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VOICES FROM LIFE'S THITHER SIDE.



# IS MATERIALIZATION TRUE?

WITH

## ELEVEN OTHER LECTURES

OF GREAT INTEREST.

GIVEN IN CHICAGO, ILL., BY AND THROUGH THE  
TRANCE-MEDIUMSHIP OF

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## IS MATERIALIZATION TRUE? IF SO, ITS PHILOSOPHY.

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The word "materialization," as you are aware, has special reference, doubtless, in this question to a certain class of manifestations that have taken place within the last few years in connection with Modern Spiritualism.

Undoubtedly these manifestations are not new, but they have now for the first time attracted the attention of philosophers, and are considered as legitimate subjects for scientific investigation. Heretofore all apparitions or appearances of that kind have been considered to emanate from one of two sources: either from a confused and diseased imagination, which the materialist employs as a reason to account for nearly every spiritual manifestation, or from the real representation of spiritual forms or images to the mind (through the visual organs).

Undoubtedly the German philosophers were correct in supposing there were three phases or appearances of things which presented themselves to the human mind: one, the conception of a thing which may have its birth in the mind without any external form; another, the appearance or imitation of a thing which may have existence really but not be the thing represented; and the third is the actual appearance or form (the thing itself). All of these phases constitute the usual appearances of life, and they so interblend that with-

out actual science it were difficult sometimes to tell which are conceptions of the mind, which are appearances of things, and which are real things; and we are not certain that even science is accurate upon this subject. She is so arbitrary and dogmatic in her terms, and assumes things to be real which undoubtedly are not so, and disputes realities which she does not comprehend, that it is not safe even to suppose that science can fully determine what things are real and what are unreal. But it is generally admitted that all usual appearances of earth and sky, all forms that are familiar to the eyes and senses of man, the usual human existences and such other things as come within the analytical scope of scientific knowledge, are real. But there is a vast other region of investigation just as real that lies beyond the present region of scientific investigation, and which gradually is obtruding itself upon science. That other region is the existence of just as tangible forces, governed by just as real laws, and acted upon by just as spontaneous and natural impulses as the external world, which, however, is not governed by the laws controlling the material world, but by other laws that are just as tangible and capable of solution. And this, of course, brings us to the legitimate sphere of inquiry involved in this question.

That materialization is true is attested by the usual testimony of science, by the suppositions of scientific deduction and analogy, and by the testimony of those who have investigated occult forces through clairvoyance and spiritual power. The only basis for external science is the testimony of external scientists, and that has been adduced and given in published testimonials by at least a score of living scientific minds, to say nothing of the added testimony of thousands of witnesses who are not scientific yet who are capable of observing material facts. This, of course, leaves no room for the doubting of the reality of materialization. The philosophy of it science has not yet claimed to solve, and there are only a few scientific men that have the inclination or the leisure to devote to the investigation of this subject. Among

those the familiar names of Messrs. Crookes, Wallace and Varley, and the Scientific Investigating Committee of St. Petersburg, are familiar; but at the same time they have not professed, nor are they ready to state any philosophy concerning the fact. The facts alone are stated by them and the deductions must be drawn by the scientific world, or a philosophy must be unfolded which shall explain measurably the process of this form of manifestation.

Everything in nature is materialized from an invisible and impalpable source. The germ which contains the oak is not visible in its possibilities save by chemical and microscopic analysis; yet you are perfectly well aware that under favorable and correct conditions the germ will develop into a forest tree, and that all the properties which will constitute the tree are held in solution in the earth or in the air. This process that goes on before your very senses is invisible to you; you do not see the circulation of the sap, the quickening of the germ, the weaving of the various rays of sunlight into the fibre and trunk of the tree; you see nothing save that a miracle of life is performed slowly and gradually before you, and that at last the forest tree is there. Yet, if you had never been accustomed to its growth, if once, for the first time in your life, you had seen a shrub or tree unfold, it were then a miracle; you would not have any philosophy to account for it, and the whole research of all other sciences would be void to explain that one sublime mystery of the unfolding of a flower or a tree. Consequently, that is always mysterious to which you are unaccustomed and have not a ready solution either of the daily contact of life, or of a science which finally penetrates into the process of life in the forest tree.

The only difference between the usual functions of natural life as manifested in the unfoldment of any organic form and materializations by spirit power, is that every organic form in Nature unfolds by a process of generation or germination; and science has failed to discover any spontaneous generation in the universe—we mean, any creation of form without a

preceding germ of that form. Consequently, science is accustomed to suppose that all appearances that cannot be traced to a germination must be either aberrations of the mind, creations and tricks of the mental vision, sorcery, or sleight-of-hand. But we can show that this is a fallacious conclusion, since forms may be as real for certain purposes that are not generic in the process of their evolution, and since a form representing an idea may be as a symbol just as valuable as a creative or generic form may be; and this is all that is claimed of any representation whatever. For instance, these flowers are the result of generic process. They have grown from the earth under the usual organic process of unfoldment. Artificial flowers might be there, resembling these, which would convey to your minds the symbol of flowers, and which, if your senses are not very acute, and you are not near enough, you could not detect from the natural flowers. The artificial flower has not been created by generic process, but by the imitative process, by producing such shapes and forms and drawing together such materials as will convey the idea of the natural flower when the generic process is absent.

Now, science declares that the atmosphere holds in solution nearly all, if not all, the elements of the earth; and that these, if condensed, can be made to resemble the elements of earth, though of course they exist there in a diluted form. The results of witchcraft, sorcery and magic also prove that appearances of real things can be brought before the mind and optical vision in such manner as to represent the real things and convey all needed impressions of a symbol. If this can be done by magic and sorcery, and by rapidity of movement and skillful fingering, it can also be done by another process. Chemistry resolves in her crucible the various vapors and makes them solid substances again; and the great alchemy of life does this over and over every day and hour of existence. Solid substances become vapor, and vapor becomes again solid substance without ever once creating a thought of wonder at this great magic that is going on in the world, without a perception of its process.

Now, if the science of chemistry can do this, and if you are aware that Nature does it always and continually in her laboratory, it only remains for you to understand that behind the external science is another, a super-science, and that the philosophy which accounts for external things by natural law, may also account for an appearance of external things by super-natural law; (and here we use the word super-natural not as extending beyond law, and as being above the usual law of Nature.) Then you at once enter into the region of explaining all of those manifestations that have the appearance of organic things, yet are not generic, but are adopted and employed for a certain purpose of presentation to the mind.

Undoubtedly all visions of seers, all visitations of angels or messengers in olden time, were either psychologic impressions produced upon the brain, or actual appearances evolved from the atmosphere by this super mundane science that we speak of; and when any given number of people witness the same manifestation under the same circumstances and testify to its truthfulness, the reasonable deduction is, that it is not psychological, but an external appearance, and that for that external appearance there must be a natural and legitimate law and process. Therefore, if one person sees a vision, it may be an enraptured impression produced upon his mind by the exaltation of thought or inspiration. If ten or twenty or one hundred persons see the same vision, it is undoubtedly either an unusual psychological power, a pentecostal flame that psychologizes the whole multitude, or else it is an external appearance created by that power to produce impressions externally upon their minds. Both of these presentations are possible, and both come within the range of vision spiritually and of materialization so-called.

The genuine materialization is that which produces an impression upon the external visual organs or senses, and which without psychologic power conveys the impression of an intelligent source of personation. These forms of demonstration constitute all phases of physical manifestations in Spirit-

ualism, are to be observed through the senses, judged of by the usual avenues of sensation and reasoned upon in the usual manner. They differ from manifestations that are produced upon the mind from inspiration or from gifts of the spirit inwardly, and must be judged by the usual standards of scientific observation aided by that liberality of judgment which admits the possibility of higher laws than science has as yet discovered.

According to the best authorities, or investigators, upon this subject, among whom, perhaps, Mr. Crookes is one, a learned professor in one of the London Universities is another—who writes under the name of "Imperator," M. A. (Oxon.) etc.—and other testimonies, there are three kinds or varieties of materialized forms. One variety is that of a seeming picture thrown upon a wall or canvas; there appears before the aperture of a cabinet, or within a room, or on a pane of glass, a likeness—the lineaments, expressions, features of a departed friend. These are pictures. Now do not confound this with spirit-photography; it is not so. These are pictures created at the time by spiritual power, under an impression of light that spiritually corresponds to the light employed in the magic lantern, and really reflects the image of the spirit form, or of the form which the spirit wore while upon earth. This is a process of picture-making, and is just as much a materialization as an actual form, only that it does not claim to be the form of a spirit, or even a representation of that form except as a picture.

Another phase of materialization, as sometimes seen with Dr. Slade and others, is that the figures appear as statues, without the usual evidences of life, or sometimes even as masks, without the usual expression of vitality. These are images corresponding to sculpture, and, for the time being, are created as representations of spirit-friends, resembling them in lineament, expression, feature, but lacking the vitality which seems to give life.

The third and most triumphant form of materialization is that of the actual form, which apparently has all vital func-



tions, breathes, moves, speaks, expresses joy or sorrow, and to touch and sight and every physical and mental sensation appears tangible as the material forms which you occupy to-day.

These three different phases, with their various modifications, have been well attested, have been proven to occur as genuine manifestations of a power beyond external science and without any appurtenances of chemical or other scientific aid. These three are easily explained. If a spirit has power over any atom of material substance, or any force emanating from the medium, then a spirit has power to do all that we have stated. That spirit has power over material substances you are aware from the contact of your own spirits with your own bodies, and that some of those powers are so occult, impalpable, and imperceptible as to be exercised almost without volition. But this, you say, is in obedience to organic law. So it is; but then you do things in obedience to organic law that are not necessarily dependent upon the organic structure of your bodies. The mental vibrations are real, and these, in turn, produce a palpable effect upon the physical organism. It is true that no embodied human spirit has yet discovered the power whereby, by exercising the will or volition, you can impel an organized body, outside of the human form, to move in any direction whatever without the aid of extraneous sources. It is true that the embodied human spirit does not know of any process, save through chemical science and the usual laws of Nature, whereby bodies can be evolved out of the seeming vapor of the atmosphere. But it is also true that science admits the possibility of this being performed through scientific processes, and if the mind were made aware of another and inner step, behind chemistry and beyond the usual laws of scientific investigation, science admits the possibility of its being done. Having admitted the possibility of it, it only remains for the individual to possess the power to do it, and that power lies within the province of the disembodied minds who are nearer to the sources of organic life, nearer to the sources of elemental being, and one step nearer

to the existence of the real, atomic structures of the universe. This is why their will power can act upon atoms outside of organized bodies—because, removed from organized bodies, they can employ the forces that otherwise are idle and dormant, even in your own systems, and make these forces perform the work which you cannot do.

Mediums for materialization are those who possess, therefore, a certain amount of that nervous, or what we choose to term psycho-dynamic power, that is unemployed by themselves, but which spirits, aware of its existence and of the method of its manipulation, can employ for the purposes of materialization. As the body, in its physical structure, attracts to itself the particles of the atmosphere to sustain it, so the spirit can attract from the atmosphere substances and particles, through this force that exists in the materializing medium, out of which can be fashioned either the pictured likeness of the friend, the sculptured image, or the living and apparently vitalized form. And this law by which the vital forces of the medium are utilized in this way, is a law of spiritual volition acting upon the medium, but the medium's mind having nothing to do with it, save the passivity with which the medium and the surroundings meet the effort of the spirit to do this thing. The agitation of a single wave of thought, the opposition of a single violent will-power, anger, suspicion, hatred, all violent passions, interfere with this normal circulation of the fluid that is employed by spirits in materialization. Hence you are frequently told: Be harmonious in your circles; keep your minds passive; let there be no violence; let there be no suspicion. Why? Because, even as the various points of the magnet become de-polarized by certain processes, so these various atoms become de-polarized, so far as the spirit-will is concerned, by the agitation of intermediate waves of thought, and cannot be thus utilized.

When the conditions are perfect the perfect form is evolved; when the conditions are imperfect various stages are evolved and are considered failures; sometimes are even considered impostures. But supposing, in the process of taking a pic-

ture, you were to suddenly rush into the photographer's dark cabinet, insist upon hauling out the plates and seeing what progress he had made, would it be imposture, on the part of the photographer, if there were no real picture there? So many persons imagine, because, during the process of materialization, certain things are discovered that do not seem to conform to their ideas of what should be the state of affairs, therefore there is trickery. Do you consider the sculptor an impostor because when you tear aside the screen that veils the unfinished marble it is incomplete? Do you consider anything in science an imposture because it is interrupted before fully formed?

You have heard that materialized forms or images have been interrupted in the process of development, and that various things, all confusion, seemed to appear in the cabinet. Did it ever occur to you that a spirit requires time and conditions to make perfect things, just as well as mortals, and that those conditions and that time may be as carefully preserved from interruption under all fitting test conditions that should be applied *beforehand* and not *during* the time of the materialization? Did it ever occur to you that the most delicate process in the universe must be that process that through occult forces evolves a palpable image to the sight of men? And the only wonder is, not that there are so few of these manifestations that are satisfactory, but that there are any, considering the delicate nature of the conditions required, and considering the rude, uncouth, and crude manner in which human beings proceed to the investigation of them.

If you would know the laws that govern materialization, you should guard them as carefully, preserve the conditions as sacredly, treat them with the same kind of deference and the same kind of reason that you do the carefully prepared plate, the electric battery, the various refined and subtle processes of chemical science that are oftentimes experimented with a thousand times before there is one successful result.

This substance upon which spirits act to produce the representation of material forms is, as we state, the most delicate

of all substances which the human form holds, and is the one ultimate link connecting matter with spirit. Upon this spirit breathes its volition or will-power; an aura is created that draws just so much of the vitality from the form of the medium, and frequently from others who are in sympathy that are present. These subtle and delicate atoms attract other corresponding atoms from the atmosphere; and by this process of motion, which is created when these atoms are drawn from the form of the medium, the attraction goes on until either the picture, the sculptured image, or the vitalized form is revealed to the vision.

As we state, this process can only be comprehended by those who are accustomed to the subtle changes and transformations of chemical science; can only be comprehended by those who have studied with the greatest care, perhaps, the writings of Reichenbach, Prof. Faraday, and others who have investigated to a certain point the occult forces connected with the human system; and they must also go a step beyond this and understand that the volition of the spirit acting upon these substances which are held in solution in the form of the medium causes the attraction of other atoms, and the making up of the fabric which to that intent and for that purpose is for the time being materialized.

Sometimes the question is asked: Is it, then, only an image? Certainly it is only an image. No one ever saw with *material* eyes an actual spiritual form. This is an image (the outward form) which expresses yourself to-day. No one pretends it is the man or the woman that sits here in the outer garb of material life, and fashioned and formed shapely or unshapely. It is simply the representation of the spirit. No one claims that this is the Ego—it is the outward image of it only. The difference between your form and the image which appears for the time being as a materialized spirit-form is that yours has passed through the process of organic life, while the spirit-form is the result of the immediate created life given by the spirit. And this explains why, in ancient lore and among the biblical prophets and seers, there were frequently men de-

scribed as angels, and messengers who walked and talked and ate and drank with them as angelic visitants, these forms appearing in the guise of men, and taking upon themselves the real form of existence. But these images also had power to de-materialize and disappear again without organic process of decomposition.

This reveals, also, a glimpse at another kind of nature: namely, that forms may be created as instruments are, as tools and implements are, for uses without any organic process, and that so long as these uses abide and prevail the form may remain; but when the uses no longer abide and prevail the form disappears. The inverse process of materialization opens up also an avenue of disintegration. Chemistry not only shows that seeming vapor can be fashioned into solid substance, but that solid substances may become vapor; and does not this explain, then, all that class of manifestations that in olden times were supposed to be miraculous, and which in modern science have been considered as superstitions? Disappearance of the prophet in cloud and flame; transfiguration of Christ, his uplifting from the grave—all these wonderful things not fables but realities under the power of spiritual disintegration! Does not this explain the taking on and off of the coat, the dismemberment of the iron ring from neck and arm? the various substances passing through solid walls, seemingly—that disintegration is just as possible as consolidation, and that atoms which are bound together by material laws, if those laws are not finally interrupted, can be drawn together again, and can be interrupted for a certain space of time or in a certain manner, and yet not lose their integral vitality and the attraction of cohesion that binds them together? Cut your hand; close the wound immediately and there will be no sore there. The circulation will go on if the atmosphere does not intervene. Let there be hemorrhage of any vital part of the body; if the arterial blood is not oxygenated with contact with the atmosphere, it will go on giving vitality just the same. And science proves that if any wound or any sudden blow on the body could be with

sufficient rapidity closed, there would really be no wound and really be no suffering. It is because of the intervening time, and that the atoms become disintegrated too far, and that the intervening atmosphere steps in and dissolution measurably takes place in that part of the body which is affected by the wound or the blow. When the science of medicine, therefore, shall have so far discovered this law as to have instantaneous action always available, the ills from accidents or other sudden contingent circumstances of life will be far fewer.

This being true, as we say, of de-materialization, and of the possibility of having interruption in organic life, and yet that the organic life goes on—the wound upon the bark of the tree healing up by other fibrous forms, the sap continuing to circulate when a large gash is cut in the side of the tree, various things in nature that show the constant reparation that is going on even where there is violent interruption of life, prove that where there is sufficient of the occult forces and a sufficient knowledge of those forces, the various processes of healing, of disintegration, material formation and of external decay, can be understood, avoided, guided, directed just now as you guide and direct a ship, or any other mechanical implement that you have yourself created.

When it is understood that organized life is not a miracle, but only a process of chemical and mechanical action, it will then be known and become possible not only to force flowers into more rapid growth and bloom, and cause a tree to grow in one year what it usually does in three, four or ten, but it will be possible to develop from the germ with greater rapidity than even the hot house culture the flower perhaps in a single day; and if the chemical science shall still go on, may it not be possible that the substances and combinations out of which the flower is made shall at least be so simulated as to make the semblance of a flower that shall last, even though it do not have the organic process and power of fructification and reproduction? And this also leads, step by step, into the great miracle of creation. For what else do human beings become when they seize hold of the natural substances

of earth and fashion forms for their own pleasure or profit but proportional creators? And if in elemental life shall be found all substances that exist in organic bodies, is it not possible by another step and another leap of the spirit into knowledge to shape those forms into the semblances of organic being, and for purposes of temporary manifestation to make a living, breathing image? It is possible. And it is this power that, developed proportionately, makes the angels and spirits like the Deity; but at the same time there is no continuity because no organic process; no power of propagation because no organic function. The form is made for the certain purpose of expression, and must be disintegrated in order to restore to the vitalized bodies from which the atoms have been taken the properties required for their continued existence; and therefore in the present state of the earth a permanent materialization of any physical form (except fragments) would be utterly impossible, without robbing the life that is in existence, through organic law. But even organized bodies rob from each other. You slay the tender dove to give you food; you cut down the wheat that your bodies may live. Every organized substance preys upon every other organized substance, and you rob the earth that the body and the soul of man may be enriched. Go another step, and the spirit takes from your forms all that vitality that you can possibly spare to make the single image that shall convince the world that there is life beyond death.

In all times and ages men have sought for signs and wonders. No vision of prophet or seer would suffice; the intuition of the soul was not enough; the revelations of God upon the tablets of the human spirit did not answer. Man must needs have the real tablets of stone as palpable law, the thunder in the heavens and the lightnings in the sky, the visible sign and token, the Shekinah glowing before your vision by night and as cloud by day; and so long as this is true, the spiritual forces of the universe must tear from your own vitality the functions that are required to build up the pillar of fire and of cloud, the living image, the angelic form; and yet

this is not the real, it is only an expression of power, only a proof of force, only the fact of external life behind which lies the sublimer fact and loftier fulfillment of spiritual existence.

Oh, when will man, uplifted by loftier sensibilities and controlled by higher aspirations, seek the spiritual fountain and the image of God in his own soul instead of pictured images and shadows that have no reality of life? When will man seek for the sign, not at the outer door, but within the temple of his own spirit, asking not as a proof of Deity the handwriting upon the wall, but rather the conviction of the mind? For this we can afford to wait. The child must grope before he can walk. There must be blocks of stone before there can be the magic of the Grecian dome.

Let us have the image and forms. Let us understand that they are powers of the great science of life whereby the soul of man, fulfilling the perfect gifts of the spirit, shall finally fashion into outer image everything that his thought conceives, and the forces of earth and air shall fly at his bidding even as the winged lightnings do to-day, and even as the pent-up vapor that carries the iron steed snorting across the continents.

Behold, there is no miracle beneath the sun. All life is a perpetual change, and flows from the spirit to the outermost, and that which is the next step remains to be revealed to your consciousness, and the soul, with its surpassing powers, shall unfold even in time and eternity to do the things that magi and sorcerer have not dreamed, revealing one by one the atoms in the structures that make up the visible and invisible universe.

This is somewhat of the philosophy that is couched in that one word, Materialization.



## MATERIALIZING POSSIBILITIES.\*



All persons who are familiar with the phraseology of Modern Spiritualism, are aware that the word materialization has a technical meaning: that it refers to a certain class of phenomena now taking place, in connection with spiritual manifestations, distinct from the apparition, the ghost, or the spiritual vision of former times. These appearances are tangible, take on every condition of seeming substances, and are palpable to the human senses.

The whole question of the materiality of matter hinges upon the answer to this question—the supposed solidity of matter, which science has dissipated to some extent; the supposed necessary organic properties of matter, which these manifestations certainly dissever, (the possibilities of the contact of atoms being so arranged as to simulate organic life for the time being, and yet not possess organic life); the properties of weight, specific gravity, and everything upon which science usually hinges all her propositions.

The first physical manifestations in connection with Spiritualism certainly overthrew many theories of science, as, for instance, the attraction of gravitation, or the specific gravity which draws bodies toward the earth and its centre, was overcome by an invisible, impalpable power; the uplifting of heavy bodies in the atmosphere being an indication of this

\* Subject chosen by the audience.

power. The disseverance of such bodies, the disintegration of particles of matter, however, except by decay or chemical transformation, was considered even less a possibility by science in times past.

In periods of great spiritual power, when miracles were performed, all these things have taken place; the apparent crumbling away of the walls at the feast of Belshazzar, and the handwriting upon the walls; the appearance of angels and messengers, walking, talking and eating with the prophets and believers of olden time; the appearances of angels in human form, denoting palpably distinct formation, and spiritual vision, also, sometimes accompanying these, wherein only the seers beheld them; the certain transformation of one substance into another, as the changing of water into wine by Christ, at the marriage, and the various miracles performed by him, which, of course, though performed by him, must have been done in accordance with some law that intervened the so-called laws of nature—had they never taken place at any other time or in connection with any other human being, the fact of their taking place then indicated a possibility of either the suspension of the usual laws of nature or the existence of intervening laws of which science is not aware.

We choose to take the latter hypothesis—that all the laws upon the surface of things in nature are equable and unvarying, excepting where there are intervening laws to take their places; that anything which transpires either regularly or exceptionally in nature, or any phenomena, must occur in accordance with a general or special law, and that that law is usually either general or special as the mind is familiar with it.

The various changes of substances that go on around you every day, transforming the invisible into the visible by a rare chemical process, prove that materialization is constantly occurring in connection with regular scientific processes. It is impossible to detect the process whereby these flowers [indicating a bouquet of flowers before her], day after day, unfold beneath the rays of the sun, and each one aggregates

to itself the atoms and the color suitable for its form; yet you perceive the results, and in the autumn time, or in the full fruition, you gather those results without once doubting the occurrence merely because you did not see the process of it.

The law of materialization is, that there is no organic process required for all appearances or forms in nature, and that if there is a process of existence whereby the organic process can be imitated or simulated, and the appearance remain the same, it is the province of the human mind to discover that fact. As, for instance, the artist can make an apparition or resemblance to the human form, a picture which has a resemblance to the object that he seeks to portray—a statue, which, of course, is not alive, but still bears some resemblance to the human form; and if he had knowledge of the subtle laws of chemistry and the process of combining atoms, there is no doubt but what science could aggregate the entire substances that make up a human being, but could he breathe into that being the breath of life?

Materialization, then, is every form and appearance of a form which is not produced or created by the usual organic processes of nature.

Science is accustomed to imitating these forms and processes continually, and the super-science of Spiritualism merely comes in contact with another system of laws a little in advance of the laws known to science, and therefore more capable of controlling the inner principles of nature.

Galvanism applied to the human body can imitate some of the processes of life; galvanism applied to a structure which science can make can, automatically, perform some of the mechanical processes of life. Electricity in its application may also be made a motor power when a mechanism is used that shall imitate some of the motions of human existence.

Now, let science understand that beyond the degree to which she has gone there still is another grade and set of principles and laws which she has not yet reached, of which galvanism is a mere external form, and of which electricity is only one of the vibrations or motor powers, and she then has

a basis for the predicate of materialization. Any intelligence that can overcome the law of gravitation, without the usual visible contact of mechanical force, is, of course, capable of overcoming other occult and more subtle laws. Any intelligence that can disintegrate collective atoms and then renew them so that there shall be no perceptible disruption of the structure, can simulate the fibre of structure itself.

It is an established law in science that, while one substance and one equally tangible organism cannot occupy the same place at the same time, still that other substances besides those which are apparent may interblend with each other, pass through and into each other, and really interpenetrate the porous substances which are considered solid, in nature.

Electricity, excepting through non-conductors, penetrates almost everything. The subtler forces of magnetism penetrate even those solid substances, and those which are seemingly not conductors; and the whole universe, so seemingly solid, is filled with infinitesimal interstices that form the conducting avenues for all these subtle principles of life. Your thought passing out of this room does not necessarily have the door opened to enable it to pass; you can sit here bodily, and your thought can pass down the stairs into the street, along the way, and return from your dwelling, and no one is aware of this subtle process that is going on. Other substances besides thought, that are even more tangible, can perform that same journey, and yet no windows or doors be opened to admit them. Light itself passes through the most solid substances of transparent mediums. Glass does not impede it, hardness not being an impediment to light, but opaque substances that are very thin and seemingly lack great solidity make an impediment to light, while glass, which is one of the hardest substances, and the diamond which is crystalline, do not impede the ray of light in the least degree; thus showing that matter passes through matter, only that the substance must be of different degrees of density and hardness.

There is a law of atomic creation, or attraction, whereby in

organic bodies atoms of matter are held together. It is called the law of attraction, of cohesion. This attraction is what keeps the atoms of your bodies together. The substances gather together around any body or form, by its organic structure. If the attraction of cohesion can, therefore, be made between subtler atoms than those of which you are aware, there is the nucleus of an organization. The basis of materialization is, that it is the attraction of atoms that separately are invisible, but together may be made visible, and may imitate the structure of the human body, until they have every appearance of tangibility, weight, form, color, expression, and everything that belongs to the appearance of the human system, and this may have an animated appearance, by the presence of the spirit whose form is thus made material for your vision. As weight is only a relative condition, it is possible to make any object weigh more or less by the application of suitable atmospheres or laws. As specific gravity and attraction of gravitation belong only to the earth's atmosphere and the planetary system, and do not exist outside of the earth's atmosphere excepting in a mere infinitesimal degree, then the attraction of gravitation and specific gravity can be under the control of an intelligence that can intervene those laws and make them either appear to exist or not appear to exist.

The facts are better than any hypothesis. The lack of a theory in science to explain them is not the fault of the facts. Materializations do occur; it is the business of science to find out the laws. These materializations take on every appearance of human beings; are created for a time, and are dispersed at the end of a given time; come out of seemingly nothing; disappear again into nothingness, except where by special permission some piece of raiment or lock of hair is retained as a *souvenir* of the materialization. To deny these things is to dispute the testimony of witnesses of the highest veracity. To attempt to account for them without any adequate law or system of reasoning is absurdity. The process from the spiritual standpoint may be perfectly plain and

clear; the process from your standpoint may be as unknown to you as that of the formation of this flower. You do not dispute the flower because you do not know how it grows; it is simply an accustomed phenomenon. If you had never seen a flower before, and were told that all its form and color is the result of an invisible power of unfoldment, it would be a miracle. Had you never seen the sun's rays and their wonderful effect upon the sky and atmosphere, as visible to-day, it were a miracle. Had you never seen any of the usual or unusual manifestations of nature, for the first time they would appear miraculous. The reflection of prismatic colors in the sky was the ancient miracle of promise to the world. The subtle alchemy of life going on in various mineral and vegetable existences, was the token of sorcery. The laws of religion and mystery were intimately blended, and the sorcerer was merely a gifted man of science. The wonder-worker was he who, combining spiritual with material knowledge, could express the semblance of life to the astonishment of the ancients. We now have these forms of manifestation again. The world of science declares that sorcery, witchcraft, magic, &c., are at the foundation of them—not witchcraft in the theological, but merely in an external sense. While the theologian is fain to confess some forms of manifestation, he confines them entirely to agencies that are not to be named to ears polite.

However this may be, as we state, the facts are in existence. The theory of the fact is simple enough. Spirit is the vitalizing substance in the universe, not *vice versa*. Your spirit is the vitalizing substance of your body; because of its presence atoms are attracted, food is assimilated, atmosphere is inhaled, all the particles and properties of life are rendered vital and powerful. Remove that spirit, and your body is surely a lump of clay. Every chemical attribute and property may be there; every fibre and nerve and muscle and sinew and artery and vein, but not one particle of life. The organism is a splendid structure, but without a tenant is devoid of life. Take that spirit, however, separate from the

body, and it is alive; it has veins and arteries and form and configuration of its own, and with finer fibres and more delicate structure of etherealized substances that are not named in your external vocabularies, but are still in existence.

Now, it takes but one or two added grades of materiality to make that spiritual form palpable to the senses. Hence, this is the process of materialization—that a spirit is present at a given séance. Partly from the atoms surrounding the medium and those who are present, but chiefly the medium, who gives off what is known as psychic force, or nerve aura, this spirit attracts sufficient to make that spiritual form a tangible appearance. If there is a photograph desired, it requires much less materialization than for the human eye, because a photographic sensitized plate is much more sensitive than the physical human organization; but if it is for the human eye it requires perhaps two or three degrees of these accumulated atoms. When once the structure is fully formed there is, of course, no difficulty. Pulsation, weight, respiration, hair, eyes, all appearances may be simulated by the same process, since there is in the atmosphere about you, in solution, every property which the human system contains, and every property which the earth beneath you contains. You therefore see that it is only the building out of the structure from the spiritual to the material. Then, when the séance is concluded, all there is, is that these atoms revert again to the medium or to the circle from whom they have been drawn, and form a part of the vitalizing medium of circulation in your midst.

Supposing here is an electric battery. You require a certain amount of electricity to carry a message in a given direction; not that the electricity itself traverses that distance, but it requires that the wires shall be charged with the fluid; then communication is kept up by vibration.

Now, when once this form is fully created, the connection between the spiritual and the material world is kept up by continued vibration of atoms, and whether the materials be more or less perfect, whether it resemble or do not resemble

he departed friend, the fact of any shape, appearance, form, or tangible touch being given in this way, is evidence of materialization. When the image is perfect, when the resemblance is recognized, and when, as is often the case, there is every appearance of a full and beautiful human figure draped in the most delicate fabrics, it shows a perfection of chemical knowledge and atomic law that is absolutely unknown in your world, and of which you have not, as yet, even the key to the knowledge. The reason you have not the key is because scientific men commence with the outside structure and expect to work inward until they find the mind. If they begin with the spirit and work outwardly, they will not miss the connecting links.

The inverse process of materialization is de-materialization. Books, jewels, furniture, human beings, have passed into and out of rooms without any visible aperture. Coats, solid iron rings, cords, various substances have been removed from human arms and human bodies without any dis severing of the hands. The process which enables spirits to materialize, in its inverse statement enables them to de-materialize those substances already in existence.

The attraction of cohesion holds the atoms in any organic body together. If you cut your hand and press the flesh together before the atmosphere has disintegrated those atoms, you will find that there will be no shedding of blood, and that the life currents will continue almost instantly. If it were possible to do this even in serious wounds, before any change had taken place in the chemical properties of the blood, healing would almost be instantaneous. The severing of the fibres of the garment is only a question of rapidity; if they can be torn and put together again, dis severed and replaced, before the atmosphere has changed the quality or contact of the atoms, or, to use a favorite expression of scientific men, before the atoms have forgotten their contract, they will of necessity adhere again, as it is the nature of all substances to resume the place in which they have been existing, until that has been dis severed by the clear connection of other atoms. It is



also the tendency of all atoms to assume the form in which they have existed. Hence, it is easier with this spiritual process to renew the organic form or structure of walls, or clothing, or iron, than it is to move the bodies which intervene, because these are atoms, and the others are organic and exist in bulk. To the spirit the dis severing of this atomic connection is in no way difficult, nor its renewal. To you it is absolutely difficult, and you must resort to other connecting processes.

