



SPIRITUALISM—Progress, the Universal Law of Nature; Thought, the Solvent of Her Problems.—SPIRITUALISM

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SHALL THE SPIRIT BE FORGED OUT OF THE BODY?

Shall a Person Be Allowed to Suffer Intolerable Pains From Incurable Disease?

A Prominent Philadelphian Writes of Suicide and Its Results.

THE ANCIENTS GAVE A MAN THE RIGHT TO KILL HIMSELF—WE MODERNS, HOWEVER, HAVE A GREAT DREAD OF DISSOLUTION—HOW THE LAW OF THE STATES LOOKS AT THE ACT OF SUICIDE—TWO INSTANCES WHERE SELF DESTRUCTION WOULD HAVE BEEN JUSTIFIED.

Whether one agrees with Judge Simeon E. Baldwin and Dr. Nehemiah Nickerson regarding death as a recourse from incurable disease or not, all thinking men must hold to-day that death is held to be too much of a catastrophe and too little a matter of course, says the Chicago Chronicle. It has recently been pointed out that the Old Testament may be searched in vain without finding that death was ever regarded as a motive, positively or negatively, for the living. And this, too, in the face of the fact that the world was almost on the threshold of the Christian era before a school arose among the Jews to which faith in a future life was not unknown. "No free man thinks much on death," says that man drunken with the thoughts of God, Baruch Spinoza, and there is nothing truer to-day than the absurdity of going to a possible ending of life for guidance respecting the conduct of it.

Along with this feeling of hyperaesthesia concerning death in the modern world has gone a curiously growing disregard for the sanctity of the individual life. Suicide is held to be murder by all Christians and the common law bears this out by pronouncing it *felony*, a felony committed upon your own person. Yet how great a step has been taken since the day that when a man who took his own life was buried at the intersection of two roadways, "with a stake in his side!" New York, it is true, punishes an attempt at suicide as a crime, but the condition is anomalous; to condemn one who has killed himself when the successful are beyond condemnation is absurd, and only less absurd is the intervention of a human court when an appeal has been taken to the final and supreme one of all. Good manners and morals are conserved equally well by Illinois in holding it to be disorderly conduct merely, when such is the fact. Public scandal is to be prevented.

SUICIDE AND THE ANCIENTS.

The ancients held death self-inflicted to be a resort of unexceptionable propriety under many circumstances. The taking off of Cato will be in the mind of every schoolboy. Among oriental nations death is notably despised, and not infrequently sought as a blessing. Our newly found fellow citizens in portions of the Philippines have brought the unpleasant custom of running amuck into American territory, by way of example. In older Japan the practice of *harikari*, or ceremonial suicide, reached the point of etiquette and was described as the "proper thing" under certain circumstances. In India the custom of *sati* is not unusual for a man to kill himself at the threshold of his enemy, with the avowed intention of haunting him as soon as he has obtained the necessary information in the world beyond. Primitive man has at all times held to the right of self-destruction, and in most cases carried this forward to the point of ending lives filled with the miseries of incurable disease or extreme age.

It would seem, therefore, that while it has been the practice almost universally to take one's own life as one sees fit and to deprive the others to whom life is a burden, of it, as a matter of duty and humanity, we moderns have grown to such a dread of final dissolution that we would deny to those who love the consolation we grant to a pet dog or cat—of making a peaceful and dignified ending of what they do not hold worth keeping—any right to glory or grief. When a distinguished jurist like Judge Baldwin or a physician of repute like Dr. Nickerson unite in approbation of taking human life when it is undoubtedly humane so to do, they deserve to meet with something besides platitudes and false analogies.

A CHICAGO CASE.

Not many years ago a resident of Chicago was stricken with such an incurable malady of the kidneys that death became merely a question of time—at first of years, then of months, at last of days. To those who knew him well enough to understand that he was suffering from a mortal hurt to his constitution, and who knew enough of medicine to understand the effect of this trouble upon his mind and disposition, the result was sufficiently disagreeable and disconcerting. This was, of course, especially true of his family and more intimate friends. Just in proportion as one stood close to this man, in his prime a perfect specimen of physical and intellectual vigor, just so far was one compelled to follow the slow and insidious wrecking of all that was best in him.

This was for those who loved him. To those others who were more remote, his enemies more particularly—for there was too much character and positiveness in the man to leave him without warm friends, and so with warm foes—there was no knowledge of the pathological changes in him, only of the fact that a model of self-containment was losing all sense of restraint upon confessedly slight provocation, and that an exemplar of habitual self-denial should indulge himself in the grossest of excesses.

Those who read Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde," published about

would his family not have given and his friends and his work people, who loved him too, if this bitter bitterness of that last year could have been avoided? Who could have blamed the pious hand which steeped his soul in a Lethe from which it could not awaken again in this world? What blame would have followed a Dr. Nickerson had he administered the quietus, so far as intelligent persons are concerned? Many things are for the best—was this?

A WOMAN THE VICTIM.

Henry Ward Beecher is said to have observed that he never knew a Christian to make an edifying end when the cause of the death was situated below the midriff. For some reason not fully made out diseases having their seat in the organs lying under the diaphragm injure the character and disposition far more than those which are seated in the organs above that dividing membrane, generally and rather crudely speaking. But this is not always true, though it is sufficiently near an exact statement to be taken as illuminating if only its various bearings be studied out. A most estimable woman, for many years well known in Chicago, by reason of her complete devotion to her husband and family fell a victim to an organic trouble of the heart. She was a person of the strongest will, of intense vitality, of unusually good heredity and of the highest character. All who knew her held her in the highest esteem, though in some cases this was manifested by a feeling of envy, so various and so excellent were her natural gifts, refined and perfected by constant application and real nobility of soul. Unfortunately for everyone concerned, this estimable woman fell into the hands of the practitioners of a school of medicine which lacks at once scientific knowledge and scientific remedies. Treated as she was by purely empirical processes, she eventually fell into a droopy which forced her to confine herself to her chamber, though with characteristic energy she refused to be bedridden. This, be it noted, was not for years after her malady had declared itself. It has long been known to students of longevity that the chief factor in giving length of years is, after all, the tendency to live for a certain length of time regardless of all other considerations.

PRECIOUS TIME WASTED.

In the minds of educated and properly trained physicians with whom the case has been discussed there seems to be no doubt that the matter should not have been allowed to assume the phase of droopy, or having gone to that length, that it should not then be checked. The physicians who were in attendance upon this unfortunate woman, however, stood powerless in the presence of a mere symptom and while they were confessing their ignorance of palliatives the droopical condition grew into a poisoning of the blood. The patient, cheerful at the worst, even merry upon occasion, saw no reason for dying, and she had before, and could not realize that she was being left alone at a time when she most required aid. Because these physicians of hers had been in attendance upon her during other and slighter attacks and she had recovered she believed that they had been the means of her restoration to partial health—the fact, of course, being that her wonderful power of recuperation, her system having been wound up to go for a longer time, as it were, which had kept her from being permanently invalid.

So when urged by friends to take the counsel of other physicians she refused. No one was willing to be the bearer of bad tidings and disclose the whole truth that these physicians had given up hope of a cure and were yet unwilling to admit or to advise recourse to some remedy so bound by imperfect and disproved theory and unscientific practice. In their quandary they kept hope alive by vague promises of tapping for the withdrawal of the droopical liquid and by the administration of remedies which were not remedies. In this way four full weeks were wasted, every day, every moment of which was precious and beyond recall.

ASKS FOR POISON.

At last, upon a Sunday, these physicians paid their last visit to the sick-room. Just before their coming the patient had been seized with an attack of vomiting and a black mass had been brought up, which they immediately pronounced to be a fatal symptom of blood poisoning, or septicemia. They assured the trained nurse privately that their patient could not live twenty-four hours more, and they had the heartlessness to bid the poor woman good-by in a manner which left no doubt, even in her hopeful mind, that they were pronouncing a death sentence. When the two men had gone the sick person, in perfect command of her faculties, made the nurse sit down before her and tell her the truth. Of wide experience in such cases—though she afterward confessed she had never known such vitality as was exhibited here, either before or since—the nurse was compelled, by the superior force of this woman's character, to disclose in some detail the horrors of a death from such a cause. After listening with all due attention, the sick woman asked the nurse to bring her the powder which was in one of the drawers of the dressing case. When the nurse took this in her hand it was wrapped up. Removing the wrapper she found the box labeled "aconite," and she was forthwith assured that her patient intended self-destruction, as the less of the two evils with which she was confronted—as it undoubtedly was. The nurse therefore put the powders back in their place and returned where the poor woman could see her.

"I am compelled to refuse you those powders, madam," she said. Though she has blamed herself bitterly ever since, there was no word of blame from the lips of the person she had thus condemned to almost infinite suffering. The powders were not mentioned again.

GOES TO HER END.

It was necessary that there should be an assistant for the nurse. What had

been foreseen took place and the room became uninhabitable except for those devoted servants of the afflicted in the third day, which was Wednesday. Had not the wind been favorable and so continuing for an unusual time, the entire house must have been given up, in fact. Sheets saturated with powerful disinfectants and deodorizers were hung about; every fifteen minutes the nurse on duty rinsed her mouth and nostrils and gurgled her throat with appropriate germicides; the situation was inconceivably awful. For the sick woman preserved her faculties through eight long days, during which she was dying, literally, by inches—and her extremities were not only dead long before her intellect, but were grossly and horribly corrupt. She passed away on the Monday, a day and a week after her physicians had said she could not live twenty-four hours. Three or three before her death her heart, a part of her left lung and her brain were all that were alive in her. She knew to the full what she was passing through. She stood it like the woman of character she was. She could not move; she was denied the right to a death which was not an accumulation of horrors; she sat upright in her chair and bessed to her deserts without complaint. But she refused the consolation of religion to the last, and those who knew her felt that in her heart she believed God to be unjust in so afflicting her.

