BF 1272
.A8
Copy 1

The A. B. C. of Spiritualism

B. F. AUSTIN, A. M., D. D.
Editor "Reason Quarterly"

The Austin Publishing Company
Los Angeles, California

The A. B. C. of Spiritualism

One Hundred of the Questions most commonly asked about Spiritualism, answered tersely and plainly.

B. F. AUSTIN, A. M., D. D.
Editor "Reason Quarterly"

The Austin Publishing Company
Los Angeles, California

BF1272
.A8

Copyright 1920, by
B. F. AUSTIN

© Cl A 563970

MAR 13 1920

no 1

BRS 24 Mar. 1920

THE A. B. C. OF SPIRITUALISM

1. What is Spiritualism?

Spiritualism is the Science which affirms the existence of Spirit as the Origin, Sustainer and Reality in all the forms of Nature and in all the expression of life. According to its teachings the Universe is spirit-built and constitutes a Divine Revelation of Spirit (God). Spirit manifests in all life, in all intelligence, in all power, in all wisdom and in all that is True, Beautiful and Good. Spiritualism is the Philosophy which explains the manifold operations of the Spirit in nature, and in man.

It is the Religion which demonstrates through Mediumship life's continuity after death, affirms man's divine origin and relationship, furnishes man with the true philosophy of prayer, gives the strongest possible motives to good conduct, inspires and aids man in self-development, and offers him the richest consolation in life's sorrows.

2. Are Spiritualists Justified in Styling Spiritualism a Religion?

Yes, abundantly justified by its teachings and its effect upon human character and life.

Leaving out all references to the derivation of the word religion—since the derivation of a word is very often lost sight of in its changed use and meaning—it may be most positively affirmed that in the accepted use of the word Religion today there are three universally recognized ideas: the existence of a Supreme Power; the efficacy of Prayer; and the duty and privilege of man to come into harmony and peace with that "power, not ourselves, that makes for righteousness."

Spiritualism recognizes the omnipresence of Spirit—finds its manifestations and divine revelations in heaven and earth, in man and beast, in rock and flower, and thus the truly awakened Spiritualist is ever "face to face" with God.

Spiritualism recognizes the efficacy and value of prayer, explaining in its lucid and inspiring teachings how every expression of man's desire for the True, Beautiful and Good, causes the soul to "mount up on wings like the eagle," through the operation of natural law; and how prayers are often specifically answered through the ministering angels and our arisen friends.

Spiritualism in all its literature and inspired teachings has ever affirmed, the absolute failure of all creeds, ceremonies, sacraments and ecclesiastical services to bring peace and comfort to

mankind until the individual, through knowledge of the truth and loyal obedience to the truth, has brought his thoughts and affections into harmony with the great laws that govern the spirit realm. Salvation from the viewpoint of Spiritualism is found only in that knowledge of, and obedience to, truth which brings man's life into perfect adjustment with Nature and with God.

3. When and where did Modern Spiritualism Originate?

In the village of Hydesville, New York State, on the 31st day of March, 1848.

4. What distinction is to be drawn between Universal Spiritualism, Ancient Spiritualism and Modern Spiritualism?

Spiritualists affirm, and truly, that many of the great leading principles of Spiritualism such as the existence of a supreme power, the value and efficacy of prayer, the belief in the continuity of life, the belief (in many cases, the knowledge) of the communication between mortals and spirits, existed in nearly all the great religions of the world when these religions originated. Certainly in Bible times (both Old and New Testament) many held these great leading principles and knew of the open door of communion between the two worlds.

5. Why is a distinction drawn between Modern and Ancient Spiritualism?

Because on the 31st of March, 1848, through the wonderful mediumship of the young daughters of the Fox family (9 and 11 years of age) a Code of Communication was established which opened up a wide door of inter-communion between mortals and spirits. And also because preceding and following this significant event there was a mighty outpouring of spirit power upon the world resulting in the development of a large number of Mediums all over America and the general spread of the knowledge that life is continuous after death, and that communication between the mortal and the spirit realm is possible and actual.

6. If then Spiritualism holds principles and teachings common to other religions what reason is there for a Separate Religious Body? Has Spiritualism Distinctive Principles of its own?

Most assuredly it has.

1. Spiritualism through Mediumship offers the world its only present-day demonstration of the Continuity of Life.

(Practically this is to most men a proof of Immortality since it seems impossible to doubt that man will survive any other great change that may be before him, if he can survive the change called death.)

Spiritualism furnishes, then, the only firm and stable founda-

tion for Religion and Morality. It furnishes the highest possible motives for study, development and for a truly moral and spiritual life.

2. Spiritualism is the only Cult that not only affirms the fact of Mediumship but stands unequivocally for its cultivation and consecrated use in the instruction and uplift of the human race.

7. What objections do opponents of Mediumship urge against its practice?

They say it is inimical to health, often leads to insanity and tends to immorality.

8. What answer to these charges is made by the advocates of Mediumship?

They point to the fact that the great majority of those possessing and practicing Mediumship are healthy, happy and compare favorably in point of morality and character with any other class of good citizens. Ten of the mediums best known to the writer range in age from 75 to 98 and are excellent examples of happy and useful old age.

Mediumship is generally associated with the Spiritual Philosophy of life which works out a mental emancipation for its followers from the narrow and pessimistic dogmas of the Old Theology and inculcates a most cheering optimism which certainly tends to life's enjoyment and to health and longevity.

A vast multitude of Mediums will testify to the fact that on yielding to spirit influence and guidance through Mediumship and becoming acquainted with the cheerful and inspiring teachings of the Spiritual Philosophy they have found not only an improvement in health but increasing motives and aid in leading a more spiritual life.

It may be affirmed therefore, and with boldness, that the whole tendency of Mediumship unfolded under right conditions and consecrated to the instruction and comfort of the race, is toward health, happiness and the development of a loftier character.

That some mediums are immoral, some are sick, some have lost their reason, is no more than can be said of every class of public workers.

9. What other answer is made to the charges brought against Mediumship?

Mediumship is in Nature's order. It seems to be a part of a great divine plan of the Infinite Intelligence for the instruction, inspiration and aid of the younger and less advanced souls in God's great family, by those of riper experience and richer

knowledge. It extends thru all the ages and thru all the realms of the mortal and spirit spheres and will one day link into communication all the realms of spirit and all the worlds of space.

Since some men and women are born mediums, never having to develop it (child mediums being found in all lands and ages), and since Mediumship comes spontaneously to many in adult life who have never sought it, and even against their wishes and protest, **there must be a rightful and beneficial use of Mediumship in human life.**

10. Upon what is Spiritualism based?

On the Principles of Nature, the Facts of human experience and upon Mediumship as the mouthpiece and interpreter of these.

11. Is not Spiritualism based upon the Bible?

No. The Bible so far as it is inspired and true is based upon Mediumship and therefore, both Christianity (the simple and beautiful teachings of Jesus—real primitive Christianity) and Spiritualism rest on the same basis.

Spiritualism does not depend for its credentials and proofs upon any former revelation.

