposition upon this point from those upon our own plane of thought, who call themselves practical men and women. "We

must be practical," they say; "therefore it is necessary for us to ask first concerning those who apply for aid, if they are worthy?" In the distribution of charities that question cuts us the worst of all things, for we feel that the fact that a human being is cold, hungry, or in distress, makes him worthy of help. He may have been in the lowest paths of life, the reason for which you might perhaps find in the inherited consequences and results just spoken of; but while you were making your investigations, the man might starve. It is better to help those in need first, and find out their shortcomings afterward, if you have time enough. They may have done wrong, but they never will do much better until they are warmed up, their hunger satisfied, and their surroundings made favorable for the development of their nobler and better selves. If the applicant for assistance be a woman, the examination is especially rigorous in all institutions. It must be found out who she is, what she is, where she came from, and what she has been doing.

The best means to employ in seeking to lead those whose faults and shortcomings are many, out upon the highway by which higher planes of life may be reached, is charity clothed in the garment of love. According to the new definition, charity *is* love, and if it does not succeed in making them better and nobler, then the best of God's remedies has failed on earth. Apply it long enough, however, and I have the utmost faith in its efficacy as a cure for all the ills that man is heir to, morally speaking. Some one who has made a few applications of it upon a certain individual unsuccessfully, and then in despair has turned the cold shoulder

upon the erring one, says: "I have tried that person over and over again, and it is of no use." Try him seventy times seven, as said one of old, and then seven hundred times that, if necessary, we add, for a human soul lifted out of the mire and brought out of darkness into light will pay you for the seven hundred times trying, as well as for the seven or seventy. We have those in our ranks who have but little backbone; but while wishing that they had more stamina let us have charity for them. There are those in the Church, also, it appears, who have no backbone at all; and, while we regret it, let us have charity for them as well.

Ought a man who is convinced of the truthfulness of Spiritualism to come out of the church? an interrogator asks. It seems to us that he ought, but we cannot stand in his place. We should say that "honesty is the best policy," but we understand that all are not capable of acting up to a high standard of integrity. Such as these need to remain in slavery to others, as they really are, until they grow a little more and can bear the light, whose warm, effulgent rays will strengthen and develop their spiritual nature. We find that one of the greatest needs in this direction is a love of the truth, and we urgently appeal to all to cultivate the very best within them. So we say to all in the church who believe in Spiritualism: Come out from among them and be ye separate. Do not skulk behind the church pews, the church creed or faith, if you do not longer believe it. If every man and woman were to come out of the churches to-day who does not accept literally the creed as it is, with all of its articles of faith, how many do you think would be left? Very

few indeed. You will find very few church members who can give you an intelligent answer when you ask about the articles of faith of their particular denomination. They have subscribed to them without much thought, and they cannot tell you the doctrinal points at the foundation of them. We pass these by and take up the class of men whose views have grown broader than their creed, but who still remain in the church. Beecher, during the latter years of his ministry, was one of these. To our way of thinking, the man who does not live up to his convictions is not strictly honest; but until we are able to place ourselves in the position of another it is unwise to say what we would do under like circumstances. It is easier for one to step out of the old rut than for another; it is easier for some to break the shell of their former environments than for others; therefore let us have charity for those who do not see their duty as we do. Though we should say, Come out, be honest, be upright, still it is our belief that just at the point where they have developed enough spiritually to be of any particular use to the cause of truth they will and do come out and we find them in our midst. Spiritualism is truth to you to-day. It was not a few years ago, because your perceptions were not sufficiently developed to enable you to grasp the philosophy or the facts. Later experiences made it impossible for you longer to reject it. The greatest spiritual light that has ever penetrated the darkness of human life with its divine rays touched you, and you became enthusiastic. You could no longer remain in the churchfold, even with the hope of winning others to your way of thinking, but must be outspoken. Noth-

ing wins like truth, or carries such conviction as candor and sincerity.

Coming back to our subject, "Charity," we hope we shall be forgiven when we say that a great many Spiritualists are apathetic and unmindful of duty in this direction. They need awakening. They do not realize the necessity of even contributing to the support of the cause in a general way, to say nothing of associated charities. Perhaps it is the result of circumstances. Former beliefs leave their impress upon the mind and spirit of the individual, and when discarded there is a corresponding reaction. The fear of future punishment or conditions has been the spur that has forced them to a performance of their religious duties, but when Spiritualism teaches them that there is no place of eternal torment, no avenging and angry Deity, they swing, as it were, out on the other side and become careless. We also find truly good men and women in the spiritualistic ranks, with warm, tender hearts, but, owing in a great measure to the lack of organization on the part of Spiritualists as a whole, they forget the responsibilities that rest upon them, the duty they owe society and their fellow-mortals, and settle down into a state of lethargy. Upon the minds of all such we would most earnestly impress the fact that while there is no death, hell, or judgment to fear, still there is wrong to dread, and a nobility of character to develop which should be an incentive to right acting and the living of higher and better lives. There is much for us to do upon the earthly plane. There is not a sorrow that comes to the heart of one mortal that is not felt by all. Some, we know, will say that this is all nonsense, but we affirm

that just so surely as the sun and moon influence this planet, and *vice versa*, that which affects the life of one individual also affects, in a degree, the lives of all others. As parts of one great whole we cannot afford to have any portion of the great body universal diseased; we cannot afford to have wrong, sorrow, and want abide where any one of us can do aught to prevent it. If we fail in the little that we can do, if we fall short in charity, love, and kindness, and in the living out of these principles, then we fail in all that constitutes true religion, and the injury we do ourselves affects all others in a measure.

Leaving the thought of associated charities, let us consider the true attitude of man toward the evil-doer, and as before we will look within our own ranks. We will not pass this point without speaking of that which is of such vast importance to us, namely, our phenomena. Sometimes we feel that we cannot be too severe in our denunciation of those who have been found guilty of deception; who willingly and wilfully trifle at the altar of the holiest of holies, where the angels come to let in the light upon mankind. There is, however, much to be considered here. While we find individuals who give fraudulent communications or manifestations, there are also conditions existing which make it necessary for us to be wise and discreet in meting out our justice. There is such a wide difference in the experiences of different individuals with the same medium, that our advice to each one is to use your own judgment and reason in settling the question for yourself in every individual case. If you desire to know whether spirits can clothe themselves again in

matter, it is your privilege, while conducting your investigations earnestly and sincerely, to use your own judgment, and when you find an open, flagrant imposition, to denounce it.

Our Spiritualism rests, in a great measure, upon the solid rock of facts, a part of which are physical manifestations, and if not dealt wisely with they will strike a terrible blow at the very foundation of the cause. As a religion, Spiritualism carries weight where no other religious system ever has, for it gives positive proof and assurance. So, while we have good and evil, false and true, genuine and counterfeit, we must exercise our charity at the same time that we mete out justice. It rouses all our righteous indignation to be imposed upon in the investigation of truth; but it is better to bear imposition a few times, at least, than to be guilty of touching rudely one of those whose necessities and requirements are such that if too harshly dealt with the work of preparation that may have been accomplished by the spirits for the individual, whom in time they hope to elevate and make a useful instrument, will be retarded or entirely undone. "Are you advocating charity in a case of obvious deception?" some listener asks. Yes; charity that softens our dealings until we know of a certainty what we are doing.

Before we close we desire to speak a few words for womankind, to awaken within our sister woman charitable feelings toward her sisters in all conditions. We believe most of you present do not need this particular argument, for there is no lesson that has been taught with so much earnestness and so oft-repeated by the angels as this. We would not foster wrong, or sin, or

evil doing, but we would that every woman was as true to every other woman as man is to man. "You would not be true to a false woman?" questions one. Why, certainly; true to the woman, not to the deed she has done; true to the woman, that we may uplift her; true to the woman, that we may lead her to nobler womanhood, and make of her what was born within her but what has not been expressed. Many times she has been driven from bad to worse, from worse to desperation, from desperation to death, beyond whose gates is the only place where a woman who has done wrong and been wronged finds as yet anything like the conditions that will help her out of the slough in which she is struggling. We know that efforts have been made for the uplifting and redemption of degraded women, but not in the spirit that they should be. We say to women, It is your work! The fallen of your sex will never be uplifted, saved, redeemed or elevated to a high condition of womanhood until you stand by their side and do your duty without regard to public opinion. When you feel the necessity of expressing a certain opinion, of taking a particular position, of clasping the hand of a sister to help her, do it, no matter what color the face of your neighbor may turn, and by and by such deeds will leave an impress upon your very souls, and stamp even your outward bearing with a power that will defeat the purpose of the evil-disposed, for they will not dare say aught against the women that have been true, upright, honest, and steadfast in defense of every other woman, until they have helped to make their sisters what they themselves aspire to be.

IN RE DR. TALMAGE.

A SYNOPSIS OF A DISCOURSE DELIVERED MAY 6, 1888.



RELIGION, as it is at present divided and subdivided, presents to the observer the aspect of so many walls of defense and attack. A man in choosing the ministerial avocation looks about him, examines these different positions, decides where he wishes to be garrisoned, takes his place behind these walls, and begins his work accordingly.

He takes his position as Catholic, Presbyterian, Methodist, Congregationalist, Baptist, — or in any other of the many branches of the Christian faith, — and whichever of these positions he takes determines his range. He must not reach beyond the limits prescribed for him in any of these instances. He stands behind the pulpit; this is his barrack; the Bible is his wall of defense; in his hand is a banner on which is an inscription: this inscription is the creed of the particular branch of the church to which he belongs; these are the colors he is expected to bear aloft, and these determine what he shall say and how far he can go. The book all accept, but differ in their interpretation, and these banners or creeds tell their point of difference.

People are thinking to-day; they are living in an age of thought and of rich experiences. These thoughts and experiences exert an influence upon the mind of

these standard-bearers. They cannot help but feel its quickening breath, and their theology is affected by it. Views of death, particularly, are changing through the influence of the teaching of Spiritualism. These views will and do creep into the sermons of the divines, into the songs of the poet, and are felt in every direction. The popular minister gives his sermon on a future life and describes a future state of existence in such a different way from the old-time theology, that he excites criticism on the part of some of his hearers; they have heard something like it before; they are wide awake, they have been listening perhaps to some spiritual medium, or attended a séance. And they say: "Why, our minister gave us a regular spiritual discourse to-day; talked of the other life just as the Spiritualists do."

Then the said minister becomes frightened — does not wish to be called a Spiritualist, and therefore rises to explain. Mr. Talmage has risen to explain; somebody has called him a Spiritualist, and this would never do.

Now it would be (and was generally) expected that a man occupying the position he occupies, and speaking to the vast assemblage he addresses, would seek to have a thorough understanding of the subject he handles; that he would give it careful investigation and research — know just what it was himself, and then give the people the benefit of that knowledge as a sincere and truthful man, who felt the importance of such movements for public weal or woe.

Contrary to this, it appears that he does not feel called upon to go to work upon Spiritualism because of

its faults or its virtues, neither to give the people some great truth, or to expose some great error: Somebody has *called him a Spiritualist*—and he, the eminent Talmage, fortified by Calvinistic walls, wishes to be known by its tenets. His creed-book teaches foreordination by election for adults, and the doctrine of infant damnation has not yet been expunged. Yet he wishes to be understood. He must not be called a Spiritualist, to whatever spiritualistic pictures of the after-life not in consonance with that creed he may have given utterance in moments of inspiration.

Did he speak on Spiritualism from any desire to reveal truth or expose error we should feel like answering his arguments (if he used any), or meeting his statements or assertions with our reasons for the existence of whatsoever he might criticise; but when a man occupying his position—though he may be called the greatest among his kind—descends to the use of as much misrepresentation of a cause as he has in this case, we consider him scarcely worth the time spent in making any reply whatsoever. Still, as he occupies the place he does, and the world of Christendom eagerly hears or reads what he says, we shall give his positions a cursory glance:

First, what *is* this sermon? It is practically a resurrection of an old sermon delivered by him, some four years ago, in Brooklyn; it is *almost* word for word; there is scarcely a point in one that is not to be found in the other; there is no evidence of recent research, and apparently no more study has been devoted to the subject—a subject that is awakening thought in almost every direction, that is finding its way into all condi-

tions of society. He takes a sermon delivered three or four years ago, the text being the only noticeable change, and gives it anew to his intelligent hearers. There in his great congregation were the Spiritualists of Brooklyn going to hear whether they would receive fair dealings at his hands. Seated among his people, in all the pews, from among the most intelligent and refined of Brooklyn society, were ladies and gentlemen, judges, lawyers and doctors (even some of the officers of his own church are at least gifted as healers and clairvoyants), in short from every walk in life were present believers to hear themselves abused and misrepresented in these sermons.

He says Spiritualism is an old doctrine: In all ages there have been necromancers — those who consult with spirits of the departed; charmers — those who put subjects in a mesmeric state; sorcerers — those who by taking poisonous drugs see everything and hear everything; dreamers, who in their sleeping moments see the future world and hold consultation with spirits; astrologers, experts in palmistry. Yea, before the time of Christ, Brahmins went through all the table-moving that spirits have exploited to-day. "Is Spiritualism," he asks, "any different from all these? I answer: They belong to the same family, and are exhumations from an unseen world." He then asks: "What does God think about it?" Well, *I* don't know just what God thinks about it. But I know, through the olden volume by which Mr. Talmage sets such store, what God has done: that he followed Moses into the land of Egypt, and, according to the story, surpassed the necromancers and sorcerers of that land in all the experi-

mental trials, from the turning of a rod in the hands of Moses into a living serpent (which swallowed up all the other rods) to the turning of the dust of the land into creeping vermin; until the magicians, acknowledging themselves beaten and Moses to be the chief of magicians and sorcerers, said: "Surely, *this* is the finger of God!" We will take their word for that.

Mr. Talmage's next allegation is that our deeds are done in darkness. This is scarcely worthy of notice, as every one familiar with the phenomena knows that although some of the manifestations are given in darkness or semi-darkness, many of the manifestations are in the full light of day. In the very beginning most startling phenomena took place at all hours of the day, and have continued so to do, ever since.

He spoke of bad orthography, bad grammar, and bad morals; spoke of having a communication from a spiritual medium, sending it back, etc.; then followed, by telling us what God says, or gives us his curse on all those who seek "familiar spirits"; and in this quotation the Brooklyn divine cites as the word of God a sentence which we really deem unfit for us to repeat in this place.

To say that the teachings of Spiritualism lead to immorality is as false as the rest of the statements he has made; and any one comparing the same with those he advocates will see whether the tendency to immorality is on the one side or the other. Spiritualism teaches individual responsibility, right for the sake of right, and the law of compensation and retribution following the individual deeds of the individual man: That as a man soweth so shall he reap — in opposition to the doc-

trine that man can sow discord, sin and corruption, and by belief in the merits of another can escape the logical consequences. Some Spiritualists may lead immoral lives, but it would be as unfair to judge Spiritualism by this as to say that Christianity is to blame for the crimes of some of its ministers.

Let us see how Mr. Talmage holds up Bible pictures: He describes an ancient séance, and willingly depicts this as an object of ridicule. He says: "Saul went to the witch of Endor, called for the Spirit of Samuel. Here he comes; the floor of the tenement opens and gray hairs float up; then the forehead, the eyes, the lips, the shoulders, the arms, the feet, the entire body of dead Samuel wrapped in sepulchral robes appearing to the astonished group, who stagger back, hold their breath and shiver with terror. The dead prophet, white and awful, from the tomb, begins to move his ashen lips, glares upon King Saul and cries out, 'What did you bring me up for?' And the King was terrified." We do not wonder that he was. It would be well for you to read the original story as told in the Old Testament, and see how much Scripture our critic has manufactured. If *we* were as unfair in quoting Scripture and embellishing stories as he proves himself to be in this instance, we should describe another Bible séance: Jesus has been crucified; his disciples are terror-stricken; they seek solitude, seclusion; I do not know but it was a dark séance—the historian is careful at least to tell us the doors were locked: they were weeping; he had promised them so much that their disappointment was great; they wondered, and were sore afraid; presently they began to see something on the

floor of the tenement; there it was: First the brown curls floated up, then the forehead, then the mild blue eyes, then the pleading lips, then the shoulders, then the pierced side, then the feet, then the entire body wrapped in sepulchral robes! How did it get there? the door was locked; the key in the lock; yet there he was, The Crucified One, looking on the astonished group; and the disciples all burst out laughing! We have been as strictly true to the reading in the one case as Mr. Talmage has in the other; they are both Bible stories, told with a little ministerial *license*.

The next point sought to be made by Mr. Talmage is that Spiritualism ruins the physical health, wrecks the nervous system and leads to insanity; that there is not an insane asylum from Bangor to San Francisco but has its torn and bleeding victims of this "delusion"! Any one taking the pains to personally ascertain will find that he is either entirely ignorant of the truth of this matter, is not familiar with the statistics, or wilfully misrepresents. The fact is that for one Spiritualist to be found in these places, twenty can be found who were brought there through the evangelical type of religious excitement.