If there is a wound in your body, it takes time for Nature to restore the atomic structure, and even after that the scar still remains, showing the interruption of the original fibre; but this disintegrating of the substances of Nature is just as natural to the spiritual processes as the calling together of external forms and atoms.

Now, the possibilities in connection with materialization are, of course, to be measured only by the amount of knowledge that there is in the universe, and the condition of the matter to be employed.

The earth itself, science declares, is undergoing a gradual process of refinement, or trituration of infinitesimal and elaborate working, that makes the atmosphere finer, the substances more easily managed; all crudities are rapidly disappearing. The fact that the earth presents a finer surface than it did in the days of the mastodon shows this; the fact that in the carboniferous period rank vegetation and huge forms of life were visible that now are unknown, proves this; the fact that culture through various scientific processes improves orders of plants and animals; the fact that knowledge, when applied to the human system, can make the organism perform its function better and give a more perfect race of human beings; the fact that gradually the laws of outward science are overcoming those seemingly absolute elements, the earth, the air, fire and water, to make them and all that they hold in solution subservient to the wonderful province of man's will; the fact that man can materialize out of seeming chaos the various structures that make up his abode, his temples of worship, his shrines of art and learning—can make

ships sail over seas propelled by almost invisible matter, can make a message-bearer of that which was once one of the terrific gods of the ancient worshiper, can carry forward the vast processes of the enlightenment of the world by the simple clicking of a small machine—all these prove what power man has over external substances; and when added to these comes a knowledge of all those inner processes and laws, those elaborate and occult sciences that connect the inner with the outer world, the possibilities are unlimited.

Undoubtedly organic processes must remain on earth so long as human beings require this in their primary stage of existence, but it is not too much to say that, as the earth is not the oldest planet it is not the most advanced, and that it is quite probable that the system of organic laws which constitutes creation here is unknown in some of the older planets, where mind and matter are more directly in contact, and where there is never required the dull and slow process of organic life to create forms and substances and images in accordance with the will.

If you were aware of the subtle life that goes on in this flower, you could in a day, or hour, or twenty minutes, produce that which it takes all summer to produce, by a process of growth known to you. But you say these are natural laws. You might as well say that the stage-coach, or walking, are the natural methods of human propulsion. The natural method is whatever you can possess, and if human beings learn to fly, there is no law in nature which shall prevent them from exercising it.

The theory is that germination may go on more rapidly than that which you are accustomed to witness, else you would have no hot-beds, no greenhouses, no system of forcing nature. It would be at variance with the law of nature to have strawberries in April and May in this country, and it would be at variance with the law of nature to have roses in the house the entire year. You must not introvert the processes, but if you can always have roses without the usual atmospheric conditions, and if by a knowledge of these subtle

laws you can have flowers blooming in your presence throughout the year, there certainly is no law of nature to prevent it.

Spiritual beings will aid you, so far as is possible, but you must remember that between their knowledge and your ignorance is a vast step, and that some portions of the alphabet must be learned by you before they can teach you to read. This teaching comes by degrees. You must begin at the other end. Science has reversed the microscope and telescope to your vision, and you have been obliged to look at the stars through the magnifying glass that you should look at the insects with, and to look at the insects through the telescope. We mean, of course, spiritually and figuratively. The theologian would have you look at animated beings through his telescope; the scientific man would have you look at them through his microscope.

Now the truth is that there is a lens through which you can look at spiritual beings. It belongs to the spiritual nature of man. It has laws of its own and rules of its own, and these must be studied. You do not study astronomy in the crucible, nor do you submit the stars to the small investigations of the laboratory. What you desire is to study each system of science according to the laws that govern that system; when you study man's spiritual nature and its possibilities, you are to study it in accordance with the laws of his spiritual nature.

Faith is a great element of miracle-working, you are told; and science has declared that faith is blind and of no use, but we do not know a man of science who attains a single result but what does so primarily upon faith, faith in the laws of nature, faith in the infallibility of laws which he has investigated, faith in the certainty of results that will come about by a certain process of reasoning and investigation. If he had no faith he could do nothing. We do not know a human being who passes from one place to another without absolute faith. If they did not have that faith they would render themselves and others very uncomfortable.

The old lady—always the old lady, of course—who travels in constant terror of her life, between here and New York,

and has never been upon railways before, sometimes is excused for not having the most implicit faith in the flying machine called an engine; but the ordinary human being goes to and fro, night and day traverses the earth, explores, investigates, encounters perils, performs almost impossible feats upon the very basis of faith—faith in humanity, faith in one another, faith in the laws that govern any especial action; and you do not need to investigate the steam engine at every step of your journey or to ask the engineer to know that you will probably arrive in safety at your journey's end.

The same faith in a greater degree is required in spiritual laws. The absolute nature of the spirit, its permanence, its power of contact with light, everything invites us. You know that whatever mistakes *you* may make, the spiritual laws will not make any. You may know that whatever blunders you may make, and however bunglingly you may approach the shrine of investigation, the laws themselves are neither bungling nor will they make any blunders. You may know that the truth is there, that it only waits the conditions, and the magical hand of comprehension for you to understand it.

Two things are necessary to know the truth: one is, that it shall exist; the other is, that you shall be able to understand it. The child cannot walk. Infantile men or women of science cannot understand the most intricate problems. The laws that govern the spiritual and material worlds by their elaborate and subtle processes require patient research, careful investigation, absolute willingness on the part of the spirit to know the laws, and not to dictate them. We never knew that Herschel directed in which way the planets shall move. We never knew that Kepler dictated to science what she should reveal to him. We never knew that any human being, in search of the truth, commanded that truth should come in a given way.

If spirits are to materialize themselves, and you are to witness the best results of that materialization, it is your business to adapt yourself to the laws connected with them: not

to dictate the terms, not to decide how it ought to be, but simply strive to know how it is. If there be jugglery it will be exposed ; if there be trickery it certainly will be unvelled. There are always a sufficient number of self-appointed detectives in the world to ferret out any crime, and if there were not one, the crime itself would find itself out. There is that weakness in deception that it sooner or later weaves a mesh for its own revelation. There is that strength in truth that in spite of numerous so-called exposures it always comes out triumphant.

This is the spirit in which materialization should be sought. No marvel, no wonder-working ; nothing but the silent laws of the spirit, waiting for man to know them ; waiting for the recognition of the world, until forms shall appear, beings shall walk by your side, visible appearances shall be made known that will indicate the contact of the two worlds, and it shall be no more strange for a materialized form to appear in your midst than it is now for you to recognize and meet one another. You will change, the substances surrounding you will change before this takes place, but it shall be done. Now, it requires careful conditions, selected circles, the best kind of atmospheres ; it will then be a perpetual state of the world, and then men and angels will not be strangers to one another.



## THE FRATERNITIES OF DISEMBODIED SOULS.\*

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My theme this evening, friends, relates to the Fraternity of Associated Spirits in Spirit-Life. The text is: "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

The perception of spiritual existence is one thing; the existence of life beyond death is quite another.

There are many persons who exist after the decease of the body; there are very many who do not perceive spiritual existence, even though they live after the death of the body. If I come to Chicago and am intent upon works of art, I visit those places where works of art are to be found, and know very little of what the superficial world may have to offer; I perceive only such things as I am in pursuit of, and I could not for the life of me tell the records of what is passing upon 'Change, nor could I determine in any manner the latest scandal in fashionable society. If a man in love with mere diversion visits Florence or Rome, he would scarcely be interested in those wonderful works of art that form the basis of pursuit of the student and scholar, and he very likely would find the cities both insipid and dull, merely because he could see nothing in a tower or dome or in certain pictured walls to suit his advanced(!) tastes.

We see with our minds and the condition of our spirits; certainly not in any high sense with our external vision or the perceptions of our bodies. And therefore the spiritual world being more nearly a world of the condition of the mind,

is entirely one of perception. The condition of every spirit depends upon the degree of that perception. The surroundings being less arbitrary than those of material substance, the external substance itself being amenable to other laws than those that govern matter upon earth, you will find that each spirit describes the spirit-world into which he or she enters as being precisely in accordance with his or her highest idea of heaven, or rather perception.

I once had occasion to ask a countryman in Massachusetts what his idea of heaven might be. He said he had a dream once—that he died and went to heaven; and approaching a large red house, which seemed to him the perfection of architecture and taste, he inquired for the master. Everything about the house was spacious, and arranged in strict accordance with an ancient country farmer's mansion. He was informed that the master was away in the fields. He saw broadly cultivated acres and fruits growing in profusion, grain and all kinds of productions in the height of their growth. Presently he saw a man of immense dimensions (who would have appeared gigantic if he had not been so well proportioned) coming toward him; from his own feelings he interpreted this to be God. He, therefore, in abject fear, bowed down before this gigantic man, without making known what his errand might be, and awoke with the full consciousness that he had visited heaven and seen God.

I have seen other men, with larger culture and higher ideas, who had their image of heaven derived from their own minds as much as this man. Whether it be a throne of alabaster with walls of brass and gates of pearl, streets paved with gold and flowing with milk and honey, or whether heaven be, according to the Mahometan, a garden of paradise, where the Peri dwell and where Houris lavish all kinds of blandishments upon the happy and disenthralled Mussulman, it matters not; the ideal heaven is according to a man's spiritual perception, and he undoubtedly enters the state for which he is best qualified. Albeit there is a heaven for the dog-fancier; very likely he will enter a condition of spiritual existence

where his mind will still be in sympathy with his previous joys and pursuits. Albeit there is a heaven for the loftiest devotee, who enshrines his images in outward form and worships through sacerdotal rites and around altars emblazoned with emblems of external worship.

The heaven into which I entered was that which was latest upon my lips as a human being, the love of my fellow-man. I believe I can say that I have never cherished—at least I have no recollection of cherishing—a feeling of ill-will toward any human being. I believe that my effort in life was, so far as possible, to express that good will; and if ever I was indignant, it was at a lack of the expression of good will among men, not toward the individuals who failed in that expression. If I ever cried out against wrong, it was the wrong, not the wrong-doer; if I ever considered human beings worthy of chastisement, it was only the gentle chastisement of that love which burneth greater than fire, and scourgeth more than a fine scourge of colls.

In spiritual life, therefore, I was prepared to enter an abode of love. I had never the fear of God in my mind; I had no thought of wrath, nor vindictive punishment; I had no terror beyond that of my own shortcomings. I well knew that there were imperfections and faults in the spiritual nature; that surrounded with matter and with dust, the spirit had not been so active as it should have been, but I had striven to keep alive so far as possible the spirit instead of the letter of the Word of God. I had striven, so far as possible, to find out what that spirit might be, and instead of the external form of salvation, I had chosen to receive the spiritual meaning of Christ's mission on earth, his love for man instead of the wrath of God; and I believed that this love was equivalent to the uplifting of all human beings.

With this feeling I entered spiritual life. I did not expect the heaven of the Orthodox Christian; I did not expect a material heaven at all. I was quite prepared to enter a state of existence entirely different from my earthly state, and hoped that I would do so for this reason: That I found the earthly



body, its surroundings and its needs, sometimes an impediment to the spirit; and while quite necessary for earthly uses, I had imagined a condition of life where the body itself might be dispensed with, as any useless incumbrance may be when we have outgrown it, and I quite well remember that in my last moments I became aware of the uplifting of the spirit beyond the senses, that the body was falling off as husks or shackles might fall from the slave, that an external covering was being removed that admitted my spirit into its native element; and I can realize no greater change that could come to a human being under these circumstances than release from the physical body itself. The bird bursting the calcareous covering, and soaring at once into upper air; the butterfly bursting the chrysalis, and feeding on dew instead of groveling in the dust; the flame mounting out of the darkness in which it has been imprisoned for years, could scarcely be more sudden or a greater transformation than that which comes to the spirit of man willing to be disenthralled from the dust.

I do not say that this comes to every spirit. I do not say that the feeling of release is so sudden and so conscious in all human beings, but I do believe—and in this I may perhaps judge somewhat from what I desire more than from what is really the case—I do believe that every human being feels in a measure disenthralled by the change called death. I do believe that the worst conditions, spiritually, are in some degree benefited by that change. I do believe that the release from the outward body, which is the scene of passion and suffering, is in some measure a release to the spirit, whatever the condition of that spirit may be.

In my own case it was as I have described it. It was not that I was particularly glad to be away from earth; I found many things to employ me here. I found still the great field of social, religious and political life to be, as I thought, renovated. I found that the actual shrine of existence might remain in the external life for some time, and find ample work for the hands to do; but when once it was shown me that I

was to go, and when I saw that my necessary career was in the direction of spiritual existence, I as gladly sprung to that atmosphere as the caged bird would spring to his native heather; I as gladly entered that condition as I would have entered any place of intellectual, social or religious enjoyment that I had long aspired to, but never attained when upon earth.

We enter a drawing-room upon earth, and we find ourselves either at once in our own atmosphere, or in a strange element; if in a strange element we are obliged and endeavor to assimilate with it, and to find some one with whom we may converse in sympathy, or at least observe something that will interest. If we find ourselves at home, we can at once enter into the spirit of whatever conversation, amusement or recreation is passing around.

external states are, as we say, arbitrary; we are obliged to adapt ourselves to them on earth; in spirit-life we take our state with us. We enter that company and companionship for which we are best fitted. Our thoughts on entering are immediately known; we are recognized, and recognize one another without the formality of external introduction, or social inquisition. We are really among our spirit kindred, whether we have ever known each other on earth or not.

It is the blessing of spiritual existence that it removes external fetters; family lineage is not questioned. The spirit-record only forms the lineage that is to be considered. We are not questioned as to our individual beliefs on any given subject, since life itself is taken as a criterion of belief, and we are supposed to worship the gods we follow. I have known things to be different upon earth. I have seen men worshipping at the shrine of Mammon in every external action, and yet professing to worship another deity. I have known it to occur in human life that the profession was Christian, while the practice was largely Mosaic. It may be that these conditions on earth are only attempts at growth; but they certainly fail to express the profession of life, and make very

much of human existence an outward mask, in which men strive to appear what they are not.

In spiritual life this mask is necessarily removed ; if we are highway robbers, we enter the heaven of that kith ; if we belong to the more respectable class of robbers—those that in human life are considered respectable, because under the guise of society and law—we enter the condition of our kindred ; if we belong to a class of human beings that revere principles, and in our imperfect way strive to express those principles in outward life, we are also known and recognized as we are ; there is no disguise, since each one knows his or her own record, and is quite aware that one can be admitted to no company other than that for which one's spiritual state is fitted.

I therefore felt no discomfort on being admitted among the kindred and friends that surrounded me, among the minds that seemed to sympathize with the thoughts that I had held dearest upon earth, and among those whose thoughts had in some manner formed the basis of my external life and dreams.

I found social states entirely different from those on earth. By this I do not mean the actual social states which proceed from the affection of the mind and heart, but the laws governing society were from the very outset different. We begin at the external covering on earth, we attack society as you would a burr ; that is, a very rough exterior must be taken by main force. In some instances we attack it as a general does a fortress, and approach by parallel lines, and a series of tactics, that the ingenious man if he understands will well employ ; and that even discourages many honest men from attempting to enter the fort at all. Beginning on the outside of human beings, we necessarily in human life discover that which is worst in them ; they wear this upon the outside, whether they think they do or not, for if it be a mask that apparently is good, we still must probe that mask before we find the actual individual.

In spiritual existence we begin the other way. We find the heart and mind first, which saves much trouble and mis-

understanding. We are one with each other at once, or strangers. The chord of sympathy is at once struck, or is dumb. We understand that there is a common ground between us, or we know that there is nothing in sympathy. I have seen men of equal intelligence and learning sit in a company of earthly people who were enlightened and intelligent for three or four hours, and conversing together with never a thought in common, and with no more knowledge of each other than at the beginning.

If, as Talleyrand said, "words are given as a disguise for human thought," surely much of human society in earthly life is given as a shroud for human existence, and men and women are buried in the things that they vainly call pleasure, and social life is a mere masquerade in which they assume a guise that they fain would have their neighbors perceive to be true; and each of them despises the other for wearing it.

The thought of being recognized, the consciousness of being loved, and the fact that the spirit could not be mistaken, with an abiding trust and lofty hope, the endearing sentiment and power, made me aware that I had survived death, was alive, and drew to me the consciousness of those friends that had preceded me into spiritual existence. And now let me just here, in passing, say to those who pursue Spiritualism, who search for the hidden truth in Spiritual Philosophy: Do not seek for your friends in their outward garb merely; do not seek for father, mother, brother and sister as they *were* in their earthly estate, but only seek for them in the love which bound them to you, because all lesser things than this will have been swallowed up in their spiritual state; and in striving to join them do not strive to bring them down to your comprehension of external things, but rather to raise your comprehension to their new-found state. You will find it much more convenient; you will find it much more useful; you will find it much more truthful as far as spiritual life is concerned. The parent who passes from earthly life in a feeble state of health, and with a form decreasing in strength, vigor and activity, will not meet you, in spiritual life, in a

decrepit form or with enfeebled countenance, but as in the full prime of manhood or womanhood. The parents who are to you, even in old age, the representation of all that is sacred and dear, will come to you in the full vigor of middle life, as perfect in form and feature as though no finger of time had ever touched them here. If rounded in spirit and completed in those social qualities which adorn human social life here, they will meet you with the full radiance of that social life expressed in visage and in form, and at outward sight you would certainly not know them, but with inward perception you would feel them at once as your own. It is so in degree with every friend that passes into spiritual life; the external imperfection, if it be a physical one merely, passing away with the body, the spiritual imperfection only remaining, and that, if their natures be more aspiring than groveling, soon wears away in the new atmosphere of spiritual life.

I was struck immediately with the consciousness of being in a world or sphere devoid of mere personality, of self-interest. Now what I mean by this is, that necessarily, owing to the external requirements of the body, you are selfish here, even the most unselfish of men. The house that you live in you consider yours; the property that you aggregate around yourself is yours; the possession of things individually belonging to the individual, creates a sphere of selfishness, and the protection of this property produces in all social life a kind of self-interest in which each human being and each family are hidden from the social observation and intercourse of their fellow-beings in some measure.

Now, you can imagine that in entering a life where you have no dwellings to provide to keep you from the elements; where your clothing is the work of far other hands than of those that are employed to to-day and night to clothe you here; where your food consists of far other substances than those that must be won either by work of the hand or the speculation of the brain, and where, in reality, the outward is usurped by the inner nature—you must imagine that there is an entire reversal of the social methods; that whatever

Individuality a human being may possess he is not afraid of being robbed of that which is really himself. You are not afraid, when you lock your doors at night, that the burglar is coming to carry *yourself* away; you do not imagine that individually he would care to become possessed of such an incumbrance; but it is something that you are surrounded with—your goods, your chattels, your diamonds, your plate, your pictures—something that is extraneous to yourself which the burglar does not, perhaps, with a clear moral perception recognize as yours, and thinks he is entitled to it if he can only slip away with it. But in spirit-life everything that surrounds the spirit is as much a part of yourself as your body is here. While, then, you are removed from all necessity for protection against robbery and plunder, or innovation of any kind, there are consequently no inducements to that superficial and external kind of selfishness which constitutes the seeming necessity of outward life. If you could enter earthly society where the houses were all open, where there was perpetual summer, where children were playing to and fro among the flowers, where everything of adornment and beauty was visible, and not concealed, where all objects that met the eye were those of grace and comeliness, where kindly greetings, exchange of fraternal regard, ready sympathy and quick comprehension, were in every mind and heart, where every man who met every other man was as a brother, and all women sisters; where each and all conspire to make the others feel happy, where, if a source of knowledge or wisdom or joy came to one, he was not content without imparting it to all the rest, and where, like a steady breeze that blows in summer time, filling the air with odors of flowers from whence you know not, joy pervades the entire atmosphere, it would give you some idea of the harmonious social state of spiritual existences.

Each family, indeed, is isolated; there is, indeed, an individuality, but it is so sacredly regarded and so heeded that it is not even perceived. No person can invade the individuality of another. In fact, the spirit is its own protection, and you

can be as isolated in the midst of a million as though you were upon a mountain top, or a hermit in a cave. If there be something in your mind or spirit that requires solitude, there is no spirit among all your friends who would or could intrude upon that solitude.

The sanctuary is within the soul! The surroundings indicate that solitude is there. No invading hand or voice ever approaches until you desire it. But where there is nothing to conceal, where solitude is only for self-retrospection, self-benefit, where the thought of others is uppermost in the mind, and where ideas flow forever continually toward the benefit of one's kind, there can be little room for misanthropic meditations, little desire for loneliness, since prayer in this state of existence consists of activity, and the working of the mind toward others is found to be the chiefest instrument for aspiration and ascension.

The hermit who prays in soul, the recluse who seeks solitude, the misanthrope who separates himself from his fellow-beings, is an illustration of a kind of selfishness; but he who only seeks solitude that he may gain strength, he who desires to be alone that he may commune with the highest—with the Infinite—he that strives simply to benefit others by his communion and meditation, does not even find it necessary to separate himself from his spiritual associates and surroundings.

While, as I say, the charm of the family is still preserved, and the nearest and dearest are nearest and dearest still; while the mother folds her child, and the father embraces the darling that comes to him from earthly life; while the brother and sister, who are linked in spirit as well as with the ties of consanguinity, are still brother and sister, there is not only this family, but a larger family of all kindred minds and souls.

You meet in society, or in the world of contact with matter, occasionally human beings, and you will say to them, "I surely have met you before; you seem as near to me as a friend or brother." The kindred nature of your spirits flows

together, and you know one another without the formality of long social intercourse. After this manner you become associated in spiritual life—poets, philosophers, friends, artists, those who have loved a single truth, or been associated in the same effort; those who in different parts of the world have dreamed the same dreams, and looked out for the same glorious future for humanity; these are drawn into fraternities and associative bodies. They resemble, in a loftier degree, some of those friendly associations in Germany where every man seems to have the interest of every other man at heart more than his own selfish interest. I have seen some such associations in colleges. I have known of such friendly intercourse among those of some craft, or lik, or art, upon earth. I have known it to exist even among the orders of secret societies, but the trouble is that upon earth it is the external interest that binds them together, and not the flowing together of the spirit. It is like the membership of the church, that has the external form too often of brotherhood, but within is discord. And I know of no bond in church, in Freemasonry, in Odd Fellowship, in any outward order created by man, that can take the place of this sublime spiritual recognition that determines the order of spiritual relationship, and determines the fact of spiritual kindred by the nearness of spiritual perception and likeness to one another.

Having found my heaven; having determined it to be a condition of mind more than of place; having perceived that I could make my own surroundings, and that my spirit was indeed amenable only to the laws of its own growth, having such outward adornment only as was necessary for the spirit, not limited to time and space, and only such associations as I could take with me wherever I desired to go—I said, “I long to know more of the mysteries of this spiritual state, wherein the brotherhood of man is more clearly recognized, and wherein I can in some degree see the foreshadowing of what I hope may come upon earth.”

I beheld one whom on earth was called a dreamer; who gave incendiary thoughts to his time and age, and was de-



nounced as infidel and atheist because he believed in the brotherhood of man, and the love more than in the hatred of God and the condemnation of his fellow-men. I mean Rousseau. I beheld him in a fraternity of associated minds, surrounded by those who had either possessed kindred thoughts for humanity, or, stimulated by his words and works, had followed him as their idol and teacher. He seemed to me as a flame. He seemed as inspiring as an eagle. He seemed prone to fly into regions where no other being dared to follow, and yet return again to the conscious work of outward life. Oh, how his spirit flashed! How the air around him seemed to glimmer with transcendent light! How I knew that he had been shunned, vilified, ostracised upon earth! And I beheld there one who loved his kind and hated only tyranny, only those institutions of men that serve the ambition of tyrants and kings by blotting out human life and human liberty. There he was, and could you have seen the minds who surrounded him there; could you have seen how willingly they worked in accordance with his directions; could you have beheld that even as machinery, intricate and complicated, yet all fitted together turns the great motor power of the world, you would have seen that there in that one sphere is a social state equivalent to moving the whole planet of men, stronger than the strongest armies of united Europe, or of the whole world; stronger than the strongest physical force of every masked battery, of every invention of torture that man has ever dreamed of—the one moral power of a single mind round whom other kindred minds are centred, for the purpose of breaking down upon earth physical power and social wrongs.

I did not find him alone great among these minds: I found there many great and risen ones—philanthropists, poets, those who have shed their light upon earth; and linked with them, even far away into the classical periods of time, I beheld other souls whom the world has worshiped as great. I need not say that I found that there were even more modern exponents of the associative effort of man upon earth, at-

tempting to make in external life the semblance of spiritual fraternities. I need not say that in one of the more recent groups I found Robert Owen, the English philanthropist, and he who, perhaps more than any other man of this period, engrafted upon the English working-men's minds the necessity of associative effort.

I said: "In what consists the seeming failure on earth of associative bodies of men for fraternal purposes?" I remember the benign visage and hesitancy, as though he felt unequal to answering the question, when Mr. Owen said, "I am at a loss for any explanation other than that which met me in the face when I first attempted this experiment in my native land."

He said: "I mean the selfishness of humanity. I am at a loss for any other explanation than that the moment external matters of business are considered, human beings forget that they are brothers."

"But," I said, "there surely must be a deeper reason than this?" And with this there came out of the sphere in which Rousseau dwelt, one who seemed competent to answer the question. I did not know him, but some one said, "This is Fourier, the French socialist, the leader of a large class who in following or striving to know that which Plato grasped in his time, fell into the revolution of a period of thought that was not ripe for his plan upon earth."

He said: "I know the reason. It is that the external alone has been sought for in associative efforts. Men begin at the wrong beginning. They make property, education, external things, the basis of associative effort. The only fraternity is that of spiritual kinship. Let any class of beings associate together from the love of one idea, and while that idea binds them they are harmonious. Take the religious ideas and orders of the world: when pervaded by them, those who associate together are harmonious. It is only when external matters intervene that they cease to work together. Take all associative efforts based upon religion, and for zeal and bigotry men will do more than they will for their kind. Now,"

he said, "if we can only have a religion that embraces humanity, and teaches the worth of human life at the very foundation, we shall have associative efforts enough upon earth. There has never been a religion except in individual and isolated cases that has been sufficient to overcome the love of external power, whether it be of kingship, priestcraft or wealth.

"When this religion pervades mankind; when some high sentiment like that of art, poetry and music combined shall take possession of the soul; when the thought itself shall be centred upon humanity as the great power, and upon human brotherhood as the heart and soul of its religion, we shall have associative bodies of men upon earth. Foreshadowed by these minds, attempted in many ways, experimented upon in reference to social plans, and plans of religion, no effort of human beings at conquering outward selfishness has been a failure. Every one I consider to be a stepping-stone toward the higher fraternity that shall surely come."

Secret societies, bonds of brotherhood having any relation whatsoever, I consider to be the prophecies of the coming time. The only reason I object to secret societies is that they do not include everybody, and if I ever have an order, or establish one, I should certainly have it include the entire human family. Then it may be as select as you desire. But certainly any one upon any basis, or that predicates the brotherhood of man, making that as its foundation, is to me, and has been during my entire life-time, an indication or a prophecy for the future.

In spiritual life you will well understand there is no rivalry between artists, no jealousies among poets, none among philosophers; and as for millionaires their wealth is nothing, since they have left that behind them upon earth.

There is consequently none of the stimulus to outward emulation, and selfishness gradually comes to be dropped off, as one would drop off a worn-out and useless garment, of which he is always ashamed.

In spiritual associations, also, there is the constant stimulation that the more active we are for others the nearer do we

seem to be to that kingdom of happiness of which we are in pursuit, and the consequence is that one soon learns to forget whether he is in heaven or not, whether he is seeking his own salvation or not, by the consciousness that he is striving every day and hour to do something that will ameliorate the condition of others.

The working-men of England, of this country measurably, of France, of Germany, of all Europe, feel the mighty force of that power that is sweeping in from the sphere of these so-called communists, and, feeling it, are uplifted by it, and although upon them is no blame of the bloodshed that was seen in France, we must remember that riot and confusion follow tyranny, and are born of it, and are not born of association any more than insurrections among the slaves were born of freedom. We must remember that if there be violence at the breaking out of the efforts toward fraternal association, it is not the fault of the principle, but only of the state of darkness that precedes it.

I perceived other associative bodies for other purposes. It seemed to me that art was one, and that a whole sphere of kindred minds was linked together around the great soul that planned St. Peter's, and that he, having outgrown his ambition, his jealousies of all rivals, sat in the midst with his three-fold power of genius, while many more with him, among whom were Raffaele, Da Vinci, and a host of others who seemed to move in harmony together, working for higher aims—what might be their art now? No papal power for which another dome was to be fashioned; no churches to be ornamented with Madonnas, each one wearing the face of some mother in Italy; no babes, infant Christs, to be pictured for the homage of the world and the admiration of all lovers of art! What could they be painting now? Along the vistas of time, and as if in panorama, I beheld their work, and I saw how upon kindred minds they had pictured hope when despair was nigh; faith when they had been lost in darkness; love when human hatred had condemned them to despair; and I could behold beautiful images, more beautiful than any

which adorned the classical scenes of Rome or Florence. Oh, such pictures of human hearts that had outgrown their anguish, of human souls released from the misery of despair and the despotism of fear of death—such pictures as Raffaele alone could paint, whose mind, intent upon the love of one human being, forgot that he ever painted a picture which was worthy the consideration of man! Did he not paint for *her* eyes alone? did he not toll for the infant upon her knee? and was it not this inspiring love that uplifted him to heaven. Danté—did he care for the divine poem that he wrote, that through all time has been the study of students and philosophers? Nay; he cared only for that one image, uplifted above all others, enshrined within his heart, she who led him on, the saint of his worship, the idol of his life—Beatrice! And that worship and that love made him superior to other souls who are impoverished of love here and who have no divine image to turn to.

Was it not the mother of Christ that taught all human mothers to bear their anguish in silence? Was it not Christ, the elder brother of men, who gave to humanity the one living image of self-sacrifice that they might be uplifted and sustained in every sorrow?

Shall we only paint pictures upon walls? and build temples that can crumble to dust? I tell you that I saw a temple in that artist sphere that no time can cause to crumble, and no human hand demolish, fashioned of human lives, so perfect and so rounded that each pillar was engraven with a life, and every image was an image of loveliness. I saw mothers enshrined there, no carven images of stone, no painted images upon canvas for men to worship, but the living images of Magdalenes, disenthralled of souls, risen out of despair and desolation, whom the tortures of life had misled, but who were there released.

I saw divine and sacred shapes of art and religion, but they were no lifeless things; they were living beings, pulsating, palpitating with the breath of life, and placed in their own sphere, performing their work there, each one a portion of

the living temple which the great Master Artist has fashioned in another sphere than that of Rome.

Oh, could you see that dome! Could you behold the images that were adorning its walls! Could you see the life-current flowing to and fro, that vibrates to no melody save that of love! Could you hear the music of voices all in sweet accord that have no sound save that which breathes of peace and harmony! Could you know that not one chord of human sympathy is lost! that not one love-note is broken! that not one tie is extinguished! Could you behold the risen and created forms that are grown glorious and beautiful in that far off clime, you would say that all the art of earth sinks into insignificance, that here is the divine fellowship and the divine hand that links them all together.

I will not multiply. These are but typical spheres of thousands of others that I have visited, thousands where no thread of human life is lost, where no hope has perished, where no day-dream is forgotten, where no lofty aspiration for humanity is ever doomed to disappear; all are gathered in golden links of perfect shining chains into those spheres of life, and represent the possible of man!

To bring some portion of this divine atmosphere, to uplift you to that height and the structure of these divine temples that are imperishable, to make your lives a portion of that spiritual existence that shall fashion for humanity on earth that which souls have fashioned in spirit-life, is some portion of my errand among you.

If from the sphere of fraternity, which embraces thousands of associative bodies, I have given you one gleaming hope, so that the captive in the dungeon cell, the prisoner in chains, the soul enshrouded in fear of death, or he who walks the earth the victim of despair and melancholy shall be in any measure lightened of his burden, then I am satisfied.

This is my errand of love, and as I go I repeat my text, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."