12. Are true primitive Christianity and true Spiritualism opposed and opposing systems?

Not at all. Both originated through Mediumship. Both teach the spiritual nature of man; both teach and illustrate the continuity of life after death; both teach salvation by knowledge of, and obedience to, the Truth; both teach the intercommunion of the two worlds.

The conflict, if any, is between Spiritualism and the spurious Churchianity of today, which has usurped the place of the truly spiritual teachings of Jesus, and is teaching what Jesus never taught and is not teaching what Jesus did teach.

13. What is the relation then, between true Spiritualism and true Christianity?

Each is independent of the other, having its own evidences and proofs, yet buttressing each other since their claims and teachings are so similar and their proofs and evidences are essentially one. The proofs by which early Christianity was established were known as Miracles; the proofs of the truth of Spiritualism are known as psychic phenomena. These are one in character.

14. How do Spiritualism and true Christianity buttress each other?

In this way: If the early miracles really happened—such as the healing of the sick, the gift of tongues, the lights and sounds

of Pentecost, the remarkable deliverances of the followers of Jesus, etc., etc.,—it is evident they occurred in nature's order, and therefore, may happen in our time. If, on the other hand, the psychic phenomena of today are genuine, why should we doubt precisely the same happenings (under another name) in early Christianity?

15. Do Spiritualists deny the existence of the historic Jesus?

No. The vast body of Spiritualists, including all their representative writers, accept Jesus as an historical character. They do not deny his miracles, though they hold it is impossible to make certain to human minds the happenings of two thousand years ago. Spiritualists as a body venerate the name and character of Jesus and regard him as the world's great Teacher and Exemplar.

16. Do Spiritualists believe in the divinity of Jesus?

Most assuredly. They believe in the divinity of all men. Every man is divine in that he is a child of God, and inherits a spiritual (divine) nature. Just as a man developes his intellectual and spiritual nature and expresses it in life, he is "God manifest in the flesh." Since Jesus attained to and manifested in a very unusual degree the divine attributes of spirit no spiritualist would question his divinity.

17. Does Spiritualism recognize Jesus as one person of the Trinity, co-equal with the Father, and divine in a sense in which divinity is unattainable by other men?

No. Spiritualism accepts him as one of many Saviour Christs, who at different times have come into the world to lighten its darkness and show by precept and example the way of life to men. It recognizes him as a world Saviour but not as "the only name" given under heaven by which men can be saved.

18. From the viewpoint of Spiritualism, how does Jesus save men?

By his truth and by his life. According to the teachings of Jesus men become FREE (or saved) by knowledge of the truth. "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." Spiritualism fully accords with this. It holds that the whole duty of man is to find the truth, love the truth, follow the truth and that in so doing he becomes a free man.

As the life of Jesus was a beautiful commentary upon his teachings, even a more eloquent exposition of the truth than his words, as it was, in fact, a "living epistle, known and read of all men," it is truly said that Jesus saves men by his life.

19. Does not Spiritualism recognize special value and efficacy in the death of Jesus in saving men?

No. Spiritualism sees in the death of Jesus an illustration of the martyr spirit, of that unselfish and heroic devotion to humanity which ever characterized the life of Jesus, but no special atoning value in his sufferings and death. The world has had uncounted illustrations of men who have died for the truth. All such deaths have a moral value and influence but not in a sense of a ransom price for the souls of others, as taught by the so-called orthodox churches.

20. How do Spiritualists explain the statement of Jesus: "I and the Father are one?"

They put alongside this statement another of his statements: "The Father is greater than I" and find an interpretation in which both are true.

Jesus and the Father were one in nature, one in desire and purpose for humanity's uplift, and yet as the Infinite Life and Intelligence and the Source of all Being, the Father was greater than the son, the Fountain greater than any stream that flows from it.

21. From the standpoint of Spiritualism how is the character and work of Jesus to be interpreted?

Jesus was a great Mediator, or Medium, who recognized all the fundamental principles of Spiritualism and practiced them. The existence of a Supreme Power; the Spiritual nature of man; man's continued life after death; the open door between the two worlds; the efficacy of prayer; the power of healing; the gifts of clairvoyance and clairaudience; and the practice of communion with angels and spirits, are all to be found in the teachings and examples of Jesus.

22. How does Spiritualism answer the objection: "the Bible condemns spirit communication?"

The fact that a few isolated passages are found in the Old Testament forbidding the practice of communicating with spirits is admitted.

But this prohibition establishes at once the fact of spirit communication. There were special reasons for this prohibition at the time because of the abuses to which the practice had been subjected. Old Testament laws and regulations are not now considered binding upon professed Christians, being abrogated in the newer and more spiritual dispensation of Jesus. Jesus himself communed with angels and spirits and took his favorite disciples to a seance on the Mount, where Moses and Elias appeared and communed with them.

Surely there can be nothing more authoritative or binding in Christianity than the example of Jesus.

23. What answer does Spiritualism make to the objection: "Christianity and Spiritualism are opposed to each other."

Read Moses Hull's "Encyclopedia of Biblical Literature;" Dr. Crowell's "Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism;" Dr. B. F. Austin's "Christianity and Spiritualism;" and you will find all the opposition is between Spiritualism and the perverted Christianity of today—better named Churchianity—and that the true primitive Christian religion and Spiritualism are most closely related and in general harmony.

How—it may be asked—could Christianity be opposed to Spiritualism when the Christian Religion was really born in a Seance? The real beginning of Christianity, its motive power, its great impetus, came—not from the birth or death of Jesus—but from Pentecost, the greatest Seance in history. (See Dr. Austin's pamphlet, mentioned above.)

24. What effect does the acceptance of the Spiritual Philosophy of Life have upon a man's character?

It exerts an emancipating power over his mind and brings him out of the realm of doubt and into the realm of knowledge and hope. It inspires him with a love of truth and a desire for knowledge of spiritual things and spiritual growth and development. It tends toward a study of and compliance with natural law and hence improves his conduct and life, as he finds no escape under the teachings of Spiritualism from the consequences of wrong doing.

25. It is boldly charged that by denying the dogma of eternal punishment and asserting that man can work out his own salvation, Spiritualism tends to immorality. What answer can be made to this charge?

All writers on Criminology agree that it is not the severity of any proposed punishment but the certainty of the punishment that deters men from crime. It has been found that the death penalty—owing to the difficulty of convicting by jury and the possibility of pardon—does not deter from murder. So the threat of eternal punishment is not the strongest motive for abstaining from evil, but the certainty that punishment suited to the transgression will follow. Eternal punishment as a motive to good conduct has lost its power over human minds because men almost universally doubt a dogma so abhorrent to reason and man's moral sense. Spiritualism by making rewards and punishments a part of nature's order and not an arbitrary arrangement, has furnished men the strongest motive possible to good living.

From the very nature of the case it may be boldly asserted that no salvation wrought out by another person can be of any real value to a man. Unless a man takes himself in hand, seeks and follows the truth, and develops the spiritual nature (the Christ) within, no Saviour or system of religion can bring him freedom and peace.