Again he says Spiritualism is a social and marital curse, etc.; but this statement of his is only on a par with the residue of his assertions; and we have only to say that it comes with rather poor grace from a minister who naturally, and according to creedal usage, holds up before the people as patterns of excellence such examples of social and marital life as Solomon and David; while the "misfortunes" of the modern clergy in the way of sexual criminality are too well known through-

out the land to need any pointing out at the present time by way of answer by comparison between the relative standing of Christian teacher and Spiritual believer.

Then he sums all up and says: "What does God say about Spiritualism? He never speaks of it but in thunder tones of indignation. He says, 'I will be a swift witness against the sorcerer!' Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live, and lest you should make some important distinction between witchcraft and Modern Spiritualism, God says, in so many words: 'There shall not be among you a consulter of familiar spirits, or wizards, or necromancer, for they that do these things are an abomination unto the Lord.' Now," he adds, "be a Spiritualist if you *dare!*" Let us see; we remember that God prohibited something once before: it was in the Garden of Eden. God had made the garden, and everything within it; then had made man and woman, placing them in the Garden. In the centre of the Garden he had placed two trees, which he did not intend they should make any use of. He was going out for a little while from the Garden, so he called the man and woman to him, and said: "Now look here! I am going away; I want you to enjoy yourselves; here in the Garden is everything to make you happy. All is yours; of all these things you may freely eat. But there are two trees in the middle of the Garden — these you must *not* touch; if you do, *you will get into trouble.*" They waited till his back was turned, then Eve, woman-like, turned around, took a good look at the trees, and, said she, "*Now there is something worth having,*" and she walked right up, *shook* that tree, took

some of the fruit, ate it, and said to her companion: "Adam, that is *good*; it is *splendid*; have some!" and Adam *took some*; and I will guarantee that since Mr. Talmage apostrophized the people with his "Now be a Spiritualist if you dare" — as both himself and God forbid it — the New York and Brooklyn mediums have had more patronage than for a long time before. Forbidden fruit always had a tempting sweetness for mankind; and if a cause had nothing to recommend it of itself it would grow by virtue of the persecutions visited upon it by its opponents. What would Christianity have been but for the persecuting and crucifying Jews? without the crown of martyrdom bestowed upon its reputed founder? Men cannot crucify to-day; they can only hurl coarse and bigoted epithets, which action has always proved the power of growth to the cause so vilified.

Fear not, ye who cherish this great Revelation of the nineteenth century! who have received undoubted evidence of immortality! The believers in Christianity have only *faith* in that concerning which you have positive *knowledge*. Truth is mighty; it prospers through obloquy; it grows amid adversity; it is deathless, and its reign shall have no end!

SIGNS OF PROGRESS; IN FACT, IN FICTION.

INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE GIVEN IN BERKELEY HALL,
BOSTON.



INVOCATION.

Source of our strength, again we turn to thee, asking that the lessons of truth received to-night may strengthen and encourage each and all of us on life's journey. Enable us to go within the temple of our own souls, and to drive out from thence everything which binds to earth, all discordant elements, all strifes and inharmonies, cherishing only that which will lead us upward in the pathway of light! And for the guiding hands that ever lead in the pathway of progress and soul growth, for the blessings of the present and the promise of the future, do we return to thee our thanksgiving and our praise.

LECTURE.

WE have chosen as the subject of our thought to-night, "Signs of Progress in Fact and in Fiction." All along the history of mankind, going as far back as is possible for us to go, we find the marks of development, that are, in reality, the milestones of the ages, that tell us how far man has progressed mentally and spiritually. Everywhere in the past we find expressions of his nature as a religious being. He reared altars; he made offerings to a being or power of whom he knew little. Away back in the ages we find the records of search after something above and beyond himself, something

to come after the change called death, for a knowledge of which he has ever been blindly groping. The records of this are the signs of his progress or development, the milestones of the race, telling us how far it has journeyed.

As man has advanced, he has erected better altars, has made nobler sacrifices, has expressed a higher ideal of divinity, showing that he himself has advanced to just that extent.

Literature, also, gives us an idea of the progress of the ages, showing the growth and unfoldment of human thought. When I look into the history of the past, I find man there, as an historian, a recorder. What has he written? What has he left recorded? He has written of himself. He has left a record of what he was at that time when he made the record. From age to age he has shown us himself, showing what progress he has made, how far he has advanced, what faculties of the human brain then predominated, in what part of his being he actually lived most.

When we look upon ourselves as human beings endowed with many varying attributes of mind and character, realizing something of the powers and capacities which belong to us in various directions, knowing that sometimes one of these attributes, sometimes another, becomes, for the time, the governing power, dominating the others, we can understand that there have been times in the ages of the past, in the history of man as a progressive being, when one of these attributes dominated the others.

We have that in our make-up which we call temper, or anger, which we feel when the lower passions of our

being are aroused. There is, also, in the long pathway of man's progress, an unfolding, a supremacy of the higher nature which will overcome this. This wisdom, or higher intelligence, must, at last, be supreme over these lower faculties, and hold dominion and sway over them ; and we, who have been troubled because of this tendency to anger in our nature, may take courage from the fact that by continual watchfulness, by determined will to overcome it, we may gradually grow into that condition in which these lesser or lower attributes shall become subject to the higher, and our being be ruled by the power of wisdom. When we have gained that position, when we have reached that state of unfoldment where we can say, "I am ruler of myself!" we have made a greater conquest than the ruler of any physical or material kingdom has ever done. No martial conqueror ever gained half the victory that he gains who conquers himself. No man is conqueror until he can say to this appetite, this passion, this desire, "Stay thou here," and it shall obey him.

Now, I believe there was a time when the reason of man had not unfolded to a degree that would enable him to reason upon these things. In that time, while he was, as we have seen, a builder of altars and a thinker, as far as a future life was concerned, he was yet in his crudest conditions, and his conceptions of the Power which he "ignorantly worshipped" were necessarily measured by his mental capacity and intelligence. In those times, when he had no idea of mastering himself, when he looked upon the lower attributes of his nature as unconquerable, when he gave way to them, and they held power and sway over him, then

his thoughts of God corresponded to his thoughts of nature. Whenever he saw a disturbance in nature (nature being to him the expression of God), he took it as an evidence of God's anger. Being himself a creature possessing this attribute, subject to its dominating power, he conceived of a Deity who became angry with men for their deeds, and, in his anger, violent and unappeasable, visited them with terrible punishments. Storms, lightnings, thunder, volcanoes, earthquakes, were to him but expressions of the anger of God descending in this way upon the violaters of his law. As proof of this, we have the teachings of Grecian mythology, and the history of ancient Egypt and Rome, with their gods, all possessing those attributes and passions which man felt in himself.

All these attributes which man possessed he believed the various gods to possess, all the way down to the time when were written the records of ancient Judaism, where we find the picture of their angry Jehovah, cherishing his wrath through the centuries, until he found by the sacrifice of innocent blood the means of pacifying his anger; but you to whom it has been given to live in the nineteenth century, bright with the light of truth which has been evolved through the revelations of science, you to whom the voice of science in various directions has spoken as with thunder tones, have learned that the old stories of creation were only mystical, mythical fabrications which had their birth in the brain of man. Geology has given you the genesis of our earth in a record running through the "Bible of the Ages," — the solid strata of this earth on which you dwell.

In this nineteenth century we find wonderful signs of progress. In this nineteenth century such a light has dawned upon the world that all, whether calling themselves skeptic or Christian, are compelled to accept the new idea of creation, and the fact that there is an effort on the part of those who have rested their belief on the words of the old Book, to reconcile or harmonize the two records, is a sign of progress. You know now, it is said that the six days of creation meant six unlimited periods of time. They didn't tell you that in your boyhood. You didn't find it in the teachings of your catechism. But the revelations of nature have gone on; the chapters of geology have been written, and in the light of to-day they are read so clearly that wise theologians take the chapters of their Bible and adjust them by this measurement. A sign of progress. We are no longer taught that a day was the period of time between the rising and the setting of the sun, but that it was a season, like the day of Moses, the day of Christ. So we have the days or periods of creation. Long days they must have been, making a long week.

Some there are who still cling to their cherished idols, still hold to the old ideas of the past; but they are few in number, comparatively, except in externalisms. By this, I mean to say that the Church in external form stands very much as it has since the time we speak of as the Reformation, when Martin Luther gave Protestantism its existence. The great schism in the original Christian Church created by Luther has gone on, widening and increasing as man has gradually thought his way out of the great labyrinth of error in which he found himself involved; and each one who

has so thought and fought his way toward the truth has left the record of his progress, has left one more milestone, showing to the rest of mankind how far he has gone.

One sign of progress was the system of theology taught by John Wesley, and the introduction of the free-grace platform into the Calvinistic creed of the age. It was a higher conception of God. It was a broader, grander thought. A little later came the founders of Universalism telling of a plan of salvation for the whole human race, saying that anything less than this would be a failure unworthy of a God. Thus Universalism erected its milestone of progress; and then Unitarianism with its liberal teachings concerning the nature of God; and so on, until we have Liberalism in the churches, a liberal Christianity. So, gradually, man has unfolded like a blossom, thinking more and better, having higher and more noble conceptions of God, in proportion as his own character became more elevated and humane, farther removed from the sensuous and cruel. Every free, grand thought and word has been a lever to raise humanity. It has opened wider and wider the gates of truth. All over every portion of our earth where man's intellect has been awakened is dawning a better, brighter day. It has come little by little, and it has been purchased with a price. Heroes have been martyrs for truth all the way along. It has been bought with suffering, with the blood of those who have been willing victims upon the altars of human progress.

We do not always realize the price that our freedom has cost, nor do we always fully realize how much freedom has been gained even within this century; and

freedom would be gained, and gained more rapidly, if men were not inclined to be *afraid* to think for themselves. We see a man who has been checked, held in obedience to fixed rules which have been so long established he feels obliged to yield to them, to obey them in a measure. A grand thought finds its place in his mind; he gives expression to it, and somebody says, "Well, brother, that sounds a good deal like the Free-thinkers' doctrine; you must be a little careful; you don't know where such speculations will lead you." And he becomes alarmed, and tries to stop thinking. Oh, for men and women who dare to give their thought free expression so long as it does not violate the rights of another! When men dare to do this, to live up to their highest convictions, we shall not have the hypocrisy, deception, and selfishness that are practised to-day.

The fearless advocates of truth may meet with opposition, they may be traduced and reviled; but the clanking chain, the burning fagot, are things of the past. They are dead. They have died hard. Error always did. Superstition always did. We see the same spirit at work to-day devising bills and enactments for insertion into our laws, which are diametrically opposed to the spirit of progress in this age.

I would call your attention not only to the medical bill, in this direction, but to the Sunday law, which, if carried into effect, would shut the doors of your assemblies, holding them to be sacrilegious because you do not worship God according to some other person's idea; and you to be profane in giving utterance to your thought of religious truth. Against this spirit we pro-

test, preferring to take care of our own souls, risking them in the hands of Eternal Justice, knowing that we must meet the consequences ourselves of our own deeds. We believe in days of rest, hours of rest; but we don't believe in fettering ourselves with a religious dogmatical idea that somebody else holds and we do not hold.

We call upon you to utter your protest against this spirit of injustice and tyranny. We take it as one of the signs of the times, this struggling of this monster of power, and it warns us that, if we become lax in our duties, and allow the fetters to be woven around us, we may have to pay for liberty once more, even as our fathers paid for it, the price of suffering, persecution, and blood, ere we can extricate ourselves; for the spirit of liberty in this day is too strong to submit to oppression. We have had our taste of liberty. We have had a breath of fresh air. It has entered our being; men, women, and children feel it strong within their veins; and it must do its work, leading upward to nobler thought and grander living. We claim the right to worship as we will, seeing in everything in nature an expression of the Infinite.

As man has advanced slowly along the ages, some one has always been moved upon to give out an advanced thought, — a higher, broader idea of truth. It has gone out alone, it has drawn back its thousands. Theodore Parker did this for you, years ago, in this city of Boston. You remember the grand standard of liberty, truth, and light which he unfurled, giving it to the world as it came to him. He was a standard-bearer in the pathway of human progress, teaching truth as he

understood it, with all the power of his genius and inspiration. Such men as these have been lights electric, illuminating the way for the race.

Now look at the signs of progress that are found in the works of fiction written in these later days. When Elizabeth Stuart Phelps gave to the world her "Gates Ajar," with the beautiful idea of a natural world beyond the grave, it was found that the whole human family wanted some such picture as that. They were tired of pictures of heaven as a place with golden streets and pearly gates, its throne, around or at the corners of which were strange animals; with its wonderful choir, its forty and four thousand of just men who were continually harp-playing. These things did not satisfy the longings of human nature. Elizabeth Stuart Phelps believed there was a more natural world than that. She wrote a description of it, and sent this picture out into the world. The world received it with hungry hearts. It found its way into libraries, homes, and Sunday schools all over the land. Ministers and laymen, men, women, and children, welcomed it. It met the needs of the people. Was not their consciousness of this need a wonderful sign of progress?

In the dark days when human slavery was known in our land, you remember how a woman was inspired to write that wonderful book called a work of fiction, "Uncle Tom's Cabin," and you know the wonderful power it carried all over the land, turning a mighty tide of thought and feeling against the monster Slavery. What a sign of progress in realms of fiction, and what a fact in fiction was that! Sister women, you may well rejoice that two such works have been penned by

the hand of woman. They were called works of fiction, but they embodied the grandest principles that human beings have ever known. Harriet Beecher Stowe, when she wrote that story of human life, and love, and suffering, of human sin and crime, did more, in our opinion, toward creating a hatred of the institution of slavery in this land than all that was said or done before had been able to accomplish. She did this because she reached the heart of the people, the motherhood, the fatherhood, the childhood, in the homes. She touched chords in the human soul that were responsive, and this great lesson of human brotherhood did its work in the world.

Everywhere in our literature, in works of fiction as well as of science, we find signs of progress. Not alone in the writings of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps, but everywhere, in all the masterpieces of fiction that the last few years have produced, we find more or less of the teachings of Spiritualism. Nearly every novel has some of its philosophy or phenomena, or both: spirit communion, by impression, by clairvoyance, by clair-audience, by raps; the materialized forms, human beings possessed of and exercising occult powers; these appear on its pages — a marked evidence of a progress of knowledge in these directions, and of a universal desire for such knowledge. Truly a most encouraging sign of progress! It shows how fast humanity is leaving behind it the false teachings of the past.

And now we would speak of a work of fiction that is swaying the minds of the people as no book has since the time that Harriet Beecher Stowe gave her great work to the world. Like that it is a plea for freedom,

for deliverance from bondage; but it is for freedom of the soul, release from the thralldom of the teachings of the past. We see its struggling hero growing inch by inch, fighting his way step by step, by and by standing up in the power of his noble manhood, feeling that he must know and teach the truth, at any sacrifice, even that of being misunderstood by her he loved most.

How would such a work as this have been received, not many years ago? It would have been laid on the shelf, or consigned to the flames with writings of Paine and Voltaire. That "Robert Elsmere" is received as it is to-day is a sign of progress. This spirit of progress has worked its way through the ages, until to-day the great mass of humanity is ready for light, for understanding. The light of truth is breaking in upon them, and they see its reasonableness and beauty. To be sure, there are exceptions. Some who read this book will shrug their shoulders, and advise their friends not to read it, which will probably have the effect of causing their friends to procure it at once, and seven out of ten will find "Robert Elsmere" making an impression upon their minds which will never be effaced.

And so, all around us, in fact and in fiction, we see the signs of human progress. By and by the leaders of religion, as they are thought to be, the theologians, will have to come nearer to the mass of the people, and revise their creeds as well as their Bibles. Men who believe, as so many of them are beginning to do, that there must be "probation after death" for the so-called heathen, will not care to send theologians to them, who while, according to the old belief, they are saving a few, will certainly cause all the rest to be damned,

since those people as a whole must reject the theology presented to them, as they are people who think and reason to a great extent.

Thus the world moves on, and man's conception of God grows higher and nobler, broader and brighter, as he himself develops more on the higher plane of his being. The old idea of him as a being of wrath and revenge is being put away as simply a creation of the human mind when the race was in its childhood, crude and undeveloped, subject to its own passions, and ignorant of its manhood. Now it has become noble, strong, brave, and true. The spirit of freedom has been aroused. We have tasted of its sweets. We can never go back into bondage.

And so the soul moves on, and must until the highest ideal of the human mind becomes a realized fact. The purest, noblest, sweetest inspirations that ever came to poet, painter, or prophet, have their reality somewhere. No picture was ever made, no song ever sung, no glory ever depicted, but was a *fact* somewhere. Otherwise the brain of man could never have conceived it. It is a fact in some life, or none could ever have dreamed of it; and so we see the spirit of progress, of truth, of love divine, stamping itself upon the fiction of our time, woven into our poetry, and sung in our songs.

Move onward, Spirit of Progress, bring us the coming day,
When man to man shall be faithful, and justice shall hold sway.

