



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

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SPIRITUAL JURISPRUDENCE

By One Who Wore the Ermine When On Earth—Given Through the Lips of Mrs. Cora L. V. Richmond.

Like Othello, "My occupation was gone." From the affairs of human judgment, from a long life of studying and acting upon man-made law, from a judiciary which now seems an entanglement of error, yet which I then thought was the greatest and highest form of human arrangement of laws, I passed into spirit life. Honored far beyond my deserts, yet aware of fulfilling, as far as within my judgment lay, my highest duty.

I believed the law to be the supreme guidance of men and nations, and I deplored any departure from that supreme guidance. It is true, that I accepted a change of laws when inevitable; but founded in the Common Law of Great Britain and borne forward under its Magna Charta, I believed the laws of this country were most perfect. Yet there were times when it seemed to me that there was not sufficient simplicity, and that the making of too many laws might ultimately constitute the ruin of this Republic. The one thing required of the individual life I conceived to be, the fulfilling of man's duty in the line of life he had marked out for himself.

In religious matters I was content to take, in a modified form, the opinions of my father. I belonged to the church, to that church which in Great Britain is the "Established Church," but which in this country is not a State church; though in my secret heart I wished it were; still I could do nothing to promote it. I believed our forefathers did act wisely when they separated church from state. So I felt I would enter into the presence of the All-Wise, the dominant being whose judgment would be according to the strict lines of his infinite wisdom.

While there was something of humility (all is humiliation in the thought), still I had that consciousness of having fulfilled my duty well and of being obedient to the laws of my country and my God; that made me certain of a high estate in that kingdom. I believed that I had few shortcomings; in fact, if anyone had challenged my right I would have said, as far as I know, considering human frailties and weaknesses, my life has been up to the correct standard of duty and rectitude. I never reviewed my professional career in the judiciary, that I did not think it had been fully up to the highest sense of duty of one in my position. There was no weak yielding to sentiment when judgments were rendered. I took the greatest care not to allow my mere human feeling, which I believed a weakness, to get the better of my judgment and the law in the case. As I had sworn in taking my high office to sustain the laws of the land, so I fulfilled that oath according to best of my ability.

But, as I said in the opening sentence, like Othello, my occupation was gone. I did not sleep until that day when, according to our ritual, we are to be resurrected from the dead. I heard no "awakening trumpet," no voice summoning me. I was not aware of having slept. I passed out of earth life as from one room to another; and there, confronting me, were friends and those of my own household. They looked upon me with the greatest kindness, with loving greeting. I thought they did not pay me quite as much respect as they should have done, considering some of them had been very humble in material life. I had been somewhat of a prominent man; their manner was more like the meeting of an equal. I thought I detected, if possible, a look of compassion in the gaze of some of them. They, pitying me who would, of course, enter into my inheritance of spiritual life as one who had been just in all his dealings. I perceived that they received me with the greatest affection; but I saw no attendant angels, none whom I thought had authority. It seemed to me as though treated in keeping with what I had been in the earth life that, I should have had a little more recognition.

I do not know that I expected an escort of angels, but I had pictured to myself a sort of tribunal, similar to my court room, but much larger, into which I would be led and where my peers would be arranged to receive me. Although that would not be the judgment seat of the Most High, still it would be a sort of preliminary examination for me to pass to the higher judgment. So imagine my surprise on seeing these people, members of my own family and friends, whom, indeed, I was glad to see, whom I realized I had in some measure neglected when they were upon the earth, for my professional career.

They came around to welcome me as to some new existence, though I had not passed from earth; I had no consciousness of entering the state or place of heaven. Then I perceived that there seemed to be no especial raiment, that I did not seem to be clothed in light. But no one came offering me the raiment of the spirit with other belongings that I supposed would naturally be my own. I also perceived, as I looked upon my spirit form, that I did not seem to be clothed in any especial brightness. The garments of earth had been cast aside. There was no insignia of office; but I found myself wrapped in what seemed to be something like shadow, a sort of gray substance or mantle enfolding my form. I thought this must be something simply incident to the newly arisen spirit, and when I came to be placed in full possession of my spiritual glory I would have raiment of light and a high estate because of a cruse salute.

I said a sort of requiem over my earth-form; while men paid tribute to me, and there shone on me the beam of glory and splendor from the office I held on earth, and those things that are conferred by human judgment; for I felt I was to pass to that which was so much superior, although the highest office, I regarded, in my own government had been bestowed upon me.

Presently I was confronted with a man wearing a look that seemed familiar, and yet it was strange, because, if I was right in my recognition, on earth I had known him as in humble life. But he came forward to me, wearing what looked to be raiment of light; his countenance was beneficent. He said, as he held out his hand, "You are welcome to this life, and I am appointed to say to you, for the judgment which was an error of the head and not of the heart I have long forgiven you; but it was in your power, not only to have saved all that belonged to me, but my life." Then I remembered the countenance and how I had, notwithstanding the weakness tugging at my heart strings, pronounced judgment in exact accordance with the law, and I wondered at his patronizing air. Then I said to him: "Sir, I remember your face now, but it seems to me as though we have changed places; I see you are in a measure sitting in judgment upon me." "Not in the

least," said he, "for I have not had in my heart one unkind thought concerning the only one through whom it would have been possible for my human life to have been saved. "Then," I said, "is it possible that the case in which I adjudicated against you I was in error?" "Quite possible, as you will see."

Then I saw what seemed to be quite a multitude of people, and they came toward me bearing a scroll, and as they came nearer they seemed to belong to an entirely different class of people from those I had mingled with upon the earth. Yet as they approached their countenances were radiant, and their forms were arrayed in brighter raiment than my own. As they came forward the scroll was placed before me, and I saw therein one of my own decisions. I read it; as I read it the sentences burned into my mind and into my heart, since I knew by that decision all these lives had been affected, and many of them had passed out of earth life because of it, and many of them afterward through the circumstances resultant of that decision.

I cannot name to you what that decision was, not because now I am ashamed of it, but because I do not wish my personality at present to be known. But it burned into my brain, and as they gazed upon me with kindness I thought, "can it be possible that these men are greater in judgment than I?"

Again and again, for whatever length of time it may take for such things to occur in spirit—I know it was not a great length of time measuring from the human standpoint, but it seemed like ages—there came first one then another, then two or three, then a score all bearing similar testimony from away back in my professional life at the bar, where I began upon that principle of following the highest mandate of the law regardless of sympathy or human sentiment. A goodly array of faces appeared before me, some of whom had been mad with grief; others had been frenzied when condemned; but all seemed to be in better states than I. Their raiment was not so shadowed. They did not seem to be afflicted with aught that they had done. Where it had been in early life a matter of crime I had followed the legal proceedings closely and had adjudicated according to the law. But I found in some instances, to my great horror, that I had been utterly and absolutely mistaken. Though I said, as if in self-defense, crying out against them all: "I am not to be judged by any but by the Infinite Judge. I have tried to do my duty." But even as I spoke, I felt something tugging at my heart-strings, and there came a voice pleading, "But justice should be tempered with mercy always." Even as I would obtain mercy I was to be merciful.

I had forgotten this in the austerity of my life and judgment, in duty fulfilled and the doing of that which I had set out to do. So in no instance where there was an opportunity, where there might have been a chance for mercy, for the recommendation to mercy, even if one had been constrained to observe the full letter of the law, had I availed myself of this right of recommending mercy; though women had pleaded with me with tears in their eyes, though former clients had pleaded with me on behalf of young men, though there had been hundreds who had signed petitions on behalf of an oppressed class or people, still I did refuse. When all these confronted me at the very threshold of my spiritual existence I said: "Am I in hell, and have you assumed the raiment of light to try me here at the very gateway of this immortal life? I will not yield even now, for I have dealt justly with all my fellow-men."

Still the voice sounded in my ears: "Be ye merciful, even as ye would obtain mercy; and it came upon me at last, that in following the perfect line of the literal fulfillment of duty, of my perfect observation of all religious and moral laws, and the announcement of judgments according to my highest conception, intellectually, of duty, there nevertheless would be such errors against humanity as to bring this array of witnesses against me; but who shall plead my cause? Who I cried, will stand and defend me? Am I here in the midst of all these who confront me, and no one to plead for me? I who have been accustomed to pronounce judgment?"

Then did the voice, relentless, pursue me: "No pleading of others availed with you, no tears moved you to human sympathy, nor did you take into consideration their ignorance and lack of moral training. In no instance did you ask for clemency and, on that account, who can plead for you against yourself?"

Then the conviction came as a solemn condemnation: I am lost, and this is but a brief respite before that fatal hour. Perhaps I have slept for hundreds of years and this is the awakening unto that which precedes judgment, and this is all to roll away like a scroll, and the heavens and the earth are to disappear, and the judgment is to confront me, and this is my first examination. How shall I pass then, when that great, gentle, benevolent countenance meets me; He who had no harsh judgment for any except the judges, and who viewed the abandoned sinner and the outcast with leniency? How shall I be able to bear it when that visage of light meets mine and I have no record of loving kindness?

I remembered that in my early ambition in my profession, although I had loved I would not follow the voice of that love, because it would take away from my own expectations; and I remembered hearing afterward in the height of my brilliant career that she whom I had first loved had died of a broken heart. I remember the content with which I read that message, and thought: "How weak are women's hearts that they could thus break so easily." Had she just been patient and lived as I, while longer I might have raised her to my own estate. But she had died, and there did the matter end. While that did not change my views, for I was then and am now in no mood to declare it; but I bore my life well in my profession. It was said of me and believed of me, that I was the most devoted, most honored, most respected among all the judiciary. Now where was I? In my hopeless state I even remembered that face, that youthful, beautiful face which in the first flush of young womanhood I had loved, but had cast aside as interfering with my aspiration in my profession. Where was she? I was ashamed to think of her. Yet something came to me that possibly she might plead for me. My mother, where was she? In the midst of all those around me the mother whom I had forgotten for the sake of my worldly honors, the mother whom I had, it is true, supported or aided, but

who had never received from me any love since my childhood, where was she? Oh, perhaps in the great void that was coming to me, in that terrible judgment that I felt was to overtake me, I never in all the ages of eternity would behold those faces, or gaze upon others than these kindly, benevolent people who chose to forgive me. I did not even ask them for their forgiveness; I did not even feel toward them in a kindly spirit. It seemed to me as though their presence was a sort of impertinence.

Oh, the appalling consciousness was then mine! They had left me. I was alone. I was no longer confronted with my victims, for now it seemed to me that I was something of a murderer; it seemed to me that, without intending to be so, holding myself wholly in the right, I had committed sins such as criminals do; it seemed to me that a sort of prison house was forming around me, that I was going, perhaps, into that outer darkness where there are weepings, wailings, and gnashing of teeth. All of this gradually changed, and I seemed to myself to become a thing without a heart, a thing without light, to be separated from my kind, to have placed between myself and them this great barrier. Would no one come back, even with reproaches? I would treat them kindly enough if they would come and tell me that I had wronged them, and that they knew it was an error of the head and not of the heart. I would tell each and every one of them, that I did not understand, that I was ignorant of this great other law. But in the midst of all the moving worlds, in the great splendor of the heavens and starlit skies and of souls I felt utterly and absolutely alone.

Have you ever been wrapped in any selfish mood of sorrow, or of self-love, or even an ecstasy of human passion, shutting out all other things except your own sorrow, or your own enjoyment, or your own self-consciousness and suddenly become aware that you were separated from every other human being, from every other soul? Then you may understand, somewhat, my feelings. I remembered what I heard a clergyman say once. He was not a clergyman of the regular church. He was what was formerly called a "dissenter," still I heard him say that man was doomed to go down the steps of eternity alone, and I felt that that was prophetic, and I thought, "Am I only one of all the other people in the great kingdom of spirit life who are alone and have they to confront this terrible solitude as I do?"

Then I saw myself, the other me. I do not mean my body, for that had been put away with very great honor, but I saw what seemed to be myself—proud, unbending, without sentiment, harsh in judgment, with outward behavior that was full of decorum, but selfish in the pursuit of human honor and of gain, and having allowed nothing to stand between me and that human height. As I saw myself I looked like a stone image, not beautiful, like any statue I ever saw, but like an image, immovable. Was that my life?