It is no difficult matter to advise after the event. Foresight and hindsight have been judiciously deemed to be different things. But who knowing what he knows now could have visited the nurse with blame had she placed the aconite in her patient's hand and turned her back? And if this is true, may not our present method be capable of improvement?

Experiences of a Suicide in Spirit Life.

The fate or condition of the suicide in the after life, is a question that has been much discussed by those entertaining various opinions. However as there is no school so thorough and exacting in its methods as the school of experience, doubtless the most important of life's lessons are learned in that school, as I had learned this one. I received an unexpected spirit communication. The spirit began by saying: "I am a suicide. When in earth life I lived in a house and in environments that were quite unsatisfactory." (I presume the spirit referred to the physical body as the house in which it lived while on earth.) "Being dissatisfied with my lot in life, I concluded to end it. One day I went to my room and threw myself into the stream, quickly passing into the eternity of the future. On regaining consciousness, I found myself upon a barren plain, dark, dismal and desolate. Alone I wandered about in the darkness, calling for assistance, but there came no response. I have no language to fully describe my sufferings. I prayed for relief, but alas, it came not. After a long time, when I remembered that when on earth I had at times prayed to God for help, kneeling, I prayed as in the days gone by, that I might escape from my terrible fate. God, however, did not grant my request, but again I saw the light, and with it came a voice, saying that no power could rescue me from my sad dilemma. Time alone could bring relief, there being no other position for me to occupy. When the time arrived when I should have passed from earth to spirit life in the regular course of Nature's laws. As I was being told this a star became visible and I was further instructed that when the star should reach its zenith, the time of my liberation would be at hand.

"Thus I was linked with misery and despair, until I heard a voice whisper, 'The time for your release has come.' When released I was told that I must begin life as a little child and work my way upwards. I learned subsequently that I had been in that state of suspense forty years."

The spirit was asked the object of the confession. The spirit declined to give the name it bore when on earth, on account of friends still in this life, who would be pained thereby. "What a painful lesson," he here set forth by an erring soul, who has suffered for the crime of self-murder. It doubtless seems a trifling matter to a thoughtless and dissipated individual to cut short his trials and difficulties of mortality. We are evidently destined to avoid the trials of life with patience and fortitude in order to become strong and vigorous and thus be prepared to fulfill a useful mission in the future life.

The confession of this spirit proves that if we ignore Nature's laws and by our conscious act sever the bond that holds us in earth life, the effect of such act must follow as inevitably as the weight falls to the ground. Nature's method of dealing with such outrages against the laws of life are not only self-operating, but stern, as well as calculated to correct the fault. It also proves that a spirit forced from the earth plane, a conscious suicide, has no proper place or condition in spirit life until such time as he or she should have passed on in the regular course of nature. Nor is this all; the spirit must return to the earth plane, take up the life work left undone, and finish the same as best it can, while meeting more and greater difficulties than would have

been encountered when it was in possession of the mortal form. It also appears that it is a part of the mission of such returning spirit to give the warning signal, that those who contemplate self-destruction may be apprised of their danger, and thus avoid the painful results experienced by this suffering spirit.

It will readily be understood by this lesson that any attempt upon the part of a mortal to escape meeting the trials and tribulations of life, is not only robbing himself, but the spirit falls back into an abyss of suffering fearful to contemplate, making the last estate more trying than the first. The spirit cannot escape from its own selfishness, or the results of such acts of violence and outrage upon its life.

As the spirit said the object of the communication was to impart a lesson, the writer thought that it should be put on record, that others who might be tempted to pursue the course of this unhappy and misguided spirit, might benefit by the danger signal, thus aiding the spirit to fulfill its mission.

In placing this communication on record, the writer hopes the lesson will meet the desired end for spirit and mortal.

B. B. HILL.

Philadelphia, Pa.

MINNESOTA ITEMS.

A Valuable Object Lesson for Other Spiritualists.

The missionary work under the state association goes forward with enthusiasm. Mrs. Kates and self find it congenial to our liking to be busy—and that has always been our life. If Spiritualism were working for at all it is worth our best energy. We have had large audiences the past week in opera houses at Princeton and Milac. Sunday, September 24, we had a splendid meeting with a crowded hall, before the Scandinavian society in Minneapolis. These people are full of zeal and spirituality. Their number also speaks volumes for the work being done by their mediums. "The Nya Tiden" is an unexcelled paper printed here in their language, and should be taken by all who can read it. The address is an earnest lady, fully capable of the great effort she has assumed.

The State Association employs us, pays our traveling expenses, and the localities furnish the hall and entertain us. The collections pay the state associations excellent dividends, and the local people get meetings upon an easy plan. The work is proving to be very useful in all ways. Meetings are held free of any admission, and the people attend in large numbers, whilst bars, opera houses and churches open their doors to us with only cost of lighting.

The results of the Minnesota missionary work will teach a valuable lesson to the Spiritualists. Instead of debating how do we get up, we are now debating how we can get down. We need enthusiasm! We need a willingness to do something practical for the cause, instead of always discussing plans and discussing efforts already instituted. If we desire propaganda to be effective we must educate. And the best way to instruct the people is to furnish ways and means to send instructors. We must prepare the way for phenomena, for that part of Spiritualism is little understood by the gaping and expecting multitude and perhaps by many confessed Spiritualists. Meetings for lectures and some dignified descriptive work, will leave a marked effect for good. We have thus reached a thousand people in a week, who would not to-day think that Spiritualism is a sensible philosophy or positive religion, nor hold the Spiritualists as decent people. These missionary meetings have been held by the Minnesota State Spiritualists Association. I hope to hear from every locality in Minnesota where we can hold a free meeting. After October we resume the work for the winter.

G. W. KATES.

Minneapolis, Minn.

Distilled Water.

To the Editor:—Mine is a short story in re distilled water, for I have had the actual experience. For over fifty years have I used as drinking water that taken from our northern lakes, more especially from Lake Erie at Buffalo. This water is more or less loaded with organic deposit and limestone. Now when I begin to feel the bad effect of this loaded water in my system, I always take about one quart of pure, freshly distilled water and put it through my system, one day in each week, and used in this way as a medicine it is of use, and to me of great use, for this one quart of water passes through heavily loaded with whatever matter it can pick up on its passage. But if I should use it seven days in a week it would be a very detrimental thing to do, for it would remove too much of the compounds that I need in my daily life in my body. But used in reason, and as a medicine, distilled water is of great use, especially to a person of a bilious temperament and rather sluggish through the system. Common sense and a good deal of moderation are good things to use at all times, in all things.

Buffalo, N. Y. J. W. DENNIS.

Lake Helen Camp-Meeting, Fla.

The first excursion will leave New York City (pier 45, North River) on October 24, at 3 p. m., by the Clyde Line steamer Comanche. I have secured first-class state-rooms, and am ready to quote very low rates to parties of ten or more, who may wish to visit Lake Helen or other places in Florida. The hotel at Lake Helen camp will be open for guests about December 1. Those arriving earlier will find accommodations in the Apartment House in Brigham Hall, or in cottages. Write me for particulars, rates, etc., enclosing 4 cents in stamps for postage on circulars. H. A. BUDINGTON. 91 Sherman St., Springfield, Mass.

N. S. A.

Annual Report of Secretary Mrs. Mary T. Longley.

To the Editor and Readers of The Progressive Thinker: Dear Co-Workers and Friends:—It gives me pleasure as secretary of the National Spiritualists Association, to submit my report to you for the year of active work that is about to close for this worthy organization. The year has been fruitful of results to the cause we espouse, and I am glad to see the progress in the progress and usefulness of Spiritualists as a body, and in many instances as individuals. Of this I am assured by the number of testimonials received at the home office from friends and strangers far and near.

Personally, the work of your secretary has been varied and diversified, not a little of which has been in the effort to assist in drawing together scattered forces, and to harmonize, by correspondence and otherwise the factions that have arisen between certain societies and this association in former years, and by explaining to individuals the true attitude of the N. S. A. towards Spiritualists and Spiritualism. What ever may have been the disturbing element that had caused the condition of inharmonious, and misrepresentation referred to, I am not called upon to explain, but suffice it that such did exist, and in a few instances may still be manifested; but I am happy to state that at the present time a cordial feeling of good-will between the most of our societies towards this Association exists; and the same may be said of the Spiritual press, while the affection and loyalty shown to the N. S. A. by private individuals, not especially connected with any established society, is very gratifying to its board of trustees.

In this connection the secretary would say, that she has habitually found in her correspondence, and interviews with societies, editors and private individuals, during her association with the N. S. A., that courtesy is met with courtesy, good will with good will, and sincerity with its kind, and that she has not the slightest complaint to make of lack of kindly treatment on the part of anyone, nor has she had to endure misrepresentation from any source. Therefore the labor of her office has been made pleasant to her, and contrary to the treatment received. There is on file at the home office, a large collection of letters from societies and individuals, attesting to the truth of these remarks.

With spiritual societies, as a rule, finances have been very low during the year; this has been no less so with N. S. A. chartered societies, than with others, as a consequence, those who are loyal to this Association, and who express their desire to pay dues and make contributions to this parent organization, have been mostly unable to do much in that line owing to the apathy on the part of Spiritualists at large towards the needs and claims of local societies, which necessitates the expense of holding meetings by the locals, being borne by a few hard-working individuals.

