

30
76

Some Occult, Spiritual, Liberal, Poetical, and Other Thoughts

— By —

JUDSON FRANCE DAVIDSON

RONDEAU.

Does death end all? When once we go
Is finished all our joy and woe,
Or when the vital spark is fled
Is but the senseless body dead,
And does the soul with life still glow?

New birth, new life—would it were so!
But dead men come not back, we know,
To tell us (not thus faith is fed),
Death ends not all.

Yet ever hope's bright torch can throw
Light on dim ways where doubt mists grow.
Gold, thought, a [circle]:—in such are read
Vague omens shadow-raimented.
Ah! ghosts gone down the dead years' flow
Does death end all?

THE RAISING OF JAIRUS' DAUGHTER.

(On Gabriel Max's Great Picture at Toronto Industrial Exhibition).

The vaulted room by light from overhead
Is lit: the ruler's daughter pillowed lies
(Her wrappings half unwound) upon a bed,
Whereon the Master sits dark-raimented,
And calm and loving looks into her eyes:
He lightly holds her hand, and from the dead
Calls back her spirit; to her cold cheeks rise
Faint gleams of flushing colour—death hath fled!

Majestic, godlike, supernatural,
Christ's head unhaloed shews against the gloom:
Divine the painter's genius thus to call
From fancy's womb, He who o'ercame the tomb.
O son of man, with mystery, gift and shod,
Thou art indeed the Holy One of God!

5012
1906
10000

The spirit is mighty, limitless, infinite, changeless, splendid, lofty, fearless, loving, stainless, beautiful, strange, terrible, silent, omniscient, omnipresent and omnispersive. Hence power, knowledge, love, truth, virtue, loyalty, honour, courage, love of the beautiful, strange, weird, and awful, correspond to qualities or attributes of the spirit. Nothing is hidden from the spirit. In the trance state the spirit may know beyond peradventure what is passing at a distance.

Just as these are chemical elements, so there are mental and psychic elements as taught by Paracelsus, Madame Blavatsky, *et alii*. By some occultists they are called elementals, but I prefer to call them elements, that they may be contra-distinguished from the elements or nature sprites (ariels, gnomes, undines, and salamanders) who dwell in earth, air, fire, and water. These elements take part in every movement of life and nature on the globe.

Upon the arid sands of Egypt stands the sphinx, emblem of mystery and of silence. Many of the enigmas of existence are sphinx-like; and no Œdipus is forthcoming to resolve them. Job's query, If a man die shall he live again? Whence, why, whither? What is justice? The true relation of man to God and nature, free will and necessity, natural depravity, the verity of the chiliasm, the *font et origo mali*, the real presence in the eucharist, effectual calling, the perseverance of the saints, the mystery of the plenary inspiration of Holy Scripture, the mystery of Christ, the mystery of iniquity, Antichrist, and many other matters of pity and moment *vexatæ questiones*

The race is not yet fully civilized. The water-mark of civilization already attained has only been reached at a great cost of life, and after terrible suffering. For us by slow and painful stages the live light climbs above the line. That we are not fully civilized is evidenced by such facts as the following:—Our menus are adorned (?) with such dishes as calves' brains, ox tail soups, lambs fries, cows' and calves' hearts. Bovril may be strengthening and good for the muscles, but it is, "Alas! my poor brother." We beat drums and our fellow-men, we go to war and slay our brothers amid horrors that rival those of Dante's Inferno. In business we compete instead of co-operating. The life of the town hardens or breaks the heart.

There may have once been immortality in the flesh. At any rate man in times of old lived hundreds of years. But to-day such hells have earth-lives become, that the average duration of human life is not much over thirty years. Many good people have wished they had never been born. Many not by nature pessimists are forced to subscribe to the well-known sentiments of the man of Uz under affliction,—"Man that is born of woman is of few days, and full of trouble. He cometh forth as a flower, and is cut down: he fleeth as a shadow, and continueth not." (Job. xiv. 1-2.)

Altruism may be one of the laws of progress, but what progress has been made is not largely due to that tenet of positive philosophy. In truth and in deed selfishness largely rules the worldly roost. But "the question naturally arises," as the orator says on Dominion Day, "How far can we blame 'em?" In spite of Christianity as practised things are

pretty bad, but they would be worse if there was no religious worship. Some day the beau ideal may be realized. But when? At the Canadian calends.

The civil law is to some extent tyrannical. It frequently fails to protect the good, virtuous, and innocent, and to punish the wicked, depraved, and guilty. It is often impotent to secure justice to the individual, but when the judicial procedure of the past is studied we see that the civil law of to-day is better than in times of yore. But though the civil law is still bad enough, we could not live without it. Sakes' alive! what would we do without peelers.

