

SERMONS  
ON  
SPIRITUALISM

AT  
STOCKTON  
(WARWICKSHIRE).

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BY THE VENERABLE  
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The beautiful old Knight Templar Church of St. Michael and All Angels, Stockton, suggests the use of the Collect for the day of its Dedication, over 700 years ago, to those reading these Sermons, published now by the Author in the hope of furthering the faith of "The Communion of Saints," Angel Guardianship, and the Ministry of Spirit Friends Unseen (and sometimes permitted by "the God of the Spirits of all Flesh" to be seen) watchful over us for good.

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**THE COLLECT FOR ST. MICHAEL AND ALL ANGELS' DAY.**

O Everlasting God, who hast ordained and constituted the services of Angels and men in a wonderful order; mercifully grant, that as Thy holy Angels always do Thee service in heaven; so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

*Sept*  
*Mrs. H. H. Higbee*  
*12/24/53*

## PREFACE.

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THESE Sermons have, at various times during the past thirty-eight years, been preached in ninety-one Parish Churches of fifteen Dioceses in England, with the five over-sea Dioceses of Bombay, Lahore, Gibraltar, Grahamstown and Natal.

They are not, therefore, recently made Discourses preached only at Stockton, but are the result of long meditated convictions rooted from experiences thereunto relating, and which for the most part have been preached to Town Congregations, and the Congregations of four Cathedrals, when in three instances a Bishop has been present and pronounced the Benediction.

Stockton Rectory, Warwickshire.

*September 30th, 1907.*



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## THE PROVIDENCE OF HEAVEN IN CALAMITY:

THE WRECK OF THE "TEUTON."

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Isaiah xxxviii., 12: "I have cut off like a weaver my life."  
Ezekiel xvi., 50: "I took them away as I saw good."

Such disasters as the loss of the "Teuton" bring forcibly to our minds thoughts touching the insecurity of life. We also at such times as these wonder how—if this world be under the control of another world—such calamities are permitted. Hence we catch ourselves perpending whether everything is not of chance; if all be not haphazard; misdoubting that order, pre-arrangement, and providence are vain ideas not borne out by fact.

Can heaven's rule, we ask, exist, when seeming hell's misrule is apparent? Destruction and death judged to be normal, man impotent to battle against them, becomes the plaything and victim of the elements when his life goes down in calamity.

Is there a God that indifferently can see and allow so much evil? Is there an All-Father that unmoved can see his children suffer?—a kind parent who checks not at every point of danger the threatenings and visitings of unkind fate?

Such are the secret thoughts and silent questionings of many hearts at times like the present time, when

distress moves the public mind at the sudden plunging into eternity of two hundred souls encoffined in the well-known vessel that was bearing them full of high hope to fair Natal.

Did the Omniscient Eye rest upon that young man, elated at the prospect of a successful career in the land of his adoption, as he stepped aboard the doomed ship at Plymouth, when, with emotion scarcely hidden, he looks astern and bids farewell to the fast-fading country of his birth?

Did the Divine Providence mark the embarkation of that severed household—the wife and children of an able minister not long since arrived in South Africa, whose last letter by him received from England spoke of his loved ones joining him in a neighbouring Diocese?

Did the Eternal Watchfulness note that fair maiden, timid and retiring, but nerved by love to face the dangers of the deep—bidding farewell to the mother she might never see more—to join him in this far land to whom her heart was pledged, that down the ages they might tread the path of wedded life here—the starting point on earth of the travel of twain souls to be one, and no more twain throughout eternity?

Did the All-Seeing Eye of the Divine Compassionate perceive the digging up and transplanting from the old home of that entire family—lusty son with aged sire, wife of the strong young man and troop of ruddy, blue-eyed children, babe yet hanging at the breast, and fair-haired little prattlers all jocund with life and the bounding gaiety of youth and fond affection? Then in that awful plunge of the crashing, moaning, dying leviathan of the deep, did Heaven look on and see and hear the agony of parent and terror of child, the despairing shriek of mother and wife, the feeble moan of grandsire, and the exceeding bitter cry of son, husband and father—himself a strong swimmer—powerless in the grip and suction of the gurgling, eddying swirl and vortex of the weltering, black midnight stormy wave, powerless to save his loved ones, his darlings, his bosom's mate and his white-haired father from their watery grave?



Ah! in that awful moment when to mortal ken the eternal providences stand still, paralysed, resourceless, nerveless and dead, what despairing doubters are we of God's omnipotence and the Father's will to save? 'The big ship, like a wounded thing of life, quivers as if in dying agony—a moment's pause—then a lurch to starboard and to port—the swash of seas from stem to stern—a sudden plunge downwards, astern high uplifted, and then—

“From sea to sky arose a wild farewell—  
Then shriek'd the timid and stood still the brave—  
Then some leap'd overboard with fearful yell  
As eager to anticipate their grave;  
While round the ship the deep lay like a hell,  
As down she sucked them with her whirling wave.  
And then one loud and awful shriek there rushed  
Above the roar of ocean like a crash  
Of echoing thunder; and then all was hushed,  
Save the wild wind and the remorseless dash  
Of billows; but at intervals there gushed,  
Accompanied with a convulsive splash  
A solitary shriek, the bubbling cry  
Of some strong swimmer in his agony.”

Yes, the providences of heaven in calamity, in such dark moments and appalling crises, are not, as a rule, we fear, well apprehended. The faith that welcomes the inevitable, knowing that all shall be well, does not inhere so closely with us as it should do, crushed out of human hearts by theologies ycleped orthodox. Yet at no time more than these times of sorrow and wail do the purposes of the inner world of causes have their gracious, potent will so effectively in this world of effect where results are ultimated from processes transpiring around us all unseen.

Every life is threaded to the divine life of the creative mind. Humanity in the mass is the outward expression of unclothed divinity. Humanity also in the individual, and every single animal soul throughout the wide universe

of matter—from the myriad worlds that in star-spray and planet-glory sparkle in the sapphire dome of heaven to-night above us—every soul, animal or human—“the whole creation groaning and travailing in pain together until now” resident here on earth or on the most distant star unnamed and undescried in the profound abyss of boundless space, is fibred from all circumferences, plains of life, plants, systems, spheres and suns—zones and latitudes, faiths and creeds—to the eternal centre, which is God.

Every human heart is fibred to the divine heart, and every pulse-throb and heart-beat reports itself at that awful point where the corners of creation are thus grandly gathered up in the Divine. No hyperbole, therefore, was intended when Jesus said “The very hairs of your head are all numbered.” Hence no aspiration, hope, or prayer of the two hundred who last Wednesday night were suddenly ushered into the eternal world was for a moment disregarded or unfelt by the All-Father, “whose tender mercies are over all His works.”

It is in calamity hard, of course, to think that the righteous, wise and loving will has been done of heaven’s gracious purpose to ourselves bereaved, as to those whose earth-life was with pain and terror so abruptly terminated; but in “the cutting off like a weaver our life” in the infant of days, or strength of ripe manhood, or harvest of full years of old age, the pattern doubtless of our existence here had been taken out and the design of our creation accomplished—the character-sketch outlined and completed for our more skilful infilling with richer colours in eternity.

The young man who embarked on board the ill-fated vessel with high hopes of commercial success here, yonder in the higher life to-night prefers assuredly the merchandise of the skies. The fair maiden who looked to become the bride I should have married to our desolated friend to-day, is, to the object of her choice tarrying here below overwhelmed with sorrow, now in spirit wedded more closely than years of conjugal felicity on earth could have compassed. So, as an angel watching o’er the life of

him bereaved who this evening might have called her wife, she will hover near him and sanctify his sorrow to the further chastening of his soul and the ripening of his spirit for its transplanting in due time to the Paradise whither she has been called to prepare for him his celestial home, and wait with her maiden-spirit associates to give him welcome.

So with the clerical brother involved in the common grief of this calamity, he will know, better than I can tell him, how the rude severing of earthly ties and the passing suddenly into the unseen of wife and children, speaks not of irreparable loss and separation, but rather voices the sacred hope that will contribute to added spiritual power and benediction from the loved ones yonder gone upward from their drowning, whose first care naturally will be to distil a healing balm into the wounded heart sore stricken in their unexpected instant removal.

“ Uttered not, yet comprehended,  
Is the spirit’s voiceless prayer;  
Soft rebukes in blessings ended  
Breaking from their lips of air.”

For shall not human feelings survive what we call death?—Yea, indeed, the domestic bond of love will not slacken its rosy chain. Love is love for evermore. Affection is intensified by the loss of our material part, and chastened and hallowed. Sundered by death, as we wrongly think it—the fire on the hearth quenched, the arm-chair vacant, the tiny cot robbed of its treasure—our heart of its jewel—the family circle broken, dwelling—its segregated members—in different spheres, yet in earth-life and spirit-life alike the home circle is one and undivided in Him who all unites:—

“ One family we dwell in Him,  
One Church above, beneath;  
Though now divided by the stream,  
The narrow stream of death.”

So in the whole families that have gone down with the "Teuton"—the white-haired old man and his lusty son, wife, and children—there for them has scarcely been the pang of momentary separation. For has not heaven wisely ordered it that they shall all enter into the higher life together?

The death struggles ended, the wild shriek stifled, the gurgling cry now hushed—all is still. The weltering waves, in their content for mischief wrought, are as a cemetery with mortuary monuments crowded. A white face floats upward; 'twas mobile with life half an hour ago; 'tis now the pallid countenance of a corpse. That is, however, but the earth-side view, the outside history of the calamity. Look we now more wisely let us on the other side, and look within; pierce the pall that, by reason of our carnality, hangs over futurity, and loop the curtain that shrouds the eternal world from mortal ken, while yet our foot-falls daily tread the near confines and mysterious boundaries of the other life.

Here busy about those we speak of as dead are the celestial angels, lovingly operative upon the spirit for its resuscitation and for its birth from the chrysalis of the no-longer habitable body to its higher life.

"When mortals cry a man is dead  
Then angels sing a child is born."

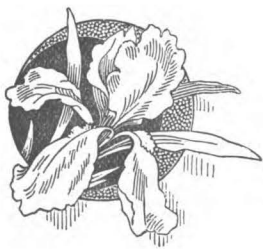
Hence, returning consciousness soon dawns upon the mind of the new-respiring soul now breathing the purer auras of a diviner state, and on the spirit-vision of eyes couched in death from drowning breaks the view of scenery sublime. For the emigrants that from England set out for Natal find themselves one and all straightway landed in heaven; nothing is lost save the body slowly sinking to the ocean's oozy floor through fathoms of watery space. And of the body have they now no further need—"not unclothed, but clothed upon," as says St. Paul—there being "a natural body" and there also being "a spiritual body," and "it is the spirit that quickeneth, the flesh profiteth nothing."

The mother still fondles the infant that nestles in her bosom, and has also the strong arm of her husband for her support. The children with them are for the moment perhaps astonished, remembering the last earth terror that held possession of their young minds quickened to intensity of thought in the dreamy pleasant suffocation of drowning. But in the clustering of spirit-children and the youth of heaven thronging around them as new comers to the higher life ("for of such," says Jesus, "is the kingdom of heaven") they quickly forget the appalling moments of the shipwreck in the joy of new found playmates—realising the truth of the hymn (341) they used to sing—

"Soon in the golden city  
The boys and girls shall play,  
And through the dazzling mansions  
Rejoice in endless day."

While the aged grandsire, feeling himself every moment strangely growing younger, shouts with delight to see the partner of his former life, long removed from earth and resident yonder, swiftly coming downward from the high uplands of her well-merited lofty attainment in spirit-life, with joy to give him and her son and his wife and children heaven's holiest welcome.

Through death, therefore, to life is the lesson of this calamity. *Mors janua vitæ*: Death the Gate of Life. Hence continuous and immediate and conscious being. No sleeping in the grave, or beneath the wave. For, as the Burial Service of the Church of England says, "The souls of the faithful, after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh, are in joy and felicity."



## HELL, A NECESSITY:

### A PROVISION OF THE DIVINE MERCY.

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Psalm ix., 17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God."

The revised version of the Scriptures modifies this awful text, but obscures it. Mis-read it nearly always is, and in its baldness conveys the most erroneous views of God, the All-good. For there is no devil in hell or lost fool out of heaven that has ever been turned into the one or out of the other by the being "without body, parts or passions," whose nature and name is Love—the All-Compassionate whose "tender mercies are over all his works."

The wicked shall be turned into hell undoubtedly, but the text does not say that cruelly thither shall they be turned by the determinate purpose of God, *i.e.*, the power or personality that ever worketh for righteousness in the hearts of the children of men the wide world over. They have gone there of their own choice and perference—turning themselves out of heaven and the way unto it from having no desire for the things that constitute the wonder-world in its surpassing glory.

Monstrously against the gospel of humanity and the beneficence of the All-Father's Divinity is it to maintain that Deity wills the punishment of any single soul in hell, or that he does not by every means short of coercion strive persistently to save men mad with the

virus of sin from rushing thither. For would a human parent inflict endless chastisement upon a rebellious child? or for the undutiful conduct of years measure out pains and penalty for centuries and eternities? Shall the Divine Parent then, indeed, be less merciful—man more just than his maker—the creature more pitiful than the Creator?

The All-Compassionate Almighty wills not in anger to keep any devil in hell, and never yet has sent or ever will send a single human soul to that sad region of self-banishment from heaven.

Self-banishment is the word; for soul-suicides are they who from the neutral ground of earth plunge downward to the abyss and aspire not to the higher life. No lost soul, therefore, in perdition can say "I have been hither sent." 'Tis self-accusation that must plague the sinner into saying "like a lunatic perverse have I of set-purpose voluntarily hither come."

In affinity with the virtues that make heaven he has never been, and therefore has seen nothing sweet in purity; nothing noble in truth; nothing attractive in goodness; nothing holy in life; nothing sacred in man. He has rather been in alliance with the vices that constitute hell, and insanely has seen something delightful in the impure; something clever in lies; something fascinating in evil and wrong; something admirable in pride; something pleasant in the profane, delectable in the vicious, sportive in the unhallowed of woman and hideously depraved of man. So, as like attracts like, to that adumbrated world, that has trod the ways of darkness and forsook the path of life, he gravitates by easy stages, and now, in congenial fellowship where alone he may have it, he has found his level, and lives his idiot life with others afflicted with the same insanity of sin in the Bedlam of the universe known as hell, into which he with all the wicked are turned, having turned themselves. Hell is therefore a provision of the Divine Mercy, a necessity, and the only place fitted for those unfit for heaven.

A cordial welcome awaits everyone good or bad in the other life. So, when natural respiration ceases, there



will be an immediate introduction to scenes that a life-long rehearsal here has made familiar—joyous or sad as the case may be. If sad, they yet will for awhile be satisfactory to the soul that has made the melancholy pleasures and insanities of sin its chief occupation here. To joyous scenes of holiness also will they be welcomed by the angel-citizens of the world of light who have anticipated heaven above by daily striving to make heaven below.

Moreover, to the mad revelry and scenes of depraved horror will those be welcomed by evil ones of like character to themselves; and the dissipations hankered after in earth-life and madly indulged, secretly or openly without shame, will still be desired, scant, however, of the full capacity for their enjoyment. No matter indeed how bad the life on earth may have been, there stands no avenger at the threshold of the under-world to afflict woe in measure apportioned to the wickedness, or visit for deeds done in the body. The avenger is carried with us, is in us, and we afflict ourselves.

Eternal punishment there never is for temporal sin, but eternal suffering for sin there must be while the sin eternal yet remains.

Whatever the place or condition where sin shall hold its hideous, hateful court, there, attendant, is its punishment. Where sin is, there is suffering, and there is hell. Hence, just as certainly as there is a heaven for the good, so in the economy of God's loving providence must there be a hell for the bad. The two places, states, conditions or spheres can never be mixed up or made to blend. Bid the poles and tropics unite, join the torrid and the frigid zone, and the absurdity is no greater than the thoughtless endeavour to leaven hell with heaven, or enfold heaven with hell. The two must stand eternally distinct. The "great gulf fixed" is not a myth, but the real scientific frontier between the evil and the good, the clean and the unclean—angel and fiend.

The one provision, place, state, or condition involves the necessity for the other. Where there is sunlight there must be shade, and every solid object has its attendant shadow. Happiness and heaven pertain to the first;

wretchedness and hell to the second. Light and life! Darkness and death!

Look at the process by which a bad man after death reaches his final lot or the position for which he is qualified in the other life. Think of the man whose life in this world has been passed in planning mischief and working wrong. Into the next world he carries his ill-conditioned nature, and the results of his misdeeds borne by those who have gone into spirit-life before him—his victims—will meet him on the threshold of eternity.

Will he be met as he might well expect to be met with vengeance and the recompense of hate for his wickedness? No! in his re-birth to astral life, with all its inconveniences to him of his own preparation, he will have nothing inflicted on him but what he himself inflicts. A kindly welcome will he receive in the world unseen when his eyes close on this world wherein he has wrought such woe; for they will open in the angel-world to see the bright messengers of his wronged heavenly Father, solicitous to disentangle his defective soul from its integuments of the flesh and assist at the return of the prodigal, erring, wandering spirit back to its former life, even as earth-friends in the body-life of his immortal spirit assisted at his nativity here and rejoiced at the soul's new incarnation.

His perception of these spiritual surroundings will, however, be slow. In mercifully-ordered obscurity he will at first scarcely discern his angel-helpers, but as consciousness increases a contrariety of spheres will be felt and something of discomfort at their holy presence, even as in this life the bad are ill-at-ease in the company of the good. Hence he will have the desire to withdraw himself from the bright ones of celestial aspect and seek the society of others less divine, with others, then, thereafter, still less good, till feeling no congenial companionship for his defective nature in these high regions of grace—being unfitted for heaven, unable to breathe its pure air, or enjoy its ineffable light, or endure without pain its eternal weight of glory—he soon passes over the psychic frontier, walking on into the night-shade of the

other life, and merges his soul in the eclipse of a lower state. The shadows and gloom of darker latitudes then fall around him as he comes in contact with those more congenial to his pitiful condition, and hell becomes his heaven; for very heaven to him all unprepared for it would be a worser hell.

Having in this way now found his place in the economy of God's Providence—hell being a necessity to him—a provision of the Divine Mercy—what will he do? Analogy, which is man's surest guide below, shall answer the question.

From analogy, as from Scripture also, may the truth be gathered that death is but a change of state involving no break in the continuity of life, character, bias, inclination, use, custom, or habit. "He that is unjust, let him be unjust still: he that is filthy, let him be filthy still," until he learn justice and cleanliness, doing unto others as he would they should do unto him.

Confidently, therefore, may it be affirmed that life will begin again in the spiritual world, even as it was left off in the material world. Man there will at first apparently have just the same body that he had here.

Dreams full of energy, and operating many busy things, suggest the psychical perfection of the double of the physical body that lies motionless in sleep. Hence in the sleep called death, when dreams have come upon the corporeal system which are worth the dreaming, to shew the illusions of mortal life shamed beyond all imagining by the realities of the life immortal, man for awhile will think no other than that everything there in his new environment is geographied and to scale exact to the earth-sphere he has quitted and knoweth it not awhile, so to the manner born is he familiar with his surroundings spiritual.

Dwelleth he not in a world the sublimated replica of material conditions he cannot immediately quite understand? Here is his house—and truly it is his own, for did he not build it from the scaffolding of his mortal life during the hours of natural sleep? Is he not similarly clothed, thought-fabricated

raiment vesting his spirit—clothed upon with garments outwardly correspondent with his inward state of mind and heart? Is he not as one with others there, with comrades perfectly natural?

So much like his last of this world must be the beginning of the next, that he may need considerable evidence to convince him of the fact that he really is in the other life, one of the most potent proofs of which being his acquaintance bye and bye with those whom he thought of as having long since in this world died.

With earth-memories still strong within him, and earth-attractions still felt, yet having the same sense of freedom in spirit-life that he had there, though with more liberty and power and fewer restrictions from this world's obligations for outward fair seeming and false appearances, he there, unlet and unhindered, alas! wills to practice the same evils of his fleshy existence and begin to live the same bad life—weave the same wickedness, scheme the same lies, fabricate the same sin for the same mean miserable fiend's behoof that he did while it obsessed the wretched carcase his friends a short while ago gave a pompous burial.

But heaven cannot permit this long to continue. The Eternal Father cannot allow liberty to degenerate to licence. The hells have to be restrained.

Everyone in the other life follows the bent of his imagination and suggestion of his will up to a point. Trespassing beyond that point brings punishment to the transgressor, and, if that punishment does not lead to its Sanscrit root of purification, hell's torment is eternal to the degree of its acquisition being eternally unattained.

For the whip is ever in the wickedness. The smart is always in the sin. This is the grand law, and its splendid operation in minutest detail, inexorable inflexibility and merciful justice, is such that punishment is close upon the heels of perversity, and is self-derived and self-inflicted.

The All-Father, therefore, is not the executive when "the wicked are turned into hell, and all the people that forget God." He indeed descends into hell, as

Christ descended, to alleviate, restrain and control the mad abandoned souls who have chosen it for their abode and deter them from tormenting themselves and others beyond the institutes of stern necessity for their ultimate good.

“When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness that he hath committed, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall save his soul alive.”

In hell he is left in freedom to choose his own associates and his own way of life. He might ascend even to heaven if he cared to escale its splendours and were fitted for it, or if its purity and blessedness made it not a place of greater torment to the deflagrating, unadvancing soul than the dark caverns and labyrinths of perdition.

This is the law that explains the text. This is the law that rules in the apportioning of punishment—punishment not eternal for temporal transgression, but as everlasting as the cause that vitiates the transgressor.

What then is hell? The heaven of the damned? Even so, if you like the flavour of the definition. But rather should it be regarded as the sink of iniquity, where the foul abominations of the vile and the vicious rankle and reek. The slums of earth empty their loose populations there. Can you contemplate your fair daughter dwelling there? Your loved ones now incontaminate and pure companioned there with the libertine, the liar, and the villain?

“The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the people that forget God.”

It is the only place for which they are fit, until perhaps after the discipline of many incarnations and re-births they at last may be trusted to live in Heaven, not seeking to defile the angels, gloriously themselves fitted ere eternity ends to become the angels of God continually.



## DREAMS.

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Genesis xxviii., 11-12: "And he lighted upon a certain place, and tarried there all night because the sun was set; and he took of the stones of that place and put them for his pillows, and lay down in that place to sleep. And he dreamed, and behold a ladder set up on the earth, and the top of it reached to heaven: and behold the angels of God ascending and descending on it."

To understand a dream and the interpretation of it was one of the gifts of the ancients, who were deep read in many things of which we know but little. Proud of our modern scientific attainments, yet would it be folly for us to belittle the wisdom of past times.

Scaling the pyramids and exploring their mysterious recesses—marvelling at the ruins of Carnac and Philae, and the rock-cut temples of Elephanta and Karlee, with other of the seven wonders of the old world, we scarcely can think ourselves abreast of the ancients even in physical science, while as to psychological knowledge we are indeed very far behind them.

For to do as Moses was divinely gifted to do—the magicians of Egypt imitating him sometimes also likewise genuinely in doing—to do as the dreamer Joseph did in Canaan, and afterwards as Prime Minister at the Egyptian Court, divining with his silver cup, and knowing of the years of plenty ere they came, and years of dearth yet to come—to do as Daniel did in the interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dream, and the

reading of the mystic writing on the wall at Belshazzar's riotous feast—to have ocular demonstration of the existence of another life—to perpend the problem of being, know its source, apprehend its springs, ken its working; these, and other things pertaining to the same study, were matters of every-day knowledge with the ancients.

The ancients were gifted with insight superior to modern methods touching nature's secrets and the forecasting of events to come, being mysteriously endowed with the faculties of clairvoyance, second sight, seership.

The prophets all were seers. Hence the Scripture (1 Samuel ix., 9), "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God thus he spake, Come and let us go to the seer, for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer."

But so sceptical is the age, and so Sadducean have the churches and denominations and sects now become that, to practical purpose, any belief in angel or spirit or eternal world is rarely looked for as a factor in the regulation of life and conduct. We clean forget all about these things when the preacher leaves the pulpit, and our Bibles and Prayer Books are closed with the church doors on Sunday night. So from Monday morning onward we toil through the week as though this life were the be all and end all of everything—this world the only real world, the preacher's being simply one of mere fancy and ecclesiastical romance.

Hence it comes about that we are Materialists, and not Spiritualists. Dreading to be thought superstitious we become pretentiously scientific, and talk an infinite deal of nonsense about the known laws of nature, forgetting the universe of unknown law waiting to be explored.

Fearing to be thought credulous, we fall into despondent unbelief, and are practically atheistical. Mistrusting to be thought weak-minded we get hard-hearted. Obstinate to receive the testimony of the past, we are indisposed to listen with understanding patiently to very much of Scripture, and



greatly dislike to accept the Bible for true when it treats of angelic appearances, spiritual interpositions, miracles, dreams and their interpretations. So there is large ecclesiastical contempt for the story of Jacob's ladder and all the spiritual paraphernalia of the dream of our text. But our own wise, English, Warwickshire Shakespeare very truly says, "There are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

Hence, while we should persistently interrogate nature, and sift and seek to understand nature's laws, and look for natural causes for every physical effect, yet should there be no dogmas of science or thought of finality insisted on to correlate every such physical effect of necessity to a physical cause. So, when we cannot trace all outward results to their self-evident natural manifestation, we should not be refused the right to extend our researches beyond and away into the realm of the transcendental and spiritual.

For the thoughtful observer of common everyday events cannot but perceive that there is a factor in every transaction that the merely materialistic mind cannot fully grasp; it disturbs all our calculations; it perplexes the chemist with his crucible and the astronomer sweeping the sky for the next new comet; it disarranges the carefully-formulated dissertations of the scientist, and cripples with incertitude the mind of the theorist madly attempting to dispense with it entirely, and for ever to get rid of this mysterious, perplexing, unseen factor—God.

Many think they have all and everything solid—not a bit of poetry in them, and certainly no theology. God, heaven, and the angels are simply church terms, having but the most apocryphal existence for them so matter-of-fact and severely exact that they will not believe in anything they cannot weigh, ticket, and measure. No transcendentalism is possible for such who pride themselves on being so practical and sagely scientific. Yet, as a scientific fact, it should be known that it is well within the range of the probable for another world—a second order of existence—to be in our very midst and we be unconscious of it normally.

Our faculties have limits. Visibility, for instance, is the merest accident of matter. How perfect, apparently, for sight is the eye, and yet how dead is it to things about us of which the mind has knowledge; and what a merciful deadness is this sometimes—that deadness of the optic nerve to the obscure heat rays of the sun! Ruin to the eye would be instantaneous if placed for a moment at the focus of the luminous rays in their intensity, which are but as one to seven of the dark heat rays. Yet at the invisible focus of the obscure rays—heat rays sufficient at a determinate point to fuse metals to vapour and melt solid gold—the unprotected eye may yet there be placed with impunity, its humours being so wonderfully impervious to the intensest invisible heat.

Yet what scientist, what oculist deep read in the structure of the eye, the optic nerve, the retina, the rods and cones of natural vision that swing tumultuous to the touch of outside nature, reflecting its multitudinous rays to hurtle them in through the windows of the soul upon the organs of natural sight, can yet account for dreams and spiritual sight with eyes fast closed against the things of material make mould and shape?