During the months of November '98 to September '99, the secretary of the N. S. A. had written eight hundred letters without the aid of assistant or stenographer, copies of which are in the press letter books of the association. The correspondence of all descriptions incident to the work of the office of secretary has been conducted without the aid of an assistant except for a matter of six weeks, at the close of the 1898 convention, owing to the generosity of a valued and well appreciated treasurer, P. J. Mayne, who had been engaged for the president and secretary, without expense to them, or to the N. S. A., and the same may be said of a period covering about a week, since January 1.

Quarterly circular letters have been sent to each of the chartered societies during the year, nearly all of which have elicited kindly responses.

On an average, a letter a month has been written for each of the Spiritual papers—not circular letters, but mostly varying in matter and construction—in the interest of the N. S. A. All of these have been printed; and here I wish to acknowledge the courtesy of the Spiritual press towards the N. S. A., and to myself, and I ask the thanks of the delegates in their October convention be passed to the several editors for all kindness shown.

On Saturday, December 3, the treasurer and secretary of the N. S. A. went to the Arlington Hotel, in Washington, D. C., to present a paper to the directors of the National Military Homes, requesting them to grant the privilege of using rooms at the soldiers' homes, especially at Dayton, Ohio, and Marion, Ind., where such had been denied to Spiritualists. We were courteously received by the clerk of the board, and assured that the appeal should receive attention at their business meeting. In the course of a few weeks the N. S. A. received a communication from the directors of the National Military Homes, that nothing could be done with our appeal, as the matter of religious worship at the homes must be left to the judgment and management of each home.

On Saturday, December 3, I started for a grand mass-meeting of three days held by the First Society of Spiritualists in Philadelphia, which society paid the expenses of my trip, that a good word might be said for the N. S. A. by one of its officers. The meeting was a grand success for the cause, and reflected much credit upon its managers.

In response to my personal appeals to friends, donations of money have come to the N. S. A. in a number of instances in sums of from one to ten dollars, with promises of more when times improve. The library of the N. S. A. has proved a source of instruction to many who have borrowed books for perusal from its shelves. The secretary has solicited by letter, and through the press donations of

their publications from authors, with the pleasing result of having over fifty books added to our library.

Of those who have largely contributed books to the N. S. A. since January, may be mentioned, Lillian Whiting, Susie O. Clark, who sent her complete works; Susan Porter, donating Abby Judson's works; Dr. E. D. Babbitt, four volumes; Carlisle Petersilea, four volumes; Florence Huntley, Frank A. Wigham, W. J. Colville, Annie Lord Chamberlain, Frank Walker, I. O. Fuller, and several unknown donors.

We have kept the headquarters open for business and visitors, the entire year, and endeavored to do our duty towards the work in hand and our constituents. Seemingly looked at as a bureau of information, the N. S. A. office receives questions upon all subjects from correspondents and visitors, that the officer in charge, is expected to do with certainty and dispatch, and as far as knowledge will permit, this has been done. In recognition of the splendid service rendered to her in many instances, the secretary wishes to acknowledge in gratitude, the uniform aid and consideration of President Barrett and Treasurer Mayer, and to add that each member of the board has done his part in adding harmony and aid to the general whole.

The N. S. A. has granted fourteen new charters since October 1, 1898—one state, one camp, one lyceum, and eleven locals. Several societies have disbanded, and others have affiliated with their state associations.

The secretary has found it impossible to trace charters lost in 1898, through the mails, as the registration made of them at the post-office to Charters sent out this year have been registered and accepted for.

A financial statement can only be made after the close of the fiscal year, when the books are presented to the auditing committee.

With loving thought and good will towards all, respectfully submitted, MARY T. LONGLEY.

Secretary N. S. A.

FROM A WORKER.

Field Notes from Mr. Geo. H. Brooks.

I should have written before of many things I desired to say, but I have been too much worn out with my work at Lily Dale, and besides very busy since the camp closed, to either feel like writing or have the time so to do. The camp was a success in every way. More interest was manifest in the meetings than ever, and truly a finer array of talent could not be found anywhere. We had several new speakers come among us, and all left hosts of friends more than busy.

One of the facts that have inspired me to write this article is this: Our worthy and honored brother, Lyman C. Howe, who has served the cause of Spiritualism so faithfully and well, who has left not only the teachings of our philosophy behind him for his heirs to follow, but the stamp of his noble, generous, spiritual life upon the community, an impress that can never be obliterated. Brother Howe informed me he had no engagement ahead of him, and said there seemed to be a mistaken idea in the minds of so many, that he was unable to do any work. Now, Mr. Howe has not been as well in years as now, and truly with the ripened experience of many years, and the helpers behind him, he is better able to do more now than ever. I trust our friends will give Mr. Howe all the work he can do, for truly if the old workers like Mr. Howe are not kept employed, what is there to inspire the speakers and mediums to spend the better part of their lives in the work, then when they get on the shady side of life, and there is no work for them to do. Brother Howe says he can do a better work for a society where he has a long engagement. I trust he will be kept busy.

I am sure when people hear such men as Mr. Austin and Mr. Howe, they will be led into a higher conception of thought. I shall, I fear, be unable to attend the N. S. A. convention, owing to my work in Pittsburg. I am truly sorry, but I cannot see how I can avoid it.

The first Sunday in September I held a grove meeting at Chamberlain, Ind. Mr. E. A. Brooks is the president of the society. The meeting was held in a grove belonging to his brother, and truly it was a Brooks affair. This is the third meeting they have held. I have served them two summers. There was a large attendance—larger than one year ago.

The second Sunday I held a grove meeting at Waterloo, on the consecrated grounds of the Chautauqua Association. There would have been a very large attendance, but rain began to fall just before the time for the meeting to commence. Still there was a very good audience indeed. I found a greater spirit of investigation than when there two years ago, and a spirit to receive the truth. The society is small, but it hopes to keep on until it can hold meetings more regularly. My address while in Pittsburg will be, 2018 Forbes Street, G. H. BROOKS.

Patience is bitter, but its fruit is sweet.—Rosseau.

Good deeds ring clear through heaven like a bell.—Richter.

Without earnestness there is nothing to be done in life.—Gotho.

A handful of good life is worth a bushel of learning.—George Herbert.

Eat at your own table as you would eat at the table of a king.—Confucius.

GODS OF ANTIQUITY.

The Deities Worshipped by Ancient Peoples.

This is a theme that has commanded the attention and invited the investigation of every nation, every tribe of the populated globe, and still it is being discussed with undiminished interest. The intelligent man is not satisfied with the knowledge of his own individual existence, his own belief in God, but he wants to know what the belief and worship of many of his ancestors was.

The primitive religious beliefs of the Egyptians have not been clearly determined; the oldest monuments reveal the worship of many gods. The same learned writers give it as their opinion that the original principle in them all is the worship of one god. Others equally learned believe the Egyptians worshipped a multitude of gods. The first and greatest of the Egyptian gods was Ptah; he stood at the head of the dynasties of the gods. His names were sublime. He was the lord of truth, the ruler of the sky, the king of both worlds, the weaver of the beginning, the producer of the egg of the sun and the moon. Having the power of both sexes within himself, he was a creative spirit.

The people of Egypt worshipped a multiplicity of gods. They worshipped the double god, the serpent, the bull, the cat, the ape, the crocodile, and many other animals and reptiles considered by them sacred.

The gods Osiris, Isis and Horus play a conspicuous part among the other gods of Egypt.

The Asiatic Tartars have their god Lama. The Lama is not only adored by the inhabitants of the country, but also by the kings of Tartary, who send him rich presents, and go in pilgrimage to pay him adoration, calling him god the everlasting and father of heaven. He is never to be seen but in a secret place of his palace amidst a great number of lamps, sitting cross-legged upon a cushion, and adorned all over with gold and precious stones, where at a distance his worshippers prostrate themselves before him, it not being lawful for any to even kiss his feet. He is called the Great Lama, or Lama of Lamas, that is first of priests.

The orthodox opinion is that when the Grand Lama seems to die, either of old age or infirmity, his soul in fact only quits a crazy habitation to look for another younger or better; and it is discovered again in the body of some child, by certain tokens known only to Lamas, or priests, in which order he always appears.

A particular account of the pompous ceremonies attending the inauguration of the infant Lama in Tibet, is given in the first volume of the "Asiatic Researches." The Emperor of China appears, on such occasions, to do a very conspicuous part, in giving testimony of his respect and zeal for the great religious father of his faith. The twenty-eighth of the seventh month, corresponding nearly as their year commences with the vernal equinox with the middle of October, is reckoned the most auspicious for the ceremony of inauguration.

The procession on these occasions, from Terepaling to Teeshoo Lumbao, is conducted with such slow and majestic solemnity, that though the distance is only twenty miles, it takes up three days. The crowd of spectators is immense. The three next days are spent in the inauguration in delivering the presents sent by the Emperor to the Lama, and in the public festivals on the occasion, during which all who attend these festivals at the capital are entertained at the public expense, and alms are distributed liberally to the poor. Universal rejoicing prevails throughout Tibet; banners are unfurled on all the fortresses, the peasants fill up the day with music, and night is cheered with general illumination. These ceremonies from the beginning to the close take up forty days. The newly inducted Lama is often not three years old.