26. What effect does the teaching of Spirit Communion have upon human conduct?

It naturally lifts our thoughts and affections above the dust and tends toward the spiritualizing of the life. The fact that our departed friends are often near us, that they are more or less conversant with our lives ,that they are interested in all that concerns us, that our conduct is known to them, certainly has a tendency to restrain us from unworthy thoughts, motives and deeds. The man who will not be restrained from wrong doing by the knowledge that the eyes of a sainted mother, sister or friend, are upon him, will surely not be influenced by some threat of future punishment.

27. In what way can our departed friends aid us to nobler and happier life?

First, by demonstrating the after life and the fact that our conduct here brings to us a natural reward or punishment over there.

Secondly, by the strength and inspiration which a knowledge of the continued love and watch-care of our departed friends imparts.

Third, by impressions and messages in which we get words of kindly warning, wise counsels, and, sometimes, active co-operation in our life work.

28. May not spirit communication be a curse as well as a blessing?

It is freely admitted that the spirit world contains evil spirits as well as good, (evil in the sense of ignorant, undeveloped, selfish, passionate) and that if we live on a law plane of morality, and enter into communion with the denizens of the lower spheres of spirit life, we may receive moral degradation.

Mediumship is a ladder through which we should climb heavenward. We may reverse the ladder and go into a cavern of darkness.

No one, however, who seeks truth through spirit communication understandingly and prays sincerely for wisdom, need fear to investigate and may be well assured that they that are for him are greater than all that can be against him.

29. Why is a Medium necessary in Spirit Communication?

A medium is generally (not always) necessary because most people are spiritually blind and cannot see spirit forms; deaf and cannot hear spirit voices, insensate and cannot perceive spirit presence.

There are, however, many who, if they had instruction and could rightly interpret their own experiences, would be able to communicate with spirit friends through their own powers. We call such people mediumistic. Mediums are necessary to most people as telescopes are necessary to the astronomer. They bring that which is naturally invisible into the visible realm. Our senses of sight, hearing and feeling are adapted to the physical realm in which we live, but quite inadequate to bring us into touch with the spirit realm and its inhabitants who function on a higher plane of vibration. Hence it has been the custom of kings to have their prophets (seers, soothsayers, mediums) and under one name or another men in all lands and ages have communicated with spirit people through mediums.

30. Why do my spirit friends go to a medium and not come to me?

There are two false assumptions in this question. Your spirit friends do not as a rule go to the medium and your spirit friends do come to you. If your spirit friends do go to a medium it is for the purpose of bringing you and the medium together that they may reach you in communication. Ordinarily your spirit friends, drawn by love and natural ties of relationship, come to you. They speak and attempt to manifest their presence in a variety of ways. They find you cannot see them, hear them or sense them. And after repeated vain attempts to manifest they seek some one whose senses are open to perceive their presence. It is a mistake to speak of a medium as bringing your spirit friends to you. When you get a message from a medium your spirit friends in all probability, went with you to the meeting—possibly impressed you to go—and often resort to various devices to bring about an opportunity to communicate with friends on the earth plane.

Spirit Communication is a necessity and a boon to both realms.

31. What attitude does Spiritualism take toward other Religions?

A friendly and appreciative attitude, recognizing the rights of other religionists to think and act for themselves. Spiritualists rejoice in all good accomplished by the churches and various religious cults, freely acknowledging the fact that all of them are necessary in a sense to meet the varying needs of men in different stages of intellectual and spiritual unfoldment. While

gladly recognizing the truth given out and the good done by others, Spiritualists claim equal right to point out the errors and fallacies of the old religions and to present with boldness and fidelity the newer and fuller gospel of the Harmonial Philosophy to the world.

They believe the Churches today represent primary schools and that as men graduate out of these they naturally will progress toward the broad and inspiring Philosophy of Life contained in Modern Spiritualism. Indeed they claim that all progressive thought lies toward Spiritualism and that men progressing must advance toward it.

32. What is the attitude of Spiritualism toward Miracles and the Supernatural?

In the sense in which Miracles have been believed in and taught by the Church—as abrogation or suspensions of natural law—Spiritualism denies their existence. All occurrences both on the physical and the spiritual plane are under law.

Miracles as wonderful happenings, seemingly contrary to the known laws of nature, are freely admitted. But in every case such happenings, it is held, are in accord with laws unknown. In other words the occurrences called miracles are events seemingly contrary to law, or it may be contrary to all laws known to the observer, yet in accordance with laws not fully understood. There is no arbitrary suspension or annulment of law in the universe.

33. It has been charged that Spiritualism destroys homes; weakens the sanctions of the marriage tie and is one cause of the many divorces in American life. What are the facts?

The answer is found in the fact that there are no happier homes in all the land than the homes of Spiritualists; that Spiritualists recognize the home as one of the great bulwarks of society; that Spiritualism teaches all its followers to recognize the rights of others and to treat every person with charity and kindness; that Spiritualism contributes to human growth and happiness and must therefore help to build and maintain stable family relationships; and that all the literature of Spiritualism and the whole trend of Spiritualistic teaching and messages are in support of the home life. The Home is the first school and the first Church of humanity, and so is held in respect and reverence by the vast majority of Spiritualists. It is quite possible that some people on a low plane of intelligence and morality professing and possessing mediumistic powers have in individual instances disturbed family relationships. The writer, however, after twenty years' association with the organized Spiritualism of America cannot recall a message or a discourse in Spiritualist meetings

tending to disturb family relationships, but happily can recall many which were directly in the line of promoting peace, harmony and good will in the home circle.

34. If Spiritualism rests on the fact of Mediumship and Spirit Communications how can one account for Spirit Messages and prophecies which prove untrue?

Spiritualism does, indeed, rest on the fact of Mediumship and spirit communications, but does not undertake to guarantee the truth of every statement or message from the spirit realm. The mail service, telegraphy and wireless are methods of communication established among men, yet no one would guarantee the truth of all letters, telegrams and wireless messages. The spirit world is a vast realm and contains every class of intelligence and every grade of morality that has existed on the earth plane. If a medium, therefore, contacts untruthful and deceiving spirits, it is quite possible to receive messages that prove untrue.

35. Are all unreliable messages from lying spirits?

By no means. Many messages express the opinions, possibly the sincere beliefs of the spirit communications, and these are proved by future events to have been founded on misconception and error. Spiritualism has never claimed any infallibility for spirit messages.

36. Are there any other explanations of the failure of spirit messages and spirit prophecies to come true?

Undoubtedly there are many other explanations of the failure of spirit messages. The whole method and practice of spirit communication is still in an experimental stage. In the first place the communicating intelligence must possess clear knowledge of the facts to be transmitted. Secondly, the medium must be in perfect condition to properly receive the message sent. Then the medium must present the message perfectly to the sitter. And lastly the sitter must clearly sense and receive the message. On any of the above lines a failure is possible and through lack of perfect conditions the message as originally formulated does not reach the intelligence of the sitter. No doubt many failures (?) of spirit messages can be accounted for in this way.

37. But if Spirit advice and prophecy may prove unreliable, what benefit can men receive from them?

The same benefit that you can receive from the advice of the lawyer, doctor or earth friends. None of these are infallible and yet their counsel is often very valuable. Spirit messages have never been advocated by Spiritualism as an infallible source

of guidance. All representative Spiritualist teachers urge people to gain all the advice and knowledge possible from friends in both worlds, and then determine their own conduct according to the reason and moral sense God has given them.