Medical men usually lean to the thought that dreams come of physical causes only. Some dreams do, of course, thus come, but not all—not all when men divinely dream and give us glimpses of heaven, enriching earth by their dreams on the glowing canvas, or by sweet pure words in a poem, or in music like Mozart's last Requiem, suggested by the mysterious visitor who came not for it till—visible to but the dying composer—at that last death-bed practice he came for it and took with him also the soul of the musician.

There are, therefore, dreams and dreams—dreams that certainly are not of natural causes. Jacob's dream was not of these. St. Joseph, being warned of God in a dream to take the infant Jesus and flee into Egypt was not consequent of such, nor was the dream of King Nebuchadnezzar that Daniel the prophet interpreted and so for this was made chief of all the magicians at the

Court of Babylon. For that could not have been capable of state importance or spiritual explanation that was but of a gross and gluttonous origin.

“God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed. Then openeth he the ears of men, and sealeth their instruction” (Job xxxiii., 15). For man has two natures—body and soul; two sets of faculties—material and mental; senses of the flesh and senses of the spirit interacting.

Man is, moreover, amphibious to two states of being, and has a double life. For even as the wings of a flying fish are practically non-existent in its normal element, and are seen only when brought into play in the purer, lighter kingdom of the air, when it leaps upwards from the denser kingdom of deep waters, so, earth-thralled are man's higher faculties, hidden, quiescent, undeveloped—their existence, indeed, being often unsuspected and sometimes altogether denied. But in fugitive moments, when some strange thought flashes through the mind, suggesting the idea that we have lived a former life or known a state of pre-existence, a consciousness is developed, apart from the teaching of faiths and creeds, that our better self is in exile and temporary banishment from, yet heritor to, another life.

With half our faculties asleep, and the quick soul trammelled up with the wrappings of the flesh—“coats of skins”—(the epidermis, the rete mucosum, and the cutis vera)—Deity hath clothed us withal, and the multiplied earth-individuality of a thousand ancestors whose cast off garments of flesh we wear, what wonder that many of the subtler phases of our being are for awhile in hiding, smothered, suffocated, submerged.

From hybridity and hereditary transmission we may have the aspect, voice, and manner of some remote progenitor; so in the blue depth of the eye of the golden-haired motherless little maiden a sorrowing father may have saddened, pensive comfort, seeing in her eyes the wifely look of his lost

love. For affection beams upon us in the glance as from the soul through the eyes of our children of the mother gone into the Brighter and Better Beyond. The spirit sight indeed of those away in the angel-world doubtless takes cognisance thus at times of the loved ones left below by the parent through the eyes of the orphaned child, unconscious of the presence unseen thus gazing on the familiar scenes and surroundings of its former earthly home.

And the spirit eye and its clairvoyant power, what of it, observant and wakeful in dreams, when the natural eye is closed and dead to outward sight and sense? The spirit eye such as the patriarch Jacob had to see glories surrounding him that made him say "This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven"? The spirit eye that Balaam had unclosed when he said (Numbers xxiv., 15), "Balaam, the son of Beor, hath said, and the man whose eyes are open hath said: He hath said, which heard the words of God, and knew the knowledge of the most High, which saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open." The spirit eye, which Elisha had when he saw Elijah's translation to the higher life in a chariot of fire with horses of fire? The spirit eye which Elisha's servant was gifted momentarily to have use of when the prophet prayed that the young man's eyes might be opened to see the angel host encamped round about for the protection of his master? The spirit eye that St. John the Divine had when in the spirit on the Lord's Day he saw the apocalyptic splendours of the holy city, the heavenly Jerusalem, with its jasper walls and pearly gates and golden streets? The spirit eye! Let us not forget or doubt its existence, for it must be opened in all true dreams such as these and the dreams of our text.

"The spirit eye?" questions the medical student. "I have never seen it. I have dissected the human eye and operated on it. I have traced the optic nerve. I have analysed the vitreous humour, the crystalline humour, the aqueous humour, and determined their respective refractory powers. I have observed the convexity of the cornea and the opacity of the

sclerotica, measured the dilative extent of the pupil, scrutinised the iris, made search for the real point of sight, but never yet have I found anything suggestive of a spirit eye."

Not surprising to the Spiritualist is this objection to the existence of the spirit eye as urged by the Materialist. "For the same may be said touching the spirit ear, its existence being as necessary as the spirit eye to the divine dreaming of all prophets and poets and seers, from youthful Samuel when he said, "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth," and the prophet Elijah who, wrapping his face in his mantle, stood at the entering in of the cave and listened to the "still small voice," and the apocalyptic Revelator who heard the angel-harpers by the crystal sea and joined in the song of the redeemed. For the sceptical anatomist may say, "I have followed the auditory nerve, and mastered the vibratory action of the typanum. I have tested the muscles of the clavatore, and have tried to tell the myriad nerve-points that swing tumultuous to the faintest whisper or wave-beat of the softest note that ever gentlest zephyr kissed from the Æolian harp, but never yet have I detected the smallest rudimentary trace of a spirit ear." Of course not. For this is no more surprising as relates to the clairaudient than to the clairvoyant powers of man, their existence testified past all gainsaying both from Scripture and the experience of mankind in every age the wide world over.

But perverse is the teaching of the Sadducean and materialistic school of thought, that would thus misdirect the body in its quest for the soul, and set the flesh to make search for the spirit, and, failing in its researches, then deny the very existence of the two faculties most active in dreams of spirit-hearing and spirit-sight. Proof none of spirit-eye or spirit-ear can be forthcoming through the clumsy instruments of materialistic methods of research; but proof superior to that sought by scalpel and lancet shall be afforded of these psychic attributes of our being to those who apprehend that the shell is made alone for the sake of the kernel.

The outside merits of the one should be prophetic of the still better inner qualities of the other. For the wonders indeed of natural sight are so astonishing that the reverent explorer into its mysteries may easily conceive that but a little extension of its powers shall in no great while introduce us verily to a new world on the verge and borderland of spirit. The present inability of the microscope and telescope to see as deep as we would see into the wonders of creation is passing away, and a new process of photography already suggests the possibility of our soon being able to see through all solids—there being nothing solid—and where sight ends prophetic faith begins, as where demonstration is confronted by a transient difficulty, induction and analogy take up the thread and philosophy pursues fugitive facts into the realm of the transcendental.

Have the diamond and amethyst (asks Professor Tyndall) or the ruby and emerald no inner structure? Assuredly so. Yet what can the microscope make of them? Its highest powers cannot disclose the marvel of their formation—the palace-architecture of their construction. For between the microscopic limit and the true molecular limit there is room for the swing of empires—room for the Infinite to work undreamt of mysteries.

Dreaming to scientific purpose indeed is this, and most valuable is the faculty of trained research touching these deep things, for it moves us to wonder, and wonder begets reverence, and reverence leads on to devotion, and devotion quickens us to sincerity of life, earnestness of effort, real humility, and true religion.

Again, I say then, relative to dreams, that the spirit-eye is the core, the moving principle and soul of natural sight, even as the spirit-ear also is the root, first element, and chief principle of the outward ear. And it is from these twain inner powers of the soul that true dreams do come.

Swedenborg illustrates this when he says that man has two memories, as indeed man has a double set of everything he possesses. So when the door of the inner memory is opened the outer door is closed. Shut off

from the world of nature, we are intromitted to the world of spirit. Back through the utter gate again to the temporal by to-morrow's sunrise at daybreak, the eternal begins to fade from our remembrance; but, awaking with the dawn for another day's duties, having only dim glimpses of what has transpired beyond the range of bodily sense in the world unseen—where we have possibly been busy while our body at rest lay entranced in slumber—we say we have dreamed. Even so, for says the poet—

“ This world I deem but a beautiful dream  
Of shadows, which are not what they seem;  
Where visions rise giving dim surmise  
Of things that shall meet our waking eyes.”

Jacob's dream was like this; it was the opening of the eyes to the inner world of realities from the illusions of this. The patriarch's dream also was representative and prophetic of his future—the ladder of his ascent in the way of mortal life—his worldly success and prosperity in the scale of earthly things.

But for us this dream of Jacob's ladder, the top of which reached to heaven, teaches the sublime truth of the existence of higher stages and degrees than this low earth level of life comprises, through which, however, from the lowest rung of earth-conditions we may ascend to the loftiest heights of perfection in Deity: ascending from the material to the natural, the natural to the spiritual, the spiritual to the celestial, the celestial to the Divine. In evolution ascending from the mineral to the vegetable, the vegetable to the animal, the animal to the man, the man to the angel, the angel up to God. For on the ladder were seen angels ascending and descending; and this is the esoteric teaching of the most real of all dreams, *i.e.*, our descent from heaven at birth, and our ascent to heaven at death, if so be we are on the ladder of the way that leadeth unto the life immortal.

Also by it—this dream of the patriarch Jacob—is taught the most comforting truth of angelic ministrations—spiritual blest go-betweens 'twixt this and the higher

life. "Angels ascending and descending upon the son of man" (St. John i., 51). Their access, also, unto us is shown on the moral virtues that compose the staves of that mysterious ladder—that heavenly ascent that lifts us from nature to grace, from matter to spirit, from man to God.

Angelic ministrations. Who can deny the fact thereof with the testimony of Scripture thereunto? Heaven's interposition on man's behalf—spirit visitants, angel helpers, dreams directed, and godly ordered for human good—who may gainsay belief therein under warranty of Holy Writ? Blind are they to nature's greater wonders who thus ignorantly do, and inapt readers also are they of the pages revelation, unskilled to scan the arcanas of many things undreamt of in their philosophy. Dream we not thus! but be awake to the solemn issues of life, life which is two-fold—aye! manifold—living vigorously the animal, earnestly the mental, prayerfully the spiritual, so to have dreams worthy of being remembered yonder in the Beyond, when the sleep of this life is over.

Anticipating this, would we have Jacob's dream? Then must we have Jacob's pillow. "Out of our stony griefs Bethel to raise." For in soul-exile, wanderers from our Father's home, lost in the wilderness, under the discipline of sorrow, in banishment from all things good and true and bright and joyous and happy, when steeped in misery, tearful watchers, our eyes heavy with grief, we sink in sorrow to unrefreshing sleep, then, geographied round as we think with calamity we light upon—nay! we are angel-led to—happy resting places (man's extremity being God's opportunity), and dream anew the gracious, holy, cheering dreams of hope (the patriarch's dream), to awake, as Jacob did, saying, "Surely the Lord is in this place, and I knew it not. This is none other but the house of God, and this is the gate of heaven." For Bethel lies near us in our affliction. God is ever with us. The angels throng about us. For "the angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear Him, and delivereth them"



(Psalm xxxiv., 7), while heaven is wherever a good man is found battling with adversity and bent on doing his simple daily duty.

Is this a dream? Then waking would be pain:  
God let me die to-night, or ever always dream this  
truth again.





## DEBORAH, THE PROPHETESS.

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Judges iv., 4: "And Deborah, a prophetess, the wife of Lapidoth, she judged Israel at that time."

Judgment is looked for rather in man, as affection is more the characteristic of woman. But endowments vary, and some men are so wanting in manliness that a woman, to save her home or nation from ruin, is at times forced to exercise control, and manage affairs. It is, however, contrary to the institutes of heaven to confuse the issues existing between man the first created, and woman that is of man. For this would be to upset divine order and bring about a quick destruction of the home in which woman should reign supreme.

And may her queenly, wise, domestic sway,  
Whose word is law and whom we all obey,  
Order sweet happiness from day to day.  
And may such quiet, rest, repose and ease,  
And household pleasures which should never cease,  
Here find a home, with love and joy and peace.

Who would mar this teaching, substituting the horror of sexual socialism to our national undoing? Sow nettles and you will reap a crop of stings. For how sadly true is it that when a woman goes wrong and unsexes herself from the angel-virtues of her nature, she sinks to deeper depths of vice and wickedness than man dare ever fathom. He may reform his ways and from courses bad attain a measure of self-respect once more. But a woman, lost to virtue and to God, seldom finds her way to honesty

again. For from the hands of the Omnipotent High Potter she has been made the "weaker vessel," and "or ever the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain," the fragments of what was once a woman, now abased to the mere female, can rarely ever be gathered up in the mending to pass for those moral attributes that first were hers by right of heaven's especial gift in their assigning.

Would that woman from girl-hood were trained and taught not to compete with man in things foreign to her better instincts; then she would know wherein she was weak with the weakness that is, with her, far better than manhood's strength. For man is of a spirit rugged and strong, and the outer covering of his inner being partakes of this hard nature; so he is fitted to do battle with the rough, rude world, and be the protector of the gentle soul that he, in honour and true manliness, loves to have to cling to him for safety.

With a mind of a severer, colder cast, and a judgment less influenced by impetuous feeling than that of his loving partner, man usually is proof against the snares of overwrought affection and the specious flattery of mere appearances. He can weigh difficult measures, and ponder deep things, and calculate the likelihood of dim and distant or near and imminent event; while the even balance of his reason, and his clear-headedness, will not be shaken by the recklessness of love's divine abandon, or generous impulsiveness, or feminal tenderness of heart.

Woman, on the other hand, is a creature of fine susceptibility—a thing of love; and when she is not she is no longer woman. She is a being of a more fragile cast and delicate workmanship, and in no wise so aptly fitted for the world's rough handling or unmeet competition in rivalry with man.

Pitiful is it when necessity compels woman to quit her household coign of vantage, and merge her gentleness in business pursuits, or mingle in the earthly strife that shall require her to leave the angel-hood of her womanhood, to unsex herself in the hurly-burly concerns of the

cruel world, so desperately competitive and self-seeking; for then she is at woeful disadvantage, weak and unarmed in the arena where savage men wrestle and giants strive for mastery.

Unfitted, therefore, for the most part, lone and distracted with the world's maddening din, to cope with the jagged circumstances of the times, and terribly exposed to the temptations whereunto from tender-hearted pity she is ever prone, it is man's glory and privilege to be the protector, friend, or husband of the Creator's masterpiece—woman.

This is the great law of sex, twofold—protection and trust; the law of love—man's love for woman and the woman's that seeks it of him, and yearns with trust for love, so specially needing it more than man whose pride is to afford protection. For as man's love by nature is a thing apart, so otherwise it is a woman's whole existence. Her need for it, and for leadership, guidance and protection is, however, with woman subject occasionally to exceptions. The text instances an exception.

Deborah judged Israel; but though a Prophetess and a Seer, she nevertheless had to be the wife of Lapidoth; for, as his name shows, he was to her "a lamp"—an illuminating power; and she (a queen "bee" as her name suggests) in her feminine impulsiveness was guided by a Lapidothic, masculine enlightenment. He, the man, a student in retirement, ponders life's problems; she, the woman, being the loyal executant of his wisdom.

For as there are men who have a gentleness of manner and are bashful, who live the quiet life of a scholarly recluse, and feel the tender dint of pity like a woman, so there are women who have a power of ambition above their kind, which sometimes runs erratically to vanity, when (fond of admiration beyond their natural excuse for it, that is, having in a measure lost, or grown out of, or renounced their womanly qualities) they assume an attitude of rivalry to man that sometimes renders them unpleasing, and unfortunately disposes them occasionally to be pragmatic, hard and ungracious. Men then avoid them, for they dislike the

masculine character in a woman, even as women rightly hold in disfavour the feminine character in a man.

But though this is the law which is generally recognised as operative in the world and potent from instinct, yet, when circumstances so require and need demands, there is awhile a temporary setting aside of the law that rules in the interest, and for the mutual welfare of the sexes.

Hence the deliverance of Israel from the yoke of Jabin, King of Canaan (that should have been a man's work, Barak's), begun by one woman, was ended by another.

Deborah moved Barak against the hosts of Sisera, and, as a Seeress, prophesied their discomfiture; while Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, completed their overthrow, compassing—under the compulsions of her fore-ordained destiny—the great captain's treacherous, albeit predicted, death.

Need so required, as it seemed, that both these women should arise, Deborah and Jael; the one to be known as "a mother in Israel," and the other (with unqualified admiration for her as a murderess, of inspiration sacred, to be pronounced "blessed") an assassin—yet "blessed above women in the tent."

For divine as was the seership and prevision of Deborah, the Prophetess (1 Samuel ix., 9), in foretelling the death of Sisera, yet very otherwise than divine was the manner of its accomplishment. The "killing letter" (2 Cor. iii., 6) of the account of this murder, separate from its scriptural spiritual signification, is destructive of all human sense of right. The moral maxim of worldly wisdom is, however, ungodpally in-read with this to lead us selfishly and cutely and astutely to be "wise as serpents," if we have not the heavenly disposition to be "harmless as doves."

For when "asking for water they give thee milk, and bring forth butter in a lordly dish" (Judges v., 25), then unworthy suspicion bids us beware of the "nail and the hammer" (Judges v., 26). Looking the gift horse in the mouth, unlovely distrust of ready, spontaneous,

proffered, uncalculating generosity continually says "beware of things that cost nothing."

And truly, if covetousness and meanness move us to seek cheap entertainment at other's cost, even as Sisera had no right (by eastern customs) to be in a woman's tent to compromise her character in her husband's eyes, when Heber the Kenite (as his name teaches) might in "anger" be away from his "nest." If disgracefully defeated, defeated in the battle of life, as Sisera was defeated, you meanly, reckless of other's welfare and reputation, selfishly think to do anything analogous to what this fugitive captain, a skulking coward, did, shirking your responsibilities and fleeing from your post of duty, craven and timid, hiding from the results of your unmanly incapacity, why then your ghost may one day have to hold an inquest over your body with a "nail," a tent-pin, through your temples.

For when feminine impulse is left to itself, uncontrolled of masculine reason (as Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, was left to herself—the husband clearly not being at home as a guiding, restraining influence), then the wife's, the woman's righteous but ungoverned wrath possessing her, as bearing the attribute of the husband's name, she, in his absence as its executrix, being unable to be "angry and sin not" (even as Eve in Adam's unfortunate absence was victimised when in the Myth the mother of all living got gossiping with the snake), so fury gets access of the heart in the violated sanctity of the tent thus invaded (for hell hath no fury like a woman scorned), and murder is done ere we know it by what awhile ago were gentle hands, and loving hearts now gone crazed.

For the two faculties of impulse and reason—wife and husband—must never be separated, or, in the divorce, mischief will ensue. Jael, indeed, must not be left to herself too long, and Heber the Kenite must not pettishly in "anger" be out of call too long away from his "nest"; the lesson plainly being that though Deborah may judge Israel for a time, it must be conjointly with Barak as her military adviser, and under the legal and intellectual sway of

her husband Lapidoth ; then all will be well, and victory in fair fight, without murder and assassination, will be assured.

For differing howsoever greatly man and woman may, differing as do the sexes in thought and feeling, character and attribute, capacity of mind and bias of will, there yet exists an equality, an even balance of virtues and powers alike between man and woman.

Let this be recognised, and there need be no cause for envy, and no unwillingness on the part of either to serve the other and pay loving court to the segregated qualities resident in both. For the equality that exists between man and woman is not an equality of the same virtues and graces and gifts, but the possession by each of just what the other lacks.

Hence no man can be a perfect man without a wife ; and no woman can be a perfect woman without a husband. That some unwed are doomed to this state of imperfection (perhaps to punish them here and now for what was done wrong in a former incarnation, or to enable them single-handed to work out the high purposes of their more perfect life hereafter) does not set aside the rule that no man can be a perfect man without a wife, even as no woman can be a perfect woman without a husband. For the love of the one strengthens the wisdom of the other, and the wisdom of the one guides the love of the other. The man having wisdom desires love, and the woman having love desires wisdom. For man, alone, is all head ; and woman, alone, is all heart. Love impels, wisdom executes. The woman inspires, the man triumphs.

This is the divine equality of husband and wife, with conjugal emulation twain instantly to serve : ready helps, with yearning solicitude for the other's welfare ; each desirous of losing his or her own soul's identity for the other's sake, and forgetting self in the existence of one's dearer self ; each, in the mysterious mystical exchange of heart and metempsychosis of soul, admiring what the other possesses, not proud rivals jealous of being outshone.

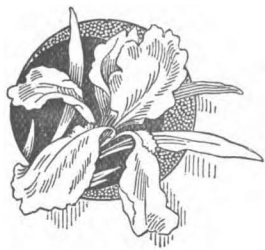
Recognising such a wondrous equality of attributes, parts and powers, where everything lacking on this side



is to be found on that—an even balance of faculties being of the Divine Providence struck in felicitous marriage—let men, eschewing the unworthy thoughts they sometimes have of women (regarding them merely as pretty toys), let men learn to appreciate them as intellectual friends and knit companions of soul, whose affections shall quicken their best thoughts, and move them to daily useful deeds and still nobler manhood.

Also, let the women of our time, renouncing the growing fast ways of the age and its pert conceits, study not to be frivolous, but to be thorough, genuine, sober-minded, and staid; yet the while being winsome, merry and joyous, true, pure and good—content as sisters, or proud as mothers, to cherish the world in its pupilage, that they still more may be the fond desire of its maturity.

The man for the world and the workshop, the woman for the nursery and the house. The man for the busy walks of commerce and the noisy traffic of the streets, the office, the factory, the foundry and the field, the tempestuous ocean, the trackless desert, and rugged outside world with the throng of men and jostle of the multitude in the headlong race of life and cataract roar of vast cities. The woman in retirement (agreeable to the institutes of her Creator) for the quiet of the household in unobtrusive usefulness, for domestic duties and the sanctities of home, for service to her husband, her children, and her God.



## SAMUEL, THE SEER.

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1 Samuel iii., 9: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

"The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world" to a purpose greater than she knows who mothered its occupant. Hannah (the "gracious") had long been the wife of Elkanah (the "zealous for good") ere the Creator permitted her to be the pro-creator, parent, or co-partner with her husband in the production of, or leading down from Deity, the soul to be clothed in the garnature of the flesh, thenceforth in sacred history to be known as Samuel (the "asked of God").

History is biography at the root. Lessons might, therefore, with advantage be gathered from the life of the mother of the Seer (1 Samuel ix., 9). Many of the world's great leaders have been mothered by women of parts and character. The prophets have sprung from prophetesses, latent or developed. The seers come of those gifted (though they may not know it) with what is called clairvoyance or second-sight. Heroes are born of heroines, domestic it may be, but heroines none the less because as yet (like Hercules in one of his incarnations) they have only had to battle with household cares. Men of pith and power mostly have had good mothers.

Hannah was one such, and Samuel, ere he took on materiality, doubtless was led to make choice of her for his birth or re-birth, from the qualities she possessed fitted to contribute to his destined work in the world as a prophet.

As longing in vain for many years to embrace a son, a matron nevertheless was Hannah in all she could have

been, lacking the maternal-fruiting of the mother-instinct, which is the end and aim—following sacred companionship with man—for which all women are or should be divinely constructed.

With the Israelites this inability to operate Deity's very first command to "be fruitful and multiply" was deemed a shame and disgrace, since it was a stigma and a reproach to be a wife and have no children. Hence Hannah's outpouring of soul, and her vow to dedicate the life-form sent down from heaven for her to dress in the garments of the flesh, and provide the incarnating spirit, from the bosom of the Great Spirit, with a material body, to enable it to do its duty here for three score years and ten or four score, and so work its way back to God. Hence, her voiceless prayer when her distressed heart could find no utterance, and the grieving spirit had no forces at disposal to march its earnest thoughts to the lips and gates of speech. Hence, also, aged Eli's hasty, unjust judgment and rebuke to the agonising soul, striving with Israel's God, as to a woman drunken.

But her prayer was heard; the possibility of its being answered was indeed its inspiring cause. For prayer never alters circumstances that are to be to us, but fits us to circumstances that in Deity's foreknowledge and loving providence are best adapted to be ours. Hence prayer is not the moving cause of the answer that is to come, but the preparatory agent for its right acceptance. "Not that our prayers make God disposed to give, but that they make us fitter to receive."

This is the philosophy of prayer, and this was the scope of Hannah's prayer. Samuel was wanted, a choice soul was needed, and the ego of the future seer was fetched from the world of souls. The state of Israel required it. The times demanded it. Samuel was the want of the age. He stood in the pure spirit-realm ready for his earth-mission. Samuel, therefore, was prayed for; Samuel was called for; and Samuel came. So the public good was furthered in the maternal satisfactions of a happy mother blest in the heart-enfoldment of her baby son.

The prayer that Hannah could not articulate—the desire of her heart that could not clothe itself in words, but yet did permeate her fully, and make her whole life one prayer—doubtless had its psychometric mysteries to operate, and its celestial force to weave in the character of the babe unborn. For, as surely as the children are visited with the sins of the fathers unto the third and fourth generation; as surely as the vices of posterity largely will be from a vicious ancestry, and this, not from any implacability of Deity, but because, by the dynamics of nature physical and psychical it cannot be otherwise, from the everlasting law of “seed after its kind yielding fruit after its kind”; as surely this, in states disorderly and conditions violated, so surely shall we find that cultivated moral feelings, gentleness, virtue, integrity and honour (exceptions only proving the rule) will more or less have force in the perfection of the human race. Hence from a praying mother, here have we in Samuel a son whose life is the incarnation of a prayer, as a life of self-sacrificing activity for the common good. For he prayeth best who loveth best, and love stirs to action, reckless in regard of self, and energetic on behalf of others.

In such-wise Samuel (“placed of God,” “asked of God”), dedicated to God, stands forth as the embodied prayer of a devout woman, the child of promise, the want of the age, the man for the times.

Deity never lets the hours slip by uncounted, uncatalogued, unindexed. The period comes, and the man of the period is there. The crisis and its solution concur. The malady and the remedy are coupled. The nettle and the dock grow together. “Parturient montes, nascetur ridiculus mus?” Nay, the mountains need not labour to bring forth anything so ridiculous; for the Mountain-Lifter is over-watching, and says “Sufficit diei suâ vexatio,” since ever even out of evil is the possible eduction of good, for still is there “some soul of goodness in things evil, would men observingly distil it out.” Hence, specially where the times are bad and unpropitious, a most auspicious moment by seers is seen to be detached from eternity, travelling down earth-ward for

insemination to root itself in human birth. So Samuel was, as all great men are, more really the product of the time's necessity than the offspring of his mother. She was but the materialising medium of the Almighty, the Atween or "DOOR" atwixt the two worlds spiritual and material, visible and invisible, even as the Founder of our religion affirmed himself to be the Medium-mediator Divine. All mothers everywhere throughout the human race are materialising mediums, and in a way as marvellous as are the psychic atweens of phenomenal Spiritualism. Hence the Scripture, Ecclesiastes xi., 5: "As thou knowest not what is in the way of the spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child; even so thou knowest not the works of God who maketh all."

Hannah, the mother of Samuel the Seer, was, therefore, indeed the materialising medium and instrument under heaven for letting down to earth, from "God who maketh all," a master mind, to teach the wisdom of the higher sphere, and rule this lower one for a season.