The paradise of the Mohammedans is said by them to be situated above the earth, in the seventh heaven, and next under the throne of God. They tell us that the earth of it is of the finest wheat flour, or of the purest musk, or of saffron, and that its stones are pearls and jacinths, the walls of its buildings enriched with gold and silver, and the trunks of all its trees are gold; amongst which is the tree Luba, or tree of happiness. They believe that this tree stands in the palace of Mohammed, a branch of it reaching to every true believer, loaded with pomegranates, dates, grapes, and other fruits of surprising size and delicious taste unknown to mortals. If fruit is desired, it will immediately be presented to him or her, or if he or she chooses flesh, birds ready dressed will be set before them, and such as they may wish for. They believe that this tree will not only supply the blessed with delicious viands but with silk garments also, and beasts to ride on, adorned with rich trappings, which will bust forth from the spirit and the tree is so large that a person mounted on the fleetest horse would not be able to gallop from one end of its shade to the other in a hundred years.

The Koran speaks of rivers of paradise that flow, some with milk, some with wine, and others with honey, all of which have their sources in the Tree of Happiness. Besides these there are a great number of lesser springs and fountains, whose pebbles are rubies and emeralds. But all of these glories will be eclipsed by the resplendent and exquisite beauty of the girls of paradise, who are not formed as mortal women, but of pure musk. These girls live in hollow pearls from sixteen to sixty miles long, enjoying perpetual youth.

The gods of the Chaldeans were sky-gods, their home was in the open heavens. They were for the most part deities of the stars and planets. Twelve were worshipped as having divine powers of the highest order. The supreme god was El. After him was named the great capital Bab-el. He sat enthroned above the other deities in heaven. He was the lord of the Sky-Land. Auster and stern he was sitting apart from the other gods and without sympathy for the human race. His titles were The Warrior, the Prince of the Gods, the Lord of the Universe. In one of the Assyrian tablets he was called the Lamp of the Divinities, and everywhere he was recognized as dwelling in light and majesty.

After El, the next in rank among the deities of the Chaldeans was the god Anu. He had his abode in the concave dome of the heavens. He was called the Old Anu, the Original Chief, the Father of the Gods, the Father of the Demons, and other names. The chief seat of Anu's worship was the ancient city Erech. Here was one of the favorite burying grounds of the Chaldeans, and over this Anu was said to preside as a tutelary deity.

Then the god Bel, and Eeo, who was in the likeness of a fish-monster who came up out of the sea to teach the Chaldeans letters and astronomy. This god also came in the form of a reptile,

and was called Lord of the Abyss, Lord of the Sea.

Rome had its household gods, and Italy is peopled with gods.

Some learned men think that the worship of serpents, and various kinds of reptiles and trees was the earliest faith of mankind. Others have thought that the sun, moon, stars, and fire were the first worshipped.

There is no written record to tell us when man rose from his first low estate, when he first saw around him the world with its great silent hills and green valleys, its rugged ridges of purple-tinted mountains, and the resplendent scene that came forth at the budding touch of the sunlight, that sunlight that awakened the spirit of inquiry in the human breast. It is natural to suppose that man sought to get at the cause of things, of what he saw. His ears listened to the different sounds of nature, the music of the flowing river, the roar of the never silent sea, the rustle of the leaves as they were swept by the unseen fingers of the breeze. The rolling of the clouds, the dashing of the lightning, the hubbub that nature slugs in the twilight, all these stimulated man to ask, Where and what am I and whence came I?

To-day mankind is growing more thoughtful, and trustful; he prays for the things that perish not, telling his wants to an all-wise Being.

Some learned men have looked upon the various religions of the world as almost beneath notice, or if studied at all, studied as a proof of man's hatred to nature, and of his war with it, and more thoughtful men felt that we ought to try and understand them, and see what kind of answers others have given about God, life and death.

We do not make our own religion more true by calling other religions false, nor do we make it less to us by admitting the good that may be in them. It is true, many of the ancient books contain many silly stories, legends, myths, and coarse ideas about God. The errors that they contain do not make less true whatever of truth they hold. A diamond is not less a diamond because we pick it out of a dust heap.

God is no less the one invisible God of the universe because ancient people worshipped streams, trees, sun, moon, cats, apes, bulls, and many imaginary beings. He wraps man in darkness and makes him ever long for light. As that which costs little is valued at little, if much knowledge had been granted him at first, he would not strive after more, but because he knows little, yet feels that he has the power to learn much, he uses the power in gaining increase of wisdom and knowledge, till he feels the truth of the saying that wisdom is more precious than rubies, and all the things that men desire are not to be compared unto her.

MRS. MAGGIE STEWART.
Piqua, Ohio.

THE LIFE UNSEEN.

Spirit Message from a Noted Author.

The change which transfers one from earth's atmosphere to the realm of mind is not always "a sleep and a forgetting." Consciousness did not desert me. I but closed my eyes on my usual surroundings, to open them on other scenes, though scenes not far removed from those dazed and agonized by my far too hasty exit, and who were all unprepared to meet the blow. Feeling myself freed from bodily environment, I simply drifted until recalled to those in whom I was most interested, and there remained, endeavoring to soothe the anguish, to pour oil on the troubled hearts unable to realize that a real separation had not occurred. My escape from the mortal proved to have been well arranged by those who realized that my span was running low and that I must soon succumb to the inevitable, however bright appeared my prospects for longer continuance, where my hopes were so deeply centered.

Life in my far-off island home was fascinating to me in the extreme, even though banished as an exile to its shores, a necessary self-banishment for physical reasons alone. I now thoroughly realize how physical was my nature, which, had I understood more clearly, would have been of far more value to me in my earth experience. And of this I would speak earnestly and urgently, of how great consequence it is that each should know himself, should learn to realize his true nature, which is the physical, and should be awakened and cultivated to its very extent. Undoubtedly this idea is gaining ground with a certain class of minds, and must become more general, must reach all sorts and conditions of people, who are becoming fairly prepared to be governed by more humanizing conditions.

The world is being redeemed more rapidly than would appear on the surface, but away out of human view is being wrought a work of immense proportions and bearing directly on the important changes, soon to be established on earth. A tremendous power is already manifesting itself, whose touch no one will escape. A great spiritual force, the like of which has not been dreamed of, but which is to sweep all before it, winnowing the chaff from the wheat, as it pursues its course, leaving no stone which shall not be overturned. So inevitable is it that the old shall give way to the new that the overthrow shall be radical, unique. There is to be a great deal said and written in regard to this, and we who speak from the Borderland of certainty, trust to being able to remove last remaining doubts, and to ease troubled hearts by pointing out the surest, most direct method for obtaining a correct knowledge regarding the future.

Life, of the past and of the present, presents many contrasts. For while a strong resemblance exists between the two conditions, one is at once deeply impressed with the far greater reality of the mind life, its far wider scope, its more perfect conditions for advancement on higher lines, and its absolute permanency, imparting a feeling of security, of confidence, impossible to experience on the earth plane.

But, most satisfactory of all is the true, beautiful harmony which prevails, flawless, but penetrating, so that one should be perverse indeed to resist, for long, its all-pervading charms, not to perceive its advantages, how perfect its element of love, how sweet, true, harmonious.

Words that words might be mine to be able to convey, even a partial idea of the beauties, the delights, the utter satisfaction of this wondrous mind-life. And may the power be accorded us, to speedily unfold to the world natural and greatly desired glimpses into our unseen existence.

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON.

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JESUS AND THE CRITICS

An Interesting View of the Subject.

In the winter of 1875, I think it was, my mother had a very strange vision concerning Jesus and his mission. When I will give as correctly as I can from memory as I was a child when it occurred, and I have not spoken of it to her for years. It appears that a protracted meeting was in operation at an orthodox church some miles from home, and the entire family was from home at the time except herself and little babe, a daughter. She had been pondering much concerning Jesus and his mission on earth, and could not reconcile herself to the rigid orthodox beliefs, and yet she wished to believe something concerning Jesus that would not be a mixture of hate and love, tenderness and tyranny, and hoped for some sign to show that she was not wrong in her longings. As she lay on her bed there suddenly appeared in the doorway of the chamber, and perhaps fifteen feet from her, a luminous silvery cloud which took the shape of a man dressed in a dazzling white robe. His eyes were blue, and full of love, pity and tenderness, and his hair of golden brown, waving in the wind, and he hung in graceful waves upon his shoulders. His beard was of the same color as his hair, and his pale face was sad and thoughtful.

With a compassionate look that she could only compare with that of mother love, he stepped to the table and picked up a large Testament lying upon it; the book opened of itself in his hand, and he turned slightly toward her with extended hand, laid down the book and then was gone! She arose and picked up the book and as he held it, it apparently opened of itself at the gospel of St. John.

My mother I believe is a true Christian if there ever was one, and has had considerable communion with those across the border in the other world, separated from us by only a thin veil, and she is comforted with the thought that no fiery hell can await her, and that she will know as she is known and enjoy with the arisen ones the true glories of the hereafter by those who have fought the good fight, finished the course, and kept the faith.

I once myself am conscious of having attended in the spirit a meeting in an "upper room" in the city of Jerusalem, with hands, eternal in the heavens. I never can forget the grandness and beauty of the address given on that occasion by our Elder Brother, the Man of Sorrows, the Man of Nazareth. A lady attended this meeting with me, and the memory of that time will cling to me as long as life shall last. Jesus spoke on the ethics of moral philosophy, giving the principles by which our every-day life may be brought near to heaven, and was filled with the richest treasures of thought and pearls of wisdom. I can only compare with the Sermon on the Mount expanded of all the forgeries and interpolations with which it has been garbled by ungodly traitorous priests for the purpose of shackling the human mind, and yet give it a semblance to the religion taught by Jesus. I would say here that the appearance of Jesus corresponded greatly with the description given by my mother of the personage seen by her. He had a complexion that may be likened to the color of a ripened peach, except rather paler, and concerning his physiognomy, it appeared to me that he was of Grecian blood and race rather than Jewish, at least I judged he was not Jewish.