Then I fell to torturing myself with conjuring up all conceivable things that would come to me: I thought of that "burning hell" and whether it was a literal flame, and how I had heard a heart-rending revivalist once say that, "Hell was a million times hotter than any furnace." Then I fell to torturing myself about other things—little neglects, little unkindnesses and all acts that were done with the view of my own advancement. It seemed to me that this state would never end.

Then I again heard the voice: "God is love." Could this be and I be cast out? Yet was I more than any other? I instantly asked, since all this had come for all my persistent seeking for self, why should I not still seek for self? What was it that I wished, recognition in the kingdom of life which was not like my own. "All must work out their own salvation with fear and trembling." I had leaned upon the foundations of the church. I had supposed that my salvation was secure. I had given myself no concern about this, because I had followed the routine worship. And now I must work out my own salvation with fear and trembling? Was I not afraid? Was I not trembling? Was I not in a prison-house? What was there to confront me as the judgment of the Infinite? Would I be forever cast out? Again the voice: "God is love," came in accents sweet and familiar.

Gradually when this fear had almost taken possession of my soul, I saw the face of my mother. Oh, how I yearned for her! Yet I shrunk back. "Mother, you have not forgotten me; and yet for all those years I did nothing except my formal duty toward you; my mind was wholly alienated, my heart was dead. All there was, was myself. I forgot your pining cheeks and the wrinkles that were forming upon your brow, though you smiled, and praised that which men applauded in me. Then when you went away from earth life I forgot to mourn as children mourn for the mother they love. I only thought of you as having passed out of life, and gave you my dutiful regard at sepulture, and now, how you love me, you are coming toward me. Do not look at me with those loving eyes or I shall certainly expire," and I fell prostrate before my mother, and my mother lifted me up as if I were a babe and said: "My son, in the midst of all this it is madness and blindness thus to reproach yourself. There is that which is selfish even in too much self-reproach, and if you immerse yourself thus in great sorrow because of your short-comings it is as much an error as to immerse yourself in pride when on earth; do away with this and come into the life that is most natural. That which you did was incident to this over-weening ambition, and I, myself, might have fostered it. In your childhood I told you to emulate the example of great men. I bade you look at them as a stimulus for all you did; but I met all that on leaving my body. I met that with which you now reproach yourself. But come with me."

As I went I grew into a better state, although I still dreaded those haunting forms, those past decisions, those that were not tempered with kindness and mercy, the array of people whom it seemed to me now I had wronged. I said: "Mother, is there no time nor anything in eternity whereby I can blot out that record?" "My son," she said, "there is no need of blotting it out; these great errors of life, by their very greatness, react and you see in them stepping-stones to higher conditions. Your record is sufficiently bad from the standpoint of life here; but not one of all these whom you have seen bears you one unkindly thought, and it surely is selfishness if you now take up that thread and bear it forward continually to your own condemnation."

"But what shall I do?" I said, "which way shall I turn?" "You are here and these friends are kind, then let me show you," she said, "the law of life in spirit. None sit in judgment upon others, you have been at the judgment seat of your own conscience. Not one of all these forms that you saw confronted you, but it was your own introspection, the vision of conscience, the partial awakening that made this grand arraignment before you. None of

these in spirit life have come to you. They have no thought of unkindness; and no one is permitted to accuse another here. It is the law of spirit, that we attract those like unto ourselves, or we attract only our own conditions which we have made. Now let me show you another picture.

I saw my childhood days. I saw my mother as she then was, and how, up to the time when this dread ambition seized me, I was full of affection, and she, seemingly led me by paths along which grew flowers that I wished to gather for her in childhood, those first wild flowers for which we ransacked all the fields and hills, and woods, then a little further on there the violets; and, oh! I remembered the scent of violets around her, whom I have mentioned, and I grew faint when there came up in my heart, full of pain, the thought that I would never behold her again; and my mother, divining my thoughts as I turned away, said:

"My son, there is one way unto perfect happiness, and that is by self-forgetfulness."

"But how am I to forget myself," I said, when there is nothing that does not remind me of my own short-comings?"

Then she said: "There are those in deep shadow. Come with me and I will show you."

I saw those who, "neath the command of men, even like myself, were suffering in sorrow and agony. I saw them under the stress of human laws condemned to slavery and servitude—not in technical sense perhaps, but in the sense of oppression and power. I saw criminals in high places loved, respected and honored. I saw men in lowly places dishonored because of toil and poverty. I saw in the midst of the reeking crimes of crowded cities many bright lights crushed out by harsh decisions and cruelty. I saw jails and penitentiaries founded by men who were conscious of more humanity and greater piety than I myself possessed, and since in the midst of their crimes some of these men would wipe out the memory of the mother's face; and I saw others whom I could hate. Oh, if I could stamp upon human minds the impress of what came to me! That whosoever thinketh himself great, wise and good shall pause in the midst of his career and remember what he is.

Then my mother said: "Yours is the mission, since you know all this from beginning to end, and have knowledge and access to all laws enacted by men, yours is the office to change human jurisprudence and that which is mis-called justice. First," my mother said, "you are not to think of crime from the human standpoint, but from the spirit; that takes into consideration the human condition. You are to endeavor to ameliorate the conditions of crime. Then you are not to consider that human laws in any sense are perfect; but you are to work for the greater perfection of human fellowship."

"But, mother," I said, "what do you mean? You talk as though there would be no laws, as though anarchy would prevail."

"My son," she said, "has it ever occurred to you that anarchy may be masked under the garb of law, that the greatest and divinest law may be put to death, even as was our Lord, because of human judgment?"

Then a new light came unto my spirit. As I gazed upon human law, upon all that relates to the affairs of men, it seemed to me that it was simply like a rope of straw; all the parchments, all the tomes I had read were like dust and ashes as I looked into human hearts and human lives. I said, "Mother, will it be in my power to change this?"

"When you have found the truth, my son, you will be able to impart it; until then you can do nothing."

"But what is the truth, my mother?" and then she pointed, as there seemed to be another vista beyond where we stood. There I saw a beautiful vision. The clouds opened, and there, in golden bordered letters, I traced, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another."

"My son," she said, "when that commandment was given it superseded the law and the prophets in Judea; why should it not supersede all the laws in the enlightened nations of the earth since it is true?"

"But how can it be true? Must there not be law before this can come true?"

"Oh, yes! for many, many centuries there must be, but," she said, "there comes a time—look again."

I saw certain lives whom I had considered seditious, certain ones whom I had helped to condemn growing luminous with that great love that was written there, and they came from among the people, and illumined human hearts to fraternity. Then there were new orders socially, and they brought about a new arrangement of business, and all those things that I had thought were illegal, seditious and worthy of being put down and destroyed; and they created local centers which became more and more radiant. Then I saw a horrible vision. I saw police and the militia employed against, and courts of justice condemn these men, as I had done. I cried out, "You are mistaken; these men are not seditious!"

My mother smiled. She said: "Your voice will not reach them. As yet the world is not in a condition to hear. But these centers of light will increase; these men called seditious will melt these shadows that you condemn; ethical law will increase and at last there will be a sense of the fraternity of the race."

"But I will go," I said "to the highest tribunal in the land and tell them that this is wrong, that they have persecuted men who are nearer unto me than I knew."

"That will not avail," she said. Reach the masses, appeal to those who constitute the power, the leaders of lives who rise to this knowledge and this standard. The men in power in the land where you lived are but creatures, not the creators, and so when these people understand they will destroy them, other lives will be sacrificed, these men will slay them. Have you not heard," my mother said, "that the blood of martyrs is the seed of the church? In the great church of humanity the blood of those sacrificed in such a cause must form the seed for the future humanity."

Then I looked again. I would inspire such minds as I found were ready, minds that were peaceful but earnest; minds that were intent upon bearing forward this message. I, who had condemned such agitation, who had believed only in the usual course of the law and the usual enactment of law, would impress their minds to seek for different legislation, to ask for different privileges, and this I will do unto the end; if there is any power that can be brought to bear upon human lives for this end I shall fulfill it.

In my weakness, in my humility I am learning as a little child. My mother led me through pathways of violets when I had forgotten myself and lot there among the violets and the lilies, waiting for me, was the one whom I had forgotten.

FREE THOUGHT.

The Growth of Liberalism.

The fundamental concepts of Liberalism are close kin to Liberty; free, not selfish, narrow or contracted; embracing other interests than one's own; open, candid, generous, broad-minded; charitable judgment of men and things. Liberalism impels us to demand "justice for all," not merely for self. No one can be a good citizen of this American Republic who is not a Liberal; who is not imbued with that principle in the preamble of the United States Constitution, "to promote the general welfare," who does not recognize the glorious fact of equal rights for all, so fully expressed in the Declaration of Independence.

Amid the clash of creeds for 800 years Liberalism has steadily gained, and is to-day permeating the churches. Occasionally a single society fails to keep step to the harmonious march of Liberalism.

Yesterday a Congregational church was dedicated in the town of Texas, Kalamazoo county, Mich., where forty years ago I began my public lecture work. For forty years these people have been without a church, most of them Spiritualists. They are a moral class, have been orderly, law-abiding, kind, neighborly. L. B. Burdick, now past 80, and his wife, formerly Mrs. Laura Voke, of Paw Paw, devoted Spiritualists, are a humanitarian, progressive couple. There are many here of a similar bent of mind, liberal, hospitable people; yet, I am informed that when the lot for the church building was about to be leased for ninety-nine years the church officials desired a clause to be inserted excluding Spiritualists' meetings. The owner of the land said: "No, I have many good friends among the Spiritualists."

I presume the church power has fixed it so that no Spiritualist speaker shall ever be heard inside its walls! Doubtless that will be the arrangement in heaven.

Rev. Samuel Jones said: "Thank God! I have had but three fights since I was converted."

A couple of the members of this church could boast of but one. Through the neglect of Spiritualists to care for the instruction of the young as diligently as the church, Christians here may gain the third generation; but the liberal spirit is absent. The work is growing better, although there are exceptions, like this new church. I used to say: "Well, Spiritualists are too liberal to exclude a public speaker of any oral to persuade from advocating his sentiments in their building." I offered to rent a Spiritualist hall in a town not many miles from here. The secretary wrote me: "I am authorized by vote of our society to say, we cannot rent our hall to you on any terms."

The society need liberalizing. It may be exceedingly spiritual, but is it truly liberal? I am glad that the bulk of Spiritualists are not illiberal—that they are not mere sectarians.

I have rented church buildings, and had some of them tendered free for my lectures, especially my temperance addresses. W. F. JAMESON.

Texas, Mich.

Michigan Notes.

The society at Sturgis, Mich., has already commenced the fall and winter work. They had two excellent meetings on Sunday, September 22. In the forenoon, Mr. Herbert Arnold, of Burr Oak, occupied the pulpit of the Free or Spiritual Church. Mr. Arnold, who is cashier or book-keeper at a bank in his little city, a few miles east of Sturgis, is a young gentleman of promise; he possesses a rather attractive personality, and his remarks were provocative of thought (sometimes on and sometimes off). We hope he will warm the "sacred desk" with his presence soon again.

In the evening, Miss Eugenie Belfour, who is the sister-in-law of the president of the Harmonical Society, Dr. Denslow, entertained a numerous audience; she delivered a lecture, from a carefully prepared and faultless manuscript, which was inspiring and suggestive. Miss Belfour is a true gentlewoman, and she imparted pleasure and edification by her thoughtful and philosophical inferences from ascertained data.

It is the intention to keep up these meetings regularly every Sunday at 10:30 a. m., and 7:30 p. m. When professional speakers are not present the members or friends of the society will hold forth; the vocalists of the choir, assisted by the church organ, will execute musical solos, and a renewal of the "good old times" is anticipated. These Spiritualists, independent thinkers and friends of progress generally, who live within a reasonable distance of this city would do well to avail themselves of these opportunities of attending Spiritualistic and scientific services in the Sturgis Free Church, as there are none others held nearer than Chicago (at least not regularly, I think). The church will be open every Sunday. I am informed, so no visitor from the country shall return disappointed. All are invited and would be welcomed. It is almost unnecessary to add that everything connected with these meetings is free—free church, free seats, free speech and free "salvation" thrown in. Sturgis, Mich. THOS HARDING.