Would that this deep truth touching human incarnations from the Divine were more generally kept in remembrance; for then the more should we respect each other and the better be able to credit one another with the possession of parts and powers and aptitudes, loaned to us, of God, for the use of man, and soon should we then lose our jealousies of one another, seeing in each other more of good and less of evil.

For, to requisite power, for service in the world, the angel is innate in everyone, waiting for eduction and proper education and development, to be expressed and led without to sanctify the lower attributes of its corporeal abode and fleshly garniture and clayey tenement.

This would be the easier for us to understand could we sometimes forget a man's early parentage, forget his kinsfolk and environment here, and view him as a pilgrim from afar. For indeed he is a traveller in mufti; a prince incognito, sojourning with us for an hour; heir of eternal glory; scion of the royal house on high, away beyond our poor conceptions of him, as he tarries here prospecting with curiosity earthly conditions, and explor-

ing mundane things until called back to his estate above and home eternally in heaven. From it he came—he, we, everyone—and unto it when our work is done shall we all return.

Wisely should we, therefore, have these truths well remembered in our dealings with one another, and not forget the high source from which the springs of mortal being come to run their refreshing currents of immortality in the clay of human needs, and irrigate the barren country of our earthly pilgrimage, and bring the thirsty land of our bodily exile to some degree of fertility and fruitfulness. The channels then through which the currents of deity in us flow (though of no small importance) shall not be seen to be of the supreme importance outwardly that many are snared to think, disrating one another because of the humble parentage through which this soul or that, or some rare and most ancient world-soul, chosed to come down from heaven for incarnating or reincarnating here on earth.

Samuel the Seer had no particular advantages in this respect touching his choice of parentage through which, as a high spirit, he willed to be born; no advantages apparently had he as estimated by outward show, or rated at the value most prized of the world he came to visit or re-visit. His birth, like that of Jesus Christ, was lowly and obscure. For psychic reasons dominate more than physical and adventitious reasons when a special incarnation is needed; even as for psychic reasons, and their mediumistic qualities, rather than for their intellectual endowments or social status, were the untaught, lowly born, rough, uncultured fishermen of Galilee chosen by the Carpenter's Son, who surely, as the looked-for Christ—though in disguise as the mere Artizan of Nazareth—yet possessed the power, had He chosen to exercise it, of attracting to His ministry the prince from the throne rather than, among others, one who betrayed Him; as even there indeed was a psychic reason for this His seemingly mistaken but deliberate choice when He said, "Have I not chosen you twelve, and one of you is a devil?"

The mystery of Divine Selection is only explicable when the law of Natural Selection is seen to be inapplicable to the spiritual needs and requirements of the soul-man, so superior to the paltry necessities of the body-man functioning here in the very small arc of the circle and vast round of his eternal destiny.

Hence when an especial embassy from heaven is commissioned to make speedy descent to earth (and every man born, as a potential Christ though the process of the suns and æons of untold ages, is or may in turn be a special messenger) the human vehicle or vesicle for its due conveyance hither is prepared (by processes declared by wise King Solomon to be inscrutable), and the moral or psychical, personal or physical pedigree of those most concerned in the transit of the immortal individual ego is carefully attended to and traced back.

For the Divine Foreknowledge of an All-wise Providence sees afar through the ages the crises of the times to come, and the necessities, yet wrapped in the bosom of the centuries, deep in the dark, shrouded future, and straightway makes provision for the San Salvador, the man for the occasion, the individual for the times; chooses his ancestry, selects his parentage, determines his progenitors.

And then, when the *via humana* through the spheres of spirit to ultimate matter is complete, and when, from eternity's vast sea to the bank and shoal of time and coast line of this lower life, the adventurous soul has resolved to make its self-sacrificing voyage, and all is arranged for natural gestation, then the human organism for its devolution, evolution, transfiguration, and investure in earthly apparel—coats of skin, three-fold (the epidermis, the rete mucosum, the cutis vera) to clothe the ultimating soul in human form—is developed fully.

"The fulness of time" then has come, and the insemination of the hero, or prophet, or seer, or poet, or statesman, or teacher thereupon from heaven straightway takes place, and the world rejoices in the incarnation. For, in the birth of a master-mind to rule among the people, another name is added to the scroll of fame that



earth still proudly points to. For another noble visitor from the higher life has come among us, to instruct us and cheer us and bring smiles from the summer-land above, and tell us all heaven's latest news, and teach us the arcanas of the seraph-world.

Such a visitor, preordained, predetermined, linked to a prepared ancestry and parentage, mothered by a prayerful Hannah (the "gracious"), fathered by Elkanah (the "zealous"), and God-sent, above all, was Samuel.

Need we portray his life? No, there is no need to mar the sweet Anglo-Saxon picture of him set forth in easy Bible language. His history is well known, and it is one of the sweetest bits of biography the volume of the Sacred Law affords; while the lessons of his life are valuable and many. He is the son and father of his people—its product and its prince.

Yet what he was all in turn may so become; for the potentialities of immortality, virtue, manliness, heroism and integrity are the same in each soul born to-day, or, in the round of never-ending existence, dying to-day centuries hence to know re-birth.

We may not everyone be prophets or seers, but if there were more zealous Elkanahs and gracious Hannahs there would be more god-given Samuels. For God helps man through men. And as men help themselves in and for each other, heaven gets nearer earth; the natural in us is thinned out, pared down, sublimated, and so refined that the spiritual shines through translucent with the Divine that glows within.

Percipient then of the great light ("that lighteth every man that cometh into the world") St. Paul saw on his way to Damascus we become clairvoyant with sacred second-sight and sacred seership, moved of the ineffable will "not to be disobedient unto the heavenly vision" of what in the way of self-sacrifice is required of us.

Clairaudient also then to the call of duty, to hear the voice of God within, if not with the open ear of Samuel in the stillness of the night, "ere the lamp of God went out in the temple of the Lord," yet ere the lamp of life goes out, and the

darkness of nature's night falls on us, we may hear the "still small voice" of conscience in the hush of the elemental war, when passion within has subsided; when the earthquake and the winds are still, and the fire that rages and leaps through the veins has burnt itself out; and then we may hear the low sweet breathings of the Eternal Love deep down within the volcanic clefts and caves of our once rugged and now regenerating nature and feel (if we will but let the holy impulse of our hearts go free) the response of the creature to the voice of the Creator rushing to our lips in the devout utterance of "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

The hundred-throated nightingale pours forth the fulness of its delight in song, and God's voice is in it. A spirit-message falls from the skies when the lark at heaven's gate sings. The thunders roll and the lightnings flash, and God's voice is upon the mighty deep with the storm-tossed mariner, on the weltering waters of the rainy seas as the red sun goes down with the hurricane, and there is a whispered angel-hush with the words "Peace, be still."

It is the voice of Deity. He speaks in the perfume of the flowers, in the hum of bees; in the dreamy summer afternoon slumber of village quiet, when the honeysuckle sheds fragrance by the cottage door; and in the cataract roar of vast cities. A thousand tongues of testimony give utterance of God, and speak of His love.

Shall we not listen? Intent to catch the voice of heaven shall we not give heed? Vocal with the immanence of Deity, God's voice awaits our recognition everywhere. Coveting the gift to be thus clairaudient henceforth, therefore let us with youthful, trustful, wistful Samuel say "Speak, Lord! Speak, for thy servant heareth."

## WITCHCRAFT.

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1 Samuel xxviii., 6, 7: "And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets. Then said Saul unto his servants, Seek me a woman that hath a familiar spirit, that I may go and enquire of her. And his servants said to him, Behold there is a woman that hath a familiar spirit at Endor."

The Witch of Endor has she been named—this lady medium or psychic Atween. And a gracious lady she appears to have been, although one of the sensitives persecuted by King Saul, who, as a medium himself, lost his gift of Atweenship when he fell into evil ways. For in the days of his innocence he likewise exercised functions prophetic, Holy Scripture declaring (1 Samuel x., 10) that "the spirit of God came upon him, and he prophesied," till it became a proverb in Israel thus question-couched (1 Samuel x., 12), "Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Yes, but it may be said that a prophet is not a wizard, or a prophetess a witch. Both words, however, are related to the Anglo-Saxon English form of thought that hints the meaning to be nothing blameworthy, suggesting only that those so designated were gifted with knowledge or wisdom, perhaps psychically acquired, superior in kind and degree to that attained by others.

Those illuminated with this inner light, which the French call clairvoyance and the Scotch call second sight, are in the Bible spoken of with reverence as Seers, the old

name for Prophets. Hence the notification, special (1 Samuel ix., 9), "Beforetime in Israel, when a man went to enquire of God, thus he spake, Come, and let us go to the seer; for he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer."

But Witchcraft or Seership cannot be believed in by Sadducees and Materialists. St. Thomas á Becket, Wesley, and Keble, with all the poets, Shakespeare, Milton, Tennyson, scientific men also and philosophic thinkers, do, however, apprehend that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy.

The recurring problems of a psychic nature during the last half-century are demanding their solution. Much thought and patient investigation are, indeed, now being given to nature's secrets; since it is plainly unscientific roughly to deny any fact not thoroughly explored.

Professor Tyndall says between affirmation and denial lies a wide stretch of country which we must call suspension of judgment; for in holding facts which we have already acquired we must by no means think we have gathered all.

Sir Isaac Newton, at the close of his long life of great discovery, confessed himself to have been only but as a little child picking up the pretty pebbles on the shingle beach and shore of time, while the unexplored ocean of truth stretching out to eternity yet lay before him. He refused, therefore, to dogmatise, for intellectual power is humble, and in silence to ponder a matter ere any expression of opinion be uttered, is the mark of wisdom (Proverbs xviii., 13).

Sage is the man who, touching most things, dares to say "I do not know, I cannot tell, I am not sure." That man will teach us many things. Nought whatever in ignorance denying, and every good thing hoping, should be the maxims of our life. To learn wisdom thus, nor controvert the virtue that hopeth all things, and believeth all things, and endureth all things, stands with the Scripture and the teaching of ages past relative to the inscrutable, the mysterious, the profound. And though (as in human nature often are seen absurdities and contrarities and inconsistencies) there may be an aspect of the ridiculous.

and inexplicable sometimes associated with these things—yet must we not be snared into any intolerant rash denial of phenomena psychological that may be accredited supernatural, and are undoubtedly supernormal.

The Bible is full of it. The religion of the so-called supernatural is the religion of every age and every people.

Absurd and inconsistent is it for pious people to believe that Balaam's ass spoke with a man's voice, rebuking the madness of the prophet, his clairvoyant faculty awhile eclipsed to incapacitate him from seeing what the ass saw—the angel standing in the way with drawn sword to bar his further progress. Absurd and inconsistent is it for the devout to believe that the magicians of Egypt parodied the white magic of Moses and Aaron with the black magic of their enchantments. Absurd and inconsistent is it for Bible readers to believe that the iron did swim when the axe-head fell into the water, and Elisha the prophet bade the astonished young man to seize it on his outcry "Alas, master, for it was borrowed." Absurd and inconsistent is it to believe these things, and with the text before us to say that there is no such thing as witchcraft.

Can we believe in the miraculous supply of manna from heaven for forty years, when the travelling, slave-escaping Israelites, dry-shod had passed through the Red Sea? Can we believe in the pillar of fire by night and the pillar of cloud by day leading the Hebrew people from Egyptian bondage; the tremendous drama of Sinai and portentous giving of the law; the strange siege operations and exercise of subtle invisible power against the walls of Jericho; the translation of the prophet Elijah to heaven in a chariot of fire with horses of fire; the hydropathic curing of Naaman's leprosy, and his thought that it should have been magnetic healing or the mesmeric passes of a process psychopathic; Belshazzar's feast in the banqueting hall at Babylon, and the mysterious writing on the wall, when the fingers of a man's hand grew forth high up on the entablature over against the candlestick and wrote "Mene, Mene, Tekel, Upharsin"; the wrestling of the angel with the patriarch Jacob; Daniel in the

lions' den, and his interpretation of King Nebuchadnezzar's dreams; Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego in the burning, fiery furnace; Ezekiel's visions, and Joseph's dreams, and the cup wherewith he, designated by Pharaoh as the Zaphnath-paaneah, was wont to divine when Prime Minister of Egypt; the apocalyptic Revelations of St. John in the isle of Patmos; St. Peter's miracle on the helpless paralytic at the gate of the temple called Beautiful; his walking on the sea at the bidding of Jesus; the fish caught with the piece of tribute money in its mouth; St. Paul's miraculous conversion on his way to Damascus; himself afterwards being made a living, moving rag-screen for the absurd curing of folk's sickness when (Acts xix., 11-12) "God wrought special miracles by the hands of Paul: so that from his body were brought to the sick handkerchiefs or aprons, and the diseases departed from them, and the evil spirits went out of them."

How can all these things be believed or regarded as other than superstitious fancies, lying fictions or blemishes, and stupid excrescences on the page of holy wisdom if Spiritualism be not likewise true?

What do we know of the thaumaturgic attributes and mystery-working of Christ? What of his giving sight to the blind, hearing to the deaf, health to the afflicted, and life to the dead? How may we deny the power of the words "Lazarus come forth," or the hushing to a calm the angry waves with the voice "Peace, be still"? The feeding of the five thousand with five barley loaves and two small fishes; the transfiguration on the Mount; with Peter, James, and John, when Moses and Elias appeared in glory, and the face of Jesus shone as the sun, and his raiment became white and glistening; Calvary, followed by a bodily resurrection from a rock-cut tomb, and the risen Christ several times appearing a materialised spirit-form suddenly with his disciples, the doors being shut; materialising to visibility and tangibility his psychic body one moment to eat with, and talk with, and company with his disciples, and then the next moment to dissolve into viewless immateriality and

vanish? How are all these things to be accepted as facts if the phenomena of modern Spiritualism are not equally accepted as true?

Provocative of unbelief are they both if either is denied. Unspiritual and grossly material souls deny the twain, and gird at those who believe the Bible and Modern Spiritualism as being hopelessly superstitious; while touching the things of the text—Urim or Thummim, dreams, prophets, seers, wizards, or witches—they relegate them to the limbo of the ecclesiastical past as things unworthy the attention of men of common-sense. Ah! but let to-day remember that it has very unwisely forgotten the profound secrets of yesterday, compared with which the knowledge of the present, disregarding of the teachings of the past, is very superficial and elementary.

Astronomical science may give hints of the composite constituents of the stars, but cannot tell us of the invisible mysteries thronging the apparent void of space 'twixt star and star, or discover the habitat and realm of spirit. Nor will the chemist's crucible give out the elements of life's quintessence, or the scalpel disclose the quick soul hiding in physical labyrinths and lurking places of mind and being.

Ticket, measure, and weigh, catalogue and codify all that is prehensible and attainable, and give them their proper places in the scale of things known. Let spectrum analysis determine the constitution of the sun; aye, and let it be applied to tell us the nature of the reflected light from the attired figure of the old man that came up in King Saul's presence covered with a mantle; let the phonograph that speaks like as with the spirit-voice of one long dead; or the microphone that amplifies the whisper of a gnat to the trumpet tones of command in the day of battle, when men strive for mastery; let the telephone reach down to earth the voices of the invisible stars and the greetings of the peopled worlds deepest set in the abyss of space to appear in to-morrow's newspapers; let physical science, let mathematical science, let chemical science, widen their boundaries and push forward from hence into the beyond; but let them not, nor those

disciplining them, limit the area of the possible or probable, or say this or that cannot be.

Against the operation of known law again and again are witnessed many occurrences vouched for in Holy Scripture and psychical science. But against the operation of some unknown law are not any of these same happenings which we hereafter shall find that have so perplexed us in the past, and yet, somewhat less, perhaps, puzzle us to-day. For now the laws which induce the condition that ages ago made witchcraft possible—the laws that may have ruled in the evocation of the spirit of Samuel the prophet—the laws that operated in the use of the Urim and Thummim—the laws that regulate prophetic dreams and aid in the development of the prophet, suggesting the nature and source of the afflatus that still at times rests on some, and is recorded to have rested on Saul, whence arose the saying “is Saul also among the prophets?”—all these occult things are becoming less occult and better known and understood, and the Witch of Endor will but little longer be a snare to Bible commentators or a stumbling block to thoughtful, pious souls.

The three modes of spiritual enquiry in old Testament times appear from the text to have been by dreams, by Urim, and by prophets. Therefore, without being superstitious, it may from Bible teaching be held that dreams are an appointed means of spiritual guidance. Hence, says the Scripture (Job xxxiii., 14), “God speaketh once, yea twice, yet man perceiveth it not. In a dream, in a vision of the night when deep sleep falleth upon men, in slumberings upon the bed; then He openeth the ears of men and sealeth their instruction.”

There also is the Scripture (Numbers xii., 6), “Hear now my words, if there be a prophet among you, I, the Lord, will make myself known to him in a vision, and I will speak to him in a dream.”

Dreams ever serve to shew how the spirit in sleep can come and go, and enjoy the range, work, pleasures and experiences of a higher life, while the body is at rest entranced in slumber. For dream-life is a revelation of



spirit-life, and gives proof of a world apart from this. Dreams also show that the mental world is as real to the soul and as full of objects crowded as the material world is to the physical body. Dreams, moreover, may at times be regarded as allegorical of our moral state within, suggesting the character of the spirits near us in our sleep. Hence nightly should we pray :

“ Let no ill dreams disturb my rest,  
No powers of darkness me molest—

May Thine angel guards defend us,  
Slumber sweet Thy mercy send us,  
Holy dreams and hopes attend us,  
This live-long night.”

The superficial and hypercritical, of course, may laugh at this, for they would assign all dreams to physical causes. Few with much experience of life will be able to admit this. But even if we admit that many of our dreams are of such an origin, yet the physical conditions which produce them are often due to the suggestions of the mind, the fancy, the desires and concupiscences of the flesh. For it is a sad truth that men may bring upon themselves states of consciousness, self-induced, self-guilty, rash and imprudent into which the powers of evil may infuse their malignant and soul-destroying influences, and then on the physical equivalent of the optic nerve—the mind's eye—shall appear wretched shapes and scenes, staged in sleep to dramatise their horrors and shake our soul with terrors and disquiet the dark hours of night ordained for healthful slumber with mental and bodily rest.

For our mortal bodies in bad physical unhygienic states are the habitat and spheres—then perhaps more often than at other times—of bad spirits in abominable accord with these vitiated physical conditions ; and darkly do the elementals, demons, and satyrs, whose name is Legion, flow, with their phantasies, into mind and heart, luring the drunkard at that particularly weak moment to the

craving for drink, the debauchee to thoughts of vice, the vain to their native vanity, and the fool to his sinning folly matching his bias, to be led away to this or that besetment, thus enticed by some disembodied enticer. Dreams, therefore, often are a species of revelation to us of our real, inner self when we are off guard. Hence, says the poet—

“ Dreams! Take them home to thyself,  
And if to thyself  
The answers forbidding should be,  
Then, beware of thyself,  
And take care of thyself,  
Or so much the worse for thee.”

But King Saul had no help from heaven in dreams. “The Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim.” Urim—the stones of the breast-plate of the High Priest worn when the hierophant presented himself at the drawn-aside curtain of the Holy of Holies.

For as flash-light signals from ships at sea can by each other in passing at night be given, so by these spirit-lights gleaming in the ephod of the High Priest, scintillating, moving, enfolding, now warning and now flashing forth, might the God of the spirits of all flesh, with the help of his ministering spirits, give communications and directions to his chosen people. For as the Scripture affirms, “Light is sown for the righteous, and gladness for the upright of heart.”

But to those in the dark Saul-state of heart there is no answer, “neither by dreams nor by Urim.” No, nor by prophets, nor by prophetess, for the woman, or lady of Endor, was as Saul’s *dernier resort* when Deity was otherwise inaccessible—the feminine prophet or seer, as was Deborah, the prophetess that once judged Israel.

And the prophet, who aforetime was called a seer, now here in the prophetess, woman of Endor, as a seeress, honoured by Israel’s penitent monarch, was to him, even as the Scripture testifies, an oracle of the unseen. For so is it recorded (1 Samuel ix., 9) that when a man went to enquire of *God* for *good* (for God and good are one

and the same), thus he spake, "Come and let us go to the seer"; and this most certainly not to get a tip for the Derby, or for any other like piece of rascality. For those righteously inclined went to the medium—the seer, the Atween 'twixt two worlds, like the mediator or "door" as Christ affirmed himself ages afterwards to be—went to enquire of God through her the prophetess-woman, not Witch of Endor in its evil sense.

So if, when the heavens are as brass to our prayers, and God answereth us not, "neither by dreams, nor by Urim," when as Isaiah (l., 10) says, "Who is there among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness and hath no light?" we then in sincerity and truth and holiness of heart and purpose earnestly seek a message from the brighter and better beyond of the spirit world, through a medium sensitive, seer, seeress, or Atween, this is no more witchcraft than Saul, in the early days of his innocence, seeking the guidance of God through the man of God, the paid medium, Samuel the prophet, to tell him his way. For said Saul's servant (1 Samuel ix., 8), "Behold I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver that I will give the man of God (Samuel the prophet, seer, paid medium, or Atween) to tell us our way."

That is not witchcraft, neither is Spiritualism witchcraft when used for good. Go in an evil way for villainous selfishness and worldly purposes to an Atween, and taking the devil with you what do you get? Yea, and how vilely do you then, by your bad-heartedness, corrupt the sensitive, and play mischief with God's human instrument, prophet, prophetess, seer, seeress, medium, or Atween! Play your lunatic, rowdy songs on a church organ, and what Bedlam-discords are heard, like the screeching of maniac fiends in the consecrated temple of God, and still holier temple of the soul! But draw the sweet stops of grace abounding, as in Mozart's last requiem or the "Lost Chord," and the hallowed echoes of quiring angels will flood the chancel, transepts, groined roof, and aisles of the holy place with the anthems of heaven.

Take your black art and devilish witchcraft to the hell of your own bad heart, but bring your earnest self with love and charity and virtues and graces to Spiritualism and its Atweens, mediums, sensitives, seers, and seeresses, and there shall meet you those gone before you into the realm of the unseen—those loved ones not lost to you, but in spirit with you still—the loving father, the fond mother, the steadfast brother, the pure maiden sister, and all the friends of your innocence and youth.

Then no longer shall the terrible text be applicable to any as it was to King Saul, having abused his mediumship, ruined his Atweenship, lost his gift as a prophet or seer, and wrecked in himself the consecrated powers of the Lord's anointed, when "the spirit of the Lord departed from him, and an evil spirit from the Lord troubled him," when too late he "enquired of the Lord, and the Lord answered him not, neither by dreams, nor by Urim, nor by prophets."



## ELIJAH'S TRANSLATION AND CHRIST'S ASCENSION.

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2 Kings ii., 9-10: "Elijah said unto Elisha, Ask what I shall do for thee, before I be taken away from thee. And Elisha said, I pray thee, let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me. And he said, Thou hast asked a hard thing: nevertheless, if thou SEE me when I am taken from thee, it shall be so unto thee; but if not it shall not be so."

St. Luke xxiv., 50-51: "And he led them out as far as to Bethany, and he lifted up his hands, and blessed them. And it came to pass, while he blessed them, he was parted from them, and carried up into heaven."

Acts i., 9: "And a cloud received him out of their sight."

Death is the gate of life, a mere change of existence, for "there is no death, what seems so is transition. This life of mortal breath is but the suburb of the life elysian, whose portal we call death."

Under the ploughshare the daisy lies crushed in its bloom, but its life in another form, upspringing in rightful evolution, is forced on by what seems to be and is not misfortune's rude stroke; so a thousand seeds are new sown in its death to bud into new life and beauty.

Transition, therefore, is the right word, not death, for change of state; it is a step upward, a passing onward. Apart from sin, which is transgression of law, and trespass against the institutes of order, there could be no death, as commonly known. Perpetual change is the law of the Eternal All Compassionate, while death, as

misconceived, misthought, everywhere develops new degrees of life. Departed this life, but not dead, are they who return to the God of the spirits of all flesh when this life's day is ended. The chrysalis of the earthly body, the tenement of human clay, crumbles into dust; but the white-winged soul it imprisoned spurns its inert clod and, on upward pinion, cleaves spaces intervening 'twixt earth and heaven, and, in a new life and new state of soul-existence, lives right on, and strikes home at last.

The change, therefore, which we call death, is but the crisis of life ascending to a loftier degree of perfectness. For the life that is to come really is but a continuation of the life that now is, glorified, sublimated; and our mortal years are states of swift transition into immortality.

The common lot of man has been to know this change rudely, but it is thought that it shall not always be so. Hence the Scripture (Hosea xiii., 14), "O death, I will be thy plagues; O grave, I will be thy destruction"; while the triumphant song of the soul, no longer thrall-bound to the flesh even now in nature's extremity yielding up the ghost, often is "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?"

So in the glad hereafter, when this life knows its privileges of spiritual development, the change called dissolution will be painless, and right glorious. For with the process of decay arrested in us, there will be an immediate quickening to ecstatic renovation, and we shall not sleep in death, nor look for, or dream of any rude rending 'twixt scul and body; for "we shall all be changed, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye." Jordan, the typical deep-flowing river of death, shall contract to a silvery line, attenuated to a threadlike film, sundering us barely from the golden city on the other side; its terrors will all vanish; for narrowed to a hand's breadth, shrunk to a span, scant of volume, nor wide, nor deep, the soul's transit will be swift, brief, joyous.

Burdened here as yet with a mortal body, we groan; but when the garments of the flesh are worn thread-bare,

and the angel within has outgrown the outer man's dusty clothing, and the spirit has need of its ascension robe, its heavenly summer attire, its new uniform and befitting dress; when the soul, unclothed, looks to be clothed with light and immortality; when God would have us rest from our earthly labours, and the angels look for our companionship with them in the higher life; when we have shuffled off this mortal coil, since flesh and blood cannot inherit the Kingdom of God, one step shall then make all that is visible in us and earthly, invisible and heavenly. One pangless, painless, sudden stroke, and straightway are we removed from human sight, and, viewless, shall we melt into eternity. Snatched from the seen to the unseen, then shall we rightly realise the marvel of Christ's ascension, Elijah's translation, and gloriously bound into life.

Missed from our accustomed seat, our shadow nowhere found, our sudden disappearance from the ranks of men will make no unusual stir, occasion no fruitless search, cause no anxiety or sorrow. The sons of the prophets, against the will of Elisha, sought for Elijah, but his body could nowhere be found. So in the days to come it will be known that our quick removal from the earth-plain of physical being, to the higher range of astral life, has simply been after the manner of Elijah's translation.

The fruit will have suddenly ripened, that is all. God saw its mellowed earthly perfectness, and plucked it as He walked amid the trees of the garden of life. No need is there for astonishment or great searchings of heart at our departure. No need shall there be for burial rites, for funeral observances, grief, mourning, or solemn graveside service. For in that glad day there will be no corpse to be coffined, or body to be committed to the dust. The spirit so Christianly will have occupied the domain of matter, and reigned from its well-fenced walls and close-watched gates, with peace in all her borders, that the collapse of the outer man upon the inner, the incandescence and godly burning up of the grosser by the refined, will be so instantaneous under the process of the

Deific Purifier of silver as tried in the fire, hallowing not consuming, that our removal from the walks of life (as Elijah's in a chariot of fire with horses of fire) will be the instant, viewless, melting out of time into eternity, with rapture—our sudden evanishment from mortal sight and the gaze of men as with a lightning flash. For we just simply accept the Master's invitation: "Friend, come up higher," "Come up hither," and are at once transplanted from the low valley of earth to the high uplands of heaven for soul growth of eternal perfection.