Move onward, O Spirit of Freedom, and banish the gloomy night
Of superstition and darkness, and show us the fuller light,

Which we see now as a promise over the distant hill,
Growing stronger and brighter, as ever through ages it will,

Until it shall cleave the shadows, and mists and clouds shall roll,
That like a heavy curtain still overshadow the soul.

Move onward, valiant brother, move onward, my sister true,
Fighting for truth and freedom, as your fathers fought for you.

You shall see their flag unfurling, advancing every hour,
And tyranny expiring, slain by its mighty power ;

While Progress nearer coming, shall, by its bright'ning ray,
Lead man and woman upward into the perfect day.

WOMAN.

INSPIRATIONAL DISCOURSE GIVEN AT BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON,
MARCH 17, 1889.



INVOCATION.

Unto thee, O ministering Spirits, who lead us gently, day by day, from darkness unto light, ever kindly pointing upward, and leading our thoughts into the sunlight, ever faithfully keeping thy word to us, unto thee we turn this morning, asking that the clouds (if such there be about our vision and understanding) may be lifted, and that, seeing the truth, there may be on our part a willingness to receive. Aid us to gather from it, and appropriate unto our lives, according to our individual requirements, that which will strengthen us for life's duties and the faithful discharge of its many obligations. May we desire only that which is just, that which is noble and true, that which will tend to the uplifting of the whole human family, laying aside all prejudice, seeking only what is best for all. And unto thee, our helpers and our guides, we return thanksgiving now and evermore.

LECTURE.

IN presenting the subject of the morning, I, as a spirit, ask you to remember that mankind, considered as a whole, has ever overlooked in the past history of the race much that is important, much that must henceforth be considered, much that is being agitated to-day; and among the things which have been over-

looked, *none* so important as that of the true position of womankind. It is my belief, that until the race rises to a recognition of this, and the requirements in this direction, criminality, disease, the great mountains of imperfection and suffering, that now belong to us as a human family, will not, cannot, be overcome.

I wish, first, to be understood among you this morning, as an intelligence from the spirit side of life — a spiritual intelligence, who seeks the welfare of mankind, the complete, the entire family, male and female; not the development of an “ism,” not the promulgation of some pet theory, not the maintenance of the rights of one, without consideration for the rights of all. In seeking to bring before you the wrongs of woman, in asking that *they* be righted, I must call your attention to the consideration of facts in this direction which call for earnest thought, for sincere research, for a willingness on the part of all to assist, in order that the race may be uplifted, and the best condition for all be advanced thereby.

It is a fact that all over the earth woman has been, and is yet, in a position secondary and subordinate to man. The why and the wherefore we must seek for in nature first; and here we have an illustration of the ever-present truth that all things work in and through nature, and are governed by her laws. Therefore I believe this state of things exists, and has existed, because of the nature of man and woman, there being a preponderance of physical strength on the part of man which gives a corresponding preponderance of one kind of mental power; and power has been, is now, and will be, might; and *might* has taken, is taking, and will

take, the place of *right*, until wisdom, or discernment by the higher nature, recognizes the right from the standpoint of principle. When men have grown from the physical and intellectual up to the spiritual, then there will be a recognition of right from principle, rather than from the foundation of physical strength which has given the priority to man.

In considering this subject, I ask you to lay aside your prejudices, if by inheritance or false education, or habits, you have them (and everywhere we find them, more or less), and then, as far as possible, put yourselves in sympathy with, or in the place of, your *mothers*. This is all I have to ask of you. In this tender place where I will then find you, I know you will be ready to hear the arguments and consider them, and we can consider them together, *not* as men, *nor* as women, but as one in soul and sympathy; not men and women, but souls seeking eternal progress. We forget this outer barrier of sex; we drop off this mortal, and become souls eternal, possessors of that infinite property, mind; intelligence, which under like circumstances and opportunities presents like attributes, whether in male or female, is inherited from the Infinite or Eternal. While we are such, divested of prejudice, forgetful of externals as far as that may be, then we are no longer fathers or mothers alone, but parts of that great Over-soul which contains and is both. We are parental. We are then of the family fraternal, and, as such, we seek the family's well-being.

In the past our earth has been governed largely by force, might, and power. The physical developing first, governing as it did in the past, gave man the su-

premacv of strength. This is true not only of the male in the kingdom of mankind, but also of the male in the animal kingdom below him. Superiority of physical strength belongs to man as an animal. It is his inheritance from nature, and until his higher nature, intellectual and spiritual, has widely unfolded, the animal nature will look upon the "right" from the standpoint of might, or of the superiority of force and strength. This is forcibly illustrated still among the uncivilized nations of the earth. Here we see society in its most primitive condition. Everywhere the male predominating and holding supremacy, decides all questions of social life as best suits *his* inclinations. In their system of marriage, if we may call it a system, we see the man of strength and might choosing according to his fancy from the females around him in his own tribe or in others; dealing only with those who possess the same qualities of might and power, the fathers, or male possessors of the woman he chooses, and he purchases her; or, scorning to do that even, he takes by main force and brute strength the maiden whom he covets, and she becomes his by possession, having no voice or choice in the matter. This rude savagery, once found all over the earth, is still to be found in the far-away islands of the sea, in parts of Africa, and in other portions of our earth where man has not yet grown out of the condition of which we have spoken, a condition of animalism in which might instead of intellect and spirituality controls him, and is the governing power. In other parts of the earth there has been a steady growth and development, yet still there are laws, customs, and usages, whose essence or quality is that

of injustice,—is the recognition of might instead of right.

Long-fixed customs have, in addition to their own strength, that of the power of habit; and the more fixed these habits become, the harder they are to overcome. So there were many centuries of this kind of living before men began to conceive of a reign of law, liberty, truth, and justice.

When they did, they laid the foundation of better laws, better systems of government, and social life; but it is only slowly, through the ages, that improvements have been wrought. Man has been the only law-maker, and so the laws respecting woman, which she is compelled to submit to, are very imperfect and unjust where she is concerned.

Looking through the history of the ages, we see this gradual improvement. Looking over our earth to-day, we see the great necessity for still further improvement.

In your Spiritualism, to-day, you have, as spiritual mediums, influences, or spirit friends, who come to you from different portions of the earth. You find in your band of intelligences those who seek the elevation of womankind and the uplifting of the mothers of the race. There is scarcely a medium with a well-organized band of spirits around him, which band does not include such intelligences.

I wish to speak to you this morning as a woman who lived in the mortal, in centuries long past. I will not give you the time, but I will say in the centuries of the past, long, *long* ago, I was a resident of earth, among a people who recognized as authority *might* rather than

right and justice, in a land where woman is still a slave, the far-away, fair land you call India. Now, as a spirit who seeks the emancipation of woman, I have sought, through those who are most advanced, to reach those who need a helping hand; and yet, right here in your own fair land of liberty of which you boast, in your land of freedom with its many States and Territories, I find women in such bondage to-day, oppressed by such unjust laws, it would almost seem that their emancipation was a Utopian dream, not to be realized in the present time, even in this land of freedom as it is called, — still less to be thought of for the women of my own fair clime.

We may enter, as women, your legislative halls, as grand, capable women of your land are entering them to-day, only to be scoffed at, and scorned by many who sit in the halls of legislation and judgment. Then, notice how the subject of woman is taken up by the Press, and, in many instances, flippantly handled, as if woman was something for caprice and fancy and for idle amusement, instead of being the foundation upon which homes are built, the hope of the future, as far as earth is concerned; instead of being the mothers of the race, the wives, sisters, and daughters, to whom we must look in the future for the condition of morality which shall bring into being men and women whose inheritance is purity and godliness. And while men in the majority of instances hold the question as idly, as flippantly as they do, deeming it of so little importance, even holding it in ridicule, they can look forward with but little hope; for there can be but little advancement of the race. They must take hold of the root of

the evils, that which lies at the foundation of the social structure, which is also the foundation and root of all good upon earth.

As I have said, you find in your own land these radical evils in the condition of woman; and in my own fair land, sunny and beautiful, the land where the knowledge of occult and subtile science has been developed as nowhere else on earth, there is such ignorance upon this vital question, such thralldom and tyranny as to hold in bondage womankind, making her a very slave; and it is a fact that Spiritualism teaches you that mankind is a brotherhood, that the human family is a unit; and so there can, in reality, be no ignoring of one nation or one people, and the building up or uplifting of another. No one can grow in beauty and symmetry unless there be a recognition of the rights of all and needs of all. This is as true of nations as it is of individuals. There cannot be a true spiritual growth, a true unfoldment, which you, as souls, desire, unless there is a recognition of the rights of all, a rendering to all what each asks for himself.

We are glad to see that noble women are working in this direction. They are meeting with scorn and derision. Oftentimes they work on with heavy hearts; but they know there has been a little growth, a little advancement. In this very defeat they see cause for encouragement, because it is a defeat with a promise in it; it is a defeat with a prophecy in it; it is a defeat with the light breaking through the clouds. And this promise and prophecy are not for you alone. We are looking forward to your unborn sons; we are looking forward to the time when women shall be able to give

an inheritance of freedom, of justice, of equality to their children, when they shall stamp upon their unborn children such a high moral nature as will make it *impossible* for them ever to go out into the slums of vice and degradation. Those who fall into those conditions, friends, are those who have been defrauded of their birthright, that which belongs to them as their divine inheritance. The criminals that are filling our prisons, the unfortunates in our insane asylums, are what they are, because of their inheritance, because of the gross ignorance on the part of many men and women who so little realize, in becoming fathers and mothers, what they are bestowing upon their children, endowing them with propensities which of necessity make them subjects for your schools of reform, for your state prisons, compelled to become criminals because of their weakness and imperfection having its legitimate harvest of crime and corruption.

We contend for woman's right to the ballot as the means to an end; that end is the righting of evils which exist. She proposes to use the ballot to right those wrongs, or to assist in so doing. That is all. Look for a moment at the laws of marriage, and the property rights of married women in this America, this land of liberty, whose laws are the best on the face of the earth. In most of the States of this Union there can be no release from an unhappy marriage save by perjury on the part of one or the other, or by a criminal act on the part of one or the other, which gives to them a chance for freedom. There is no redress save in this way through the laws of the land as they exist to-day.

How often is it that girls too young and ignorant to

be capable of making a wise choice enter into the close relationship of marriage, — often so trying to the souls and bodies of both women and men, a relationship which requires the holy ministry of the angel of love all the way, — only to find that they have made an irrevocable mistake productive of far-reaching misery; yet the bonds that bind them are legal, and cannot be broken save by perjury or crime. While this is true, what does it do? It holds in this relation many women, unloved and unloving wives, who still continue to become mothers. And what kind of mothers must they naturally be under such conditions? What kind of children must naturally be brought forth? What must be their inheritance? I leave your reason to supply the answer. When it is answered, you will understand why it is that crime abounds; why it is that so-called religions have no power to overcome these influences of evil. I say “so-called religions,” because to-day systems that are held as religions have so little of real, vital truth. They deal not, neither will they deal, with the real evils as they exist. They dare not use their pulpits to give expression to their bravest thoughts on these great questions. The minister, in many instances, is bound by certain laws of creedalism. His congregation understands what these laws are; and both know how far he can go without censure, and where he must stop. These reforms must be agitated by persons outside of these fixed lines; and as the agitation goes on, the more liberal in the church limits will join them. You remember that the anti-slavery agitation in this country was begun by heroes outside of the church, who were persecuted and traduced; but the thoughts

to which they gave utterance, bearing so much of truth, were taken up by the more liberal and advanced in the pulpits.

Spiritualism, as no other religion has done, has agitated this question of woman. It shows you the cause and the cure of crime as lying in the character of the motherhood of the race, more than in anything else; and for this, Spiritualism has been condemned; for this, the finger of scorn has been pointed toward it; yet it is the one thing of which in the future you will be most proud.

It has been beautifully said that the "hand that rocks the cradle is the hand that rules the world." While this song has been accepted as a poetic idea, few have had a realizing sense of its truth; few have realized how a mother's influence stamped upon unborn generations, not only sways the world to-day, but reaches far out into the infinite future.

And too many men there are who would like her to do only the cradle-rocking. At this point many a defender of old customs with their fixed lines stands entrenched. He says woman's place is in the sphere of home, that there should be nothing to take her attention from it, to occupy her time or her thoughts. All outside is a realm belonging to man. Man must be the sole maker of the laws. To enter the arena of politics for even an hour, long enough to cast a ballot for temperance, for social purity, for equal rights, would be degrading to her womanhood, bringing her down from the pedestal where man has placed her, as a creature to be worshipped and adored. This is the argument of our legislators. Heaven knows how few women there

are who have ever received this adoration, or even made a footprint upon this pedestal, while the great majority are kept in a condition of servitude, without any acknowledgment of their rights as human beings, or as women.

I wish I had time to go over the laws of your States respectively. You know how many there are in which a woman whose husband dies is simply his "relict"; and she can simply have, during her natural life, the use of the property that he has left, although it may represent their joint earnings and savings for a long period of years; she can simply use it, having no power to sell or give or bequeath it to another. This is the law, friends. It is true that many men, knowing how unjust were these laws, have made a law of their own, and protected her by a will; but this is far from being universal. Here is a single instance: A young widow having two small children married a second husband. Having very little, they worked on together, and at last a good farm with comfortable buildings rewarded their patient industry, when her husband died. During these years she had become the mother of three more children. When it came to "settling the estate" after his passing away, it was found that her first two children, who had helped to accumulate the property, were penniless, while she received only the widow's thirds. All that woman wants of the ballot is to make it serve the interest of justice and of right. That she will have it is assured because of the growth that is coming to all humanity, bringing a knowledge of right and wrong. Many a woman, until she comes to some

such a point as this, does not realize the injustice that is inherent in the man-made laws of to-day.

Woman has no need that man should tell her of her obligations to her home and family. Every true woman realizes them for herself far more than any man can do for her. She realizes the worth of a true home. She knows it to be the centre from which the salvation of the race must spring. Do you think Mrs. Livermore is any less a mother or less a wife, any less queen of her home, because of her determined effort to make every other woman's home as bright as the intellectual growth and development of such a woman can make it? Do you think any women who are working in this direction are any less womanly? If you think so, you don't know them. We have entered their homes. We have seen them take up the little children, and hug them to their hearts, with the feeling, "It is for you, children, that we are working, in the hope that, with coming generations, the evils which it is impossible to right now will be done away with." And I would say to you that the woman who thinks in the widest circle, who takes up all the thoughts of the day, is the noblest wife, the grandest mother, because she is the noblest and grandest *woman*.

Now, I want to refer to one in your midst, one well known to most of you, — Mrs. Brigham. It would do your heart good to go into her home, to eat the food that comes from her hand. Everywhere in that home you would feel the spirit of love and liberty and tenderness that permeates her entire life. Would the free exercise of the elective franchise make her less womanly? I think not. Now, remember that woman

asks for the ballot as a means to an end. She believes, with that in her hands there could be a reformation brought about. She does not say it will come as soon as she enters upon the work ; but she believes that her voice, her influence, will be on the side of right, will be for the uplifting of the race.

She hopes to aid in the elevation of humanity. She hopes to work in this direction to help her husband, her father, her brother. If any of you think this would make her unwomanly, or would take her from her home duties, I want to say to you that most women have learned to do more than one thing at a time. They can keep house well, can look out for the interests of the home, and can vote once or twice a year, without infringing upon their other duties any more than voting does upon yours. You, as business men, can leave your business one or many hours, and still have it go on successfully. So can she. Are you any less manly because you care for the general interests of State and county as well as for your own individual private interests? If not, then she will not be less womanly for so doing. Are you more manly because of it? Then, she will be more womanly for the same reason, more really a helpmeet for you. It is said, in the old tradition, that God saw it was not good for Adam to be alone, and so sought to make a helpmeet for him. I wish he had done it! I wish he had made one whom man would have recognized as such, and would have allowed her to become a "help meet for him." I wish she could now take her proper position as such! I wish it for the babies' sake, for the sake of the children yet unborn. I wish it for the good of the race, believ-

ing that it would be the thing that would give you the greatest advancement.

You know, mothers, how, sometimes, a little emotion, a little fright, leaves its physical stamp on the child. Let me say to you that the higher emotions leave a moral impress upon the child unborn; and kindness, tenderness, love, equality, liberty given to the mother as her rightful possession, enables her to bring into the world a son in whose nature these hold rightful supremacy. These stamp themselves upon the unborn as surely in a spiritual sense, as surely in an intellectual sense, as impressions are made upon the physical tenement in which the soul dwells. As this is true, it follows that the most important work of the age is the uplifting of the mothers of mankind, the placing of them in the true position of equality where they rightfully belong.