Shakespeare says we are creatures that look before and after; the more surprising that we do not look round a little, and see what is passing under our very eyes.—Carlyle.

The man of pleasure should more properly be termed the man of pain.—Colton.

Often the elements that move and mold society are the results of the sister's counsel and the mother's prayer.—E. H. Chapin.

It is an inevitable something that a man cannot be happy unless he lives for something higher than his own happiness.—Bulwer.

Man is the merriest, the most joyous of all the species of creation. Above and below him all are serious.—Addison.

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE IN SPIRIT LAND

A Series of Letters from Spirit Franz Petersilea to His Son, Carlyle Petersilea.

LETTER NUMBER THIRTY-SIX.

Robt. G. Ingersoll says: Friends and readers of The Progressive Thinker:—I want to say a few words on an all-important subject. Do not expect the spirit of a man to talk precisely as he did when on the earth and within his material body, for a great change has come to that man.

All the eloquence of rhetoric he has, mayhap, thrown into the waste basket as so much rubbish, or so many unnecessary words. I tell you, my friends, it takes the starch out of a man, mightily, to find out that he really knew so little after all. I feel now as though I were sifting jewels from an enormous amount of chaff—the jewels being few, rare, and far between; and, then, friends, my power as a writer was never as great as that of a talker or lecturer, for I gained power and strength from those whom I was addressing or talking to, and when I got well started I sometimes ran at a headlong pace and did not always know just where I should stop; moreover, spirits sometimes get hold of my brain and worked it to suit themselves, for some special purpose. I often wondered if this were not the case, providing there were any such beings. Well, now it is quite different. I am not talking but writing, and writing through a foreign instrument or brain.

Now I don't want to be slapped in the face, because I am doing my level best to let you all know that I am not dead. I don't want to be told that my efforts are not worthy of me. That which I am trying to do is worthy of any man or spirit. I am trying to tell the truth—the great and glorious truth of the immortality of the soul. When a man is in deep, dead earnest, he doesn't always stop to cut and dry his words, but he shouts them forth in terse, short sentences. He is not trying to cater to an audience or please the people, but he shouts forth, "I have got it! Great God! I have found it," and you cry, "What have you found?" and he shouts back, "That which all humanity have been seeking since the world began—Immortality! There is no Death!"

"How do you know?" "Because I am here. I have passed the Rubicon. I have entered in at the straight gate, even the gate beautiful. Men call it death; but death and life are weird twin sisters. You pass from the hands of one directly into those of the other. Death is misnamed. She is really Life Eternal. Death is a phantom, but Life is real. Life is earnest. Life is beautiful, crowned with the flowers of immortal youth. I thought I was growing old and here I am, youthful, strong and powerful as a young lion—aye, I feel like a God. Ah! I realize now, to the fullest extent, the true meaning of all those old Greek gods. Symbols—symbols, my friends; nothing more. Why do I feel like a God? Because man is a God. That which I thought I did not know, I now know. To be immortal is to be a God. To never die—to live and learn forever is to be God, and they tell me here, that immortality is all the God I shall ever know."

I said when I was with you in the body, that all men ought to be happy, that all men should surround themselves with beautiful objects, that their homes should be models of comfort and beauty, that all men had a right even to the luxuries that mother nature bountifully supplies, and my mind is not changed in the least on those points, but rather I am more and more confirmed in such opinions. Every human being should surround himself or herself with the very most beautiful and comfortable things possible for him or her to obtain, and they should strive hard to do so; but, do not misunderstand my meaning; in doing this they should be very careful not to rob or wrong another, for every penny a human being obtains unjustly, that he must return sooner or later. By this, one can see what a hell the millionaires are making for themselves. If they could repay these wrongs with

money it might be easy for them; but money has no value here; the soul must pay to the uttermost farthing; not in cash, but in unutterable woe. This is not fancy, my friends; these are not idle words but everlasting truths.

Every man, woman and child on earth has a right to a good and comfortable home wherein they may surround themselves with objects of art and beauty. No man should be in poverty and no man should be over rich, and no company of men should have the power to rob the people. A company of men whose business it is to rob the people are no better nor different, except in name, than a company of highwaymen. Robbery is robbery, call it by whatever name one may please.

Oh! it is beautiful here. Such wrongs are all righted here; and, perhaps, you will be better able to understand how it should be on earth if I tell you how it is here. First, then, we have no such thing as money value. All the riches we have belong wholly and entirely to the soul and spirit, and those who are the very richest in spirit have the most to bestow, and those who can give or bestow the most are the happiest; those who have no riches of soul or spirit are the poorest-stricken ones, consequently are the most unhappy. How strange it would seem to you of earth, if one of your multi-millionaires should say to himself: "I begin to see the error of my ways. Instead of gathering to myself I will bestow. Here, now, I am worth so many million dollars. I will reserve enough of this money to make myself and family comfortable, also to make my home beautiful and luxurious if need be; the remainder I will bestow upon those who have no homes. I begin to see that all would have homes if they had not been robbed of that which rightfully belonged to them. Now I will bestow all my surplus wealth and try to induce others, who are rich, to do likewise."

This man then takes his money and with it purchases a tract of land in a pleasant locality, divides it up into acre lots and upon each lot erects a pretty, convenient cottage—a real comfortable home—he can make as many improvements as his means will allow. Now he has got so many pretty and comfortable homes for as many as they will shelter, and he sets himself to the task of finding occupants among the poor and needy that he may bestow these homes to those who need them.

First, perhaps, he finds a widow with a family of little, helpless children; her husband, maybe, has just been killed on the railroad and herself and little ones about to be ejected from their miserable tenement rooms, and cold winter near at hand. He says to her: "Madame, I will present to you one of these nice cottages together with its acre of ground—that is I will give you a life lease of it—for these homes may not be bought or sold for money. I will also do what I can to aid you in obtaining food and clothing for yourself and children."

Again he finds a hard-working man with a family to support. The poor man has been out of work more or less for many months; he is utterly discouraged and dejected; he cannot pay the rent of the miserable and uncomfortable tenement which he calls home, but which is to him hell instead of home. The man has often longed for a pretty cottage and a nice bit of ground to cultivate, but has been too poor to obtain it. The rich man says to this poor fellow, "Come with me and bring your wife and children. Look! is not this a nice, comfortable home, and this acre of ground is just what you want. Here is a life lease of it. It is yours as long as you live and wish to reside in it. Take it, and thereby make me happy as well as yourself." And the poor man weeps for joy.

"I will also aid you in obtaining work, good, remunerative employment. I will employ you myself, if need be, for four hours each day, for which I will pay you one dollar per day."

How long do you think it would take this rich man, in or near Chicago, to give away these nice homes to those who cruelly need them; and those who suffer thus have been robbed of their rights, as men and citizens, by the rich and powerful, by monopolies, trusts, and so forth.

Now in the whole course of the rich man's life, he never experienced such joy as he now feels. Try it, if you wish, and see if I do not tell the truth. Every man on the face of the earth has a moral right to an acre of ground

with a pretty and comfortable home in the center of it, and no man on the earth has a right to any more in his own personality, and human beings ought not to live, huddled together like sheep, in a city, in tenement houses—houses owned by rich landlords who, each week, rob these poor people of their hard earnings and in return give them a place to live, little better than dog kennels, and treat them worse than they do their dumb animals.

Well, the rich man who has thus bestowed his surplus wealth becomes exceedingly happy, and his face shines with joy; for love, wisdom and goodness have entered into his soul. Now he says: "If my capabilities are larger than some of my poor brothers and sisters, and circumstances have placed me where I am able to do more good, I ought to be very happy and thankful; but, I want to be happier still; I want to be wiser yet; consequently, I will look around; mayhap there is other work for me to do. How much happier it makes me to work for the good of my brother man than it does to simply work for myself alone. As a rich, grasping man, I was always miserable, and now I have found the way to be happy, so I will work for the good of others with all my might, and as long as I can, for I like to be good and happy."

That man said, "As long as I can" and he can forever and forever, and forever more, and the more he does the happier he gets, the wiser he becomes—aye, he is a very God—an immortal Jove!

Now, my friends, that is one way of getting into heaven, and one of the very best ways I know anything about. You all want to go to heaven, don't you? That is when you die, or shuffle off the mortal coil? Well, why not go to heaven right now, just where you are? Don't wait a moment if you can help it. Why, the spirit can leave the body as well as out of it. You don't need to get out of it to get into heaven, and if you don't get heaven before you get out of it, you won't find it when you do, for as you are, so you will be for a long time to come. Better hurry a little; you can't afford to wait. Why live in hell fifty years, more or less, hoping to find heaven at the end of them, when you might find and take it along with you each hour and year you live on earth? Why, my friends, you don't know what a great big heaven you can make in that length of time; so, go right about it this moment, one and all; no matter whether you are a multi-millionaire or not, you certainly are able to do something toward making a heaven for yourself. If you have not got any money, you can search for jewels to distribute among your fellow-men, or you can do as I used to do, knock down some grinning monster that threatens to destroy the happiness of your brother or sister. The jewels are truths, the monster is error. Knock him down, knock him down! I say, and spare not—demolish him root and branch.

Error is a blatant Ananias, and Robert G. Ingersoll will kill him if possible. I wonder if blatant liars go about doing good? I wonder if they advise people to be generous, good, wise, virtuous, truthful, and to do unto others as they would have others do unto them? I wonder if they inspire men to give their money and talents toward furthering all good works, without hope of recompense other than the heaven it brings to them? Very strange kind of blatant Ananias, are they not? Very peculiar kind of evil-spirits, are not they? And fraud? Whom do they defraud? Well, suppose I admit the fraud, or rather, defraud. I will admit the defraud. To defraud is to take away something that one possesses. If one possesses a spirit of evil, defraud him of it if you can. If one is grasping, cruel, selfish, immoral, it is good that he be defrauded of those qualities and their places substituted by the jewels of wisdom, love and truth, and by the beautiful flowers of generosity and benevolence.

The government should bestow on every man who reaches the age of taxation, or the age of twenty-one years, an acre of land, not to be sold, but leased to him during his natural life, and if the young man is not able to put up for himself a neat house, his friends and neighbors should do it for him.

Since coming here I find that people, as a rule, eat too much, and their food is not of the kind it should be. Now an acre of ground, put to good use—the best possible use—will nearly support a small family, and people should not have extremely large families. No man should toil

more than four hours a day, the remainder of the time should be given toward cultivating some art or science, or all of them as for that matter. No person should eat more than two meals a day, and many can get along with one. If a man does not toil more than four hours a day a light breakfast and a good dinner is all that he requires, and he will find his brain clearer for the study of the arts and sciences.

No intoxicating beverages should ever be distilled or sold, and it is a great sinful blot on the government that licenses are granted for the selling of that which takes away man's reason and fills his body with disease. When a man has an acre of ground and a good home, a faithful, loving wife and two or three sweet children, he ought to be good and happy, and the most of men would be. When men and women cease to be cannibals, that is when they eat no flesh, the cost of living can be brought down to a very small amount. Now, friends, suppose some of you try a method of living such as I will here suggest.

We will say that already you are comfortably housed, that you have, at least, an income of six dollars per week, and your family consists of, say, five persons, perhaps father, mother, and three children; or it may be other relatives; suppose you sit down to a breakfast of oatmeal mush and a cup of coffee, the coffee really can be dispensed with, one would be all the better if one did not drink it. One-half pound of oatmeal will make breakfast for five persons, plenty, all they ought to eat; the oatmeal costs two and one-half cents, this feeds, and feeds well, five people; but when dinner time comes, we will have a greater variety, we will have bread, potatoes, together with some other vegetable; vary the vegetables each day in the week, that is, we will have peas one day, beans another, onions another, squash another, and so on; then we will have fruit; vary the fruit each day if the season will permit; and nuts; vary the nuts likewise. Now a dinner of this kind will not cost more than ten cents each person; so a good dinner for five persons will cost fifty cents, the breakfast and remaining household expenses would not exceed twenty-five cents, consequently a family of five persons can be well fed for seventy-five cents a day, and we think that even fifty cents a day could be made to cover the cost. If one had his acre of ground and house, free of expense, he could raise at least one-half the food necessary, which would bring his expenses down to twenty-five cents a day.