Elijah's translation, with Enoch's mysterious taking into God, is an earnest of this sublime Gospel teaching. Our work completed here, there will be no need for our further tarrying below, and heaven will call us straight home in the most kindly way.

Sudden death, from which the Litany prays to have us delivered, means unprepared death. For if ready for the great change, when my life's work is done, then let me, Oh God, die suddenly. Death—death in the act of duty be my happy lot! For can we think that the ripening future of the world is always to be painfully conversant with the hushed and sad surroundings of the sick room, where one of heaven's exiles here lies languishing, distressed, body-bound, waiting for the delayed summons home? No! Grander methods are yet in store for us of the Creator's love, calling his children to the Fatherland. And even as the Master (first fruits of them that slept) and elder-brother sprang upwards as the last scant degree of matter, and the atissued film of earthliness exhaled, and, veil-like, fell from his glorified human body, now divine, and was dissipated in a moment—while the wondering gaze of the disciples followed their Lord to the near borders of the heavenly sphere, a cloud receiving him out of their sight—so will it be with us.

In sweet companionship shall we be walking, maybe, with an aged sire, ripe for his departure, or with some dear friend, when here with us a moment past was the prepared heart for its being clothed upon with light; but the next moment he is gone. We miss him suddenly



from our side. We ken not the manner of his mysterious taking, but he is vanished and is gone. God's angels have rapt him from us unawares. Unseen of us they beckoned him away. He saw them, though we did not, and walked unto them willingly and joyously from the border-land of this to the seraph-world, where angel foot-falls linger, and the mists of the invisible beyond have enshrouded him from our fading sight. No vain regrets on our part will linger to cloud our minds with grief. No anxious solicitude will be ours as to his sudden disappearance. We only may sigh, and long for the time to come for our like taking; then into the world forthwith shall we plunge, now with new vigour and determination to get our earth-work done and all our duties right well accomplished, that we the sooner may be ready for the longed-for change—for "we shall not all die (sleep), but we shall all be changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye."

Christ's ascension, Elijah's translation, with Enoch's re-absorption back into the bosom of Deity (all inscrutable, and impossible of explanation), are suggestive—with what some have had of like experiences—of these anticipations.

The structure of the human body nevertheless is such, that, with no violation of natural law (and its immortal occupant living on earth the heavenly life, as Jesus, Elijah, and Enoch lived), there is no reason why it should ever die in the horrible way of mortal death and rotting corruption.

In the odour of sanctity some have been known so to pass away that the process of decay has been arrested, and entirely suspended, and the thought has been with the bereaved that the casket of the spirit was too lovely and beautiful to be buried for the worms to prey upon, hidden out of sight in the damp, dark grave. Hence the hymn

Ah lovely appearance of death!

What sight upon earth is so fair?

Not all the gay pageants of earth

Can with our dead loved one compare :

The languishing head is at rest,  
 Its thinking and aching are o'er;  
 The quiet immovable breast  
 Is heaved by affliction no more.  
 To mourn yet and suffer is mine,  
 As earth-bound imprisoned I breathe,  
 And still for deliverance pine,  
 Pressing on to the issues of death.

For were this world our unintermitted or continual non-reincarnating, final state, there should be no reason why the energy of the Divine might not make matter-man, as the mere animal-man, as perfect as the brute animal in sub-human unconsciousness of wrong or moral defect, and so expel the seeds of sin and death from physical-human nature, and saturate completely our mortal bodies with alternating currents of immortal animal life that man need never die.

But as this world is not our fixed abode, and we, even now, as still more completely we are destined to be, are amphibious to the life physical and psychical, and since in the way of evolution for the race mortal and immortal, there is preparing for us a better state, sublimer, purer, less gross yet more real, the elements of nature are in process of being made more refined.

We know not what we are, "and it doth not yet appear what we shall be (as says 1 St. John iii., 2); but we know that" fleshly substance will become spiritual essence. For life's endeavour, from the Alone Source of Life, is to transmute the base to the beautiful, and rise to the height of its pre-ordained and eminent condition, attaining not a carnal resurrection of perishable flesh, corruptible and mean, but a glorious ascension—an upspringing of soul from the grave of earthly-mindedness, that with our elder brother, Jesus, we may heavenward in heart and mind ascend, sharing ultimately, by the discipline of time and gifts from the Divine, His holy nature with the perfected human attributes of Enoch, Elijah, Moses, and others who have the endowments that have enabled them to reappear awhile on earth as

angel-men, and then at will to disappear, and re-ascend far above all heavens to their celestial home and continent of the diviner life.

For if perpetual existence here had been Deity's intention on behalf of man, frustrated by a mere snake, as supposed from a misinterpretation of the Myth of Sacred Scripture, surely then the perfect life of Christ would have been the chosen vehicle for its restoration, and He, the Holy Founder of our religion, as the instrument best fitted for its restitution, would positively and literally have been the new Adam of a new earth-race, and human-divine parent of earth-clad immortals. But higher life than this was aimed at, and *so* Christ died; and higher still the nature of dull human clay, and *so* Christ rose again; and higher yet the home, estate, and dwelling-place of the immortal soul, and *so* the Master, tarrying forty days after Easter Day, at last ascends to where He was before His last incarnation, "that he might fill all things" under His power here below in His spirit descending by the "new and living way" (and "DOOR," as He designated Himself to be in His Atweenship), to "give gifts to man."

Hence very remarkable is the parallelism between Christ's ascension and Elijah's translation. "It is expedient for you that I go away (said Jesus to His disciples), that ye may receive power from on high." For perpetual discipleship emasculates individual effort. The faithful servant, therefore, in due time is exalted to rule. The pupil becomes master. The well-taught and instructed becomes instructor, and has now to teach.

"It is expedient for you (says Jesus) that I go away." "Ask, therefore (says the prophet Elijah to Elisha), what I shall do for thee." And the younger seer made wise reply, and said, "I pray thee let a double portion of thy spirit be upon me"; and the answer confirming his, until then, undeveloped faculty of seership, was "If thou SEE me when I am taken from thee it shall be so unto thee, but if not it shall not be so."

Oh, for this quickened, awakened power of spiritual discernment as the test of heaven's double favour towards

us! Oh, for this clairvoyance that Elisha the prophet then had, to see the glorious translation of his master Elijah! For this is one of the gifts promised in the Gospel, when we are prepared for the gift.

And what would not the bereaved give for the gift of open vision, to see those taken from them, hovering around them still, and looking down upon them from the near border-land of the world unseen?

They who have left us often see us, whom we, from our blindness, see not, which blindness soon shall pass away; for the great awakening is near, and the sleep of the dark ages is over; and the deadness, and dullness, and blackness of the world under the pall of moral night must quickly and rightly be brought to an end.

In the bad profligate days of the aged high priest Eli, whose sons made themselves vile and he restrained them not, "there was no open vision" ere the child Samuel had the inner ear open to hear God calling "Samuel! Samuel!" And the youth's response was "Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth." So now in these bad Bible-denying, unspiritual, materialistic, Sadducean days, when men believe not to practical purpose in angel, or spirit, or eternal world, woeful and worse would it be if there were "no open vision," and the ear unopened should be deaf to the heavenly voice.

But the eclipse of faith surely is on the wane, and in the heed now given by the most eminent men of science and leaders of thought to things once scoffed at, and vulgarly gainsayed by the ignorant, touching the "signs following," of which the Gospel speaks (St. Mark xvi., 20), that attended the apostles and disciples after Christ's ascension, parallel to Elijah's translation, in this there is hope for the world in the outcome of natural law, close allied to supernatural law, or supermundane law beyond our present understanding to account for its mysterious operation.

Be patient, O Sadducee, yet for a little while longer of life's unsolved enigmas, and humbly recognise that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in your philosophy or mine.

## MUSIC, ITS DEVOTIONAL AND MEDICAL POWER.

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1 Samuel xvi., 23: "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

"The man that hath no music in his soul,  
And is not moved by concord of sweet sounds,  
Is fit for treason, stratagems and spoils;  
The motions of his spirit are as dull as night,  
And his affections dark as Erebus:  
Let no such man be trusted!"

This is not always so, hence the injunction imperative is unkind. For there are those functionally unable, and yet not deaf, to interpret the subtle significance of Spohr's delicious musical dreams, or follow the rapt mystery of Bach's fugues, or soar to heaven's gate with the witchery of Mozart's angelic requiem (the music that sobs and throbs and thrills and dies as it touches the sapphire walls and floods the golden streets of the celestial city), reputable people who cannot distinguish the difference, as 'twixt heaven and hell, existing between the grand efforts of the masters of the oratorios, and the lunatic skirling of Scotch bagpipes. Yet with no ear for outward music, their hearts within may nevertheless be full of melody that has cascaded down from the high celestial land of love and rained their soul brimful of heaven.

For it is melody of heart and music in the soul of which Shakespeare speaks; his words, therefore, state a

deep and suggestive truth, as there is more of melody and heaven in every heart than there is of discord and hell. Were this not so 'twould be the Creator's duty straightway to close the account with man, end heaven's transaction with earth, and wind up the ultimated concern of outward creation as a most disastrous failure, and not leave the nether world to get all the profit.

But the Soul-Fabricator does not make ten hearts utterly bad, for one heart possibly good. To think this at all likely would be a reflection on the Creator's skill and loving beneficence.

Defective and undeveloped as mankind may be on the lower rungs of humanity's ladder, yet, in the gamut of the ascending scale to a higher clef, man, taken as a whole, is still half-angelic, if not three-fourths; though 'tis to be feared the other fraction of the devil is dreadfully active in us, and it is the mysterious, inexpressible something—an unknown quality or factor of our moral constitution—that makes the problem of life so difficult to solve. It is indeed the surd (absurd in us) that makes our better powers deaf to the charm of David's harp. It is the evil spirit in us, like the evil spirit that was upon Saul, but surely not "from God"—and "David took a harp and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."

There is a strange power in music; it is a matter of vibration, atmospheric and etheric, physical and psychical, and there is a mystic bond between it and the emotions of the heart—our affectional nature. The heart speaks by music as the intellect speaks by words. Hence, the liquid outpouring of the soul in torrents of sacred song is often a stronger prayer and better sermon than the best ordered ritual or words set in the happiest form for pulpit teaching. The highest effort of the orator fails of the effect produced on the mind and heart of a silent multitude, listening with intensity to the storming periods, full orbs, and growing gales and hurricanes of song.

Who that attended the Handel Festival years ago and heard a thousand trained voices as one mighty arch-angelic voice, and the instrumental hundreds as one

mighty instrument of heavenly make, can ever forget the thoughts that came crowding in upon the soul, as with the voice of many waters and the song of the redeemed harping with their harps by the crystal sea? A single voice is heard, as 'twere a hundred-throated nightingale, and there is the hush as when an angel sings. A silver note purls in and streams like liquid-vocal-silence down from worlds afar, and, following it, in rounded-volume comes the golden diapason, as 'twere of sunshine moulded to a rolling sphere of melody, resonant and reverberant of all celestial harmony. Then, with clarion power, the theme expands and grows. The movement quickens, runs and races on with eddying swirls and convolutions intricate, bewildering and confused, while strong excitement seizes all as with a crash the thousand voices—a tempestuous euroclydon of harmony let loose—break in. The trumpets, the screaming pipes and throbbing drums, the marching-heavy pedals of bourdon heart-beat, and the pulsing life of mighty organ with full orchestral power overwhelm the soul and thrill the vast auditory with the pain of pleasure, inexpressible, unutterable, and sublime.

Such being the effect of earthly music, what of heavenly? But music is in its very nature heavenly. Discord is infernal; for evil is discord in the universe. Sin is the jarring note in the music of the spheres. Its utterances are all inharmonious. From the lion-roar of the devil incarnated in a brutal, drunken mob, to the hiss-like whisper of the social snake in evening dress, luring the vain and giddy ones to sin, the whole compass of hell's accursed gamut is horrid, discordant and devilish.

Music, uncontaminate with words suggestive of evil, is more than a luxury. Such music is a necessity as a solace from life's daily cares; while, as a noble adjunct and important aid to public worship, its winsome sweetness brings rest to the wearied soul, and inspires us to resolve and dare to do the things which are holy, righteous, wise, loving, and good. Hence the effect of music on the dark and brooding soul of King Saul, when David, the psalmist and sweet singer of Israel, made melody mesmeric upon the harp.

It is a solemn truth, to be meditated, that King Saul was the human microphone through whom bad men out of the body and fiends no longer human listened from the gloomy sphere of their invisible state for what they wanted to hear of his sin and shame, deaf to the music of David's harp, but clairaudent to the rage of war and the loud confusions that his fall from the grace of anointed kingship brought about, prior to his fatal fall on the mountains of Gilboa.

His approaching doom was near. His bright spirit was clouded. Darkness rested on his soul. An evil spirit troubled him. Could he have known the secret of his despondency?

Under crushing burdens of sorrow and the weight of grief, perplexed as to the cause of our restlessness, gloom and foreboding, we know not often or forget the fearful fact of the existence of suicidal spirits about us, and the unseen powers of evil around seeking to infuse the virus of hell into our smitten hearts. But this is Bible teaching, and great need have we ever to be on the watch against the unseen enemy, and pray

“O Thou Eternal Ruler of the Heavens!  
Look with a pitying eye on our poor hearts,  
And beat away the busy meddling fiend  
That lays strong siege unto our sinful souls;  
And from our bosom godly purge away  
The taint of evil that still rankles there!”

The meddling fiends had made King Saul their instrument and spoilt its harmony, keyed up its passion to acutest pitch, slacked down its virtues to sagged impotency, imported hideous discords, embittered life, destroyed peace, robbed the mind of its repose, and made the distracted memory and recollection of lost golden days most sombre, sorrowful and sad.

Retrospective memory is like a harp of broken strings; we cannot strike perfect chords; the minor mode of sorrow wails through us, and the catching breath of many sighs makes our heart-strings vibrate with the



melancholy dirge of grief. The jarring notes, the frequent gaps between—lost friends—hushed voices—dead hopes—mar the melody of life.

Israel's first king felt this and anguish filled his soul. The Seer (1 Sam. ix., 9), Samuel the Prophet, was very patient with the psychically distressed monarch he had anointed king, foreseeing his overthrow, his attempted suicide and tragic death. In suchlike cases, which are far more frequent than is supposed, we also now should be patient of those likewise obsessed.

Music was Saul's cure; for "music hath charms to soothe the savage breast"; "David, therefore, took a harp and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well." Hence is suggested how the music of love and gentleness and sympathy and kindness shall assist the cure of those who are spiritually distressed. "A soft answer turneth away wrath," and times of refreshing will come.

The devils that came to catch through the soul of Saul some of earth's unhappy discords did not think to hear—deaf adders that they were to celestial melodies—Israel's sweet singer and David's harp, vibrant with the ecstatic harmonies of heaven that Deity poured through the stripling's heart, and the Seraphim spread upon the golden strings. So it came as pass as David played that "Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him." For the fiend-familiar in him could no longer hold the tenancy of the monarch's distressed heart, when the access of heaven came to it through David's fingers on the harp of solemn sound to make melody and peace within, and drive forth from the temple of the soul the miscreant mercenaries. Legion, and hell's hideous discordances cannot endure the harmonies of the angel-world even through human instrumentality. The evil who cannot endure the heavenly sphere shriek out with pain at its approach saying "What have we to do with thee? Art thou come hither to torment us before the time?"

Return we hate for hate, railing for railing, spite for spite, and the foul fiends rejoice in the discord and revel

in the uproar. They come to excite the confusion and stir up strife. So in our fits of passion we foolishly pander to their vitiated propensities and they vitiate us. They warp the instrument on which the immortal soul wills to play heaven's eternal harmonies. The inner ear, deaf to angel voices whispering to us of things ineffable, fails of interpreting the mysteries of heaven ever so close around us still, while the outer ear, attentive to earth's loud stupidities, is abused with lunatic discords. When the evil spirit, therefore, is upon us as it was upon Saul, and when we feel the forces of evil crowding around, and we are tempted to speak unkindly, look black, cloud our brow and be sulky, savage and sullen, then instantly let us play down discords with harmony, strife with peace, anger with love; for love conquers, love wins, and the evil spirit that troubles us will take a hurried departure.

The dark demons that say of every sinning fool, Come and let us have a lark in the world through him to-night; let us inebriate him and try some of our new curses on his lips; let us look through his eyes and inflame them with the gleam of hate and the leer of sensuality; let us be seven devils in his right arm to make him fight against heaven and virtue, and seven devils in his heart to blaze and blast it with hatred of those he should love, and race the blood like liquid fire through his veins to stir his rash hand, revengeful, to some murderous deed to-night; let us be Legion to every faculty he possesses to dispossess him of their control and obsess him, and abuse him, and infect his every power, and thoroughly saturate the fool with hell, and make him irredeemably our own. The vile familiars who thus plan and scheme will very quickly take their departure when the poor victim of their spite, hatred and malice—the repenting soul—the returning prodigal coming to his right mind, says, "I will arise and go to my Father," while angel-watchers with glad acclaim upward pass the word "Behold he prayeth" (Acts ix., 11).

For music at its highest is a prayer; and he only half understands the influences which act upon him every moment who regards but the body-side of life and makes

no provision for the other side unseen of his psychical nature, hungering for harmony, and for repose, and the blessedness that comes through prayer, devotion, meditation and communion with the invisible helpers that throng around us ever. For the world's great soul is the spirit-world. All its great movements are from thence. Its periods of progress and reform are but the times of ultimatum here, in act and outbirth, of causes from within, materialising to effect.

A lacking note in the harmony of creation, and the lost chord still eluding us, thence results all life's discords, while also a plain is afforded for the approach of the dark powers whose Legion-activities accursed presage for man disasters moral and physical, mental and material.

Of supremest importance, therefore, whether in kingly government or state administration, is it for the world to know the value of David's harp, or the quality and faculty thereunto analogous in music, or means equivalent for the averting of mischiefs to which the world is subject, and the curing of its ills moral or material, social or spiritual, religious or political, psychical or physical.

For when the world is greatly wrong it is because the vital flow of heaven's beneficences earthward is cut off by the forces of evil massed around it; so the influx of truth and love is checked; earth's failures then of every sort are rife, shadowed forth and embodied in the evil spirit from God that was upon Saul; while a sad, parallel, individual experience also sometimes is ours, and the sub-human, insentiate, elemental, unregenerate, defective, rejected, bad, worn-out and old then obsess us.

But when the announcement goes forth "Behold I make all things new," then the world, freed from its incubus of ignorance, prejudice, lies, malice and wrong, will leap forth on a new career of liberty and light and virtue.

Broken melody then restored, and David's harp attuned to catch the music of the angel-world (vibrant on the responsive hearts-strings of universal man), harmony

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in its perfection and higher attributes and effects of restorative, medical, devotional, psychological power will then be the earth-echo evermore of heaven—discords will cease, and all will be concord and peace.

For stands prophetic the analogy of the world's future in the words "And it came to pass, when the evil spirit from God was upon Saul, that David took a harp, and played with his hand: so Saul was refreshed, and was well, and the evil spirit departed from him."



## SPIRITUAL DISCERNMENT.

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Psalm cxix., 18: "Open thou mine eyes."

The five senses of touch, taste, smell, hearing, and seeing, by means of which the soul gets access to the outer world, and from within us, apprehends the material condition of things about us, are simply the natural expressions of parts and powers we spiritually possess. The outer ear being moulded on the inner ear. The outward eye upon the inner faculty of sight. The other senses also being but the natural product and result of causes corresponding in the other half of our composite being—the spiritual—which is plastered up with the carnal, and stuccoed over with this dull human clay.

Many there are who are so thickly wattled round, and coated o'er with nature's slime, that they have no conception of the treasures of grace within. The windows of the soul are, as it were, bricked up, its gates of access blocked with rubbish, the whole inner man being so encased with the alluvial deposit of this lower world, that the existence of a higher life, with higher faculties within, is utterly forgotten.

The temple of the body suffered, after a sort, to gather dust, delapidation, damp, mildew, and decay, too often is such a ruin, that the tenant soul is but miserably housed. No one, from its outer aspect, would dream of the existence of the rich frescoes on the walls, behind the thick layers of dirt that cover them; their glories hidden, and the light of heaven and God's sunbeams utterly quenched.

Debased in architecture, with many a leak in roof, and crack in wall; steps broken; balustrade thrown down;

windows all askew, and doors hanging hingeless; falling rafters, and utter crumbling neglect—this house I live in—sin-wrecked by the tenant excursionists from some undesirable region, to whom I have iniquitously sub-let its best apartment of head and heart, for riot and wickedness, and the commerce of lies—this house I live in is a miserable ruin, sadly unlike what it might be. And I, the foolish leaseholder, for seventy years or so, know not of its capacities; its wondrous labyrinths, and closed corridors, and secret chambers, wherein are stored, from reach of profanation, the riches of heavenly wealth that might be mine, for godly use, were I found worthy of them. We are, indeed, fearfully and wonderfully made, and with all that is bad in us, there are more sweet stops in nature for the drawing of grace; and more harmonies latent in us for majestic oratorios; and fewer discords to mar life's full-flowing melody, than any of us dream of, had we but the wisdom from on high, to heed the ancient admonition "Man know thyself."

To guard the gates of access to the soul, and diligently therefrom to remove obstructions: to clear the windows of the soul, and purify affections yet imperfect: to sublimate the passions, and exalt the feelings, and make the carnal transparent to the spiritual: to thin out obscuring nature, until grace shines through, unchecked, unhindered, and undimmed: to make, in short, the body so much less gross, less dull, and heavy to the motions of the quickening spirit, that, translucent, like a parian vase of classic mould, the light of immortality may be discerned within, shine through continually, and glorify our outer life with its divine effulgence—this is life's great work. And in the exercise thereof we attain self-knowledge and perceive the two-sidedness of our nature; the duality of our being; and recognise that every faculty and sense outwardly possessed, has its inner correspondent faculty, organ, and sense equivalent.

Now it was a prayer for the faculty of second sight—divine clairvoyance—that the Psalmist made when he uttered the words of our text. Need we stop to prove that such a faculty does exist? The materialistic ten-

dencies of the age require, I think, that we should do so. For the spiritual senses—of which, as I am endeavouring to show, the natural senses and organs thereunto fitted are but the outgrowth, and mere appendages—are denied an existence, by certain, who pride themselves upon being in advance of Christian methods of thought. They take man to be simply what he outwardly appears to be. Outwardly? Nay from their view the word is redundant. For they deny altogether that he has anything inward. He is only so much flesh and bones; phosphates to such a weight; salts so much; oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, gases and water to such an extent, and no more.

No spirit within the body will they at all admit. They are microscopically observant of the glove; but repudiate the notion of a hand within to give it shape. They dwell upon the shell, and closely mark its minutest gravings; its form and texture, grain, substance and material, but are strangely oblivious to the fact that it hath a kernel! The sheath hath no sword; the envelope no letter; the house no tenant; the body no soul, for such shallow philosophers as these. Therefore they cannot apprehend the possibility of the outer ear being moulded upon an inner ear; the outward eye upon an inner faculty of sight.

Be it ours not to fall into such Sadducean error. Scripture would not have spoken of its prophets and seers if there had been no seership. For "he that is now called a prophet was beforetime called a seer" (1 Samuel ix., 9). Nor would it have been recorded how when Elisha and his servant were surrounded by enemies, the young man being afraid, that the prophet prayed the Lord to open the eyes of the youth to see the mountain full of chariots and horses of fire round about them for their protection, if there had been no faculty of vision in the young man that could be opened, or if there was no spiritual world surrounding them into which he could be transmitted, and clairvoyantly look and see the angel host protecting them.

Do you call to mind how, at Elijah's translation to heaven, when Elisha prayed for a double portion of

Elijah's spirit and the prophet answered that it should be so, according to his prayer if he saw him when he was taken away from him? So we read, as they still went on and talked, the charioted angels came for Elijah, and parted him from Elisha, "and Elisha saw it," though the sons of the prophets that stood to view did not—showing that the prophet's transit was superphysical, and Elisha's seeing it superphysical. To wit, the opening of the inner eye, to introspect the inner world, and witness the congeries of events therein pertaining to Elijah's wondrous departure from this to the higher life.

Instances upon instances may be cited from Scripture to shew the divine capacity given to man of spiritual second sight? Can we forget St. Paul on his way to Damascus, his soul-vision open to behold the Lord, the light of heaven upon the orbs of natural sight being so intense as to cause physical blindness for three days? He also at the same time becoming clairaudient by the opening of the inner ear to hear Jesus say "Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?" Though they who journeyed with him (clairvoyant momentarily to some degree) were not made clairaudient and "heard not the voice that talked with me," said St. Paul, though they indeed saw the light and were afraid.

Yet if doubts, in spite of all this do still remain as to the existence of this but little suspected faculty of the soul (with the duality of our powers, and the double action of the senses naturally possessed), can we hesitate longer to hold out against extending the forces of man upon the domain of the angels (stretching out his powers from things human to things divine); or hinder his free spirit from bounding into the other life, to explore its secrets while yet bodily tethered to this; feeling, as he often does, his aptitude therefor, into which, unlet during his sleeping hours (if at no other time) his one half nature will protrude?

Having senses divinely fitted for that life, that rust from want of using, can we, I ask, ignore all this and takes sides with those who would filch the wondrous mechanism of the spirit from man



and leave him the useless dial plate and empty framework, the wheels within wheels and motive power of God within taken out—hands pointing to dead midnight? The animal conceded, the true human denied? The man a mere growth of protoplasm, the soul a figment, Divinity scoffed at, Immortality gainsayed? Can we thus miserably argue against man's diviner powers, when we remember the glories of the apocalyptic Scriptures, present to St. John the Revelator when in the spirit on the Lord's Day he heard and saw—as also did St. Paul when caught up into the third heaven—things unutterable and in store for the redeemed of the human race?

Yea, knowing the truth of these things by intuition, and feeling powers yet to be unlocked in the human soul, well may we pray with the Psalmist "Open thou mine eyes."

But, with eyes wide open, we are very often astonishingly slow to see the commonest things about us. For even natural sight has to be cultivated. The artist sees more in a picture than one who has no taste for art. One of the old painters held the maxim that the eye must first be taught to see what the hand was to portray, ere the most skilful fingers could lay in the colours to any real effect. For if in carrying the inward discernment outward, the laws of perspective are not observed, and if the lines and curves that go to make a picture are not rightly perceived, converging towards their proper vanishing point (as sometimes instanced in Chinese works of art), the labour, though never so severe, so minute, careful and skilful in other respects, ends in the ridiculous. The educated eye sees more than the eye untutored, and knows the direction in which to look for what it wants to see. So the universe becomes more and more beautiful, with trained powers of observation to note the crowding joys that wait on loveliness, and throng around us ever, loaned to earth from heaven.