38. But Spirit Messages often contain trivialities and recite petty incidents in human life. Can such trifles engage the attention of Spirit Intelligences?

Semingly trifling incidents in human life noted and reported by our spirit friends prove the nearness of our spirit friends and their watchcare over us. If such incidents deepen the conviction of the truth of spirit return in any human mind, they are no longer to be regarded as trifles. Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. J. H. Hyslop and other Researchers hold and emphasize this view.

39. If Spiritualism is a Progressive Religion, why are there so many Spiritualists who do not care for books, lectures, class work or study of the Spiritual Philosophy?

The answer is that these people do not represent Spiritualism but "Spiritism." They are as a class "Phenomena Hunters" and have gone off the path of self-development and progress which true Spiritualism prescribes, to worship strange Gods. They center all their interest in the movement upon the messages and these they exalt into a "fetish" and seek to escape all responsibility for the use of their own reason and moral sense, by rushing to the spirit world for advice on every occasion.

These people are not true representatives of Spiritualism but, unfortunately, they constitute a large proportion of the movement. They represent in Spiritualism the old wing of the church army who sang lustily, "Jesus paid it all," and who trusted their salvation to the sufferings of the Crucified—since these worshippers of the phenomena apparently believe that "the spirits will do it all" and that life will be replete with joy and happiness if they will faithfully follow up every available message circle.

40. What, then, is the true Mission of Spirit Messages?

First to convince men of the continuity of human life. Secondly, to spiritualize our thoughts, affections and lives by instruction and guidance. Thirdly, to bring us Consolaton in the sorrows and bereavements of life. Fourthly, to enable us to reach through Mediumship exalted and powerful spiritual helpers in the great crises of Life.

Spirit messages are not designed to take the place of our own reason and moral sense in ordinary affairs or in business life.

41. What class of Spirit Messages are most likely to prove fallible and misleading?

By common consent it is admitted that messages dealing with worldly affairs are most likely to prove disappointing and misleading.

42. Are there not authentic instances where the Spirit World has given advice that proved valuable in worldly affairs?

There are such cases but they are exceptional. Generally where such messages as these are given they have either come spontaneously to the mortal, prompted by the love and watch-care of some spirit friend, or as reliable advice that brought financial good to some one for the promotion of the cause of truth.

Comparatively few instances can be found where men seeking financial gain for themselves have found that spirit advice led on to fortune.

43. Are there not instances where men have sought advice from the spirit world in worldly affiairs and, following the same, have met with disaster?

Quite a number of such cases have become known to the writer.

44. Why does the advice of the spirit world on worldly matters so often prove unreliable?

There are doubtless many reasons for this. 1. The inhabitants of the spirit realm are out of direct touch, and not EN RAPPORT, with material conditions. 2. Some spirits are asked to give advice along lines of business with which in their earth life they had no connection and with which they have not acquainted themselves since passing over. 3. The mental atmosphere of those desiring and seeking messages for worldly gain is not conducive to good conditions for spirit messages.

45. How may the failure of other spirit messages regarding worldly affairs be accounted for?

Sometimes an individual whose mind is filled with some project of worldly gain, whose desire and will are very strongly enlisted, and with whom the thought of this great gain has become an obsession, visits a medium, not so much to get the truth as to gain confirmation of his desires. The medium in a sensitive condition is more largely dominated by the vibrations of the sitter than by the vibrations of the spirit world and the sitter gets back a reflex of his own mind and will. Sometimes the mortal vibrations of a circle are stronger than those from the spirit realm. A sitter under such conditions gets back the message he has brought.

46. What conditions are necessary on the part of the sitter to get the truth in a spirit message?

A mind free from bias; absolute sincerity; a supreme desire for truth whether it proves agreeable or the reverse; and a calm, receptive mind.

47. Are Mediums to blame for untruthful and unreliable messages?

Not necessarily. If they have desired only to receive and give out the truth, and have helped to instruct the public in the true mission of the spirit message, and have sought to use their spiritual gift for spiritual purposes, they cannot be blamed for the impressions received when they have yielded themselves to spirit influence.

48. Are Mediums responsible for the abuses that characterize spirit messages?

Some mediums are progressive, spiritual and seek to educate themselves and their patrons in all that pertains to spirit communications so that the best possible results may come to all. Others, we fear, care little for progress themselves, do little instructional work, and while knowing that spirit messages dealing with worldly affairs are often unreliable, give them out to all and sundry with great confidence thus cultivating a popular belief that messages dealing with worldly affairs may be relied upon guidance in business. The latter class of mediums may surely be held responsible in part for the abuses associated with the messages.

49. How might the message work among Spiritualists be lifted to a higher plane?

1. By more study of the conditions necessary to the exercise of reliable mediumship and attention thereto. 2. By classes of instruction for all Spiritualists under a good teacher. 3. By requiring a Three Months' Course of reading and Catechism instruction for all beginners and investigators before they are admitted to Seances. 4. By emphasizing the fact that Spirit Messages are chiefly and primarily for spiritual instruction and comfort and only incidentally for material interests. 5. By requiring all church mediums to confine their public messages to spiritualities and compelling those who seek information and instruction from the spirit world on material affairs to do so in private sittings.

50. What are the chief outward hindrances to the acceptance and spread of Modern Spiritualism?

Ignorance of the Philosophy and Phenomena presented by

Spiritualism to the world. The Power of Numbers, Wealth, Prestige in the church which has ever opposed Spiritualism. The Practical Materialism of the age largely immersed in money getting. Fear of Social Ostracism on the part of those who are attracted toward the movement.

51 What Causes within the spiritualistic Movement retard its growth?

Too radical statements of doctrine to those whose are not prepared for them; attacks on the Bible and Christianity as if Spiritualism was utterly out of harmony with them (Spiritualism has its own rational interpretation of the Bible and is not at war with Christianity properly understood, the Christianity of Jesus); illiterate workers who crowd their way to the front and assume the platform without very much of a message and with very poor qualifications for expressing that message; lack of harmony among mediums and societies, engendering rivalries and jealousies; officials who have sought office and position and obtained them and are not qualified for leadership.

52. Is Spiritualism growing? What prospects of its general acceptance by the masses?

If by Spiritualism is meant the organized movement it must be frankly admitted that it waxes and wanes with the varying conditions and the different workers in each locality. Many societies and churches under settled pastors and with efficient mediumship, show increasing strength and solidity and others decrease in effectiveness.

If by the growth of Spiritualism, however, is meant the progress of the Spiritualistic teaching and the general acceptance of its fundamental ideas, then it may be boldly asserted that no other form of religius teaching in the world is making more rapid headway. A mighty tide of thought and sentiment in favor of the main propositions of Spiritualism is sweeping over the world. The signs of the times are so many and so apparent that all who read and think must perceive the world's growth toward the Spiritual Philosophy of Life and Death.

53. What are some of the more obvious proofs of the rapid advance of human thought toward Spiritualism?

1. The great change in pulpit teaching during the last 25 years. Ministers today are not teaching what they did a quarter of a century ago. They are teaching what they did not formerly teach. The changes are all in the direction of Spiritualism.