## JOHN WESLEY'S SEARCH FOR HEAVEN.



"The kingdom of heaven is within you." "In my Father's house are many mansions." "I go to prepare a place for you."—*Words of Jesus.*  
"I saw a new heaven and a new earth."—*Revelations.*

I greet you, brothers and sisters, with the benedictions of the spirit. I come to you with a message of actual life in another region and another state of being. I describe to you the inward and outward conditions of that life. I expect of you nothing save your attention and hearing, and such conviction as may come if my testimony seem valid to you. Whatever is born of the spirit of truth survives.

I lived long enough after the advent of the Protestant religion to outgrow some of its severities; long enough to know that the faith of Luther was not a final faith, and the severity of Calvin was not the severity of God. I lived long enough to recognize in the gentle admonitions of Christ, our teacher and my Saviour, the truth concerning the spirit; and not all the terrors of the evangelical church, nor the established form of worship in the country of my nativity and ministration, could lead me to the supposition that Deity was other than a God of love. I found in him a father; in Jesus a teacher, a brother, a friend.

So far as my education would permit, I taught this; and you will bear me witness that it was a gentler ministration than that which preceded me.

Whatever may have come of those teachings upon earth, I recognize now that I was well prepared for the consciousness of the spiritual life into which I entered. I did believe in the ministration of angels; I did believe in the companionship of the dear departed; I did believe that the sounds, and forces, and mysteries, unexplained by any form of religion in the world, were to be explained by spiritual and not by mundane influences; and I did believe that hovering all around the pathway of earthly life, accompanying the good and the evil, acting upon human life for good or evil, the departed ones were ever nigh. I did believe that the future life was a state of gradations of existence, and not one unqualified condition of happiness or misery.

It is true that I believed in a place of eternal torment, and it is true that I believed in a place of absolute happiness for those who were saved; but I tried to think that those who would be ultimately condemned were few, and I tried to suppose that all of mankind would finally in some manner enter the abode of the blessed.

With this qualification I entered spirit-life, after such ministrations as you are aware of; and with these thoughts uppermost in my mind I was prepared to find many mansions in the Father's house. I did expect, however, because of my belief, of my salvation through Christ Jesus, of the consciousness of that salvation, to be admitted into his presence. I did expect that the heaven of the Christian, the true believer, was a special place, a habitation set apart from all the rest, where we would have sweet repose. I did not believe in an eternity of idleness, but I supposed that our ministrations would continue to those upon earth, but that in heaven itself we would have repose, tranquility, utter freedom from the cares and trials of earthly life.

In my pursuit of heaven I found much of it on the lower earth, much of that happiness which comes from the consciousness of doing one's duty, much of that condition of the kingdom of heaven which I believed that our Master intended we should possess here; and when I repeated the prayer of



the Lord, I believed it possible for that kingdom to come on earth, and that we each could assist in bringing about that kingdom, by our lives, actions, and teachings, to our fellow-men. I believed also that the state in which souls existed beyond death was a condition or state adapted to themselves.

On my admission into spiritual life I did not pass at once to the kingdom of Christ's heaven. I was not admitted into the kingdom of those divine apostles, with whom I expected at least to have something in common. I did not at once see my heaven, my Christ, and my kingdom around me. I looked for it, as men are prone to, too literally. I looked for it too much after the manner of the senses. I expected Christ would come and welcome me to the companionship of the just and good, as having served him, though I was aware of my unworthiness in every human sense; but believing in the justification by faith as well as works, and believing that prayer had wrought wonders in my own nature, as well as having given somewhat of my life to this truth, I could but believe that the faith which was in me had exalted me to a condition where I would abide in the presence of those whom I revered, and where Christ Jesus would bid me welcome.

Instead of this, on my admission into spiritual existence I found myself, as I expected, surrounded by friends who had been waiting my coming, and who, it seems, had prepared for me a welcome. I found those of my own family and fireside, my own country and belief; and these gathered round as if to receive a message from me, when I was just admitted into the condition of those who had departed from earth-life. The message that they wished to receive was one of ministration. I said, "How can I minister to these who have passed beyond the earthly life long since, and to whom I come for ministration, and who I expect will be my teachers?" But they said: "We are devoid of teaching save from our own thoughts. Give us of the ministrations that you were wont to give upon earth." I communed with myself for a time to discover whether I had a message for these disembodied

spirits who had received me into their kingdom, and who had nothing to give to a new-born soul who had just entered the spiritual state. I could find nothing save the thought of the love of Christ, nothing save that which had uplifted and sustained me in my dying hour; nothing but the consciousness that somewhere, in the heaven of heavens or in the vast eternity, that which I sought would be found. I commenced teaching them from this standpoint. I commenced telling them of the profound love and faith that I had in Christ, and I commenced to point out to them somewhat of what I believed to be the actual inheritance of the Christian, to which some of them replied: "But we have not found this heaven; this kingdom has not come to us, and Christ has not appeared in our midst." "Nevertheless," I said, "I believe he will come."

Looking thus for heaven externally, and teaching the kingdom of heaven spiritually, you may judge, friends, that I was not prepared for that which came to me.

Presently, in the guise of an Oriental priest—I should judge one of the Magi of the East—there came a spirit seemingly adorned with great power and splendor, and he stood in my presence. I could not recognize in him the Master whom I sought, although his presence was full of commanding power, and his appearance one of transcendent loveliness. I said: "Do you come to lead me to my Master, and these my friends?" He says, "You are in pursuit of heaven. Will you come with me?"

We traversed what seemed to me interminable spaces, with great rapidity; whenever I faltered my guide or director seemed to have the power to will me to proceed with him. We passed, so near as I could judge, far toward the southern heavens, in the direction of the Southern Cross, which constellation is not visible from this point of the earth or northern latitudes. We entered a region of very great splendor and light, so bright that I never saw upon earth any noon-day sun beginning to compare with it, and I never beheld such luminous particles of atmosphere. He said: "I will

shade your vision, that it may not be too bright for your gaze." Every object around us seemed resplendent with this transcendent brightness of the sun's rays, and yet no sun was visible, and no particular orb, only that this atmosphere seemed to extend in vast sweeping circles beyond, around and above us.

As we entered I saw innumerable beings whose forms were perfectly transparent, and who also were lighted by this same luminous power. These also had the garb of Oriental nations, and appearance of Oriental continents. I said, "Surely this is no heaven that I am in pursuit of, since these are all strange faces. I recognize none of my own kind or nationality." We passed on. They all seemed intent upon weaving light, and as they wove these meshes of light, making various motions and gesticulations, I could see that the space far beyond grew more and more luminous, and that wherever we went there were circles of these beings, with seeming incantations weaving meshes of this light.

We entered nearer and nearer to what seemed to be a centre in this singular realm, and wherever we passed there were still beings, groups of twelve or twenty-four, and finally I beheld innumerable ones; so great was the number that at last I ceased counting, and only watched the motions that were all pulsating in harmony, clad with greater radiance than before. Each new group seemed circling around some centre of light; and at last I beheld what baffles language to describe—an orb of splendor, pulsating in every artery and vein with a fire in which was enshrined, as within a dazzling sphere of light, a being, angel or God I could not tell. There were wings of fire sweeping out from this sphere; there were pulsations that radiated to every circle that I had passed through, and seemed to direct and guide their motions. The space illumined by this wonderful being seemed limitless, and the power extending therefrom seemed to govern worlds and systems.

I said, "What is this? Here are countless myriads of beings seemingly engaged in no other work than toying with sun-beams. Here are silent and voiceless, innumerable powers,

that have countenances of splendor, radiating light, yet from whom I receive no sound of voice or recognition."

Then the attendant who had come to me smiled and said, "This is the heaven of the Egyptians. This is the angel Osiris, who presides over them. We are millions upon millions of leagues away from the earth. There are myriads of beings drawn into this heaven, and these idle motions and incantations that you see are the beginnings of worlds, the fibres of thought that finally reach space and act upon atoms, producing suns and systems of splendor."

"Am I to dwell here," I said, "who have no knowledge of Osiris? who do not know the meaning of these movements? who cannot worship at this shrine?"

"No; but this is heaven," said my guide, "and these whom you see seemingly employed in idleness are engaged in the majesty of creative power. They worship at this shrine; they have been led hither by their Deity, and these are their fructifications."

I thought of Christ, of Calvary, of the blood which was shed for the world, and I said, "How can these beings be saved, or in heaven, without the intervention of Christ Jesus?" He said to me, in a very solemn voice, "Truth was before Jesus. God was with eternity, and these were his children. What time they came from the earth, no man had heard the name of Jesus breathed. Their message was a message given of fire and flame, of power and creative life. They passed on into the world or atmosphere that they themselves had fashioned, and here they dwell and perform the work of their Deity. But if this does not satisfy you," he says, "we will pass on."

We seemed to pass through this sphere, that occupied leagues of space with innumerable beings, into a mild, charmed light, as charmed as that light that hovers over the southern tropical climes of the earth at sunset; as beautiful and clear as the most crystalline atmosphere you ever have beheld upon earth, yet softened by an interpenetrating light, half dreamy, half lovely, that absorbed the spaces.

Here I saw another wonder. There were souls ensphered, each seemingly in an orbit of its own, but without any form that I could discern. I could see the spheres move, could almost feel the pulsations of their thoughts, but I could arrive at no forms, only sphere upon sphere, moving and pulsating.

I said, "What are these? Planets?" "Nay, these are souls." These revolved always, moving with harmonious accord, around centres that were grouped each in their turn around larger centres, until we arrived at a centre that seemed to fill all space, and yet was a centre. There was no form, no presence, nothing but a sphere of this mild and subtle light. The most visionary thoughts, the most transcendent dreams, the most abstract visions of song and poesy, the most remote and absolutely unsubstantial creations, passed through my mind as I entered this sphere. I felt one with the absolute. I could almost hear the beating of God's heart, so intense was this absolute feeling. At last it became painful, because of the silence and because of the unanimity.

"What is this?" He says, "This is the heaven of the Brahmin, who worships in silence, having upon earth given to the three-fold deity, Brahma, Vishnu and Siva, his devotions. In this heaven, where Brahm abides, there is no praise, no adoration, no prayer, no vocal utterance. The soul is absorbed into the central life, and all move harmoniously together."

"And have these spheres, that seemingly have no human shape, conscious intelligence?" I said.

"Ay; not only so," he says, "but they are conscious in a diviner and more absolute sense than any thought of consciousness that humanity has ever had upon earth. They are conscious of the nature of things in their essences. Truth is no longer broken to them; they are not in doubt upon any subject; they have reached the final solution of all external expressions, and abide as the conservators of the spiritual essences of the universe.

"These are those who worship not with deed and word, but

who abide as central souls, round which other souls in more broken fragments, and in other worlds, seem to revolve."

And I saw with amazement that this vast and innumerable throng of spheres were moving harmoniously to a mighty purpose; without voice, and without praise, and without sign, were absolutely guiding distant regions of thought, reaching souls that were far away, and by subtle powers of silence imparting their life and splendor thence.

"But this is not the kingdom of heaven which I sought. I cannot comprehend it; it is too vast; take me elsewhere."

Branching out from this in three directions there seemed sub-spheres. There were active beings, engaged in all kinds of occupations that pertained to the spirit, ministering to one another, ministering to those that seemed in distress and doubt, engaged in different kinds of labor as if rearing habitations; employed in various errands to different planets, as though they were message-bearers from the inner sphere which we had visited. I said, "What are these three sub-spheres that seem to branch out from this centre?"

"Those are the followers of Buddha, the reformer of the Brahminical faith, who taught the practical expression of their religion in deed and word. These are the message-bearers from the inner shrine of Brahm. These are those restless spirits who seek to do the work of the Infinite, and therefore must be constantly employed. Therefore they minister; therefore they teach; therefore they build habitations; therefore they have a kingdom of heaven which constitutes labor and the constant employment of their thoughts in doing something."

"But is not what they do valuable?" I said.

"Most certainly," he answered me. "They must minister to those who are beneath them, and as in all the worlds and spheres of spiritual life there are many millions of beings less enlightened than they, they are constantly employed."

"But," I said, "is this their heaven?"

"This is the heaven of the Buddhist," he answered; "he worships inly at the shrine of Brahm, but you will see his al-

tars here to the three-fold deity, expressing the various forms of creation, preservation and destruction; he worships at these shrines."

Then I said, "There seem to be more altars to the deity of destruction."

"Certainly," he said; "those who fear evil powers always worship them the most. The good is supposed to be invulnerable and will perform its office; the evil must be propitiated. So they bowed before the shrine of Siva, they still gave their offerings, still endeavored in some manner to propitiate the destruction of the universe, fancying these were the results of the deity which they worshiped."

But I still felt a longing for the quietude and the kingdom of heaven that I had pursued. My guide perceiving this, led me still further.

He says, "You wish to go still further." And I went to where, reclining upon a mountain side, seemingly having watch over the distant valley, a kingly form seemed to abide, and all around in the valley were shepherds watching their flocks, and kingly tents denoting encampments of those that were in some degree building a tower. I noticed the utmost order and symmetry in the arrangement of these encampments, and that the tents were grouped in exact relationship to the degree of power which the leader might possess; so that the highest upon the mountain slope seemed to be the king and leader of all.

I said, "Who are these, with patriarchal tents, keeping watch of flocks and herds?"

"These are the children of Israel, still journeying toward the promised land, and who expect that the New Jerusalem is to come when their king and messiah shall come to lead."

"And do they," I said, "still refuse to believe in the messiahship of Christ; and do they still pursue their wonted avocations, as though upon the lower earth?"

"Certainly," he said; "out of the elements of space they surely can fashion the group of mountains that you perceive, and their heaven is located conveniently above Jerusalem, so

that when the destruction of the earth and the wicked shall surely come, they can descend and inhabit it, which they fully expect to do."

"But," I said, "the patriarchs are not here surely; the leaders and inspired prophets, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, are not here?"

"Oh, no, they are not here; their belief and spiritual power has ripened into a far other heaven than this; into other kingdoms of thought they have advanced; but these are the literal followers of the kingdom of heaven, according to the Mosaic dispensation, the Jewish Rabbis, those who have taught from time immemorial the actual resurrection of the good, the destruction of the wicked, and the occupation of the earth in the New Jerusalem by those who are to be blessed."

"A long time will they wait," said I, "before that advent occurs."

"You are not sure," he says, "since you do not know by what signs and tokens they may have judged. Be not too sure; they may return to earth, may inherit the kingdom, for aught you know; though doubtless in a different form from what they imagine."

This likewise seemed a vale. I was charmed with the pastoral beauty and quietude, the patient waiting of these people, who seemed so satisfied to wait until their king and messiah should come. I said, "Have they no temples of worship?" "Certainly; above Jerusalem is an exact prototype of the temple in which they did worship; the temple that Christ saw the destruction of; the temple that was destroyed; and these with skillful manipulation and spiritual power have made its prototype in the heavens which they occupy, to answer the purpose until their king shall reëstablish them upon the earth. So on every day of fasting and worshipping they repair to this temple with all due observances, gathering from their scattered people upon earth such fragments of strength as will give them force and encouragement to wait, while they only believe that the time will come when their saviour shall come to earth."



"Then," I said, "are there no other heavens?"

"There is a place," he said, "that I should like to have you visit, but I will first take you to other spheres."

I passed through what seemed to be a narrow belt of half luminous ether, separated from the patriarchal heavens of the children of Israel, and came within sight of the earth itself, although I am quite sure it was many thousands of leagues away; but I seemed by some power to be able to discover that this track, into which I had entered, had connection with certain countries of the earth, and especially could I see that it had connection with Southern and Western Europe, and with America. "This," said he, "is the heaven of the Protestant Christians." Here I noticed there were various divisions, as though each was careful to exclude the other; subdivisions, as though each was anxious to keep its heaven to itself.

I said, "What is this? Surely among brethren there can be no such divisions into creeds since they have passed from earth!"

"Certainly," he says. "Over there are the Baptists, yonder the Presbyterians, the Calvinists yonder, and all denominations distinctly represented, while more remotely, as you will see yonder, are the followers of the Roman Catholic faith, who have a heaven of their own, a state barred and walled about that no Protestant can ever enter."

I was shocked and amazed, and I said, "Does Christ dwell here? and are these my brethren?"

"Christ does not dwell here," he says, "because by their very pursuit of the kingdom of heaven they have shut him out; these walls that you discover are the barriers of their own creeds. They have hemmed themselves, their families and friends within these walls, and now are praising Christ, and singing hymns, expecting that he will come."

"What do they do?" I asked.

"They employ their time in singing praises to God, and in praying that Christ Jesus shall come to them."

I said, "Do they do nothing for others?"

"Oh no; theirs is the ministry of self; they sought the kingdom of heaven for their own happiness, and not for the happiness of others; how, then, shall they minister until they have found the kingdom which they sought?"

And I said, "Do they never visit the earth?"

"Never; they believe not in angelic visitations. If it were taught them they would scorn the idea. They are in pursuit of rest. How shall they labor when they have passed into the kingdom of rest, and of singing psalms and praises to the Most High?"

And I saw surely that these minds seemed dwarfed; their very appearance was that of pigmies. I could discover that they rotated merely in an orbit of selfish aims, for the ambition merely of the kingdom of heaven; that their object was salvation for themselves and their friends; that these different walls were as impassable as though they had been made of the solid substances from earth. "Oh!" thought I, "can I not go among them and show them that this is not the way?"

"Wait a while," said my guide, "I will tell you afterward; but there is another heaven into which I will introduce you."

We passed through and beyond this, where I really recognized many whose faces were familiar on earth, many whom I had supposed were saved, many who had pursued salvation with a vigor and earnestness such that I thought it would not fail, and they believed themselves saved. They are abiding in the narrow compass of that small domain. I shall never forget their shrivelled and half-starved appearance, the mournful monotony of their singing, and the constant expectant longing look with which they greeted every newcomer. We seemingly passed unobserved among them and on. We entered a broad arena, evidently far removed from that heaven or that sphere; into which there seemed to centre various hues of converging light, all transparent, all representing different figures, and signs and tokens, but seemingly as soundless as the universe itself. Here were arches, triangles, circular forms, various groups of temples, grottoes, mosaic towers, every imaginable shape and device of religion, or

science, or art; and here were groups of people occupied in various ways, as though with one another, intent upon companionship and conversation.

I could see over upon a slight eminence a group of people surrounding what seemed to be a teacher, guide and friend. I said, "Who are these beings? They do not seem to be tethered and bound in any special way, but who, intent upon some object of the mind, or employment, seem to radiate light all around them, and seem to be fully free to come and go."

He said, "This is the heaven of the disenthralled souls; those who have no special manner of salvation; those who have come through no creed or dogma into the kingdom of heaven, but who by their self-abnegation, by their thought and love of humanity, by their desire to benefit others, have risen to this heaven. This is the second or interstellar sphere of the heavens of the earth. There are spirits from other planets here, also, who emerge by virtue of their development into this condition, and who are only too happy to communicate through this sphere their information or knowledge to others."

I said, "Are these of Christian lands?" "Of all lands beneath the sun, and of all faiths and beliefs; of all countries and climes, and nearly all the worlds that you see in space. These are beings who move in response to the thought that is within them; who have the evidence and light and power of truth, and who, without any especial limitation to that power, have sought only the benefit of others."

I saw, as we approached, a luminous body gathering around a centre, within which there seemed a radiant form teaching and instructing them; and ever and anon the vast multitude swayed and moved around this form, and messengers were sent hither and thither, as though in obedience to the mandates from the centre. I saw women clothed in spotless white, whose countenances were radiant with self-sacrifice. I saw little children bearing lilies and white flowers, as though intent upon some errand of mercy; they sped downward to-

ward the earth, and ever as they came back they came laden with burdens and laid them down at the feet of this teacher.

I said: "Who are these, and why are they hurrying hither and thither, as though intent upon some sublime mission?" By some sudden spell I was drawn toward them, when lo! with matchless countenance, with benign visage, with instruction that was familiar to the outward ear, and still more familiar to the consciousness, I saw the Son of Man standing in the midst of this heaven without a name, where no Christian, no Hebrew, no Buddhist abode, but where the souls of all men who had won that fight seemed to congregate.

I bowed me down in great humiliation and asked if I might be a message-bearer from this heaven.

My guide departed. I was left standing in the midst of a group of little children, who each came forward offering me a flower, and said, "Go, if you know any one who is sorrowing, and leave a flower at his hearthstone."

I have been bearing messages, performing this work. Tonight I lay the offering upon your hearts; I ask you to know that the kingdom of heaven which I found was not in any place or sphere or orb of existence, but abides here within my spirit, and takes me wheresoever my work takes me, into the lowliest places of earth, into the furthest planet that you can see, where, ever intent upon the work of my master and my guide, I go to bear a blessing to those who sorrow; and this night above death, beyond the heaven that encases and envelopes those who have only their own salvation in view, I conjure you to seek the kingdom of heaven by no selfish pathway, but only lay your first offering at the first human shrine that needs it, and Christ, the Man of God, will bless you, and the multitudes who are the companions of the abode in which I dwell will smile upon you because of that offering.

## JOHN WESLEY'S FAREWELL TO EARTH.

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### INVOCATION.

Omnipotent Spirit; Infinite Parent of all souls; thou divine and perfect source of life; thou friend of the friendless; thou light to the darkened spirit; thou knowledge and thou comprehension; thou divine and potent love! From the earthly life darkened with human oppression and sinfulness; from the spirit-world illumined by somewhat of immortal radiance; from the angelic hosts that proclaim thy praise in the whiteness of their lives, the voice of adoration goes upward and outward unto thee. Not alone in the syllabled words of human speech; not alone in the offerings at Christian shrines; not alone where men bend the head in praise appointed of man; but wherever a lowly spirit desirous of life and light bends in meditation or prayer; wherever lofty aspiration possesses the soul; wherever divine deeds of charity and goodness illumine the pathway; wherever compassionate words and actions fall—there men praise thee.

In the shrine of the human spirit, before the altar of that divine soul which is like thyself, we bend and bow, giving our offerings of praise, giving our ministrations and aspirations, asking thy spirit to preserve and consecrate, asking that each meditation may grow more lofty, that each thought may grow more supreme; that the whiteness of life may blossom out into truth and love and goodness, and that the earth may behold the manifold tokens of thy presence and power:

The signs that thou hast inscribed upon the heavens, the starry tokens of thy law in the firmament above and in the earth beneath, tokens of thy power in the inspirations of past ages, the words of prophet, the vision of seer, the evidence of the Messiah—all things revealed by the inspirations of past prophecy; tokens in the present: Thy life illumining the upper sky, ministrations and visitations of angelic powers, the spirit poured out upon the earth for the regeneration of man. The word of battle is bidden to cease; the word of conflict to be overcome, and men are bade to war with each other no more.

Oh thou spirit of ineffable light! Oh thou divine truth! Kindle in every soul this fervent flame; let the aspiration, the thought, the prayer, abide forevermore; and may thy spirit minister unto all, even as the spirit of truth abides forever and ever.

#### THE LECTURE.

The eye of man hath not seen, the ear hath not heard; nor hath it been given to the heart of man to comprehend in earthly life the glory of the celestial home.

Could you with one glimpse behold the place in which my spirit abides, could you see the thought and aspiration that enkindle those who are there found, and then witness by contrast all the suffering, the crime, the outward misery of earth, you would say: Between this and that estate there can be no connection; no possible attainment can give to man that brightness, that glory, that light which is beheld; and yet, like you, every soul inhabiting that abode has trod upon the earth; like you every one has come up through great tribulation; like you they have borne the penalty of external life, of doubt, of sin, of crime, of shame; like you the tortures of unbelief may have wrung their souls to madness in the hour of death; and, like you, when confronted with poverty, with shame or ruin, they may indeed have doubted the existence of God and the soul. I say every one of those who inhabit that spiritual, that heavenly abode, have come by the paths

of earthly sorrow and suffering, and between your and their estate are links of spiritual brightness and ministration that, like a spiral pathway, lead unto them and form a chain of blessedness between them and you.

These words which I speak to-night may not be the last that I shall speak through mortal lips ; but it is to announce to you another change in my spiritual state different from that which I have previously described through this instrument, that I am here. It is to state that, having found my heaven not in any limited sense, not in the narrow abode which the theology in which I was reared would fain have placed it, not within the circumscribed walls of a creed-made or man-made heaven ; having found my Master, not imperviously seated on the right hand of the Infinite Father, unapproachable and unattainable, but abiding in the midst of a multitude who with him were ministering unto multitudes of others, abiding in the midst of those who turned to Him as Teacher and Friend ; having found my Light and my Guide there in following, as on earth, the footsteps of him who taught humility and love and kindness, I have ministered continually, seeking to undo much of the theological wrong which unwittingly my earthly estate bequeathed, and seeking to lift such minds from the encompassing fear of death and the terror of eternal torture as I could approach.

All this ministration has been doubly sweet, from the consciousness that no effort is in vain, however long it may be in producing fruition. However long the ray of light may seem buried, the gem at last comes forth in crystalline completeness. I assure you these days and hours of what would seem a brief eternity itself compared to human life, have been all joyfully, gladly expended in this work of my immortal life.

I had never dared to hope, I had not believed, and did not know that in any position which I might fill, or any place which I might inhabit in the spiritual home, I should be so near to that Truth, that Impersonation of the divine, as I feel myself to be in the presence of that Beneficent Face, in the light of that Benignant Countenance ; surrounded by those

who seek to do that which he taught upon earth, I have learned the meaning of all the problems that vexed the earthly mind—I have solved the seemingly insoluble mystery of human misery, of human emancipation. I find there are no technical problems to overcome; I find there are no superficial methods to adopt, but that the deep, infinite meaning of all human life, human suffering, human experience, human knowledge and attainment is the ineffable love that abides in the universe and makes men co-heirs and co-partners in eternity, by the very fact of their immortal nature.

Having found this central truth; having discovered that man has not fallen from his high estate, but abides in it by the perpetual love of the Infinite; having discovered that the salvation through Christ, through the principle of truth wherever found, means the perception of the spiritual and immortal part in man; having discovered that the only pathway to that salvation lies through the knowledge of the spirit and its possessions, I need not longer perplex you nor myself with those doubts and problems that theology alone has reared, but which were never reared in the simple faith, the sweet utterance, the absolute benediction of love that came with the Teacher nearly two thousand years ago. What Christ was to that epoch of time I also found there were other teachers to other periods of time, and that these cyclic visitations of truth have come to man as any other bestowment through infinite law, and that they come in such periods of time as the earth is unfolded to receive them and humanity is prepared to be gathered unto the ripened sheaves of the eternal harvest.

The spiritual world and the mortal life are alike a portion of that world which the spirit of truth ministers unto; and Christ's mission to earth was no more to its inhabitants that were in a mortal form than to the spiritual states that intervene between the angelic state and the mortal. All spirits that came within the range of his ministration and power, whether upon the earth or in their spiritual prisons, were alike ministered unto; and to these he came, those who were ready accepting, those who were not ready waiting for many



years, and some following slowly after, even in the two thousand years which is approaching.

Shall it not be, then, in comprehending this divine system of spiritual instruction and truth to man, in perceiving that as fast as souls or spirits advance from one state they pass to another, that there also must come a time when, having fulfilled, having received fruition, having gathered all that it is possible for the Christ spirit to gather, he with his angels shall depart to another realm that needs ministraton, or to another state where higher powers may be unfolded? The earth, having received these instructions, having benefited by them, as you know, in two thousand years, more or less; having in some instances of individual souls been signally uplifted and saved, and in other instances of vast numbers been aided and strengthened, and in many more not reached at all, the Christ period, the distinct epoch of that time, passes away, is on the wane, the millennial epoch of the ancient time of two thousand years is fast approaching, and the earth itself is being prepared for another messenger.

The Jews expected their Messiah or Saviour would come; their chosen prophets had passed away unto the kingdoms of the God of Abram, Isaac and Jacob; the great messianic period was approaching; the mothers in Israel were looking for the Christ to be born; the pulsations of the approaching power were already abroad in the land; but it was left to the humble and the lowly to receive the visitation, and the Christ-angel came not among the potentates nor powers, not among the priests nor the learned, but among those who were lowliest in the land; and this Christ spirit, first obscure, almost obliterated, shone forth at last upon the cross by the sign of martyrdom which makes even the lowliest victim the theme of human compassion and sympathy, if not of heroism and divinity.

The Christ-spirit has worked its way in the world since that time; guarded round with kingly powers, beset by armed men, the very tool of potentates and kingdoms, still silently the stream has wrought its work in the world. The name of

Christ is no more responsible for the indignities perpetrated in that name than is that of liberty responsible for what tyrants do under her assumed banner. The name of the spirit of truth is not responsible for the errors that men commit under misguided passion, ambition, or under the plea of individual duty or aim. That which does abide in the world is a loftier spirit of humanity, a common tie of brotherhood, the acceptance of the individual salvation through individual means, and not past barbarism of sacrifice, of offering, of external atonement. To-day the Christ-spirit, with all the materialism that is in the world, is more distinctly understood, even though it be under the name of antichrist; for whatsoever binds men together is the *spirit of Christ*, though it shall pass by a far different name, and not be understood in the world of theological learning.

As this Christ was expected, so when Jesus was about to leave his disciples and depart into the spiritual realm, into the Father's house, he says: "The Comforter will come, even the Spirit of Truth." "I will come again; be comforted." And so he spoke to them, half to their comprehension and half not understood, until they finally believed that he was to come immediately; and when he did appear on the third day after the crucifixion some of his followers supposed that to be the fulfillment, and when he appeared to his disciples in the upper rooms some supposed that was the fulfillment; but John upon the Isle of Patmos believed that another revelation of Christ would come, and in that wonderful prophecy, which was to include the full cyclic period of the Christian dispensation, he dimly perceives through allegorical symbols and the exact statement of historical truth all that should come to the church of Christ from the beginning unto the end, and all that should come to the nations of the earth ere that wonderful climax and culmination which Christians had unanimously learned to believe was fast approaching.

That cyclic period is now nearly accomplished. Many Christian denominations fully expect the literal end of the world. For my own part I always believed it had a spiritual

significance, though I could never fully solve nor penetrate its meaning. I supposed the hour, the advent of the spirit of truth into man's heart and life, would constitute the verbal day of judgment, and that the appearance before the throne of grace, before the infinite conscience, before the power of the spirit of Christ, would constitute our final exculpation from misery, or perhaps our final condemnation. But now all is changed. The revelation makes clear and distinct the meaning of the ancient record. I see that the closing of the Christian period of time is the judgment day for all who are connected with or interested in it, and that those spirits who have but passively interpreted the meaning of Christ are to be adjudged and left behind; those who have neutrally accepted, accepting the letter but not the spirit, may not enter into Christ's kingdom, for he said they could not; and those who have said "Lord, Lord," yet in their spirits were not of his spirit, can by no means belong to his kingdom, any more than can one belong to your heart who does not love you, yet who pronounces your name most frequently: That the Christ-kingdom will include the spirits of those who believe, who fervently and devoutly comprehend, who in their spiritual natures aspire to and understand the meaning of Christ's work upon the earth, and that of the multitudes who profess you can comprehend that there will be but few who are really fitted to accompany his spirit to the realm that lies beyond the earthly heavens. Yet not even these are left comfortless, as I shall show you by-and-bye; but the gradations of spiritual and angelic life are such that, as in a university of learning, those who are advanced must pass on, and must not wait nor stay behind for those who have just entered the primary departments. Angelic life has its grades, spiritual ministers have theirs, and the attendant guardians and guiding spirits of your lives have theirs, and all are appointed and fitted to your condition and to theirs.

In the kingdom that Christ shall take with him, there will undoubtedly be a great number whom no man could estimate casually, but fewer than are encompassed in any portion of

the world's history, fewer than belong to almost any nationality of the earth, for the angels that shall go with him must be those that have overcome not only all earthly desire, not only all external thought, not only all outward passion, but have also become perfect in love, being completed in the sphere of human life and possessing the perfect duality of life that belongs to the angelic soul. Nor will all angels depart. Each succeeding spiritual epoch leaves behind a certain portion to minister to those who are still in infancy, and who will undoubtedly be heirs in the next harvest or kingdom of salvation to the world. As some fruits in the early summer ripen and must be gathered while the wintering apple waits until the frost, so the fruits of Christ's kingdom which were named "the first fruits" in ancient biblical language, are those which are first ready, and whose souls first emerge from all earthly thralldom into the kingdom of spiritual light and blessedness. Nor have these grown with their high estate beyond love nor sympathy nor consciousness. Were it not a portion of that life which has come to them, and were they not called upon to minister at other places and in other ways and pass through experiences that would fit them for higher duties, each one would remain and minister unto the earth until every soul shall have been rescued and redeemed. But as this cannot be, as the spirit-realm would be over-peopled with souls, as the great life beyond must win some, as there must be those that blossom out into a greater harvest of eternity, so the angels pass on to their next degree, and the Christ-angel bears with him those messengers that accompany him on his labors elsewhere.