Now, as a rule, people dress more expensively than they ought, especially women. Women should dress simply and neat. Diamonds, velvets, silks and satins are not at all necessary, and an enormous, costly head-gear would put a savage to blush. Many women can dress very well on twenty-five dollars a year; fifty dollars a year can be made to clothe a family of five if three of them are children. Two hundred dollars a year can be made to support a family of five persons in comfort, and even a certain amount of luxury, providing the acre of land and house are at their disposal; and if the government owned all public works whatever, every man who needed employment could be employed by the government at the rate of one dollar for four hours' labor. Now I put the question to the government itself, if this would not be political economy? There would not be a really poor man or tramp in your land. All prisons and penitentiaries would soon die a natural death, and governmental institutions of learning would take their places. When men have homes and are properly educated, there will be no crime provided intoxicating liquors are not sold or distilled. Turn your great distilleries into temples of wisdom. Turn your churches into schools. Educate your young men to be as pure as you would have your girls. One should be as pure as the other. If a young man requires a pure wife, a young woman should require a pure husband. Oh, it would take very little, after all, to make the world good and altogether lovely and beautiful as it is here in the spiritual world.

This may not be considered by some as being very eloquent, but I feel quite eloquent on the subject.

ROBERT G. INGERSOLL.

The passions, like heavy bodies down steep hills, once in motion, move themselves, and know no ground but the bottom.—Fuller.

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(Continued on page 3.)

A SCRAP OF HISTORY.

Illustrating the Finesse of Romish Advocates.

From the 13th to the 21st of January, 1837, there occurred in the city of Cincinnati, between Alexander Campbell, of Bethany, Va., and Rt. Rev. John B. Purcell, Bishop of Cincinnati (later archbishop), a debate on the Roman Catholic religion, which was taken down by reporters, revised by the parties to it, and published in book form, the proceeds of the sale of which by mutual agreement, were appropriated to two public charitable institutions, Catholic and Protestant.

By a mere accident a copy of this book recently fell into the hands of the writer hereof, who did not see the light of day until seven years after it was published. He had read a similar debate held some years earlier between Bishop (later archbishop) Hughes, of New York, and Rev. Dr. Breckinridge. In both of these discussions one fact is very prominent to the unbiased reader and that is the artful evasion of the essential points in the debates on the part of the Catholic participants. Were these debates to be held to-day before audiences composed of educated, intelligent Catholics and Protestants, it is doubtful if either party to the controversy would be able to create any interest in it. In America, the land of thought and investigation, of science and literature, and the coming religion of Nature, both Catholicism and Protestantism are losing their old-time influence upon the masses in a theological or orthodox point of view.

In the Campbell-Purcell debate, Purcell's answers to Campbell's charges and the documents he quoted to sustain them, were simply that they were false, the documents spurious, forged by anti-Catholics, or the council of Trent misinterpreted, etc. A general denial or evasion was the plan of defense set up by Bishop Purcell.

Some ideas of the responses Bishop Purcell gave to Mr. Campbell's charges may be gained from the following. Mr. Campbell had accused the Catholic church of permitting its clergy to keep concubines, and quoted from a standard author in the Catholic church as proof of the truth of his charge. This standard author was Alphonsus de Liguori, whom Pope Pius VII. Canonized as a saint on the 16th of September, A. D. 1815, under the title of the Most Illustrious and Most Reverend Lord Alphonsus de Liguori. I will now give upon this point in the debate the exact words of the disputants so the reader can judge of their merits:

Alexander Campbell:—Once more, from Liguori, and I shall have given almost a specimen of the immorality and filth of the Roman Catholic rule of faith, on general points of religion and morality. There is no one subject on which we could be more copious than this one; but from respect to our audience we shall give but the remotest hint:

"A bishop, however poor he may be, cannot appropriate to himself pecuniary fines without the license of the apostolic see. But he ought to apply them to pious uses, which the council of Trent has laid upon non-resident clergymen, or upon those clergymen who keep

nieces." Ligor. Ep. Doc. Mor. p. 444. Synops. p. 204.

Now, if a priest should keep a niece, it is a very expiable and trifling offense; but should he marry his wife, he must be excommunicated forever. Thus the Roman Catholic rule of faith treats the Bible, and annals, at pleasure, every law and institution of heaven.

Bishop Purcell:—The volume from which the gentleman has been all day reading, is one of those books of abomination and falsehood; put forth, in the city of New York, by Smith, Slocum & Co., and it is a fair specimen of their fashion of circulating truth. Does it not furnish strong presumption to the reflecting mind, that there must be something divine in the religion which such men and women combine to abuse? It was the monster Nero, notorious for pericardic and lust, who first drew the sword against the Christian religion. Forget not then, I pray you, my friends, the proposition that is before us. I am determined not to slumber down on this matter, but to probe it thoroughly and expose its rottenness to the world. Mr. Campbell's allegation against the Catholic church, is that Liguori, a standard moralist in that church, teaches, that priests may keep concubines by paying a fine, but that if they marry, they must be excommunicated. Whereas I distinctly deny that Liguori has ever taught anything so abominable, and that all who say so, are guilty of a most flagrant violation of the commandment of our God, which says: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

A few days following the above utterances, the Bishop having examined his volumes of Liguori, he continues as follows: Here are the complete works of Liguori, in eight volumes, with an index consisting of one volume. I have performed a work of supererogation. I have examined these volumes, from cover to cover, and in none of them can so much as a shadow be found for the infamous charge, I exonerate my friend from the sin of misrepresentation. I will say he has been deceived, misled by anti-Christ, perhaps, who can deceive the elect, if possible, that is to say, if I'll let him, which I have, in this instance, no notion of doing. The original tells the truth. The translation lies. My friends, I hope that the same audience which is here now, will be here this evening, and I pledge myself, before the heavens and the earth, that this base slander is what I call it. There is no foundation for it whatever in the works of Liguori.

EVENING SESSION.

My friends, it is imperative upon me to make one exposition before I proceed. Many of you were here when my friend would have led you into a gross mistake, respecting the Catholic church, by quoting a pretended extract from Liguori. I assert that that extract could be found in that writer's works to substantiate the odious charge, to give it so much as a semblance of truth. I have now before me the entire works of Liguori, and I have placed them in the presence of my friend, Mr. Campbell. The 9th volume has an index, containing every word of any importance, and I repeat, that after a search through the whole nine volumes, nothing like the quotation of last evening has been found. I have now placed the book in the hands of Professor Biggs,

of Lane Seminary, one of the moderate, and a Protestant of the Presbyterian denomination, if I do not mistake, and I will leave it to him, or any other intelligent and candid man, to say to you whether the fact is as my friend has stated, or the very contrary of what he has stated.

Mr. Campbell:—Be so good as to explain the matter fully. Bishop Purcell:—I will explain the exact state of the case. Mr. Smith, the author of the translation, from whom my friend read this, as well as many other things, has given a false quotation, and made Liguori say, what he never said. The facts are these: A canon of the Council of Trent, and Liguori, according to the canon, says, "that if a priest falls by criminal intercourse, as specified, from the holy state of purity, to which he is bound by a voluntary, deliberate, and solemn vow, he shall be deprived of a large portion of his salary for the first offense. If he does not refrain after admonition and such like, and is again admonished, and deprived of his whole salary, and suspended from all his functions as a priest in the Catholic church. But after the third admonition, if he is still incorrigible, he is excommunicated."

Rev. Campbell:—Knowing, my fellow-citizens, how much depends in such a discussion, as that now in progress, on having authentic documents, I determined from the beginning to rely on none which could, on proper evidence, or with justice be repudiated. I knew that in all debates so far back as the very era of the Reformation this party has been accused, and to deny authorities, to dispute versions, translations, etc., even of their own writers who were so candid as to give a tolerably fair representation of themselves. And as all their historians, good and bad, frequently tell the truth, they are all occasionally to be censured, when that truth is quoted by a Protestant and turned to its proper account. I have not then to keep conscience or belief introduced as an unworthy author. And so long as my opponent can disprove nothing which I have quoted, either from Du Pin, or Liguori, his frequent allusions to them, with such unqualified censures, only shows how much he feels the truth of their testimony.

Bishop Purcell:—My friends, Mr. Kimmont will now tell you whether the pretended quotation of Mr. Smith from Liguori, is correct. You will recollect that Mr. Smith said, that according to Liguori, the Catholic church allows priests to keep concubines upon a fine. Upon hearing this I at once said that the charge was an infamous falsehood; and I will now show that Liguori said no such thing.

Mr. Kimmont:—I am called on in my professional character simply, and have no part or lot in this debate. (Mr. Kimmont is understood to be a Swedenborgian.) I sincerely believe they are disputing about something that is not true, and are equally in the wrong; but I will do what I can to assist in clearing up the difficulty of fact. I find it stated in Samuel Smith's work and marked as a quotation from Liguori, under the article headed "Concubines of Clergy."

Concubines of the Clergy.—"A bishop however poor he may be, cannot appropriate to himself pecuniary fines without license of the Apostolic see. But he ought to apply them to pious uses, which the council of Trent has laid upon non-resident clergymen, or upon those clergymen who keep

Council of Trent has laid upon non-resident clergymen, or upon those clergymen who keep concubines."—Ligor. Ep. Doc. Mor. p. 444.

And the following is Smith's commentary: "It is a shameful act, that the Apostolic See, as they call it, that is, that the pope of Rome, should enrich his coffers by the fines which he receives from the prodigality of his clergy! If they keep concubines, they must pay a fine for it; but if they marry, they must be excommunicated! This accounts, at once, for the custom in Spain, and other countries, and especially on the island of Cuba, in South America, where almost every priest has concubines, who are known by the name of nieces. These abandoned men are willing to pay the fine rather than forego the gratification of their lustful appetites. The 'Narrative of Rosamond,' who was once herself one of these concubines in the island of Cuba, portrays the general licentiousness of the popish clergy, in colors so shocking, that the picture is almost looked at with a blush. This keeping of concubines is a thing so common in the popish West India islands, and in South America, that it is rarely noticed. The offspring of this priestly intercourse are numerous. They are known to be the children of the priests; but because it is the general custom, it is lawful; and it passes off merely with a joke or sarcasm."

Mr. Kimmont continues: This is the text and commentary as I find it in Mr. Smith's book. This is marked as Liguori, p. 444. It taken from Liguori at all, it is taken from a different edition. The present purports to be a complete copy of the works of Liguori. It bears no mark of being an expurgated edition. It is said to be an edition of what was said and written before with additions. On turning to the place where he treats of fines and punishments inflicted for concubinage, he says that priests guilty of this offense, were, after two ineffectual reprimands, to be degraded from their functions. He refers to Council of Trent, and states what that council decreed. Smith throws us on Liguori and Liguori on the Council of Trent.