It is because we believe the ballot in the hands of woman would do away with many forms of evil and crime that exist, because it would reach the very root or basic principle of those evils in the way we have described, that I appeal to you, my brother-men, to give her this natural right. You can if you will. The question is in your hands. We believe it has been rather a habit carelessly indulged in than anything else that has led most men to regard this great question so lightly. Remember that every one of your voices will have weight and influence. No argument on the part of woman is going to do but very little until man yields the position he occupies to-day, and looks at this question seriously, instead of using the old senseless argument of political influence making her unwomanly, as a man in the Massachusetts Legislature did the other .

day. A man? Rather a fossil dug up from the ruins of the past, yet living in this living age of which we are a part. What we want is living, thinking men, men who are willing to put woman in her true position. We want this agitation continued until right prevails in every department of life; until woman is paid the same wages for the same amount of labor equally well done, as are given to a man; until it shall be merit and the work accomplished, rather than sex, that settles the rate of compensation for labor. If a woman ever becomes President of the United States, I wonder if she would be so on half salary. I wonder if it will be the first time that the nation will think that there should be economy shown in the salary given to its President. I wonder if, instead of paying once, they will think she ought to be paid right along, pensioned, as we hear men saying that those who have been at the head of the government ought to be *pensioned*, agitating the question of pensioning Presidents because they have held that position, as if the men who were willing to serve their country in that position were rare beings, hard to find! There is no true woman in the land but is entitled at least to the pension of liberty, justice, equality. We ask for equal rights for her in all places; we ask the right of suffrage, we demand it; and we are *going to have it*.

THE BALLOT.

We'll have it to use as a power
 In the battle for *truth* and *right*;
 Have it because it belongs to us,
 A weapon of power and might.

Have it because too long we have borne
Our wearisome burden of wrong ;
Because the very bearing of this
Has unfolded a purpose strong.

We'll have it because our children need
The wisdom of both combined.
Not too much, even then, will it be
For the evils that now we find.

Evils of crime and intemperance
Existing without and within ;
For here in the "holy of holies"
Of Motherhood *cure* must begin.

Then put in the hands of the mother —
And trust to her wisdom and love —
The ballot, that she may assist you
In lifting the nations above.

Then give us a sixteenth amendment.
We have waited patient and long,
Till our patience is growing weaker,
While our wills they are growing strong.

Do we ask *too* much where we're asking
Equal rights with untutored man ?
Withhold from your wives and mothers,
Then, longer, this right if you can.

For shame on the men so determined !
Stand back, you are now in our way.
Wives, mothers, and sisters are coming, —
They are marching for Freedom to-day ;

And as sure as Justice Eternal
Ever wins in the contest for right, —
Though patient and long they have waited, —
Their day of reward is in sight.

REMINISCENCES OF A SPIRIT.

I APPROACH you, friends, by this means, as a Spirit with a few reminiscences of earth life and of the life which lies beyond the change called Death. Others may speak to you of more than this, even claiming to recall events in prior states of being. That we are eternal in our entity, I believe, or I should expect that which had a beginning would somewhere in the hereafter have an end. How many of the varied experiences of an eternity I have passed through e'er reaching the point where memory made a record of events, holding them where I should in my future at times recall them, I know not. It is not mine, and never has been, to recall other than events which belonged to an earthly pilgrimage; and even many of these I cannot to-day recall in full. Others have left such an impression with me as a substantial part of myself.

I shall not give in this instance much pertaining to my earthly life, save to say I was a man of the world, *loved* the world, was satisfied with it, had friends, *many* of them, had faults, *not* a few, and averaged, as I believed, with the rest of the human family as to virtues. I was not a believer in religious systems to any extent, yet accepted the general belief of immortality until the later portion of my life on earth, when I became skeptical in reference to this, and inclined to materialistic

views. Spiritualism I had heard of, but, with the majority, believed it was hallucination on the part of some and deception with others, while the rest were duped by both classes. Life was, in my case, much as with other mortals, up and down, sorrow and pleasure, success and defeat, alternating sufficiently at least to prevent monotony, until the cry for help was heard over all our land, and answered by men from every walk in life who went forth as preservers of our nation in its time of peril, when I followed as an army surgeon. I loved excitement, and found myself from this fact often in most dangerous places, escaping many times marvelously only to repeat my folly. At one time I stood in the midst of the battle, dead and dying so thick about me that my only thought was to reach them one after another, rendering what assistance I might. So strangely and often had I been preserved through such scenes that I became inured and fearless, with no thought of self as far as danger was concerned.

Suddenly, with no sensation of warning which I can recall, save the din and roar of battle then in progress, with no particular sense of change to myself as I was hurriedly moving from one to another of those lying prone around me, I found myself standing by a form, vainly endeavoring to move it. I noticed its resemblance to myself, and can distinctly recall my thoughts. "Who is this, and who could have been among us so strangely like myself? Poor fellow! whoever you are, you are done with life, done with battles; and for you the victory is won." Soliloquizing thus, a strange sensation or influence caused me to look up. Instantly I saw *my mother*, who had been long years numbered

among the so-called dead. I thought of this, and recalled having heard many times of experiences in lives of others wherein such events had been received as foreshadowing danger or premonitions of some change awaiting them. Before I could frame any words, and much quicker than I can repeat this, I saw another, a child, a dear little one, who passed from our earthly home some years before. Seeing her with my mother, I felt that some great change awaited me. I thought of death. Perhaps I ere long was to meet the fate of the silent ones around me. I gathered strength in my excitement to say, "Mother, what is it?" She answered, "It is death." "When?" "Now, my son." I cannot tell you how. I have no sensations or recollections which memory leaves of this event, or how it occurred, only that by some means I was borne above the field of carnage, above its roar and din, as far as the material side was concerned; or, I lost the power longer to behold this side of the scene, and saw only the spiritual side of a great battle. I think this latter the better explanation of my condition then.

Losing sight, in a great measure, and power of recognition of material things by the severance of the bond of the body which acts as a medium for this, I began discerning the spiritual, and was for a little while riveted to the spot by what I beheld. Directly above the battle-field I saw what first had the appearance of a cloud or mist of white. This was the spiritual ether which is at all times a part of earth's atmosphere, though only discerned by spirits. It was my first view of it, and my sight was dim. Gradually, as I became freer from material conditions, my vision grew clearer

to spiritual things; and this ether I saw full of many-colored forms or sparks of light, varied as the hues of the rainbow, and some of them brilliantly beautiful. At first they seemed like motes or specks of light, filling this lake of ether, all moving, changing. There is nothing to which I can compare this to give you a clear conception. I soon saw that they tended toward centres which at first were not visible to me; but as the work went on, they became clearer and more apparent, dimly outlining at first and growing clearer and stronger.

This was the work of resurrection in reality, which I saw to be governed by a law so perfect, atom answering to atom, life to life, that it needed no other voice of God to call them to obedience. Each spark of life divine, by a law which governed it, sought its own centre, which was the conscious entity or soul which had during its earthly expression used these elements with which to clothe itself; and now they were obedient to the soul as a centre of attraction, and followed where it led. The soul, violently thrown by the incidents of war from its body, arises into its native element, calling after by this law all that belongs to it, and must take, as its inheritance to the spiritual condition, the finer portion of what it has called unto itself during an earth journey.

This law works so perfectly that there are no mistakes. I received that which by my mode of living I had placed in the receptacle — the body. At death the body yielded up to me what I as an immortal being had intrusted to its keeping, no more and no less; so it was with all. No one could appropriate at this time the brighter portions belonging to another, and by its greater

ethereality rise upon it. But as flowers or plants growing in one garden, each selects its own element, the rose, the lily, by no accident changing places, or one in any way robbing the other, so each soul finds its own element, drawn by this law unto itself; and we are again clothed upon.

Above this already described I saw another still brighter line or cloud of light, which was the still more ethereal and spiritual atmosphere. In this were innumerable spirits. From *this* source, visible to me now, I saw an influence was thrown upon the living, or minds still in the body, to assist. They appeared to direct a subtle power to the individual they desired to reach. Space to them seemed to present no obstacle, but rather it seemed by this distance they were in a condition where they could more perfectly use this power. All spirits cannot exercise a great power in this way, and these seek direct contact. In fact, the power to do this at a distance is attained only by experience, and is, therefore, practised by the more advanced minds in spirit life. Others moved upon the earth among the suffering and dying. It was indeed a cloud of witnesses.

As my powers of observation extended and my spiritual vision grew clearer, I discerned among the many around me those I had known in the days of my childhood, — kindred, neighbors, and friends; some of whom had passed from earth long ago; some of them with me had escaped the body mortal, escaped the conflict of battle and ills of earth, in a measure at least, in one short hour.

In the midst of these scenes, and apparently without

the lapse of time, or the realization of going or of traversing space, I found myself in a beautiful place. All I saw I cannot here describe. I was far away from the scenes I had recently participated in, and in a place of such indescribable beauty, such ease and rest, with such a sense of love pervading all around me, that I find no language to convey to you a correct idea. With me were the spirits I have spoken of as first appearing to me upon the field of battle. I had lost sight of them in the interim, though I found they had not left me, as it is possible for the spirits who are more advanced to become visible to us who have just entered upon that life, or not, as they will to do. I found myself in reality almost as helpless in regard to the use of my new powers as a child new born. I learned that by a power which she possessed my mother had borne me thus through space to her home, a place of rest to my spirit. That as she had once received me, welcomed me, to her arms when I first started out on my earthly journey, so again, when leaving earth and time, she had gathered me in her embrace, and carried me to a home of rest. Here I saw many of our old friends, who one after another came to give me welcome.

Very soon I realized a sense of uneasiness, unrest, even in this bright spot, as of something somewhere to which I still belonged, which would not allow me as yet to enter into this life permanently. I began inquiring, thinking, and my thoughts were of earth and of my recent experiences, of all I had left behind me; and somehow in a way which I do not yet understand, by a something which must be called, I think, unconscious volition, by strong desire, I found myself again on earth.

I have no recollections of passing from one place to the other, or of passing other scenes or places, only that I was once more upon the earth. Not this time upon the field of battle, where my body lay, but in my earthly home, where my loves awaited and attracted me, and where I knew the knowledge of this change would come as a great sorrow. I passed into the house, and found myself standing by my wife's side. She was reading a letter just received, written by me the week before, full of hope and expectation; and her face was lighted with the hope borrowed from the letter in her hand. She did not know I was so near, and vainly I tried to make her understand it. It seems almost incredible to a spirit, in their earlier experiences in spirit life, when they find themselves so tangible, in a body so real, that they cannot make use of that body as a means of communication with those yet in the mortal; that they speak, and are not heard; that they see you, and yet are unseen. On entering my home I saw spirits whom I had not seen in my mother's home. They greeted me, and smiled at my discomfiture, saying, "Oh, well, old fellow, you'll get used to this after a while!" and offered me any assistance they could render. One of them, an old friend, took me by the hand, and led me away, saying, "We'll show you how you can be of service to yourself and others; but first we will borrow from the old case-ment, the body, all it has which by nature it has not already given you. We will see what by intelligence it will yield. Then you will be ready for this other work."

All I have given here occurred within a short space of time, a few hours. The period of rest in my mother's

home was while she held over me an influence enforcing a condition of repose and calm to my spirit. When this was withdrawn, then I went forth as described. Accompanied by this spirit, and joined by others, we were soon upon the field of battle, and by my earthly body. How I pitied it! I could not help it: it looked so pitiful. There it lay in the moonlight, under the shadow of night which had crept over the scene. No bodies had been disturbed; even of the wounded and suffering, yet living, but few had been cared for. Blood, blood, everywhere. What we had paid, answering the law of retributive justice, for our crime and sin of slavery as a nation! It was through the blood of this sacrifice this sin must be atoned for. Spirits were here everywhere. Could you believe it, when all the mortal army had withdrawn?—the victorious and the defeated—leaving upon the field the victims; no longer *soldiers*, Federal or Confederate, but *men*, wounded, dying, and dead. Around them were gathered armies of angels who still had a work to do; who could be kept away by the picket guards of no conquerors; who came and went unseen until they had accomplished their work of soothing suffering wherever they could, and liberating or assisting a spirit when needed, as they were helping me. And this is the resurrection into the new life. By a power which these spirits understand, they called from the body that which had not by attraction been drawn to it, but which was entangled in material conditions, and which they, as chemists of the spirit, understood the process necessary to separate it; and I found myself growing stronger by this process, also becoming possessed with a light or knowledge, as I gained strength,

of how to make use of it, so that soon I began to see I could govern intelligently, and by will accomplish that which had hitherto been done either by other spirits for me, or by the impulse of a strong desire. As, for instance, at death many times a spirit is seen by some absent friend long distances from the place where the spirit is leaving the body, and almost at the same instant they appear, and give messages concerning their death. This is when the thought at the time centered forcibly upon the person to whom they have appeared, with a desire, perhaps, to see them once more before death; and the earnestness of this desire becomes an impulse, bearing the spirit to this person. In a short time spirits learn to concentrate and govern intelligently. Then thought and judgment, strong will and reserve, gain the ascendancy rather than emotion, impulse, or strong desire.

I found myself now an inhabitant of a new world. I found that the world of sense, as far as material things were concerned, was closed to me, that the spiritual was opened to me; and I found myself in the possession of faculties, as every one does, which I was not before aware of possessing. I found that language was almost unnecessary, as all about me seemed to divine my thoughts and know my wishes before I could express them; and that, as I approached earth friends, that I also saw their thoughts quicker than they could have been expressed. I could stand by their side, and the mind was as the pages of a book. I could feel even their sorrow, and it became my own. My anxiety for them was intensified until I felt it as keen suffering. Spirits do not become reconciled to this until wiser

spirits teach them the laws of life and its uses. Then one becomes satisfied with the good outwrought from all apparent evil, and realizes that sorrow even and suffering are made the means in hands of infinite good of working out for all the greater good, and brightening all our capacities by the endeavors or efforts put forth.

I found also that an influence, put forth silently and almost unconsciously, exercised by all in degree, could be exercised to such an extent that it could be made a means of doing good to many in ways I had never thought of. My family, especially, were affected by this means. When I found them in trouble, worn and too weary to sleep, my presence soothed, and passed them into quiet slumbers. When scarcely knowing what they ought to do about some matter in which they had ever heretofore sought my advice, I could impel them, not by words or direct council, but by a feeling or impulse, to do as I desired, and it was done. So that, although they did not know it, I became their counsellor and guide of life, alive in their memories and affections, but more alive in their acts, had they but known it, than ever before.

“So, side by side, we journey through life,
As links in a golden chain;
Those passing on are united still
With the loved ones who remain.”

I found that this influence extended as physician and friend in the earth life. I visited the old-time friends and places. Wherever I could soothe a sorrow, or quiet a troubled one, I did it and found joy. Yes, and pleasure, even what is called heaven, which is happiness

or peace within, by so doing. Soon also I found myself in the wider circle (as far as the use of these means are concerned) of Modern Spiritualism, and finally became attached as one of the number who labor with and through the many means to disseminate a knowledge of what life really is on the other side, among those who still journey upon the earthly plane, that more rational views may take the place of the darkness and obscurity which have hitherto veiled the life beyond.

That it is a life of realities and varied, instead of ceaseless harp-playing and chanting hallelujahs, I need not tell you. We follow a great variety of occupations here, according to the life we live, as you do. Of the work which I have chosen upon the earth I have spoken, or of a part of it. Now I must refer briefly to that which belongs to our side of life. For every kind of work there are those especially gifted, or especially prepared by nature, and according to their fitness or adaptation. My work in spirit life is still that of the physician. There are physicians who carry hope, cheer, spiritual insight, and magnetic force. If these are their endowments, then nature has called them to their work. Fortunately I was so organized as to possess this power, which in an invisible way soothed my family and friends after my departure from earth life, and which led me also to take up the same work on this side of life. There are many spirits who are exactly the opposite of this. If they approach an individual in the mortal, there is restlessness and nervousness; and many times disease follows, if they remain long enough.

These must be directed, instructed, harmonized,

before they can benefit mankind. All who arise from the earth who have not been taught how to live wisely come in a state requiring more or less assistance, strength, and what might almost be termed reconstructing, to attune them to the conditions necessary for the enjoyment of the higher spheres of spirit life. There are some who have led such lives on earth, of impurity of body and mind, that they are veritable lepers of spirit, spotted and stained by the grossly impure lives which they have led. Such as these are spiritually diseased, in the fullest sense of the word. They have brought with them the spiritual part of the gross material, with which they have by false habits of life continually supplied the body. And while the two bodies, that of spirit the finer covering, and that of matter the external covering, are united, one must necessarily partake of and be affected by the other. The spiritual or astral body is fed by the spiritual part of that which is given to supply the other, and receives its taints or impression left upon by impurity of thought and action. This must be overcome, sometimes by growth, and sometimes by the kindly assistance of others. Those who work in this direction among spirits, showing them how to correct their faults, inspiring hope and trust, impelling them to action, and also removing at times chemically their impurities, are spiritual healers; and bands of these are continually at work among this class of spirits, and meeting those who are just leaving their bodies. This resurrection and healing work is also accomplished through the aid of mortals who are approached by these bands, and made use of as reservoirs of material force, which is necessary in this

work. Much of this is done when the individual so employed by spirit agents is entirely ignorant in regard to it, as it is done by spirits who use their chemical properties rather than their intellectual faculties, while there are others who are well aware of the work they are doing, and are quite often termed cranks if they make known the fact that they do such a work.