While attendant angels must pass to other realms of knowledge, gaining light and strength, and added power to do good to some other benighted world, or, perchance, to return again as angels and messengers of light to minister unto your world, undoubtedly the angel who heralded in the period of the Messiah—undoubtedly the angel who presided over the Mosiac dispensation, was born of a higher kingdom than that which the earth at its present stage can afford, was born of another

place and time, whence the Christ-angel also came. He knew of his approach; he ushered in the glad dawn by prophecies and foretellings. The spirit of Christ was made manifest by that means. In another hour, and at another period of the world's history, another messenger was heralded, another angel ushered in the dawn of the first inspirations that came to the world.

In the present hour are there not messengers also heralding the dawn and the advent of the spirit of truth? And already the mighty potencies of that angelic voice are heard over the lands of the world, and the spiritual kingdoms are thrilling with new light and fire. If the Christ-spirit had departed from the external temples of worship in olden time; if the spirit of truth had forsaken the tabernacles of Jewish inspiration; if in the thralldom of the external senses the church had grown cold and lifeless, and the Jewish men of learning and priests were discussing not the principles of truth, but mere doctrines, what shall you say of the present hour, when the church, losing its vitality, still descends to contend over technicalities, and when, as in the Reformation, men would grow riotous and mad with frenzy over some technical interpretation of the meaning of the word *logos*? What shall you say of the vitality in that church which, with its many-pointed fingers toward heaven, still refuses admission to the spirit of truth in any form of angelic ministration to day, and turns aside from the very open gateway that leads to its own interpretation and its own foundation? What shall you say of that church that, putting saints to death, turns again in two or three centuries to worship them; scorned, despised and ostracised, calls them at last its own, and by its own wrongs upbuilds itself upon the foundation of human error, creating, instead of a shrine, a charnel house of its offences?

But that other and broader church which is alive in the world, has it not been heralded by the spirit of human brotherhood? Has it not been announced by the tokens and signs that have been in the sky? Has not the voice of prophecy and inspiration foretold it, and are not gifts being poured out

upon all flesh, as they were promised? Are not these the latter days of the kingdom of Christ, and is not this spirit of truth approaching, this Comforter that revealeth all things? And those that have ears to hear do they not hear the voice of the spirit; those that have eyes do they not see visions of the spiritual realm; those that have understanding do they not comprehend the angelic states that lie beyond?

My parting word ere I pass to that next stage of instruction in angelic life, and ere I go away into that other realm which is almost as much a mystery to me as was the life beyond that I passed through in death, I would leave this one assurance, that the Christ-spirit did not expire with Jesus upon Calvary; that the spirit of truth is to be born again in your midst; that the light of angelic ministry is still to continue; that no soul upon the earth, nor in all the regions round about the earth, that constitutes the final peopling of the spirit-world, shall be without the voice of the Comforter, the Messenger, the Messiah, in some age and cycle of time, of eternity; that unto every soul in the great kingdom of spiritual life the fruition of the harvest of love will one day be granted, as surely as unto those souls that now, in the regions of angelic life, gather the fruition of their kingdom of experience. This word of promise I leave you, and to undo whatever doubt the ministrations that I gave upon earth may have left in the minds of those who loved or revered the name of Christ for my sake, I would say that the spirit of love pervading the universe I have found adequate, I have found sufficient to comfort, to make whole and sure every spirit, in whatever degree of darkness; that it is only a question of time, only a question of healing and over-brooding wings, only a question of growing from spiritual infancy to manhood, and only the light that, continually penetrating in the darkened places, will make itself felt at last, and the universe will no longer be a prison-house to any living soul.

I do not say that you will leap suddenly to this consciousness with death. I do not say that you will in many years attain it, or cycles of years; but if you exist to-day, and there

is a spark of intelligence, of comprehension, or if the human form encases you, the light that burns within is an eternal flame, and wheresoever it abides, wheresoever it lives, flickering though it seem to be, it is encompassed by the infinite love and the infinite promise, the Christ spirit ministering to many worlds, the messiahs that descend from the kingdoms of blessedness to uplift many worlds like yours, giving promise and token of this; and the very thought that pervades your minds this night, which, like an electric flame, mounts upward and links itself with those ministering angels of your household, with those departed spirits, the loved of your hearts; with those kindred souls that abide in your spiritual heaven—this is the prophecy, this the certainty, this the guerdon of your hopes. As Christ was the promise to those who believed in him in spirit; as in ancient days and ways the angels of the Lord ministered in their own appointed time and method to the ancient peoples, so in this day and hour the voice of the spirit speaks to every heart according to their need; and it is not that you shall understand better than you can, but it is that even in the midst of your blindness, even in the midst of the imperfections that beset you, the spirit of truth burns for you.

If you are a violet by the wayside, the ray of light perceives you; if you are a lily in the garden, the ray of light reaches you there; if you are a tall tree of the forest, the rays of the sunlight find you; even if you are immured in darkness they pierce, by vibrations, through the sod and find you out at last. The spirit of truth descends to every condition, is childlike in its simplicity and purpose, announcing itself to every human estate; makes no distinctions only in accordance with your need; adjusts itself to your hope and fear and despair; allies itself with life and death, and birth and regeneration, and whatever gives excellence to man; makes itself a portion of your daily employment and life; clothes itself with wings to follow after your footsteps; goes before you with ever-beckoning hope; abides in the quietest and quietest way or in the loftiest and most sublime. If you do not understand the

thunders of Sinai, it makes itself a chirping voice by your side that you do understand. If you do not comprehend the prophets of olden time, it makes the baby lips upon the mother's knee speak words that she does understand. If you may not know the pulsations of those great cycles that move the worlds and systems on in their courses or make men and angels and spirits, then it comforts you with the voice of some sweet spirit by your door—the departed friend, the ministering spirit, the sacred shrine and altar of family worship, until thereby you are led by that subtle chain of light to link yourself with the eternities. At all times and in all places there is an abiding voice, and the spirit of God pervading all things, and the spirit of Christ ministering everywhere, and the truth-teller descending upon the earth, make life and earth and time and space all but a portion, a fraction of that eternity which finally incorporates men and spirits and angels and archangels, and such souls as have no name on earth, but in the whiteness of their lives may blossom out the Messiahs of eternity, the saviours of the human race.

“Behold! I send you the Comforter, even the Spirit of Truth, who will tell you all things.”



**THE**  
**OCCUPATION, CAPABILITIES AND POSSIBILITIES**  
**OF DISEMBODIED SPIRITS.\***

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**MR. CHAIRMAN AND FRIENDS**—The words of my chosen theme this evening have not been idly selected: "The Occupation, Capabilities and Possibilities of Disembodied Spirits."

Into the region of that world which lies beyond death, and into that portion of it which it has been my good fortune to dwell for many years, I invite your cordial presence; a presence which is possible if you will only free your minds from all fears concerning death, and assume that it is simply a voyage through another country, narrated to you by a traveler who has sojourned there.

It is usual to you to disencumber your minds so much of time and space that, either with panoramic view, or with the aid of word-pictures which the traveler can portray, you easily traverse distant countries, become accustomed to the habits and manners of the inhabitants there, familiar with their laws, and, indeed, know as much of them as though you were really there in person. This is possible concerning the spiritual life. If you unbar the doors of death, take away from the gateway of the angels the terror and fear that have so long sat there, and disencumber your minds of the thought that there is aught in connection with the future life of which

\* By Spirit Benjamin Franklin.

man has need to be afraid, you will then easily perform the journey.

Death is no barrier at the gate of life; death is no fiend, shaped in hideous image to frighten you from the precincts of immortality, only a natural change—one which all must inherit, and sooner or later pass through; the method of it is familiar to those who have watched the departure of friends or dearly loved ones; the consciousness of it is present ever, alike to the studious and to the thoughtless. Surely in this theme there is nothing that should inspire with fear nor profane the silent shadow with terror or despair. Birth into your world were a more fitting opportunity for sadness and mourning, since you do not know into what scene of terror or misfortune the newly-born infant may be plunged in after-life; but in the spirit-world, when the body has fulfilled its outward function, and is again gathered to dust, there is nothing to fear aside from what a man may take with him into that world, namely, his own spiritual condition. No fiends of terror await to plunge him into abysmal torment; no one watchful with vindictive glance to judge of his slightest look, word, or deed in life; he has no more severe monitor than his own conscience; than consciousness, when disrobed from outward life, of being in spirit, perhaps impoverished by a lack of excellence in his external life and knowledge.

Into the spiritual state, therefore, the usual human being enters as freely and as gladly as you would pass from the winter clime of the frigid zone to the regions of tropical warmth and beauty. Into the spiritual life usually the spirit enters gladly, as though freed from a prison, unfettered from chains, and released from the thralldom of the encasing physical clay, that even to the best of human beings is to some extent a bond upon the spirit. I can therefore say that with the fullness of years and the consciousness of having tried to do my duty, death came to me as a welcome messenger.

I knew little of the state into which I would enter, but I had an abiding faith that the Infinite Power over-rules these things, and that we enter that state for which we are best

fitted, and that to me there could come nothing worse than what I had encountered, and in some way triumphed over during my earthly pilgrimage.

I assure you, friends, the consciousness of this fact abode with me for many years before my departure from the earthly life. I assure you that I had gleamings of this sublime philosophy that fills the void between the outer and the loftier life, and that I therefore was somewhat prepared for the reception which seemed to await me in the spiritual spheres ; a reception that more than surpassed all earthly recognition, all visitation to home and friends, all possible conceptions of outward life, since it was not marred by any thought of the absent, or by any approaching severance of the chord by another change of death.

The needs of the human spirit speedily force themselves upon the consciousness of the newly departed.

I found that affection, kindness, charity, the graces and thoughts that I had admired in my earthly friends, were the real inheritance into which I came when I entered spiritual life. I found that external surroundings, shapes of beauty, or usefulness, were in accordance simply with the needs of the spirit, and secondary to it, while all that pertained to the vital existence of life—I mean to the thought of life, to its good qualities, to those things that make up the real man or woman—these were apparent and manifest in the surroundings that awaited me.

Hence, in the abode of family affections to which I was first admitted, I found the kindred of my fireside, and of my spirit, awaiting me as joyously as though I had been in long banishment, or exile, and was returning to them. I found my youth, all impulses and hopes of early manhood, every form of young life, restored and more than fulfilled in the fruition of the spirit. I found that the physiological change of death had wrought a greater miracle than Arabian wonders ; it had wrought the miracle of absolute departure of age, of infirmity, of pain, and the consciousness of it—of all things connected with matter, so far as physical suffering was con-

cerned. I found to my sorrow that much of my life was not perfect, and that the portion which was not perfect was reflected in my brain, to which my friends, however, kindly seemed to turn a blind eye and deaf ear, and only allowed me to discover the imperfections. These imperfections were the results which, of course, every human being possesses, and must ultimately become aware of—any lack in the mental or moral perfection of the nature on earth. Such lack is distinctly portrayed in the spirit, and unless there is very great moral perversion the spirit becomes distinctly aware of it the moment disenthralment from the earthly body takes place.

Nevertheless I was admitted into the abode prepared for me by the aspirations of love and the loved ones who were present. I did not find the distance far, although I presume upon actual measurement it would be many thousand leagues from the earth; but so rapid was the transition, and so sudden was the rising from earth, that it seemed an instant and I was there, though I could look back upon the earth, and it appeared as a speck or atom of dust in the atmosphere.

I found that the spheres of spiritual life are not of necessity connected with the earth's atmosphere, except by mental or spiritual ties, and that those having friends upon earth still hold an interlinking chain; but the orbit that connects them with the earth and with the spiritual state may be far away.

I found the sphere into which I entered was a vast belt of interstellar light, which seemed at first, as I approached it, to be like the Milky-Way, of those nebulous masses that the astronomer discovers when contemplating the heavens. This belt was not limited to any especial planet or world, but seemed to stretch far away in different directions through the orbed spaces, and each planet seemed to have an interlinking avenue connecting with this interstellar belt.

I asked one who appeared to me as a luminous star of light what sphere, by name or number, I had entered.

He said: "The spheres are not numbered to us, but for the purpose of external information they are frequently numbered. This is the second or interstellar sphere—the heavens

Indirectly removed from the earth or other planets—that state which the spirit enters in its second stage of spiritual growth.”

I said: “Then is there another sphere nearer the earth?”

“You have passed through one,” he says, “which connects those spirits with the earth who are more nearly allied to it, and whose affections and ties are of an external nature. Such spirits are earth-bound, and have yet their passions, their prejudices, their human proclivities, to overcome. Look back!”

I looked back, and I discovered what I had not seen while passing through it. Dense masses, seemingly of vapor, floating over the speck that I called the earth. These dense masses the spirit, who seemed luminous and orbed with light, told me were the first spheres of spiritual life beyond the earth into which those spirits entered that from moral obliquity, earthly ties, selfish habits, or any external cause whatever, were still bound near the earth.

I noticed, however, that even the dark masses swept away toward other planets, and he said there was a connecting link between the atmosphere of earth and the atmosphere of every other planet in a similar stage of spiritual growth, so that these lower spirits, or spirits less spiritually developed, were connected with whatever planet represented their average state, and frequently received an augmentation of their own shadow by the shadow reflected from the planet equally undeveloped.

Into the sphere, however, which I had entered, there seemed no absolute moral obliquity. There were imperfections enough, the results no doubt of failures in earthly life to fully comprehend the nature of the spirit and its latent powers. I could readily see that these failures were not the result of intention, and that they were soon overcome, as indeed my own delinquencies seemed to be overcome by my earnest desire to have them overcome. I prayed, that is, I strove earnestly with myself to overcome whatever of personal pride, ambition or earthliness might remain with me, and I beheld, as I entered nearer and nearer the abode of my loved ones, a

shining stream that seemed to flow all around the borders of this sphere into which I had entered, through which I must pass to enter their abode.

Without hesitation I plunged into the stream, but instead of water, according to the standard of that substance upon earth, I found each globule seemed life-like, and was laden with some essential pungent power, that probed the weakness of my moral nature and expurgated it from me. Every globule seemed distinct, and like a lash would scourge, at the same time leaving no sting but the consciousness of renovation.

This was the sphere or state of self-examination; and during my passage through this stream I distinctly remember that all of the faults and failings and mental imperfections of my earthly life seemed to pass before my mind. I distinctly remember that I judged them all, one by one, and wished that they might pass from me.

As I emerged upon the other side I beheld my dearest friends extending to meet me; the members of my own family fireside group who had long since passed from gaze were there awaiting me. These had prepared, as it were, an encircling bower, that shut out all view of the surroundings and scenery, but at the same time might open out any time directing my volition to it.

Here was my wealth, here was my greeting; here was the reception which for a long time I had awaited; how long I know not, for an age would seem as nothing and a moment an age in the consciousness of the joy of being disenthralled from earthly sense, and in greeting again the friends whom I knew upon earth.

As we passed out again into what seemed an open space, I was led by the spirit that appeared from a luminous body of spirits, to contemplate the change that had come upon me. I found substances, new in name, but apparently as tangible as those of earth-life, and I found structures that had no resemblance to earthly things, but at the same time were typical of the thought, wish or desire of those who inhabited them. I

found that the atoms of these spiritual existences were transparent; that I could see all the performances of life within my own frame as well as in the frames of those with whom I came in contact. Thought itself seemed luminous, and I could distinctly tell by the radiations of light around my companions and friends that their thoughts were toward me. I soon understood that we had no speech; that it was not necessary to make vocal signs, as the thought itself became palpable to the comprehension of the spiritual vision or consciousness of the other.

I then said: "Have we no physical senses here? Speech does not seem to be necessary, and I do not require to hear when you think."

"Physical senses," was the answer, "are but the measure of the human body and its weakness. The spirit only wants avenues of expression and avenues of understanding. If senses were here they would blockade and prevent the expression which you so much covet."

"They do upon the earth," I said. "The sight is limited, the hearing can only be relied upon at random, and the physical senses impede frequently the expression of the spirit."

"How much more, then, in the spiritual state will they do so," said my attendant, "when the spirit itself requires none of these outward avenues, but has avenues of expression according to its own state!"

I then speedily discovered that every mental vibration produced as distinct an impression upon the atmosphere as though a photographic plate had been there to receive its rays, and that this aura surrounding a spirit was at once a sign and token of the condition of the spirit, and of the different thoughts emanating from the brain.

"Is thought then a substance?" said I.

"Not a substance *per se*, but it affiliates with the substance of spiritual life, producing vibrations upon it, as sound does upon the external or earthly air. Hence if a person *thinks* in spiritual life it is equivalent to speaking in earthly life, the effect being just as palpable on the finer substances of spirit-

ual existence as is the vibration of sound upon outward substance."

"Then in what manner is thought received?" I said.

"By vibrations. The corresponding wave of thought reaches your own spirit and produces impression there, just as the wave of sound reaches the hearing and produces impression there."

"Then," I said, "of what use is this form?" for I perceived that I had a form distinct and conforming in shape, and I judged in appearance, with my earthly form, except that there were no lines of age, or care, or pain upon it.

He said: "The organs of physical sensation are but the expression outwardly of spiritual sensation, hence they are a symbollic representation externally of what the spirit really possesses in a greater degree. Hence, sight and physical touch, then, in spiritual life become submerged into one sense, but each of the avenues are preserved to complete the oneness, just as a complete sound or chord is made by several notes in unison; so the senses of the spirit are as separate notes of music out of which a chord of melody is made; or better still, are as separate rays of light, of which a single perfect beam of light is made. You do not use the senses separately in spirit-life, as on earth, but all sensation is alive at once through all the avenues, quickening, or receiving, in proportion as the spirit thinks, or is acted upon by surrounding spiritual intelligences."

Of course I then discovered that the methods of this life must be widely different from those of earth, that the slowness and inadaptability of earthly life are vastly unfitted and unqualified to sustain anything like the rapidity with which thought itself acts upon the mind and brain of another. Speech itself is slow to human consciousness; thought is rapid in its vibrations. The movements of the physical form are necessarily cumbersome, and vary in grace according to the ability or construction of form. In spirit-life gracefulness of thought depends upon its perfection, not upon the external expression, and he represents the most perfect beauty and



symmetry of form and shape of life whose thoughts are the most perfectly formed, and therefore who expresses them the most perfectly.

I saw an entire change to my comprehension in the manner of construction of things. In the external life, you will observe that all things proceed from organic properties and functions, and that life unfolds gradually from the germ that is acted upon by extraneous influences and substances. I discovered in spirit-life that all emanations proceed from the spirit itself; all attractions, or accretions of matter, are the result of a greater or less degree of perfection in the mind or in the spirit, and that therefore there is no necessity for organic construction; that whatever construction takes place in spiritual life, is what you term subjective in earthly life, but to the spirit is certainly objective; while all forms of earthly substance and organic life upon earth seem to the spirit in my stage of existence purely subjective and shadowy.

I see the radiations of matter, as I shall presently show you, not from the external but from the spiritual standpoint, and will endeavor to portray the changes in my senses and consciousness, while comparing the two stages of life, and my observation of substances in each.

As I soon became interested in these forms of external observation concerning myself, of course my immediate interest in home ties and home friends disappeared, and I became anxious to enter a wider range of observation, where I could discover the various processes of the life into which I had entered. I perceived forms all about me, of beauty and comeliness, some of them similar to forms on earth. I mean external objects, but all of them seemingly dependent upon the radiations of some given mind. Hence if I approached the habitation of a spirit there were flowers and forms of beauty, foliage, external objects it is true, but these all seemed dependent upon and radiating around the spirit that was their life and centre. If that spirit moved, the whole of this structure seemed scintillant with the thought of the spirit; if there was a pulsation of joy it seemed as though the leaves and fo-

llage were conscious of it; and even the habitation in which the spirit dwelt became more luminous; and I speedily discovered that the thought of the inhabiting spirit affected all substances within the orb of its life, and hence that the attractions of other spirits, the home ties and all, were a congregation of spirits of similar grade, who formed their habitations by the attraction of as much substance as their own minds could control; and that the power of the spiritual will, its volition or consciousness, became the secret spring where-with these substances were attracted.

I then said: "How was it that my own habitation was prepared without my presence here?"

"You have been living upon earth," the attendant spirit said; "you have had thoughts and occupations there, and whatever thought belonged to this stage of life, instead of to the earthly, produced its impression upon this stage and upon the corresponding substances here; so that your spiritual structure was fashioned by you while you were an inhabitant of the earth-life."

"Then we build our spiritual habitations," I said, "while upon the earth?"

"Yes, and perfectly or imperfectly; the structure is fashioned according to the perfection or imperfection of your thoughts; if they are continually broken and shattered by external things, or if the ties of matter encroach too strongly upon the spirit, it makes habitation appear fragmentary and frequently very-imperfect, but that is speedily remedied by the spirit when it comes to this state of existence."

"Then," I said, "is there a continual connecting link between the earthly state and this state of spiritual life?"

"Most certainly; there are connecting links," says the attendant spirit, "between all atoms of matter in the universe, and certainly there are connecting links between all atoms of spiritual substances that make up the vast spheres of spiritual life."

I then discovered that the occupations of the spirit begin not externally, as they do upon earth, but inwardly. For in-

stance, if on earth a young man wishes to build a home he saves up a few dollars, he gathers together his earnings, and he makes a habitation out of such substances as accord with his means. While his mind may be very lofty, his aspirations very meritorious, he cannot build a greater habitation than the dollars which he has will warrant him in erecting. He builds his habitation and takes his companion, and they together make up the home; first, of course, from their affections, but the external property from the substances around them.

In spirit-life the novice enters seemingly without a possession, but he soon finds that he has laid up his treasures, or his lack of them, in heaven. His lack of them will consist of a vacant space, which certainly he may occupy, and which, if he has any friends or kindred or loving thoughts, will be measurably peopled by their kindness; but if he has been entirely lacking in spiritual graces and aspirations it will seem to be an impoverished country into which he has entered. I am told that in the lower stratum of spiritual existences there are vast barren plains inhabited by persons who have not had aspirations sufficiently spiritual to make populous their home with any living thing.

I am told that there are barren deserts stretching far away into space, the outgrowth of the earth and other planets, which souls must for a time inhabit, because they themselves have failed to create beauty in their thoughts. But in this sphere which I entered there were no such desolate places; there were certainly many imperfect, and many that seemed devoid of what I would consider grace and beauty. My habitation, when I entered that part of it that I myself had created, was sufficiently imperfect, and I found it like another famous place in history "paved with good intentions," and I speedily set to work to rear upon this somewhat substantial basis the edifice of my new life. In doing this I did not look around for wood or marble, or any outward substance; I was told that I had to build from within. I said, "How shall I do this? I know the trees grow and all things unfold from

within upon earth by attraction of atoms from the sunlight and the various substances of the soil ; but I am not aware of any such property in man, except indirectly."

"You shall see," answered my attendant. "Give yourself no uneasiness about your habitation, but try to reform the methods of your thought."

"Reform the methods of my thought? Have I then been inebriate? Have I been imprudent? Have I been immoral? Have I misjudged my kind?"

"You are to decide."

I looked within my mental structure, and I discovered that the walls had largely crumbled away since I passed from earth-life; that things very real and very substantial to me in the external life were nothing; that precepts and maxims which I had considered essential and important, became as nothing; that they were mere shreds and sophisms. For instance, I discovered that the external policy of honesty, unless accompanied by the genuine impulse, is void. Of course I always thought so, but I stated it wrongly. I discovered that an external morality typical of life is void, unless there be a corresponding probity of spirit. I understood this, but I was not sufficiently alert to its importance of being first a spiritual state. I was of the opinion upon the earth that the external inculcation will eventually produce the right kind of state, and that the semblance of it ought to be cultivated that the real may come. I discovered that no semblance can imitate the reality; that the real foundation of all moral excellence must be by *inculcation of it from within*.

I believed in modern science that outward observation and the pursuit of various mechanical and mathematical discoveries would eventually lead to the perfection of truth. I now perceived that wall, also, crumbling away, and an insight entering my mind that outward science is but the form or clothing of the spiritual principle, and if that principle be not correct the science itself is void.

In religion also I found that while I had no creed which made a barrier between me and my Deity, or between myself

and my kind, there was still a mistake in the fact that I failed to recognize the absolute nature of the Divine Personality in the guidance of all worlds and men. Of course I believed that too much can be done by man himself; I recognized too little the unseen agencies that are alive in the universe to shape and govern all things.

I must be pardoned if I seem prolix, but in order to arrive at an accurate comprehension of the change which every spirit must pass through, I must give these individual experiences.

I then discovered that as I unraveled one by one the meshes of external sophism or external philosophy, I seemed to be ensphered in an atmosphere far more luminous. There were certain indications of fabric growing around me; I perceived that as my thoughts regulated themselves harmoniously there were spherical arches, and various forms of beauty like rainbow lights, around me. I said, "What is this?"

The attendant, seemingly watching me from without, said, "You will soon discover." And I at last found that my entire method of thought became inverted, or introverted; that I looked upon substance as a shadow, and upon what men call shadow as substance; that I discovered in the external life no organic property separate from spirit. Remember this: "In atoms no organic property separate from spirit"—that I probed to the very foundation of my philosophy and discovered that nature has of herself no activity independent of the spirit inhabiting nature. I found this out in my own structure, and in the spiritual body which my soul animated and the life into which I was admitted.

I then said: "From this standpoint can I investigate outward science? Can I now become familiar with the processes of the contact of elements in external nature?"

The attendant said: "From this standpoint only can you understand the processes; the externally scientific man has no groundwork; he perceives at random; he discovers, seemingly, by accident; he follows a line of investigation, and if

he arrive at the truth it is simply because the truth is in his way, not because he has a correct aim."

Then I said: "I may safely study the elements of the earth's atmosphere and planetary substances, and the laws governing their control?"

"Most certainly," he said. "But you are not fitted to enter upon this study until you shall have at first perfected your own habitation. By this I mean," he says, "until you shall have become self-centred, properly poised in your own sphere of life, and understand thoroughly the scenes by which you are surrounded."

I then said: "I will follow your instructions; I seek only for guidance. Let me know the methods."

"The methods are still self-examination, still self-scrutiny, still the undoing or perhaps the overthrowing of the thoughts that were with you on earth."

Then I leaned still more toward inward contemplation, and thought that I had not sufficient power of spiritual growth to reach the point of my desire in the pursuit of the investigation of the sciences connected with the elements of the earth and the heavenly bodies. Soon, however, I became tranquil, and my mind was breathed upon by a consciousness of humility.

I said: "I will study as a little child, and listen to these spirits or witness what they shall do until I learn."

I then perceived groups further and further away nearing us, and that each seemed to be occupied with their own pursuits, not intruding nor interfering with the others, but ranged in family groupings and in social order and occupation.

I said: "How busily and constantly employed they seem to be! and yet I have no clue as to what their occupation may mean, or the effect that it may have upon themselves or others."

I sat down in contemplation with the habitation unfinished, much as one would sit on an unbuilt edifice for which he had no capital to proceed further. My capital was gone; I

had nothing further to invest; I did not know how to proceed. By observation I discovered lines of sympathetic light extending from one spirit to another, that formed these groups. These lines of sympathetic light radiated, or scintillated, as they approached one another, and of one accord they seemed to understand, as I described previously. They then seemed to pass off in groups further and further away, either into space, or sometimes they seemed to me to descend into darkness.

I said: "What do they do?" I then thought intently with a desire to know their occupation. I discovered that these were self-centred family groups, or social circles, who had a distinct line of thought and occupation in spiritual life, and that this line of thought and occupation was connected with some social state beneath them, or some planet to which they might be attracted for use or for work.

Then I said: "I have the clue: it must be what they do for others that gives them capacity to increase their power of building their own habitations." Instantly all the atoms in the fabric of my own habitation thrilled with this new light.

I said: "I will seek some person, or spirit, or state, that is not as attractive as my own, and see what good I can accomplish." I was not long in seeking. I seemed to pass into a stratum of atmosphere beneath and darker than my own, among persons who seemed to be without the power to rise, and some without the aspiration; and I thought, as I breathed upon them from my mind—this breathing being a real exhalation of my spirit—"Would you like to enter a region of greater brightness?" And a spirit looked upward and said: "Oh, I cannot; there seems to be no way; I am hopeless. I have no unhappiness, no fixed condition of misery, but I am inert."

I said: "Do something," giving the same advice that I myself had sought.

"What shall I do? there is no outward work for me to perform. Clothing is unnecessary, we weave it seemingly of our thoughts; we do not feed upon substances like those upon

earth. I have no necessity for these things; and one cannot always *think*; it is too inactive."

But I said: "Do you not know one in outward life whom you wish to benefit? Is there no such one living upon earth?" I ventured this without even knowing that I myself could do it. "Is there no one that you would wish to benefit upon earth?"

"Oh, if I might," said he, "communicate with some one whom I love, that I might tell of the inertia that fills my mind, it would even be a blessing to do that!"

I said: "Think intently of the one whom you would like to communicate with." And I saw that he was thinking, and that with that thought he disappeared toward earth, and there followed a portion of the light which seemed to come from the sphere that I inhabited with him as he went upon his way.

I returned to my spiritual habitation, and behold! a reconstruction had taken place; the formless portions were shaped and in order, and all around the base was seemingly the foundation of a perfect structure. It is well, I thought; I will try again; and so little by little I went beyond the precincts of my own habitation, seeking to influence minds that were evidently less employed than myself. To my utter delight I discovered on each return from such a visitation that my habitation grew more and more complete; and when I had finished it so far as it is possible for any spiritual state to be finished, I then was conscious of the presence of the attendant who had advised me. He said: "You have found the process now of increasing your activity and powers; now you are fitted to study the elements." I said: "Why now?" "Because the spiritual is the centre here, and that must be in order and well balanced before any material thing can be touched. You cannot even become conscious of the methods of outward life until you are conscious of the methods of spiritual life."

Then I said: "Are there no spirits in communication with



the planets and with the external elements save those that are spiritually self-centred?"

"Certainly; but they are not consciously so, and have no knowledge of their office or employment; they perform it mechanically, and act under the impulsion of higher minds. I take it that you wish to act intelligently."

"Certainly I do."

"Then," he says, "come with me."

I passed to the stratum of atmosphere that we had seen as I was passing from earthly life. I found there various unemployed spirits upon barren plains; found them in habitations that seemed to be void of beauty and intelligence.

He said: "Do you wish to perform anything upon earth?"

I said: "I would like to find out, if possible, the methods whereby spiritual beings, or spiritual forces, control and act upon earthly beings."

"You then," he said, "wish to enter the sphere of study of the elements in connection with spiritual beings and intelligences?"

I said: "Yes."

He said: "Select from these persons whom you see those whom you consider most fitted to act upon."

"How am I to select?" I said.

"Think toward them," said he.

As I fixed my mind upon one and another, I saw them in various degrees of promptitude or slowness turn toward me and gradually come near. Those who came the most readily, and those who seemed the most anxious to respond to my thought, were chosen.

He said: "Now, anything that you will these persons to do they can perform, but it must be through your will and your knowledge, and not theirs."

I then became aware that other spirits had in the same manner gathered around these groups of spirits that occupy the plane nearest the earth; that they were intent upon solving the problem of communication between the outward sphere, which is the earth-life, and the spiritual spheres;

not only in the manner of impression and guardianship, which I discovered to be a distinct spiritual power, but in the manner of affecting the currents of the atmosphere and occult forces lying around the earth. I joined this school. I speedily found that my attendant was one of the number, and that in the second sphere, which was my home, in a higher grade beyond me, was their habitation and group, or council, and that I really was to be admitted to this council as one of the message-bearers to the earth! One of the message-bearers! The thought itself electrified me. Could it be possible then to open a direct line of communication? I bethought me of the subtle force that a portion of my life had occupied intently my thought and mind. Could it be through some such force as electricity in one or other or both of its vibrations? Was there some method whereby this substance, which was spiritual and yet tangible to me, could be brought in direct contact with matter, and made to reveal the consciousness of man's spiritual life by the stepping-stone of physical science? Here was a problem.

I commenced first studying gradually the forces surrounding the earth. I discarded the idea of electricity very soon, as I found it too material in its vibrations and too directly connected with the elemental contact of the earth.