Rev. Campbell:—My friends, you will doubtless have observed, that of all the extracts read from Liguori, found on the pages of Mr. Smith, but one was challenged by the Bishop, on the ground that it is not found in the page of St. Liguori in the edition now before us. The case is simply this. According to the moral theology of the church of Rome, concubinage is a greater sin than concubinage, and if a priest marries, he is forthwith excommunicated; but if he keeps a concubine he only pays a fine. This is the statement that Mr. Smith makes as a correct translation from the passage in Liguori. Now, Bishop Purcell denies that there is such a passage in Liguori, or that there is in the Council of Trent any such arrangement; and in proof of it, he has brought us an edition of St. Liguori, and the decrees of the Council of Trent. But the edition which he has produced, has not, upon the page referred to, the passage quoted. In the passage quoted, the reference to Liguori is to a decree of Trent. But there are always two ways of quoting a passage; the one verbatim, and the other, substantially. Whether Liguori quotes the Decree of Trent literally, or substantially, we cannot affirm. The Bishop referred this

matter to Mr. Kimmont, without consulting me. It was an exparte reference; and therefore comes not fairly before us. Although I have no objection to Mr. Kimmont; but on the contrary, I think him very competent to decide a matter of this kind. If he had time to examine all these volumes; and perhaps, had I been consulted, I should have agreed in selecting him; yet as the reference is wholly one-sided, it can have no authority here. However, so far as the decrees of Trent have been read, they do speak of fines or forfeitures of those who have concubines, and these do substantially sustain all that I have alleged. In his preface to his synopsis, Mr. Smith observes: "If they deny that we have given a fair translation, we will then challenge them to come forward in a public assembly with the works of St. Liguori, when we promise to meet them, and submit our translation, and the original, to the inspection of a committee, one-half of whom to be chosen by ourselves, and the other half by the Roman clergy. Truth never shies at investigation. If we have not given a fair, genuine, and true translation, and if we have not exhibited the doctrines of Liguori and correctly, without garbling, or giving an erroneous construction, we will be willing to expect, for having deceived the public."—Synops. Pref. p. 12. I will thank the Bishop to inform me the date of his edition of the Works of Liguori.

Bishop Purcell:—What is the date of Mr. Smith's edition? Mr. Campbell:—1828.

Bishop Purcell:—This edition (pointing to his own) was also published in 1828; so that it appears both are the same.

Mr. Campbell (here taking up a volume of the Bishop's copy of Liguori) read, "Editio. Nova Emendata." It hence appears that the Bishop's is a new revised edition; that, probably, this and the one used by Mr. Smith are not the same. Be this, however as it may, nothing is lost by the examination; nothing is proved against Mr. Smith as a translator, and I shall write forthwith to New York to Mr. Smith for the original Latin of this passage in his edition, and have it certified and published among this community.

But were it lawful to read in this assembly, I have before me the decrees of councils, and the words of bishops and cardinals, teaching the very doctrine which the Bishop would represent as a reproach or calumny on his clergy and church. Here is the decree of a council at Toledo, and here are references to various councils, such as Bivili Concilia, Tom. 1, pp. 737, 739. Crabb. Concilia, Tom. 1, p. 449. Edition of 1651, and Pithou Corp. Jur. Canon. p. 47, as quoted by Dr. Brownlee, which go to prohibit priests from keeping more than one concubine; and declare marriage in a priest to be "a mortal sin." And here is Costerus and Cardinal Campeggio who taught what I dare not read here; but I will reserve all this for a more convenient season.

Mr. Campbell received documentary substantiation in reply to his letter to Mr. Smith, which appears in the appendix of notes supplementary to the printed debate as follows: The reader, who looks back to pages 219, 253, will there see with what solemnity and assurance the Bishop declared that no such passage

as that quoted from page 204 was ever written by Saint Liguori. (See pages 209, 319, 320). Mr. Smith, in reply to my letter per Mr. Enimons, wrote as follows:

"The obnoxious passage, then, which the Romish Bishop of Cincinnati calls heaven and earth to witness is not to be found in the works of Liguori, is the following: "A Bishop, however poor he may be, cannot appropriate to himself pecuniary fines, without the license of the Apostolic See. But he ought to apply them to pious uses. Much less can he apply those fines to anything else but pious uses, which the Council of Trent has laid upon non-resident clergymen, or upon those clergymen who keep concubines."—Ligor. Ep. Doc. Mor. p. 444.

This passage I will now give in the Latin, as it stands on the 444th page of the 8th volume of the "Moral Theology of Alphonsus de Liguori," from whose work the extract was made. The words are as follows: "Multa pecuniaria Episcopus sibi addicere non potest, quantumvis pauper sit sine licentia Sedis Apostolicæ (or excommunicatus argumentis S. Congreg. evinctur in Tract. De Syn. Doc. L. 10. C. 10. N. 2). Sed debent in usus pios pendere. Multo magis non possunt nisi in pios usus applicari illæ multæ, quas Tridentinum inflicti Clericis non residentibus, aut concubinaris."—Ligor. Epit. Doc. Mor. p. 44.

The words included in the brackets, were not translated, merely because I did not wish to encumber the "Synopsis," (as I have observed in the Preface of the Synopsis) with too many authorities quoted by Liguori. I shall now, however, translate the above words in the brackets, much, I know, to the discomfort of his Reverence the Romish Bishop of Cincinnati. The words in the brackets, therefore, translated are as follows: "As is evident from many arguments of the Holy Congregation, in the Treatise respecting the Diocesan Synods, Book 10, chapter 10, Number 2."

Here we have, not only the authority of St. Liguori, but also that of the "Holy Congregation of Rites." Since the subject is now to be probed to the bottom, we will also translate the contracted words which I transferred into the "Synopsis," as I found them in the original. The words to which I allude are the terminating ones of the disputed passage, as follows: "Ligor. Ep. Doc. Mor. p. 444"—which, translated, stand thus: "From the work of Liguori, under the head of 'An Epitome of the Moral Doctrine,' page 444."

In order to render the testimony still more striking, it is important to observe that this "Epitome of the Moral

A VANDERBILT TELLS WHY SHE BELIEVES SPIRITS RETURN.

MRS. LA BAU, THE COMMODORE'S DAUGHTER, GIVES HER EXPERIENCES—HER CHILD DIED IN ANOTHER CITY AND SHE WITNESSED HIS PASSAGE INTO THE CLOUDS.

Up in the third-story bay window of a big white brick and marble mansion that tops one of Riverside Drive's beautiful hills sat an old lady yesterday looking out of the window. Hers was a face that bespoke strong character. There were firm lines around the mouth, an authoritative poise of the head, a pair of blue eyes that could look one through and through. She was Mrs. Allen Vanderbilt La Bau, daughter of old Commodore Vanderbilt and possessor of many of his millions after contesting the will.

The World yesterday told of the suit for \$20,000 brought against her by Arthur J. Dodge, son of Mrs. La Bau's second husband. In a word she declares in her sworn answer that she was influenced by a medium, Jeannette Danforth, to buy a quarter interest in Dodge's patents because the medium gave her messages from the spirit world to do so.

The house that the Vanderbilts money has bought Mrs. La Bau is a palace in miniature. It is forty feet wide and has stories high. It commands the full sweep of the Hudson from its great windows. It is furnished with all that taste can suggest or money buy. It has even a wonderful electric elevator which starts and stops at any desired floor by the simple pressure of a button. Her son, Walter La Bau, took the reporter upstairs in the elevator and showed him into his mother's room.

THE MEDIUM WAS HYPNOTIZED.

One glance was enough to tell that the elderly lady in the window was a Vanderbilt. There were those keen, strong eyes—that roundness of face and those little heavy purses of skin under the eyes which are a part of every Vanderbilt visage. There was that full habit, too, which all the elder generation of Vanderbilts possessed.

"Want you sit down?" the old lady said, in a pleasant tone.

Mrs. La Bau was somewhat averse to going into details about the technical side of her defense, preferring to leave it to her counsel.

"I'll say, though," she said, decidedly, "that Dodge hypnotized Jeannette Danforth to tell me those messages from the spirit world. I'm sorry now I didn't do as the spirits themselves told me. They gave me a control which showed all Dodge's schemes to be worth nothing to me."

Mrs. La Bau lay down what she was reading, pushed her gold-rimmed spectacles back on the top of her iron-gray hair and slapped her hand on the little table in front of her to emphasize her statement.

"But do you believe in Spiritualism?" asked the reporter.

For a moment the old lady hesitated. Then she said:

"I have never denied, and I will not deny now, that I thoroughly believe in Spiritualism. I don't believe in any of this clap-trap Spiritualism; I take mine direct from God. And why shouldn't I believe? I once received the greatest proof in the world."

"It was forty years ago. There was something that I wanted to come to pass most earnestly. I was a scroffer then, but I looked myself in my chamber and I prayed. I cried, 'Oh, Lord, if this can come to pass I will believe.' And it came to pass. Now, how can I disbelieve?"

There were tears in the old lady's eyes by this time, but she brushed them away with a laugh. What proof had been shown to her she would not say. It was plainly something close to her heart.

"And since then," she went on, "I have seen too many from the spirit world to face to face. I have seen my little dead children. I receive 'controls' from the spirits all the time."

"But others would believe if they could see these too?"

"Bases her belief on Bible."

"Ah!" laughed the old lady, thoroughly, the woman of the world now; "that's what so many ministers have said to me. But, mind you, I don't believe in all this clap-trap Spiritualism. I take my Spiritualism from the Bible and from God. Read your Bible. In it you will find many gifts of Spiritualism."

"Everybody is spiritualistic. Some people are more so than others. Now, my son has healing power. He can cure aches and pains by the simple laying on of his hands. I have the healing power; nobody can pass away in the same house with me. I have never seen any one pass on and I never will. The spirits have told me so. Both my little children passed away when I was far away, but I knew it."

"I knew when my little boy went, many years ago. We were here in New York. The baby, who was only three months old, was in Saratoga. Suddenly I saw his spirit. It was just as if you looked out on those beautiful clouds there in the west."

The old lady pointed to the window, where the sun was sinking over the shimmering river. There was a big bank of clouds over the Palisades. She was the mother now, and her eyes were moist.

"It was just like that," she said softly. "High above the clouds was a great round face, just as if it had been made of opal. And there through the clouds was little baby's spirit going straight toward the opal frame. I saw him reach it just as plainly as day."

SPIRIT CHILD WAVED FAREWELL.

"Then his little spirit stopped and waved its little fingers toward me. 'Good-by, good-by,' and he was gone. 'The baby's gone. He's passed on,' I said.

"My husband laughed. 'Nonsense,' he said, 'you're always worrying.' But in a few hours came a telegram. The baby was gone. He had passed on just at the minute when I saw his little spirit. It was the same way with my little girl. We were here and she was away. I saw her spirit go. A friend was coming upstairs. I asked her what time it was and she said 'Eleven o'clock.' That was the hour that my little one passed on."

"I knew Elliott F. Shepard was going three weeks before. I suddenly felt it coming from the spirits. I told my family that some one in the Shepard family was going. They laughed, and next morning my uncle's passing was

HOW IT IS DONE!

The Sleight-of-hand Performer in California.

HOW HE PRODUCES PRETENDED SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA, AND DECEIVES THE GULLIBLE.

"SPIRIT" TYPE-WRITING.

This is such a bad, hoary-headed and transparent trick that it would not be worthy of notice were it not that so many presumably intelligent people have recently been taken in by it in this vicinity. The "messages" are nearly all prepared beforehand, and the medium is always worked by the "medium" or an assistant, the keys, or space-bar being utilized to give the audience the impression that the spirits are writing in the dark. Sometimes, when the medium is in the cabinet with the machine, he will actually write two or three short messages or answers to suit the occasion. Type-writing can be done in the dark anyone familiar with the machine, but it is slow work, and explanation is made that a little girl "comes and goes" and "type-writing." The medium has all the prepared messages in his pocket when the seance begins, and after they are handed out he pockets the blank paper provided for the use of the "dear spirits." If the audience will insist upon the machine being covered and locked, so the medium or his assistant cannot get their hands on it, there will be no writing done. Be sure of that.

A TRICK WITH BALLOTS.

One method of ballot-reading used by some prominent mediums in their circles is this: The cards or ballots written by the audience are collected by the medium or assistant and placed in an envelope or bag. This is supposed to remain in sight of the audience. In reality it is taken into the cabinet and a dummy just like it takes its place while the medium in the cabinet examines the ballots at his leisure by the light of a small bull's eye lantern. After he has answered most of the questions and copied the rest, another "switch" is made, and the real ballots are again under the eyes of the audience. Of course some of these present are positive there has been no change, but you must remember that the hand of an expert is quicker than your eye, and also that in every circle of that kind there are a number of confederates or assistants, and it is very easy to make these changes without detection. Some mediums have the bogus ballots in an envelope and burn them before the eyes of the audience. This is generally regarded as a clincher. Another method is to switch the ballots into another room, where the assistant reads them, and gives the contents to the medium in the cabinet through a speaking tube, cunningly concealed. This way has its advantage, as if the voice of the assistant is heard by any of the audience, it is regarded as an independent spirit voice and an evidence of the medium's power. These methods have been recently worked in Los Angeles, and are used elsewhere.