So the musician hears more than one who has no taste for music. Handel, Beethoven, and Mozart could catch "the music of the spheres," and hear the angels sing; and in the tiniest pipe of throstle, hum of bee, or

waving wing of gnat, would feel a meaning grosser ears would fail to understand, though they might listen to the tramp of a myriad viewless life atoms in their march across the microphone for ever. The love of music, with the great masters, being from a deeper, holier cause than the resonant vibrations and pulsing waves of air, though from the most exquisite stop, drawn by angel fingers, tremulous, quavering, plaintive notes of sorrow and wail; or quick stirring marches and storming periods of hope and joy. For the great masters' supreme delight in torrents of harmony, and open sluices of song, was from the voiced, but veiled, and sheathed meaning of every note, tone, semi-tone, and chord, that speaks volumes to the inner ear, not deadened by the world's senseless jar and din.

So every faculty, following eye and ear, is enlarged and quickened with proper use; and the culture of the five senses leads us from the dull material, heavy, clay-clogged gates of access to the soul, right upward to the inner world of spiritual realities; where, unclothed of the body, we can, with glorious readiness, appreciate the higher faculties of our immortal part, and long to be disencumbered of this flesh-hood; feeling how, like a soaked vesture, it would drag us down and drown us in material things, did not the aspiring spirit and the love of God sustain us.

It stands to reason that the more we perfect our earth conditions, the grander will be the development of their parts agreeing in the other life. For life is all of one piece; this and the next being only different chapters of the same volume; the thread of the narrative continued; the theme as before, but expanded.

So he who prays "Open thou mine eyes" and being opened uses them—having divine insight into the inscrutable ways of heaven—seeing the truth only to love it—beholding iniquity only to hate it, looking for good even in things evil, and thence extracting it—discerning good in the vilest wretch and loving him out of his villainy; and with open eyes above all to his own manifold imperfections, seeing himself as others see him, and

striving to improve the hideous object—he thus gifted with this practical second sight, shall in the life to come find large profit from the honest labour of this, and the more clearly see the ways of Providence, by which, in the realm of time, he has (through afflictions, and separations, and calamities—so thought) been led to the Sunsetless Dominions of Eternity.





## DEMONIACAL POSSESSION.

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Mark iii., 14: "And he ordained twelve that they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach and to have power to heal sickness and to cast out devils."

The superfine enlightenment of the age discredits the possibility of evil possession. Those spoken of in the Gospel as being obsessed are now popularly regarded merely as hysterical, epileptical, or insane people who ought to have been confined to a lunatic asylum. But, when we read that Jesus cast out devils, it is impossible to conceive, as some would argue, that Christ accommodated himself to the superstitious fancies of Jewish days, and pretended to do what he did not do.

That bodily possession, or the access of evil spirits to the physical structure of man, anciently existed, is indisputable, for modern instances of the same grievous disorder are not unknown. The Church of England—the most staid and sober, least imaginative and least fanatic of all communions—itself has made provision against the recurrence of New Testament obsession. Hence the 72nd Canon, giving instructions relative to exorcism, directs what is to be done to cast out any devil or devils. Prayer and fasting are enjoined, notice being given to the Bishop of those afflicted, vexed and possessed, in order that a license may be obtained authorising the minister to proceed to exorcise the evil spirit.

Many cases of insanity are undoubtedly attributable to obsession, and all cases of suicide are due to the sudden accession of evil spirits. Bad men are played upon by subtle powers unseen that use or misuse their corporeal senses and appetites to minister to their depraved and still uncorrected will in spirit life. Hell talks through a man when he raves and curses, and a whole legion of fiends sometimes gets possession of him when he is wrought to madness and fury and hate.

The language of daily life is expressive of the truth of this. We say he or she acts like one possessed when in tempests of passion anyone loses all self-control. For then a darker control dominates the mechanism of the physical system, and the man, as we say, is beside himself—outside himself—and seven other spirits worse than himself are within, holding foul riot and defiling the temple of the poor victim's body; warping the instrument to play their hideous discords on, and perverting the natural bias of the enthralled will; depolarising the mind from heaven by the strong magnetic attraction of its opposite, that the leanings of the flesh may be towards perdition. So in the end every function of the soul is vitiated, and the Saint of yesterday becomes a veritable Satan to-day, and cries, with St. Paul, "When I would do good evil is present with me."

Most sad are the thoughts that we must think as we dwell upon the subject brought before us in the text. But for our encouragement it is well for us to remember that with evil present with us in every temptation (for, says the Apostle, he is tempted who is drawn away of his own lusts and enticed, and to be enticed necessitates an enticer), yet with the evil everywhere abounding there are countervailing powers and forces in God's unseen universe that stand as glorious off-sets against the mischiefs cited.

It is a matter very full of comfort, and a truth that hath many warrants of Holy Scripture, that we have our good angels, the blest emissaries of Heaven. "Are they not all ministering spirits sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?" "The Angel of the Lord tarrieth round about them that fear Him, and

delivereth them." They instil into our minds hope and purity and holy joy to counteract the unseen satyrs' infestations and suggestions of impurity and blasphemy and profanity. They inspire us with aspirations heavenward, for the soul's true respiration is from the lofty atmospheres of the angel-world—the immortal spirit's native air.

The blest beings of the radiant brow who have gone before us truly are still watching over us; and they breathe in us their loving hopes and holy thoughts to help and strengthen, succour and encourage us in the dusty way of life. So, as we incline to them, and will be led by them, our spiritual enemies unseen withdraw; for these cannot endure the heavenly sphere and influence of the good angels we attract. While also, alas! if, on the other hand, we are seduced to give ear to the evil suggestions of our ghostly foes, the angel guides of our life will be forced to leave us. Our celestial associates are unable to remain with us when we are desperately resolved to ultimate in actual sin our dark and wicked thoughts. So our good angel sorrowfully departs, and we are left to storms of passion and tempests of evil, with wretchedness, despair and woe to fall possessed.

Scientific sceptics of course gainsay all these things, and contend that the cases of Demoniacal Possession recorded in the New Testament were simply ordinary fits, or phases of epilepsy; though it would puzzle the medical faculty to tell what epilepsy is, so easy is it to cover our ignorance of a matter with an un-English name, ticketing it with a scientific term to make believe we have explained it and know all about it. But can we conceive that Jesus, knowing he was curing a merely natural disorder in an afflicted child, would rebuke it as a foul spirit, and say to an unconscious disease, "I charge thee to come out of him, and enter no more into him"? Against such an impious suggestion it would be an insult to your intelligence to argue. Indeed we may remark that one of the chief uses of the ministry, as instituted by Christ, was for the express purpose of exorcising those possessed of evil spirits. Thus we read, "And he ordained twelve that

they should be with him, and that he might send them forth to preach, and to have powers to heal sicknesses and to cast out devils.”

Any attempt to discharge the duties of our ministry in respect of exorcism would, however, in these materialistic and Sadducean days, subject a clergyman quickly to an enforced interview with the Lunacy Commissioners; and we can readily imagine how a Bishop would be startled to receive, according to Canon law, and direction of constitutions ecclesiastical, an application from one of his clergy for a license to exorcise an evil spirit. Nevertheless, the fact remains, as stated by the eminent mathematician, the late Professor De Morgan, that the medical and physical explanations relative to these things are utterly insufficient, whereas the spiritual hypothesis is sufficient, though ponderously difficult.

Foolish, and evasive of close thought and philosophic research, is it however to attempt to resolve the instances of demoniacal possession, as recorded in the Gospels or recurrent in modern times, to ordinary cases of epilepsy or insanity.

The powers of evil doubtless are chiefly exercised in our day in the obsession of men's minds rather than men's bodies; yet bodily possession is much more frequent than is supposed.

Had we the introspective power of Christ and the early Church, we might discover many innocent victims of obsessing spirits, temporarily possessed, through the sins of their forefathers; the bias of heredity giving a natural plane of action with easy access to the hideous embodiments of family lusts and the unseen genii of some covert family evil.

Victims of the passions of their progenitors, are therefore often regarded as dangerous maniacs hopelessly insane. But we might find many capable, under spiritual methods—for this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting—capable under Heaven's blessing of being dispossessed, and delivered from the thrall of perdition and evil possession through exorcism, and psychopathic treatment, and angel-help. Lunatic asylums indeed every-



where might be thinned of their inmates to an astonishing extent were Christian remedies and apostolic gifts called into play; for said Jesus: "These signs shall follow them that believe: In my name shall they cast out devils."

Too materialistic, however, as yet is the age for this. When mania is observed in anyone, medical men begin to weigh the brain and diagnose the mind that is afflicted, whereas 'tis rather the heart that is debased and gone wrong. And we of the clergy weakly acquiesce in the dogmatism of earthly physicians instead of following up the practice of the Physician of Souls.

Out of the heart are the issues of life; and it is when this is seriously affected that appalling evils leap forth and monstrous impurities break out to carry defilement abroad with desolation and horror, home corruption and national ruin.

The powers of evil cannot debauch the mind when the heart is steadfast and true. It is when the moral nature is warped, when lust and passion find a congenial home in the heart, that the madness of evil and insanity of sin are destructively apparent; and then it is that the bloated, brutal, sensual wretch is positively fiend-possessed, and is used as the instrument of hell to carry out its economy of horror here and make hell upon earth.

This positively is the rationale of evil possession. The unseen powers of darkness return to earth through us, to enjoy the carnal pleasures of the world again. And as we yield our bodies to sensual gratifications (as it seems for self alone), we are really but the degraded channels for vile affections through which impurity ebbs and flows from hell itself.

Can we put the matter more plainly? Oh! whether we know it or not, too often do we perilously stand closely related to invisible evil powers. We are possessed of evil tempers, evil thoughts, evil feelings, lusts, concupiscences, envyings, hatreds, emulations, malice, and all the bad brood of evil which in the aggregate of its conglomerate bestial character makes one monstrous devil.

Of Jehovah's merciful bidding angels and ministers of grace defend us! and, in the language of the collect

for St. Michael and All Angels, let us pray: "O Everlasting God! who hast ordained and constituted the services of angels and men in a wonderful order, mercifully grant that as Thy holy angels alway do Thee service in Heaven, so by Thy appointment they may succour and defend us on earth: *Per Jesum Christum Dominum nostrum.*"



## SPIRITUAL GIFTS.

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Joel ii., 28: "It shall come to pass afterwards that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions."

Either this prophecy has been fulfilled, or waits to be fulfilled, or cannot be fulfilled. Many things are recorded in Holy Writ to have happened since the prophet, with the hand of heaven upon his hand, and angel fingers on his fingers, was controlled to pen the words of the text that seem to suggest an outpouring of psychic power with which the world has to be fulfilled—filled to the full—in the evolution of human race to the higher scale of being looked for and promised. For there is in man, with evolution ever upwards, a hinting of the existence—latent indeed as yet for the most part—of superior faculties than man, the mere animal, possesses.

"With a curse" the Old Testament ends if this tarries unduly, and slacks down from unaccomplishment and enactment, while with "Amen" in fiat ends the apocalyptic splendours of the New Testament, anticipatory of what creation now is struggling to attain, though as yet we know not what we finally shall be, looking for the adoption, to wit, the purchase back of the body from its thrall of matter to an emancipative freedom of spirit that shall be above all and through all and in all as the *pneumatosis* of the Over-soul, in whom we live and move

and have our being—Avatars one and all of Nirvana, the incomprehensible Divine. For—

“All are but parts of one stupendous whole,  
Whose body nature is and God the soul.”

Wisely, therefore, must we be prepared to admit the supernatural or supermundane as the basis of being rather than the material structure of matter-man as the foundation of life. For though we are not altogether of such stuff that dreams are made of, yet are we of a nature inscrutable that often seems most inconsistent, unreal, and visionary,

“Between two worlds life hovers like a star,  
'Twixt night and morn, upon the horizon's verge:  
How little do we know that which we are!  
How less what we may be! The eternal surge  
Of time and tide rolls on, and bears afar  
Our bubbles: as the old burst new emerge,  
Lash'd from the foam of ages; while the graves  
Of empires heave but like some passing waves.”

Hence, in predicting the larger outflow of the higher life to perfect our physical-psychical being, and flood the earth with heaven's abounding glories and benedictions, the sacred Scriptures are rich in allusions and instances of the dreaming of dreams and seeing of visions as the normal attribute of those that have preceded or are to follow us. St. Joseph, the carpenter, being warned of God in a dream, takes the infant Christ and flees into Egypt. For said the angel unto him in a vision, “Herod will seek the young child to destroy him.” Again also, when Herod was dead, the angel of the Lord appeared unto St. Joseph in Egypt in a dream, saying, “Arise, and take the young child and his mother and go into the land of Israel, for they are dead which sought the young child's life.”

But before this, as recorded in another Scripture, the father of St. John the Baptist—aged Zacharias—was gifted with the faculty of seeing visions—which the Scotch call second sight, and the French clairvoyance, and the Bible notifies as seership—for St. Luke reports (i., 11) that while Zacharias was ministering alone in the temple at Jerusalem “there appeared unto him an angel, standing on the right side of the altar of incense,” who announced that he should have a son, whose name was to be John. Also Mary, the mother of Jesus, as recorded in the same Gospel, was endowed with a like faculty of spirit vision when the angel Gabriel came to her and said “Hail thou that art highly favoured, the Lord is with thee. Blessed art thou among women.”

There are dreams, therefore, which are not altogether the result of natural causes. Hence St. Peter's remarkable dream (Acts x., 13), when the fisherman of Galilee, the lowly working man, as a Jewish aristocrat had an object lesson given him in the angelic command “Rise, Peter, kill and eat,” and it was emphasised in the after rebuke of the angelic voice, “What God hath cleansed call thou not common.”

St. Paul's vision also, when he was unregenerate, persecuting Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus, was a remarkable spiritualistic manifestation from the great spirit, through one who said “My words are spirit and they are life.” For suddenly there “shone round about him a light from heaven above the brightness of the sun, and a voice was heard by Saul and some—though not all the others who journeyed with him—all apparently clairvoyant but not all clairaudient, as St. Paul says (Acts xxii., 9), “these heard not the voice that talked with me, though they saw indeed the light and were afraid”; while others, as indicating the development more or less of their psychic gifts “stood speechless, hearing a voice but seeing no man” (Acts ix., 7).

The *cui bono* of Spiritualism is here answered, when an apparent discrepancy of Scripture like this is explained, perceiving that one part of the

company with Saul—unconverted as was he—became for the moment clairvoyant, and suddenly were endued with the ability to see into the eternal world, and catch a passing glimpse of its splendours, while the rest, who were blind to the vision, became for awhile clairaudient, and had the open ear to hear the message from the skies—spiritual sight being quickened in some, spiritual hearing being developed in others.

But not to multiply instances from Scripture to prove the existence of these little suspected and hidden or latent faculties of man's immortal soul, let these suffice to show that the prophecy of the text has at least in part been experienced in the lives of some, and which standing for complete fulfilment says, "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions."

Rightly, therefore, may the world look for a larger outpouring of these psychic gifts than yet has been known. For if they never have been known or never may be known in very act and deed, for what purpose would be this waste of time in church attendance to hear such Bible myths and parables, or the make-up of such fictions if these things be not so and are not true?

Church-going materialists are intellectual hybrids, inconsistent, for if we are not prepared to relegate the Bible to the limbo of exploded superstitions, it is impossible for us to escape being Spiritualists. While if we are not prepared to acknowledge heaven's interposition in human affairs, sometimes by dreams, sometimes by visions, and sometimes by the still small voice such as youthful Samuel heard, and Elijah heard, and all the prophets heard; if we are not prepared to recognise the existence of the prophetic spirit resting on chosen instruments to direct, control, and inspire godly enthusiasm in dull, cold human hearts, and stir the masses of mankind to generous impulses, why then, if we are not prepared to do this and recognise the spirit of civilisation in it, with the well-

being of society in it, and an advantage to individual man in it, then let us straightway burn our Bibles and Prayer Books and regard the mysteries of faith as fictions and superstitious tales unfitted for the world to-day, and the onward progress of the twentieth century.

It is well known that some do openly speak in this way, and many more do silently so think, and may be it partly is because there has been perhaps too much refining on nice points of theology, hair-splitting on dogmas and doctrines and politics denominational, neglecting meanwhile to teach the nearness of the spiritual world as a demonstrable fact, and the practical commonsense existence awaiting everyone immediately after death. *Mors janua vitae*—Death the gate of life—hence continuous, and immediate, and conscious being, with no sleeping in the grave, for, as the burial service of the Church of England says, “the souls of the faithful after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are in joy and felicity.”

So not knowing, not having been taught, and hence at first denying this as too good to be true, there follows often, if still untaught, an utter disbelief of God, angel, spirit, or eternal world, or any possession of an immortal soul—the body being everything, material substance the only solid reality—and nothing more existent throughout the wide universe. Dreams? Shakespeare’s eloquent thought about them mere poetry! “for in that sleep of death what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil?” is absurd, when we in Sadducean thought have ceased utterly to be.

Dreams? quoth the Materialist, what are they but the proximate result of imperfect gastronomical deglutition, not consistent with the code of *Æsculapius*? Visions?—the lunacy of the self-deceived, the imbecility of hysteria, the impaired mentality of epileptic subjects, due to insomnia, due to somnambulism, due to heaven knows what. No! there is no heaven, due therefore to—to—oh! certainly, yes to be sure, due to cerebral disturbance of the cerebellum and unconscious cerebration.

That is the way of Sadducean talk; it is a darkening of counsel by words without knowledge, and the use of fine terms wherewith to cover pretentious ignorance.

But from the genuine school of scientific thought not a few now of the erstwhile negative minds have during the past few years of research into the subject of the text been convinced of the truth that really there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy, who also openly now admit that the things prophesied in the text may not altogether be put aside as unworthy of serious thought.

Church-folk and Christian people, therefore, ought not to ignore, decry, defame or deny the question of Spiritualism. It is, indeed, forced upon them whenever the Bible is opened or prayers in Divine Service are read.

From Genesis to Revelation is there evidence incontestable as to the reality of things psychological. The miracles wrought in Egypt for the deliverance of Israel from serfdom and slavery; Moses and the bush that burned and was not consumed; Jacob and his dream of the ladder on which the angels ascended and descended; Joseph and his dreams and the cup wherewith "such a man as I am can certainly divine" said he, when it was found in Benjamin's sack; youthful Samuel and his response to the spirit voice direct—for God is a spirit—when the child said "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth"; Isaiah's prophecies; Jeremiah's prophecies; Ezekiel's prophecies; Daniel's visions. They who do not believe in these things—the gift of prophecy, the dreaming of prophetic dreams and the seeing of visions, gifts of healing, the gift of tongues, the interpretation of tongues, discerning of spirits—such unbelievers believe not the Bible.

While, however, we take care not to fall into the Sadducean error of doubting everything and believing nothing, we must not severely blame those who, like sceptical St. Thomas, say "Except I see I will not believe." though, says the founder of our religion, "Blessed are they that have not seen, and yet have



believed"—for this is not the attitude of weak credulity, but the gracious aspect of true charity that hopeth all things and believeth all things.

Our hope and belief, therefore, is that the prophecy of the text, having had an earnest in the past of growth to fulfilment, may yet have larger fulfilment. For the perfection (through evolution and the action of heaven on the affairs of earth) of the future powers, physical and psychical, of all mankind, when the faculties of the yet imperfect human, developed from the mere animal, shall by devolution from on high, be vastly increased—nature shall then be perfected and glorified, and the carnal shall give place to the spiritual, and mankind grow up to angelhood.

For to such tends the working of the promise of the text: "I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh, and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your young men shall see visions, and your old men shall dream dreams."

"Will" and "Shall" are the strong words of the text, therefore it might seem to be independent of our collaboration to bring about its fulfilment. As, however, the unseen may operate through as well as on the seen, it stands for those of good-will to further its right action.

So linking age to age,  
 Exalted or debased, subject or supreme,  
 Be it now ours to wage  
 Warfare with self, and guage  
 Nature with grace; nor idly deem  
 These hopes but visionary—an empty dream.  
 But live the human life  
 Controlled of the divine,  
 With righteous warfare—daily strife—  
 Until eternity forecloses time.  
 THEN shall we see, if not before,  
 The prophecy's fulfilment of the Sacred Page;  
 And earth-ward looking, through heaven's open  
 door,  
 Discern the swift on-coming of the golden age  
 A re-committal unto angel-man

Of gifts and graces, lost by sin's mischance,  
And recognise the infinite, wise plan  
Deity vouchsafes us, to enhance  
The mortal years of discipline that He  
Requires in righteousness of human kind,  
That every power of heart and mind  
May ripen to eternity.



## ANIMAL CLAIRVOYANCE.

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Numbers xxii., 23: "And the ass saw the angel of the Lord standing in the way, and his sword drawn in his hand."

Dumb animals cannot tell what if they could would, in its narration, greatly astonish their owners; they see and hear what we do not; hence they afford proof of the fact that beyond our range of vision and sense of hearing are sights and sounds to which we are blind and deaf, pertaining to another world in closest touch with this, unfelt by us, and all unknown save for our nightly intrusion, it may be, thereunto during the hours of sleep.

Imagination undoubtedly often plays tricks with us when we dream, and fantastic pictures of impossibilities are dramatised at night in slumber, as also in our waking hours, when we indulge in day-dreams ridiculous and absurd. But imagination scarcely can have to do with sub-human animal life, where instinct alone rules, and reason is absent or dormant.

Who that has known the shock-sudden stand-still of a horse that neither whip nor spur could avail to move a step further in the direction of our will, can altogether put aside the thought that something may be in the way, unseen of us, which our dumb friend sees, and will not pass until the invisible obstacle to our progress has been removed, or of its invisible will and individual volition that same mysterious something has chosen to stand aside and suffer us—man and beast—to go on our way rejoicing?

This was Baalam's experience that for awhile puzzled him until he had redevelopment of the power of second-sight that the ass was suddenly gifted with. It has been the experience also of many who by it have been led to

perceive that our dumb relations had a perception, sometimes superior to our own, of things beyond the powers of natural vision. Hence the unassailable proof, from animal instinct and human reason, of the existence of another world intersphered with this normally to us unknown, yet under conditions capable of being known, seen, heard and felt, in a way that invalidates the assumptions of Materialism and Sadduceeism, and shows that there is a spirit-something of a continuous or discrete degree lifted but very little from the matter-something we daily have to do with here on earth, and rejoice not to have to do with when nightly we let it slip as a heavy yoke from our shoulders in sleep.

This matter-something is no more known as to its real nature than is the spirit-something enveloping it; and to dogmatise upon either, whether as to the non-existence of the latter or the illusionary, elusive nature of the former, is unwise.

More light is needed as to the whence and constituent elementary make-up of matter, even as more light is wanted as to the laws that operate in the realm of spirit; while to deny the existence of the one is to cut off the cause or effect of the other. Animal and human life are both against such a proceeding; Balaam and his ass alike being in evidence to witness for the dual existence of the worlds natural and spiritual, or those conditions that are interchangeable in proof of the twain existence of the twinned worlds so intimately linked together and interfused.

Hence man and beast alike are endued with faculties fitted for their exercise in either sphere; man in particular being amphibious to the life seen and unseen; even as here also particularly the mere animal gives proof positive that these things are not the fanciful creations of a distempered mentality, but are the sober, logical deductions from the experiences recorded of the most obstinate quadruped, dominated by instinct only, that has least share of reason or imagination.

The ass saw the angel which yet the man did not see. It was, therefore, no case of concurrent hallucina-

tion or mutual hypnotism—an effect of unconscious cerebration, or catching infection of suggestion.

Materialists who are not sufficiently advanced in thought or but little helped by the teachings of experience to become Spiritualists, who yet are dissatisfied with their unintellectual thralldom to dogmas crudely Sadducean, are given to play with the words “hallucination,” “hypnotism,” “unconscious cerebration,” “suggestion,” “thought reading,” “telepathy,” “epilepsy,” and such like.

Absurd terms are all these which are only used to cover pretentious ignorance; they explain nothing, and will not fit in with the facts recorded in the text or solve the mystery with reference to animal clairvoyance, and the like human faculty in Balaam, the Seer, “the man whose eyes were open: who saw the vision of the Almighty, falling into a trance, but having his eyes open” (Numbers xxiv., 4).

Wise as we think ourselves to be beyond the wisdom of the ancients and the deep wisdom unto salvation of Holy Scripture, our own Bible, and the sacred writings of nations that were in a high state of civilisation when our forefathers were naked barbarians and painted savages, let us not discredit the testimony of long ages past relative to things occult, psychical, and yet still for awhile mysterious. Knowledge will grow, and indeed it had need to, touching what in pragmatic self-sufficiency we think it is clever to deny; for western thought is going east—the old home of philosophy and architecture, where they built like giants and decorated like jewellers, and where they still think to a purpose often high beyond our dwarfed conception of exalted truths.

But not long can it be ere we shall know what will shame us out of our Materialism, Infidelity, and Sadduceeism. For has not the word of wisdom said “I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding” (Jeremiah iii., 15). In vain shall men then look to the pulpit for the Gospel according to the Pews; and in vain shall Moab and Balak “say to the seers, see not, and to the prophets, prophesy not unto us

right things, speak unto us smooth things, prophesy deceits" (Isaiah xxx., 10). For the divine compulsion that Balaam felt shall sway the minds of all true teachers, who shall say "Have I any power at all to say anything? the word that God putteth in my mouth, that shall I speak" (Numbers xxii., 38).

And now from Animal Clairvoyance and Human Seership there is, in the assertion of Balaam as to compulsory utterance, the vastly more difficult subject suggested for consideration of animal articulation, vouched-for in the Scripture, where we read (Numbers xxii., 28) "The Lord opened the mouth of the ass," and it became feelingly vocal with words of remonstrance against the unkind treatment of its master; even as St. Peter said "The dumb ass, speaking with man's voice, forbad the madness of the prophet" (2 St. Peter ii., 16).

The statement is incredible touching earth-experiences while yet the Bible speaks of talking animals in heaven, and of their devotion in worship, saying "Amen; Alleluia"; and of the four beasts giving "glory and honour and thanks to Him that sat on the throne," each also in turn saying "Come and see" (Rev. iv., 9; v., 14; vi., 1, 3, 5, 7; xix., 4).

The compulsory utterance of Balaam is not so difficult to explain as this record of animal eloquence surpassing the best effort of any mocking bird or talking parrot. For cases are every day known in Modern Spiritualism, even as in the spiritualism of the Early Church, when untaught fishermen were suddenly gifted with the Power of Wisdom, and controlled to speak, as the Spirit gave them utterance, with tongues to them unknown, and orally teach in divers languages altogether foreign to the country talk of their rude provincial dialect, that made one say of St. Peter "Thy speech bewrayeth thee" (St. Matthew xxvi., 73).

There are enforced communications from the invisible world suddenly through the lips of those who themselves hear not what they are impelled to say; as also sometimes even when they naturally hear the words unnaturally forced through the gates of human speech,

as with an irresistible torrent, strong from a mountain-range reservoir of thought behind them in the way of an open sluice, they know not in the least what is coming; nor have they the choice of words or control of thought to apprehend the meaning of the message given, or signification of the terms in which the occult communication is conveyed with accent and manner, language and intonation far above their normal use.