Magnetism I found also governed by the laws and currents affecting the earth and its atmospheres. Then I said there must be a still more subtle force, which is amenable to the direct control of the individual will, and is not so sensitive to the casual currents or changes of the external atmosphere as electricity seems to be.

To my surprise I found electricity to be a simple vibration, and the result of counteracting currents of magnetic life upon the earth, and which in their various orders and rotations may be easily measured and guarded against, and placed in accord with the various electric mechanisms of the earth, and adjusted according to human wants and needs.

This certainly was not the force to be employed in connection with the contact of spiritual beings with earth, or with

earthly matter. I looked still further. I discovered a subtle force or aura, surrounding minerals, and surrounding all vegetable substances, and finally surrounding all human beings. I found that the aura surrounding mineral substances was not amenable to the action of spiritual volition or will-power. I found that the aura surrounding vegetable substances was not amenable to the action of will-power in the individual capacity. I found the substances surrounding animals, especially the dog and horse, or bird, to some degree amenable; so that under some circumstances of human contact or surroundings, these animals could be made to express an unusual degree of supposed intelligence, and to give tokens or signs of what would seem to be supernatural power.

By experimenting upon these, I found that gradually the substances surrounding human beings, by an action upon the organs of the brain and sensation, would become susceptible to the expression of volition, independently of the human being.

This was the desired element. Upon this element, then, all the force in the school of message-bearers, to which I belonged, was intently fixed, and into a particular vein or current of thought, which we, by converging our minds at a given time and place, were able to send into that centre of thought.

We made our first expression of individual contact with matter, in connection with the modern phase of Spiritualism. (See Rochester Knockings.) I then said, "Is this a new thing? Is it for the first time discovered?"

"By no means," said the eldest and centre of the band; "this has been known for ages, was practiced in all the various forms of magic in ancient times, and is the key that will finally unravel all these ancient mysteries."

"Of course," he says, "it is the first time that it has systematically been presented to the thought of modern science, in the light of a science; but it will soon grow to that degree of observation externally that it can be tested, at least, by

the usual methods of scientific observation, and finally tested by actual scientific apparatus."

I found that no measure of electricity or external mineral magnetism could affect, or alter in any degree, the manifestations from our world. I found that the outward atmosphere only affected them, by depressing or changing the nervous currents of the medial organization, and not because of any superabundance of electricity or magnetism.

I found that the nerve-aura consists of minute particles or globules, that form in themselves a radiating atmosphere around every human being, and which, when properly directed, constitute the means of motion of the physical organism, as well as constitute the means whereby a disembodied spirit independently of that organism moves bodies and produces concussions in the atmosphere. The concussions in the atmosphere are not the result of what may be called vacuum, are not the result of electric vibrations, but are the result of this nerve-aura which is centered at a given place, and which produces by the rapidity of action, or volition, the action upon table, chair, musical instrument, or atmosphere itself.

The capabilities of spirits in connection with these manifestations must be limited at the present time by their own knowledge, by the nature of the instruments that they have to employ upon earth or other planets, and by the intermediate stages of thought and observation that qualify human beings to understand, step by step, the stages of these manifestations. The capabilities at the present time are limited, as I say, by these things, and by another—that accompanying every external step in any science, and preceding it there must be a prophecy of the philosophy itself. Spiritualism has had that prophecy and that philosophy, and these must go hand in hand, or the attestation of the physical proof of it will have no corresponding soul to vitalize it and keep pace with it.

Hence the manifestations are continually checked by falsehood, by deception, by discoveries of fraud, by the various temptations to which humanity is liable, for the reason that

the soul and its growth must keep parallel to the manifestation and its demonstration ; but remember that this is only in connection with an *intelligent* contact of the two worlds, physically. Behind all this is a substratum of spiritual laws and forces of interlinking sympathies and amenities, that continually unites the two worlds, whether there is any outward demonstration or not, and makes up a complete chain of inspiration, even if there had never been a physical manifestation in the world. Remember that the external expression is only the smallest portion of the sublime contact of the earthly and spiritual states, and of your subjection to spiritual beings and impressions by them. In whatever sphere of life, or in whatever state, morally or spiritually, you may be, you are acted upon continually by spiritual powers, for good or ill, for your elevation or depression. These spiritual powers, by continually acting upon your affections and sympathies, move your capabilities to surpassing excellences, or gravitate with you toward those darksome places and conditions that at some time form the bane of human life.

The possibilities of spiritual existence I can only portray to you in a faint and dim outline, an outline itself so glorious that it can scarcely be believed by those still immured in the external plane, but of which I as much have assurance as I have of my existence as a disembodied spirit.

If a spirit can move one atom of external substance to do its bidding in response to its intelligent wish and will, then it solves all the problems of the heavenly bodies, places us in communication with the great forces that lie behind nature, and makes the revelation to our consciousness that planets and systems, as well as men and immortal souls, are under the guidance of angelic powers as the agents of the Divine Mind.

No orb is left to perform its functions and rotations without an ever-present and ever-active intelligence ; and yon lovely flower, [referring to a bouquet on the table] that is painted in the summer sunlight or destroyed by the cold wintry blast, is in its every atom and function guided by the in-

telligent power that lies behind the ray of light and behind the wintry blast, to the end of doing the work of the spirit.

These possibilities are within the human grasp. Do you not govern substances? Is not the earth itself amenable to you? Is there any place upon it that man does not intend to inspect? And may you not with the power of mechanism, with the grand inventions of human thought, with the continued explorations and impressions from spiritual sources, finally hope to vanquish that which has been nearly vanquished—time and space and substance—altogether?

If the swift-winged messenger of electricity has already made the distance between the two opposite portions of the world almost nothing, may not the more rapid method of thought itself finally supplant the slow method of electricity, until at last you shall converse together by vibrations of human thought?

If the power of steam has caused the ancient coach to disappear and the methods of usual locomotion to seem tedious and heavy, may not the more rapid transit of aerial navigation, by some still more occult force, become within the possibility and grasp of the next half or full century of time? And is it too much to suppose that that mind which acts upon these substances from the external with so great success, is also able, when freed from the external form and fetters, to act upon it with still greater success, if not by moving worlds in their orbéd places and guiding the elements to their appointed tasks, doing lesser things, not for the individual benefit of sections or classes of people or conditions upon earth, but for the great expression of the perfection of the planet or world?

I see behind all these forces and mechanisms of nature the guidance of an intelligent power and will. I see, as you see behind the helm of the ship; as you see behind the engine that bears you across the country; as you see behind the messenger that carries with lightning speed your thought to the dearly loved one; so behind all these forces I see the powers of great disembodied minds that have risen from the limited

comprehension of the narrow place upon earth to a loftier and diviner comprehension of the elements of life. They lie in the comprehension and the possibility of the soul of man.

I find it is no fable that Jupiter commanded lightnings or that Hercules might overturn the world. I find these powers embodied in the thought of man; and the divine intelligence that shapes the infant's feet to do the simple act of uplifting the body for the first time from the dust, is capable of shaping the winged angel to the fulfilment of the task of moving a world or a solar system.

These are some of the gradations of thought that have come to me since I understand the glimmerings of that science by which man as an external and man as a spiritual being can rise from the dust and triumph over human clay.



## LECTURE BY SPIRIT ROBERT DALE OWEN.

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### INVOCATION.

Oh, thou Divine Beneficence, thou Infinite Spirit, we approach thee with thankful hearts, and through lofty meditation and thought of truth we would seek the inspiring power of thy presence; that presence which is forever made manifest; that power which is divine and perfect; that life which, extending through all forms of being, links the atom with the Infinite, and the soul of man with thee. Oh God! thou past and future life, the soul is summoned to thy Divine control by all forms of nature, and every living thing portrays the perfection of thy law. We would praise that law, the perfectness of which fills the soul with admiration and joy; we would praise thy love, which is thy life, and which every soul inherits, and from spheres of immortal blessedness beyond the veil and shadow of time, thy children would draw aside the mist that separates the outer from the inner world, by the subtle law of change men call death; by the power of life which is inherent in the soul; by the transformation of dust into glorious thoughts and images, until the soul aspires to know all of endless life. Oh, let the children of earth, casting aside their fear and terror, enter the vestibule of thy temple of knowledge that leads to eternity; let them behold the laws banding together the visible with the invisible, the inner with the outer world. Let ministering spirits, with



soft, appealing voices attend, and linking their lives with the celestial, remind them that life on earth is but the fleeting shadow of a vision compared to the reality. May the utterances of this night be inspired by thy love and thy truth, and may the hearts of those who listen be filled with the knowledge that shall come to them, until the two worlds shall be no longer apart and divided, but all shall be united and all shall name thee our Father and our God.

#### THE LECTURE.

Mr. Chairman and friends—for I feel that I am not a stranger in your midst, so lately here in person, so truly here to-night. I little thought that the time would be so soon when, having burst the bonds of outward sense, I could speak as one having authority; when, seeing through a glass darkly, I would so soon see face to face the reality of spirit-life, when last conversing with friends on earth we measured our little gleams of the philosophy of life which the certainty of Modern Spiritualism brought to me.

To-night I have been invited to give you an account of my transition from the outer to the inner world, and of my reception in spirit-life. You must bear with me. I am unaccustomed to this kind of control, though it was perfectly familiar to me as an observer when on earth. Up to the last hour of my mortal existence I had as positive knowledge as is given to mortals to have, of the existence upon which I was about to enter. Death came to me no unwelcome visitor; friends on both sides, equally dear, summoned me to both lands, but the time allotted to humanity had already transpired; and my life, as you know, had been right in faith, if not in deed, for many years. That faith which was born of knowledge was no holiday gift, no bestowment of intellectual spasm, and no result of morbid theological fancy. For twenty years I have had knowledge; for fifteen years I have never had a doubt of the existence beyond death, and the possibility of spirits to communicate with mortals. But as

the morning gradually dawns upon the earth, as the summer-time constantly approaches in the footsteps of spring, and brings her own peculiar loveliness, that no prophecy of morning or spring can afford, so the transition from knowledge to experience, from observation on your side of life to observation on the spiritual side, is as great as the advent of day after the night. I speak with no hyperbolical language; there is no word to express the change which death brings to the spirit; there is no language to typify the life of which for the first time I became certain that I was the real inheritor. The knowledge which I believed I possessed upon earth was indeed knowledge, so far as the senses could give it; the knowledge which came to me on my departure from earth was the certainty of absolute possession. No moment of the expiring or receding ray of mortal existence was lost to my spiritual consciousness; at no interval of time did I feel that I was going to sleep, or that the power of my individual life was fading from me; at no instant did I feel severed from either world; conscious alike of the ministering power of beloved ones on earth, and gradually becoming more and more conscious of the ministering power of spirit friends, I found my spirit-land all about me. I was not borne through the air; I experienced no sensation of sleep, no interval of time between the outer and the inner consciousness; I saw gradually what I had not seen before—what seemed to fall to my vision as the revelation after a veil had been removed—the people of the spiritual existence near me, as though they had been waiting for me always. I saw that the film fell from my eye as the bodily strength decreased, and I gradually became aware of spiritual existence and spirit scenes, as one standing in a mist among the mountains might suddenly, as the clouds would rise and disappear, become aware of the landscape around him.

My spirit-world was where I died, the friends who had preceded me into spirit existence were there, they smiled upon me as though they had known I was coming for a long time, they were ready to receive me as if they had been waiting by

my side for many a day expecting that I would slip out from my earthly tabernacle, they seemed aware that my sojourn on earth had nearly expired ; and there was my father, benign, not in his old age, but in full vigor of manhood, smiling at me as though I were a boy again, and he had come to teach me something new. All this was so familiar and so entirely in keeping with what I expected, that I was not even astonished, not certainly at the presence of my friends, the dearest one of my household, my family, who had preceded me, but there was a surprise. It came in my own consciousness and feeling, it came in the possession of powers of which I was not aware, it came in that transcendent sense of *life* which I never experienced on earth, not like youth, not like early manhood, not like any intoxication which any draught could give was the sense which came to me of inexpressible life, a feeling of buoyancy as though there had never been a physical bond, as though pain, and dust, and weight, and time, and sense, had all departed. If I could prefigure to you, or convey in one word the term and meaning of that transcendent experience when for the first time the soul feels fetterless, when the freedom of the spirit to think and feel is absolute and seemingly boundless, when all possibilities seem to rise at once as accomplished facts, and every hope and desire of the mind seems capable of fulfillment, because of the possession of the power which is within ! This is no exceptional state in me ; aware that from long habit of thought, and from accustomed communion with spirit-life my mind was well prepared for this, I know since that many spirits who have no such outward knowledge are in reality prepared spiritually for this higher birth. It is a spiritual state, it is a state of exaltation, it is a redemption which comes to man after the fatigue and labor and comparative toll of life is over. Easy as was my daily path when I made it so by my mind and pen, and easy as were the allotted hours of my appointed labors upon earth, and easy as were the subjects of contemplation to grasp when thought and determination were set to bear upon them, I found obstacles

which had perplexed my way suddenly removed, as if I had come from behind a ledge of rocks, and now could see the gray sky and ocean before me.

This sensation of death you will not experience, probably, until you pass through the change clairvoyants transfigure. Many persons who pass into abnormal conditions may realize it somewhat, but the unfettering of the soul from the body is the one thing that death reveals, and with it the hidden powers that otherwise seem to slumber, and are in some measure hampered by the physical senses. I observed strangely enough that my physical body was still perfectly apparent to me, that the friends upon earth were still visible, and I only seemed to have had an added glimpse of life, of scene, of atmosphere, of being, that I could not see with my mortal vision. Not being clairvoyant upon earth, never having seen except such manifestations as were given through others, possessing knowledge only through the physical senses, I could not previously understand as I now do the meaning of that inward light, that perception of the spirit which seems to comprehend all senses, and makes mind as well as matter visible to disembodied spirits. To-night, therefore, as really in your midst, the double faculty of seeing your body and perceiving the spiritual atmosphere is mine, and with that the perception of all this spiritual realm that lies about you, which I find is not removed to some remote point in space, but accompanies you, hovers near you, attends upon your footsteps, is a portion of your daily life, and when the soul breaks through the barriers of time and sense, reveals the beloved one by your side. The spirit-land is no far-off realm. I find not a few spirits who have no thoughts beyond the earth, but if they have sympathies with human beings who are aspiring to lofty thoughts, they remain near to inspire and uplift them, and this atmosphere of which I speak is a portion of the spiritual atmosphere surrounding you. I do indeed perceive that there are dense places upon the earth and spirit atmospheres above the earth where it would seem scarcely possible for spiritual light to penetrate, but even there some

redeeming thought or some kindly deed frequently illumines the surrounding darkness, and higher spirits attend.

But for the most part the spiritual existence of your friends who are newly departed is quite near to you; they are taken charge of, are made familiar with the scenes of spirit-life, and those who are in sympathy with them abide near them, as they abide near to you; and my affection being about equally divided between the spiritual and the earthly life, I assure you I have no intention of leaving the atmosphere of earth until, by communication and by constant effort, I shall possess myself of the facts on this side of existence as wholly as I did upon the mortal side. I mean to make every effort, not only to express myself in this manner, which by permission of her guides and the gifts of this medium I am enabled to do to-night, but also to try my powers at every form of manifestation which I have ever witnessed, to possess myself of the required information, that I may, if possible, state it in a manner which I often longed to have stated to me while I was still an investigator, and which, for the benefit of other investigators, I shall certainly endeavor to state from this side of existence. I now find that the aspirations and certainties concerning spiritual existence which came to me were not only real in the sense of manifestations and presence, but real in a more transcendent sense than this; that all the thought or hope of spiritual life, all the aspiration for the reality of friendship and the continuance of genial companionship is more than realized. You and I have experienced these things—that is, some of us—in a degree, that we were severed from time and space and death by conversation, by hallowed experiences, by our own intelligent and intellectual pursuits; I find spiritual life is even more than this, personal, and especially gratifying to the social, the intellectual and the spiritual thought of men. I find that real here which was not real upon earth; the sympathy of friends becomes the strongest tie here, and no outward change of circumstance or distance seems to affect that bond. As spiritual life is not a material substance compared with the substance

of earth, so whatever composes the happiness or unhappiness of a spirit is the result of his or her inward state.

The spheres of which you hear so much I find to be *conditions or states of spiritual life* depending upon the thought and spiritual growth, and liable to exist anywhere ; so that to-night there may be numberless spheres represented in this room, and your spirit friends attending upon you may represent as many grades of thought as yours. As spirits are not dependent upon material substance for existence, as they do not require shelter from the elements, as there is no necessity for any particular time or space, a spirit sphere may be near you, and that attendant spirit which abides by you represents the sphere of his or her existence, so that the state itself defines the sphere, and not the place or distance, nor the position with reference to the earth. I am thus explicit, not because it is impossible for spirits to exist at a distance from the earth, but because much mistaken materialism has grown out of the thought of distinct locality as being necessary for spiritual existence, and while I find that in the highest spiritual state to which I have been permitted to enter, I seem to be removed and absolved from earthly things and earthly communion, I do not realize the distance that separates me, but in an instant, if I so desire, I can be back to the earth again, or back to the friends that I wish to communicate with. Space is literally annihilated ; there is no necessity for time, except when we wish to converse with mortals ; and therefore one mile, or a thousand or a million, are as readily traversed by the spirit having the wish to traverse that distance. I find that the knowledge of the spirits affects very materially their powers, and that some spirits reside near the earth, move slowly upon the earth's surface, hover about the places of their former occupations, without seeming to know that they have the power to pass more rapidly from point to point. It seems being there they are held there, and this probably constitutes their spiritual bondage ; but for the short period of time that I have inhabited the spiritual state I find time and space are no barriers. Many things, sufficient to fill volumes, have

come into my consciousness, and of which I had no power of analysis before. With the throwing off of the mortal body, clearness of perception and comprehension of spiritual principles, absolute sight of material substances that are sealed to mortal vision, and perception of laws and forces of nature, before unknown, occult powers that seem to be withholden from mortals' view, are entirely clear and perfectly understood by the mind as soon as brought in contact with them. To use these powers perfectly, to make one's-self familiar with them, to study them closely in the effect of union between the two worlds is to be my occupation for some time to come, since I regard this revelation, now that I have entered spirit-life, as even more important than I did while still among the inhabitants of earth, since I regard any added knowledge, or any light thrown upon its philosophy as being so much more important than that upon any other subject with which I was comparatively familiar.

And now I have an admission to make: I have wished since I passed into spirit-life that I had more and more revealed what I knew of Spiritualism while upon the earth. It is true I talked about it with my friends constantly; it is true that when called upon I made statements to the public; it is true that my works are before you; but if I had known as I now know the absolute nature of the importance of these manifestations, I would have daily and hourly devoted my energies to making manifest to the public, or to any human being who desired it, the testimony which I have witnessed in proof of spirit communion. So much the more easily can spirits communicate when there is even an awakened power in the human mind; but the avenues of communication are so few, and the channels so imperfect at best, that could I have thrown the whole weight of my experience on your side of existence, I would now have the consciousness that I had not delayed in expressing that which to every human being must be the highest possible revelation of human life, the certainty of existence beyond death. If tardy in this duty, it was through conscientiousness; I did not wish

to force my opinions upon others; I was reluctant to ask people to believe that which they had not themselves witnessed; but I now know that the value of human testimony is not to be underrated, and that the manifestations which I saw might have led many to an inquiry who otherwise were prevented from so doing. With this acknowledgment I will say that the states and conditions of the spirit-life by which spirits manifest themselves to mortals are as varied as the circumstances under which mortals abide or exist, and that a spirit is obliged to overcome every one of certain outward conditions before he can intelligently reach the mortal mind. Finding this to be the case, I sought a familiar channel of communication in several places, and found myself able to express my thoughts through those accustomed channels; but seeking it in one or two other places, where there was no previously existing mediumship, I found I could only make an impression, and a very slight impression, upon the brow or mind, and while I have been able to converse in meditation with my friends who have thought of me since my departure from earth, I have not been able to make them aware, as I could wish, of my personal presence because of those intermediate barriers. To remove those barriers, to set them aside one by one, on your side of life as well as on ours, is the mission and work of true spiritual philosophy; to make intelligent research a pursuit which shall not be that of curiosity; to ask candid inquiry into the phenomena, and especially instruction in the philosophy of spiritual communion; to make some sort of preparation so that the upper world shall not be hampered with the conditions of earthly life as well as all those of ignorance in the minds of men—this is what I wish especially to plead for. But borne upon the wings of the new-found life, and conscious of the unbounded knowledge which I had yet to gain, and aware that those who had preceded me in spiritual state must be more familiar than myself with those methods, I have waited and shall wait until I receive such knowledge by observation or instruction as shall enable me to carry forward this research



intelligently; but meanwhile no opportunity will be lost and none indeed neglected whereby I can speak or even manifest through any channel the light which has come to me, and which is the fulfillment of life itself.

If the reunion of long absent friends, if the silent communion of similar thought and souls upon earth, if the steady preparation for the long voyage that at last culminates in absolute realization, if to find the hopes of my youth and manhood more than verified, transcendently realized, if to feel that there is no change except an added endearment in the friends that preceded me into spiritual state, if to recognize as of one accord those minds whom I have long revered and held sacred, and those friends that with me have withstood the brunt and battle of persecution, if to be thus heralded and thus received into soul communion and into confidence, greeted as one worthy, though I felt my unworthiness, made an equal though I felt my inequality, if this be the realization of heaven, then I am in that heaven. No fabled wonder, no city of gold, no gems nor precious stones arose to greet my vision, no heaven of theology. I never believed it, I could not; but the spiritual union, the welcome of friends, the sunlight of love upon an atmosphere made buoyant by truth and hope, to feel the constant fervor, the absolute life of awakening intelligence merging more and more into reality, this was what I found; the love of the soul unquenched and purified, the transfiguration of thought made beautiful by all the images and symbols of art, the true reverence of the spirit for the Infinite Creator imaged in lives of self-forgetfulness and ministration, the busy spiritual world where thought itself is supreme, and where each messenger is a ministering spirit—this is what I found. Assemblages of spirits, into whose presence my father conveyed me after I had first received the benediction and greeting of my friends, assemblages of minds working together in community of purpose and thought for the amelioration of the condition of men, the social problem which my father commenced on earth and I but feebly followed to fulfill, these all made more clear, and the solution of

them found in this higher and purer atmosphere: The faith, and hope, and certainty of human alleviation, that the States, socially, morally and politically, would finally be better, the absolute plan of the uplifting of humanity by steady and constant spirit ministrations, the instruction of the masses in the way and means of spiritual life, so that every human being would become aware of his or her individual importance.

In one conversation with my father since I passed from earthly to spirit-life concerning the society or association which he first endeavored to form in the Old and then in the New World, I said, "Is the scheme correct which you formed? Is it possible for any considerable number of human beings to live together in associative bodies, including their moral and spiritual uplifting?" He said, "My thought upon earth was only a prophecy; I did not fulfill it because I had not found the true key." "What is the true key?" I asked. He said, "It is spiritual adaptation in classes. I supposed that a community, external interests and a common bond of sympathy in external pursuits, would ultimately unite them spiritually. I find now," he said, "that there can be no real community without a base of unity in the spirit, and all associations formed merely for external purposes must fall, excepting in the external sense, while socially and morally and religiously, the world would remain as it is. You will witness," he said in continuation, "that those associated bodies bound together by a common religious impulse generally remain steadfast, and though their impulse be not correct, it still is a bond of unity among them. Now," he said, "what we intend to do is to pour out upon the world such a flood of spiritual intelligence as to sweep away the barriers of materialism, and bind men together upon the common basis of spiritual welfare." "But," I said, "that is what the Christian churches have been trying to do for two thousand years." "Oh, yes," he said, "but they have only done it in an exclusive way; what the world wants to-day is not only Christianity, but a religion or a Spiritualism that shall include everybody, and the moment you do this you place all on their proper level, they seek their associations, they be-

come equally as important in the great project of creation the one as the other, and in time, society itself will combine together upon principles not external, but spiritual. If there shall be an association formed," he said, "under the direction of spiritual beings, that shall be intelligently carried out, it will combine spiritual with material purposes, and the spiritual will be first. No one will be called upon or expected to join the association who is not practically capable of following the Golden Rule." "Well then," I said, "you will have to wait until the millennium." "Not so," he said; "there are many minds upon the earth to-day ready to practically demonstrate this, many who are longing for the opportunity, but they cannot combine, because of the wide severance in earthly matters. Now let every one of these be summoned to a community or association equally adapted, set aside selfishness, and work together for the whole good, and the problem is solved—the individual is swallowed up in the whole, and yet the individual is not neglected."

This was one conversation. And had you seen as I saw the deceased and risen students of social philosophy, Fourier, all who have taken the lead in the long line of reformers and socialists, many who had risen from the bloody fields of carnage in Europe, many who rose out of the Commune with imperfect and fragmentary ideas of social life, with many who have illustrated by their lives and example the possibility of self-forgetfulness, had you seen the myriads of souls intent upon this problem, and conscious that it is dawning upon the earth, you would not have been surprised at the vast manifestation which has recently taken place with reference to labor, nor would you blame that spirit of true freedom which—although in the existence of the present customs it makes carnage and destruction—indicates a wrong at the basis of your social order. [Applause] Had you seen what I saw, you would not be surprised at the terrible echoes running all along through the various arteries of commerce, and the aisles and corridors of vast speculations in this country and in the Old World, a tremor which will not cease and will not pass until

It becomes a loud voice and powerful protest against the injustice of the present system of social and commercial life which binds man to man by any servitude whatever. Had you seen the hope and the joy which spread all through those lines of intelligent spirits when they found any united purpose in the appeal for man, you would know that there is no end to disturbance on earth until injustice shall cease; and while we do not seek warfare, and while every one deplors the shedding of blood, that there is no responsibility upon those who seek redress for their wrongs. And then I said, "Will it be possible that this shall come about without great warfare and conflict? will there not be shedding of blood and serious disturbances? shall we not finally have a war that shall involve the whole country, and perhaps nations in ruin, bringing anarchy instead of freedom?" "There is no need of this warfare," said my kind parent; "the shedding of blood is not a proper atonement for sins to-day any more than in any past age; there can be no respite for wrong by committing added wrong; we shall make voices to instruct the people in their rights, to see that they steadily unite and maintain them, and above all to make their spirits calm and steadfast, that the injustice may not be perpetuated, that they may not seek for redress by injustice, but that they may protest against it intelligently, acting so unitedly that all will be won by the simple power of intelligence and spiritual truth." And then I saw far off in the coming time, though not so far as one would imagine, that there will rise up teachers under the influence of that sphere of spiritual life, who will instruct man, first of all, that his spiritual nature is the highest, that he has no right to inflict injury upon his fellows, even in redressing wrong, but that he has a right, steadily and persistently, to protest against wrongs until the wrongs shall disappear, that he shall live above them and beyond, and that this is the inauguration of the new social state.

I passed into other fields of thought, of science, of philosophy, of art, of religion; I found no idleness, I found none unemployed, I found none indifferent, I found all acting and

working for the benefit of others, and thereby gaining knowledge for themselves. I found that in proportion to their ministrations and communication of knowledge was the attainment of knowledge. I found the seclusion of students and the possibilities of fraternal communings alike permissible and alike the result of unselfish desire for truth and the wish to communicate it to others. Above all things I found an increasing desire in myself not only to discover the various methods of spiritual existence, but to communicate them to others, to my friends upon earth. Oh that so-and-so could know this! oh that my friends who expressed such a doubt could be aware of this! And then I thought for all minds in spirit-life who have this yearning and desire, how few are the channels through which they can converse with mortals, and how long the time that it takes for preparation to inaugurate an intelligent system of converse between the two worlds. Friends, remove the barriers, take down the walls *fear* and *prejudice*, invite union at the family circle, let the mediums by your firesides be unfolded, let the daughter, the child that is clairvoyant, see visions of spirit-life, let there be this steady flow of intelligence; it will uplift, sustain and strengthen, nor will it mar the pursuits of daily life, but on the contrary make them more and more ennobling by infusing this element of spiritual existence into your daily drudgery. If I had a thousand voices and could speak through a thousand tongues this night, I would say let the spiritual life receive its due proportion of consideration at your hands; let there be no putting off to a more convenient season of that investigation which interests you all; let it take possession of your daily life, let it become a portion of your existence, as your food, and the air that you breathe; thereby you will come to breathe more and more the spiritual atmosphere, and thereby you will—like some of my friends whom I see here and who have already passed beyond the fear of death—have entered the spiritual life even before your bodies pass through the final change.

As for me, I know that without boasting I can say I fulfilled the prophecy of John in the wonderful Apocalypse. "There

was no death," and the new Jerusalem that came down to me adorned like a bride for the bridegroom, was indeed the life, the immortality, into which, as with a spring, I plunged fearlessly and buoyantly, and that awakened all that endearing association which now thrills and fills my life. I would communicate to you that you too may seek and know, until all the air of earth shall cease to resound with dismal fear and complaining and murmuring about death, and you shall abide in the spiritual state where I now find myself one with them and one with you.

Feeble as is this utterance, I thank you for your attention and for listening to me in this manner. Again and again I shall try, until at last I shall be able to perfectly, through this and through other instrumentalities, express myself to you, individually as friend and collectively as brother and kindred spirit. Good-night. [Applause.]

## THE NEW NATION.

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“Behold, I make all things new.”

From the councils of your nation who have risen, not by ambition, not by human flattery, not by the voice of their fellow-men, but by merit to their places in the spiritual world—from those who still keep watch and ward by the gateways of life, with divine meditation contemplating the earthly state, and with highest hope looking forward to the future, I am appointed to speak to-day. I have no lofty words of eloquence, I have no gift of speech such as some have who control this instrument, but speak the truth. My words are those of conviction, and whatsoever I may say it comes not from outward love of display, but from inward consciousness that a voice to the nation and of the people may be of value from the spiritual standpoint of existence.

I consider that the people of this country do not sufficiently prize their privileges. I consider that they do not understand what it means to live in possession of the three-fold armor of liberty, which encircles them and protects them from invasion from all the civilized and barbarous world. I consider that the privilege of existing beneath so free a system of laws is such that, if he who reads the law of the ancients can judge aright, all who possess that privilege would bow in thanksgivings, would hold their right as a sacred and priceless gift, and would, rather than sacrifice it, do all things even to the

end of living each moment a life of justice and righteousness. Clad in this three-fold armor, the Republic stands to-day the guerdon of hope for the world. Clad in this three-fold armor, stronger than the mail of ancient warrior, stronger than the triple steel-clad armor that in ancient Greece and Rome protected the patriotism of those loved lands, stronger than Egypt's mighty hosts, is this system of invisible law that holds every human being in the hollow of its hand and protects even the unborn babe and the gray-haired sire.

The foundation of the Republic was, in itself, almost a miracle. The adaptation of the laws under a constitution that might only be altered by the united voice of the people, and the three-fold division of the government into the executive, judicial and legislative departments, fashioned in themselves a protection and a strong barrier against the encroachments of individual ambition and of the selfishness of combined bodies of men. But like all nations under human administration the highest is not appreciated; that which is possessed is not understood, and it is only when war, devastation, ruin or slavery creeps in that men understand the true meaning of the word Liberty, and appreciate the blessings that they possess.

Above all things the right of religious freedom, that for which the centuries had groaned, that for which seas of blood had been shed, that for which massacre, torture, inquisition and imprisonment had long existed, that for which saint in dungeon cell had pined, and the votary of a new faith had, going heavenward mid flame and fire, sought to attain—that is yours, has been yours almost from the beginning, and is the priceless boon above all others in the great jewel of your national existence. I wonder that men do not pause in the daily routine of business and pleasure, in the headlong pursuit of the wonderful god of gold, to stand upon this, the altar of their freedom, and praise God every day. I wonder that in the mad whirlpool and pursuit for high places of emolument and trust, men do not pause with reverent and uncovered heads waiting the voice that shall call them to the



possession of power, instead of rushing madly where angels might fear to tread. I wonder that beneath this very dome [Snow's Academy], that is starry and typical of the ensign of your nation's freedom, men do not consider that they take their hearts and lives in their hands when they learn what it is to become fully endowed with the privileges of citizenship in this land. And it is not in a political sense that I speak of this; it is not with reference to any external process, any law-making or law-executing process that is familiar to those politicians who look upon the surface of things and see in the ballot box only a means of power, and in the high offices of the government only places for self-aggrandizement. It is not with the superficial view of those who glance at the rights and privileges of American citizenship merely from the standpoint of selfishness and the aim of individual ambition, merely because it protects their property, their individual rights, their freedom of speech and their liberty of conscience. It is because that beneath the eye of heaven, and unfolding even as forests unfold from the soil that is around them, this nation is the mighty outgrowth of the nations that have preceded it, is the flowering out of civilization, the unfoldment of the perfect rose of life beneath the hand of God; and he who wantonly destroys its bloom or takes away from the fairness of its beauty, becomes a coward and a slave in the consciousness of those who understand the meaning of the rights of men. It is not because won with great suffering and heralded with a long line of torture the seeds of this nation's freedom were planted in victory; it is not because that after a century some of the evils incident to a new government have been wiped away by the baptism of blood; it is not because the heroes and sons of your own land have risen up to defend it against an old-time foe whose new offspring came forth in their hideous deformity upon your soil—it is not because of this; but it is because of a vast spiritual strata that has risen above the earth and fashioned a super-government therefrom, that in its turn yields to the nation and to mankind the harvest of spiritual growth. It is because the

ripening fruits of your civilization become the germs of future civilizations and of invisible kingdoms, whose voiceless words and soundless speech make vocal the air above you with wonderful prophecies and fulfillments.