SLATE-WRITING.

The methods of producing so-called independent slate-writing—18 or 20 in number—are so numerous that we will mention now only those in most common use among mediums of the shady class.

The "Prof," who owns the premises he occupies always has a system of trap doors and sliding panels which are used to pass the slates to confederates, who embellish them with pictures and messages in the name of your loved ones, and pass them back the same way. But your traveling medium must depend upon his manual dexterity to carry him through. Nearly all of these use the silicate flap, which fits into the frame and covers the prepared slates completely. The medium shows you both sides of the slate; you are willing to swear it is perfectly clean. In placing the slate upon the table in front of you he dexterously allows the flap to drop into his lap, and when, after sitting awhile with your hands on the slate, you turn it over you are amazed to find it filled with writing, perhaps in different colors. This method is the one commonly used in giving slate-writing seances in public halls and on the stage. It is easy for an expert to fool any committee not acquainted with the flap trick. The production of writing on slates brought by the audience and held in their hands, is very simple and easy when you know how. The slates are all prepared before being brought to the hall. In every city there are plenty of people who can be induced by a small fee, or perhaps a ticket to the show, to bring the prepared slates and carry out their part of the program. The "medium" does not see these people. This part of the work is done by the agent or helper who is always on hand to help mediums. This go-between generally prepares the slates and attends to passing the steel plates and carrying them truthfully to the audience, who are strangers to the medium and were not employed by him.

In giving private sittings the medium uses various methods, according to his estimate of the sitter. One who visits this city frequently has a private arrangement with a stationery store near his rooms. He leaves at the store several pairs of prepared slates of the same kind as those kept in stock. These are kept neatly wrapped in the usual style. When the medium gets a sitter who is shrewd and hard to work, and who brings his own slates, his "guides" and some objection to the slates' slates, and if the sitter objects to those the medium has in stock the latter suggests that he buy a new pair of the required size, and kindly mentions where they may be procured, near by. The victim sees nothing wrong with this proposition. He goes to the store and the clerk shows him a number, he selects a pair he knows are clean, the clerk goes back to wrap them up, switches in the prepared ones, and the victim takes them to the medium, gets his sitting with the slates in his own hands just as one or two slates are filled with writing, and takes his leave fully convinced that spirits do write on slates. He knows it—no trick possible. And any person who says that mediums are fools and a horse-thief. Henceforth he is an easy victim and can be fooled with any old trick. Of course he got no "test" from his departed friends the first time. He goes again for that, complies with the "conditions," and gets some "wonderful results."

Sleight-of-hand, or the changing of slates, is depended upon more than any other method by most mediums. And by the same means they secure the names or questions you have written. One prominent medium had a sitting with a big time during the sitting. In his hands, a large-sized slate. He handed me two smaller slates with noiseless blinding. I was directed to wash and wipe the two slates thoroughly. After this was done he took one in his hands for a moment to see if it was thoroughly washed and dried, he said. All this time he was holding the big slate. And right here is where the lightning change came in. Under the

LARGER SPIRITUALISM.

Takes the World of Progress in Its Arms.

Spiritualism comes to people only as they are able to receive it, only as they are capable of understanding it.

Dr. Thomas, of the People's Church, still live and are conscious; my own soul, my whole being tells me so."

Rev. T. DeWitt Talmage says: "I know that our friends are alive and all about us as we walk and as we sleep; my consciousness tells me so."

Rev. Jenkin Lloyd Jones, of All Soul's Church, this city, preaches good Spiritual truths and yet he never had evidence of spirit return.

While it comes to the souls in tune for its vibrations as does the knowledge of a supply of water come through the thirst of the flesh, as food to the appetite, there are those who are not in tune with anything but that which is material and tangible to the eye of earth. There are those who must see and feel and smell and taste their evidence of continued life after so-called death.

There are those who can find all the evidence necessary in the Bible that man a future existence, and again there are those to whom this is no evidence, those to whom naught but the shake of a tangible hand and the familiar voice of a friend whose form they had seen let down into the dark and gloomy world would appeal.

In fact no two can see this great truth from exactly the same standpoint; for that point is self and no two are exactly alike. But that makes no difference to Spiritualism; phoenix-like it rises up from the sands of time, from the ashes of burned witches; from the ages of myth and superstition, and spreads its broad wings over the whole world like a great mother of the universe.

Evidence of continuity of life comes and comes; through the ignorant to the ignorant and the conscious to the conscious; through the poet to the poet; through the philosopher to those who have capacity to measure and weigh, and analyze, and reason; through the musician to those who are filled with nature's harmonic vibrations; to the egotist with something like a hickory club; to the materialist in a material way, etc.

It comes and it comes, and there is nothing that can prevent it. Ever since the first little step upon the other side of the door of life, ever since those little children invited it in, Spiritualism has plowed through stormy seas and braved the tornado sweep of bitterest opposition from church, and clergy and imitations, and still it moves on and on, always manned with a crew as true as life, always pushing forward and leaving its enemies by the wayside in deep wonderment at its rapid gain.

Differences belong to individuals and they prate and rant, in the heat of passion over the smallest matters of divergence; grow personal and call each other hard names, in other words, lose their balance; lose their respect and lose sight of the broadness and greatness of the spiritual movement.

Narrowness belongs to the human, not the spiritual. Selfishness, jealousy, envy and anger are not of the soul, but of the flesh in its struggle with the spiritual, the higher, the real man.

Spiritualism is not only not an organization, but as a whole it is not organized; it is above and below and all around and in and through all organization; the foundation for many organizations.

It requires human beings to make or create organizations here, financial, benevolent or religious; social, political or reformatory, and all are but "parts of one stupendous whole," and that whole is life, nature, spirit.

Men organize for ball game contests, and in it and under it is the ever restless spirit of excellence; the spirit of man trying to gain, to win, to grow; to rise above others; the spirit of ambition; the spirit of pride; the eternal evolution, aspiring, desiring, growing spirit of man, and how can that be organized into a small, one-ideaed institution with dogmatic rules, principles and principles presented to a world as representing Spiritualism?

Modern Spiritualism is not founded on the historical manifestations of dead and buried ages, any more than ancient Spiritualism was founded on the then unfulfilled prophecies of the realization of which remained for the unborn generations to reach when grown up to it. Therefore Spiritualism always has been and always will be, and will continue to move on and on while humanity continues to struggle with the problems, and on a large scale, to the individual and innumerable non-essentials.

It will grow with a creed and it will grow without a creed, for this is only a plan or means for adding the cause. With its religious tendencies, to other religions within the whole and giving it a name by which it may be distinguished from others by the coming generations.

We are told there is nothing binding in that declaration of principles adopted by six Spiritualists representing the National Association. In one sense this is true. One can be a Spiritualist in the true sense of the word when he has been convinced of the power of the disembodied spirit to return and manifest its presence, whether he does or does not "believe in Infinite Intelligence." Neither does it hinder one who does so "believe" from being a Spiritualist.

But this is now published to the world as the declaration of American Spiritualism, and unless we can subscribe to or sanction that little flat from organized Spiritualism, we cannot be a full-fledged Spiritualist in the eyes of the world.

In other words, if we do not have to subscribe to it as a requisite of good standing in the organization what is it good for? A sunflower badge will give notice to the public that the wearer is a Spiritualist, and is of just as much importance as recognition by the N. S. A. If this little creed need not be subscribed to to become a member of Spiritualism.

The badge system has not been generally adopted as a means of recognition among Spiritualists, although when worn by anyone it designates him as a Spiritualist and surely is as far-reaching and as appropos as is the much discussed "declaration." Then why not adopt the sunflower and make it of cheap material as well as of gold, and place it within reach of all as well as those who are able to wear gold?

Sunflower button for the coat lapel, as the G. A. R. boys wear, would answer the purpose just the same and not necessitate the sanctioning of an objectionable assertion.

In the first place a true Spiritualist is one who lives his doctrine every day, and except for recognition by our old puritanic laws neither Spiritualism nor Spiritualists would need to declare or hang out a sign to be known as a member of the great family, the great brotherhood of man, the only church

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SANGTIFIED SWEATING.

Cruelty to Young Girls in Convents---Shall It Be Tolerated Longer?

A TRACT JUST ISSUED IN LONDON
—SIGNED "S. J. ABBOTT," SECRETARY TO THE CONVENT ENQUIRY SOCIETY, 8 GRAY'S PLACE, LONDON, W. C. ENG.

There are now upwards of thirteen hundred monasteries and convents in the United Kingdom, about nine hundred being convents, or religious houses for women, and every one more or less a prison.

According to the "Catholic Directory" for 1839, there were then but seventeen convents in the whole of England and Scotland, or about half the number now established in the county of Sussex alone.

With this enormous increase and the fearful evils involved therein, legislation is urgently required for the protection of all inmates of such institutions.

Including nuns and those under their control, the number of inmates can scarcely be less than fifty thousand. These have thus far been abandoned by the British government to the tender mercies of the Mother Superior, who neither knows nor respects any law but the canon law of the church of Rome, though the cruelty and tyranny practiced beyond question in our law courts, as in the trial *Saurin v. Star*, etc., also in France, Austria and elsewhere.

But so little is known by the outside world of common-place things as convents, that in 1895, when it was proposed to bring all convent laundries carried on by way of trade under the Factories and Workshops Acts, not one member of Parliament was able to meet the misrepresentations of the Roman Catholic members; with the result that the bill was so altered that these inhuman institutions were exempted from inspection and from all the provisions of the Act, though a petition, hurriedly got up and signed by one thousand proprietors of laundries, against their exemption, was sent to the House.

The laundries, work-rooms, dormitories, and general arrangements for the women and girls not under vows in these institutions are as separate from the cloister and all that appertains to the nuns as are the arrangements of the factory from the private apartments of the proprietor of any secular establishment.

In France, convents have long been subject to some sort of government inspection. But in spite of this the most shocking abuses have come to light, as the readers of the "Contemporary Review" for April are aware. Some of these abuses were known to government officials in France, though the French public were ignorant of them. But the letter addressed to a cardinal at Rome, by Mgr. Turinaz, Bishop of Nancy, charging the nuns of the Good Shepherd with crimes which cry for vengeance, got into the French newspapers, and brought forth evidence from official sources and from the victims themselves, revealing the practice of atrocious cruelties upon helpless orphans and others in convents in all parts of France, of which I have received enough details to fill a volume.

The writer in the "Contemporary Review" says, "There is no contradiction to this evidence, 'except from the Sisters themselves,' and 'an enormous number of persons in all walks in life must be liars, conspirators, and worse, if the denial of the nuns be well founded.'" P. 595.

The frightful picture, with all its harrowing details, cannot be given with a few strokes of the pen. Some of the poor victims were nearly starved, cruelly beaten, shut up for days and even weeks, fed on bread and water, and otherwise ill-treated, and all were sweated and treated as slaves. Failing to accomplish the allotted task, or of offending the nun in authority, met with such punishment as female tyrants alone could inflict; some of which must almost have exhausted female ingenuity to devise.

A hairpin was driven into the head of one by a blow from a nun. The eye of another was torn out by a stroke of a comb of seven teeth. A young girl named Eliza died from meningitis, who had previously been struck on the head with a stick. Another, suffering from the same malady, was let down the stairs between two mattresses, under the pretext that she was yielding to the exigencies of nature. She died two hours after. A young girl named G—, received a kick in the breasts, became consumptive, and spat blood. Mlle. Anna— received a blow in the eye with the soles of a shoe, and wore a glass eye. Mlle. Agathe T—, at present residing in the place de la Republique, has her back permanently bent in consequence of blows received. A child five years of age was placed in a straight waistcoat, was constantly beaten and otherwise cruelly treated, because unable to get through her daily task. She had a pin in her mouth. A nun gave her a blow which cut her lips and made her swallow the pin. The child gradually wasted away and died without medical treatment, at the age of seven.