I have no patience whatever with those churchmen who would make Jesus God Almighty (though according to ancient dedication of good men he may have been a God) and ascribe to him impossible characteristics and properties. He never taught any such doctrines or precepts, and only priestly meddling and tampering with records dealing with him and his companions, have given such fallacies to the world.

Those upon whom who would garble the words of Jesus, and make a mockery of the mind of man and creating a priest-bound and priest-led organization for their own aggrandizement.

And as well I have no patience with those on the other hand who veer around the other side to the wind, and reject with scorn and the most bitter vituperation and contumely the very thought that Jesus ever existed, or say that he was a crank, bigot, fanatic, crazy anarchist, and such like villainous epithets.

Why do they not take the trouble of passing upon the New Testament, the candid, careful, crucial examination they give other matters, especially the investigation of the theory of a future existence and the ability to demonstrate it? What is psychometry for if not to read the past as well as the present? Have the anti-Jesuits become so bigoted that they will not turn the search-light of psychometry upon the New Testament, independent of all spiritual communication with New Testament characters, and must become more general, must reach all sorts and conditions of people, who are becoming fairly prepared to be governed by more humanizing conditions.

The world is being redeemed more rapidly than would appear on the surface, but away out of human view is being wrought a work of immense proportions and bearing directly on the important changes, soon to be established on earth. A tremendous power is already manifesting itself, whose touch no one will escape. A great spiritual force, the like of which has not been dreamed of, but which is to sweep all before it, winnowing the chaff from the wheat, as it pursues its course, leaving no stone which shall not be overturned. So inevitable is it that the old shall give way to the new that the overthrow shall be radical, unique. There is to be a great deal said and written in regard to this, and we who speak from the Borderland of certainty, trust to being able to remove last remaining doubts, and to ease troubled hearts by pointing out the surest, most direct method for obtaining a correct knowledge regarding the future.

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toches that it should be done in the after life, and I have no doubt of genuine cases of divinity. These days, they are essentially the same, whether made through a spiritual leader or an orthodox Christian. It seems to me, too, that Jesus was especially endowed with the ability to cause himself to become invisible at times, from whence arose, no doubt, the teachings of the Gnostics that he was not of the flesh at all, but a spirit which materialized and came to earth to teach mankind. Jesus had such wonderful spiritual gifts that it is not much wonder that his followers became mystics; the further away they got from spiritual gifts, to account for his manifold features of expression and characteristics.

The following passages clearly show to me that the Jews were puzzled at Jesus' ability to become invisible, owing to the high ethereal nature of his physical frame. John vii:10-11: "But after his brethren were gone up, then went he also up onto the feast, not openly, but as it were in secret. Then the Jews sought him at the feast and said, 'Where is he?' John xiii:39: 'Then some roused their sticks to strike at him, but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple, going through the midst of them, and so passed by.' John x:39: 'Therefore they sought again to take him; but he escaped out of their hand.' I also consider from my study of the Testament that the spirit of Jesus before his death, appeared unto people, and indeed it may be construed in the above passages that the astral body was the one that Jesus sought to take, being unable to distinguish it from the physical. Some time I hope to be able to write at length concerning Jesus and his mission, possibly treating the subject in some respects as it has never before been treated. U. G. FIGLEY, Ney, Ohio.

ESTABLISHED LAW.

A Critical Analysis of the Same.

The germ of everything that exists in nature is primordial. There has nothing been created during the past eternity and will not be through the eternity to come. What exists to-day, eternally existed in the infinite realm of spirit and matter, spirit being the matrix of all manifestation. Intelligence and design inhere in spirit as an active function, and give form and modifies what is under its control. There is no power in the universe more potent than spirit. It is the life of all life, the soul of all soul, the pith and essence of being; hence it holds within its grasp whatever was, is, or is to be. All of nature's forces are in perfect harmony with spirit.

The eolian harp touched by the gentle zephyrs sings its sweet anthems in accord with natural law. The crystal spheres dancing in their pebbly bed, impelled by an irresistible force, obey the high law of spirit. The profound silence it guides the planets in their revolutions. Every atom and molecule is subject to its authority, molding and governing all for high and noble ends.

Spirit is the inherent and manifest life of the universe. It pervades all space and permeates all matter. Its life breath quickens everything into activity. There is, no point in infinitude where spirit does not exist, ever active, ever working out its inherent tendencies. It has no compromises to make. Its yips, is preeminent in the realm of spirit; its commands are absolute. Being eternally supreme, nothing can thwart its beneficent tendencies.

Now, if spirit is primordial or self-existent, then matter is also primordial, for spirit can only get expression through matter. There must of necessity be a medium for its manifestation, and matter is that medium, however refined it may be. The infinite variety in nature is but the boundless wealth inherent in the underlying principles of the universe, each law manifesting itself in rhythmic harmony with its legitimate environments, thus producing a sublime unity of purpose, and all tending toward higher conditions and bringing to us new revelations of their inherent potencies.

There never has been, and there never will be a change or modification in Nature's laws. They always were in active operation and ever will be. In the domain of Nature they are sovereign and omnipotent. Love, truth and justice were never created; they eternally existed as facts in the domain of Nature, and their beneficent tendencies are always in evidence.

The greatest expression of beauty and the grandest manifestation of order are in accord with natural tendencies; and they but voice the law that governs them. The law of attraction and repulsion always was, and there is no power in the infinite realms of space that can modify their inherent tendencies.

Exact science and absolute truth blend in harmonious relations. They are both based on solid and substantial facts; hence faith and belief in an overruling providence science ignores, and the scientific method of discovery is the theological concept of a personal being formulating and governing the universe by the fiat of his will, the highest and best thought of to-day rejects as illogical. It cannot be reconciled to the judgment of an honest thinker.

Nature is relentless in her methods, and only by unfolding and developing the potential forces and powers in our being and thus familiarize ourselves with Nature's methods can we escape from her relentless grasp and avoid the pitfalls of error and destruction.

The consensus of the best thinkers of the age accept evolution as Nature's true and only method of procedure. This method is the scientific one. It is capable of explanation and demonstration, and is in harmony with reason and sound philosophy. By this method, life from monad to man can be traced consecutively, without a break in the golden chain of Nature's harmonious unfolding.

To this legitimate conclusion the thought of the age is rapidly tending. Now if scientific facts tend to controvert the biblical statement of creation, and the orthodox construction of the same, so much the worse for the statements and the construction; for all the theories in the universe must bow to the sovereignty of a fact.

The dogma of special creations is losing ground as special advances in knowledge of the mysterious and inexplicable is giving way to the actual and real. Reason is taking the place of blind belief, and knowledge is assuming its rightful sway, shedding a clear and certain light along human pathways, causing shame of every description to disappear; banishing ignorance, superstition and priestcraft with all their baneful results into the cesspool of the wrong and error of the past.

Man vision, and it is hailed with joy and inexpressible. The myths that have dimmed the mental vision of our common humanity are being swept away, and are being relegated to the realm of forgetfulness never more to be resuscitated. Progress for man is the keynote that sounds its clarion notes in the depths of our inner consciousness, arousing all our dormant energies, and quickening into more vigorous life all our active powers.

The path to the facts in nature is becoming more luminous, and its secrets are being revealed to the earnest student. The goal presents itself clearer to our mental horizon, and the unity and correlation of all natural forces more apparent.

Through science we are invited into a realm where the brightest and most precious gems are to be found, presenting one unbroken chain in the line of evolution from the atom to man into a realm where Nature sings her sweetest anthems in harmony with the eternal virtues.

How enchanting the picture; how rich in revelations from the unseen! How grand the privilege of entering into Nature's inner chamber and catching glimpses of her inexhaustible resources, ever wooing us onward and upward to higher attainments and grander unfoldments of our psychic powers!

The great mass of our fellows are slow to perceive the new light, being chained by the dogmas of the past, but their pure rays are shining brighter day by day. But it will be seen, felt and welcomed as human vision becomes clarified and man rises into a higher and more spiritual realm.

DAVID WILLIAMS,
Utica, N. Y.

MISTAKES OF TALMAGE

Falsehoods and Fiction Concerning Distinguished Deathbeds.

"And the fifth angel poured out his vial upon the seat of the beast, and his kingdom was full of darkness, and they gnawed their tongues for pain." (Rev. xvi, 10)

There are other falsehoods and fictions in the sermon of Dr. Talmage besides those I exposed in the Times of September 2. I quote:

"Benjamin Franklin . . . wrote to Thomas Paine begging him to destroy the 'Age of Reason' in manuscript, and never let it go into type."

Franklin dies three years before Paine wrote the "Age of Reason," the first paragraph of which is as follows: "It has been my intention for several years past to publish my thoughts upon religion; I am well aware of the difficulties that attend the subject, and from that consideration, had reserved it to a more advanced period of life. I intended it to be the last offering I should make to my fellow citizens of all nations, and that at a time when the purity of the motive that inspired me to it could not admit of a question, even by those who might disapprove the work."

In the preface to Part II, written after ten months' imprisonment, he tells us that he wrote the first part hurriedly, with neither Bible nor Testament to refer to, and unable to procure any. He knew his life was in danger, expected to be arrested, and had not finished the essay more than six hours before a guard came at 3 o'clock in the morning and conveyed him to Luxembourg prison.

These facts are a sufficient refutation of the allegation that Paine submitted the manuscript to Franklin three years before. But we have a further disproof by Paine himself in the following sentence, written in 1802:

"In my publications I follow the rule I began with in 'Common Sense'; that is, to consult nobody, nor let anybody see what I write until it appears publicly."