2. The more liberal attitude of the press. Today many of the leading magazines and many of the leading papers in the largest cities of the land are exploiting Spiritualism by publishing

the writings of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Mrs. Wilcox, Sir Oliver Lodge, Rev. Robert Wynne of London, England, and other converts to Spiritualism. Spiritualism is getting more unsolicited and free advertising in the press than any other liberal Cult. Christian Science articles are paid for, but the leading editors are exploiting Spiritualism in response to a popular demand.

3. The radical change in the funeral services of today proves that the optimistic and Spiritualistic teaching regarding death has supplanted the gloomy and pessimistic teaching of the past days.

4. The growing demand for Spiritual literature and for seances and sittings with mediums proves that the hearts of the people are turning toward Spiritualism for instruction and comfort.

5. The fact that the leading book publishers of New York City, Boston and other cities, who a few years ago turned down all books upon this subject, are now publishing very many of the most popular books on Spiritualism, is proof that the tide of public sentiment runs strongly toward Spirit Communion.

54. Where can I get fuller information about Spiritualism?

Most public libraries have in whole or in part the writings of Andrew Jackson Davis, the author of the Harmonial Philosoph and known as the "The Great Seer of Poughkeepsie" and often styled the "Father of Spiritualism." The writings of Dr. J. M. Peebles, Dr. Moses Hull, Judge Edmonds, Stainton Moses, Hudson Tuttle, Sir Wm. Crookes, Sir Alfred Russel Wallace, Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, are worthy of careful study. Write to the N. S. A. Headquarters, Mr. Geo. Kates, secretary, 600 Pennsylvania Ave., S. E., Washington, D. C., for information. Or address the Progressive Thinker in Chicago; the Austin Publishing Co., Los Angeles, Calif.; the Banner of Life, Boston, Mass. Consult the officials of any Auxiliary Society of the N. S. A. ,and you will probably find all needed information.

55. How can Spiritualism help a man to nobler character and more effective life?

First by giving him an exalted conception of human nature in general and of his own unlimited powers and possibilities. Man's nature (from the Spiritualistic viewpoint) is absolutely unlimited except by the conditions that may aid or hinder its expression. As these conditions are largely under man's control through right thinking and action, man can steadily rise in the scale of intelligence, power, wisdom and efficiency, expressing more fully his divinity to the world. This optimistic view of man's greatness and of the law of eternal progression implanted

in human nature, has a most stimulating and beneficial effect on his character and life. It is a constant auto-suggestion to a man to make the most and best of himself.

56. What right have Spiritualists to say that Spiritualism is "The Religion of Sunshine and Happiness?"

Because Spiritualism disperses the gloomy concepts found in the teachings of the past—teachings that were born in the darkness of the human mind and the savagery of the human heart—and everywhere presents to man the newer, truer and more cheerful views of human nature, life, death and the future.

57. What are the Teachings of Spiritualism regarding the so-called evils of life? Do Spiritualists deny that these evils evist?

No. Sickness, pain, sorrow, loss, trouble and bereavement have a real, though temporary, existence. They do not exist in the same sense that the good in life exists. Evil dies—the good in life persists. Evil is the cloud crossing the face of the sun but swiftly vanishing. Good is the ever-living, ever-shining sun. This doctrine when fully understood makes every man an optimist. It robs evil of its power to destroy peace and happiness. It strengthens all souls compelled for a time to dwell in the shadow. It shows how "evil" when rightly understood and used often merges into good.

58. Has Spiritualism any solace for the sorrowing?

It is especially the One Religion of Consolation. Its teachings brighten the atmosphere of human life. Its demonstration of the after life has proven the Nectar of divinest comfort to the heart-broken and despondent. It is today the great **Mother of Comfort** to a world in tears over ten million slain in battle and unaccounted deaths resultant from the war.

Spiritualism brings "the touch of a vanished hand, the sound of a voice that was still." That is why out of all the churches today members are going in secret, like Nicodemus, to the medium, for comfort.

59. What is the attitude of the Clergy toward Spiritualism?

The Clergy of the Churches today are generally ignoring Spiritualism. Formerly they boldly attacked its teachings. Now, with few exceptions, they are silent on the subject or only occasionally speak of it in terms of reproach or condemnation.

60. Why are the Clergy silent on a theme of such wide-spread interest and one so vitally connected with religion?

Clergymen address congregations every Sunday that are divided on this question. In every congregation are found people

who believe in the truth of Spiritualism and commune with their arisen friends in the home circle. Many others in the congregation are, through ignorance and prejudice, opposed to Spiritualism. Hence for the Orthodox minister to take a stand, for or against, Spiritualism is to encounter criticism, and possibly, opposition.

61. Are there other reasons for the Silence of the Clergy on Spiritualism?

Doubtless there are many other reasons and among them we may mention:

1. Many ministers actually believe in the truth of Spirit Return, but fear to take a stand that may possibly mean the loss of their pulpit and salary. Many ministers are good for very little in this practical age except ministerial work. They fear to launch their bark upon an unknown sea.

2. Many clergymen who suspect the truth of Spiritualism are afraid to voice the silent belief of their hearts openly, and content themselves with preaching many distinctive teachings of Spiritualism under the cloak of their own religion. Nearly every funeral sermon by orthodox ministers today contains more or less of the distinctive teachings of Spiritualism.

62. Are the clergy of today justified in being silent on the subject of Spiritualism?

No. A subject that is so much in the thoughts of the people today, upon which so many enquiries are being made, one so vitally connected with the happiness of the people, one so closely related to the teachings and practices of the early Christians, ought to receive full and fair treatment in the pulpit.

Ministers are "watchmen on the walls of Zion" and should not be "dumb dogs that bark not," on the approach of a foe, but courageous and faithful watchmen, sounding an alarm against a foe, or opening the gates to a friend. A cowardly minister is a disgrace to his profession.

Let the clergy get off the fence, and if Spiritualism is, in their opinion false and misleading, let them denounce it. If they find it true, let them endorse it boldly to the world.

63. How may the Clergy be aroused to action on this subject?

Members of their congregations interested in Spiritualism should ask their clergy to preach upon the subject. Get a copy of "Conundrums for the Clergy," an inexpensive pamphlet, and send it to the minister. Collect a number of Bible passages and Bible incidents in which Spiritualism is taught or implied, and ask the minister to explain his interpretation of these in the pulpit.

64. Is there a safe and rational way of unfolding one's own Mediumship?

All men are mediums but most men are undeveloped mediums. In some the mediumistic gifts are on the surface; in others they are deep within the nature, and hence in many cases will not be unfolded on the mortal plane.

Multitudes of people, however, have some of the simpler phases of mediumship and could unfold them greatly to their own advantage and comfort. First, let them harmonize their own powers by building their character and life on Nature's plan—making their thoughts, affections and action centre upon spiritual interests. So long as men are in the animal stage of life (governed by the body, and passion and appetite ruling them) they had better not unfold and use their mediumistic gifts. Mediumship on this plane is a curse rather than a blessing.