These samples are taken almost indiscriminately from a voluminous mass of such details, much of which may be found in the "Contemporary Review" for April. The best workers were kept in the convents from twelve to twenty-five years. Then, when nearly blind, and completely ruined in health, they were turned into the world homeless and penniless.

The following, of which I know of no published translation, appeared in the "Aurora," October 25, 1899. It is taken from the report of Dr. Thulle to the Upper Board of Public Relief: "During the nights of December 7 and 8, 1890, ten little girls who slept in rooms unfit for human habitation, had their feet frozen; seven slightly, three very seriously. One of the latter was of necessity transferred to the hospital (Hotel Dieu), and had to undergo the amputation of both feet."

After the action that was taken by the French government, the English correspondent, quoted in *Christianisme*, might well exclaim on hearing that the Nuns of Nancy had gone to London, "God have pity on us in England!" But the nuns of the Good Shepherd and other similar orders have long had their converts in almost all parts of England; many of them governed by foreign nuns. In these convents thousands of poor girls are imprisoned and never allowed to go outside the convent walls. They slave at the laundry, shirt-making, and other labor, from early morning—rising in some at 4:45, others at 5:30, and continuing until 8 or 8:30 at night, with no respite from their labor, except to take their scanty meals and attend to religious exercises. Every letter is read by the Superior, who posts or withholds them according to her inclination, never allowing any complaint to pass out of the convent. A child ten years of age, who had been an inmate of a convent orphanage in

England for about four years, informed me that she had to spend four days a week at laundry work and scrubbing floors, etc.; yet no government or school-board inspector ever visited the place. The child further stated that one form of punishment adopted was to put the children in a dark cellar and tell them the rats would eat their toes off. The child did not make these statements by way of complaint, but in answer to simple questions.

Quite recently the infamous methods of getting children into Roman Catholic industrial convents in Ireland have been exposed by the Court of Queen's Bench. The father of two girls was told by a woman engaged in a conspiracy to get them away that, if she would ask for a penny she would give them one each to buy some sweets. They asked and received the penny, and were then charged with begging, a man representing himself as their father, appearing in court to aid in the conspiracy—the father himself being ill in bed at the time. An order of commitment was made by the magistrate. On discovering the whereabouts of his children and the truth of the matter, the father made unsuccessful applications to the Chief Secretary, and eventually applied for a writ of habeas corpus, and had his children restored to him. Mr. Justice Boyd in delivering judgment said, "It was admitted that the practice prevailed to a large extent of getting up children for the purpose of having a large number of children committed to industrial schools who ought not to be there, and thereby a fraud was committed upon the authorities and upon the rate-payers, on whom the burden of keeping these children there was imposed." He commented strongly on this case of pious fraud as "the worst kind of fraud thus far."

A young girl who had been an inmate of a convent laundry told me that one of her fellow-inmates, who was very ill and a great sufferer, was made to continue at the laborious work of ironing until she was too weak to stand, and then, worse than Egyptian taskmasters, who deceive the world by their apparent gentleness, made this poor creature go into the labor-room to make men's colored cotton shirts, and continue at this work, without any respite from the hours of labor, until within two or three days of her death! Truly, as the bishop of Nancy says, "These nuns have no other end in view but that of gaining money."

Another poor girl who suffered from a painful abscess, had to continue at her toil without mitigation, though so weak that she used to faint while at work. She was in danger of being choked, so was taken to the doctor. On her way, unperceived by the nun who accompanied her, she posted to her mother a letter she had penciled on scraps of paper, which letter I have in my possession. In it she says, "I am posting this on the sly, so don't say you heard from me. Oh, I should be punished! I am going to the doctor, and that is how I am posting it. . . . It is just like a prison. We have to work and keep the nuns. We have food like they have in the workhouse. They read all your letters before they are posted and open all that come in. . . . I have just the same [clothes] as I came in with, and my boots are hanging off my feet. I wish you would send me a petticoat and stays for my birthday. For God's sake don't say you heard from me, for it will be read. You had better not write any letter, for I shall not get it. Send me a petticoat and put me a shilling in the hem of it!"

This was written, not in heathen China, or even in South Africa, where we are spending blood and treasure for oppressed millions and the rights of white men, but in the metropolis of civilized England, where in the name of the "Good Shepherd" white girls are oppressed in convents and have no rights except that of submission to their "holy oppressors."

The perilous attempt of the two girls to escape from the convent of the Good Shepherd at Sheffield is referred to in *Tract No. 1*. I will therefore only mention that, according to the Sheffield Independent, July 3, 1897, "The girls felt cruel treatment, and threatened to kill themselves if they are sent back."

No wonder that Rome hates the light and dreads inspection! No wonder that the censorship over correspondence in all convents is so rigorous! But surely this is all the greater reason why British electors should insist on a rigorous inspection of all conventual institutions.

The eloquent facts contained in this short paper should stir the heart of every Englishman who has a spark of humanity, to a sense of his duty! Protestants are making their voice heard all over the kingdom! The inspection of convents is one of the objects forming the basis of all the Protestant electoral action. Every elector, therefore, who has liberty of conscience and a sense of justice, press this great question upon Parliamentary candidates and demand that legislation on the subject have a prominent place in the next Parliament.

About God and Religious Beliefs.

The above word, "God," calls to mind the article from Brother R. M. Stanton in *The Progressive Thinker* of September 1, on "Evolution of Gods." While it may wound some of your readers who yet have a God, about which they are very sensitive, fearing to lose him, yet those who have advanced in thought, and have reached the plateau of a scientific Spiritualism, realizing that creation, and that which caused it to be, and that which rules it, is entirely beyond human conception, or any personal God, will regard this article a very appropriate inscription to place upon the monument erected over the grave of their dead and buried Gods.

How extremely ridiculous is the idea, to us, who have buried all of our Gods, and resolved to create no more, having no use for them. My spirit grand-father, who was for many years a Baptist deacon, recently informed me that he, in company with several other spirits, had been studying into the causes which led to the establishment of religious beliefs, and their evolution up to the present spiritual conception; and that the revelation obtained was both amusing and disgusting. His object was to prepare himself to aid in the progress of other spirits, who, like himself entered spirit life loaded down with theological dogma, by teaching them the true origin of their faith, thus eradicating the error, and opening their minds to the true light. The revelation would be interesting to us, I think.

May our noble ship, *The Progressive Thinker*, continue to sail on the Divine Plan to the end of time.

DR. CARLOS WRIGHT.
LaGrand, Oregon.

Of the World's Great Religions.

COMPILED FROM MRS. ANNIE BESANT'S WORKS.

Mrs. Besant's testimony on this and kindred subjects is especially valuable, for many reasons, among them these; her conclusions are the results of many years of study and patient research on these lines, assisted by some of the best scholars of Europe (as well as the sages of the East in whom Free-thinkers do not believe).

Secondly. She was at one time one of the foremost Agnostics in the world; and lastly the fact that even her enemies do not doubt her ability to speak the truth to the best of her knowledge.

Mrs. Besant says in her introduction to her "Ancient Wisdom": "Right thought is necessary to right conduct, right understanding to right living, and the Divine Wisdom—whether called by its ancient Sanskrit name of *Brahma Vidya*, or its modern Greek name of *Theosophia*, comes to the world as at once an adequate philosophy and an all-embracing religion and ethic." Some of its teachings are so simple and practical that any person of average intelligence can understand and follow them, while others are so lofty, so profound, that the ablest strains his intellect to contain them and sinks exhausted in the effort.

"It is admitted on all hands that a survey of the Great Religions of the world shows that they hold in common many religious, philosophical and ethical ideas. But while the fact is universally granted, the explanation of the fact is a matter of dispute.

Some allege that religions have grown up on the soil of human ignorance lifted by imagination, and have been gradually elaborated from crude forms of animism and fetishism; their likenesses are referred to universal natural phenomena imperfectly observed and fancifully explained, solar and star worship being the universal key for one school, phallic worship the equally universal key for the other, fear, desire, ignorance and wonder led the savage to personify the powers of nature, and priests played upon his terrors and his hopes, his misty fancies and his bewildered questionings; myths became scriptures and symbols, facts, and [How could the symbol exist before the thing symbolized?] as their basis was universal, the likeness of the products was inevitable. Thus speak the doctors of comparative mythology, and plain people are silenced but not convinced, under the rain of proofs; they cannot deny the likeness, but they dimly feel; are all man's dearest hopes and loftiest imaginings really nothing more than the outcome of savage fancies, and of groping ignorance? This is the great leaders of the races, the martyrs and heroes of humanity, lived, wrought, suffered and died deluded, for the mere personification of astronomical facts and for the draped obscenities of barbarians?"

"The second explanation of the common property in the religions of the world asserts the existence of an original teaching in the custody of a Brotherhood of Great Spiritual Teachers, who themselves the outcome of past cycles of evolution—acted as the instructors and guides of the humanity of our planet, imparting to the races and nations in turn, the fundamental truths of religion in the form most adapted to the idiosyncrasies of the recipients.

"According to their view the founders of the great religions are members of the one Brotherhood, and were aided in their mission by many other members, lower in degree than themselves, initiates and disciples of various grades, eminent in spiritual insight, in philosophic knowledge, or in purity of ethical wisdom. These guided the infant and groping races, their post-enlightened their, ruled them as kings taught them as philosophers, guided them as priests; all the nations of antiquity looked back to such mighty men, demi-gods, and they left their traces in literature, in architecture, in legislation.

"That such men lived it seems difficult to deny in the face of universal tradition, of still existing scriptures, and of prehistoric remains, for the most part now in ruins to say nothing of other testimony which the ignorant would reject. The sacred books of the East are the best evidence for the greatness of their authors, for who in later days or in modern times can even approach the spiritual sublimity of their religious thought, the intellectual splendor of their philosophy, the breadth and purity of their ethic?"

And when we find these books contain teachings about God, man and the universe identical in substance, under much variety of outer appearance, it does not seem unreasonable to refer them to a central primary body of doctrine. To that body we give the name of the Divine Wisdom, in its Greek form—*Theosophy*.

"As the origin and basis of all religions, it cannot be the antagonist of any; it is indeed their purifier, revealing the valuable inner meaning of much that has become mischievous in its external presentation by the perverseness of ignorance and the accretions of superstition; but it recognizes and defends itself in each, and seeks in each to unveil its hidden wisdom."

Mrs. Besant goes on to classify the underlying harmonies running through all religions; and begins her proof quotations from the old Chinese Scripture, the *Ching-Chang-Ching*, or *Classic of Purity*; and the thread of these quotations together with Mrs. Besant's comments, arguments and explanations will be followed up in our next—if we are allowed a next.

CELIA MACNEAL.

BOOK REVIEW.

The Light of Egypt. Volume 2.

In this volume Spiritual Astrology is especially elaborated, in a scholarly and masterly manner. It is a book of much interest to Hermetists and students of occult subjects. Astrologically The Light of Egypt aims to present in brief the wisdom of the ages concerning man and his destiny, here and hereafter. It may be stated that Theosophists of the Blavatsky type have felt impelled to criticize it sharply because it controverts their theory of Karma and Reincarnation. The book is beautifully bound in cloth, and is for sale at the office of *The Progressive Thinker*. Price \$2.

Esoteric Lessons. By Sarah Stanley Grimke, Ph. D. Including personified Unthinkable, First Lessons in Reality, A Tour Through the Zodiac, (A Sequel to) First Lessons in Reality.

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Published by the Astro-Philosophical Publishing Co., Denver, Colo. Price, cloth, \$1.50.

A Study in the Philosophy of Man.