The basis of the falsehood repeated by Dr. Talmage is a supposed letter of Franklin, without date or address. It is the last of numerous letters printed in Volume I. of Franklin's works, 1837. The compiler does not venture to say it was addressed to Paine, and I very much doubt if Franklin wrote it. Anyhow, it has no reference to such a publication as the "Age of Reason."

The argument of the manuscript submitted to the writer of the letter is "against a particular Providence."

This letter has furnished material for a religious tract, entitled "Don't Undervalue the Tiger," an expression borrowed from the text of the letter.

Franklin was extremely reticent on religion, as shown by his letter to President Stiles, of Yale College, dated March 9, 1790, a few weeks before his death. In answer to Dr. Stiles' request to know something of Franklin's religion, he says:

"It is the first time I have been questioned upon it. But cannot take your curiosity amiss, and shall endeavor in a few words to gratify it. Here is my creed: I believe in one God, the creator of the universe. That he governs it by his providence. That he ought to be worshipped. That the most acceptable service we render to him is doing good to his other children. That the soul of man is immortal, and will be treated with justice in another life respecting its conduct in this."

Franklin further expresses doubt of the divinity of Jesus, and in a postscript adds:

"I confide that you will not expose me to ridicule and censure by publishing any part of this communication to you."

Franklin's religious sentiments were in precise accord with those of Thomas Paine. I quote from Dr. Talmage:

"Altemont, the notorious infidel—one would think he would have been safe against this delusion of the Christian religion. Of no. After talking against Christianity all his days, in his last hours he cried out: 'O! thou blasphemous but most indulgent Lord God, hell itself is a refuge if it hide me from thy wrath.'"

I remember reading this passage from the English Reader when a small boy at school, and with what gusto I repeated aloud the words, "Lord God, hell itself," printed in large capitals, and more suggestive of profanity than piety. Anyhow, the capitalized words were all that I could afterwards recall of the manifested fiction. The fabrication of such deathbed horrors has had its day, and is now desuetudinous. A generation or more ago there was a Universalist parson in New Orleans named Clapp, who visited the sick when the yellow fever raged. He published a statement to this effect: "I have probably seen more people die than any other man. They have all died peacefully, save two, who were orthodox Christians."

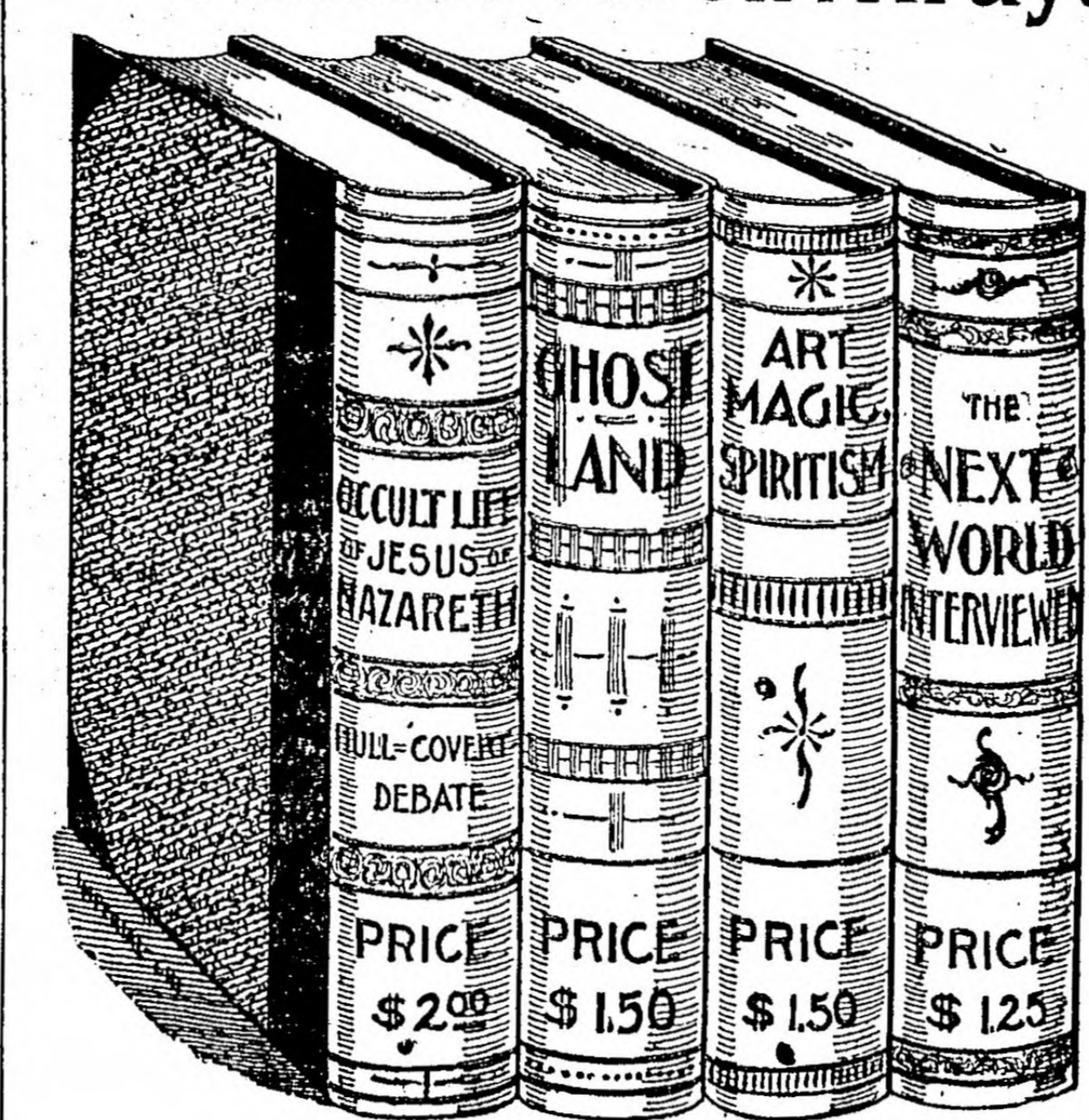
Another perversion of the truth by Dr. Talmage is in regard to the death of Voltaire. He never renounced his membership in the Catholic Church. A short time before his death he made the following confession, written by himself, to an accommodating priest who accepted it:

"I, the undersigned, declare that, having been attacked four days ago by a vomiting of blood, at the age of eighty-four years, and being unable to get to church, the cure of Saint-Sulpice having taken me to a place of waste land, thrown into a pit previously dug, covered with a sackful of lime, and then with earth."

The secret of this transaction was so well kept that in 1864, when the heart of Voltaire, which had been removed from his body at the embalming and preserved in a silver vase, became the property of the nation, and it was proposed to place it in the sarcophagus with the other remains, the Archbishop

of Paris observed that it might be well to ascertain first whether his remains were there. So the sarcophagus was opened, and it was found empty! Voltaire in his latter years, in letter-writing and in speaking, often repeated the phrase, "Je renonce l'infame," "I renounce the monster."

W. H. BURR.

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DAUGHTER OF THE SPHERES OF LIGHT

Mira Lamb--The Child of Adversity.

(Conclusion.)

Feeling a faint hope there might be a possibility of being redeemed from my fallen state by a change of locality, if nothing more, and in reply to his appeals, I said:

"I will consent to part of your proposition now, and will consider the balance later on; and that is this: If Grandma wants to accompany you home I will consent to go along, providing I may be allowed to remain with her as long as she lives; for I cannot think of being separated from her. She is too dear to me, and I want to care for her as she has cared for me in the past. I have long since banished all hope or desire of becoming a wife, knowing my life of sorrow and sin, which has nearly bereft me of any affection for one of the opposite sex. So you will allow me time after we arrive your home to consider, and, if possible, to convince myself whether I want to ever become a bride."

"You may have all the time you wish, dear Mira, if you will but give me a hope that I may sometime claim you as mine," he said, his eyes beaming on me with all the endearing fervor of love and admiration.

"We all have hope of bettering our conditions, or there would be no use of a change," I replied.

"I believe, yes, I know the change will be better for all concerned. If I thought not, I would not insist on your leaving your cottage home that has become so dear to you in consequence of the circumstances that have thrown you together. And as for you and Grandma being separated, you may have no fear. As long as you both live you shall remain under the same roof. Now as we have arrived at an agreement, the next step to be taken will be to make arrangements for our early departure."

"Turning to Grandma, he inquired: 'Do you know of anyone to whom you could sell your property?'"

"Yes," said Grandma, "my neighbor whose land adjoins mine, asked me a few days ago if I did not want to sell. He said it would make his farm square, as what I owned was a corner off from his land."

Horace saw the man the following day and a bargain was soon arrived at. The necessary papers were executed, transferring the little home that had become so dear to me into other hands. Now there was but little to do to complete our arrangements. Grandma and I must have some clothes, which were soon procured, and we were ready for our departure for a new home in the east.

Our journey to our eastern home was at last completed, but not so quickly, nor as pleasantly as it would have been at the present time, with all the modern improvements in modes of travel.

On our arrival we were greeted by Horace's mother and sister as friends, and members of the family, more than as mere guests.

Nothing of importance occurred out of the ordinary line of social life for some time. Finally Horace began pressing his suit for our marriage. I had learned to like him for his usual conduct towards Grandma and myself, and I did not deem it necessary to longer postpone it. Grandma said she believed he would be a kind and affectionate husband, and advised me to put it off no longer. After considering the matter well, I told him I was ready to accept. Everything was got in readiness in a few days. The few invited guests had arrived and were seated about the room waiting the arrival of the minister who was to make us "twain of one flesh."