Secondly, let them make harmonious environment. Bring all possible knowledge into the mind; music, art and culture into the life; cultivate aspiration which leads to inspiration; cultivate a love of truth as the soul's greatest possession; let the conscience and moral nature with Reason govern the life; ask and persevere in asking for teachers from the heights; give out the light and truth to others; wait patiently on the Lord (the spirit realm) and follow the monitions of the spirit.

65. What is the Mission of Spiritualism?

Spiritualism is a World Teacher, Inspirer and Comforter of humanity. It aims at the unfoldment and uplift of the race. It emancipates the mind from error. It interprets to man the great volume of nature. It is the best key with which to unlock the storehouse of Spiritual Knowledge. It is an illuminating teacher on the Bible and Christianity. It explains the enigmas and riddles of life. It brings all realms of nature under law and asserts that man's whole duty in life is to find out the laws of nature and conform to them.

66. What is the attitude of Spiritualism upon the subject of Metaphysical Healing?

It asserts the efficacy of Metaphysical healing and finds evidence of its practice and value in all the great religions of the past and in its diversified forms of treatment today.

67. Does Spiritualism antagonize the Medical Profession? Does it deny the value of drugs, ordinary medical practice, surgery, etc.?

No. Spiritualism recognizes candidly the great value of medical studies and in part the value of medical practice. It acknowledges a potency in drugs and a necessity for, and great

benefit in skilful surgery. In this respect its attitude is quite the reverse of that of Christian Science.

68. What objections do Spiritualists raise to the medical profession and to ordinary materia medica?

The great objection to ordinary medical study and practice that Spiritualism raises is rather to its defects than to what it contains.

It holds that the medical study and practice up to the present time has dealt almost solely with the body which is merely the house in which a man lives; that every system of medical study and practice which does not include a thorough and practical knowledge of man's mental and spiritual forces and their influences in causing and healing disease, is radically defective; that you can no more secure radical and permanent healing for the sick by mere change of bodily conditions than you can reform a man's character by painting his house; that disease originates largely in wrong mental action (inharmonious thinking, feeling and willing); and that to secure permanent restoration to health and happiness you must bring the mind and spiritual forces into harmony with each other and with nature.

69. Has Spiritualism practiced Metaphysical Healing?

Yes, and in a great variety of efficient forms. Historically Spiritualism may justly be regarded as the Mother of the many cults of Metaphysical Healing now spread over America. Long before Dr. Quimby and Mrs. Eddy and Evans of the Mind Cure, long before the New Thought Movement was organized, Dr. Andrew Jackson Davis taught and practiced healing by the mind and spirit forces (though he also made a limited use of drugs), and continued this practice 65 years. Nearly every medium of the early days of Modern Spiritualism was a healer and the verified accounts of many of their healings read like Miracles of the olden time. Dr. J. R. Newton was in many respects the most noted, popular and successful healer who ever walked the earth. According to statistics furnished by representative committees in the various cities he visited, and published in that marvellously interesting book: "The Modern Bethesda; Or the Life of Dr. J. R. Newton," he laid his hands on and healed in about 20 years 150,000 people. No more astounding cases of healing are found in the world's history than those of Dr. Newton who was a devout Spiritualist.

70. Have there been other remarkable healers in the Spiritualistic movement?

Yes, too many to mention here. One very well known to the writer, Mrs. J. H. R. Matteson of Buffalo, who passed away a

few years since after a wonderful record of 33 years in healing thousands—large numbers of them having been given up by regular physicians.

It may be objected that as Mrs. Matteson administered herbal remedies her healing was not metaphysical. It was very largely so because her remedies were the result of spiritual teaching and control, and her diagnosis of disease was through her wonderful clairvoyant powers, and along with her remedies there were given by her guides and helpers, many suggestions which were powerfully effective.

71. What other methods of healing, more or less Metaphysical, do Spiritualists believe in and practice?

1. **Healing by Light and Color** as taught by Dr. Edward Babbitt, the Scientist (a devout Spiritualist who acknowledged the spiritual origin of his discoveries) in his "Chromopathy or Principles of Light and Color." This was always taught by Dr. Babbitt in conjunction with mental suggestion and the awakening of the Spirit Forces, and may, therefore, be classed as largely Metaphysical.

2. Healing by laying on of hands. This is largely believed in and extensively practised in all Spiritualist Societies. Along with the magnetic forces imparted by the hands the power of music, prayer and good suggestion is used and with most beneficial results.

3. Spiritualists generally recognize the efficiency of all the finer forces in nature and many of them find in the electric and magnetic forces, administered by skilful and experienced healers, great benefit in certain forms of disease.

4. Spiritualists believe in the Healing Power of Music.

72. What is the attitude of Spiritualism toward the various Schools and Methods of Healing throughout the land?

Spiritualists find some good in all the systems in vogue but look upon most of them as defective, believing that no system of bodily treatment can be radically and permanently effective. They look upon man as a unity and so long as the real man—the thinking, feeling and willing self—is left out of the treatment, so long will that system prove inadequate and transitory.

73. What is the attitude of Spiritualism toward Christian Science?

Spiritualists generally rejoice in the organization and spread of the Christian Science Movement as an off-shoot of Spiritualism as Mrs. Eddy was a practicing medium for a time in Boston. They rejoice in it also as a large exodus from Orthodoxy toward Liberalism. They gladly recognize the fact that many people are healed and many people rendered happier by the acceptance of

Christian Science. They are pleased that such large numbers have escaped from the bondage of the old church teachings and have made a substantial advance toward the fuller and more optimistic teaching of this age.

74. Do Spiritualists accept Mrs. Eddy's teachings in "Science and Health?"

Only in part. They regard Mrs. Eddy's denial of spirit return as insincere—her statement that she was never a medium as false—and many of the teachings of "Science and Health" as irrational and contradictory.

75. How do they look upon Christian Science as a system of teaching?

As a mixture of many and in some cases, opposing elements. The distinctive features of Christian Science teaching they trace to Phineas P. Quimby, Mrs. Eddy's healer and teacher. (See Letter of Dr. Quimby's son, published in November, 1918 "Reason Quarterly." See also the McClure Magazine series of articles on Mrs. Eddy and Christian Science.)

The Scripture interpretations of "Science and Health" Spiritualists trace largely to Emanuel Swedenborg and its Idealism to Berkeley and other philosophers of that school.

76. Do not Spiritualists recognize the greatness and genius of Mary Baker Eddy?

Most assuredly they do and to these and her mediumship they attribute the power and success of her movement. She is generally regarded by Spiritualists as one of the greatest women of the age, despite many human frailties, and despite the fact of her denial of historic facts regarding herself and the true origin of her system of healing.

77. What relation is there, if any, between the New Thought Movement and Spiritualism?

Spiritualists regard the New Thought Movement favorably and look upon it as one of the many indirect results of the great tide of thought and sentiment that sprang out of the origin and spread of Modern Spiritualism. The Optimism of New Thought; the high concept it has of human powers and possibilities; the Metaphysical Healing it practices; the wide departure it has made from Orthodoxy in abandoning the Old Theology and accepting the New Theology—and many other good features of the New Thought—were all found in Spiritualistic literature before the New Thought Movement was born. Granted that in the New Thought Movement these teachings are amplified and carried out in greater detail.