Hanging is a relic of barbarism. It is not certainly known who invented sleep, but hanging was devised by tyrants. If a man is a good dancer they generally give him a carpet whereon to dance. But the civil law makes poor wretches dance on nothing, and sometimes to the tune of the Lord's prayer. If a man hath a soul (as I verily believe he has), hanging is choking it out of his body. *Sus, fer coll.* is one of the worst forms of judicial murder, and ought to be abolished out of hand. Another instance of civil tyranny is compulsory vaccination which ought to be resisted tooth and nail. There is no distinction made by the law between murderers who if they got what they deserved would be removed, (though I don't know that I am an advocate of capital punishment at all) and those murderers (?) who ought to have on laurel crowns, purple robes, rings on their fingers, ride in automobiles, and enjoy good fat pensions.

Another stain on the escutcheon of our civilization is the cruel treatment of animals which so largely obtains. Of the animal creation much too low an estimate is taken. Our so-called dumb friends think, reason, and dream. As regards animals thinking, put case of a shepherd dog who having been set to watch a flock of sheep, shows responsibility which he could not do unless he reasoned. Ergo, he thinks. Q. E. D. Animals have nerves of sensation, feelings, emotions, passions, and animal minds. They therefore suffer as much as we do, that is, in degree. For if they have not as much imagination as we human bipeds, neither have they as much will power. What saith old Shakespeare, perhaps the first of those who know :

"The poor crushed beetle that is trodden on
In corporal sufferance feels a pang as great
As when a giant dies."

I wish a Canadian poet had written those immortal lines. Wanton cruelty to animals ought to be punished. There should be refuges, hospitals, eating houses, and comfortable homes for poor, sick, friendless, and starving animals.

If a person is suffering from an incurable, painful disease, has no pleasure in life, or is a burden to himself or to others, he may in some instances be justified in shuffling off this mortal coil, despite any canon civil or divine against self-slaughter. A man's own life ought to be at his own disposal; but it is very generally unwise to forestall nature. Moreover, a man who his quietus makes is not a moral or physical coward as some would fain have us believe. Social conditions should be amended, so that not so many would be driven to suicide. More humanity, brotherhood, love, mercy, kindness, justice, concord, co-operation, and amity are what the world needs, and less hatred, envy, jealousy, selfishness, cant,

302774

hypocrisy, competition, tyranny, and oppression.

Spiritualism is not of the devil as blatant bigots and hardshell stick-in-the-muds asseverate. There are genuine phenomena connected with that cult, but they are the phenomena of nature, and merit investigation. Time was when a man with any liberal thoughts on matters theological was called an athiest; when a blizzard, tornado, cataclysm, volcanic eruption or seismic wave, was supposed to be the work of an angry deity. Sickness of human beings and cattle was in like manner sometimes attributed to the malefic spells of old women riding through the air on broomsticks. *Nous avons changé tout cela.* But lots of superstitions, like death, poverty, disease, and taxes, are with us still. Some remnants of Biblical phenomena are still to be met with at seances. At Pentecost the spirit was as a mighty rushing wind; a draft of air passing over the sitters sometimes heralds the approach of the influences at spiritualistic sittings for the production of phenomena. At Pentecost there was a most marvelous gift of tongues; mediums while entranced have been known to speak in languages whereof they knew nothing in their normal state. At Pentecost cloven tongues of fire appeared and sat on each person present: fiery and radiant appearances are sometimes seen at modern seances.

As there are occasionally good ensamples of well or partially developed spiritual gifts even in this degenerate and materialistic age—(this veritable Kali Yuga)—it is evident that under more favourable conditions such gifts might be brought to greater perfection and the number of the possessors thereof be multiplied. Clairvoyance, clairaudience psychometry, voices in trumpets, materialization of forms, levitation, independent slate writing, crystal-gazing, rapping, table-turning, discerning of spirits, magnetic, mental, and spiritual healing, gifts of tongues, prophecy, etc., are not myths. Of all these things well-authenticated cases exist.

One of the most remarkable instances of the gift of modern prophecy in modern times is exemplified by the vatic utterances of Mr. R. L. Kidd, the editor of *The Parchment*, whose prophecies regarding the Russo-Japanese war, the vicissitudes of exalted personages, and the affairs of nations, have been remarkably fulfilled. But by my halidom, I grow a talker! Therefore I will put a period to this tractate, lest some gentle learned reader should ejaculate, "*Siste, jam satis!*"

P. S.—I may say by way of apostille that I have endeavoured to discuss the above matters with that fairness and liberality so eminently characteristic of Canadians.

Toronto, June 10, 1906.