Nature's methods of saving her children from the hells in which through their ignorance many times they find themselves are often misunderstood by children of earth; but they are always effective, and sooner or later extricate us from the slough of despond where the giant Ignorance has left us.

In these reminiscences I have given but a glimpse of the world we now live in. I do not give it to establish any identity, or to say who I am, other than a brother-man, one who lived as you live, and has passed from the mortal body, and still lives, who stands by the side of the visible form that responds to my thoughts, and yet who is unseen, as are many others in your midst.

Had I time, I should like to speak of the world of spirit more fully, of its realities, its varied avocations. This you have had, and will have from other returning pilgrims who have made this journey. We *live*; this is finally established. The way of communication is now open. Our inheritance is life, immortality, and eternal blessedness, with the grand law of eternal progress to aid us in overcoming our infirmities, while the vast universe is ours as the field where we may gather wisdom. Truth and love are the ruling powers or principles. By these we expect to see the triumph over error, and at last our race redeemed, not by belief, but by the

acceptance of a knowledge which saves from the consequences of sin and evil, by saving from the perpetration of evil and from wrong-doing. May all good impulses be cherished within you, and these and good angels lead you ever into the Light.

REUNION AT GETTYSBURG.



A DISPATCH dated July 4th to a Philadelphia paper a few years since gave the following brief memoranda of a celebration upon the historic grounds of Gettysburg, of the anniversary of American Independence, participated in with equal enthusiasm and fraternal feeling by soldiers from the North and South; on which occasion Mrs. Pickett, widow of the general who led the Confederates at the battle in 1863, held a reception and gave an ovation.

“Just as the clock in the tower of the County Court House last night sounded the first stroke of twelve, the midnight stillness was broken by the strains from a bugle of ‘Way down upon the Suwanee River.’ Scarcely had its notes died away when the members of the Philadelphia Brigade and Pickett’s Division began the celebration of the glorious Fourth with the booming of cannon on East Cemetery Hill and the explosion of fire-crackers in the town. Pandemonium reigned for one hour and a half. No such noise has disturbed this little village since the three memorable days of ’63. Not only the citizens took part in the celebration, but those who wore the gray as well. They joined in the festivities with a zest equal to any, and showed, as Judge William J. Clopton, of Richmond, a prominent member of Pickett’s Division, said, ‘that we of the

South take equal joy in the observance of the day with our brethren of the North. No one at Gettysburg to-day can forget the scenes connected with this anniversary of the birthday of freedom, binding still closer in the bonds of union two great states, Virginia and Pennsylvania, as well as drawing still tighter the cords which, through scenes like these, are bringing about a complete and lasting peace and union of our country.' ”

Reading the above, my spirit guide gave me the following lines which, I feel, can appropriately follow the preceding reminiscence of one who passed to the higher life under the circumstances which he has described, on the pages immediately preceding.

POEM.

Go forth, O messenger of peace,
Go forth forevermore,
Till war shall cease upon our earth,
And conflicts shall be o'er;
Until at last all arbiters
Shall stand upon the height
Where these now stand and view at last
The victory of Right.

For hand to hand and heart to heart,
Most loyal are they now, —
The conquered and the conqueror, —
With peace upon each brow.
What strange emotions well may fill
The hearts that meet to-day;
Remnants of two great armies,
The nation's blue and gray.

As children of one family
Will often disagree,

Even so was it one day with these
Children of liberty.
And wisely overruling all,
As loving parents will,
Right and *Justice* stepped between
With the command, *Be Still!*

From the first sound on Sumter's height,
Throughout the nation's storm,
We little knew that in those hours
A nation should be born ;
That from the fields of Gettysburg
And Richmond there should be,
Rising as from the blood-stained earth,
A nation truly free.

Four million shackles broken from
As many bruised hands ;
Hushed, silenced, and with bleeding hearts,
A bruised nation stands.
Be hushed, our anxious questionings ;
Be stilled, each fear and doubt ;
Through all these dreadful evils
Life's problem is worked out.

We know not its beginning,
We cannot know its end,
We but watch the lights and shadows
That slowly interblend.
As Time's hand slowly changes
Dark threads to golden hue,
Nations and men all in good time
Shall each receive their due.

We are standing on the summit
Of the Mount of Peace to-day,
And we celebrate our freedom
In a truly loyal way ;

For the North and South are meeting
As brother meets a brother —
Their leader, for the day, at least,
A *Woman* and a *Mother*.

And the remnants of these armies
Fall in line at her command,
With love her only weapon, while
She grasps each loyal hand.
They stand upon the very spot
Where they have stood before,
And almost fancy they're again
Amid the battle's roar.

He who on that eventful day
Called his brave men to rally,
Has stacked his arms, heard the command
To "pass death's silent valley."
And all the land we love so well,
Peace holds as her dominions,
While Slavery, "foul bird of prey,"
Lies low with folded pinions.

His talons still are fixed upon
The laborer and woman,
So strong his predilection is
To cling to something human;
But as *surely* as his clutches
Were from the black man freed,
So in the time now drawing near,
All shall be free indeed.

Through bloody seas it may be,
We'll walk to freedom's height;
But surely as the truth prevails,
Wrong shall give place to right.
Woman shall stand beside her lord
Acknowledged equal there,

Her voice heard in the nation,
Its weal or woe to share.

The struggle that with capital
And labor now is pending
Till Justice rules and Right prevails
Will never see an ending.
The wheels of progress slowly move;
But with a strong endeavor,
They're grinding out our destiny,
Forever and forever.

OUR PLACE AMONG THE RELIGIONS OF THE WORLD.

DISCOURSE DELIVERED BEFORE THE BOSTON SPIRITUAL TEMPLE
SOCIETY — MEETING IN BERKELEY HALL.



OUR thought this morning will dwell upon these words: "Our Place among the Religions of the World." I know that some are ready to say that Spiritualism is not a religion. This is because they have become satiated with what has been given them in its name in the past, in which so much of error has been embodied. They have been compelled to accept so much that is erroneous that the mind has, at last, determined to cut loose therefrom.

We must look at the facts just as they are. One of the most important of these is that man, by nature, is inclined toward religion. That he has been so in the past, history abundantly proves. That he is so in the present, earth's numberless systems of religion fully demonstrate. Since he is by nature a religious being, he is by nature a spiritual being, allied therefore to the infinite, eternal soul of all things. As such, permanent in his essence and substance, his thought must necessarily dwell upon the permanent and abiding. That leads him always to the consideration of a future state of being.

This state of existence is fleeting for all of us. Those who live to attain a hundred years of age upon this earthly plane are looked upon as marvels. People will often go a long distance to see a human being who has battled with the storms of earthly life for such a length of time. In the traditionary history of mankind, written upon pages deemed sacred, we are told that man, at one time, attained the age of five, six, seven, eight hundred years, and that he has gradually lost his power of life upon this plane of being; but evidence of this remarkable longevity of the human race is nowhere to be found; therefore we class this extraordinary story with many of the myths of the past, the outgrowth of man's imperfect development. Further on we read that the measure of man's life is three-score years and ten. In reality we know that very few of the human beings who are born attain even that age, a vast proportion passing away in their infancy. So there is something upon this mortal plane of being with which we must ever contend, something that weighs upon our lives with mighty power. This something is the struggle of the spirit with matter, and through matter, to express its higher and better self, which has not as yet found a perfect condition for its higher expression. This we know to-day is because our earth is young. We used to think it was old, but we know now that it has not yet attained its majority. When it has attained to this, we shall see man possessed of such mastery over matter as will enable him, in a great measure, to control the length of his sojourn here, and bid defiance to the approach of death, save as it approaches him as an obedient servant to unlock the doors of the tomb, his body,

after it has served the purpose of the soul, and give him emancipation.

As we find ourselves possessed of a higher nature which we call soul-nature, we find ourselves akin to the life-force, or power, which men have always worshiped in one form or another as God. We find ourselves akin to this, inheriting qualities which make us children of the living God and heirs of eternal life—life reaching out beyond that change which man has so dreaded in the past, that change of which he has known so little, save to feel the terror of its power. We find ourselves, by the power of soul within us, akin to the eternal property, or substance of life. Now, we call this God. I know no better name for it. The embodiment of this life-power, which we believe to be eternal in substance and essence, is all that I know of God, and it is God to me wherever I behold it: in the face of man, in the budding flower, in the world you live upon, in the higher spheres of being, in the immensity of space filled with worlds, peopled with forms of life corresponding to the conditions that have evolved them.

When we take this fact into consideration, we realize the magnitude of this universe of which we are parts, and realize as well how small we are in comparison with the infinite whole, yet we are parts of the eternal essence of life, and we find ourselves moving on in the eternal round of change which attends the evolution of spirit through matter. That man is such a creature, that he is possessed of this kinship with the eternal essence of power, this soul of life that cannot die, has been the cause of all religions; and all there is of error in any religious system is there because man, as a spirit,

cannot yet see clearly through this veil of the material in which he is still enveloped. These errors exist because he is undeveloped and imperfect; because the higher chambers of his brain are not yet taken possession of by the higher forms of thought, which will enable him to walk with God as some have done in the ages of the past when following their highest inspiration. It may have been Mahomet in the desert, the Buddha in the palm groves of India, or one of the latter-day saints — it is one and the same thing. A man, in his higher condition, walks in the higher and nobler law of life, and what is this but walking with God?

The great founders of all religious systems gave expression to what was within them, and those expressions, as they are accepted, mark the stepping-stones of man's advancement. This degree of unfoldment is indicated by his ideas of what God is, what life is, what are the attributes of God, and what is demanded of the children of earth. To-day we find men teaching that God is a God of anger; that in creating things he makes mistakes; that he regrets these mistakes, and vainly looks about for means to remedy them. So great is his anger toward the children of his own creation, they may not even implore his forgiveness save through a mediator. Through the mercy and kindness of this mediator we may approach the great frowning Deity so as to find forgiveness for sins we have never committed, and for wrongs we never meant to do, and which, if the organization he has given us impelled us to do it only proves that we have been victims of his own divine mistakes.

Contrast with this the teaching of Spiritualism in its

thought of that eternal power of life which we call God, which says that there are no mistakes in this universe, that everything is growing upward to a higher standard. As well may we expect the tiny bud of the springtime to present us with autumn's ripened fruitage as to expect perfection in man's development in this early age of the world. Man is a creature governed by laws universal, which govern all forms of matter. He is a creature of growth, and by and through the growth of these outer conditions, these outer expressions, does he become capable of expressing the soul within; just as these flowers are what they are to-day, because the tiny life-germ within the seed found outer conditions that permitted it to expand, and finally to express itself in the forms of beauty you see before you. It took time to do this, and time, time long enough will accomplish all things.

Thus, through all the ages of the past we find in man the tiny soul of being wrapped up in germinal conditions within the outer forms of matter. It was infused with the eternal principle of life, but it has taken God's ages, nature's ages, to bring it even to its present degree of unfoldment. But it is budding, it is blooming, it is promising a rich harvest for the future. Something of what this harvest is to be is already beginning to be shown in the higher and nobler specimens of humanity, the gifted ones of earth, as they are called. These more perfected blossoms upon the tree of life are only specimens of what the others are to be, when all the time, all the conditions necessary for their development, have been given them.

Thus, then, we take our place as the first religion of

the earth to answer the all-important question, "What are we after death?" While preceding religious systems (some of them) have taught faith and hope, we have taught what is better than faith and brighter than hope, *assurance*. We offer *positive assurance* that life is continuous, that individuality is preserved; we offer it from the testimony of thousands who have traveled across the dark valley, have passed over the silent stream called death, and returned again; having preserved identity, individuality, personality; returned to bring tidings of that country from which it is often said, "no traveler returns." Job did not know of it; David did not sing of it; Solomon scarcely dreamed of it. No religious system of the past or present can compare with ours, answering, as it does, to the deepest nature of man, reaching as high as the highest heaven, as low as the lowest hell; lifting souls from even the lowest condition and teaching them that they may finally aspire to the highest. Our religion teaches us that we are all children of the living God — none reprobate, none castaways.

This is the Christian Sabbath. How blue the heavens and how bright the sunshine! How glad the songs of rejoicing that are pealing forth to-day! And what is the refrain? It is "Christ is risen." Now we can tell you that your loved ones are risen also. We have come to tell you that your mother, your father, your sister, your brother, your child, your friend, have risen as well, and because they live you shall live also. We have come to tell you that life is so victorious over death that not alone is Joseph's tomb in far-away Palestine broken and rent asunder, but every tomb in every land

has given up its dead; that there are no dead — that all are living. Is not that cause for rejoicing?

Christianity says, If you accept "the plan of salvation," if you believe all these dogmas, you shall have part in the resurrection of life; but if your reason prevents your believing them, then will your resurrection be a resurrection to death eternal. Now, friends, there are no such discordant notes as those in our Easter music. Our heaven-inspired harmonies proclaim that all are risen, that all have life eternal by virtue of their divine inheritance as children of life, that there is no power in the universe that can rob them of this life. They sing that death is only a change that leads on and on, through the passage-ways of life eternal. Then may we not call our philosophy, our science of life, a religion? Does it not appeal to all that is highest and best in the nature of man, and provide means for its development? Oh! yes, it is a religion, and one that has come to correct the errors of old systems of theology. This is the work of Spiritualism to-day.

Now, some one may say, if this is true, I shall know it some time. What difference does it make about my finding it out now? It makes all the difference between truth and error, and that is infinite. It makes all the difference it would make to your child if you allowed him to spend his childhood and youth in accumulating a stock of erroneous statements and opinions, which he would be obliged to unlearn before he could begin the career of his manhood. Human life is full of meaning. In it I see the embodiment of a purpose. We are here to accomplish something — there is something for us to do. We are not here to sit idle with folded hands. What

is the purpose of life? I answer, briefly, the unfoldment of the higher powers of the soul. If you are not better thinkers, better doers than you were one week ago, then that week has been wasted. And we must remember that what a soul does not accomplish in one pilgrimage, it will be compelled to in another. Some one says, "That is re-incarnation." Call it what you like, I call it eternal truth. What the soul does not accomplish for its needs in one earthly pilgrimage it will in another. That is why, unseen, I am here before you this morning, giving expression to my thought through the physical organism of another. Had I accomplished all my soul's mission, as far as earth is concerned, I should now be in the sphere of souls arisen that do not come in contact with your earth's atmosphere. What I did not accomplish in life yesterday, I am laboring hard to accomplish to-day.

Spiritualism has come to you to-day because Bibles are not complete. Living pages are to be written in them penned by those who, in the ages of the past, have failed to express through the material world the higher, better soul-nature of man. Spiritualism is here because the grosser, baser forms of true religion have been embodied in these systems; because erroneous theological dogmas have taken the place of the spirituality that was found in the Church in its early ages. "The gifts of the Spirit," enjoined by the apostle in those early days, have been forgotten by the Church, until the Pentecost of the past is known no more among them — until the tongues of fire which rested upon those who spoke as the Spirit gave them utterance are forgotten. Spiritualism, nineteen hundred years ago, had power

over the people. When kings and emperors began to try to manipulate this power, to institute their orders of priesthood upon it, it fled from their selfish grasp, leaving only the dead body of material forms and observances. Spiritualism has come to infuse life into the dead religions of the world. It is going to change and fashion them until much of what now is will necessarily be swept away for something stronger, higher, better, to come in. It has come like one of old, who said, "I come not to bring peace on earth, but a sword." This has been the power of truth from that day to this. Whosoever speaks forcibly, truthfully, against the prevailing customs of the times, is a disturber of the peace. Spiritualism has come with the sword of truth in its hand, and it will cut its way through the dark ranks of error and superstition, and show you the "king's highway" whereon, at last, all souls shall safely walk.

With every soul saved, with every child born a member of the church of the future, — as they are going to be, — there will be a universal church of humanity which will recognize the divinity in man. Every child of earth will know he is also a child of the living God, destined to live forevermore. Spiritualism has come like a John the Baptist in the wilderness of ignorance and error, to declare the kingdom of heaven that is at hand. It has come as the torch-bearer of the nineteenth century, lighting the gloom of the grave with the glory of immortality. Some will say, "This is the egotism of the despicable body of Spiritualists. They are possessed of a devil, they are ruled by the Prince of Devils." Just so they said of the torch-bearers of the past, whom they persecuted even unto death. Spiritualism has come to

lay the corner-stone of edifices where thought, intelligence, poetry, music, art, shall be promoted and elevated, not for selfish purposes, not for the uplifting of a single branch of religion, but for all humanity. This is what it has come for, the uplifting of all that is grand, noble, and beautiful in human life. It has come to make us feel that every child of earth is our brother or our sister, that we all belong to the same family. You look out upon the human races, you see men as black as night, and low down in the scale of intelligence. You call them savage, and so they are, and yet they are your younger brothers, and by and by, by means of the divine possibilities wrapped up in the soul-germ, they are going to be all that you are; yes, and much more, when they have had time enough. By and by you can extend to them the hand of fellowship and not be ashamed. If you think this is not so, when you are a few million years older than you are now I will meet you somewhere and say, as we look upon their developed condition, "Didn't I tell you so?" Out in the limitless future what is not yet accomplished for earth-children will be sometime, somewhere, and we shall live to behold it. Now we do the best work we can, and then we sit down and wish it had been better, and we feel something rising up within us which if we could have given expression to would have made our work better. In the future I know that I shall rise to a condition in which I can express the highest that I now feel uprising within me, and so shall it be with you all. You have not heard a thought this morning but a greater one rises up within you, only you cannot speak it. Well, you will tell it by and by to somebody. This is the

soul's power, and it shall be developed in God's time, in nature's time.