They did not have to wait long. He was ushered into the parlor where all was in readiness. In a short time we were conducted to the end of the room where we were to receive the nuptial benediction. The minister, who was by the minister to join our right hands. At the moment Grandma rose to her feet, and with one hand pointing directly at Horace cried:

"Peace be unto you who are to be blessed with this pearl of priceless worth. I have long known to love and adore her whom you are about to wed, and I commend her to you at Jewell plucked from my heart. This adorned child of adversity I trust to your honor and sacred care, and may the angels watch over her in the future as in the past. Amen."

She sank into her chair, and the ceremony was completed by pronouncing us man and wife. The friends came forward to offer congratulations, but I soon noticed Grandma remained seated, and thought it strange of her. I ran to her to receive her blessing. "To my sorrow, I found her dead and rigid. We placed her in bed, and immediately summoned a physician, who upon his arrival pronounced her dead. At this announcement I cried, 'Oh, Grandma, Grandma, dear Grandma,' and fell in a swoon."

When I recovered I was lying on the sofa, and Horace was rubbing my hands and crying, 'Oh, Mira, what will I do if you should die?'"

In a moment I was at the bedside of Grandma. I thought all the light of the world had gone out with the life of that dear one.

For many months I mourned the loss of my dear benefactress. I loved her as only a child could love a dear parent. I knew no other earthly mother, and it was a long time before I became resigned to so sad a loss of the woman who had been to me the same as Horace's mother and widowed sister, and nothing of special interest occurred there after for over a year, when there was born to us a beautiful child, a girl, who in a few months became a sunbeam in the entire household. It was hard to tell which one I loved her best. She seemed as a ray of sunlight to everyone who met her. She was petted and indulged in about all her fancies, and if a request was not granted by one, it was sure to be by another. She appeared old in her ways and actions, and when able to utter only a few words, they were words wiser than for one of her age.

Time passed on very pleasantly, and our dear daughter Estelle became a woman in manner and intelligence, at ten years of age. At this age she could converse upon almost any subject with the same fluency as those of riper years. Her studies at school were readily learned without any special effort. Everything seemed to come to her, and she apparently knew all without taking time or trouble to learn. She was the wonder of the community and beloved by all who knew her.

While we were enjoying the beautiful and promising qualities of our darling child, there was a dark cloud hovering over that happy home. Every one who knew my husband supposed he was quite wealthy, and no one ever dreamed of his failure in business. His business was somewhat of a speculative nature, buying and selling almost anything he thought would be a profit. He knew nothing of his business transactions, as he consulted no one, until it was known he was unable to meet his obligations, and he appealed to his mother for assistance. This surprised her very much,

and how soon will I awake to find I have been visiting a fairyland."

When about overcome with the awful suspense—a prisoner in an unknown palace, I cried aloud:

"Oh! is this heaven? and how long may I remain here?"

"Yes, dear Mira, this is heaven to those who are worthy of it; and you may remain here as long as you wish."

I looked around to see who it was speaking, and to my bewildered astonishment, there was Grandma Good, with outstretched arms, who said:

"Again, dear child, I welcome you to my home, after a cold world had no further use for you, but let you suffer and die; but this time, dear child, separation will never come."

"Oh, Grandma, dear Grandma, what does it all mean? Where am I, that your dear blessed soul can rescue me again? I believed you had passed beyond the line of mortal care."

"Be seated, then, dear," she said, pointing to a beautifully upholstered chair, "and I will explain it all to you. You believed me dead, as the world in their ignorance do of all who have passed to a higher sphere of life. But I was with you as long as you lived, watching over you and your dear child. I could see by the way things were managed that you would have a home you could call your own but a short time. I could plainly see the unavoidable downfall of your husband, and knew when his earthly career was at an end you would be again thrown upon the world to care for yourself. As this was beyond any power to prevent, so I kept a watchful care for you, that I might guide as best I could until I was permitted to bring you here."

"But, Grandma, all is a mystery to me yet. Where am I? and how came I here? Oh! is this a dream? and will I wake to find myself lying on the cold ground, where I fainted last night? Tell me, Grandma, is it real, or am I delirious and fancy I am talking with the dead?"

"Yes, child, it is real—and you are not talking with the dead. Don't become excited, Mira, when I tell you you have crossed the river with me, and are now in spirit life. You are what the world calls dead, but you have only entered upon a new stage of life. Your over mental strain brought about by the anxieties, also the half-finished condition, bereft you of reason again, and you ran frantically through the streets until arrested by a policeman, who conducted you to the hospital, where you were kindly cared for. All medical aid was in vain, and you died—as they called it—in about a month afterwards, of inflammation of the brain. When you were released from the old body I brought you here to my home. You did not realize the change, for your mind was in such a condition from the effect of the disease that you remained in a comatose sleep for several days after, and have now just awakened to find yourself here, in my home. But never comes to those so worthy as you. No more struggling against the cold indifference of a heartless, self-aggrandizing world. No more sleepless nights, grieving over a sad, forlorn condition. No more begging at the doors of the wealthy for work to keep from famishing by the roadside. No, Mira, dear, you will no longer want for anything necessary to make you happy, for you are now where eternal justice prevails, and all are rewarded according to their merits. You will find here work to do as you did on the other side, for this life is just as natural as the one you left, only on a higher plane. You will soon learn, and be happy."

"How could I be otherwise, Grandma, when I know I am never to be separated from you?" I said, springing to my feet and embracing her fondly.

"There was a happy reunion when I met my father and mother, brother and sister, that had preceded to this life, the first two when I was but a little girl. My own darling son, whose tiny form we buried near our cottage home, had grown to be a man, and was not looked upon as one conceived in shame. All is known here to be in harmony with natural law, and no disgrace falls on those who have lived without the love of a man, and a peaceful life. Love is the essential prerequisite for all must learn. Instead of scoffs and sneers at those they consider born in shame."

My husband was among the first to greet me and welcome me to the new life, and it would be needless to say it was an enjoyable meeting. Many a long talk we had over my sad condition; how he and Grandma watched my movements and tried to guide me where I could find a place I could rest in peace, free from all anxiety.

My mission for this time is fulfilled. I have but little more to say. Under the wise instruction of Grandma Good and others, I soon learned "the ways of the spirit," and I have improved every opportunity possible in the relief of those to whom I could render assistance—which all must learn is the only way to "lay up treasures in heaven."

I have been more than a score of years in this life, and have felt for some time I would like to tell my story to the dear ones on the earth plane, that it might, in some way, be beneficial to some one. I have now completed the mission I have long been anxious to perform, and have in a measure illustrated the coldness existing towards those who are unfortunate in stepping outside the lines laid down by mortals as dishonorable, and am sorry to say that some uncharitableness still exists towards the unfortunate.

Oh, mortals, be charitable to all.

MIRA LAMB.
Daughter of the Spheres of Light.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

Mrs. E. R. Williams, a recent graduate from Willamette University, College of Oration, Salem, Oregon, has accepted a position in Belvidere Seminary, as teacher of physical culture and elocution.

She will enter upon her new duties soon after the National Spiritualist Convention at Chicago, to which she has been sent as a delegate. Mrs. Williams is a lady of culture, refinement and social standing on the Pacific coast. She has had two daughters at the Home School for Children and Adults for the past three years, and their development physically, mentally and spiritually has encouraged her to come as co-worker with its principals.

We solicit for her and the school the generous patronage of Spiritualists and all liberal persons who have children to be educated. The location of the school is justly noted for healthfulness and beauty of scenery. Terms moderate, and daily care and culture of the pupils are in accord with the golden rule leading to a wise self-government, which is the basis of all true progress.

The fall term begins September 26. For circulars address the Seminary, Belvidere, N. J.

"The Watseka Wonder." To the student of psychic phenomena, this pamphlet of psychic phenomena. It gives a detailed account of two cases of "double consciousness," namely Mary Lurancy Vennum of Watseka, Ill., and Mary Reynolds of Venango County, Pa. For sale at this office. Price 15 cents.

THE GRUMBING PEASANTS.

One summer's day—the tale is told—An honest peasant poog, and old—Worked in the meadow with his wife, When thus she spoke: 'Well, on my life!'

"This precious hard that you and I Must sweat beneath the burning sky, Like galley slaves, for pittance pay, And all because—alas, the day! Of Adam's fall! But for his sin And Eve's, how happy we had been!"

"True," said the peasant, "I believe, Had I been Adam—you been Eve—No foolish fancies would have come To drive us from our Eden home; But all the race, this very day, Had in the garden been at play!"

The Count, their master, standing near, (Though quite unnoticed) chanced to hear

Their wise discourse; and, laughing, said:

"Well, my good friends, suppose instead Of Paradise, my mansion there Were yours to-day; with princely fare For food to eat and wine to drink, Would that content ye, do you think?"

"Ah! that were Paradise, indeed!"

"What more," they cried, "could mortals need?"

"Well, we shall see," the Count replied; "But that your virtue may be tried, Remember on the table served With many a dish, there's one reserved; Partake of every one you see Save that, which (like the Fatal Tree) Just in the centre I will place. Beware of that! Let Adam's case Should be your own, and straight you go."

Back to your sickle, rake and hoe!"

Soon to the castle they were led, And by a table richly spread, As for a bacchanal carouse, Behold the peasant and his spouse!

"See!" said the woman, "what a treat! Far more, I'm sure, than we can eat; With such excess we well may spare The dish that's in the centre there!"

"Who cares for that?" the peasant said; (While eagerly the couple fed From all the plates that round them lay.)