All children born in this country, all children that reach the age of maturity upon this continent should be taught, as a portion of their daily religion, should be fed as a portion of their daily bread, the lesson of this government; should be made to feel that the freedom of the people depends upon them and their choice in life; should be made to know that the intelligence—that invisible something that penetrates all the atmosphere, that makes this morning glorious in the sight of every living creature here—that this intelligence constitutes the safeguard, the bulwark, the salvation of this government and people.

I am well aware that the time may come when each human being shall exist above law and shall be conscious of the divine possession of the individual right of justice. I am well aware that a nation or people may exist upon earth that shall not depend upon any bulwark of human law, upon any legislative, judicial or executive department for their freedom; but I am also well aware that the three-fold form of government you possess to-day may become exalted and typical of the Divine government, and that never, if you were to wait a thousand years, could you frame a form of law that would in itself comprehend the divine government of man above the law. And this is why I speak to you to-day with a voice not simply of warning and of external recognition, but with a voice of somewhat of prophecy. I see in the nation that which you, perhaps, cannot see. Nearness to the sun blinds the vision, and those who are afar off may behold its brightness without shrinking. I have been in the blinding light of this sun myself. I have seen its dazzling glory lurid with the blood-red flames of battle. I have wept with you over the heroes, the sons and sires of our own soil slain for the sake of freedom when the nation was nearly a century old. I have with you stood at the helm endeavoring to prevent the ship

of state from running upon the shoals and quicksands of ambition, warfare and ruin. I have seen what policy has done even in the midst of the greatest peril and danger, sacrificing the nation to individual wish and ambition. I have known that unless there was an unseen, unless there were a superior power, unless other minds than those of earth governed and directed, the ship of state must have been wrecked; and I have known that it was no merit in you or in me; I have known that it was not because of our firmness, our greatness, our freedom from yielding to temptation nor our lack of selfishness, but because we were the right instruments in the proper place and time to do the bidding and wield the power of the Most High concerning this nation. And now I know that it is not what any man can do in your midst, though he rise up with the voice of a prophet, and though he speak and wield the power of eloquence of a law-giver. I know behind the scenes of outward life spiritual laws must have their sway, and that you are governed, as all are beneath the infinite, by those spiritual laws. And I see that the new nation which is to rise above that which is *debris* and seemingly corrupt, is a nation of spiritual recognition; that the blindness of vision and the external prejudice and materialism which have crept into life have robbed mankind of that consciousness of spiritual guidance which our forefathers possessed, even though it sometimes led them into bigotry. I believe that a new existence of spiritual life recognizes in the government a power of *religion* in all things connected with human administration—a power of spiritual law that shall bind men together, not by force of external circumstances, or advantages of civilization and commerce and trade, and a community of human interests merely, but by a higher law of human brotherhood that existed in the minds of the patriots who first framed the foundations of this government, and once more sprung into being when the life-blood of the nation was flowing and the foundations of human liberty were threatened with destruction.

All the time and every hour, where the Atlantic washes

the shore and where the Pacific washes the shore, there is a voice going up from this nation that bids the people of the earth hope and look forward to ultimate freedom. All the time while you are contending with petty differences and factions here, in the far Orient the people that have long been persecuted and oppressed look to this nation as their final safety and hope. All the time when Italy went through the severest of her many severe struggles, and Garibaldi held the sword of freedom like a flaming fire above the nation, and when Italy waited for a king that could not condescend to make her a republic, even then Italian patriots looked to this country for the hope of their own freedom; and in a voice of prophecy, crowned by the life of that wonderful prophet, Mazzini, she spoke the word of freedom and blessing to her people. All the time when Russia was groaning beneath the serfdom of years there was a warning voice that made the Emperor know that the time had come to release them from bondage. All the time when France has been desolated by warfare, rapine and ruin, she has ever felt in her inmost soul that across the watery wave there was a sustaining voice and an uplifting power. All the time when Great Britain's sons have been tolling for the bare privilege of existence and daily bread, she has known that her noblest sons have spoken in behalf of human rights and human freedom, and the right of man to toil and earn his daily bread and receive that bread, because of the nation that was smiling across the water; because of the great lily of lands that lay smiling and fair beneath the hand of God; and all the time, her own children silent, the voice of the world has praised this land and helped her to reveal herself to the eye of heaven.

And now that this hope exists and is imperishable, and now that the warring nations throng thither, and the shores receive them with outstretched arms; and the fields smile up with their glad fruition of harvest to those that had no bread, I say this nation were worse than Rome, worse than Egypt, worse than downtrodden and betrayed France, worse than all the minions of power beneath the sun if she did not smile

back her thanksgiving to heaven, if she did not wipe from her record every stain, if she did not uplift her hands to heaven and ask that her feet might be guided forever in the pathways of truth and justice.

I speak to the souls of humanity to-day, not for country; not for the sake of the strip of land that stretches far from sea to sea; not because of the love of pride and patriotism—these I have outgrown. I am no longer of any nation. I do not recognize any place beneath the sun that is dearer than any other place, nor do I know that this spot of land called America is of more value in the eyes of heaven. I do not recognize you as fellow-citizens any more than the remotest being of the remotest island of the sea; you are my brethren and they are my brethren. But I recognize here the opportunity, the blessed privilege that man has to become what God intended him to be in the way of life and in rectitude and government. I recognize that here each human being may expand and unfold in the wonderful fields of liberty and justice until he shall lean his brow against the very hand of God and not be afraid nor ashamed.

I have seen our risen statesman since he came out from the world of your existence and praises, our glorious Sumner, risen to his own place in the Spiritual Congress, not because of his individual greatness, but because of the light of truth and justice that led him on through all the years of his ripened manhood; and despite the imperfection which all possess, and despite the irritability of the later years, and despite the corruptions of place and power on earth surging around him, I see him now as a spirit, crowned by the deeds of his life, grown glorious in the words that he has spoken for mankind. And I say if this be the flower of the government, and the people blessed of all others on earth, why may we not have all politicians like this man? Why may not every child be taught to love truth for its own sake and justice for the sake of mankind, to refuse power and place for ambition's sake, and only accept it as a divine trust from the hand of God? And why may not every son of American soil read this history and learn what he may become?

I see the new nation. Its tremblings and forebodings are all around you in the air. The puppets which men use for party power, the playthings of temporary ambition, are to be swept away, and the new nation shall be born of the great heart of the people, shall be a portion of its life and its throbbings, and no man shall have place or power that is not beloved and honored and trusted in your midst. I see the tendency of this time, the storm sweeping over you, the rubbish cast away into the fiery furnace that burns not with literal flame but with the consuming fire of the judgment of God. I know that out of this fire shall arise new-born hopes and prophecies of a people disenthralled and redeemed from selfishness and pride, looking forward to the highest and noblest conquest, the victory over self and the expression before the eyes of men of all that light with which God has endowed them.

I see the new nation. Its tremblings are in the air; and instead of bickerings and scornings and pride, I see the nation's congress assembled on behalf of the rights of the nation and all that is for the welfare of humanity, and all that shall lay the foundations for coming generations of time are builded and lain while every superfluous stone is cast away and every idle word dies ere it is spoken. I see the new legislators in their places; they are 'resh from the hearts and minds of the people; they have been weighed in the balance and not found wanting. They are willing to serve, and they know that they must serve their country faithfully. I see the new executive department—not men corrupted by political contest—not those who have waded through combinations of place and power with ambition corroding their hearts and lives, but risen from the midst of the people, the offspring of your own lives, the fruition of the blessed firesides of the land, called from their places of private trust to the loftier position of public trust, that they may wield the affairs of the nation in simplicity and purity.

I see the judiciary when the last of the old laws shall have faded away—the risen sons of your own soil who have learn-

ed to know the law of the land as a righteous text-book, and to interpret it according to the highest standards of human justice and liberty, crowned with laurels not won from the bleeding hearts of those whom they have persecuted, not won from criminal courts where they have sent victims tortured into the world of souls; but from the just interpretation of laws of equity, where each human being is adjudged to be equal in rights and privileges with his fellow being, and no law is evaded, and none are condemned without justice. And I see your sons and maidens, with full knowledge of their rights and privileges, rising up in the new nation, hand-in-hand together, teaching philosophy, expressing the law of the land wherein God is wedded to earth even by the light of divine freedom.

I hear no more the clanking chains; I see no more the dismal dungeon; I hear no more the voice of those that violate laws which are fashioned perhaps not in their favor. But I see that every man is made beautiful by the sunlight that gleams upon him from his fellow-men; and even as this orb of day beautifies all upon which it shines—beautifies the streets and the darkened ways and the alleys, and even the dim chambers where in silence and poverty some human being has waited for this light, so will the light of the nation, like a sun, shine upon all and in their darkness illumine them, bringing them out of all corruption and corroding need. And I see that every human being in this blessed land, that has for its counterpart and prototype the land which I now inhabit, will feel the tremblings and thrillings of that higher life, and will know that it is not the flower, and not the tree, and not the external form, but the spirit of it and the life of it that is valuable to the soul of God; and that even as we speak the word which we have learned in our high estate, so will you each speak the word to those that are less favored than yourselves, and all become teachers, prophets, preachers in this new dispensation of light and harmony.

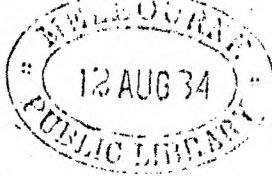
The laws of the nation shall no longer be separated from the laws of life. Religion shall not have her separate ways,

silent and alone, set apart for special obligation and praise; but the sanctuary shall be wherever there is labor for willing hands to do and pathways for willing feet to tread. I shall see a religion in this new nation that shall blossom out into its laws, not by arbitrary hands nor power of law-making, but by the lives of those who are there called upon to perform their duties. And I shall see that the shedding of blood has *not* been in vain, and that the tears have blossomed out into flowers, and that there has risen from the disappointment and embittered hopes of many bad men the fruition of lofty praise and higher love of good and godly men.

I shall see that this will come not because men of themselves have appointed it, but because the sun shining all the time upon the earth will bring forth the fruits and flowers, the germs being implanted there by the hand of the Infinite. And so, as the divine sun of truth shines upon you, my friends, down through the Congress of Spirits that wait in silence and in prayer for the fruition of justice on earth, down through those hosts of mighty minds that, uplifted beyond fear and praise and human power, wait, with voices of benedictions and with souls attuned to human love, for you to recognize their presence, wait for you to emulate their lives, wait for you to answer back unto their voices, and wait for you to reveal to the eye of heaven a nation that shall be purely white, even as is that nation of souls to which they have risen and where they sit pouring their words of wisdom down through corridors of souls, until at last the sound reaches the earth—it is but one voice, a voice of praise.

“Behold, I make all things new!” The winter is passed; the flowers come again. The graves of your dead loved ones blossom with new life and hope. The nation's dead are transfigured; they bloom in fields of immortal praise, and out of the flowering of their lives, out of the bloom and fruition of their magnified existence you are expected to gather the song of fragrance, the triumphal march of glorious deeds and the blessed baptism that shall fall upon you and yield its blessing to the harvest of the nations of the world.





## THE TREE OF LIFE: ITS SPIRITUAL SIGNIFICANCE.



### INVOCATION.

Infinite Parent, Thou divine source of all life; from a universe of life the song of praise goes out to Thee. From atoms inspired by Thy law with the fulfilment of their life; from worlds fashioned by creative power and instinct with beauty; from flowers that up-bloom, yielding their song of praise in fragrance and beauty; from the fruitage of the earth, ripened beneath the sun's rays and the glory of the sky above; from song of birds and mountain streams; from the waving of branches to and fro, and from the anthems of the ocean wave; from the voice of worlds keeping time to the glad beating of Thy heart, those constellated planets of which man wonders what may be there of life and immortality; from millions of peopled worlds and from space peopled with myriads of living souls, the song of praise goes out to Thee, for life, for being, for the existence which is conscious of itself and is glad; from the souls of men immured in the dust, to whom but a feeble glimpse of the grandeur of the universe is known, who see through the crevices of time the eternity beyond, who only know by the pulsations around and above them that life is there, but who, struggling upward, feel from within the glad song of eternity—from these the praise goes forth. From those in dungeon cells of fear and terror, haunted by crimes

and weighed down by cares and outward sorrow—even there some glimmering beam of love, some uplifting of the spirit, some fervor and hope, kindles the impulse of praise; and from those who rush on in blindness, pursuing the fickle goddess, pleasure, and who see not the light of the spirit nor know of its glory—yet even from these, in some calmer moment or hour of meditation, the haunting memory, or the prophecy of that which lies beyond, reveals the gladness of the soul and they sing their praise.

From spirits disenthralled, made glad and free by death and love, who abide in the upper air and know that the universe is fraught with glory, and to whom death and external fear, and the bondage of the senses, and human pleasure and human ambition and pride and folly, all are as naught, but who see the glory of the spiritual firmament and are aware of the sublime constellations of heavenly bodies, not planets nor worlds, but angels and archangels, round whom, as round heavenly suns, the souls must forever revolve, and who, like shining lights set in their places, guide and guard the spirits over the shoals and quicksands of time—even from these the song of rejoicing goes forth, and they praise Thee without ceasing, while the air of heaven is filled with their glad songs of rejoicing, and they are not afraid.

Oh, thou abiding Light! one feeble note of this praise thy children would bring here to-night, laying it, even if it be one of sighs, upon the altar of that Infinite Love that loseth not sight of suns, nor worlds, nor atoms, but gathers all into the constellations of eternity.

#### THE LECTURE.

In Rev. xxii: 2, you will find a reference, in the description of John of the sacred city, the New Jerusalem, to the tree of life. You will remember that in the first book of the Bible, Genesis, there is reference made to the tree of life, that when the first pair, having disobeyed the mandate of the Father,

partook of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, they were restrained from partaking of the fruit of the tree of life.

In this vision seen by John in his old age, after a life devoted to the ministration of the teachings of Christ, and after witnessing many of the wonders that resulted from those teachings, there seemed a sort of completion of his work by what is familiarly known as the Apocalypse. This book no one has pretended to fully understand. We doubt if, in theological lore, there has been any one subject of solution more difficult, more frequently attempted, and upon which more varied opinions exist than the Book of Revelations; but by all it is considered to mean something; by each class of believers it is interpreted to mean their especial form of belief, and all admit that there is so much of mystery involved and embodied in it that they cannot profess to interpret it fully. There is no difficulty in understanding, however, that it must bear the interpretation of *large spiritual powers*; that whosoever would attempt to interpret it must be familiar with all the terms employed in the Book, with the hyperbolical nature of the language used in those days, the significance of the symbols which are used as illustrations, and the traditionary as well as scholastic meaning of every one of those terms. Without this knowledge no one could give any adequate interpretation; a spiritual interpretation can be given by all according to their light.

In this particular sentence where he says that in the midst of the street thereof and on either side was the tree of life "which bare fruit" every month for the healing of the nations, some interpretations are that there were twelve manner of fruit borne, one every month, for the healing of the nations; but whatever way it is, this tree of life constitutes an essential feature in the New Jerusalem, and has been used as an illustrative figure of salvation from that time to the present.

Has it ever occurred to those not theologians, and not devoted to any particular branch of Orthodox Christianity, that there may still be an interpretation and meaning to this which the theologians have not solved; and that nothing was

written under the inspiration of that particular time of the earth's history which was without meaning; and that whatever the subtle meaning may be, if it has evaded the theologians' searching glance, it may not therefore be wanting except in the comprehension of the people? You are perfectly well aware, without any theological interpretation, that there was an outpouring of the spirit at that time; that at that particular age of the world's history there were marvels wrought and a dispensation established of spiritual truth; that those manifestations were the result of a distinct force or spiritual power, and that the ministration of Christ was the culmination of that epoch of spiritual truth which has yielded sometimes the barren fruitage of warfare because of man's misconstruction, and sometimes the glorious fruitage of advancement and spiritual progress to the nations of the ear

John, evidently looking backward as well as forward, saw in symbolic, prophetic and explanatory vision, the results of the spiritual kingdoms of earth; saw the manner in which these kingdoms were to rise up and disappear; saw the various effects upon the earth; saw also not only the future, but the past, and revealed the manner of the coming of the different angels of ministration to the earth.

This tree of life we will endeavor to illustrate or explain in its various interpretations before giving our own.

It will be remembered that the Mosaic account of creation and the subsequent rearing up of the tribes of the children of Israel seemed to be under a special dispensation of spiritual power; and notwithstanding their divergence in so many directions, and notwithstanding their disobedience to these spiritual mandates, there was something preserved that connected them with the Christian dispensation; a sufficient number of their tribes were kept together, were set apart by spiritual gifts and prophecies, were named and particularly summoned to give to the world a spiritual record for the descent of the house of David, and these numbered probably twelve of the tribes of Israel who were the principal founders of this particular branch that finally yielded Christ, the Nazarene, to the world.

Before this time there was another meaning in the secret caves and oracles of those who pursued the occult sciences of ancient time, and astrology being among the number of the sciences, there was another interpretation. It is found upon tablets of the ancient stones and from revelations made in Mithraic and other oracular resorts in the East, where there was no possible chance of communication between the Hebrew nation, the Persians and the more Oriental nations, that the signs given to represent the "perfect man" were twelve, and these came to be at last the signs of the zodiac, representing the twelve constellations that have influence over the world and are visible, or were visible, to the early patriarch astronomers of the world. Connecting astrology with astronomy, and having no accurate system of the sun as being the centre of your particular planetary system, they still perceived that these constellations, one after another, held sway over the earth, and that the particular time of their appearance constituted some particular form of evidence of life. Beginning with the constellation that then was in the ascendant at winter time, which is the Dragon,\* they concluded that that influence must have sway over darkening the sun and preventing the fructification of the earth. Therefore the Dragon was held to be the symbol of terror, and when the dawn of the Virgin, or Virgo (representing the Virgin), appeared, it showed that from that life came forth the existence that was to fructify and beautify the world. All of these signs of the zodiac were held to have some connection with the physical welfare of man—not only with the bringing forth of the young of different kinds of life, not only with vegetation and animal existence, but also with man himself; so that it became traditionary that if certain constellations were in the ascendant at the time of birth there were to be certain destinies of human beings, and if there was great power of spir-

\*The Dragon referred to is the Scorpion or lesser dragon (zodiac), while the *Cyclic* Dragon, having reference to the Messianic period, is "Draco," or the Great Dragon.

ituality it was because certain constellations were the guardian powers and controlling elements of that particular life.

So that, following the changes of the season, the signs of the zodiac, and connecting these with certain spiritual indications and impulses, it came to be a fact that among the early nations these different signs were worshiped and deified, and were held to correspond to the good or evil luck attendant upon human destiny. The winter snows, the overflowing of the different rivers that in the East constitute the irrigation of the soil, were all held to be under the control of the spiritual beings who presided over these constellations. They were propitiated with offerings; there were sacrifices given to them; there were various kinds of ovations and different forms of worship, and among the nations of the East, especially in the Brahminical world and among the Buddhists, there are now offerings each month in the year and for every sign of the zodiac, and for each quarter of the globe and for winter and spring, for autumn and summer, and for every conceivable variation in the changes of the season; the moon is worshiped—the sun and stars and all constellations—as having relevance to the inhabitants of earth and belonging thereto; and always the sacred number representing the full and complete constellation is twelve. In sacred symbolism you will find this number referred to more frequently than any other as denoting anything complete, anything finished, anything that yields its entire results to humanity.

Owing to the fact that the twelve constellations must each pass or be passed by the earth before the full fruition of the year is attained; owing to the fact that in watching these twelve constellations it was found that the entirety of the earth's productions could not be gathered except at the end of the twelve; and owing to the fact that it was supposed to be the corresponding number of powers or faculties within man that was affected by this spiritual connection between man and these various constellations, it came also to be a fact that in order to preserve their tablets sacred from innovation and to make proper scientific experiments without the mob

interfering—the masses being entirely ignorant of any science in connection with these subjects—they were obliged to conceal them in sacred temples, the priests for the most part being also students; and thence it came about that worship was instituted to prevent the innovation of these temples where the sacred tablets were preserved.

Therefore science and religion in those early days went hand in hand, and we have every evidence that the ancient Egyptians knew, not the present system of astronomy, it is true, but as nearly as it was possible to calculate from their wrong disposition of the centre, their system of astronomy was nearly as perfect as yours, and the only mistake was that, of course, the sun was not considered the centre, and therefore the observations must in that degree have been wrong; but so far as all other expressions of science or astronomy are concerned, the stars were the tablets upon which the human destiny was supposed to be written, and, directly or indirectly, each planet and star discovered was supposed to have bearing upon human life.

Now, why was the number twelve? We have stated that there were twelve signs of the zodiac, that these were watched, and that the years were made to conform to the ideas of the ancients respecting the bringing forth of the young, and with respect to the influence that these constellations were supposed to exert. Therefore, it was natural that the Dragon should be so named, because at that time, according to the precession of equinoxes, the Dragon held sway over the winter solstice and therefore constituted the terror, and was the constellation that they should turn to for offerings of fear; while the Virgin in bringing forth the God of Day, or life in the spring-time, was held sacred; and it was the belief of Volney and Voltaire, and that school of thinkers, that these were the only authentic foundation for the history of the Virgin and Child, but everything in those days was in a symbolic sense. There is just as much reason to suppose that the constellations themselves were made to represent the Virgin and Child merely from the idea that, prophetically, Christ

was to save the world; and there is as good foundation to suppose that the history did not in fact have its foundation in the tradition, but that the tradition was shaped from the prophecy.

Without discussing this point here, it is enough to know that this sacred number and these sacred symbols held sway over all the East, and formed the foundation of many secret orders and many schools of learning that were preserved and perpetuated, not only by Confucius, Zoroaster and the rest, but also by others not even named in your history, who handed down these traditions or perpetuated them in symbols for the benefit of the races that were to come.

In Egypt, where the culmination of the arts and sciences took place long previous to the origin of what was supposed to be the history of man, these tablets, and the symbols and the indications of life beyond death, the tokens of angelic visitation, the name of the primal angel who visited the earth, and all, were directly connected with the physical sciences of the earth at that time. So that it was customary to perform for the twelve hours of the day and the twelve hours of the night, or for such portions of the day and night as were divided by the ancient calendar, certain acts of devotion. Every sacred image, the ibis, the ox—the sacred Apis of the Egyptians—was in direct connection with some one of these twelve powers, and there were twelve of these sacred images worshiped in Egypt at the time that the children of Israel were held in bondage; there were twelve living representatives of the forms of life that came from the constellations of the zodiac, the chief among which was the sacred ox, worshiped alike because of its nearness to the constellation of the Virgin, and because in the spring-time after the sun emerges from the constellation of the Dragon this is the first evidence of life, worshiped because it constituted the chief power of life among them, and was held as the sacred living image of Osiris and Isis, who gave to the earth food and strength. The ibis, or sacred bird, was the representative of immortality, and the serpent was the representative of wis-



dom and strength. So that, completing the full calendar, every month was held sacred, and offerings were given not only for each in the year, but for the animals that represented those months, and in Egypt there were temples for the sun, for the moon, for the different deities that they worshiped, for the names of the deities presiding over the temples of worship, and for every act in life.

So that, holding the spiritual and material as coëqual among the ancients, we must conclude that the tree of life, as represented by them, had a twofold significance: the astronomical, which represented the different influences of the constellations upon the earth; and the astrological, which represented the influence of those constellations physically and spiritually upon man. The astrological view included spiritual beings, the deities presiding in those constellations, and their connection with the earth itself, while the sun was supposed to be the eye of Deity, and was represented by Osiris, the presiding angel of the Egyptians. Osiris was not the Most High God, but was only the representative of the Most High—the messenger, and not the Deity himself. The tree of life, then, to them would mean these sacred symbols pervaded by the spirit which gave for every month in the year an especial form of verdure, or the production of some kind of animals essential to the life of man, and therefore were to be held sacred to man's use because of this preservation, representing, also, the twelve spiritual kingdoms that were supposed to abide in the twelve constellations, and constituting the dark and bright genii that held sway over the earth—the Dragon with his angels, the Virgin with her angels, the Ox with his angels, the Fishes with their angels—all peopling the spaces with their particular angelic powers, the spirit abiding in each being the God whom they worshiped.

Now this, of course, to you may seem as superstition; but if you will place yourselves in that time, with the intelligent appreciation which they had of the meaning of the symbols, and understand that the worship was not given to the symbols but to the spirit of them, and understand that, while the

constellations were supposed to represent externally the figurative idea of creation, that behind this was the spiritual idea, you will have the earth and sun and planets as a centre, and these signs of the zodiac as representing the twelve spirits or angels revolving around the centre, while in the midst is the sun itself, being supposed to be the seal of the Most High, who sent forth Osiris and Isis to the earth as the representatives of his power, and who made, for the time being, this the centre not only of the solar system but of these twelve signs or constellations; and thus you will form some idea of the vast scope and plan of the ancient religion, and how not idolatry, not simply a material form of worship nor superstition constitutes these sacred elements, but that really there was a spiritual basis, having its existence in the absolute revolutions of the angels, and that these angels were those who held sway over the powers of the earth and the physical elements of man.

Say what you will of the sciences and the arts of the present day, it is well known that the Egyptians practiced arts that have not been perpetuated nor restored, and that the mechanism of that day, if you consider the building of the pyramids and many of the other experiments practiced by them, is a marvel even in this day of wonders in mechanical and mathematical art. Then what shall you say, probably, of cities that shall be disintombed, revealing more and more of their skill and knowledge in molding the elements of the earth that you suppose are chiefly the results of the intelligence of the nineteenth century? And what shall you say if after a time it shall come to pass that the acme of Egyptian civilization and culture, as well as spiritual knowledge, was in its degree and cycle as great as yours will be in its completion; and that Greece and Rome, representing a cycle of civilization, have never transcended, save in some directions known particularly to themselves, the civilization of Egypt, while the physical splendor and knowledge of science and art are confessedly born of Egyptian parentage? The first language known to be spoken or written, which has any suitable his-

tory recorded, has its origin in Egypt. Memnon was said to have invented the first twelve letters of the alphabet. What were those? The signs of the zodiac and their symbollic meaning, giving to the ancient Egyptians a complete language for the hieroglyphic expression of their thoughts, and giving such language as they could fashion, not only into an expression of external ideas and transactions, but also into the revelations of worship. No nation can have been very ignorant, nor very blind, nor very obtuse, that could have laid the foundation of that which subsequently has blossomed out in the enlightenment of the world. Whatever dynasties were hidden and buried before Egypt gave this to the world; whatever records were traced there before all this knowledge became apparent and was translated to the Western nations, it is known that Cadmus only added to the language which Memnon (worshipped as a deity,) gave, and that the Grecians were dependent upon Egypt for their first intimation of the art of letters; that the science of numbers also came from the East, and that in the beginning these were all shaped in twelves to correspond to the signs of the zodiac.

This is the external foundation, and one upon which the so-called free thinkers and infidels have stumbled. They have stopped here. Finding there was a correspondence and a corollary between these Egyptians' learning and the knowledge which is subsequently revealed in the Christian Bible, they conclude that the sole foundation for this vision and for all other references in the Bible to it, and for the tree of life and for every symbollic expression made in holy writ, they conclude that it all has its origin not in Egyptian religion, but in Egyptian astrology, and in the use that has been made of it. While it is perfectly true that the Mosaic records were colored by the knowledge which Moses had of the Egyptian laws and science, while it is perfectly true that the Hebrew God changed his name from Lord or God to Jehovah, after the children of Israel were in bondage; while it is perfectly true that this Jehovah was the symbollic representative of the threefold powers that the Egyptians worshipped, meaning the

future, the present, and the past; and while it is also true that much of the symbolism and hyperbolical language employed in the Old Testament after that time is a reflex of the symbolism of the East, it is not true that in the form of worship established, nor in the recognition of the one God, nor in any other fundamental principle of worship, that the Hebrews borrowed *anything* from the Egyptians; but, rather, that they employed forms of expression, the necessary sequence of their long bondage, as you would employ words in any language where you were for a time a sojourner, to express ideas entirely remote from them. While it is also true that both Moses and his brother Aaron were aware of the sorceries and arts of magic practiced in the East, they also knew the difference and discrimination between those and the genuine manifestations of the spirit which it was given them and the prophets to perform; and that this discrimination extended to the time of Christ, who also knew the difference, and who enjoined upon his followers the full meaning of spiritual gifts; and, also, that as Paul was instructed in all the Hebraic arts and sciences, he engendered in the minds of his followers the thought of distinction between spiritual gifts and sorcery or witchcraft; so that, following the entire record through, you find that they always remember where symbolism was used, and where true spiritual gifts were employed.

It is undoubtedly true that in this vision of the Apocalypse much of the phraseology of the East is employed, and that in the descriptions many of the figures correspond to the Egyptian deities; but this does not deprive them of their spiritual significance. On the contrary, it makes the phraseology much more easily interpreted, since we have a clue to the meaning of the Egyptian symbols; but there is no clue to the ancient nations existing before that time.

The tree of life as seen by John must be interpreted, not literally but spiritually, with all the knowledge which the antecedent history gives us and with a full consideration of the meaning of the terms employed. Where he speaks of angels, of cherubim, of seraphim, you must be aware that these

words constituted terms that represented not only certain material orders in connection with the spiritual welfare of man, but also the celestial orders known to those who kept alive the gifts of the spirit, and that the externals were but the symbols of the spiritual orders that had been revealed to the ancients while keeping guard around and about the throne; and while manifesting an angel for each of the four corners of the earth, after the manner of the Oriental worship, there still is a symbolism of spiritual power, and it is this that we desire to unveil to your vision to-night.

The Christian Church and theological students easily dispose of this matter by supposing that it refers to Christ himself, and without troubling themselves to elaborate it very distinctly, they jump either at the conclusion that the twelve manner of fruit are twelve nations, or apostles, or that they represent the various kingdoms of the earth that will be called into the family of those who are saved by the fruits of this wonderful tree.

But now let us trace it still further: It is known that there were spiritual dynasties before Christ. Even Christians are obliged to include the Mosaic dispensation, to have a foundation for theirs. The Mosaic dispensation, perhaps, refuses to look backward; but if it did so, aside from the twelve tribes of the children of Israel, to which the Hebrews can date their especial salvation, it would find other nations of the earth, including the Egyptians, the Chinese, the Persians and the Oriental nations entire, who each had their especial visitations of spiritual truth.

Now, for our own part you will understand we are neither biased by the effrontery of those who disclaim all belief in spiritual record in time past, nor by the dogmatism of priest, nor by the misinterpretation or misinterpolation of schoolcraft, kingcraft, priestcraft, or the materialistic school of the present day. Therefore, this interpretation which we give is predicated upon a thorough study of the meaning of ancient symbols and the spiritual records of the earth.