Spiritualists generally have little criticism of so-called New Thought Teaching but as a philosophy of life or a system of religion they regard it as radically defective. No philosophy of life can be complete without the demonstration and certainty of the Unending Life. No Religion that is devoid of a true philosophy of Death and some positive teaching of the inter-communion of the two realms, and some information about the "Great Beyond" can be regarded as complete or satisfactory.

78. What will be the character of the Religion of the Future?

Religion will be looked upon as natural—not supernatural. It will be the spontaneous outflow of love and gratitude of the awakened soul toward the Giver of all good, and the cultivation of humane and generous views of one's fellowmen, resulting in a life of service for humanity.

79. What will be the Spirit of the Future Religion?

It will be expressed in Lincoln's immortal words: "Charity for all and malice toward none." In Stead's noble aphorism: "The union of all who love and serve in the interests of all who suffer." In the Wisdom of the Brahmins:

"It is not blessedness to know
That thou thyself art blest:
True happiness is not by one
Nor yet by two possessed;
Not to the many is it given
But only to the all;
The joy that leaves one soul unblest
Would be for mine too small;
And he that has this ardent hope
Will strive with earnest soul,
To work out his own proper good,
By working for the whole."

80. What must be the main Characteristics of any future religion for humanity?

It must be built on facts and demonstration not on traditional teaching. It must be in harmony with nature, human life and reason. It must be eclectic accepting demonstrated truth from every quarter. It must be simple, natural, practical and lead to health, happiness and success. It must tend in spirit and teaching to bring the world into peace and brotherhood.

81. What attitude does Spiritualism take toward War and Peace?

War is regarded with horror by all true Spiritualists all of whom believe in peace and brotherhood between men and man, and world-wide peace among the nations.

All aggressive wars, wars of conquest, wars of extension of

territory or commercial privilege or trade, or colonization, are absolutely condemned by the ethics of Spiritualism.

Wars of self-defense, wars of liberation for the oppressed, wars for privileges vital to human life and happiness are justified reluctantly on the ground that a nation has the same right to fight in defense of its national life and in defense of human liberty as an individual has to fight in defense of his life and liberty under attack.

82. What does Spiritualism teach us in regard to man's duty to his native land or the land of his adoption?

That every man owes a debt of loving and loyal service to his own land, to which he should render a supreme devotion. No man can serve two masters and no one can render a supreme devotion to two flags. This does not imply any spirit of antagonism to other lands. It simply states the law of reciprocity that should exist intact under all circumstances between the citizen and the state: the state granting and guaranteeing the full rights of citizenship to each citizen and affording ample protection to him in the possession of his life and property, and the citizen, as in duty bound, rendering in thought, speech and service loyal devotion to his country which protects him.

83. Has Spirtualism any definite knowledge concerning a Life after Death?

Spiritualism today has indubitable proof that man lives after death. Its evidence of this great fact is a million fold stronger than the evidence the world possesses of the truth of historical Christianity. The great fact upon which all the preaching and evangelism of the Apostles of Jesus was based was the dogma of his resurrection. This was the substance of the message of early Christianity. It was based on the testimony of those who saw and recognized the arisen Master. It possessed in those days living witnesses and (accepting the Gospel accounts) large numbers of them. Today its evidence rests on the written testimony of the Gospels which, while divergent, may be regarded as substantially true. It may be said that historical Christianity today rests on the testimony of the two eye-witnesses given in the Gospels. Yet upon the record of these two witnesses—preserved through the centuries—and whether altered or changed in the copying no one knows—the whole Christian world accepts as a veritable fact the Resurrection Story.

Spiritualism has its millions of living witnesses, the testimony of a galaxy of brilliant, scientific men, and can point to convincing manifestations of the resurrection power in our own age daily.

84. It is boldly asserted that Modern Spiritualism, despite its Professed communications with the Spirit Realm for the past

seventy years, has really discovered nothing definite concerning Life after Death. Is this true?

A greater untruth could scarcely be uttered. It is admitted that communication with the Spirit Realm is still in a tentative and an experimental stage. It may be frankly confessed that there is yet much to learn about the conditions and laws that govern spirit return. There are, doubtless, many improvements to be made in our knowledge and methods of receiving and interpreting the vibratory messages of our Spirit friends. Yet certain great fundamental principles regarding the Future Life have been discovered and confirmed by the unanimous testimony of communicating spirits, so that there can be no rational doubt of their truth.

85. What, according to Spiritualism, is the relation between the present life and the life after death?

The life after death is simply a continuation, a sequel, of the life here. A man starts in the spirit life, mentally and morally where he left off here. There is no sudden transformation of character in death. A man's future status depends upon his thought, sentiments and conduct here.

In a large sense the future is a harvest from his earth life seed-sowing. This teaching is entirely novel and distinctly opposed to the conception of the After Life fostered and taught for centuries by the churches, that death changed us instantly into angels or demons.

86. Does Spiritualism recognize rewards and punishments in the life after death?

Yes, but natural rewards and punishments of the same kind as here. It does not find any arbitrary rewards and punishments there any more than here. All rewards and punishments in all the realms of God's great kingdom, are found in the outworking of nature's laws. They are not either favoritism on the one hand, nor vengeance on the other. Man sins and suffers here, or obeys the law and reaps reward. And as below, so above.

No man escapes punishment, no man misses due reward. The idea of an atoning sacrifice for sins which will remove their natural consequences (pardon) is simply ludicrous to the inhabitants of the spirit spheres.

87. Is there according to Spiritualistic teaching any restraint on the liberty or conduct of men after death?

No, except the moral restraint which is no doubt more forcible there than here. Men have their choice of locality within the sphere for which their condition destines them at death. They make their own associations. They choose their own lines of

work or engagement. They find many paths to knowledge and many calls upon their energies and in all communications they represent their lives as full of labor and interest.

88. Do the departed, according to Spiritualism, find heaven and hell as depicted by Church teaching?

Not at all. On the contrary they find a very natural world on a plane of vibration higher than this, but very similar in many ways, yet more beautiful. They deny any vision of a great white throne, any manifestations of a personal God, any appearance of Jesus, or any lake of fire and torment for lost souls.

They do assert, however, that great moral distinctions are found in the spirit realm. That some of the departed may be truly represented as in heaven and others as in hell. They tell us that each soul entering spirit life brings his own heaven or hell with it. Some souls gravitate downward toward the spheres of darkness and suffering and find their "own place" by the operation of natural law. Some souls mount upward to spheres of light, love and beauty, and having peace and love within themselves find the happiness of the blest. They say there is, therefore, a fundamental truth in the doctrine of heaven and hell if the descriptions of the same in the Bible and church teaching are taken as figurative and not literalized.

89. What advantage has the instructed Spiritualist entering Spirit Life over the man who accepts church teachings?

The same advantage that a man who has studied his guide books and obtained reliable information about the strange country he is going to visit, has over the man who has acquired false concepts or has remained in complete ingorance on the subject. The instructed Spiritualist knows in a large measure what to expect. He is not mislead by false notions. He can find himself and his place and work more readily than the man who has had his mind filled with false, fantastic notions of the after life.