Can you think of the old-time heaven described to you in your childhood, and then sing "Heaven is my Home," without feeling that you would be homesick in such a heaven? In the place of this, Spiritualism tells you that you are going to have a home, a natural home, where the loved ones gone before will enfold you in their tender embraces, and your soul shall be satisfied. It tells you that death is a friend, who will lead you to this. You may not see the forty and four thousand perfect men, standing about the throne of God, nor those wonderful animals, nor those mystical rivers, but you will find something infinitely better,—home, a home like this of earth, only with fairer skies and greener fields, with sweeter flowers and purer streams. It will be our *home*. Do you say this is too material? Why, what are these flowers, but spirit manifesting itself in form? Is there anything unreasonable in the statement of facts? Facts are stubborn things, and I tell you this fact: That world is a natural one, as natural to the soul of man as this world is to his body; yes, and more so, because it is higher, it is more developed.

But somebody asks, "What are you going to do with all the wicked?" Going to take care of them, just as you ought to have done before you hung them; going to water them with the dew of sympathy, to warm them with the sunlight of love, to quicken them with the penetrating power of truth, until in the place of the desert waste will appear the fruitful garden, and their lives shall bud and blossom, and bear full harvests of

good. Instead of sending them to hell we are going to send them to school, and we are going to have good teachers for them. They will be under the law of love, but it will be discipline as well, and the discipline will be a process of education. Then we have to take care of the babies you do not know how to bring up. Doesn't it need a natural world for this? You cannot find anything between the two lids of the Bible that tells you whether the little soul whose life-boat floated away upon eternity's ocean before it had hardly touched the river of time, ever becomes anything but a blank page or not.

Spiritualism comes to tell you that Nature, who has taken your babe from you, knows how to care for it. You did not. You loved it well enough, but you did not understand its organism. You did not know how to live while you were clothing it with the mantle of your being; you did not know how to give this little soul the right kind of a starting-place, and so it broke from its moorings and drifted away. We have taken it up; we have cared for it and educated it. Such souls I see standing beside some of you this morning. They say, "I passed from earth a babe. This is my mother. She does not know I am a man, or a woman. Why? Because no religion ever taught it." These souls say: "I am waiting for my mother. She does not know me, but I shall be sure to know her, for I have been brought to see her every day since I went away, and when she comes, I shall introduce myself and make my claims." Did that message ever come to earth before? I answer: Never, until it was brought to you by Modern Spiritualism.

Yes, Spiritualism is a religion, and it will sweep on and on, cheering and uplifting the millions who, weighed down by care and woe, know not the future holds for them an answer to all their soul's requirements; that it will bring them out into the glad sunshine of the life eternal!

MODERN SPIRITUALISM: ITS PLAN AND PURPOSE.

A DISCOURSE DELIVERED BEFORE THE BOSTON SPIRITUAL TEMPLE
SOCIETY—MEETING IN BERKELEY HALL.



WE have said that Spiritualism has a place among the religions of the earth. Now we ask, What is the labor it has come to perform?—believing that man needs assistance and direction; that there are many errors to be corrected; that there are many pitfalls in the pathway of life that have proven to be stumbling-blocks in the pathway of progress. Many of these stumbling-blocks have been held as idols. It is hard for mankind to cut loose from these idols of the past, surrounded, as many of them are, by tender memories and associations. The man looks back to his childhood, and he sees his father and mother taking a book which, in all the sincerity and devotion of their hearts, they told him was the word of the living God; putting this book into his hands and sending him forth into the world, believing they had given him the only infallible guide to salvation that the world contained. He says, “That book was good enough for my good old father and mother—it is good enough for me.” It is hard to break away the shell of conservatism in which he wraps himself like a mantle. But it was in the home of such

that Modern Spiritualism first made its appearance, working through the child mediums of that home. You know how those parents knelt in prayer and besought God to remove the curse (as they felt it to be) from them. This work, then, was carried on in the home of prayerful believers in a religious system, to which they clung as earnestly as any among you to-day cling to the old-time theology that your parents taught you. Still that mighty power kept on as persistently as though it had work to do; as though it knew that the old-time associations, tender as they were, must be set aside that greater blessings might come to man—the blessings which the powers around and about him felt that he most needed. The world of spirit came in mighty power to that humble home, bringing the manifestations of their presence that we have since witnessed.

Fancy, for a moment, what must be the happiness of the human spirit emancipated from the bondage of the flesh. Can you think what that form of life is of which one of old said, “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive” of its glories? Yet these emancipated beings in their heavenly homes saw the needs of mankind, and they willingly left their mansions of light and journeyed earthward for the purpose of blessing humanity, and they began their work in earnest. Matter was handled in such a way that scientists were compelled to acknowledge that the law of gravitation was suspended or overcome by the action of a power of which they were entirely ignorant. Matter, no longer subject to the law of gravitation, seemed itself possessed of life and spirit, so perfectly did it respond to demands of the

unseen intelligences who controlled it. Scientists saw this power and knew not what to name it.

Theologians, even of to-day, say, "It is foolish to talk of spirits moving tables, making sounds, operating upon matter, entering a home and turning over things generally, belittling themselves to such an extent." Why, friends, do you never think that God is constantly expressing himself through matter? What are all the sights and sounds of the physical universe but the operation of spirit upon matter?

Now we ask, "What did the spirits come to Hydesville for?" Did they come simply to rouse the idle curiosity of the denizens of earth? Not at all. They came because there was need of their coming; because there were lessons to be taught that would enable men to live their lives aright. Their first work was to make humanity understand the possibility of intelligent intercourse between the two worlds; and, then, with knowledge, would come a realization that they could tell of the life beyond, so little known to dwellers in this material body. Not only did they bring a knowledge of immortality to the soul of man, but they brought healing to his body, healing diseases as no mortal physicians have ever been able to do. Jesus was a healer. Through the advent of Modern Spiritualism there has been a quickening of this old-time power; and not only does it remove disease, but it tells you what to eat, what to drink, how to order your lives in a way to promote the highest health of body and mind, and thus make it possible for future generations to be born in a more perfected stage of being. It teaches the science of life physical, as well as spiritual, and you learn to

know that, unless the body, which is the temple of the living God, is kept pure and undefiled, the spirit imprisoned therein cannot rise above the low level of gross habits and desires that bind it. You know that until you can regulate your own lives in a way to express only your higher, better selves, you cannot give your children the birthright that belongs to them? How is this work to be accomplished? We answer: largely through the school of mediumship. Mediumship is an educational institution for the transmission of knowledge from the higher spheres; it is the open door between those realms and your own, through which wisdom may descend to you. As a class, the mediums themselves are elevated by their mediumship. There may be some weak vessels among them, some whose naturally unbalanced condition partially unfits them for their work, — wholly unfits them, as individuals, to be models for you to follow, — yet, even through them, a work is done; if not for man, then for undeveloped spirits out of the body; and such mediumship as that, even, is a part of the universal plan of life.

These weak vessels are they who have not received from their ancestors the birthright of which we have spoken. By and by men are going to be born with brains fitted to grasp any problem, with an organism that seeks right methods of life as naturally as the plant seeks the light.

The time is not far distant when what is now known as public mediumship will, in a great measure, be done away with. Why? Because of the unfoldment of spiritual power in your own homes, your own lives.

Children will be born clairvoyant, clairaudient. There will be child-mediums in every home, coming more and more as humanity advances. Thus will this world of yours be brought into full communion with the spirit-world. I would not speak in terms that seem lacking in respect for public mediums; but when every soul is an altar for the fire of the spirit, when every home is a church, every father, mother and child a member thereof, where will be the necessity for the public address which to-day forms a vital part of the work.

The work of Spiritualism is without limit. We have crime to deal with, and the world has had it to deal with always. Our religion teaches that every soul must pay the penalty of his own transgressions—nobody is going to do it for him. If he sin he must bear the consequences—there is no shirking them; and it is also true that the sins and mistakes of the parents leave their impress upon the children. Why, all of you can look back and say, “I inherited this form of body, this habit of thought, from my mother, my father, or some more remote ancestors.” You can see that you are more what you were born than what you were educated to be; and so we say the way to remove crime is to cease to bring into the world children so imperfectly organized that they can hardly fail to fall before the first strong temptation. I believe that crime is going to be banished from the earth, because I believe—I know—there is coming to man an understanding of what the soul is, what the spirit is, what eternal life means. Then he will live wisely, as one who lives for eternity instead of the sensuous pleasures of a few brief years. Spiritualism teaches you that the consequences

of all your sins follow you into the life beyond. They are not washed away nor forgiven. You will have to stand face to face with your conscience, your higher self, and meet the condemnation of your own soul. What is the remedy? Why, this condition can be outlived and overcome by a life of integrity and purity, and conditions for such a life are going to be given you. When, under these conditions, you have earned rest and peace and joy, they will all be yours. Will not a full understanding, a thorough realization of this truth, stimulate men to put away evil from their earthly life, and to strive to rise to a nobler plane of thought and action?

It is the work of Spiritualism to overcome mental as well as physical diseases. It brings a power that will penetrate even the brick walls of the great lunatic asylums all over the land, filled with thousands of poor sufferers, whose misery only the pitying hearts of angels can fully understand. What affliction more terrible than insanity! A human being whose soul is held in bondage by its attachment to the body from which it cannot break away; the body whose nervous system, all unstrung, like the strings of a piano if they were hopelessly broken and tangled, can express the soul within only by discordant and agonizing sounds, is the saddest sight in the universe; and to this class, Spiritualism, and that alone, can bring a perfect cure, for it comes to enlighten and uplift the insane world of spirits, as well as mortals, to help the undeveloped souls who, having dropped their own material form, yet linger here, bringing their burdens to add to those, already too heavy, of sufferers in the mortal form.

All the years of his public mediumship, Jesus was busy dealing with undeveloped spirits that came too near the earthly plane, and so afflicted mortal sensitives. Somebody says: "This doctrine of the evil influence of undeveloped spirits is a terrible doctrine." Well, it is true. As we have said before, what a soul does not accomplish in one earthly pilgrimage it must in another, and that soul must begin where it left off, no matter how low down in the scale of life that may be. Such being the fact, such results as we see must follow.

Let Spiritualists have an understanding of this, and be willing to work even for the spirits in prison, and much of the cause of insanity and crime will be removed from earth. This work of removing crime and disease from the earth will take time. There are lessons to be taught; there are systems of labor to be evolved; but it will be done. Spiritualism has also come to do a work for woman, which no system of religion has yet done. Christianity has done more than any that preceded it, but it says, "If a woman wants knowledge, let her ask her husband," and it also says, "Wives, be obedient to your husbands." Spiritualism has come to place woman in her proper position as the companion and equal of man. Its first chosen instruments were little girls. The larger part of its mediums are women. What does this mean? It not only means that the fineness of her nature makes her responsive to the touch of the higher powers, but it also means that she is more in need of a helping hand than are you, my brother man. The time is approaching in which the wrongs of centuries are to be righted. Women of all classes are feel-

ing this. The Woman Suffrage movement, grand and glorious in the idea of equality that it embodies, is one expression of this feeling.

It is the work of Spiritualism to place woman on a plane of equality with man in every respect. When this is done, the foundation of true marriage will be laid in equality and fraternity, as well as love, and future generations will be born with capacities and tendencies for true spiritual growth far beyond what is possible under the present condition of things.

I want the mothers of the world uplifted. I want them to be free and independent citizens of the country they inhabit, and they are going to be by and by. Woman is going to be permitted to vote; she is going to have a voice in the affairs of the nation; she is going to help to manage its business — not because she thinks she can do it better than her brother man, but because he ought not to do it alone. It is as true now as it was in the days of Adam, that “it is not good for man to be alone.” Men readily comprehend this in some respects, but only partially. Women, looking upon this nation, this republic, upon the work that man has done, have seen that it is not good for man to be alone, and they say, “We are coming to help do this work; make way for us.” All over the earth the women are crying, “Give us our rightful position as equal companions and co-workers with man in public and in private life; give us the rights to which, as mothers of the race, nature entitles us.” This position Spiritualism has come to give them; nor does its work of establishing equal rights cease with securing them for woman — it demands them for the downtrodden and oppressed of both sexes.

What is the meaning of all the agitation in the world of labor? It is Justice calling in thunder tones for the recognition of the equal rights of humanity. It is not woman's rights, but equal rights, that are demanded. To inaugurate the reign of equal rights—to extend the empire of Justice, Knowledge, and Truth upon earth—is the work of Spiritualism to-day.

THE REALITIES OF THE SPIRIT-WORLD.

DISCOURSE DELIVERED BY SPIRIT THEODORE PARKER,
AT BERKELEY HALL.



I COME to you as an individual spirit, wishing to address you as such as best I can, through one whose organism has not responded to me hitherto, though I have addressed you through other instruments. The world of spiritual beings or spirits is at work for mankind through the development of what is known as Modern Spiritualism, and I wish to speak a word wherever it is possible for me to do so. I am limited, and in a measure withheld from exhibiting those individual characteristics that would be satisfactory to you. Still the principles which I shall enunciate may be accepted by some as the utterance of the individual.

I am led out into the infinite realm of thought by your questions. In that realm I will attempt to answer some of them — not all.

You ask if the individual controlling spirit knows anything of planetary spirits, or others outside of earthly spirits.

In answering this, I shall speak very much as I have spoken in reference to the God-idea. I shall give you nothing except what I know by personal experience and observation. Therefore, in regard to this question, I must say that I am limited to my actual experi-

ence and observations in those spheres of existence into which I, as a spirit, have entered. In such, I have found, as you find here, a vast variety of thought and expressions of thought; I have found a vast variety of intelligences who are making their way from plane to plane, or what you call spheres of existence, and giving their experiences and their thoughts.

We find a class of spirits that pass us, as you might say, winging their way earthward, who, in passing through the spheres of existence that belong to us, give us their experiences. This knowledge which is gained by the testimony of others is not the knowledge of which I spoke in the beginning — that of actual personal experience.

The world spiritual is divided and subdivided; and the world material expresses also like divisions and subdivisions. From the lower or lesser are continually rising emanations to the higher; emanations from the higher to the lower are ever descending. Spiritual beings are continually ascending or descending upon these currents, so that in reality, as we look upon it, there seems to us to be but one world, and that filling the infinite realms of space. All these divisions are but chapters or parts of the same.

If you were to analyze the atmosphere of this room, you would find that part near the floor very different from that near the ceiling, the intermediate portion filled with poisonous gases, passing upward and outward until it mingles again with the external air, and, lightened and purified, passes onward, until, at last, it attains to etherealized conditions, and becomes an atmosphere too refined for man in his present condition

to live in. So, in the world of spirit, the spiritual atmosphere becomes purer and more refined the higher we ascend, and spiritual beings must live in the atmosphere to which they are adapted. They cannot rise from a lower to a higher until, by virtue of preparation, they have acquired a fitness, an adaptation, that is suited to that which lies beyond.

At death spirits enter one or another of the many conditions that belong to spirits who have outgrown the mortal. The condition they enter depends, in part, upon what the earthly life or career of the individual has been, but more upon the degree of life, in its purification, as to the elements or properties thereof.

Therefore we say again in as positive a manner as we have before, it is not belief in gods, one or many, that fits a man, as a spirit, to inhabit the higher spheres in spirit-life; it is not belief in gods, one or many, nor is it any kind of what you denominate religious belief that prepares a man to enter into the higher spheres of life in the spirit-world. Therefore we say that religious belief is not a necessary preparation for enjoyment and advancement in the life to come. A man may believe in a god with one head, or a god with three heads, or he may believe in no god at all; yet if he is a moral man, a good man, in reality a truly religious man — which is to do good — then he is fitted for the higher walks in life, and he lives upon a high plane wherever you may find him — in the world of matter or the world of spirit.

Now let us look upon the realities of the spirit-world, for it is to those I would direct your attention to-day. Of these I speak as a spirit who is addressing you as

best he may through the instrumentality of this organism. As I look upon your faces to-day I see that you are seekers after truth, seekers after light and wisdom, and that it is in pursuit of these as a principle that you are here to-day.