We find an absolute interpretation in the fact that not only

the tree of life corresponds in its reference to the ancient sciences and revelations, but it also corresponds to the exactitude of spiritual science. Undoubtedly in describing a city that should be the New Jerusalem the language of the time was not adequate to represent the magnitude of the subject, and therefore it seems too little and too inferior to speak of the tree of life set in the midst of the *street*. The word "street," of course, is an interpretation in the smallest sense of what should be given the largest sense in some such term as "the starry pathway," or "the avenue reaching to the skies." "Street" sounds small, diminutive, and yet it was the largest word or possible symbol of a word that could be interpreted in that language. Now, the street of it was undoubtedly the highway, the avenue, or whatever you may please to name the space that this New Jerusalem will represent. The tree of life, as discovered by John, and whose fruits were twelve, was misinterpreted to mean the twelve months of the year because of this ancient symbolism of the astrological tables, and because there were twelve signs of the zodiac representing the months of the year. Therefore the translation must needs read in accordance with the ancient meaning; but we choose to interpret that there were twelve manner of fruits, not to be applied monthly but periodically—and the word would be precisely the same in the ancient language to be interpreted either way, these twelve manner of fruits representing the twelve spiritual kingdoms that are to come to the earth, among which Christ's kingdom was one, and among which the different kingdoms that preceded him were others, and the different kingdoms that shall follow are others likewise; that according to the developments of the human race from its present standard it will require these twelve to include all the races and conditions of men in the spiritual range of enlightenment, and that while out of the ancient nations certain numbers have been reached by their religions, and certain numbers were reached in Egypt spiritually by their religions, and certain numbers among the children of Israel by their religion, and certain numbers were

reached in Persia by their religion, and certain numbers in Christendom by the religion of Christ, there will be other added kingdoms required, other added spiritual cycles to reach the entirety of the human race; and that these are the twelve manner of fruits for the healing of the nations, and it is for the healing of the nations, if you but consider that the spiritual visitations include not only the religions of an especial period or cycle, but all of the sciences, arts and governments that are developed to any degree of perfection within those cycles, and that the ignorance which follows, and the receding of the wave, is no fault of the spiritual cycle itself, but because only certain numbers of minds are ripened for the harvest and certain others must follow after them; as in the university or college there are only certain numbers of students that pass the examination, while others are remanded again to the inferior departments, so certain lines or grades of minds receive the spiritual fruit as it appears, partake of it, become healed, and are carried to the spiritual kingdoms of different degrees of light. So, as these cycles, one after another, are introduced, the leaven of spiritual food gradually enlarges, gradually includes more and more, until when the final spiritual dynasties shall appear the whole fruitage of the tree of life will hang upon the golden branches in the New Jerusalem.

Were you perfectly familiar with the ancient phraseology and with the knowledge which these ancients had of prophecy; were you perfectly aware of the number and indeed the magnitude of the testimonies given in this direction; if you understood that Christ as expressed by his spiritual power was expected by the very men of the East, who came to lay their offerings at his feet, by no science of astrological lore, but by direct calculation of spiritual revolution that it was the exact time in the cyclic period for him to come, and that they were led by the angel in the form of a star to where he was found, and that the personating and representing the acme of that spiritual kingdom was no more unknown to them than the advent of comet or planet is to the astronomer

who has calculated the precise time when it will appear, you would then not be surprised at all these predictions and prophecies that seem now without meaning.

Take any book of astronomy, of mathematics, of geology, and if you have not studied the first or initiative steps, it reads very much like Revelations to you; you cannot understand it any better; it would all be meaningless, and but for the popular opinion that science is quite correct, and quite the thing to believe, you would lay down a volume of Huxley, Spencer, Tyndall, Herschel, or any writer upon any science with no more knowledge than you had before. Because this revelation is only for those who are initiated in spiritual lore does not disqualify it for human belief, but rather places it in the catalogue of those sciences that must be interpreted by those familiar with that science, and the spiritual science which this vision reveals is precisely that which we are treating to-night—that this City which represents the perfect kingdom of the spirit, and which the numbers in the mis-translation and bungling literature of the past has compressed into the small compass of what the children of Israel might believe to be their own sacred city, after all is a symbolic illustration of the proportions given to the ancient numbers, and therefore in the liberal interpretation represents the spiritual.

With this in view you will find that the true meaning of this tree of life dawns upon your consciousness, and that you can trace by this key the entire meaning of all the symbolism which John reveals in this wonderful vision; that the angels appearing are the different dispensations of spiritual truth, and that the different phials which they pour out upon the world are the different receding waves, the punishment and penalty for the materialism which intervenes between men and the perfect expression of that truth, and that when the ultimate angel appears, and when the twelve epochs shall have been passed, there can be no more any discrimination nor distinction between the spiritual and the material, because the earth will have been so far advanced, and the inhabitants of the earth, as to take their places by the side of



angels; so that while there is only one among ten thousand in the earth to-day and in past time who may be called the "son of God," there will then be not one among ten thousand who cannot be called a son of God; for the fructage of this tree of life includes every possible knowledge which the human soul can have, all that the twelve constellations with their spiritual significance can reveal, meaning the entire circuit of the heavens, the entire experience which the earth can give, the yielding of all physical science and of all spiritual growth—and with this how vast becomes the meaning, how small man's interpretation; how feeble the petty and paltry bickering of human tongues compared to the consciousness that a word may portray eternity and a symbol may represent the spirit of God and His angels!

You despise these small tokens of spiritual power in the professed enlightenment of this age, and yet the man of science does not scorn to use the atom as the vast lever of the universe, nor does he deny to the smallest animalcule its place in the universe of organic life. Shall you, then, pass judgment upon that which holds the very solution of the problems that you fain would solve, and, because your eyes are blind and the mind unenlightened, declare that these ancients were but old and blind superstitionists, led by fable and carried away by fanaticism? Is it fanaticism to know and number the stars? Is it fanaticism to call things by their names, and be familiar with the time of the fructification of the earth? Is it fanaticism to know the organization of man and understand the subtle alchemy of the human system? Is it fanaticism to trace the principles of life to their foundation, and discover whereof they are made? Is it fanaticism to solve in crucible of science and religion the most subtle problems of life, and wrest therefrom the sacred truths that even now are held to be the enlightenment of the world? Is it fanaticism that in cloister and in dungeon cell, and by visitations of angels and communion with them, these men wrought out the principles of life, and serve them to you in the visions of the spirit?

You are accustomed to have symbols. The immortal amaranth that blossoms in your gardens is an expression to you of eternal life; the rose is given as an indication of love, and the dove is the harbinger of peace. You herald all flowers, not simply for their external beauty, but for what they signify, and if a violet grows above the grave of your child it is pressed between the leaves of the sacred volume, and forevermore it holds the sweetest place within your heart. So amid the leaves of past ages in the world's history, there spring out these indications of the thought and the revelation, and, when complete, join hands with yours, bridge the wide chasm of unbelief and materialism, and make this the beginning of one more cycle in that great history that shall ripen finally in the full fruition of the tree of life.

Has it not been said by exact science that in five years hence the Great Draco\* will again pass the shaft of the pyramids of Egypt? Has it not been foretold that in five years hence another cycle, computed by the ancients, will have passed in the world's history? Has it not been said by many that that was the exact time of the ending of the world? Is it not, rather, the ending of a particular dispensation of the world, and the dawning of a new, of which these to-day are but the premonitions, and shall not the completed fruition of this epoch also be one more manner of fruit for the healing of the nations, of which you are the smaller branches, of which each child of earth is a twig or leaf or flower, and of which the great spiritual truths that abide in the kingdom of God are the golden fruitage that hang forever ripe for the angels who are the ministers of His hand, and for fruit for the healing of the nations?

\*This refers to the cycle two thousand years, and not the *annual* revolution, and includes the spiritual, also.



## A SERMON FOR THE NEW YEAR.\*

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**"For the old things are passed away, and the new things appear."**

Sometimes the events of a nation hang upon the smallest thread, and a human life changes its entire nature from the most trivial circumstance seemingly. You are all aware, perhaps, of the small episode upon which hung the fortunes of France when Napoleon the Great was still in obscurity and France waited for her destiny. A florist's cart passing along the street dropped a small root. Napoleon saw it at his feet, picked it up, carried it to his apartments, and said, "Upon this will hang the destiny of France!" It was forgotten; and amidst the cares and ambitions of a restless brain he one day entered the room and perceived the delightful odor of violets. Rare and wonderful miracle! The root that had seemed dead had burst forth in the sunshine of the window into blossoming, and henceforth became the royal ensign of that wonderful and most potent monarchy.

Upon even as small a thread hung the destiny of Napoleon's downfall, related by that incomparable writer and poet, Victor Hugo. After describing the battle of Waterloo and its horrors and the defeat, he says: "And all this happened on that midsummer day because a little boy said to the soldiers, "Go this way, and not that."

Great men make events, and days are as naught; but still they sometimes hang the symbols of their destiny upon as

trifling things as the blooming of a violet or the waving of a boy's hand in the air. Each nation, fraught with greatness or downfall, that greatness or downfall marking the epoch or cycle of its history, has been attended with some such evidence of a seemingly o'ermastering hand that out of the silent dwelling fashions its history, and through that marks the events of its life.

To-day Russia in the East, long waiting her opportunity, takes advantage of Turkish indolence and corruption to seek to fix her power upon the gem of Eastern cities, long coveted by her—the glorious key of the Hellenic nations. To-day Europe, slumbering in momentary repose from the reaction of warfare, waits but some slight turn of a statesman's hand or warrior's thought to again burst forth into conflict for the ambition of kings and the tyranny of men. To day your own nation, apparently at peace, but suffering still from the effects of a war brought on by such corruption as only war can eradicate, still refuses to learn the lesson of the past, and panders to luxurious tastes and mad ambition, and is content that the nation shall drift to destruction in the hands of political demagogues rather than raise the voice of might against it.

Indolent men require periods of time to make a starting-point of life. Inactive men require to be jogged from their serenity by great sorrow or adversity; and the majority of human beings do not take fate in their hands and rush forth to their destiny, but rather wait until fate overtakes them with the strong sword of Nemesis, preferring this way to the more sure and safe one in the end of seizing the evil before it become the strong adversary.

The new year of every nation is the beginning of a great action, the eradication of a great wrong, the enactment of laws for the freedom of its subjects or citizens, the yielding to the voice of humanity against that of oppression.

Nations each in their turn have had some new years, and from the days of Rome down to the present time we are accustomed to recount, perhaps upon the fingers of our hands, the few events that have made history glorious as a history of

nations. Individuals have been more numerous who have marked out glorious pathways, and commenced the years of freedom or of greatness with their strong lives, and we are happy to record in history the names of those who as shining examples have set a new year for humanity in the thoughts and actions of their lives, and stand out shining like stars in the firmament for men to follow; not warriors like Napoleon and Cæsar, not great politicians nor statesmen; but those who have fought the battles of truth, philosophy, reason and intelligence, and have given for all time something for men to follow; those who have given the religion of humanity to the world, who, like Christ in religion, like Socrates and Plato in philosophy, like Galileo, Kepler, Herschel in science, have made a new pathway for human thought and carved their way through bigotry and obstacles of all kinds to the serenity of the height which they now occupy. These are episodes well worth remembering, and if instead of the dull calendar of the year men would only celebrate the birthday of minds like these, remember their actions, how rich and prolific in new beginnings would life become! If instead of feasting and revelry men would spend their time in the contemplation and emulation of such lives, how great would life become in the productiveness of the harvests of thought!

Nature is more kind than man. She gives the seed-time and the harvest to the earth, and each year or recurrent period yields the promise of the year. Nature is more benign than human ambition and folly, for all the time her face is set before you with a wonderful smile of life and promise upon it, while man in his selfishness or ambition turns away from her example and lesson to the mere petty occupations of daily employment and strivings, or worse still, to the pandering to ambition and sensual pleasure.

What is it that invites you to the Christmas festival? What is it that brings in the peal of the glad New Year on the morrow? What is it that awakens the impulses for new beginnings and higher possibilities? Oh! it is that there is something in the soul defrauded of its rightful inheritance which

makes your heart leap when you read of heroes, statesmen or orators whose lofty example you fain would follow, but which you have not the courage to do because of the thralldom of the senses.

The battle of freedom is not fought simply with tyrants and kings, but with the individual passion and appetite in the individual breast. The contest for human thought has not been made simply against bigotry and the statutes of legislators, but against the ignorance and bigotry within the individual mind. Before Galileo could know the movements of the heavenly bodies, he had vanquished his own doubt and skepticism. Before Luther could become the leader of the Reformation, he had conquered Satan in his own person or in the temptations that beset him. Before any one who has led humanity to the high destiny of human thought has taken his place as leader in the great battle of life, he has vanquished the greatest foe that man has to encounter; that is, the foe of his own desires and selfishness. He who would teach others must have become the master of self. He who would lead them on and instruct them in lofty attainment must have vanquished, one by one, the foes of his own household, namely, his own individual appetites, ambitions and selfish desires, must have given his life in humility to truth, must be willing to lay his all, if necessary, upon the shrine and altar of devotion, must see friends and home and all vanish from him, if need be, in the pursuit of an ambition, that ambition being only to serve the truth and serve it well.

Whoso does this becomes the initiator of a new era of human thought and progress to the world, becomes the founder of a new system of philosophy, becomes the teacher whom all the children of the earth may follow and learn of wisdom.

The Olympian games of Greece brought many to the front as, perhaps, champions in the great struggle for physical supremacy; and in that age of intellect and pleasure it was customary to bestow upon the successful competitor in the conflict of the games the laurel wreath, which the favorite goddess bestowed upon the victorious. Not less favored, how-

ever, were the champions of intelligence, and those who brought to the shrine of poesy or philosophy their offerings were received with great tributes of praise, crowned with laurel, their praises sung by the masses, and processions followed them wherever they went in the street. But when the stern philosophy of the stoics came, or the greater grasp of philosophy which Socrates taught, not the many followed in the street, but only the few—stones hurled at them; and these, despised and downtrodden, became the leaders of the thought of centuries, while the successful and victorious in Olympian games are forgotten, and the world scarce remembers those who wrote under the inspiration of the Greek muses.

Philosophy leads those who in advance of the age herald the advent of a new thought and truth, to make it known to the world.

The episodes of history that point to the great events which have been suggested by me, are those which first brought, perhaps, physical power to the nations in the cultivation of physical strength; next, those that brought the contest of intellectual power in the cultivation of the intellect of Greece and Rome; thirdly, those that brought the power of statesmanship in the same period, including Solon, Lycurgus and the law-givers of their time; fourthly, those which brought religious power in the form of the Reformation, and made religion the property of man instead of the Church.

Individually, each one of these causes has suffered, and the various persons who have been the promoters of them have measurably been martyrs for the sake of each particular cause.

In your own time, you remember somewhat of the contest with reference to human freedom. We were born upon soil claiming to be free. Reading the laws and statutes laid down by our fathers, we professed freedom for all. Reared up in the stern mandates of justice to our fellow-men, to have been called upon to fight the battle for the freedom of human beings was humiliating enough, but that accompanying this should also be the corruption of men, the ambition to serve

themselves, the power that always begets corruption in the love of gold, and that individual lethargy that marks the present period of national life, is in itself doubly humiliating.

But for the New Year I give you no promise that the nation will be better. For the New Year I offer you no hope that politicians will be less corrupt; that men will seek power with less avidity, or that the all-mighty love of gold will cease to govern this nation or our brothers in freedom. For the New Year I offer you no hope that suddenly there will come righteousness upon this nation or this people, or that out of all individual selfishness and pride the harvests for which the earth has yearned shall be yielded of brotherly love or kindly feeling, of the awakening of new social life, of power for fraternal good—I give you no such promise. But such signs as I do see, I will foreshadow, and such influences and powers as are at work for the welfare of man I am prone to give.

What is more important than days to every individual, is the awakening time of the individual mind of growth, and while a period is necessary for the calendar of the year no time is necessary for the beginning of good deeds, or the awakening of higher aspirations. The accepted time is *now*, when the impulse, desire and aspiration are upon you, and that which shall bring about the highest good in the world will be when each individual avails himself of that time—the present. The righting of many wrongs is postponed for a more convenient period. Many little vices and follies are put off for another year, and the beginning of a new year is said to be a good time for the forming of good resolutions, but if you wait for a day we fear the resolutions will vanish, and the good time will not come. Many persons expect to transact business on a broader and more humane basis at the beginning of a new year. Many men are aware of their own greed and ambition, and expect to put aside that folly at the beginning of some new year when they have amassed a little more of a fortune. Many persons think that they will cease to impose upon their brothers and neighbors, and cease to tell the popular falsehoods that are permitted in society when another new



year of success shall attend them. Many persons falsify in the world and expect to tell the truth on a convenient day in the calendar, as though some saint were there with truth-telling proclivities who would suddenly inspire them at that particular time for that particular purpose. Many, indeed, hope that with the beginning of the new year things will be changed in public service, and that men will be less corrupt, and that there will not be so much depravity in office, and that all of this will be the result of the simple change in the calendar.

A change comes not at all after this manner. Resolutions that are indicated by a day, and moral states that must have a certain hour for their commencement, are liable to be as transient as time itself. The condition which will bring peace to a nation permanently is a permanent condition of justice. A condition which will bring less corruption in office is a permanent condition of honesty. The condition which will bring less social bitterness and strife is a permanence of social purity and truthfulness. The condition which will bring about in the world the new era which all men profess to covet is that each individual shall set himself to work to bring that about in his own person. The condition which will make less drunkenness—intemperance being the crying evil of this period of Christian civilization—is that each individual become a total abstinence man from the hour that he feels drunkenness to be a crime. The condition of all reforms is that the individual seeing the necessity of the reform shall practice it in his own person, and advocate it at all times. If he be the only person in the world so practicing it he will, at least, have the satisfaction of knowing that the reformation has commenced. We are not aware that at the beginning of the Protestant Reformation there was any human being save Luther himself who felt the corrupting and corroding influence of the church as he did. We are not aware that until he went to Rome—took that sacred pilgrimage as the Christian now takes the pilgrimage to Jerusalem, as the Mahometan takes the pilgrimage to Mecca—took that pilgrimage that he

might sit at the feet of the Holy Pontiff and receive his benediction at the very shrine of St. Peter's—even not till then were the germs of the Reformation sown. Corruption there was; school-men there were who disputed the tenets of the church, but then and there the blasphemy of priests and the corrupting influences of priestly life awakened the slumbering fires of the Reformation and there his resolve was made.

Into every human life there comes an hour when the brand of the interpreter of human thought is thrown, kindling the fire of self-examination and criticism, and calling upon the individual to pour out the offerings of his life upon the shrine of truthfulness and good conduct.

It is vain to expect that laws will be better than men, or that human institutions will bodily take hold of human beings and force them into good deeds. The Constitution will slumber as a dead letter, and all the force and power of Christian doctrine will stand silently condemning the thought of man, unless he himself shall take the championship of his own good principle.

Into the hands of human beings only, into the minds and thoughts of human brains teeming with thought, into the power of the human spirit and that which shapes its destiny, I fling the offerings of this New Year and all that it promises. I challenge humanity to lay before God such an offering as they wish God to receive. I give you the promise which is born of the seeds that are sown and slumbering in your own souls. I ask you to fulfill that promise to the nation, to society, to the world, to the Spirit of God who gave it to you. In your hands it rests—every dormant possibility of the year, the new year of time and the new year of eternity that the ages have sown for you. What has not been sown for you? The seeds of all good thought in the past are yours. Who cries out against the past? Only he who has not learned her lesson aright. Who says the past is dead? Only he who does not know that the soul survives. She is your mother. As well call that venerable form and that wrinkled brow dead when they still are warm with life-blood for you. As well call

that heart dead when it still pulsates with the thought of you in childhood, in youth, in manhood. As well name the things dead that survive when all things else perish, as the Past with her lessons. Her form is buried and put out of sight, but the seeds she has sown are slumbering, waiting for you to call them into being. Philosophy, poesy, art, science, religion, human government, all have been hers, and these are flung into the lap of the Present for you to profit by and for you to reap the harvest. The husbandman whose sheaves are now fully threshed and have yielded their grain, whose fruit is gathered in and serves for his winter store—he knows the value of a seed for the springtime, saving his choicest grain, putting aside most carefully his best assortment of seed, that another spring he may plant for the harvest of the coming year.

In eternity God wastes no seed, and that which has been sown in the past lies ready beneath the surface of the present corruption, beneath the ambition of human beings, waiting to be called into being by the breath of heaven or the power of earth, and every human being may sow somewhat of the golden seed of the harvests of the past.

Of the individual memories and lives and the great events that constitute human history, that which comes home to the individual man is the individual experience; and we find that history is unimportant to us save that it sometimes teaches us a lesson and resembles our own little routine of existence, and that the Homers, the sages, the seers are nothing if we have not the mind to understand nor the eyes to see their greatness. So that which does not appeal to our intelligence, our love of humanity, our wisdom, our religion, is seemingly sown on barren ground; but there comes an awakener by-and-by, and that coming is the beginning of the New Year for every soul. Sometimes it comes by the hand of poverty, and if you go abroad in the streets of your crowded cities to night, you will see the patient poor, who will teach you a lesson which you, with all your comfort and luxury, cannot buy—a lesson of endurance, of fortitude, of thankfulness for

small favors; and the crust of bread which you refuse they eagerly grasp and thank you for it. You shall go forth into the streets to-night and you shall find those who are cast off from men drawn nearer unto God by their adversity and sorrow, by their sin, perhaps, who are more grateful for the kindly word and for the extending of the hand than are you for all the holiday greetings that your successful friends can give you. You shall find in the abode of the lowly one tears of gratitude, of thankfulness, of prayer to heaven, when in the abode of opulence you perhaps find only empty compliments and praise. You shall go forth to-night, and you will find of those who have suffered and borne the trials of life, that some white blossom of loveliness has sprung up in their pathway, and they are grateful even for their sorrows.

The awakening hour may not have come with you. It sometimes comes with death, when the favorite of the household, the dearly loved friend, sister, companion, parent, is taken from you. The gates of life swing wide open then, and what becomes of all earthly pomp and splendor in the presence of that silent messenger who sways with supreme will, ruling alike king and peasant, his bidding laying low the form that you love? Ah! the seed time of eternity begins when Death reaps his harvest; and not alone for the soul that is freed and gone out of earthly sight, but for those who are left behind, are the germs of immortal hope awakened, and through sorrow some thought of heaven is born. I am always thankful when I pass the abode of the wealthy and see the badge of mourning there. I know that there is something at least that wealth cannot buy, and that there is a moment of silence in that household when immortal things are thought of. I am always thankful when, in the midst of great calamity, I see that a man or a nation can pause and think, for the great God speaks with a silent voice, and sorrow is his messenger and his token. If I praise God for adversity it is because of this.

Sometimes the awakener's hand is love, that comes with magic, is flung into the life without a moment's warning, and reveals all possibilities of immortal things. Most like death is

love, since all things that were past are put aside and the soul cleaves in twain the outward covering of dust, and seems to wish to die that the new revelation may last forever. Next to this, and higher, is the love of the angels, that speaks to the soul across some bridge of sorrow or adversity, and breathes into the spirit the voice of prayer, and through martyr's flame or dungeon cell or fiery ordeal of daily life, gives to the soul consciousness of its immortal heritage. Christ upon Calvary—oh! ineffable condition, that can smile at pain and forgive the world for the wrong it did: Covet the spirit of those who have thus been transfigured through suffering, but covet no man for the worldly chains that drag him down, nor the dross that consumes him, nor the splendor that surrounds him, for these are weights upon the spirit.

The new year of the soul comes to some through what they believe to be the religion of the soul. Sometimes it is in the name of Christ, the beloved elder brother of man. Sometimes it is in another form of religious ecstasy, but it always brings the consciousness of awakening life, and is that change of heart that comes when worldly things cease to have their influence and the soul is fixed upon its sublimer inheritance. The difficulty is with sudden conversions that they do not last, for they are independent of the growth of the spiritual nature of man, and are chiefly emotional in their character. When the man's heart really changes there is less demonstration in word but more in life. He is silent and awe-stricken in the presence of the revolution that is wrought in his own nature. He does not make haste to tell the world that he is a new man, but he shows the world that he is by his actions. The difficulty with many who suppose that they have religion in the form of this emotional kind of conversion is that the new life that has come to them is not the result of an inward conviction, but is forced upon them by the magnetic power of others, and they feel prone to accept it because it is attested by others.

The genuine growth of the spirit is silent—works its way by a magic into the soul; is often under the inspiration of

angelle or other ministrations; but its transfigurations are gradual, and the life itself becomes the chief token of its expression. Every word then becomes valuable; every action then is a token of its presence, and the man no more need tell the world that he is converted, and has found Christ, than have the lilies of the field to tell the people that they are white. Can you not see?

The new year to-morrow—if I could blot out all festivities; if I could set aside all heartless words that would be spoken; if I could do away with the envyings, the pride, the bitterness that may grow out of the exchange of thought on that day; if I could set aside the mocking ceremonials to power, and pomp, and pride, of obelance to place and position, the worship of the god Mammon, and the bowing down to what men call Respectability; if I could wipe out the political corruption that gives flattery as its chief method of expression, and that which in a worldly sense seeks fashion and power; if I could make for each human being such a new year as I would, I would tell him what it shall be: It would be that on the chiming of the midnight bell that betokens the death of the old year, every past folly should be also put out of sight, forgotten, its death knell chimed. The individual foible, the anger, the caprice, the envy and the striving should die with the toll of that bell—all ambitions for individual place or emolument in the world save only that which comes from truth, and justice, and honesty. I would have the greatest rivalry in the world to be that which should prompt men to do the most good, and value each other the most in kindly deeds. I would have the only emulation that which in words of charity and comfort would bring happiness and peace. I would say to every individual mourner: "So long as your cross is upon you, you close the doors of the gateway of heaven. Behold! the iris arch has already been made, and upon the cloud of your sorrow the rainbow of immortality is beaming even now." I would say to men of middle age and mature years, who have grown misanthropic with life and hardened with its successes or its pursuit: "Every hope cher-

ished in your youth instead of having died awaits you whenever you are ready to perceive it. It is because the violets and daisies which you loved in your childhood are forgotten that you no longer see them growing by your wayside. Go out into the fields with the same heart that you had when a boy and the buttercups will laugh and nod at you as they did then, and the red clover and the white will smile as sweetly." These things have not died; but it is only that the nature is seared over, and the outer coating has made the soul forget the hopes, the truthfulness, the dreams and the unconsciousness of early years.

Call mankind hardened? By no means. Go out to-morrow and speak a kind word to the first man you meet; he will give you a kind word in return. Speak it to every man that you meet during the year and you will get a kind answer. It is worth the trying. Mankind have not altered. The trouble is that there has been more and more a mask put upon the angel that was within you when a child; and having covered yourself each year with a new garb of selfishness, you fancy the world has grown worse instead of better. It is not so. The angels in heaven and the spirits who love you see the hearts of men now as in olden time, and the soul of the world is better than it was in the days of wilder ambition, human strife and envy.

If I could paint the new year for you, I would have children and flowers, and social communings and spiritual converse, naturally and truthfully as the blossoming of the flower-bells in May. If I could have social life in my control I would put off all external garb of folly, emulation and pride, and only adorn with the sweet graces of youth, with those of mind and thought, and culture and society of the world that has material enough to make the world a paradise. If I could arrange worship I would have it simply expressive of gratitude and praise, and the simple lessons taught would be taught in the simplest phrase and garb. I would put aside priestly craft and state, and all symbols save those of the spirit, and wear those upon the countenance and beaming from the vision,

until, whether we worshiped in cathedral or under the dome of heaven, we should forget the form in the graciousness of the spirit which inspires us. I would have the new year filled with a fulfillment of all that is perfected in man's nature; and that which I see beaming in eyes before me and reflected from souls that are here, I would have typified in the daily life and in the conduct at home. I would have every hour and every day redolent with the praise that comes from consciousness of well-doing. I would have this simple, and without pomp, or ceremony, or pride; and I know that my new year would be better than all the external semblances that shall jar upon the atmosphere on the morrow, and all the false resolutions that are made to be cast aside with the first breath of temptation.

The beginnings of life are small; they are in the germs of things, and the oak lies hidden in the small covering of the acorn, and the soul of man, with its sublime possibilities, lies immured in that which encases it now.

Behold the new year! It is the awakening of promise; it is the fulfillment of prophecy. It is the revelation of the future, the laying of the corner-stone for the edifice of eternity, the planting of the seed that is imperishable.

Will you lay up simply the treasures of earth that pass away? Will you gather around you gold and glittering things that tarnish, and that you cannot bear with you into the world of souls? Will you simply enrich the mind at the expense of the heart, and store the brain with another's thoughts while your own thoughts are lying dormant and unawakened? Shall your religion be words of praise merely, and from the lips only, while the soul is longing to burst forth in thanksgiving, and the voice of the spirit is waiting to be heard in the upper air?

No. I tell you that the new year of promise to the soul is that which gives the first truthful expression of the inner life of the man. It is that which first reveals yourself unto yourself, and live or die, come shame or poverty, come weal or woe, you must be true to yourself, to your convictions and your



aspirations. Whether the worldly wise shall say no, or whether priests, kings, public opinion or aught, shall denounce, the spirit alone possesses the wealth of the spirit—truthfulness, purity, charity, and all that adorns the mind with its graces and powers.

I promise you that New Year which shall come to you from this standpoint. Eternity is too small to measure its joy. No sound of silver bells chimes in the frosty air. No revelry of earth; no midnight debauchery; no pleasure of dance and wine; no splendor of gifts of gold shall compare or shall be aught but shadows. The soul has its eye steadfast upon truth, sees but one gem; that is Truth alone. He whose soul is intent upon following that which is good sees but one thing on earth worth living for, and that is to do good to his fellow-men. He who believes in the future state of man knows that the seed planted here is to ripen in eternity, and sows such seed as he would have angels see him gather in the harvest-fields of the future:

Behold! Not the thistles nor thorns, but the beautiful flowers that adorn the wayside of life where the angels dwell; the lilies, the asphodels, the flowers of immortal splendor that pave the pathway to paradise, and are fashioned of the good thoughts and deeds of human life.



IF EVIL AS WELL AS GOOD IS PART OF THE  
SCHEME OF INFINITE WISDOM, THEN WHAT  
IS SIN, AND WHAT RIGHT AND WRONG?\*

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You have heard the subject, "If Evil as well as Good is part of the Scheme of Infinite Wisdom, then what is Sin, and what Right and Wrong?" Of course this question includes all those theological propositions that pertain to the free will of man, the beneficence of the Divine Mind in permitting evil, and the subtle questions that have lingered upon these in connection with human misery and human salvation.

In our opinion the seeming problem is easy of solution. In our opinion the laws governing the moral and spiritual universe are as comprehensible as those governing the material. It only remains for man without prejudice and prejudgment to enter into an investigation of those laws as he would any subject whatsoever.

The negative side of the universe, which science declares to be darkness, and cold, and all forms of non-existence, is nevertheless as essential to the successful development of existence as the positive side of light, of heat, of motion. Rest, space, inertia, all are relative qualities. Cold, darkness, all things that seem to be opposite to life, indicate a nega-

\* Subject proposed by the audience.

tive state, essential, however, to the production of life. Storms, tempests, whirlwinds, earthquakes, are conditions of matter in motion through which nature expresses herself in passing from one epoch of development to another.

The law of contact of life with matter, even in the lower spheres of existence, is of struggle, the struggle for the *something*, which is the positive, ultimate good, to express itself through the negative, which is *not* a positive evil but nevertheless is *there* for the purpose of the expression of the good. You take a sphere, and without probing it you could not become aware of its component parts. You may probe it by mathematics, and to the untaught mind you are obliged to dissect it into various parts, cubes, arcs, and certain sections that compose the sphere. Space, matter itself, is the breaking of the sphere of life materially, into which all forms of spiritual being are flung, and upon which they break the perfect sphere of their individual life and thus express themselves through matter.

The germ of the plant is a sphere, however minute it may be. Unbroken there would be no life. All forms of germination of life must take place under two conditions: supposed vacuum and darkness. The cells covering the germ are burst asunder—that is the first tempest. Out through the soil or other encasing substances the shoots appear—that is the second tempest. Into the cold, into the heat, into the full-orbed splendor of the sun, the plant, the tree, or human being expands, and that is life. The darkness does not do for the full-grown plant, but it is necessary for germination; the vacuum will not answer for the tree, but it is needful for the first period of gestation. Life in all its forms passes through these various throes. The birth-pangs of worlds and of nations are little different from those of human beings or of souls. What we wish most is to understand that birth and its pains are as essential as the life which follows, and that the period of slumber during which the seed recuperates, or the roots grow strong for the next summer's growth, is not a period of death, but of repose. What we need to learn is not

that nature's violence is that of death and destruction, but of reinvigoration and recuperation; that the tempest sweeping over the land and the sea, destroying ships and cities, saves more lives than it destroys; that the earthquake, opening its yawning mouth, swallowing up thickly-peopled cities and countries, is the safety-valve of the whole world, and that we can afford to part with one city, thereby giving life to the whole human race.