At times also does the message come in verse, and in speech as foreign to them as were the divers tongues to the controlled apostles on the day of Pentecost, when the Pharisees and Sadducees said "These men are full of new wine," while the strangers in Jerusalem from many lands were amazed to hear the ignorant Galileans speak every man in their own tongue wherein they were born the wonderful works of God.

This to-day is among Spiritualists known to be easy of explanation; as also in Animal Clairvoyance and Human Seership the explanation is not difficult. But hard in the extreme is it to account for the statement of Scripture relative to an animal aptitude, on the part of a dumb creature, for vocal pleading with an angry prophet for mercy.

Things sometimes thought to be impossible may however yet be true. For, indeed, not long ago the maker of the phonograph undoubtedly would have been burnt alive at the stake—as witches and wizards have in that way by the Puritans in America, as in England, been done to death, being misjudged to have dealings with the devil—for when a mere mechanical instrument will, to the very life, repeat, with every particular of intonation and emphasis, the words spoken into it, then the account of "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice" becomes less difficult to understand, thinking of the living sentient creature as a telephone for receiving a message from above, and being but the mere instrument of a quadruped that for the moment acted as Deity's phonograph to repeat the message, and be no more endued with a perception of the meaning of the words forced through it, than a parrot or other mocking bird has knowledge of

the things it is taught to utter. Memory for sound such creatures more or less may have, but no mind for sense. For if it were not of this sort here on the earth-plane (since it is hardly fitting to deny what Scripture says of animals worshipping and speaking in heaven), why then Balaam's ass could have been but a trick-quadruped and medium-fraud, even as is yet popularly supposed, of the devil in person masquerading as a talking serpent in the ill-understood Garden of Eden myth of Eve and the apple and the snake.

But, indeed, "the dumb ass speaking with man's voice" was no greater marvel than the wicked prophet speaking under compulsion in God's voice. For the will of the prophet was to curse, but the word of the Lord on the lips of the Seer forced him to bless. The supernatural was present in both cases.

For again, touching the clairvoyant powers of Balaam's ass, a spiritual faculty appears to have been opened in the mere animal before the quickened vision of the prophet was redeveloped in him to see the angel.

And from this in a figure is it taught how, when the natural mind (acute and perceptive and over anxious and impatient of obstacles that bar its progress to worldly honours and wealth) turns aside to avoid the angel of the Lord (mercifully sent to block our path to earthly riches and the princely rewards of Balak, seeking to bribe us), then, when the lower degree of the mind (like Balaam's ass), the lower attribute of our nature—which should be but as the beast of burden, to the higher powers of the soul—is, in zeal and forethought and worldly wisdom, superior to the inner man that should control it, and bring the body into subjection, then—"the children of this world being in their generation wiser than the children of light"—it is a foreboding sign that the higher faculties of mind and heart are blind and dark, as Balaam the prophet was, and the animal he rode clearly just now and very abnormally was not.

Hence, under such inverted, disorderly, ungodly conditions, great need have we then to pray, as did the Psalmist, for Divine Clairvoyance and say "Open thou



mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalm cxix., 18). For then, in answer to our heart's best wish for spiritual light, Deity gives us to see that our course of life is bad; that we are journeying the wrong road with covetous intentions for self-satisfactions of cash, coin, and the wealth promised Balaam by Balak, or with prejudice, bigotry, and the fanatical evil will of Saul of Tarsus on his persecuting way to Damascus.

Happy, therefore, then is it for us if thereupon the angel of the Lord goes out to withstand us and check us in our career.

Balaam was in the wrong way. "The iniquity of his heels (as the Psalmist phrases it, xlix., 5) compassed him about." The paths of righteousness were forsaken for worldly gain and the rewards of divination. He had sold his mediumship. He had sold his seership. He had sold his prophetic powers.

I do not say that the labourer is not worthy of his hire even in respect of his psychic gifts lawfully exercised. Would that there were no need for paid mediumship now! There was, however, paid mediumship in Old Testament times, as when Saul's servant said (1 Samuel ix., 8), "Behold, I have here at hand the fourth part of a shekel of silver that I will give to the man of God (Samuel the seer, Samuel the prophet) to tell us our way." As also there was paid mediumship in New Testament days, when the Apostle St. Paul said (1 Cor. ix., 11), "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great matter if we shall reap you worldly things?" Hence, thus allowed, every professional medium as a clergyman in the Church of England, or as a Roman Catholic priest, functioning the various spiritual duties which the laying on of episcopal hands empowers him psychically to operate, receives his fee for discharging.

Yet much to be desired were it that there were no need for this, and that means could be so devised that monetary and pecuniary considerations might have no part in any spiritual ministry.

For as here in the case of Balaam, and the times of Eli, the high priest of Israel, and King Saul, the fallen

medium who once was numbered among the prophets, temptations were consequent on thoughts of gain. So while human nature is as it is, and conditions of life are such as they are, there can be no complete assurance of personal integrity (even as the Apostle St. Paul felt) not being subject at times to perilous strain.

Balaam was not equal to it; Gehazi was not equal to it; Judas Iscariot was not equal to it. Each one had an itching palm, and the first was saved from utter ruin only through the power of a strong control unseen upon his psychic nature as a seer, and the impact of the impulses of the invisible forces that had timely exercise, nearly staled, through the merciful revival of his seership quickened and stirred to new activity by the animal clairvoyance emulative and suddenly developed on the part of the faithful dumb friend he, in his anger, abused.

For, disregarding of blows, to save his master from instant death, the patient ass, enduring the murderous threats and savage treatment of Balaam, sought to take him from the point of danger imminent in the way. Hence said the angel to the erring prophet, now that his faculty of seership was restored, "The ass saw me, and turned from me these three times; unless she had turned from me, surely now also I had slain thee and saved her alive" (Numbers xxii., 23.)

It was, therefore, by no accident, seeing that his feet were swift to shed blood, as he was urging on his way to Balak to devote Israel to destruction, that they of God's chosen people might fall in battle; it was no accident, as his feet were in the wrong way, that in the path through the vineyard the ass crushed Balaam's foot against the wall.

It was no accident whatever in Balaam's journey thus arrested (like the arresting of Saul of Tarsus on his way to Damascus) here and now at this particular point and in this seemingly trivial manner by the angel of the Lord, that Balaam's foot got crushed. No accident at all, but to teach us again in a Gospel figure that when the sweets of life, the vines and eddying pleasures of the world's vineyards, cause us to wander from the path of

duty which ever is the line of safety, pain and inconvenience must of necessity graciously follow.

The foot is crushed to make us see that we are wandering on trespass, and show that our feet are out of the way. Bodily afflictions come to remind us that we are spiritually imperfect, lame and blind.

And then, ah! blessedly then is it for us if conscience, like a strong ass with a man's voice, boldly shall rebuke our madness before the Angel of Death goes forth to bring our evil way to a tragic close. Happy, most happy then, indeed are we to possess so faithful a servant. Tamper not with it further! Abuse it no longer! Smite it no more! Never mind the crushed foot! "It is better to enter into life halt or maimed than having two feet" the quicker to race to perdition (St. Mathew xviii., 8).

Blessed, most blessed, therefore, are life's disasters, disciplines, and bereavements. For have they not taught us to say with the Psalmist (cxix., 67-71), "It is good for me that I have been afflicted; for before I was afflicted I went astray: but now have I kept thy word."





## THE BOOK OF LIFE.

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Revelations xx., 12: "And the books were opened: and another book was opened, which is the Book of Life."

The Book of Life?—the volume of human experience?—the tablet of the mind?—the written manual of the soul?—the book of remembrance?—Yes, all these and many more might be the answers to the suggested question touching one of the books named in the text, necessitating closest attention to the wise injunction "Know thyself."

The Book of Life?—the record of every day's action—the codex of every moment's thought. And the Thought-Reader Divine with the Recording Angel can explore every edition of the published work, chapter and verse at once—judge the merits of the author—note the marginal references—interpret the secret pencillings of the scribe, seeing instantly the brain capacity or heart incapacity of the writer—his quality as to goodness and sincerity of life, or inclinations evil and a life insincere.

For so can God—the power or personality that worketh for righteousness in the hearts of the children of men the wide world over—read every soul from Genesis to Revelation, when life's last chapter of this incarnation is complete, and "Finis" terminates the present round of individual existence, till a new edition of the same immortal ego is needed for mortal uses in this world below, reissued and sent forth from heaven above—the higher sphere of eternal causes whence here is ultimated every physical

effect. For He, the Everlasting Great Control that ordereth all things in heaven and earth, knoweth all men, and needeth not that any should testify of man; for He knoweth what is in man (St. John ii., 25).

The angels, also, doubtless can read what each soul in secret writes upon the tablets of the mind, or thinks to hide in the covert intentions of the will; while evil spirits, 'tis to be feared, can quote wicked extracts from the disgraceful pages of a sinful man's autobiography.

The human thought of man indeed lies open in the other life. "For there is nothing covered, that shall not be revealed; neither hid, that shall not be known. Therefore, whatsoever ye have spoken in darkness shall be heard in the light; and that which we have spoken in the ear in closets shall be proclaimed upon the housetops" (St. Luke xii., 2, 3).

Counsel here is often darkened by words without knowledge, and speech is sometimes used to hide men's thoughts. Motive and intention here are closed books; but in the other world they are texts for open comment. So if each human mind there be as a book (of which in this life we see perhaps but the outside covers of mean or rich bindings), what a library must there be for strange perusals, where the counsels of the heart are manifest, and the ill-written lives of perverse men appear, and the seamy-side of every mind is exposed to view!—criticised by the enemy and read with sorrow by the angels under the impact of the mysterious light that beats upon our darkest thoughts and shameful actions, willed and done here to be recorded, registered, chronicled, catalogued, and indexed yonder!

For we cannot evade being reported. Nay, we cannot moreover choose but (by the compulsions of an inexorable psychic law) ourselves to write our own character. There is an insisting mercifully tyrannous something that makes a man declare himself sooner or later. For as the angel within graciously will work its way outward and make the dead, dull clay of poor humanity translucent with its God-reflected glory and light up the face with holiness, peace, benignity, and

blessing, so, dreadfully also, when the powers of darkness take possession of a man of carnal proclivities, will the unseen, malignant spirits stamp the aspect of a fiend on the sensual, bloated face, to devilize still further the shameless brow to brazen its bold iniquity out with maniac audacity. Curses dwell upon the lip, and hell itself glares in the wolfish look and gleams from the bloodshot eyes. For vice cannot be hid when thoughts of vice thus dramatise without the evil play of Legion within.

The sinner is the devil's telescope,  
And through a bad man's eyes  
The fiend looks out upon this little world,  
And blasts what he espies.

The "evil eye" projects the evil thought that wounds us with a rapier thrust, and in its vibrations of ill-intending operation to work mischief, sets up a quiver in the pulsing waves of the spiritual atmosphere, aura, or ether of science that causes us to feel discomfort, as with those who "shoot out their arrows even bitter words" that clothe the unkind thought vocal from the tongue that loves to do all manner of hurt—the motive ruling the action, the intention being the moving cause, the thought engineering the cruel wrong. So the plague will spread, and make its presence known, and innate wickedness will ere long detect itself. "Be sure your sin will find you out" (Numbers xxxii., 23).

We cannot help being reported. Information is daily laid against us. Nature itself will be reported. All things are engaged in writing their history. The planet and the pebble each goes attended by its shadow. The rock leaves its scratches on the hill side, and, torn from the grip of the floating ice-berg of the glacial period, plunges downward through miles of watery space now clear and warm with the summer sun above what to-day is our Warwickshire parish of Stockton, to fall the red granite boulder surrounded by its iron palisade in the centre of our village home.

The animal leaves its bones in the stratum as the great reptile, the Stockton ichthyosaur, left its own self of wondrous petrification perfect in the blue lias quarry. The fern leaves its modest epitaph in the coal; the raindrop its indenture in the sand and its sculpture of a summer thunder storm of sixty thousand years ago in what we now dig up as stone that paves the north and south aisles of our church.

Nature everywhere will be reported, while man, its acme—well, what is man but the prophet of his future? the historian of his past? the registrar of his life to-day? He is secretary to himself, scribe of his own thoughts, and so pencils his history, character and cast of thought on the tablets of his memory which is (audited, codified, ratified for him) his Book of Life.

Memory, therefore, is the amanuensis of the soul, and the Recording Angel that witnesses against us reads our memory through like a book. Conscience, also, confirms the evidence when "the judgment is set and the books are opened" (Daniel vii., 10). So the Book of Life is read and pondered in the world unseen, and the whole library of a man's mind is ransacked, and its secrets unlocked in eternity.

From a principle in us, acted upon by what is now recognised in medical and psychical science as Hypnotism, we (when cast into the trance or mesmeric sleep) cannot help but yield up the deepest secrets of our life under the compulsion of psychologic law, and men are made to incriminate themselves under the power of this mysterious, somnabulic force.

Also, from a principle settled in mathematical science, it is believed that the impressions made by man in his words and actions on the air, or the inner structure of the air or ether, recently labelled as argon, bring about a change in the elements unseen around us.

The material elements are of all others perhaps the least important of Deity's compacting for the use and service of man—the top and sum of his creation. Yet matter really is the precipitation of the Divine Mind, the



residuum of spirit. Incessantly does the Creator, as the God of the spirits of all flesh, think new universes into being. Hence every thought of the eternal evolves a sun or sphere—each orb being a solid thought dropped from the meditation of a God. So, like meadow daisies blossoming, new heavens perpetually unfold, and systems grow and worlds concrete, and roll in shaping beauty forth from the feet of the incomprehensible Divine.

For Deity, in the process of thought, throws out existence as a flower does perfume. His every thought becomes objective—inanimate in matter, animate in beast, incarnate in man. So the Logos takes form continually, and broadens down from zones of viewless ether and roots itself in solids; kindles each blazing sun; conflagrates the rushing crush of planets and the incessant meteoric shower, and so diffuses life and light unceasingly throughout creation.

Thus from the Creator results creation that goes on continually. The Sun-Fabricator and World-Builder neither slumbers nor sleeps. "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work," says Jesus—the primal man—Acme of the human race; for every thought of the Divine mind is a spasm of creation, and every thought of Deity materialises itself, clothes itself with solids, investing its invisibility in things visible to us and tangible, that with our scientific appliances we may follow the Creator into the secret laboratory of His creation, and trace His divine footsteps right up to the near confines of His invisible kingdom.

God specially thought man into being. A creative ray of splendour from the Sun of Righteousness is directed outward from the mysterious within, and, concentrated in that beam of light—wisdom ineffable—all qualities and substances are resident, and man arose where that light stood still to be the earthly focal point of the heavenly excellencies of creative thought—a thing supreme of the evolution of the master mind of Deity.

For creation first existed in God's thought. The eternal mind precipitate does ever unweariedly crystalise to finite purposes things seen from the infinite cause unseen;

since God does each moment think to practical purposes the outcome of all we apprehend surrounding us of our physical environment and psychical possibilities; hence new suns perpetually unfold, and systems grow and spheres revolve, all being the resultant energy of the Divine Mind and activities of sublimated thought.

So, as effluxes of the Divine Mind, and each one of us the embodied thought of Deity's Sublimated Thought, it is believed that our individual human thoughts have an influence on the subtle elements of nature, and that the words going out of our lips will produce a series of changes which may never cease, causing pulsations in the ether or waves in the air which, though invisible to mortal eyes, will expand and travel forth in all directions till they have passed round the whole world and hurtled to the stars and most distant viewless planet that circles round its parent sun (deep in the abysses of inconceivable space) and produced a change in the elements that will in sequence produce other changes onward for ever. Hence it is thought that the sentence now being uttered shall alter the tides of invisible ether—the connecting link between matter and spirit—through all time.

Further, also, it is known that when we look at the sun we do not see it as it at the moment is, but as it was some eight minutes and thirteen seconds before, since it takes that time for light issuing from it to reach our earth. So, also, it is alleged that we do not see the stars as they are, but as they were at the moment when the luminous rays we now see proceeded from them. If, therefore, a volcano were to burst out in Jupiter we could know nothing about it at the time, but should have to wait for two hours before the image of the catastrophe travelling towards us could arrive.

It is, therefore, conceived that, if in spirit we could get far enough away from our earth, we might, had we the power, see things as they were years and years ago. Removing then still further off from our planet, we might see things that transpired centuries ago; and going yet further off, backwards into the void of space, remote from our earth, we should get to the focus of ages and

epochs infinitely more remote, and see the image of the far-off past travelling away into space. So outstripping it (as free spirits untrammelled from the burden of the flesh) we in eternity, by Deity's permission, might be able to overtake the past, get before it, and, turning round, see things coming on to catch us up that were existent æons of ages back. The Book of Life then, page after page turned over, might thus be studied in immensity throughout eternity.

Let us in spirit take our stand at some given point in space, and we shall see the picture of our life in infancy floating on towards us. Let us remove and occupy a point a little less far off, and we shall see the image of our childhood days. Another station take we up, and we may note the weightier actions of our maturer years, embodied in all the stern reality of fact, thus impinging on our wondering gaze. Still closer come we unclothed spirits to our old earth-abode; and our last mortal hours—the death-bed scene, or accident (so-called) that hurried us from mortal life to the life immortal, is then depicted before us in all the striking simulacra incomprehensible of the dramatised and solemn truth. Or shoot we in spirit beyond the vast confines of illimitable space, and we may overtake the travelling history and picture of our lives pre-existent in some other state of being ere we knew this last re-incarnation in the flesh, and birth into the world, from which into another, higher and better, we as free spirits shall have then escaped.

Thus by analogy, man's surest guide below, from the known laws of nature touching the speed at which light travels through the spaces of God's universe, carrying with it the images of all it hath illuminated, we may see how the now shrouded and forgotten past can be redeveloped and made present to the blest free spirits that have quitted us. Since (granting the faculty of vision so adapted) they who are no longer in bondage to the flesh have only to go out far enough from the earth-sphere into the depths of space (the vast storehouse of the past) to see once more, photographed on the

impalpable æther, images of mind, mirages of thought, and every act in its minuté particular of their life (no matter how prehistoric and remote).

The Laws of Light, which suggest these possibilities and teach us that the sun on which we gaze is not the sun of the present moment, but the sun as it was eight minutes past and gone—the laws also which permit us strangely to see, still in the firmament to-night above us, stars that have gone out and utterly ceased to be ages ere we were born—urge that these views may be divinely true, the while they lift our minds from low, earth-notions of carnality, and pioneer the thought to a sublimer spirituality which Occultists and Theosophists and Psychic Researchers see the possible arrival of in the not far distant future.

Swedenborg, a hundred and fifty years ago, as a mystic and a seer, wrote of the "earths in the universe" and the stellar magnitudes that psychically press upon human experiences and suggest lessons that are most useful for every regenerating soul to connote and heed. He also had knowledge of the fact, relative to the Book of Life, that our characters may be known and read in the beyond from the colour of our aura or thoughts, and the hue even of our garments in the summerland above, when varying from the perfection of those there who "shall be clothed in white raiment" (Rev. iii., 4,) which "is the righteousness of the saints" (Rev. xix., 8), "white and glistening" (St. Luke ix., 29).

For hence to the most external faculty of the immortal soul, when freed from the trammels of the flesh even to its attire, its quality must be known and reported; and were wrong entries possible in the Book of Life, judgment could not go by default of evidence relative to the spirit's real nature; and the shame of the "man that had not on a wedding garment" would be the everlasting shame in the other life, could it be that unclodded of the body the soul was not clothed with righteousness, fitted for eternal companionship with those who had profited by the benediction "Blessed is he that watcheth and keepeth his garments" (Rev. xvi., 15.) For says the Judge eternal

—before whom “the books were open, and another book was opened which is the Book of Life” —“they who have not defiled their garments shall walk with me in light, for they are worthy” (Rev. iii., 4).

Wisely has Deity decreed that even for the most illiterate who cannot read the Book of Life, though written in his own vernacular, yet shall that same soul know he is judged according to just judgment consequent on the “deeds done in the body,” when, now out of the body—watching for the arrival of the pictures of his life (drawn to scale by his own hand and fingers)—he, from the proper psychic distance off from earth at the right polarising angle in the void of space, may take his stand, and wondering view the scene of his last incarnation travelling up to his amazed sight, and catch the rays of light which carry into eternity the photographic image of his every action. For so immensity shall be one vast picture gallery of his former life; every thought and word and deed being fully depicted in living colours on the inter-stellar spaces of the apparent void above, around, beneath, for the disembodied soul’s behoof, reproof, correction and small praise, according to God’s eternal, inscrutable, holy and righteous will.

For, says Professor Babbage, the famous inventor of the calculating machine:—“The air is one vast library on whose pages are for ever written all that man has ever said or woman whispered. Not a word has ever escaped from mortal lips, whether for the defence of virtue or the preservation of truth, not a cry of agony has ever been uttered by the oppressed, not a mandate of cruelty by the oppressor, not a false and flattering word by the deceiver, but is registered indelibly on the very atmosphere we breathe; and, could man command the mathematics of superior powers, every particle of air thus set in motion could be traced through all its changes with as much precision as the astronomer can point out the path of the heavenly bodies; no matter how many storms have raised the atmosphere into wild commotion and whirled it into countless forms; no matter how many conflicting waves have mixed and crossed one another, the path of each

pulsation is definite and subject to the laws of mathematics; to follow it requires indeed a power of analysis superior to human, but we can conceive it to be far inferior to the Divine."



## SCARCITY OF SMITHS.

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1 Samuel xiii., 19: "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel."

The history of the children of Israel is a biography of the human soul. The acts of a nation are but the multiplied will of one man. The imperial concerns of a people are single household forces in the aggregate, moved with the increased momentum weight and numbers bring. The whole is built up of parts. The mass is but the fusion of atoms, and the mighty but the agglutination of the minute.

The life of one man repeated in ten men, or a hundred, or a hundred thousand, alone makes the difference between biography and history. The same factors enter into the calculation, and the solutions applicable to the one, resolve the other.

National problems are mastered in the study of individual character; and complications collective are unravelled, and the genius of a people is seen by the wise observation of any single household.

Show a good mathematician the smallest arc of a curve and he will soon find out the whole compass of the figure. So show, if you dare, but ever so little curve in your character, and there shall not fail to be prophesyings of the entire man—its bulk, bias, blasphemy, and benediction; so you shall find the centre of all-controlling motive in you from the circumference of circumscribed

action, and soon know whether Satan and Self, or God and the Neighbour be the axis and pole of your being.

National life, therefore, is but private life amplified, and both are but the imaged-forth conditions of the human soul, while the Bible-History of the Children of Israel is the Biography of our Inner Life.

Veiled in allegory and illustrated by symbols, all the experiences of man's quick spirit are to be read in the records of God's chosen people. In Israel's subjection to a foreign yoke, is imaged our spiritual subjection to cupidities that abase us—our immortal part in thrall to the mortal, and captivity to the "law of sin" (1 St. John iii., 4), which is the licence, riot, and devilry of Self, ungoverned by consideration for others.

Israel's varied oppressors are typical of the varied sins that weigh heavily upon us, and the special temptations to which we are particularly prone; the phase of mischief we are mastered by; the bias we have to this evil or that; "the sin that does so easily beset us."

We all have our foible—all our peculiar aptitude for some excellent crookedness, and range of detestable power for things unlovely, ungenerous, ungracious, unprofitable, and unmeet.

The Hivites, the Hittites, the Amorites, the Jebusites, the Perizzites, the Gergashites, and all the bad brood have locations on our land, and do not at all improve it.

Heaven's command was that we should increase and multiply in the earth and subdue it; rule out the evil passions of the human heart—conquer the concupiscences of nature—quell the insurrection of the flesh against the spirit, and annex this little kingdom of matter-man for heaven, and colonise it for God. But, alas, the tribes of evil annex us, and we are led captives of our own heart's lusts, and again fall under the dominance of the Philistines.

"Was there a spear or shield seen amongst forty thousand in Israel?" sang Deborah—the doom number forty, usually significant of dark foreboding, and here of spiritual poverty, incapacity and lack of courage! No, for as we read "it came to pass in the day of battle



that there was neither sword nor spear found in the hand of any of the people," since "there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel; for the Philistines said lest the Hebrews make themselves swords or spears."

Yes, it is the policy of evil to emasculate righteous effort; and as our experiences show, self-indulgence enervates and indisposes us to resist the wiles and stratagems that seduce us. There is no disposition to smite the evil—no smith is found in the entire continent of man, resident with us throughout all our coast.

For the grand meaning of that noblest of all names, and therefore so common, is the Smiter, and he who is not a Gospel Smith (that is a right good smiter) has failed in the battle of life, failed in the conflict with self, and is of the miserable forty thousand whose hands are nerveless trenchantly to use sword or spear on the crying evils our coward hearts confess and will not avenge—"willing to wound and yet afraid to strike."

It does not sufficiently often occur to us that our worldly occupations, or those we naturally turn to with delight, and would love to work at even though pay for the same was not assured—that these things for which we have a liking and born fitness, may, perhaps, be correspondent of that which will engage our redeemed powers in the future life. For indeed there will be smiths found in the celestial land above of spiritual Israel, though not perhaps after the manner of the most ancient worthy craft as we know it here. There will be builders, also merchants, and musical instrument makers, and jewellers, and goldsmiths; for there will be harps and crowns and gold there. Masons also must there be after a divine sort for the upbuilding of the mansions of the redeemed. For the Carpenter's Son who wrought at the trade here himself on earth to glorify labour would not in heaven approve of that sanctified idleness so stupidly longed for by some, hoping to go to heaven only to sit for ever among the lazy saints and sing Alleluia. For the wonder-world above must be a state of intense life that has its rest in activity—its joy in use and its benediction in everlastingly being "fit and busy"—having the health of God's salvation to work,

work, work for the sheer love of it and the holy one—our Elder Brother—Who said, “My Father worketh hitherto and I work” (St. John v., 17).

The Divinity of Work has its analogue, however, in the Necessity of Play. For the truest amusement is to be found in industry—this for others’ uses, others’ good, others’ advantage and furtherance. Hence for selfish pleasure no one need weary to go to heaven, or delude himself in thinking with selfish cravings ever to get there, for the twain—self and heaven—are ideas absurdly incompatible.

THE SUREST WAY OF GETTING TO HEAVEN IS FOR EACH ONE TO TRY TO MAKE HEAVEN ON EARTH; and not scamping this world’s duties to be other-worldly in the mistaken way of sour and selfish religionists, they need not be in such a desperate hurry to go there until they can take with them a welcome contribution of heavenly-mindedness to add to the stock the angels trade in of that same quality and element that even if possible to reside awhile in the deepest hell would make it very heaven.

For this is the operative result of the unresting work in effable repose of the Great Unseen Operative (who worketh hitherto) working in human hearts to dispose them to be co-operative in the eternal scheme, most holy, of making every man an angel, and every angel a god, and all gods one with himself as the inscrutable “God of Gods and Lords of Lords” (for “I said ye are Gods”—St. John x., 34).