There may be some among you who are still holding to idols in reference to God and the ideas thereof; but they have the knowledge that the door of the spirit-world is open; that through the instrumentality of mediumship, through sensitive organisms, spirits return to tell of what lies beyond your vision, and we say to such that there are many spirits who, when here, have believed in God or in gods, have worshiped at his altars, have bowed before his throne, have trembled at his hell and shuddered at his devil, who, on entering the spirit-world, have found themselves unable to pass even through the first stratum thereof. Now what is the reason for this? Because they were not, in reality, spiritually minded. Their religion was the outgrowth of selfishness and fear. Such knowledge as they have gained, such development as they have attained, has not fitted them for the higher life, has not taught them to control matter or spirit.

In this first stratum of the spirit-world are the greatest obstacles that the spirit has to encounter and overcome in its passage to the land beyond. What are these obstacles? They consist of a world as real as this, filled with all manner of intelligent beings who have passed out of the body, but are still — unresurrected, shall I say? They are still earth-bound, they are still held in the bondage of darkness, in superstition, in all they carried with them as an inheritance to the world

which lies beyond the boundary-line known as death. The critics of Modern Spiritualism say: "Here is the danger in communing with the spirit-world." They raise the cry of diabolism, and warn men to have nothing to do with Spiritualism, lest they should come in contact with "evil spirits." They may say that I am this morning admitting that all around the world is this class of spirits. I answer: Very well; but stop at this point a moment, and know this — that progression awaiteth every one; so, bad as the outlook is, it is better than hell.

While we, as returning spirits, tell you of the reality of things beyond, it behooves you, as believers who receive this message of life, to work as though you understood it, and, understanding it, to bring your lives up to the level of your philosophy.

Now, then, we say the spirit finds in the first place the obstacles of this condition to overcome; many are able to rise above these immediately. In the sphere adjacent to this are those whom Nature leads triumphantly above this first condition. No obstacle can impede their progress, because of their native purity. They are spirits so pure in essence and substance that the lower condition has no power to hold them. Use your electric light and the light of your gas-jets as an illustration. The first goes far above, and reaches far beyond, until it dims the light of the other. So it is with the light of the spirit that belongs to those who are children of Nature — children pure in spirit, who pass without the taint of earth upon them. In this second sphere, or belt, you will find the pure in spirit and yet undeveloped. Among them are your children

and your American Indians — those undeveloped, yet purely natural children of the earth. These already belong to the first really spiritual sphere that invests your earth. They are able to come and go freely, by virtue of the purity of the elements of which they are composed.

Those who inhabit the first stratum of which I have spoken are those in whose composition there is a mingling of elements. They have lost the purity of the child, if they had received it by inheritance — though there are some who, by the law of generation, have not received it — they have lost it by false modes of life in the years of their earthly existence. These years may have been few or many, it matters not. In many instances they have been few, yet sufficient to give the color and the contamination of the false life which men are living to-day. All this is to be outlived.

And this condition, this darkness that the spirit brings with it, this is hell — all the hell that is known; and it is enough. Out of this hell, or these hells, men are lifted by these cleaner hands, these kindly souls, these ministering spirits, that come to you in the simplicity of children, or are children in reality. This is a part, but only a part, of the work of the soul on its passage, until it passes from the outer circles or spheres of our own earth, and reaches the circle in infinite space that belongs to worlds — not this world alone, but other worlds — and enters the kingdom of life, and, some would say, the home of God. When we look upon this outer, infinite circle of life understandingly, we must realize that our earth is only one of an innumerable host of worlds, worlds that are inhabitable, or

working outward to that condition; worlds that developed to that condition long before this, our earth, was a suitable dwelling-place for man. Our world, with its millions of human beings, is only one of countless worlds that are inhabited. Therefore we must believe that there are spiritual beings not in the realms of infinite or spiritual space, who have come from these inhabited worlds. Now you may ask, can they and we, as spiritual beings, know each other? That depends upon our knowledge and experience. Can you talk with a Frenchman? Can you hold converse with a German? Can you talk with an Italian? Can you sustain a conversation with one of your native Americans? Not unless you speak their language, or they yours.

But some will inquire, "It is not so in the spirit-world, is it?" I answer, the spirit-world is made up of men, beings coming to it from this and other material worlds—and these beings are limited in a measure to like conditions, until they have progressed out of them. I believe there are spirits—I *know* such—who can hold intelligent conversation, (shall I call it conversation?) and understand each other, without the expression or outer manifestation of thought called language. You are learning some of the primary lessons in this school language when you sit down and simply think, and the one with whom you would communicate receives your thought. This is done, sometimes, without regard to space or distance. When you have experimented long enough you will understand how it is that an intelligence in the world of spirit can impress his thought upon a subject of earth. To do this requires

time, patience, and experience. Now, fancy for a single moment two spiritual beings who have passed centuries in the spirit-world, who have in reality laid aside as many bodies, who have died, if you so express it, as you have died, several times. You old men, you men in middle life, you have laid aside several bodies. By and by another death will disrobe you, not gradually, but seemingly all at once, of one more body, and your friends will say of you, "He is dead," and the earthly part of your present existence will be dead. But out of this death comes the resurrection to the higher life of the spirit. Out of all the deaths you have known have come higher conditions; for with age comes the wisdom of experience. So in like manner we pass from one condition to another in the spirit-world; we rise from one sphere of existence to another, leaving behind the mantle or garment which has served us in the spheres we are leaving as your body serves you here. This change you may call death if it please you; it is simply leaving behind that which you have outgrown, and for which you have no more use.

So, having passed through one condition after another, these two spiritual beings of whom I was speaking, meet each other after their centuries of experience, after having passed through all these changes that have etherealized the body, and have arrived at that completeness that experience brings to the soul of man. Do you think they need to speak with words, or that language, as we understand it, is needed for the expression of their thought? Not at all. Then out into this condition come at last the souls of men. So you see that this human life, which you sometimes call Infinite

Life or life immortal, may come from the planet earth, or from planets far in space. It may come from the planet Jupiter or the planet Mars, or from those for which you know no name, who are strangers to your system. But come it from whence it may, it is life, manifest life, giving expression to thought, to thought untrammelled by language, thought infinite, thought eternal, the power of which you dimly feel to-day. Now you find the expression of your thought limited by language, just as I find myself trammelled and limited to-day when I speak upon this theme, which is infinite in its grandeur and god-like in its proportions. In giving expression thereto in the limitations of this hour I can only say that in this manner it is possible for souls to speak with souls, from whatever part of the universe they may come. Then, knowing and feeling how infinitely small a part of this great universe is this world of ours, must make man modest in his self-assertings; and the more he learns of the infinitude of space, of the wondrous majesty of the whole creation, the less liable is he to make mighty claims for himself or the earth-planet which is his birth-place, and from which he is evolved.

Realizing that we are but a drop in the great ocean of life, then do we look into every human face, and say, My brother, my sister; then do we look out into the vastness of space, and say only this, My world, my universe, my Creator, my God.

As children of the living, as children of nature, as children of the universe, let us no longer quarrel one with another. Believe God one or many, believe Jesus of Nazareth as the only one blessed with the sonship of

the Infinite, say of him that he is the only Son of God, if it satisfies you; but looking into every human face, looking into the face of every Mary mother of earth, looking into the face of your child, looking into the faces of the great and good of earth, seeing there manifest the spirit of truth, and love, and wisdom, which are attributes of God, say you not then, with a soul full of love, "Are we not children of the same father? children of the same parent?"

When this truth enters the heart, it makes life broader and brighter; it makes men kindly disposed one toward another; it brings the Kingdom of Heaven to earth. And he who looks upon human life to-day, seeing the sorrows and difficulties that beset it, hearing the discords and inharmonies that afflict it, yet feeling the great heart of love and sympathy beating within him as he calls every man his brother—he is the true Christian, the true worshiper. Outside of this, where there is quarreling, contention, bitterness, envy, malice, selfishness, there is no religion, no matter what forms or modes of worship may be adopted.

While it is impossible for me to take up the many themes that have been suggested by my hearers to-day, I must speak for a moment of the children and the question that has been presented in regard to them: I must speak for the children—for the children are the coming men and women of the world. You ask me why it is that there is at present and everywhere such a condition of inharmony and discord among those who are known by the name of "Young America." Before answering this I ask those who condemn the children of to-day to go back to the old tradition of Cain and

Abel; go back six thousand years and read the story, as told in the Old Testament, of how the first family that was created became so corrupt that the first brother was the murderer of the second. It may seem to us that our children are very far out of the way, but we must take the position now that we always have — that is, that we are progressive beings, and the children of the present age are the best that have yet been created. Bad enough, they may be, but still the most perfected that the world has yet known. We are progressive beings, and so, although there is much that is disturbing, there is no reason for fear or discouragement.

Do not despair of your boys; do not be discouraged. They may seem full of mischief to-day, may cause you perplexity and trouble, but by and by you may find that these boys so full of life and energy have grown to be the pride and hope of your life, that the irrepressible energy of their being is asserting itself in grand and noble ways, and they have become a power in the world. It is these strong natures, and not the "goody-goodies," who make their mark in life. This healthy activity will sometimes seem to work mischief in the flush of childhood, as it bubbles up and runs over, but by and by the stream goes to work, and the strong life creates an impress upon the life of the world.

It is impossible for me to speak at length upon this topic, but I want to say this: Live as you should live, and you will have no occasion to be troubled about your children. If your children go to the bad, I ask you to look close into your own lives until you have found the cause thereof, going back to pre-natal condi-

tions, if need be. Men and women who live pure, true, spiritual lives, will, in the first place, generate spiritually-minded children, and these children having continually before them examples of upright living, it will be impossible for them to become vile and worthless. But if the Spiritualist is only half a one, — is a coward who dare not live the truth he acknowledges, — his children will not only be cowards like him, but may end in manifesting still more unlovely attributes. Parents cannot justly blame the child for being what, under inharmoonious pre-natal conditions, they themselves have made it. We look out into the future and we see our children filling the places of the men and women of to-day. Hence we say again, let the activity of childhood and youth express itself. If your own lives are and have been what they should be, you have no cause for anxiety. The things that trouble you will correct themselves in a little time.

I have on this occasion but taken you a little way out into a spiritual experience which is wide ; have carried you as far as possible for me to do into the realm of spirit ; have tried to answer some of your questions. I have shown you some of the difficulties that lie in the way of returning spirits ; have told you that what you call death is only one of the changes of life, — life infinite and eternal, — and through these changes, one by one, you will be led by helping hands, by the ministrations of those whom you call angels, but who are your brothers, being, like yourselves, children of the Living Good, called God.

ADDRESS

DELIVERED AT A MEETING IN OBSERVANCE OF THE FORTY-FIRST
ANNIVERSARY OF THE ADVENT OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM,
IN BERKELEY HALL, BOSTON, MARCH 31, 1889.



THROUGHOUT all Christendom, friends, the practice of celebrating the birth of Christ prevails, and all over the world a Christmas day is celebrated. Before the Christian era, among old-time oriental religionists, those who worshiped the sun, were held yearly festivals in spirit like the modern Christmas. These peoples, seeing in a measure the wonders of the material universe, and especially adoring the sun, worshiped it as the highest expression of force and power of which they had any knowledge. So on through Greek and Roman Mythology, through long ages of symbolism and of mysticism, until at last we come to times comparatively modern, and have the Christmas of this era.

We at this time — we Spiritualists — are stopping to celebrate the saving power of *Truth*, born among the sons of men. In olden times it was said: “He shall be called Jesus, the Christ, because he shall save the people from their sins.” We say of truth — especially that form of truth given to you in Modern Spiritualism — it shall be called your Christ, as it shall save its people from their sins. Sin is the transgression of the law, and the violation of the law brings offence. And that

knowledge or wisdom, transmitted by the arisen angels, as you term them, or spirits, unto the children of earth, leading them upward, teaching those lessons which shall emancipate from the thralldom of ignorance and superstition, and thus saving from error, will save from the consequences of error. Saving from the commission of sin is the only true way of saving from the results of sin. Therefore we say to you, as friends, this morning, "A Merry Christmas!" for this day is the Christmas of Spiritualism. It is the advent of its saving power that we herald to-day. It is the Anniversary of Truth, whose steady march is now, has been, and ever will be, onward and upward. Yet sometimes it seems to gain an impetus, to make progress so remarkable, so different from that which has preceded it, as to mark that time as a special period. The advent of Spiritualism is an era in the progress of truth, which with joy we are celebrating this morning. It is forty-one years ago since a little home was made sacred by the advent of those manifestations and phenomena which have aroused the attention and awakened the inquiry of the masses of mankind, until our earth is shaken with the sound which has sped almost from pole to pole.

In olden times it was said: "Every knee shall bow and every tongue proclaim His mighty name." Truth, though it find expression in varying forms, through various personalities, is ever the same. All knees do not yet bow, nor do we ask that they should. All tongues proclaim, whether they will or not. By some this truth is borne as a messenger of good tidings; by others as a persecutor; but even our enemies are made to serve the higher purpose of good.

We have not time this morning to review the whole history of these wonderful forty-one years; we can only glance at a little of it. We are called Spiritualists. It is a name given to us because we talked so much of the spirit, of spirits. We became Spiritualists by an adherence to this one form of truth. In the old-time theology it was said that God was a triune being. He was God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit. In the latter-day Christianity it seems almost as if God the Father were lost in the worship, adoration, and exaltation of the Son. We hear so much of Jesus, his sufferings, his mission as a mediator between God and man, that in this exaltation of the second person of the Trinity the Creator seems almost to have been lost sight of.

We as Spiritualists talk not so much of *God* the spirit as of men and women the spirits — of whom we can speak with knowledge and understanding. We talk not of the *trinity* of the Godhead, but of the *unity* of the Godhead: of the entirety of this universe as parts of the great whole, full of throbbing hearts and pulsating lives. All men, all women, all souls are the children of God, and consequently spirits immortal.

All around us — its lower chambers so near to earth they seem a part of it — lies the world of spirits, a world of beauty and light, full of energy and activity, inhabited by souls arisen, enfranchised of clay; a world so near to this there seems almost no line of division between them; yet this world was unknown until discovered, we might say, from our standpoint, incidentally, almost accidentally, forty-one years ago, when was established the line of telegraphic communication with

this unseen realm, through the mediumship of children, of whom perhaps some of you say now: "The least said of them, the better." Our answer to that is: Truth is imperishable, deathless; its destroyer has never yet come upon the face of the earth.

Spiritualism is born. We are here to celebrate its birthday. There is no enemy who can strike it a fatal blow. While we have knowledge which rests upon the eternal foundation of living truth we need fear no foe from without, no traitor from within. That such should arise is no new experience in the history of progress; it has ever been so all along the pathway of life. As we know, some are more capable of honor and nobility than others; they can walk more firmly among the pitfalls of the world; but none are perfect, none so wholly fallen and degraded that they may not sometime, somewhere, rise from their low estate and pass up higher; and Spiritualism has come to lead them up. Yes, even its traducers and betrayers must, at last, be saved by the very power they now defame.

Spiritualism came to man in answer to his need, and when he was in condition to have that need answered. Before its advent, the most important problem of human life was unanswered. No religious system upon earth at the present time affords any answer to the question: "If a man die, shall he live again?" — any evidence in proof of its assertions as to the character and conditions of man after the death of the body. In the advent of Modern Spiritualism, that all-important question was answered. Before that was given, only hope, faith — not knowledge — was here. We are willing to concede to any system of faith all the good it may embody, but

we do say that the great question of man's immortality can be answered only by the demonstrations of Spiritualism. Except for its revelations, the land beyond the tomb would still have remained "the dark unknown," and the entrance into it still have been "the leap in the dark."

Faith's taper was too dim to light the shadows of the grave. Heaven itself, as it was pictured, where the sole occupation was chanting the praise of God, was not a very alluring spot to poor, hungry human hearts, or active human brains. To enjoy the life there humanity would need become unlike any creation that has ever been known. To human hope, human love, human aspiration, Spiritualism came to bring its glad tidings; and the proofs of its divine authority do not rest with one medium, one household, one family, one State. They have been found, they *are* found all over the world, giving evidence of its truth. And you each can (and do) prove it for yourself. No matter who says it is false, thank God your knowledge is your own, and none can take it from you. Almost it seems to us as if the spirit of Infinite Wisdom had opened the Bible of Truth, and not waiting for priest or church to carry it forth in their hands, has poured its revelation freely, gently as falls the evening upon the lives of humanity.

Your minister did not tell you of it. Your Bible did not tell you of it. It came in no voice save the voice of the household Angel of Love. It whispered to your soul when no human being intruded upon your solitude.

Are there any here who do not know this for themselves? who do not believe the truths we proclaim? Does your faith satisfy you? Where are your so-called

dead? You answer, "We hope for the best; we hope they are in heaven, with Jesus." You *hope*, but you do not *know*. We have something better than that. We *know*; we do not hope! We do not urge you to accept the food we proffer you until you are hungry for it. We know you cannot take it until you are ready for it, but all about are your loved ones, walking silently and unseen of you; and by and by the light will come, and you will realize their presence. When you entered this door, a spirit came with you. It may be your father, it may be your mother, your sister, your brother, your daughter, your son. They look up into your faces wondering if a word will be said that will open your understanding; they wonder if the day will come when they can say: "All hail! all hail! for the stone has been rolled away from our tomb. We are not dead. We are not sleeping. We are with you every day and every hour." This is the message of Spiritualism. This is the message of truth.