What we need to comprehend is, that there is no personality in all these things; but that the divine beneficence shapes the courses of life, so that if a tree be whirled down by a tempest or tornado, life is not therefore destroyed; other trees spring into being from the roots and foundations, and the preservation of the chain of life continues forever. What we need to know is, that planets pass through the birth-struggles in each cycle of their onward existence, and that these cyclic struggles are but the expressions of life to perfect itself into the highest forms of planetary being.

These flowers\* yield the perfect expression of their lives, but time was when the germs were in darkness, and when the first struggle came to the germ out of sight, out of sound, and out of all things beautiful, to the comprehension of the outward man.

The great deities of the past were those of Creation, Preservation and Destruction. The deity of Destruction has been maligned and abused, misinterpreted and degraded to the uses of moral perversion. Not so! Destruction is a portion of preservation. You cannot have successive new forms of life without the decay of the old ones; and the wise farmer burns his fallow field that out of the soil may spring the fresher vegetation unimpeded by the decomposing growth of last year. We must have the tempest, fire and flame to consume the *débris* of matter, that Life may express itself through matter.

This is the scientific statement. We do not know of any

\* Referring to a bouquet on the table.

better statement to apply to the moral world. We do not see that God is more kind to Nature that has unconscousness than He is to the spirit that has consciousness. We do not see that the Deity provides compensations for outward life and outward existence that are not in a hundred-fold degree provided for that consciousness that can shape in some degree its existence. Because man can do this and because a portion of the responsibility is thrown upon him, the compensations are no less.

The law of moral existence, therefore, and the question of evil in the world must be transfigured and elevated from the mere standard of human existence in the period of germination, and traced through all periods of human life, even into the world of spirits, before you can judge of the beneficial effects of any law, or the action of it. Evil in the moral world is the negative side of God's sunlight, the winter of His spring, the darkness of His day, the conditions into which the lesser being must be plunged to comprehend or fulfill the greater. For the Deity himself the whole universe is the body, of which He is the soul. For the Deity himself the great worlds groan in agony and pain, and stars go whirling through the heavens, and volcanoes convulse the planets and consume them, to the end that the great life of His infinite purpose may be manifest. This is no evil. The moral law impinges upon human consciousness; and this is why the question has been so difficult of solution.

The permission of a law to which the human being is to be held amenable, in which the human being had no share of creation and for which the human being is not responsible, has been considered by some classes of human minds as unjust. But it is the same with all nature. You are placed here with the attributes of mortal life. The immortal life dimly shines through. Any knowledge of outward laws must come to you either from external consciousness and experience, or from the voice of intuition from within; and the only method of instructing you better in those laws is that accompanying each law is a necessary other law which is called a

penalty if the law be violated. That law of material nature which acts as well upon irresponsible as upon responsible beings is the great foundation stone for physical knowledge. Now the same law applies to the moral nature, with the exception which we will state a little further on. Of course those who sin ignorantly, suffer—that is, those who are not aware of the bearings of the moral law which they violate. Do not all sin ignorant of some portion of the law or its penalty, and is not the presumption clear that if human beings fully understood both the law and the penalty and all its bearings, that knowledge would take them above the sin itself? And is it not reasonable to suppose that the same law which gives a child knowledge of the fire and its consuming power by testing it with the finger, also gives the larger child knowledge of the power of the moral fire by the act, ignorantly or otherwise, of putting the finger into the flame? The knowledge which came without this experience would be the knowledge of the angel or archangel, but not the knowledge of the human being that personally must be made responsible and amenable for the experience of outward life.

The sin that is in the world may be considered as a state of existence needful until another state takes place; not therefore needful perpetually, except to souls that are in the same condition, but a necessary stage of the soul in its transit through matter.

As there is a period of darkness, as there is a period of infancy, as there is a period when the tempests and storms of passion leap forth into life, and must be either subdued or must consume you, so there is a period when the mind itself comes to the conscious possession of its faculty of either resisting the outward temptation or being overcome by it. It is the struggle that tests the strength. It is the acrobatic exercise that develops the agile performer. It is the wrestling with the tempest and tornado that Hercules may come forth triumphant from within his spirit.

No God afar upon a snowy throne, creating the powers of good and evil for the temptation of man, that man may there-

fore be destroyed, no partial and vindictive Deity heaping imperfections upon humanity, and wantonly persecuting them because of these imperfections; no cruel and inconsistent Deity, shaping purposely the temptations of human life, that humanity may be destroyed; but a divine and beneficent Principle without which the human spirit were not aware of its possessions, and into which the soul would voluntarily plunge for the sake of coming out victor.

In the arena of ancient Rome the gladiators were brought to try their strength with wild beasts. It was the test of manhood, the trial of physical life and strength, to combat the wildest of the elements of Nature. He who gained the greatest victories became the hero of the hour. In the arena of life the wild beasts are the untutored passions of the human breast. He is the greatest and becomes the hero of the moral hour and of the centuries who successfully meets and combats these expressions of passion in material form.

If there were no temptations; if the passions were not prone to carry the spirit downward, instead of the spirit carrying the body forward; if the influence of matter upon the human spirit was not the only thing which the human spirit has to conquer in the universe, then life itself were a failure, and a race of angels might have been planted here whose mild existence would have shone with reflected light, like the moon, whose positive powers would never have been unfolded from within.

The responsibility comes here: that while you acknowledge the law and its universal application; while you are aware that you did not create the principle nor its consequences; while you are fully mindful that the infinite purposes move on without your bidding, and possibly without your aid, still when it enters the consciousness of any human being that a certain course of conduct is the highest, and that human being fails to carry out that course of conduct, he having had the enlightenment, and having had the knowledge, experiences the two-fold penalty of not only violating the law and suffering, but of violating that other law for which

Christ says there is no forgiveness—the Holy Ghost, the spirit within, the warning voice that *does* know and cannot impel you to its bidding. This sin there is no forgiveness for; it may be outgrown; the penalty of it may be after long years or centuries overcome, but that is conscience that rebukes the spirit, and which no one can take away from you. The physician may heal the pain externally, or even morally; if you sin ignorantly there may be some one to soothe you, but no one can take from you the sting of that consciousness of doing what you knew was not your highest duty, or of violating that moral law when you have the knowledge of that law in your mind. You are yourself, therefore, in that degree amenable, even though you did not create the condition of weakness which causes you to yield to the temptation. We think the dividing line is very clear. It is not that you are responsible to the Deity; it is not that Deity punishes you, but it is that you have a sterner monitor within, which is your own soul, to which you are responsible, and that will hold you to a rigorous account for every violation when the knowledge of law is in your mind. You become your own judge. The judgment sent becomes your own soul, and the consciousness of your own life. You sit in daily judgment upon yourself; and when the full consciousness comes of the entire moral law it is not possible for the human being to violate it.

Thus violence and the accusation that attends become the strong chords upon which the spirit rises to self conquest and victory. Thus violence and the knowledge of it become the surety to the fact by which you know, not from the experience of others but from your own, that victory is possible. Why is it that the penitent sinner is halled into the flock? Why is it that all theology is preaching to the lost sheep, instead of the ones that remain in the fold? Why is it that the one who has well-nigh gone out into utter darkness is received with greater welcomings than those who wandered not from the light? It is because of the greater victory which is evident when they do return. It is because of the fact that hav-



ing more to overcome when they do overcome these things it becomes a greater triumph over matter. It is because the soul that is untempted is measurably untried. Fortunate if the soul be strong enough not to yield to the temptation; but fortunate still if, yielding one hundred or a thousand times, there comes a time when the soul is victorious after all. You have heard the story of the ant climbing the hill with a heavy load, until at last nine hundred and ninety-nine times had the persevering little insect tried to climb the large hill, which was the small hill of its abode; the thousandth time did the ant succeed. Were all those other strivings in vain? We think not. Would the result have been any better, or as good, to the individual perseverance and testing of the insect, if the first time it had succeeded? We would not advise a voluntary letting go of the foothold. We would not advise a voluntary plunging down the hill. It is impossible. This is never done voluntarily. People never commit sin with the entire volition of their minds; they do it in spite of it; they do it ignorantly; they do it because of some weakness. The spirit is not strong enough to take them up to the exact point that they wish to reach. They try; they fail; they try again and fail again, and all the time the moral strength is preparing for the last, final effort—which shall succeed.

It is our business to know the law of that success, not to criticise the tests of strength that are given. It is our business to adapt ourselves to the sunlight, to the thunder, the tempest and the storms of earth, not to criticise the arrangement of them. It is the test of the skill of the mariner if he plows the seas, if he builds ships, if he explores unknown regions, not if he grumble at the ocean, and try to wipe it out of existence. It is the test of human strength if, battling with material elements that are blind and deaf, and have no voice, man has made out of them the great voice of commerce, of national existence, of life here below, and shall further rescue from these dumb creations the eloquence of his own soul.

So out of this darkness that men call sin; out of this ocean

that men call evil; out of this shadow which human beings must needs be placed against for the background of the picture of life, if there spring into being a bright-orbed flame of the soul, that, like some of Rembrandt's pictures, are almost immersed in the shadow, but all the more distinct from contrasting light and shade, shall we find fault with the Divine Artist, who has shaped it thus that the soul may bring forth against the darkened ground of life the strong picture of holiness and faith and trust?

The lesson of sin is to overcome it. The degradation of sin is to fall and feel that it cannot be overcome. That evil or wrong-doing which brings despair to the mind is the last form of moral disease; but that evil or wrong-doing which always leaves a chance for succor and for hope, becomes the strength upon which the soul finally rises. This is why all forms of punishment adopted by humanity for the final offence are not the best forms. According to all human teaching you send the soul hopeless into the world of future existence. Any door of human life that bars the gateway of hope becomes the prison-house for a time of that soul.

Let us have a moral economy that knows where evil is, understands what wrong is, but includes in its beneficence the possibility of escape and the strength that comes to the soul after overcoming the wrong. Let us have a divine theology that comprehends the necessity of tempests and storms, but likewise leaves us the panacea that the tempest and the storm bring, healing as well as destruction, and that scathing after which comes the kindly benediction of fresh flowers and new fruitage. Let us include the whole moral problem, not half, or a tenth, or a thousandth part of it. Let us consider that a human being is not simply a creature, a machine, but is a portion of the Divine Life breathing in and through matter, to whom also is given a portion of the responsibility of life. You do not like it if you are the machine of your employer merely. Man chafes under the rod of another man's rule. If he takes you into his confidence you are a portion of his establishment; you are interested and responsible with him;

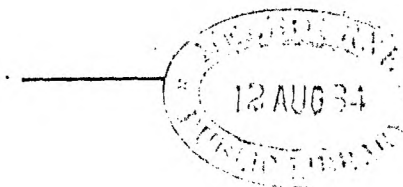
It increases your cares, but it increases your self-respect also. The Divine Mind has taken humanity in partnership in the moral principle; you are co-partners—better than if you were tools, better than if you were lessees, better than if you were mere children to be taught and schooled, punished and rewarded without volition. This divine co-partnership that links your souls with the Divine Mind gives you also a portion of the responsibility of life. Never mind if it does add to your sufferings. Never mind if it does add to your cares. The consciousness of being exalted to a position of trust makes the soul better able to meet with these cares.

It is in this degree that man differs from blind matter. It is in this degree that the soul is co-heir to eternity. It is that heirship which links the immortal part to the Infinite, and makes good and evil, right and wrong, a portion of the economy of the human soul as well as of the economy of the infinite purpose of life; and it is this that makes you amenable at the bar of your own individual conscience and to the Infinite Spirit expressed therein for the violation of that law which brings the penalty and suffering, and at the last brings knowledge and triumph over it.

This we consider the wise solution, and we believe when it enters the consciousness of the human spirit that even sin cannot appal nor make afraid. We believe that the triumph over matter and death is not wholly so great as the triumph over that death which fears the final penalty of wrong-doing more than it seeks to do right for the love of right.

Let us turn all abject passions out. Let us admit the divine philosophy and the divine religion, that philosophy which encompasses the universe, gives a reason for everything and a law for everything; binds matter with its tempests and its calms, its sunshine and its shadow, its winter and its summer into the glorious zone of life, and makes flowers to bloom out of winter snows, and out of the great tempests and storms verdure and the forests to grow. So, in the moral world, let us bind all together by the divine philosophy of that theology which recognizes in the good and the evil, in

the wrong and the right, a portion of the infinite economy that encompasses and includes the whole, and which the soul has to reach to understand, by having overcome and vanquished. Let us exalt ourselves beyond the paltry fear of anything which God can do to man, by the consciousness that man is elevated coëqual to God in degree, and that by that very responsibility which is given to his moral nature he can almost defy the law by triumphing over it. Who fears the penalty of murder? Who cares for that of theft? Who dreads the penitentiary or jail-house here? When we advance beyond the crime the penalty does not seem cruel to us; it is only those who need the scourge and the lash that feel it. Let us remember that these things must be, and that the needful scourging and the needful lash are only to be superseded by the loftier smile and the more beneficent wisdom that gives the lash into the hands of the individual and the scourging unto your own consciences, and leaves the sunlight and the love of God undimmed forever.



## CHRIST'S SUCCESSOR:

HIS MISSION ON EARTH, AND TIME AND MANNER  
OF MANIFESTING HIS PRESENCE TO MANKIND.\*

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We have indicated somewhat in previous addresses the belief among the ancients of a true Messianic period, a recurrence of the time when Messiahs were to come upon earth. We believe that all history confirms the statement that among the various nations of the earth the Messiah, under different names and titles, has appeared to man. We have referred to Buddha in the East, whose three several appearances confirm the statement of a recurrence of the Messianic period. We have referred to Zerdusht, or Zoroaster, in the East, as one of the messengers, if not an absolute Messiah to the people; also to Krishna and others. We have referred to various epochs among the Hebrews wherein, after Moses, the indications of prophet and seer foretold the advent of a *new King*, who was to usurp all powers of other kings and rule over them.

That this prophecy undoubtedly pointed to the spiritual instead of the temporal kingdom, and that the advent of Christ was the fulfillment of the prophecy, though unrecognized by the Hebrews themselves; that Buddha in the East, Zerdusht or Zoroaster, and indeed far back to Cadmus and the original Adam of the races of the earth, were divine messengers; that

\* Subject chosen by the audience.

when the world is completed, and all perfection attained that is possible from the present gradations of matter, there will be found to be a regular succession of spiritual epochs, as there have been regular successions of material epochs upon earth; that a gradual scale of unfoldment spiritually is no more out of harmony with the laws of the Infinite than a gradual scale of unfoldment physically, and that the building up of a spiritual atmosphere to give place to loftier souls upon earth, is no more a supposition than the building up of external strata, wherein, by regular gradations, higher forms of physical life can appear upon the earth.

This were in itself a sufficient solution, but there is more than this. Preceding the advent of the Christian epoch, all through the Hebraic throes for material power and splendor, were indications, signs, tokens, testimonials of the approach of a surpassing spirit to the earth. He was known in the ancient language as belonging to the regular succession of the order of Melchisedec, which, you will remember, in a previous discourse we stated must have referred to the essential spiritual order, or what is known nominally as the real apostolic succession, but what has been perverted from the spiritual to the material kingdoms by historians and theologians: That this order referred to those souls who in regular succession, either as prophets, messengers or messiahs, came to the earth to fulfill special ministrations; that this period was ushered in by certain spiritual signs and tokens, the dissevering of old and established forms of faith, the excitement and visitation of the spirit, as in the day of Pentecost, the descent upon certain lines of the house of David of special spiritual powers, which, interpreted, means not the literal house of David, but the house of the spiritual kingdom of David, which had a regular significance in the old interpretation of the name, that as David charmed King Saul to the forgetfulness of his sorrows, and won him away from the great turbulence and rebellion of his spirit, so the kingdom of David, by establishing the regular succession of spiritual harmony, brought to earth the Messiah in the form of Christ.

These interpretations require spiritual knowledge, and not literal simply. They belong to a class of facts and a period of events that must be interpreted with spiritual significance and with reference to those laws that are just as easily studied as the laws that govern the starry firmament.

We have stated that the ancient thousand years was the millennial epoch, but not the thousand years of your calendar. It is variously estimated from two thousand to twenty-five hundred years. We believe the exact period to be about twenty-two hundred years in the recurrence of the Messiahs of the East. We consider that this period refers to the gradual rise, culmination and decline of certain spiritual states upon earth; and that as nations have their birth, rise, culminate and fall, so spiritual waves of thought, brought by spiritual intelligences, have their advent in exact form upon earth, rise to their culmination of power and decline to give place to other waves of thought that supersede them.

The Christian era in itself has been one, not of a succession of angelic ministrations, but of a succession of culminations upon earth. You will remember in the advent of Christianity that whereas Rome became the power and queen of the world, her empire gradually faded as Christianity advanced and as spiritual power seemed to take the place of the material. You will remember also that in the height of the power of Rome, when Church and State were united, gradually the material was disintegrating and the spiritual taking its place all over Western Europe. It is supposed that about the year of our Lord fifty-two, Paul himself introduced Christianity into Britain. This is not confirmed, but it is supposed that it is so, and from this fact the transferring of the Christian epoch from Rome to England was a prophecy of the Reformation itself. Rome herself became the subject of temporal power, and therefore could not, after the first three or four hundred years, retain the spiritual supremacy. Then the advent was foreshadowed, as we say, in Western Europe; but meanwhile there came what was known as the darker ages. Down swept the northern hordes; civilization was suppressed,

and the arts and sciences overthrown. But this gave place, as we state, to the disintegration of those elements that finally caused the transfer of the seat of the spiritual empire to the western shores of Europe.

This wave of Christian religion, having its birth in Palestine, its first advent in Jerusalem, culminating in Rome, reaching the height of its latter decadence in Great Britain, sweeping over the continent and bringing those souls within its supremacy that have swayed the greater portion of civilization for the last two thousand years, has finally, without temporal power, without material force, without anything which man has usually considered as the building up of a dynasty, scattered its forces far and wide, not in Church and State in the organized form, but in the souls of men, while Church and State gradually crumbling and fading away leave nothing but ruins and monuments behind; the spiritual leaves the harvest of the kingdom of Christ. If anything could be more in accordance with the hypothesis one advances than another, it is the promise of Jesus himself, which, taken in a literal sense by his followers and disciples, was supposed to mean that he would return within a short period of time. John upon the Isle of Patmos may have had some such idea, but his prophecy distinctly foretold another advent in another period of the earth's history, and that wonderful apocalypse undoubtedly refers to the vast periods of time that would intervene before the essential spirit promised by Jesus should follow him into the world, and as the *Comforter* reveal the Messiah that was to come. The Spirit of Truth was promised, the *Comforter*; and in the direct language of Christ he foretells that it is necessary for him to go away or the *Comforter* cannot come. He does not define this *Comforter* as being himself, but as being the spirit of truth, and in his utterances, which are concise though brief, there is a distinct indication of a recurrence of spiritual power in another form and personality. Among all classes of Christians the second coming of Christ has been expected, and there are those, especially the Adventists, and others, who



believe in this literal coming, and who have fixed several distinct periods for that advent, and made preparation for literal translation to the kingdom of Christ. Unfortunately for themselves they have misinterpreted the word—taken it literally instead of spiritually, and have expected the passing away of the physical earth and heavens instead of the spiritual earth and heavens foreshadowed by the prophecy. After the same manner the evangelical Christians have misinterpreted the judgment day, and various references to the dissolution of the earth and the coming of Christ to claim his own. After the same manner they have interpreted literally instead of spiritually the coming of Christ upon earth to establish a literal kingdom here, which is the belief with some orders of Christians, who suppose that the wicked will pass away from the earth and leave it to the inheritance of the righteous, who expect within a short period of time that Christ will come here and reign with them upon the earth as their King. All of these, however, are indications of the reality, and there is just enough truth in them to confirm the spiritual explanation to which we have referred, instead of the literal one which they expect.

The old heavens and the old earth are evidently passing away. Indications have been seen since the Reformation itself, and Swedenborg, with divine vision, foresaw the disruption of present orders of religion and the spiritual kingdom that was to supersede them; various indications within the church, the disintegration of papal power, Rome rescued from the hands of the temporal authority of the Pope, the Vatican no longer holding sway over Roman Catholic Europe; Protestant England gradually losing her hold, so far as the Church is concerned, upon the hearts and minds of the people, and the dissenting bodies by greater unity and strength blending the hearts of the people into a more humane worship; the rising up out of different forms of church or of different creeds and denominations of those broader and larger in their interpretation and scope than the preceding ones—all indicate that the old heavens are passing away and that the old earth,

or the old kingdoms of the earth, are fading and receding under the light of this disintegrating power.

"Behold I come quickly," says John in his revelation, meaning Christ, whose power culminated upon earth nearly two thousand years ago, who shall come not in literal form, but in spiritual form, which is now being felt; and those who have passed up through great tribulation, those who are washed in the blood of the Lamb, (which is a figurative expression,) those who are made white and clean by suffering, who have been purified by their knowledge and their love of the truth, who have as martyrs, seers, saints, been driven into the spiritual kingdom through earthly flames, but who have conquered pain and suffering by spiritual power; those who have suffered inly and have made no sign, but have given their lives to the devotion of truth—all of these, ripened into the kingdom of the spirit of Christ, will be gathered to him as his angels.

The agitation in the spiritual atmosphere is just as sure an indication of the recurrence of spiritual kingdoms as the agitation in the physical atmosphere betokens the conflict of elements externally. By the same signs that the astronomer can foretell an eclipse, or the approach of a comet, or discover a new planet, by the same signs that appear upon the sea or on the desert, by which the true observer can tell the approach of the tempest, by the same indication that great physical events are foretold in portentous tokens and symbols along the horizon, so the discerner spiritually sees that in all this agitation of Church and State, of creed and sect, of government and political contest, there is a gradual commingling or conflict of spiritual elements, and that this conflict betokens the ripening of one harvest and the seed-time of another.

All great scientific truths have been sown in the same way, and you will notice that those philosophies that have survived the conflict of nations have been philosophies that have been sown on the ruins or on the receding wave of philosophies that have gradually culminated in themselves, and given their harvest of thought to the world.

Confucius interpreting the religion of the East, Zoroaster giving to the Persians the signs by which they might know the coming of the Messiah—and they did know it—the Assyrian and shepherd kings watching their flocks and the stars by night, foresaw with spiritual symbols, as well as material, the advent of the coming Christ. On the mountains of philosophy Socrates and Plato, with divine contemplation, saw the overshadowing of the mighty spirit that would come upon earth in the solution of all these mysteries. Pythagoras before planted the seeds of a subtle system that in various ways and forms has ripened to the kingdom of thought; and within science itself what wonders have been wrought. The prophecy and discovery of Galileo ripened into wonderful systems of truth through Herschel and Kepler, and all the prophets of science. Freedom of thought, ripening under the vigorous thrust of what seemed to be infidelity and atheism, culminated into a form of rationalistic philosophy that bridges over the chasm of the centuries. All these things, but chiefly those things within the church itself, gave promise that for the letter there should be the spirit; instead of chaff and stones, there should be bread; instead of the outward, there should be the inward feasting of the soul, which was foreseen by Luther when the great gorgon-headed evil at Rome was attacked by him so vigorously; that was foreseen by those who have superseded Luther when still the evils that he saw in Rome crept into the churches of the West. That same prediction and power that led such minds out of the church of Rome have led the same minds out of the church of St. Paul's and Westminster, out of the creed of King James, out of the articles that bound them to a single line of faith, and opened up the avenues of light in a spiritual form. Those same indications that have led the Quakers, the Puritans, the Shakers, and various denominations, into the western world to worship at the shrine of free thought, and follow the light of the spirit, those same indications that have given the tokens of spiritual power and spiritual gifts, the gift of tongues, the gift of healing, the interpretation of tongues, the

power of prophecy, the discerning of spirits, all gifts mentioned in the advent of the Christian epoch, are discernible in the world at the present time. No such recurrence of spiritual gifts has taken place at any intermediate stage of the world's history. Such a recurrence of spiritual gifts has taken place at every *advent* of a new religion upon earth or a special dawning of a new power. Twice, thrice in the Hebraic nation the Pentecostal flame was kindled; the gift of tongues and prophecy came in the advent of the process, and was distributed all through the line of Hebraic poets and prophets down to the Christian era, and at times since the advent of the Christian era these flames, with singular prophecy of a mightier power, have sprung up and been kindled; have been kindled sometimes in the cloister of the Roman Catholic cell; have been sometimes kindled in the very power of debate that Luther, Melancthon, and their coadjutors possessed to meet and combat the school-men of Germany; have been kindled in the gifts that variously interpreted were known to John Wesley and his followers; have been interpreted in various ways by Quakers, Unitarians, Universalists, different denominations, until at last every class of Christians knows that there is a sign by which the spiritual coming of the Lord has been foretold. Their interpretation is that Christ himself is to come and claim his own, but they make no disposition of the others. All those that are left, all those that are not grown to the kingdom of Christ, all those that have spiritual insight but are not recognized followers of Christ—what is to be done with these? Who takes charge of the souls that are left outside of the kingdom of Christ? In what manner are they to be fed? Who sustains them? Who uplifts them? All cannot belong to Christ's kingdom, for all do not know of him, and have not recognized him. Every class of Christians, save perhaps the Universalist and radical Unitarian, becomes narrow under strict analysis. Every class of Christians parcels off the souls that belong to Christ's kingdom, leaving the others in whose hands? An infinite deity, or an infinite spirit of darkness, who is permitted to hold sway over them.

Souls whose lives are as good, whose example is as lofty, whose moral integrity is as great, who have not seen because they did not know the sign of the spirit of Christ: To whom do these souls belong?

The Universalist interprets largely the love of God, and includes, by some manner of mysterious process not known to the growth of the spirit, the salvation of all souls. Later the progressive Christians have given to Universalism a larger scope, and have nearly hinged or impinged upon the spiritual philosophy to account for the gradual salvation of souls in another world. Thus they have outgrown the evangelical order of any other salvation or any other condemnation, and bridged over the darkness and abyss of Hades with the light of a progressive faith in the spiritual world.

But this is not sufficient. If there be administrations of law and government of temporal power; if the sun's splendor leads and governs the planets that revolve around it; if the earth itself holds by a law of wonderful attraction all the atoms to her surface; if by other laws she may impel those atoms to the formation of flower, and tree, and shrub, all the time by these subtle laws holding the integral parts to her very heart, then in the spiritual kingdom angels, dominions, administrations and powers by laws that are just as understandable hold, govern and teach and sway the souls of men and of spirits, and this kingdom of Christ fulfilling literally the expression and form foretold claims its own as they ripen unto it; and gradually, could you behold the spiritual forces, you would find not a literal conflict but a conflict of ideas and thoughts wherein those who are truly born to the spiritual kingdom of Christ rise up from their struggles, having vanquished and conquered the external life, and are ready to be gathered unto his spiritual kingdom, and wherein the material worshipers, those who are tethered to Rome, those who are tethered to Protestant creeds, look in vain for the advent of his coming into their kingdoms, and wait and watch because they have not the true spirit of Christ within their souls.

In their prison cells they wait in the darkness of creed, and, obscured, they wait, tethered and bound round by the external bondage of selfishness and pride—these souls wait in vain; but the souls that do not wait in vain are those that have risen from Church and from State, from without the walls of creeds and from within the walls of convent or of solitary cell to the triumph and victory over the individual self that Christ taught, and these shall make up the angels that belong to his kingdom. One hundred and forty-four thousand of the children of Israel, it was said, and one hundred and forty-four thousand of each of the nations of the earth that have known of Christ—these will be absorbed into his spiritual kingdom, while the angel that is to come will take charge over the next epoch of spiritual power upon earth.

Christ's work, we say, is well nigh accomplished. Not that it shall be lost or finished, but that the special force and presence of that single administration of angelic power draws to a close by the signs and tokens we have indicated of the special prescience of another angel whose dynasty will begin at about the Messianic period, namely, about twenty-two hundred years after the advent of Christ. We see the signs already here—the Swedish seer, the seer of Poughkeepsie, the various ministrations of spirits known in Modern Spiritualism, the indication of a mass of spiritual life approaching the earth and agitating the waters that had grown stagnant and dormant; the reawakening of new germs of spiritual power, not simply through Christ and Moses, but through the spirit underlying, that gives to every heart a sign and to every soul a token of its presence; not only this, but the direct lines of ministration given through various spiritual media, all governed and directed by corresponding spheres in spiritual life, the sphere of healing, the sphere of harmonizing the various philosophies of earth, the sphere whereby the different creeds and technicalities and formalities are merged into each other and explained; the very power that is coming upon the nations of the earth. Christ said, "I came not to bring peace but a sword." And that has been fulfilled—nation against

nation, brother against brother, creed against creed, and church against church, the spirit of Christ alone surviving. The Comforter, the Truth-Teller, brings the spirit of *peace*—peace to the nations of the earth, wherein all forms of warfare shall be impossible through that reason and judgment and calmness and power that is coming to man—arbitration wherein it is not possible for the human mind to have any difficulty that it is not possible for the human mind to solve; the nations of the earth, meeting together not upon bloody battle fields, to solve the problems of government by force, but in the halls of convention and Congress, wherein America, England, France, Russia—all of modern Europe will be represented—the Orient, Turkey, all of these dead nations that awaken from the past out of its sleep, in response to the presence of the new angel that is coming, that would not awaken to the voice of Christ, but awaken to another voice that can solve the problems of true religion. China, dead for centuries, awakens from her sleep and meets the nations of the West; Japan, ancient in art and learning, revives her storied memories and wonderful powers of Brahminical faith. Buddha clasps hands across the graves that Christianity and Mohammedanism have made, and greets the western world with a new empire, not of warfare but of peace.

Yes, there shall come a time, at the advent of the new angel whose name is Harmony, when every nation shall greet each other nation in fraternal union; when the best and noblest minds of every government of the world shall assemble in solemn convocation and dispose of all the feeble and petty strivings, when injustice shall be piracy and warfare highway robbery. As the nations of Christendom have made slavery piracy, so shall war be considered piracy, and he shall be considered a highwayman, who, whether pope, king, or ruler, shall be the first to declare war against a nation for any cause.

This is what the indications portend, and the line of succession that calls this angel to the earth is as distinctly known and absolutely foretold as was the advent of Christ to the

house of David. There is no mystery. Gradually the world is being prepared. There are typical minds upon the earth to-day. There are men and women who sufficiently represent the advent of the spirit of Harmony. There are those at least who might stand as prophets for the incoming of the new dispensation. You have heard their voices; they have given you the philosophies that have brought you to your present standpoint. They have been teachers and instruments of the spiritual world. Their teachings have given the seeds of that new sowing which is gradually ripening unto the harvest. And there shall come a time when some guiding mind, some chosen power, some man and woman typical of that perfect angelhood, shall stand in the midst of the minds of earth and teach as Christ alone taught his disciples by the sea of Galilee. The saviour of the Christian world is man. The saviour of the world, under the Angel of Harmony, is man and woman, the perfected type of the human race here below, that is culminating in life, in devotion, in knowledge, in wisdom; and the Angel of Harmony shall come and abide with men, and their feet shall be guided and their ways directed, and the voice that heralds this coming speaks the advent of a spirit which is not *he* nor *she*, but both, even as the angels are, which typifies what man and woman shall be in the new age that is coming.

Not many centuries has the world to wait. With expectant longing poets have foreseen this, and in wonderful vision have predicted the golden age of earth. With prophetic longing the teachers of religion have pointed to the time that should come, and with such prophetic longing waits every soul for that Spirit of Harmony to descend within and abide there, making every human spirit the temple and every human life the expression of its power.

Far away in the heavens a host, led by the Son of Man, whose sign is the cross, is receding. Other hosts in remoter periods have passed away beyond the atmosphere of earth's spiritual horizons. That sign — that cross disappears. No more the sword is unsheathed, no more the flame, or torture,



or martyrdom appal; no more nations war with nations in the name of Christ. He calls his own. Far toward another part of the spiritual heavens the mild, beaming light of another planet spiritually is seen. Its approaching waves mingle in purest hues and colors with the Christ-waves that are still upon earth, sometimes clashing, but more frequently solving them and their mysteries and angularities—waves of light that in rainbow hues illumine all that seems drear and dark, and prepare the minds of earth by faint gleams of that celestial harmony which is to come.

Oh, serene and perfect Soul! oh, light of the planetary spheres, approaching and approaching still! Be thy foreshadowing presence felt! be these minds illumined by thy presence till strife and discord and disturbance cease, and the world shall herald in the coming of the new morn of peace.

This is our view of the next Messiah.