To this high end from the beginning was and is man’s being in Nirvana, ere from the bosom of the Eternal Unseen and Unknown he (as we are all effluxes thence and parts of Deity) came forth, the materialised spirit-form, incarnating as a Self-abnegating Artisan to do the Heavenly Father’s work in the upbuilding of humanity and the spiritualising of carnality, till matter everywhere, as the precipitation of the Great Spirit, is once again sublimated to and becomes everlastingly divine.

What wonder, therefore, if, in the higher life after our late incarnation in this, we carry back with us to heaven the love and habits of useful earth-occupations!

The things engaging our thoughts here naturally from love of them and for the use and benefit of our fellow kind, may there in the other life spiritually find something correspondent to them, and which we are being prepared for the practice and enjoyment of in our attachment, now to-day, to their material equivalents and counterparts.

Are we merchants? Then in the higher life shall it be that our merchandise consist of those eternal wares the Almighty Fabricator can alone produce and stock us with, who says, "I counsel thee to buy of me gold, tried in the fire, that thou mayest be rich, and white raiment that thou mayest be clothed" (Rev. iii., 18).

Are we mechanics, and do our fingers explore the secrets of some handicraft, that the chief constructive engineer of the universe, the most high architect and world builder, founder of blazing suns, moulder of planets innumerable, the supreme, unresting, ever working creator of all, has, in His love and need of our skilled labour, apprenticed us to? Then in the other life our dexterity in the heavenly work, answering to the earthly work we have known here—the infinities of time fitting us for the subtilities divine of eternity—will have free scope for spiritual uses and results high and supreme, that minds enfolded and clogged with matter yet can in no wise apprehend.

Are we builders, or carpenters, or masons, or smiths? Then "in temples not made with hands, eternal in the heavens," shall we see the results of our earth-labours, and see how in the outward foundations of our mortal life we were putting in material on which to erect the superstructure that shall last for ever, building for all time. We shall see where our spiritual carpentry was workman-like and good, or where this nail in passion was wildly driven, and left the mark of temper on the cross-grained stuff our land had grown.

We shall also see where the masonic application of our lives to duty had, by square conduct, level steps, and upright intentions, taught us high Christian morality, and equality, and justice ever tempered with mercy—rude matter brought into approved form with the chisel of

adversity which the master-mason supreme must sometimes use upon us for our good.

While as smiths we shall see where this imperfection demanded smiting, and where we divinely got it for our sin. Where we were bruised, and hammered, and rasped, till God brought us to the required shape and size to fit the place assigned for us in the economy of His eternal kingdom.

We shall likewise see where the flaw was in our character, that necessitated the fire, as it seemed of God's wrath upon us, to fuse us more compactly up, and weld us more together.

"Devil stones," as foundry men call the clinkers that will not amalgamate with any amount of smelting or the persistent smittings of the best smith, are not capable of being wrought up to any serviceable use. And where no smith is found throughout all the land of Israel, the best ironstone rusts and rots uselessly away, just as the geologic wealth of the iron measures in the hills around is profitable only in annoyance from the plague of dust about us, and the waste of words and explicatives consequent upon its existence without, and our early decease of patience within.

But even the most patient craftsman, the Omnipotent High Smiter, founder of molten suns, artificer in metals, as spectrum analysis shows—the god of Tubal Cain, and Lord of all—the refiner, and purifier, shall, as the prophet Malachi says, sit as a refiner and purifier of silver, to purify all men and purge them as gold and silver seven times in the fire (Malachi iii., 3).

The Divine Smith of spiritual Israel (who asks not to live and be of the Philistines pseudo-scientific, but exists notwithstanding), even He fails to get sufficient gold from the quartz, or silver from the lode, or iron from the hills to pay the working of such "devil-stones" as some men madly set themselves to be. For thus saith the Lord of such by the prophet Jeremiah (vi., 28-30), "they are all revolvers; they are all brass and iron; they are all corrupters. The bellows are burned, the lead is consumed of the fire, the founder melteth in vain, for the wicked

are not plucked away. Reprobate silver shall men call them, because the Lord hath rejected them."

But our text does not suggest a lack of material, or insinuate that it is of any inferior sort. If spiritual Israelites—and who may not be such—there are remains within of good, stores interior untouched, unlocked, and mineral wealth unopened, sufficient for our most prodigal home use, and largest export abroad. For, says the Apostle St. Paul, "to every one is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ." "The manifestation of the spirit is given to every man to profit withal." "My grace is sufficient for you," says the Master. While St. Paul again says, "God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith."

It is not, therefore, any lack of material, but scarcity of labour to work it, that is the burden of the text. "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel, for the Philistines said lest the Hebrews make themselves swords and spears." The gospel intimation in the statement of this dead historical fact, esoterically apprehended, is, that knowing to do right, we do it not; the enslaving customs, and wrong habits, and unruly wills and appetites, and dominating lusts and evils—Philistines within—will not let us; for we are bidden to smite them, and they know it. "Resist the Devil," says the Master; "Abolish the whole body of sin," says St. Paul. Fight! Watch! Strive! These are the injunctions of heaven and the Angel-world, to the regenerating soul wrestling with Self, Satan, and Sin; Shame, Suffering, and Sorrow.

Christian, up and smite them!  
 Counting gain but loss;  
 Keen-edged keep thy weapon;  
 Nobly bear thy cross.

It is a healthy, hopeful sign when men recognise the divinity of work, and are not ashamed of labour. Mental effort itself in the dark ages was considered derogatory, by the big stupids that cased themselves in armour, and ramped around moss-trooping and plundering and practising all kinds of fearsome feudal follies. For these could

not write their own names, and with the iron gauntlet crippling their rough hand, had to attest the rude ignorance of the barbarous age with the sign-manual; clumsily scratching a cross to this parchment or that sealed document, which, floating down the stream of time, and now stored in the cabinets of the curious, show strange hieroglyphics and caligraphy, that to decipher is provocative of profanity. For when work is thought plebeian, then thought is in danger of contempt, and learning suffers.

It is a sorry thing for any people when honest work and manual labour are shirked, or neglected, as things to be ashamed of. A woeful thing was it for God's specially psychic nation when there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel. Hence taught by adversity and exemplified by their leaders, the Hebrew people adopted the wise custom from king, priest, judge, and citizen downward in the social scale for each to have a calling and learn a trade, and be a skilful craftsman of some sort, though their means necessitated not that they should be operatives. St. Paul was a tentmaker; St. Peter a fisherman; St. Matthew an accountant; and Jesus Christ himself, as the Son of a Carpenter, for thirty years helped his reputed father in that wondrous workshop at Nazareth—hence the sound theology of the familiar hymn (341)—

“O then be taught by Jesus  
That honest toil is gain,  
For Jesus wrought with Joseph  
With chisel, saw, and plane.”

If, thus glorifying labour, and not disparaging work, or thinking it derogatory to our dignity to lend a hand at anything urgent to be done, after the example of the classic hero Hercules—not to speak of the highest example afforded us in the Artizan-Life of the Founder of our Religion, while yet we may have no living need to stipulate for wages or go on strike for better pay, since Providence may permit us to enjoy the labours of those before us now gone to receive recompense in heaven, then, under such conditions, as also under all conditions,

work done from the love of it, and use of it, and advantage of it to others, rather than self, is indeed blessed, and thankworthy, and divinely acceptable; and ours, in the end (or rather new beginning, for there is no end) will be an exceeding great reward. Spiritual Israel will then never be lacking a smith when the Philistines threaten; and the world will never be wanting in men, truly worthy of the name, in any age, to carry on its high concerns in the aggregate of lowly duties, and bring down heaven to earth, and make it resident here abidingly.

It may not be necessary, nor would it be well for the craft, and the protectionist principles of Trades Unionism would be against us, for all to be operative smiths; but speculative, and spiritual, and very very busy smiths, in a gospel sense, we all must be. For there is a world of smiting yet to be done within, and if our text stands terribly true in its applicability to any of us, we are in a sorry sorry case indeed.

If there be "no smith found throughout all the land of Israel," there is no smiter of pride within. Pride: "by that sin fell the angels," said proud Cardinal Wolsey in his fall. "Cromwell, I charge thee," said the dying, broken, brilliant, poor old man, successful butcher's son, mitred churchman, papal prince, and ruler of England's king, "Cromwell, I charge thee fling away ambition."

We need heaven's smithery and God's smiting too on self and the serpent sensual part in us. Hence, "Strong in the Lord," as King Hezekiah's name implies, like him must we be iconoclasts of the snake element within, and smash it up, as he brake up the brazen serpent, "for unto those days (as we read, 2 Kings xviii., 4) the children of Israel did burn incense into it; and he called it Nehushstan." That is a worthless piece of brass. So let our brazen base desires, the brass of impudence to simulate the gold of a holy virtue that we have not, go the same way with this ecclesiastical relict that was a snare to Israel.

There must indeed be hard smith-work, and terrible smiting also on self. Our nature must be depolarised from

evil, to point towards good, away from self towards God.

When the "Northumberland" was built she was keeled from north to south, and such was the magnetic disturbance and deflection of the compass, that she had to be re-docked with bows from east to west, to block the race of electricity through her, and make her obedient to the needle. So we, by wrong education, imperfect edification, faults of construction, bad example and individual proneness to evil, must have the Divine Smiter upon us to correct our wrong magnetic bias, and bring us to swing round to the influences of good, that the angel of our life may lay our course to the port of heaven.

Again there must be good, sound, patient smith-work, and manful smiting of passion. As pride goeth before destruction, so a hasty spirit is prophetic of a fall—"Better is he that ruleth his spirit than he that taketh a city" (Proverbs xvi., 32).

No smith found throughout all the land of Israel means no smiter in us of envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness. Therefore, let the Divine Smiter do his work in us. Let truth reign; it is king, and the very term is suggestive of this; for anciently the king (as the name shows) was the man of superior ken, cunning, and approved knowledge. Truth, therefore, claims our allegiance by Wisdom's Divine Right, while sadly often in a personal sense from the Right Divine of Kings have come the Human Wrongs of People.

Let truth, therefore, be our leader—we its resolute, fearless followers, battling for the right as manful smiters of the wrong that tyrannously has held the world so long in cruel captivity. Then the text which says "Now there was no smith found throughout all the land of Israel" shall be out of date, for the Philistines shall enslave no longer, and Israel shall be free.

"On, spirit of liberty, on!

Forward, is heaven's command,

'Gainst darkness and death, and error and wrong,

Advance to the fight, contend for the right,

And the legions of darkness withstand."



For

Christian dost thou see them  
On the holy ground,  
How the troops of evil  
Prowl and prowl around?  
Christian! up and smite them!  
Smite them day and night,  
Smite the fiends accursed,  
And conquer in the fight.

Christian, dost thou feel them  
How they work within,  
Striving, tempting, luring,  
Goading unto sin?  
Christian never tremble,  
Never be down-cast,  
Smite them, smite them, smite them!—  
Victory at last.

Christian dost thou hear them,  
How they speak thee fair,  
Flattering thy worst folly  
Or laughing at thy prayer?  
Christian answer boldly!  
Fight! and watch! and pray!  
Peace shall follow battle,  
Night shall end in day.

Well I know thy trouble,  
Warrior Smith, and true,  
Thou art very weary,  
I was weary too;  
But the toil shall make thee  
One day all God's own;  
And the end of sorrow,  
Shall be near the throne.



## DEATH THE GATE OF LIFE.

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Job xiv., 10: "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?"

*Mors janua vitæ*; Death is the Gate of Life—hence continuous, and immediate, and conscious being; no sleeping in the grave; for, as the Burial Service of the Church of England says, "The souls of the faithful after they are delivered from the burden of the flesh are in joy and felicity." The single bell that solemnly knolls the departing soul, with the pulsations of its vibrant atoms, awakes a tintinabulation in all the bells of the Golden City, resonant with joy, swinging in new amplitudes of rythm at this last new arrival in the Brighter and Better Beyond. For when mortals cry a man is dead, then, angels sing a child is born.

"To die? to sleep! To sleep? perchance to dream! for in that sleep of death what dreams may come when we have shuffled off this mortal coil!" says England's greatest writer. But rather 'tis here that life is a dream, and death the awaking out of sleep, for

This world I deem but a beautiful dream  
Of shadows, which are not what they seem;  
Where visions rise, giving dim surmise  
Of things that shall meet our waking eyes.

For when souls, from the world of souls, are sent down here, they are attired in the three-fold garments of the flesh—the three-fold raiment of the trine skins that clothe them—the epidermis, the rete mucosum, and the cutis vera—and put to sleep. But in the re-awaking from our earth-slumbers to the higher life we shall remember our pre-existence both there and here. For

life is all of one piece, with but a seam, scarce visible, that separates, in our incarnation here, the infinite past from the infinite future. While dreamless sleep, as we misthink it, is really soul wakefulness. Hence in the hours of slumber the spirit is active in the operation of its other life.

I sleep to-night after the labours of to-day's hard doings, and my soul carries with it to the wonder-world unseen the thread of things poorly attempted, half done, and brings them to better issues in the life that will be mine when this mortal life is ended. So that I, at what is miscalled death, expect to see the results of soul-labour deftly accomplished in the hours of sleep. Yea, I expect to meet spirit-friends whose acquaintance has thus unconsciously been made when the worn body has been deeply entranced in slumber.

Further, I also expect to see my eternal habitation, built as I here have been building it from the scaffolding of this earthly frame-work of the mortal body, and see it furnished with all the ornaments that subtle thought has fabricated, and human knowledge and experience have contributed.

I expect, indeed, to see all I desire to see; and I shall undoubtedly see all I am fitted to see, and know all I am prepared to know, and enjoy all I have the capacity to enjoy.

Death, therefore, to me is only the second volume in the romance of life—a re-issue of existence and new edition of things, better bound and more richly illustrated. It is an ascent in the scale of being. It is a matriculation to the university of the skies, after the lower-form experience in the school of affliction and discipline here below.

Death? What says the sweet funeral hymn?

“ Ah lovely appearance of death!  
 What sight upon earth is so fair?  
 The languishing head is at rest—  
 Its thinking and aching are o'er;  
 The quiet immovable breast  
 Is heaved by affliction no more.”

Yes, indeed, death is the gate of life, and not the end of conscious being. For if death were so—did nothing remain but the ashes of the burnt-out taper of life, and man that “giveth up the ghost” were but an unhoused ghost, a supposititious vapoury, intangible nonentity, that quickly might mingle with the elements and be lost, then man were the greatest enigma in the universe. But if, as has been said, death is only the end of the first little round in life—the first short flight; if it mark the end only of his seed time here; if his budding hopes, his lofty aspirations and dawning consciousness of latent desires, which no earthly good can satisfy, are but the swelling germs of faculties that are to blossom and bear immortal fruit; if he but wisely leave in the grave only the once animated dust, that now returns to the earth as it was, while the spirit returns unto God who gave it, straightway to rise from the sleep of present death to immediate future life in a perfect human form, and not a shapeless myth or formless essence, or insubstantial ghost, then death is a grand step in life—it solves the greatest of all enigmas, and is the fulfilment of which this life is but the prophecy.

The material world is the out-birth of the spiritual world, even as matter is the out-growth of soul. The material body, therefore, is the house I live in. It is no living part of the real man. It belongs to me, but it is not me. It is only the instrument of me—the tool with which I out-work God’s great purposes in this world relative to the next. So what we call death is only the vacating of this frail abode, which is the body, by the soul which is its tenant on life’s short lease. It is simply the withdrawal of the inner man from his outer shell. This he carelessly casts aside when its work is done, just as a butterfly casts aside the chrysalis when it has served its purpose. He deserts it, and in the act of so doing steps out of this world into another. So instead of saying that man is a material being that has a spirit, let us come nearer the truth and say that man is a spiritual being that has a body. Juster conceptions regarding mortal life and the life immortal then will follow, and death at once

will be robbed of all its terrors, for "Dust thou art, to dust returnest, was not spoken of the soul."

The immortal body untenanted of the soul loses its special attractive power over the elements of earth at death. The soul in command marshals these earth-qualities into their proper regimental organisation; it brigades the dust-atoms to do their duty in the battle of life and dragoons the body to execute the spirit's will. Like changing sentinels, it is said the particles of matter that build up our physical frame-work whisper the password to their comrades that come and go on fatigue duty with the atoms of oxygen, hydrogen, carbon compounding us; hence across the incessant flight of molecules the sense of personal identity is miraculously maintained. For life is a wave which in no two consecutive moments of its existence is composed of the same particles. Yet we remain the same and retain our own individuality through all the physical reincarnation going on within us, and the plastering of new life-elements upon and around our quick soul, that quickens with its command our mortal part, till that command is transferred to a higher district and its late corps becomes a corpse in outward death, life being absorbed and drawn within.

For it is this vitalising and commanding power alone—Deity's executive in us—that energises the body and keeps it in repair, that gives it form, and enables it to resist the forces of nature, which are ever waging warfare against its better desires after grace. But, losing this vital and God-planted power (when life's campaign on earth is done), the body soon crumbles under the solvent agencies of the world, whose chemical assaults and subtle changes are many and continuous. The corruptible then quickly goes to corruption—becomes fulsome earth, dust, phosphates, protoids, protozoa, salt and gas, and mingles with the elements; while the real man, escaping from the prison-house of flesh, enters upon his new career with wider prospects under new conditions, and with new results.

"Sown a natural body" at birth, it is "raised a spiritual body" at death. For spirit is far more real and

substantial than matter. It hath a longer pedigree, for it is from the Divine. It is not temporal, it is eternal. It is not mortal, it is immortal. It was first and will be last. For God is a spirit, and we partake of the eternal Divine. He, the Inscrutable, Mysterious, Great First Cause, is the "Alpha and Omega" of all things, and we, like Him as to our soul, are of kindred nature in the estate of grace; hence the temporal and material in us is only as the shadow of the eternal and spiritual, even as matter is but sediment and residuum of spirit.

Were this not true, what hope would adventure near the gashed earth of God's green acre, where then, forbidding, gapes a new-made grave for the remains of our best beloved? For when we look at the body only, and forget the spirit, the change which we call death indeed is terrible. There lies the form we have loved so truly, motionless and stone-cold, deaf to our utterance of grief, irresponsive to our plaint of sorrow. The light of affection no longer beams on us from the eye. The smile of love has faded from the lips, and soon the inanimate relict of one we held so dear disappears, mingles with the elements and is lost.

How terrible the fate if that form, that body in *rigor mortalis*, were the sum and substance of all that claimed our love, and chained us to it with the strong fetters of our willing captivity of heart, and devotion of life! How irreparable the loss if the friend, the child, the husband, the wife were that form! But they are not; they have gone home, and the inanimate body, insensible and unresponsive to our love, is but as the detached load of the quick spirit that else unharnessed, uncoupled, and unyoked from the toil of mortal life, would hinder the soul's translation and progress to the higher life, and the realms of light and heaven's eternal day.

We see them no longer now—our friends gone forward travelling upward; so we, the living-dead, bury our dead out of our sight. The body we see through tears, but not them. We, perhaps, really never rightly saw them, for "'tis only when they spring from earth to heaven that angels do reveal themselves to men." We often do not

see each other, but only the masks we wear; they of our departed friends have thrown off theirs; and when we have thrown off ours then shall we see them, and they see us, as even now they sometimes doubtless do, and as by heavenly help we ourselves may also them occasionally still see, and in the fulness of time not as "through a glass, darkly; but then face to face; and then shall we know even as also we are known" (1 Cor. xiii., 12.)

Death, therefore, is not an accident, nor a thing to recoil from, but to be welcomed, when our work is done, as grateful sleep, for the closing of the hard to-day and the dawning of a glorious to-morrow. For life's fitful fever over, we shall then sleep well—sleeping to our immediate awaking in the wonder-land of the higher life.

Death, therefore, is an upward step in life. Death also is the Deliverer, and blessedly comes to set us free from our captivity to the mortal body, and the thrall of the physical upon the spiritual; comes to clear the mist from the eye, deafness from the ear, torpor from the intellect, and sadness from the heart. For all our faculties are in subjugation to the flesh, and the divine capacity of the soul for love and joy, and consecrated hallowed uses is limited, narrowed, circumscribed, and bounded in by the angularities and crudities and cupidities of the body-man who grievously afflicts the spirit-man within.

Our mental powers and moral attributes are in bondage to our worsen nature, that is of the earth, earthy. We feel its restraints daily; we would soar with the eagle, fly with the wind, and spurn our native clod; but the body fetters the limbs of the spirit and anchors us to earth. For the body is the soul's prison-house and shuts it up in a dungeon earth devoid of light and joy; but only for a time, for Death the Deliverer comes.

So when the mantle of clay falls to earth the freed man of the emancipated soul escapes into life—the life of which death is but the door and the way of entering—*mors janua vitæ*—where all his powers will be wonderfully increased, and where, for our truer immortal part, there will be work that knows no labour, occupations that



know no toil; where each follows the bent of his own celestial mind and bias of his heavenly nature, and works out the fulness of heaven within him, making very heaven around him, and where yet there is (though heaven is the most exclusive place in the universe—only those being there who are fitted for its life) room for all, come they from whatsoever habitat they may of this or many a myriad other worlds that people the immensity of astral space.

Here, where the multitudes labour and are overwrought, whose service is slavery and whose toil is a curse, life is but a struggle for bare existence; but there, in the Beyond, on the borderland of which we stand, and know it not—there will be no unmeet rivalry or keen competition; and no painful apprenticeship to things disagreeable or difficult; for there we shall intuitively know how to do all we love to do, and love to do all we know how.

Everyone in the beyond will speak as he thinks, and act as he desires. The firstlings of our hearts may there be the firstlings of our hands without sin, and the cup of life's happiness, full to-day, by filling shall be made larger for to-morrow.

We see not as yet the substance of which this world is but the mere shadow—the spiritual being superior to the material as light is to darkness. For the faculties of the soul are asleep and we cannot as yet, encrusted as we are with matter and defiling clay, perceive the wonder-world wherefrom we are earth-wanderers, strangers, and pilgrims, for

Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting:  
 The soul that rises with us—our life's star—  
 Hath had elsewhere it's setting,  
 And cometh from afar.  
 Not in entire forgetfulness,  
 Nor yet in utter nakedness,  
 But trailing clouds of glory do we come  
 From Heaven—our primal and our final home.

For the natural part of us is only the outer crust of the inner, man being but the rough-cast of some spiritual

entity, or protoplasm of Deity, shrouded and tangled up in parcels of fibrine, albumen and phosphates that make the mortal body; the boundaries of this and the unseen world meeting within; which boundaries (with all the glories that lie beyond, and the eternal verities that surround us, being sensuously asleep) we may not see till we awake to higher life at death, when Death the Deliverer comes to remove blindness from the eye, deafness from the ear, deadness from the intellect, and torpor from the heart.

There also is growth and development in heaven. The old grow young. The infirm grow strong, and there is a continual advance towards the morning of life, and the more thousand years we live in Heaven the more shall we attain a joyous and delightful spring. Broken with the infirmities of age and the calamities of this life, we shall in the other advance continually to the beauty and bloom of youth, and ripen into angel-hood.

It should, therefore, be for us to welcome and never dread the advent, inevitable and divinely ordered, of Death the Deliverer, for the real man is no more affected to his hurt by death than matter-man is affected by the wearing out of his clothes. For matter cannot observe, reflect, remember, reason, understand or love. Mysterious as matter is—and its mystery nearly is as great as the infinite insolubility of spirit to account for the constituent nature or cause of both—yet in its most refined and almost sentient phase, as the fleshly garnature and raiment of man is to his body, matter has no power of itself. Organise it, fashion it, refine it to its very best, it still is passive and dead.

The human body, therefore, cannot perform one of its functions after the man has left it. "It is the spirit that quickeneth; the flesh profiteth nothing" (St. John vi., 63). When this is cast off, real substantial living men we then shall stand in the light of the wonder-world beyond the grave, and not as airy ghosts of insubstantial nothingness.

At the Transfiguration Moses and Elias talked with Jesus (himself transformed even to his raiment, which

became white and glistening), not as mere appearances, or disembodied vapours, or holy mists, but as real angelic men.

Dives also in the parable is seen to recognise Lazarus, and speak across the gulf of a forbidding discrete degree, or unhappy sphere 'twixt Hades and Paradise in the unseen, not as though either or both were the popular conception of ghosts—thin clouds of impalpable ether—but living, breathing, substantial men—one indeed far too substantial, for he had a parched tongue, and withal (as a problem that waits for "orthodox" solution), though in condemnation yet had he a feeling heart, wishing to have his brethren warned lest they also should come into like torment.

It therefore really was that the rich man and the poor man alike, in their burial only had lost each his body, as the earth abode of the indestructable soul—for body and abode are of the same root, and in its use the first term condemns at once Materialists and Sadducees, who make it the abode of nothingness within, a vacant tenement, an empty house, there being no soul or spirit in their philosophy to need such an abode as the body for its indwelling.

And the discipline of condemnation "saved as by fire" (1 Cor. iii., 15), godly had already wrought improvement on Dives, and softened his heart, still human, and surely not hideously to be damned everlastingly. For so, indeed, should punishment always act preventative of total depravity, in bringing out the Sanscrit meaning of the word at the root of purification; since even ever truly "there is some soul of goodness in things evil, would we observingly distil it out."

Human in nature, and human in form, athwart the tomb escaping from the body confined in it, the better part of us has through long ages past been seen; and by many still now is seen, when in prayerful thought, that often leads on to clairvoyant and clairaudient and other psychic experiences, we follow the soul disencumbered of earth into the beyond.

For who may dispute the declaration of Holy Scripture (1 Cor. xv., 44), "There is a natural

body and there is a spiritual body"? the first being the outcome of the second naturally, for "All souls are mine, said the Lord God" (Ezekiel xviii., 4), while from the declaration that "the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Ecces. xii., 7) there is the teaching that this must be after its discharge of allotted duties while wearing the raiment of the flesh, as the physical outbirth of the psychical according to law.

Some even have borne testimony to have known and witnessed the same in apparent absurd contrariety to law, having watched the process most closely, of the evolution (beyond all sane conception of law) of the psychical from the physical—human in nature and human in form, and have the seen and tangible stepping forth from the unseen and intangible!

This apprehended or not—for it passes at present all understanding—must suffice for the answer to the enquiry of the text, "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" "Where?" Why with those wherever it may be who are of like condition as himself (like attracting like) the aggregate of evil making D-evil—the association of the good being of God.

The locality of the "where?" in either case is of no importance when this law of combination rules.

"In deepest shades, if THOU appear,  
My dawning is begun;  
THOU art my soul's bright morning star,  
And THOU my rising sun."

"He descended into Hell." What for? To mitigate the sufferings of those "in prison" and "preach" to them in darkness the light of truth. (1 St. Peter iii., 19; Psalm cxxxix., 8).

"In Hell he—Dives—lifted up his eyes, being in torments" (St. Luke xvi., 23). But torment cannot be prolonged when the cause of it passes away. Hell has no permanence when the need for it ceases. Its simple Anglo-Saxon meaning, moreover, corrects the mistake of

its cruel signification; while Holy Scripture intimates its ultimate destruction (Rev. xx., 14).