In the forty-one years whose close we celebrate to-day, there has been more advancement in the realm of religious thought than for centuries before. There have come broader conceptions of God, brighter pictures of the future life. Even in the Orthodox churches there has been progress toward freedom. What has caused this change, this growth? You know what the condition of the world was when Christendom meant Catholicism. Protestantism was the breaking of many fetters, but it had the teachings of John Calvin and others like him. Who dared think for himself? If a Thomas Paine wrote, who, fifty years ago even, dared to read his writings? I tell you, friends, with the

advent of Modern Spiritualism, and not before, came freedom of thought, giving man a right to his own soul and conscience.

In its forty-one years, Spiritualism has done more than has been done in hundreds of years before. When it first came it awakened much inquiry among professional men, judges, lawyers, ministers inquiring as to its claims. Now there are many who do not seem to consider it of much account. Many ministers deny its divine origin, and, like Joseph Cook, say it is "Diabolism." Such a conclusion as that could be drawn only by a man profoundly ignorant of its phenomena and philosophy, no matter how much learning he may have in other and less important directions. A man who says Spiritualism is "Diabolism" is grossly ignorant of what he speaks, or profoundly prejudiced — one or the other.

In its forty-one years of life, Modern Spiritualism has numbered among its followers some of the greatest minds of the age — scientists, philosophers, poets, thinkers of all grades and conditions of life. Some of the best ministers have been called forth from their pulpits to preach this new gospel; but, best of all, it has come a ministering angel of peace and love into humble homes; by lowly firesides it has spoken its words of comfort; it has bound up the broken heart and given joy to the despairing. It welcomes to its embrace the peasant as gladly as it does the king. The humblest mother whose tears fall upon care-worn cheeks and toil-hardened hands, is as fondly cherished as the queen upon her throne. It has whispered to the little child just able to talk, and the child has looked

up in your face and told you of the spirit-friends it saw around, not knowing the difference between them and mortals. You have seen this. Could there be greater proof of the reality of Spiritualism?

The strength of Spiritualism, while it is full of power to convince the intellect, yet lies, to a great extent, in the heart of the world. You see people all around scorning it, refusing to investigate its claims, afraid of it because it is unfashionable, feeling in their hours of prosperity no need of it. But let trouble come; let death enter the home and bear away their dearest and best. What then? Where do they go for consolation? They may go to the church, but they will not find it there. The world can tell them nothing that can lift the weight of woe from their hearts. You see these sorrowing souls. In your compassion for them you may tell them of a place where they can hear from their lost ones, and some of them—not too much ashamed or afraid to go among those terrible Spiritualists (*you are* terrible; you have been told so times enough)—will go to some medium, and their questions are answered, and before, almost, they are aware, they too, have become Spiritualists. And so the work goes on.

You remember the story of Saul and the Woman of Endor. You know how Saul ordered the destruction of those who had “familiar spirits,” but when he got into trouble at once began to look to one of those poor mediums to help him out. Not much different from people in the modern days.

Some one said to him: “Well, you have killed nearly all of them, but there is one left in Endor. Let us put on disguises and go and consult her”; and in this

kingly way he went into the presence of the Woman of Endor and said he wanted to consult with Samuel. Samuel — who was Samuel? He was an older medium that Saul knew about before; Samuel was dead, but somehow it was in Saul's mind that he might help him. But the woman penetrated his disguise and said: "Why seekest thou to destroy me?" She was a spirit medium, you know; at last, yielding to Saul's importunities, she called, and Samuel appeared, a materialized spirit. By this we learn that Spiritualism is more than forty-one years old. This ancient Woman of Endor, this materializing medium, came long before the days of Jesus, the great Nazarene medium. Jesus was surrounded by a band of wise spirits, who prepared conditions for his coming. We are told of this by the old-time writers, who call that preparation the "Immaculate Conception" — a spirit coming to earth, being incarnated in matter. These old symbolic writers tell you what we spirits have so often told you, that all especially prepared to be leaders of the race in spiritual development are the subjects of peculiar spiritual environment even before their birth, which prepares the way for their coming. This was true of Jesus, and he grew up and went forth into the world, working signs and wonders. Are you his followers? Show me some signs, for he said that his disciples should do even greater things than he did.

Signs and wonders were the accompaniment of Ancient, as they are of Modern, Spiritualism. We point to our mediums and we say: "There are our Marys, our Marthas, our Johns, our Pauls, our Peters. These have brought back your dead; or, rather, they have

brought you where you can see them. They have healed the sick — they have shown signs and wonders.” Where, then, is the difference between Ancient and Modern Spiritualism, except in degree?

Now, in closing, we will briefly look over the past year — a year, it seems to us, full of meaning to Spiritualists. It seems as if there had been an especial effort on the part of the enemies of truth, in every direction, to injure the cause as much as possible. Such a degree of enmity has been brought to bear upon it that the influence must be felt in a measure. Some say that it is the denial of the Fox sisters; some, the influence of Catholicism; some say both. That an enemy has been at work no one will deny. Nevertheless, we know that this, as well as everything else, will be used to serve the purpose of the higher. That vessels of clay which once held the waters of truth have been broken by the wayside is sad for the vessels themselves, but we know that by and by even for them will be found healing and cleansing in the bright fountain of truth immortal. { Sometime, somewhere, this comes to all, and no power of evil can change the plan of the Infinite.

The grand old law which makes apparent evil subservient to good has done so in this case, and we see it even now. In no year since its advent has Modern Spiritualism grown as it has this year. It has grown, it has spread. It is taking hold upon the lives of the people. It is entering into their lives, making them grander, nobler, better.

Our enemies have been at work in legislative halls seeking to pass enactments which, if they became laws, would close our places of worship and perhaps imprison

our mediums ; but still we feel that no persecution that may come can have any ultimate effect except to bring larger liberty to all. So, we say, whatever may be the temporary outcome, the permanent result will be progress, growth, and development.

Hearts have been made glad and lives happy by the power of Spiritualism in this last year. Graves have been open to those who were heart-broken, and the dead have walked forth into many homes, and have testified : “ We are here ; we live, and we love you to-day as much, yea more, than we could when we were in the mortal form.”

Yes, Spiritualism is spreading ; it is taking hold upon the thought of the people to-day. It is entering into the literature of the period. It is doing the work which I believe the highest Power above us intended should be done. I don't believe it was God's intention to make another “ism,” another Church, or another great body of religionists, as much as it was to spiritualize those already here.

Before another forty years have passed, the fundamental principles of Spiritualism will have become so incorporated into the system of Christianity — or rather they will be so understood, they *are* there now — that people will forget they were ever anything else but Spiritualists. They will turn to their Bible, that you know is replete with Spiritualism, and say, “ Here it is ! here it is ! Peter was a trance medium ; John was a seer ; James was another ” ; and you can answer : “ We told you so forty years ago ! ”

So the baby Spiritualism born in the past
To a stalwart man has grown at last.

Forty-one years old on this natal day,
And strong in its mighty power to sway
The souls of men all over the earth.
So with songs of rejoicing we hail the birth
Of this wondrous power, and follow it down
Till it wears on its head a victor's crown,
A crown of rejoicing, pure and white,
Brought from the world of eternal light !

ANSWERS TO QUESTIONS.

Question. — Andrew Jackson Davis, on whom has rested such a marvelous power of inspiration, who is, indeed, a wonderful seer of the nineteenth century, describes the remarkable beauty of a sunset in the spirit-land. W. J. Colville, one of the children of this latter-day light, himself one of the most marked and wonderful manifestations of spirit power known in this century, when asked to give a poem on that subject, said, "There is no sunset in the spirit-land."

Answer. — You ask, in reference to the above, Which is correct? We answer: Both are correct. When a lover of the beautiful describes to you in glowing terms the beauty of an earthly sunset; when he tells you that the heavens glow with gold and crimson radiance, as if painted by the hand of a Divine Artist, you know that he tells what is true. When the scientist tells you that in reality the sun never sets, you know that he, too, speaks truth. In the same way we look upon what seems, at the first glance, two contradictory statements of the sunset in the spirit-land, and say they are both correct. There is a central, a spiritual sun, governing its system of spiritual worlds, as much as there is a central sun around which your world and its kindred planets revolve. Each earthly sun and star and planet has its spiritual counterpart adjusted in relation to each other, similar to the suns, stars, and planets of the physical universe, and the same expressions in regard to the sunset are equally applicable to both. There-

fore when one privileged to behold the glories of the spirit-land describes the wonderful beauty of the sunset, he describes what is seen by those to whom the beauty of that land is revealed. When another, equally inspired, tells you there is no sunset, he is stating what is a truth as much as if he were speaking of your material world; each expressing different sides of the same truth as clearly as the limitations of language will permit them to do.

Question. — Where is the seat or center of the soul?

Answer. — On this question there is a difference of opinion among spirits as well as mortals. Soul and body are so closely related, the conditions of one depend so much upon the conditions of the other, and the subtle thread which connects them is so easily broken, it is almost impossible for scientists on either side of life to point accurately and positively to the central point of their union. Some say in the brain. Others say otherwise. But I think it is generally conceded by spirits who have watched the final dissolution of the union of soul and body after death, that it is at the brain that the last connection is broken. If so, admitting that there is any special seat of the soul, is it not rational to conclude that it is at this point which holds with greatest tenacity to the union existing between spirit and matter, this point at which that union is last broken? From the fact that sudden death is the result of injury to some parts of the body, we know that the connection between body and spirit is extremely subtle, and the precise point at which it is strongest is very hard to determine. We may touch the heart of man, and we find in an instant the chord of life is severed; but, as we have said before, there is a lingering of the forces at a point in the brain, and from this point the final separation is made. You will also find that as the soul is preparing to withdraw from the body, the loss of vital power or heat begins with the lower

extremities, gradually passing upward, until at last, as we have said, it leaves the brain, and soul and body are disconnected.

Question. — What progress will man make in atmospheric navigation ?

Answer. — Very little at present, but in the future we believe there will be inventions which will, in a great measure, obviate the difficulties in the way of atmospheric navigation which at present it is impossible to surmount. So we believe the time will come when the earth's atmosphere will be as navigable as its oceans are to-day. Such progress as this is in the order of man's development; and to anticipate it is neither unreasonable nor visionary. Reviewing the progress that has been made in the last hundred years, it is so wonderful we can scarcely realize so much has been accomplished. Considering what has already been accomplished, we may well believe that man will go on acquiring ascendancy over the elements that surround him, until at last, in the not very remote future, he will in reality be monarch of all he surveys. Overcoming these conditions, he will be able to overcome much that we to-day denominate evil, and the earth will witness a wonderful unfoldment of soul-life, beautiful beyond expression, because emanating from a source that is innately divine and forever beautiful.

Looking upon the universe in its wonderful beauty and entirety, we believe in such a source, and, knowing no better name for it, we call it God. Where there is so much manifest wisdom, so much manifest intelligence, so much that is divine, there must be a central source of this divine power, call it by whatsoever name you will—it matters not. We are not to conclude that it is a being like ourselves; but as we infer there is a central source of life because life is, so we infer there is a central source of mind

because mind is, and we call it Infinite Mind, the great source of life and power, the *God* of the universe.

Question. — To whom should we pray ?

Answer. — Why, pray to those you need to assist you, every time. In an invocation some may wonder to whom we address our prayers — if it is to some unknown being that we pray. No; we pray to those whom we do know, intelligences higher than ourselves, yet whom we know are near. We surround our medium, bringing her all the light we may, looking for guidance and assistance from spirits higher and wiser than ourselves. And it is well for man to look to something higher than himself. If you ask a question for more information, more light, you are praying for more light; and that that prayer may be answered, you should address a power high enough in intelligence to give answer to that prayer; otherwise your prayer will return to you unanswered, as do many prayers to-day — unanswered and useless. How many people to-day are asking God to do something for them that he meant they should do for themselves. Neither God nor angels will do your work for you; but, doing the best you can to work out your own salvation, it is right for you to look for aid and direction to spiritual beings higher than yourself, spirits of just men made perfect, angels who are messengers of “the Most High”; these are commissioned to aid and strengthen you, and in communing with them something of the light and power of their lives will flow into your own.

We look upon the way in which men often pray, and really, if it were not so sad it would be amusing. Man goes to work and tells God all that is going on, and asks him to mend matters. At the same time he will tell you that he believes God knows everything, and in infinite wisdom doeth all things well.

If God is infinite in wisdom, goodness, and power, then

the evils that now exist will be removed in his own time, which will be the right time. In the meantime it is our duty and our privilege to go onward and upward, uplifting our own souls as far as it is possible for us to do, by and through the power of love, will, intelligence, and aspiration, and then, when we can do no more for ourselves, we have a right to ask aid of those about us who are higher and stronger than ourselves; for in this way, by these means, does God answer prayer. I believe such prayer as this never goes forth in vain. We may not always feel the response at once, but it will surely come to our weary, aspiring souls, as gently and imperceptibly, it may be, as the dew from heaven, but bringing with it the quickening power of the life immortal.

Question. — Why don't Jesus come and speak to us?

Answer. — We think of those who to-day are addressing "the throne of grace," as they call it, in his name, and then of "the man of Galilee," who walked the earth as you are walking it to-day, a man far in advance of his age, Son of God indeed, by virtue of the light that was in him, but a man of our human race who, while doing all the good he could, yet had the limitations of our common humanity upon him, and therefore he did not heal all the sick; he did not lift the heavy burden from all weary souls; he did not enter all humble homes. He tasted the bitterness of human life; at times he also tasted its sweetness. He felt for his brother-man as not all his followers have been able to do, and in the history of his life, his death, and his teachings there are expressions of eternal fundamental truths, which, perverted and misunderstood as they have been, are, in the spiritual light of this nineteenth century, coming to be understood as they have never been before. As man becomes spiritualized, he finds in all truth its saving power, which develops within his soul as fast as its divine

principles spring up therein, and cause it to unfold in beauty.

As the life of Jesus expressed and illustrated the power of truth, so his death was the necessary consummation of his life, inasmuch as only by some terrible act like that of the crucifixion, would that life have been made prominent enough to be seen down the centuries. Now Jesus was not alone in this. In all ages men have suffered and died for truth, and by such sufferings, such deaths, has the progress of truth been advanced. This brings me to the thought I would like to express in answer to the inquiry made in regard to recent agitations and disturbances, disclosures, and discussions in regard to "materializing mediums," séances, etc.

As a spirit, I know that personation, transfiguration, materialization, are all true; they are facts that show the glorious triumph of mind over matter, of soul over what is called substance. When these manifestations are rudely interrupted, when their necessary conditions are abruptly broken by any one, — Spiritualists or not, — the result cannot fail to be most disastrous to the medium, in some cases imperiling life itself, if not destroying it. In all cases where this class of phenomena is occurring, whether it be personation, transfiguration or materialization, any interruption will always entail great sufferings upon the medium, from the fact that so many of the elements of the physical organism are lent, as it were, to the manifesting spirit, and can be properly returned only under proper conditions. Here, then, is a test of genuine mediumship, in which the condition of the sufferer bears witness to the truth of the manifestations.

When such cases occur, as they have occurred, the very martyrdom of mediums promotes the cause of truth; and every true medium is willing to be sacrificed, if need be, on

the altar of truth. So we say, the cause of Spiritualism has nothing to fear from any intrusions into séance-rooms or any rude handling of cabinets, and no true medium who possesses one particle of "materializing power," as it is called, should hesitate to exercise that power, the smallest atom of which is enough to confound the wisdom of the wisest, when it is true and genuine. It is only the pretenders who need fear—they who find it necessary to carry into their cabinets masks and wigs and all the masquerading paraphernalia which it has made our souls sick to see, but which, if it is to be found in places that should be so sacred, we are glad to have brought forth to the light of day.

We want nothing false under the standard of our army of progress. Spiritualism has given to the world the divinest truth of the ages. It is a quenchless torch to light the world, before whose glorious rays even the dark shadows of the valley of death are dispelled. Do you think little agitations or disturbances are going to stay its all-conquering progress? Not so; out of these very trials will come the uplifting of the truth. And to those true and honest mediums who suffer through the ignorance or mistakes of others, compensation will be given sooner or later. Even their sufferings, as I have shown, prove the genuineness of their work; and as, in olden times, the blood of the martyrs was the seed of the Church, so in these latter days, through suffering if need be, shall the truth be uplifted and diffused.

We find, then, that from the first days of Modern Spiritualism to the present time, true mediumship has been able to endure every test to which it has been subjected. In all its varied forms, in all phases of its manifestation, from table-tipping to full-form materialization; from the inspired utterances of the child to the veteran lecturer upon your

platforms; in every way, in every manner in which this great light has been revealed, it has shone triumphant over all conditions; it has gone forth to battle with darkness and error, and everywhere it has been victorious; and it will go on, shining into earth's dark places, lighting up the homes of men with its divine radiance, until at last the whole glad earth shall rejoice in the light of the new day.