90. How, according to Spiritualistic teaching, do the arisen spirit friends pass their time in spirit life?

In a great multitude of engagements. Among these we may mention the following:

In study of the new realm and intercourse with its inhabitants; in attending lectures, meetings, schools and colleges; in researches in science suited to their former tastes and avocations; in recreations and amusements; in travel and adventure; in music, art and authorship; in ministrations to the ignorant and undeveloped souls; and in communion with earth friends, and a practical prolongation of their earth careers by inspiring and aiding mortals to continue their former earth labors.

Multitudes of ministers who have taught the falsities of the Old Theology come back to inspire their fellow ministers with wider and truer concepts of truth. Many former healers on the earth plane come back from spirit spheres and inspire and help sensitives to heal suffering humanity.

91. What is the teaching of Spiritualism regarding Inventions and Discoveries upon the earth plane?

That these are previously known in the spirit spheres and imparted by inspiration to inventors and discoverers (so-called) on the earth plane who are in reality sensitives. This harmonizes with the Scriptural teaching that "every good thing is from above" and is supported by the testimony of many mortals who assert they have been promised and actually given, either in messages or by visions impressed on their mentality, the inventions they have given out to the world.

92. Is there reason for thinking that Music, Art and Authorship of the highest type are direct inspirations from the spirit world upon earth sensitives?

The character and habits of musical composers and of the highest grade of artists and authors inspires the belief that these three classes of workers are mediums, developed or undeveloped, and that they are largely channels for the lofty music, art and literature given through them to the world.

93. Is there Special Reason for believing that the true Poet is a prophet, inspired and illumined by spirit influence, and that "the thoughts that breathe and the words that burn" are given him from above?

That the true poets are prophets, and all the prophets are mediums, seems evident to one who studies their character and their lives.

Most great poets (Homer, Milton, Shakespeare and others) expressly acknowledge that the source of their poetry is outside themselves by invoking their heavenly muse. The poets have all the peculiarities of Mediumship. They are, as a class, free thinkers. They are reformers in politics and many of them denominated infidels in religion. They are in a class by themselves, like mediums. They must have conditions harmonious or they cannot poetize. Many of them like Tennyson and Longfellow are known to have been Spiritualists. Many of them teach expressly spirit return (Homer Shakespeare, Longfellow, Tennyson), and their poetry is saturated with the Philosophy of Spiritualism. Read "Spiritualism and the Poets" in "Self-Unfoldment," published by The Austin Publishing Co., of Los Angeles, California.

94. Why, if Spiritualism be true, are there such efforts made in all the cities to harrass and persecute Mediums?

No doubt the opposition to Medimuship springs from a variety of causes. Ignorance and church prejudice in many cases are inspiring causes. It must be frankly confessed, however, that the misconduct, fraud and trickery that have characterized much professed mediumship, especially of that traveling fraternity of fakers who steal the livery of Spiritualism to serve the devil of their own greed of unholy gain, has furnished the public a seemingly justifiable cause for opposition to Mediumship and Spiritualism. The civil authorities of the various cities have a hard task on hand in trying to protect unwary citizens from unprincipled charlatans and at the same time afford reasonable liberty to mediums who respect themselves and their mediumship and are honestly trying to instruct and benefit the people. Gradually, however, as the work of the National Spiritualist Association as a religious body becomes better known and appreciated, all workers identified therewith will receive fuller recognition of their rights and those charged with the making and enforcing of the laws will learn to distinguish between Spiritualism and Mediumship in a religious organization, and the irregular, irresponsible and unauthorized work of individuals who are using Spiritualism solely for money-making.

95. Is Spiritualism making progress in the churches?

The changed tone of pulpit teaching embracing as it does many of the distinctive features of Spiritualism; the conversion here and there of prominent ministers to Spiritualism (Rev. Norwood of Cronin Memorial Church, London, Ont., Rev. Robert Wynne, leading Baptist minister of London, England, and others); the vast numbers of church members found in the Seances; the popularity of recent Spiritualistic books among the clergy and laity; and many other "signs of the times" proves that the churches are saturated with the spirit and teachings of the Spiritualist religion.

96. Will the churches cease their oposition to Spiritualism and accept the teaching of Spirit Return?

That the churches will absorb more and more of the Spiritual Philosophy and the distinctive teachings of Spiritualism seems a certainty. They cannot, if they would, avoid this, since Spiritualistic ideas are in the air and the thought, literature, art, music and stage of today are reflecting more and more of these ideas upon the public mind.

There does not seem any signs of general rapprochment between the churches and Spiritualism, though here and there are

indications that point to a recognition of Spiritualism as a religion by the churches. The request of the Boston Ministerial Association to Rev. Fredk. Wiggin of the Unity Spiritualist church to deliver a series of lectures on Spiritualism before that body; exchange of pulpits between Spiritualist and Unitarian ministers; co-operation with Spiritualist churches on the part of Orthodox churches in social and benevolent work—point the way to better understanding and fraternity in the future.

The churches will, of course, accept Spirit Return, but have their own ways and methods of dealing therewith.

97. Does Spiritualism recognize the efficacy of Prayers for the Dead?

Organized Spiritualism has never expressed itself on this question. The writer knows a number of representative Spiritualists who think the practice of prayers for the dead a most beautiful one and who believe in its efficacy.

Spiritualists believe that while communcation between the mortal and spirit realms is generally through mediumship, that such communication is not limited to mediumship. In other words, that all persons are subject to impressions from the thought vibrations of their spirit friends, and that in turn, the mortals can by their thought vibrations affect their spirit friends. Spirit friends may need our prayers as well as our earth friends do. Longfellow in "Resignation" hints at this intercourse of thought in the lines:

> "Thinking that our remembrance, tho' unspoken,
> May reach her where she lives."

98. What is the most effective way of promoting pure Spiritualism?

Raise the standard of thought, life and character in the individual Spiritualist and bring our public services in their methods, ministry and mediumship up to the requirements of this age.

Let Spiritualists everywhere study their Harmonial Philosophy and incarnate it in their lives. There is nothing so eloquent as a good life.

99. Should Spiritualists oppose and attack the churches?

No. On the contrary let them recognize the good the churches are doing in many ways. Spiritualists should not hesitate to learn from the experiences of the churches since churchmen have had many centuries of experience with organized religious work and must have learned some wisdom. Spiritualists should grant freely to others the same right of independent thought and judgment which they claim for themselves. A

frank recognition of the truth taught and the good done by the churches impresses the public with its spirit of candor and justice, and makes the way open to a clear statement of the fallacies and falsities of Orthodox teaching.

100. What will be the future of Spiritualism?

The question may be considered as referring to organized Spiritualism and also as referring to the Teachings of Spiritualism.

The fate of organized Spiritualism depends upon the wisdom, prudence, consecration, harmony and progressiveness of its leaders and membership.

The Teachings of Spiritualism under the organizations, through the press; through Psychic Research; through great Apostles of the Cult working independently (Sir Oliver Lodge, Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, Flammarion, and many others); through the growth of liberal ideas incident to our age; through the development of the moral consciousness in man; and through the ministry of Unseen Angels and Spirits; will go on and on, conquering and to conquest, until the whole world shall know and rejoice in the great truth: "There is no death" and all God's great family are linked in glad communication and fellowship.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 022 007 232 0