Its alternative, also, as the blessed gathering place for those not everlastingly cursed by themselves with the lunatic perversity of the ill-conditioned (and even these in process of "regeneration"—being "born again"—are, by regeneration many times repeated, themselves made fit for heaven) is rightly named in the grand old speech of our Early English forefathers, and suggests the truth now emerging from the verbiage of ecclesiastical terms; so that in sober thought plainly it may be understood that **THE SUREST WAY OF GETTING TO HEAVEN IS FOR EACH ONE TO TRY TO MAKE HEAVEN ON EARTH.**

Then if not Sadducees—sceptical, or Materialists—pseudo-scientific, Spiritualists we cannot otherwise than be, and the question of the text is practically answered in our daily psychical experiences. While for those in mental thrall who dread Hell, and unintelligently hope to reach Heaven, to whom, of such gravity is the enquiry "Where?" everyone goeth that hath a "ghost" to be given up when he "dieth," stands for meditation in pious thought—helpful to them in their anxiety—the truly philosophical and patristic declaration:—

"In coelo esse, magis indicat statum conditionemque hominis, quam locum certum."

For no one need be in fear of going to Hell, who in his heart hath Heaven.



## CAST THE NET ON THE RIGHT SIDE.

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St. John xxi., 6: "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find."

Skilful workmanship in any handicraft compels admiration, whereas blundering stupidity gets scant patience when reasonable expectation looks for that measure of perfection which a long apprenticeship to experience should show.

Each one of us has a speciality—an aptitude for some given work in which he may stand supreme without a rival. Hence most of the bungling patchwork of mis-directed effort, and the disastrous failures in a man's career, are the unhappy result of a mistaken vocation, from first forgetfulness to test the adaptability of the mind and bias of the will for the thing attempted.

If, instead of a haphazard beginning to build, our earliest care led us to mature our plans with earnest solicitude and consultation with the Master Architect of the universe, there would be fewer unsightly moral ruins in the world—heart-break—soul-wreck and a wasted life; and our adversary would have smaller occasion to mock, saying "This man began to build, and was not able to finish." (St. Luke xiv., 30.)

The vast mass of mankind are the slaves of chance—creatures of circumstance, who drift hither and thither, ever at the mercy of the next event. They hail from nowhere in particular, and are bound for the dim uncertain. Objectless, aimless, with no definite plan or purpose, their course is necessarily zig-zag. Carried

about with every wind of doctrine—slaves to the frivolity of fashion—captives to the new madness of the hour, they are as vinegar to the eyes of the honest toilers, who plough the deeps in the voyage of life, and essay to explore God's wonders in creation, and with thrift, industry, and self-denial, now wisely make provision for the morrow.

At best we are very unskilful to note the times and seasons, and profit by the manifold opportunities around us. We toil all night and take nothing. We disquiet ourselves in vain. We heap up riches with carking care for the unserviceable love of coin, and cannot tell who shall gather them. We labour hard for the pampering of appetite with the meat which perishes, and fish in troubled waters for the glittering tinsel and toys of earth; and then, when the night of time staggers back at the opening of eternity and the daybreak of another life, despondent and deluded we find that we have taken nothing.

The Master stands on the golden shore which the waves of immensity kiss, and over the tumult of life's wild sea cries, Children, have ye any meat? I called you in the days just ended of my last incarnation—I called you ere from the tomb arising to stand here on the sea-shore of Galilee a materialising spirit-man divine—I called you to be fishers of men, to be spiritual anglers for the way-worn and weary, the downcast and despairing. Yours was the high vocation from the altitude of your own arduous climb of attainment and the exercise of those psychic gifts for which alone I chose you twelve (though one of you was a "devil"—St. John vi., 70) to draw humanity from the depths of depravity, and rescue the perishing and submerged. Yours was the vocation and call of heaven not to go back to the self-seeking ways of the world, but to draw out the noble from the ignoble, reason from insanity, the high human from the low brutal, and the true manly from the mere animal. I called you to be fishers of men. What is your occupation now?

And what is ours? Fishing? and not perhaps as in the case of the fishermen of Galilee for the needs of a simple life, but fishing for honours? power? wealth? position and



a name? Toiling to net some grand advantage? Ah! when the enquiry comes, with shame and confusion of face we shall have to confess that we have toiled all night and have taken nothing.

And why? Wherefore this criminal dereliction of duty and want of success? Why because we have neglected to let down the net on the right side. We have a blundering left-handed way often of doing good things, which is nearly as bad as our right-handed facility for doing evil things. A favour may be rendered in such an ungracious, ungainly fashion that a courteous refusal of it would have been far pleasanter; for "God loveth a cheerful giver" (2 Cor., ix., 7).

People who do after this sort are very much like the left-handed men of Benjamin, who could "sling stones at a hair's-breadth and not miss." They pride themselves on their ability simply to make this life a material success, for they have the smallest practical belief in any other. They are of this world, who in their generation are wiser than the children of light, and have no idea whatever of taking up with an unfashionable truth that would injure them in trade, or damage their 'superfine respectability. They pay for a comfortable pew at the chapel of some well-groomed gospel preacher, or at church make the orthodox responses to set rituals, and mumble the stale platitudes and inane gossip of Society, with sleepy satisfaction to settle on their lees and take life easily (Jeremiah xlvi., 11; Zephaniah i., 12), being intellectually keen on nothing, and too indifferent relative to everything to be quickened to activity of thought on anything; or if stirred at all to oppose what disturbs their repose, they pride themselves on their ability to sling sarcastic speeches at their neighbours, "They shoot out the lip and shake the head saying" things monstrously yet ludicrously untrue; "They shoot out their arrows, even bitter words" (Psalm xxii., 7; lxiv., 3). They speak the truth not to amend but to wound; so they are oftentimes brutally rude under cover of being out spoken and plain.

But when did this sinister style of archery avail for useful purpose; or of stone slinging practice subserve a

desirable end ; or of apostolic angling ever net large results, or do anything but mischief, or cause aught but trouble and pain? Pitiful, blameworthy, and to be sternly condemned is such left-handed action as this ; for it will never win a soul though it appear ever so dexterous in the sight of men. We must eschew our sinister ability touching these detestible accomplishments, and giving ourselves profitably to be fishers of men, supremely with all the readiness of affection, and unstudied aplomb of love, and uncalculating spontaniety of heart, cast the net on the right side of the ship if we would find.

We must speak the truth in love ; bear and forbear ; give and forgive. You may catch more flies with a spoonful of honey than a barrel of vinegar ; and with so much of the latter on stock in our unamiable nature we cannot help advertising the fact in the very aspect of our face, and so with ridiculous fussiveness we operate the best of things in vain.

Under such unhappy conditions you shall toil all night and take nothing, and then marvel that your persistent endeavours to dragoon sinners into right ways are not more successful ! But who is at fault ? Is it their depravity or your stupidity that is to blame ?

Let go your high heroics for a time and try a little homely commonsense in these things. For (Eccles. vii., 16) the "over-much righteous" sometimes give occasion for the "over-much wicked" to blaspheme (Eccles. vii., 17). Indeed it is to be rather more than suspected that when the Pharisee shows himself in God's sunlight the shadow of the Publican and Sinner is not a great way off. When we see the one we have not far to look for the other (St. Luke xviii., 10).

Bearing this in mind, therefore, if you wish a man to act right do not ply him with too many opportunities of acting wrong, by senselessly multiplying trivial rules and regulations for him to break ; and specially do not tempt him by useless limitations and captious curtailment of due liberty, to take the bit between his teeth and rush at your poor fences and foolish prohibitions, lest the impetus should carry him beyond all bound to disregard

his neighbour's landmark and lead him to trespass on properly forbidden ground.

Be your brother's keeper by all means, but mind you keep your temper. In charity forbear the hot reproof, and lovingly entreat, advise, exhort; for though there is a woe unto the world because of its offences, there is a greater woe to him "by whom the offence cometh" (St. Matt. xviii., 7).

There is the command, "Children obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right" (Eph. vi., 1); but there is at the same time the words "And ye fathers provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged" (Eph. vi., 4).

There is the command, "Servants be obedient to them that are your masters," (Eph. vi., 5), but there also is the injunction, "Masters, give to your servants that which is just and equal; knowing that ye also have a master in heaven" (Col. iv., 1).

In patience, therefore, possess ye your souls, and in meekness rebuke when you must; and in mercy chide when you must; but never in harshness rebuke, and never in anger chide.

Ask, don't bid; win, don't force; bend, don't break; lead, don't drive. In short, just do according to Christ's words of truest, heavenly wisdom, and let down the net "on the right side." Then shall ye catch men and win their love, and net many friends—yet not one too many, for

" He that hath a thousand friends  
Hath never a friend to spare;  
While he that hath an enemy  
Shall meet him everywhere."

So, to gain the former and miss the latter, let us do after the manner of our text; and let it be the golden rule and maxim of life in every zone and latitude, climate and longitude, under all circumstances, and at all times, and in all places, to cast the net on the right side of the ship; and we shall find all that heart can desire, or mind

conceive, or soul enjoy; find that which were hell to lose and heaven to gain; find love and life and truth, laughter, sunshine, and blessing, hope and joy and peace, purity, wisdom, and goodness, many and great mercies. And for all they be so many, yet shall not the net be broken. (St. John xxi., 11). For the soul's capacity for heaven shall enlarge with use, and strengthen as God vouchsafes his glorious gifts. Only let us "cast the net on the right side of the ship" in simple trust—in obedience, faith and love—with never a fear, misgiving, or doubt, and great shall be our reward. For if ye truly, saith the Sacred Writings (St. Luke vi., 35) "love your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again; your reward shall be great."

The prologue of the text is suggestive of many an act in the drama of every-day life. The disciples had toiled all night, and taken nothing. Not that the darkness was to blame, for night is the best time for fishers to drag their nets and ply their symbolical handicraft and typical calling. Morally and spiritually it is the same; for we may catch men best at times when darkness with them rests upon the soul; when the night of affliction and trouble is near; when the sun of prosperity ceases to shine, and sets in adversity, sadness and gloom; when hope, and love, and joy are dead; when anguish harrows up the soul; when consternation stalks abroad in fearsome guise like an appalling ghost to make the night of our calamity hideous with terror, and a measureless, nameless, dreadful horror, then is the supreme moment to win a soul and make a lasting friend; then is the time to speak a loving word, and cast the net on the right side.

But the disciples had (St. Luke v., 5) "toiled all night and taken nothing" to teach us how not to do the same. It was St. Peter—the self-assertive apostle, ever forward and pushing, and before his conversion somewhat pragmatic and a trifle too audacious—who said "I go a fishing." "I!" "I!" "I!" "You may just do what you like, but ego, I myself, I go a fishing" (St. John xxi., 3). And as one fool makes many, they all went at it in this same spirit.

And with a plentiful lack of humility we know how many (and some within the compass of our individual skin—three-fold—that clothes the worst fool of our personal closest acquaintance, seen in the nearest looking-glass, who always has been such, still is such, and ever to the end indubitably will be such) do the same, in other things, who meddle and muddle and blunder into a like ridiculous measure of success, and shew empty nets. Oh for the wisdom to cast them on the right side!

Are there not men whose piety is of a hard, harsh, repulsive nature; who know just how not to do the right thing lovingly; who have a back-handed awkwardness, a left-handed ungainliness for those things which, above all other, should bear the impress of the beauty of holiness and the suavity of Christian gentleness?

There are those who wear a bitter aspect, who stand the dark embodiment of an unworthy suspicion and a chronic doubt, and look the very picture of an incarnate negative. You scarce ever hear them say a sweet "Yes" to anything; it is with them from year's end to year's end a surly everlasting "No." One scruple avails with them more than a thousand affirmations. They stumble at a straw and seem to like it. But it is a sad, sad spirit, and if cherished so vitiates the whole man that it brings on spiritual paralysis, that cripples with sinister force our entire moral constitution, making us perverse, peevish, sullen, sour. It is the fly in the pot of ointment. Better, far, far better to bear all things, and believe all things, and hope all things, and endure all things, than to doubt everything and believe nothing. Yea, better, far, far better to be even a fond fool for Christ's sake than a curt caitiff for our own.

Charity teaches trust and says "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find"; while the unwisdom and lack-love of distrust toils for self ends; honours, power, riches, and a name; toils in futility all night and takes nothing, and gets cursed for its pains.

Let charity, and courtesy, and compassion, reign in us, therefore, with forbearance and forgiveness, so that patience may ripen to Christian perfection; and in every

state, condition, circumstance, and event of life, let us remember Christ's command when he said "Cast the net on the right side of the ship, and ye shall find"; and we shall be blessed in our deed, with the favour of God, and the friendship of men.



## WHEELS.

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Ezekiel i., 21: "When those went these went; and when those stood these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them; for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels."

There are wheels within wheels, and in nothing does this remark hold more true than in Holy Scripture. Indeed our appreciation of its nature, and value, and purpose, and use, would be of a very poor sort if—discerning not depths therein, and mysteries beyond our reach, and glories unimagined—we do not, with the Psalmist, whenever we peruse the Sacred Page, feel constrained to say "Open thou mine eyes that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law" (Psalm cxix., 18).

And wondrous, indeed, is the prophet Ezekiel's vision of the wheels. Strange things are seen in visions. The materialistic tendencies of the age make it the fashion to disbelieve in visions, and accredit all dreams, whether of Scripture authority or not, to merely natural causes. But such reasoning is indeed shallow, for it does not cover all the facts. There are dreams, and dreams, and doubtless many of the dreams we have are due to the half-awake condition we are in when we dream; so for the most part they are absurd and scarcely worth a thought. But there are also dreams of quite another sort, consequent upon the double operation of man's two memories.

For man has two memories. Memory of our body-life and memory of our soul-life. Hence, when we sleep, the outer memory closes and the inner memory opens. Ordinarily we remember nothing of our earth-life when we sleep; and ordinarily we remember nothing of our soul-life when we awake. But sometimes the doors of the

inner and outer memory are left half open, and then a blurred picture of both hemispheres of life is seen, and we say we have dreamed. For in sleep the spirit is clairvoyant and clairaudient, and sees and hears at times what transpires in the other world.

Ezekiel's vision was of this nature. With memory to retain the things heard and seen he as a prophet also was a seer; for, says the Scripture (1 Samuel ix., 9), "He that is now called a prophet, was beforetime called a seer." And what Ezekiel saw was so superlatively strange that most difficult is it without close thought to understand what the prophet's vision teaches. For mixed up with the mysterious Wheels was there that ornithological mystery the winged cherubim, and four other living creatures with four faces of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle, and every one had wings, with the hands of a man under their wings. Their feet were straight feet, and they sparkled like the colour of burnished brass. Their wings were joined one to another. They turned not as they went, but went straight forward. The appearance of the living creatures was like burning coals of fire. And the appearance of a lamp went up and down among the living creatures. And they ran and returned like a flash of lightning. Their rings were so high that they were dreadful. For they were full of eyes round about.

And then another element enters into the phantasmagoria, for Wheels and Wheels are mixed up with this strange compound of man, bird, and beast. "Their work was as it were a wheel in the middle of a wheel"; and when the living creatures went the wheels went with them; and when the living creatures were lifted up, the wheels were lifted up; and whithersoever the spirit was to go they went and the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the life of the living creature was in the wheels. "When those went these went; and when those stood these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth, the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels" (Ezekiel i., 21).

The lesson now of all this is Life in Progress. For stagnation is death. Life in Progress. For when the



wheel work of the curious mechanism of man is stopped, life's progress is arrested, and "Or ever the silver chord is loosed, or the golden bowl be broken, or the pitcher be broken at the fountain, or the wheel be broken at the cistern, then shall the dust return to the earth as it was: and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it" (Eccles. xii., 6-7).

There are indeed wheels within wheels, and life's escapement is most complex. We are fearfully and wonderfully made; and did we but see the operation of this life-machine of ours—the human body—we should be afraid to eat or sleep or breathe or walk or perform any of the functions of life for fear of throwing something out of gear. But all things work together for good and conspire to bring about the same great appointed end; and nature's established factory is for the production of fabrics of grace from heaven's supplied material; and the wheel-work of life is to TURN MAN INTO AN ANGEL.

Have you ever noticed the wheel-work of a turning lathe, and seen how the rough, clumsy, cross-grained angular block of wood has been quickly brought to smoothness, shape, and beauty? Well, in such a way God's mystic wheels turn. The sharp-edged tools of keen adversity are brought to bear upon us to take the nonsense out of us, and smooth off our rough unkind angularities.

In India I have watched the native mode of turning with a lathe-wheel of imperfect construction that made but a partial revolution and delayed the work, leaving it also with a rougher finish; and looking at the dusky Hindoo workman—with the heat at Jubbulpore a hundred and twenty degrees in the shade—I there and then meditated the thoughts I am now trying to utter, as I then felt how better it is for us to be properly shaphered off all round, even if it be with the sharpest discipline, so to be denuded of the ugly knots and cross-grained passions and tempers that infect our souls, though sorrow attend the process.

For to be hewn by the afflicting mercy of heaven into living members of it—pillar, shaft, cornice, capital, architrave and freeze—and have our place of usefulness,

if not of ornament and beauty, in the Temple of Humanity, is life's grand work; the wheel-work of the text being to turn our hearts and the hearts of all men to worship God in one another, and so practically "serve him day and night in his temple."

But the wicked turn to no purpose. "Turn ye, turn ye, for why will ye die, O house of Israel?" (Ezekiel xviii., 31). They are like the potter's wheel spoken of by the prophet Jeremiah, who regarded one that "wrought a work upon the wheels," and the vessel made was marred (Jeremiah xviii., 4). For the Omnipotent High Potter desires to make of every soul a vessel most perfect; but the vessel flies off the wheel in the insanity of rebellious self-sufficiency, yea, like a lunatic, the thing formed says to him that formed it, "Why hast thou made me thus?" (Isaiah xlv., 9). So from a vessel made to honour we perversely fall, and the work of heaven in us is marred.

Like the wheels of a clock that has no dial-plate to mark the time of day with us, until eternity is near and the angel of the resurrection with trumpet blast declares that time shall be no longer, we vainly spend our wasted opportunities to lengthen out to no purpose the span of life, which is but animal existence. The wheels revolve in vain, move aimlessly round, and work no profit either to self or neighbour.

"At thirty man suspects himself to be a fool,  
 Knows it at forty and reforms his plan.  
 At fifty chides his infamous delay,  
 Pushes his prudent purpose to resolve;  
 In all the magnanimity of thought resolves and  
 and re-resolves,  
 Then dies the same."

The wheel turns, but no grist is ground. Wickedness only is fabricated, until the righteous, wearied out of all patience with the wasteful wicked, in godly indignation cry with the Psalmist, "O my God, make them like unto a

wheel, and as stubble before the wind and the angel of the Lord scattering them" (Psalm lxxxiii., 13).

But the wheels of Ezekiel's vision are suggestive of progress, progress in right ways, or will be "Woe," "Woe"—progress rightly directed, and rightly inspired.

All true progress is from love. Hence in the fourth verse of the chapter from which the text is taken we read of the fire infolding itself. For love is the moving cause of all moral progress. Love is to the world what fire is to the locomotive—the mainspring of action, the means of propulsion. Hence fire is ever the natural true emblem of love, which is the first constituent of Deity, for "God is love" (1 St. John iv., 8).

In Eastern lands I have seen the Parsee fire-worshippers truly worshipping God under this sublime figure. For in every atom of the world—aye even in ice—there is stored up fire. We call it latent heat. Coal, which is portable climate, by means of which we can take Labrador to the Tropics, and make Canada as warm as Calcutta, is really solid sunshine—the embodied and embedded sunbeams of ages past outpoured over the trees then existent, and fixed in their trunks of wondrous mighty growth, till called forth now from the buried world of prehistoric times and remote geologic epochs by human energy and skill for present need.

So when we read of the holy fire infolding or catching itself we apprehend the action of the Divine Love in its operative energy, according to Divine Wisdom, in the human heart. For from this infolding or catching of the sacred fire that glowed within the wheels, we see, in a figure, how God's love restrains its ardour, giving us just that amount of heaven's caloric we can take, and are adapted to receive.

According to man's position on the earth with respect to the sun, that is according to his latitude, so is his capacity for the endurance of heat and cold. And as those near the equator can bear more heat than those at the poles, so those nearer unto the Sun of Righteousness can bear larger vouchsafements of grace than those far away removed.

Heaven knows our spiritual latitude and understands how much of its favour and benediction we can profitably receive; how much of the sunshine of prosperity we can enjoy without getting moral sun-stroke and spiritual paralysis. In this way God's love ever infolds, catches itself, restrains, and tempers itself for our good.

The All-Father knows His children's wants. An earthly parent has to do as our Heavenly Father does; has sometimes to show stern severity and hold love in check, yearning very deeply and tenderly over offspring whom yet he must punish to purify (for the two words from the same Sanscrit root mean the same thing) else, sparing the rod and loving unwisely, he spoils the child.

God's love—the fire of heaven—thus in like manner infolds, catches, restrains itself; is tempered to our needs, so, as we read daily, it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed (Samuel iii., 22). For in things prayed for, and hotly desired, but mercifully withheld, we see how the fire infolds for our advantage. "Behind a frowning providence, God hides a smiling face." The dark cloud we see, but not its silver lining; for its dazzling splendours would blind us, scorch us, burn us, all unprepared for its intensity.

The mystery of our life is that God can be with us, and we not perish at the contact; be near us, and we not wither at his presence; be around us, and we not conflagrate to instant nothingness. The great mystery of life is, to know, how the bush is burned and not consumed (Exodus iii., 2).

But in the midst of the fire, which as typical of love is also typical of life, in the midst of the fire are the burning seraphs under the four aspects of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle. First they had the likeness of a man. For man is built up of the qualities of all animal life beneath him; so, if we could take the characteristics of the animal creation, and in due proportion mould the various phases of life together, existing in beast, bird, fish, reptile, insect, and animalcule, we should build up the perfect structure of a well-balanced human mind; and there and then concreted would stand forth a man, the

true specimen of our kind, and sample of our race.

Hence the four characters here existing in each of the four burning seraphs suggest that the perfection of our spiritual constitution consists in our possessing the attributes indicated under the aspect of a man, a lion, an ox, and an eagle.

First of all our affections are to be truly human—the face of a man is indicated. Our desires are to be rational. Love is to be ruled by judgment and directed by reason.

Secondly, our affections must be courageous—the face of a lion is indicated. For what will love not dare? Love has nerved the martyr to face death joyfully. Love has moved the Christian soldier with open arms to embrace his blissful fate on the point of a forest of spears—gathering them to his bosom and dying gloriously for the righteous cause he loved. So the face of a lion is quartered on the entablature of the crest of love that dares, and does, and dies.

The third feature of the living creatures was the face of an ox, which teaches that our affections must be of its patient, plodding, obedient nature—the which, yoked to duty (be it never so mean, arduous, ordinary and uninviting) will yet in the common round and trivial task put stolid virtue to its work, and earn the consideration God appointed in the command, "Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn" (Deut. xxv., 4.)

The fourth lesson is that our affections must be lofty, soaring, lifting our desires above the earth. Hence the figure is the face of an eagle. And this one text will compass the illustration, "Set your affections on things above, and not on things on the earth" (Colos. iii., 2).

So we are to love with the reason of a man, the strength of a lion, the endurance of an ox, and ever soar heavenward like an eagle. It is the four-fold shewing of the quality of the affectional element in the wheelwork of our life; the mystical fire that energises, and inspires, and quickens the whole mechanism—body, soul, and spirit; that enters into all our concerns temporal and eternal; that is to purify, hallow, chasten; that must

“Breathe in our soul, inform our mortal part;  
 Be full and perfect both in mind and heart;  
 Be full and perfect in vile man that mourns,  
 As in the Seraph that adores and burns.”

This is the motive force that gives action to all true progress, that impels Earth Heavenward, that moves the wheels of the Universe—Love.

And now briefly from the fire that moved them to the wheels that move, “for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels” (Ezekiel i., 21).

The wheels of progress must ever run in the way of truth. Progress has relation to truth, for truth marches onward, and truth perceives; so the wheels of Ezekiel's vision were full of eyes. “The eyes of the Lord run to and fro in the earth” (2 Chron. xvi., 9). Hence we read, “When those—the living creatures—went these—the wheels—went.” For, as the living creatures are the warm affections of the heart, so the wheels are the truths in the human mind by which the soul makes spiritual progress.

To aid this progress, as truth is infinite—and cannot be attained with the greatest speed of thought in the lifetime of a single incarnation—there are wheels within wheels. For without an inner meaning to glorify it what nonsense were the text! Be it ours, therefore, to discern the saving signification and supreme sense of Scripture from Genesis to Revelation as of “a wheel in the middle of a wheel.” Then approximately shall be apprehended the import of the further somewhat mysterious language of the text “When those went, these went; and when those stood, these stood; and when those were lifted up from the earth the wheels were lifted up over against them: for the spirit of the living creature was in the wheels.”

Goodness and Truth, Love and Wisdom, Faith and Works, Precept and Practice are here coupled. When the one is operative the other cannot be idle. When the one is energetic the other cannot rust, or rest in repose. “When those—the living creatures—went, these—the

wheels—went.” There is life, and there must be action. Grace in the heart leads to its proper action in the world.

But “When those stood these stood.” The wheels cease running when the fire goes out. Love then wanes, and faith dies, and goodness fails, and wisdom ceases; faith and works fall out of gear, and precept and practice suddenly thereupon get their machinery mixed in such utter confusion that hell laughs at the woeful mischief resulting.

Promptly, therefore, let us get these spiritual things repaired. Let us see that our wheels are in working order—that they are with the true smithery of the skies tired with patience. “In patience possess ye your souls” (St. Luke xxi., 19). Then also at every stopping station on our way to heaven should we test our wheels, introspect our principles, and inspect our practices; by no means, moreover, forgetting in practical application the oil of grace, that our wheels may run smoothly.

For what is worse than a creaking wheel? Creak! creak! creak! And what a wheel-barrow wheel of a Christian is a creaky, cranky, soul, ever complaining, grumbling, growling, fretting and fuming; sour and angular, bitter and unlovely—the aspect of discontent in his face—shrill peevishness in his voice—acidulated essence of unpleasantness always on large stock, and concentrated shriekings, ear-piercing and terrible in the whole compass and gamut of his fretful life, and the entire round and daily revolution of his unhappy existence!

Ah! the wheels of his religion want more of the oil of true charity, more of the grace of human kindliness. His wheels also want lifting out of the ruts of self, and gloriously it may be done. For when the living creatures in his soul—his heart’s warm affections—are lifted up and he is taken out of himself, then the wheels of his thoughts regarding others are no longer hindered of the adversary to revolve kindly.

For so we read that “when the living creatures were lifted up from the earth the wheels were lifted up over against them.” The affections are exalted, the mind

elevated, and there is a blessed lifting up of nature to the loftier regions of grace.

The fire of heaven infolds and the wheels move. Zeal stirs, Love quickens, and progress in the regenerate life is made. So mote it be, and may we go on from grace to grace.

Attend to the Wheels. Let them not jam the axle and stop our journey heavenward from want of the lubricating virtue and oil of love and charity. Above all, as says St. Paul (1 Cor. ix., 27), "Keep under the body." Then from heaven will descend the fire to warm the heart, and move human affection for purposes Divine. Great then, forthwith, will be our progress with individual satisfactions, while blessed for all will be the result.