"My dear! I wouldn't look that way!"

"No harm in looking," said the wife; "Wouldn't touch it for my life." But in their minds, at length there grew

A strong desire for something new; Whereat the woman said, "I wish I knew what's hidden in that dish!"

"And, to be sure," the man replied, "Merely to look was not denied!"

"And even touching it," said she, "Were no great harm, it seems to me; Of course I will not lift the lid; And who would know it if I did?"

She sulks the action to the word. When from the dish a little bird (The Count had slyly hidden there) Came rushing forth into the air, And through the open window flew; And so it was their master knew What they had done. "Away!" he said; "Back to the field and earn your bread As you were wont—and ne'er complain Of Adam and of Eve again!"

—John G. Saxe.

The orthodox moral to the foregoing clever and humorous poem is "the importance of obedience." Had not Adam and Eve transgressed the law—had they not disobeyed the command of God, they and their descendants would still be inhabiting the garden of Eden and would never continue to inhabit a because there would be no death. Good and evil would also, alike, be unknown to us. We would continue in blissful ignorance of either, had our first parents behaved themselves. But I am glad that they had the courage to act in accordance with a longing implanted within them undoubtedly by their Creator, for investigation, and ate of the fruit of the tree of knowledge.

"But in their minds, at length, there grew

A strong desire for something new."

That desire was a God-given one to which we are indebted for all the progress the human race has ever made or will make. That desire is growing in intensity as time passes and accounts for the inability of the church to hold its adherents any longer to its old, uncrossed, unreasonable creeds and dogmas. Where is the intelligent man or woman of to-day who believes that there would be no physical death had it not been for Adam and Eve's disobedience? The mental development of the human race is such that it cannot further tolerate this and many similar dogmas.

"I wish I knew what's hidden . . ."

This is such as draws the air we breathe and which has solved many problems in science, philosophy and religion which were heretofore considered unsolvable. In the realm of Spiritualism much that has ever been considered hidden has been revealed, and further revelations await us.

H. V. SWERINGEN.

THE BLOODLESS SPORTSMAN.

I go a-gunning, but take no gun;
As I fish without a pole;
And I bag good game and catch such fish

As suit a sportsman's soul;
For the chiefest game that the forest holds

And the best fish of the brook
Are never brought down by a rifle-shot,
And are never caught with a hook.

I bob for fish by the forest brook,
I hunt for game in the trees,
For bigger birds than wing the air,
Or fish that swim the seas.

A roddish Walton of the brooks,
A bloodless sportsman I;
I hunt for the thoughts that throng the woods,

The dreams that haunt the sky.

The woods are made for the hunters,
The brooks for the fishers of song;
To the hunters who hunt for the gunless game

The streams and woods belong.
And thoughts that mean from the soul of the pine,
And thoughts that are blown with the scent of the fern

Are as new and as old as the world.

So, away! for the hunt in the fern-scented wood,
Till the going down of the sun;
There is plenty of game still left in the woods

For the hunter who has no gun,
So, away! for the fish by the moss-bordered brook

That flows through the velvet sod;
There are plenty of fish still left in the streams

For the angler who has no rod.

—Sam Walder Foss.

"Social Upbuilding, Including Co-operative Systems and the Happiness and Ennoblement of Humanity." By E. D. Babbitt, LL. D., M. D. This comprises the last part of Human Culture and Cure. Paper cover, 15 cents. For sale at this office.

"The Dead Man's Message," an occult romance by Florence Marryat. The author's wide experience in Spiritualism and her study of occult science have prepared her to write this romance, which will be found laden with gems picked up in the course of her investigation and studies. Cloth \$1. For sale at this office.

ROMANISM A SURVIVAL

It Remains as an Impressive Warning.

Wordsworth speaks somewhere of nature leaving certain objects to a slow decay, that what we are and have been may be known. Romanism is a case of survival of this sort. It enables us here and now to understand the curious moral and mental condition of the mass of mankind, one, two, and three thousand years ago.

It apparently survives to make us aware of the immense advance that truly modern communities have made socially, politically, and morally. In Romanism we have the past embodied, as it were, as a warning into what a low condition civilized society might relapse if the reactionary spirit were allowed to get the upper hand. In this country, Romanism is an exile as it is in China. It is the religion of ignorance, poverty, stiffness, brutality, insubordination, and crime. One of the most singular historic facts of the nineteenth century is the revival of Romanism and ecclesiasticism which began after the fall of Napoleon I.

It was caused in part by the Holy Alliance of kings and emperors, which had for its object the suppression of popular government and liberal principles in both hemispheres. The excuse for this alliance was the excesses of the revolutionary spirit in France. Liberty was stigmatized as infamous. England, Prussia and Russia, all three powers outside of the pale of Romanism, under the influence of an intensely reactionary spirit, actually restored Pius VII. to the Vatican, after his long imprisonment by Bonaparte, who, if he had succeeded in his Russian expedition, intended to have suppressed the papacy, and declared himself pope-elect, uniting in his own person a civil and ecclesiastical supremacy over all Europe in fact—for, if Russia had been conquered, all Europe would have been at the feet of the Corsican adventurer. But man proposes, and the course of things disposes.

A reactionary literature also came to the assistance of the Holy Alliance of kings and emperors who were bent on towing the modern world back to the status of the Dark Ages. Walter Scott, who was really, despite his Toryism, on the side of his reason and common sense a thorough Scotchman, was on the side of his imagination and emotional nature a reactionist of the most potent description. Interiorly, he respired the very air of the Middle Ages. His "Lady of the Lake," "Ivanhoe," and "Rob Roy," and his romances were mightier agencies of reaction than the Holy Alliance itself. At one period, everybody in Europe was reading the "Waverley Novels." Even Dickens never had a moiety of Scott's world-wide influence. The lost cause of Stuartism was almost revived. The spirit of the ages of faith was rekindled in the breasts of the aristocracy of Great Britain. The following "Psalms and Ritualism" in the English church, Wordsworth played into the hands of Romanism with his ecclesiastical sonnets.

I have omitted mention of the reactionary movement in the world of literature and art in France and Germany called Romanticism. This was part and parcel of the Romantic reaction. The stalwart Vermont, Brownson, became a disciple of the French reactionist, Lacordaire, and reasserted in American speech the exploded dogmas of the spiritual despotism of the Middle Ages. Other eccentric Americans have also followed the example of Brownson. Meantime, the immense immigration from the south of Ireland to this country, during the last forty years, has made all our large towns and cities only too familiar with Romanism.

Notwithstanding this cataclysm of medieval bigotry and superstition, the cause of liberty in both hemispheres has prospered, and science and rational knowledge are becoming the watchwords of ever-increasing hosts in all civilized communities. Light and liberty are winning new trophies in every collision with the dark spirit of medieval despotism. The Pope has been reduced to a mere priest and ecclesiastical authority. The Jesuits, those ecclesiastical tramps and Janissaries of the Papacy, have been banished from Germany, and are interdicted from teaching in France. Even in Catholic Belgium, popular education under the control of the state has raised a fixed barrier in the teeth of Roman ecclesiastical and their tubulations. Italy is united and independent; France is a republic; Germany is also consolidated. American slavery has been abolished; Napoleon III. is dust, and his empire—at whose instance the attempt was made to introduce Roman Catholic imperialism into Mexico—is childless, crownless and powerless. Her Mariolatry did her no good.

Thus have Romanism and Jesuitism lost in every instance, of late years, in both hemispheres. The latest Jesuitical conspiracy of fight for popular education in the United States, will, in the long run, bring those engaged in it to signal grief. In fact, there is no chance of the Bastille being rebuilt in France, or the fires of the Inquisition being rekindled even in Spain, or the instruments of ecclesiastical torture being brought forth to the public repositories for the suppression of heresy. Reactionary bigotry shows in such queer publications as the Catholic World that it has forgotten none of the nonsense of the Dark Ages, or of the pagan period which preceded the Dark Ages. But it stops short with an oral or printed reiteration of the nonsense aforesaid. It dare not proceed to put its detestable principles in force. It dare not bring out its fagots. Meantime, Bourbonism, Ritualism and Romanism seem to survive to keep intelligent, modern, progressive communities in a constant state of vigilant activity, so that political and mental freedom may nowhere suffer detriment, but be continually promoted and strengthened over the whole area of civilization.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

"The Bridge Between Two Worlds." By Abby A. Judson. This book is dedicated to all earnest souls who desire, by harmonizing their physical and their spiritual bodies with universal nature and their souls with the higher intelligences, to come into closer connection with the purer realms of the spirit-world. It is written in the sweet spirit of that characterful and wise Miss Judson's literary works. Price, cloth, \$1; paper, 75 cents. For sale at this office.

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BECAUSE they fail to filter your blood.

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When your kidneys are not doing their work some of the symptoms which prove it to you are pain or dull ache in the back, rheumatic pains, scatica, sediment in the urine, scanty supply, scalding irritation in passing it, obliged to go often during the day and to get up many times during the night; uric acid, sleeplessness, nervous irritability, yellow, unhealthy complexion, puffiness, dark circles under the eyes, loss of energy and ambition.

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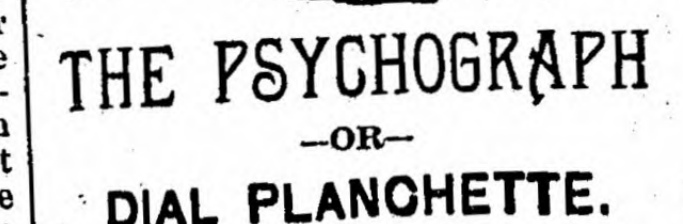
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