The earth was once a revolving sea of fire, yet in the modern maps we find the map of man. In the course of infinitely long ages, through the patient hand of evolution, evolution, revolution and time worked until its surface cooled and became solid, when this process had continued and the temperature of the crust had at last fallen below the boiling point of water, the steam condensed and gathered in the depressions of its surface, as the cooling continued and the crust became thicker the marked interior repeatedly broke through it and burst forth in streams, which in turn hardened and became rocks, and now through space there sweeps a solid sphere all gemmed with liquid mirrors. Such changes and revolutions follow one another, every region of the globe passed through several changes. Plants and animals perished by these revolutions and now lie embedded in the rocks, hence the thickness of the past. The rocks of the globe are based upon the occurrence of the various fossils. The life of the globe has changed with the progress of time, and each age has had its peculiar species of plants and animals. Its life is divided into seven long ages which have dawned and died into space of time.

The first age includes the time from the first forming of a solid crust to the appearance of animal life. In this age the first plants made a grade for the unconscious sleeping man. Then follows the age of mollusks, the age of fishes, then in the age of carbon man's spirit sings in the forest of palm and pine. Then follows the age of reptile, then in the animal age man's spirit dreams all unconscious of its dream.

Onward through the slowly creeping ages of evolution, the animal stands erect and we have the present age or that of man, his dreams now become conscious, the multiple of man has become a fit dwelling-place for man. To be sure changes are taking place now, but they are less sweeping and less violent than those of the preceding ages. Man now stands on the earth and looks around at the rocks, trees, grass and the sky, and thinks: This is I. For him life's object begins and ends in self, for he is but little in advance of the mere animal, cares for nothing but his own savage desires and passions and his own body, which he has now become a fit dwelling-place for man.

But onward rolls the world and through progression and thought and the refining hand of time, softly as the ocean's ebb and flow, tames and molds the savage man through pain and suffering, his tyrant will becomes subject to the reign of reason, and now in the o'er bending sky a new century blooms in the garden of time, before its open gate stands a pilgrim not a savage, but a man clothed in reason.

As he stands he muses: What is life's object? Is it the gaining of wealth? Is it honor? Is it position or rank? Is it beauty? Is it intellectual greatness? Is it social influence? Is it the search of happiness—the city of eternal happiness in the land of by-and-by? As he muses he sees many are striving to reach this beautiful city. Some are taking the path of carnality, some the path of asceticism, some the path of the crowd, some the path of the lone. The one that bears the sign-board "Gold." As these pilgrims worn and weary are almost within its portals, like a mist it disappears, and as before their stretches about them the unfathomable mysterious ocean of life; and in the music of the rustling leaves and rippling brook our pilgrim hears these words: Happiness is not found by any external path, but within itself lies the priceless pearl. Man makes happiness the object of life, but man cannot find it, for the result of every duty well done; happiness was the ultimate object for which man was born, but it can only be gained through a life well spent in usefulness, all duties faithfully performed.

As Longfellow says:

"O what a glory does this world put on,
For him who with fervent heart goes forth,
Under the bright and glorious sky and looks
On duties well performed and days well spent."

We must do our best for the uplifting and bettering of humanity, and to the spreading of progressive and liberal thought. But by many and varied experiences the soul must grow receptive to the soul of nature or spirit before it can unfold the flower of happiness.

But onward travels our pilgrim through the stages of the first lessons of life, of joy, of sorrow, of honesty and uprightness, working for the good of others, unselfish in all his efforts, all duties well performed, and weary with pain and suffering and the burden of life, our pilgrim stands at the open gate. He reflects: Is this the end of life? No; oh, no; this life is but a second in the throbbing pulse of time, compared with the vastness of eternity; this little sand of time sparkling on the shores of an infinite ocean was given us with a lesson, the first lessons of life, to grow, to endure, to unfold, to fall and rise again and by experience to learn to overcome our faults and learn the worth of freedom. That dark and open space does not receive the soul, only the worn and weary habitation of clay. From this the immortal elements spring and live; it soars from height to height, life's troublesome waves grow calmer and still, in the wings of the spirit he rises high, the sun's morning shines bright on the darkness of love and music the soul is upward torn by loving spirit friends to life, life-immortal. Upon our pilgrim's silent lips rests a smile of perfect peace. He has found life's object.

ALICE M. PRINDLE.
Villa Ridge, Ill.

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GOD AT GALVESTON.

The trusting believer, if he thinks as well as trusts, looks at the Galveston catastrophe with a different eye. If there is a just God, that he permits such undeserved losses and suffering to fall upon his children. We may suppose that evil men received in this catastrophe no more punishment than would require their deeds; but the blow fell equally on the saintly and the depraved, the hardened sinner and the innocent babe, on the abandoned in their hour of carousal and on the self-sacrificing of the pious. The loving families were broken up, faithful wives snatched from the husband's side, dutiful parents removed from the children to whom they were necessary, and God-fearing men and devout women were called to pass through torture of mind and body such that the humane are fain to turn from it in very weariness of sympathy and grief. How can God, if he loves his children, suffer these things to be? What purpose of justice or benevolence can be advanced through such strokes of misery and desolation upon those whose lives are exemplary and whose hearts are right?

Such inquiries bring forcibly before us the inquiry of old superstitions and the collapse which is near at hand of old inadequate conceptions of God. It was the misfortune of early Christian teachers and of many of later times, to go back to antiquity for heathen attributes of deity which higher intelligence notably that of the stoics, had grandly outgrown. The primitive mind, in its narrow veins, naturally imparted human passions to the Ruler of the universe, who was usually conceived in multimorphous personages. The growth to monotheism was slow and painful, and the impulse to identify different divinities or parts of divinity with different human qualities has long seemed impossible of correction. It still survives in the multiplicity of saints in the Catholic system, and in the speculations of extremely mystical Protestant theologians on differentiations between the three persons of the Trinity.

Theology has long insisted upon cataloging the human propensities of Deity. These are derived, not from study of creation, but from imperfect human nature. It is the survival of conceptions formed of the universe before any adequate knowledge of the universe had been obtained by actual examination. The nature of the force or forces behind creation was as imperfectly grasped in the morning twilight of knowledge as was the topography of the earth itself or the arrangement of the celestial worlds. And while the geography of Marco Polo and the astronomy of Ptolemy have long been superseded by more correct systems, the religious world, partly by reason of its isolation from the practical walks of life and partly through the tenacity of religious opinion, has been slow to yield to the educational effects of new discoveries.

The one great fact that theology has set its face sternly against is the reign of law. And if there is one department or expression of the reign of law more profound than any other in its significance, or more fundamental to theology in its own view, that is the law of growth. The tenet to which religion has been most tenaciously clinging is that things were created as they are. And to specify the particular fields in which this contention has been most fondly cherished, they are three—the original creation of the world, the being of man, and the Bible. Geology was long resisted as the contrivance of the Evil One, because it menaced the doctrine of special creation. Evolution is still resisted because it disproves the ecclesiastical view of man's nature, and historical study of the Bible is condemned because it shows that the book to have been created as it is, and not as a verbal emanation of Deity. It is only necessary now to note the fact that theologians have long ceased to contend that the Genesis accounts of creation are to be taken literally, that Christian evolutionists are becoming more numerous and influential every day and that enlightened Christian scholars now differ only in the degree in which they accept the results of the higher criticism.

An excellent source of information on this score is supplied in the notes series of articles now appearing in the Outlook from that grand old Congregational minister, Lyman Abbott.

With this increasing understanding of the law of growth as applied to creation, to man's nature and to the Bible, it will not be long when the old terror of a capricious God incessantly interfering in the affairs of men will have passed away; when explanation of catastrophes and hurricanes and earthquakes in natural causes rather than in the mysterious desire of a hidden power to reward or punish. The old belief upon the Creator, that he could call into being millions of innocent children whom he had preordained to everlasting torment has been dismissed at last, in favor of the assurance that "It is not the will of our Father in heaven that one of these little ones should perish"; but similar misconceptions still linger.

As independent inquiry grows strong through its re-assessing discoveries in science and history, it will soon have courage, even in the most trusting and devout, to appeal from dogma to evidence, to lean in confidence upon reason and conscience, to strip away from the conception of Deity all unworthy and repellent attributes, as anthropomorphism gradually gives way to the refinements of perfect ideals. The saintly soul then is perpetuated in the Galveston horror has need of emancipation from that worst form of slavery, the intellectual tyranny that binds the mind and forbids it on some subjects to think and reason. The old theology, the old church, the old ideals—these have served their purposes and served them well. They must give way by degrees, and they are pretty certain not to do so until the basis of new and better things has been laid in study and experience. The new boat must be seaworthy before we abandon the old.

The Oregonian, Portland, Oregon.

ENSHERINED.

Though worthy of all love thou art,
All tenderness that lips avow;
The first pinched blossoms of my heart
May never wreath a mortal brow.
I cannot offer thee first place
Within my heart, because not mine
For aught on earth; an angel's face
Forever fills and lights that shrine,
While life's wreath these words above:
"In memory of an immortal love
And of a hope divine."

And yet, dear soul, I love thee much,
And value more thy tenderness
Than love of most. With reverent touch
Thy friendly hand in mine I press
And whisper low before too late,
Ere death may still my lips or thine:
Though none may pass the mystic gate,
Thy soul has grown so dear to mine,
I offer thee the will to live
A place outside the shrine, yet near,
If thou wilt make it thine.

C. L. H.

SOME CORRECTIONS.

Mr. T. Darley Allen makes so many questionable statements in his recent communication relative to the Galveston catastrophe, that I am constrained to further note and correct some of his errors, which I doubt not the general reader as well as the contributor himself, will be glad to have corrected; for I take it that both readers and contributors are hospitable to the truth, to a welcome degree.

He says: "There are eminent investigators who believe that as in the past fifty years we have learned to explain a certain number of the phenomena of Spiritualism by natural causes, there is reason to hope that the study of mental science will enable us to explain all, before many years have passed."

How long since, pray, has it been true that, because A or B believes so and so, ergo, that settles it. This, however, is the substance of Mr. Allen's logic—surely a very convenient but a very false way to determine the exact nature of the subject, fact, thing or theory, especially the question of immortality.

Every intelligent observer knows that the attitude of the human mind has much to do with accepting certain theories as being true, particularly where the wish is father to the thought.

This was popularized by Shakespeare 300 years ago, in his famous saying "There is nothing good or bad but thinking makes it so"—a sophism which a certain class of mental scientists in the extreme teachings, double disprove.

I dispute his assertion that "we" or anyone has "learned to explain the phenomena of Spiritualism by natural causes"—meaning thereby by purely material means.

Who are the eminent investigators that have thus satisfactorily or scientifically explained a single spiritual phenomenon?

Who are the investigators who want not accept assumption or supposition for explanation, but demand clear, unmistakable demonstration. I want something beside the testimony of professional tricksters, like Maskelyne, Hermann and Heller, for we have the written statement, deliberate confession of their superiors, professionals like Houdin and Belloc, the latter formerly court magician to the Emperor of Germany, that the spiritualistic manifestations they had witnessed were beyond their explanation or knowledge.

Where are the bona fide scientists that have made plain the genuine phenomena of Spiritualism by material agencies?

Perhaps our critic refers to the famous Buffalo doctors who in the early days of the movement, finding themselves overwhelmed at the extraordinary character of the manifestations evolved from out the measureless depths of their wisdom the ipse dixit that that, rapping communication etc., on and through the table were caused by the summing of toe joints! This marvelous intellectual dictum of such an extraordinary feat—worthy only of Bedlam—was seriously given as an expert medico-scientific explanation of incomprehensible phenomena as to how matters of known as well as forgotten facts, were stated, and cases of personal identity revealed to hundreds of total strangers and skeptics, most of whom were convinced against their will, while some were open disbelievers in a future life.

How absurd to the extreme degree, this "toe-joint" theory was really propounded by educated M. Ds, and readily accepted by willing minds as a scientific explanation of how in numberless instances positive information was furnished—information which so far as known no living person possessed, verification, in some cases, having to be made to certain specified documents unknown to be in existence, either by the medium or the investigator.

"Learned explanation" which still obtains with many, although under the more modern and euphonious terms of "hypnotism," "unconscious cerebration," "subliminal self," "sub-consciousness," "mind reading," "telepathy," etc. Learning is popularly supposed to be the equivalent of knowledge, and knowledge the synonym of wisdom, but it is not—always! In fact they are often widely a variance. By way of accounting, however, for the successful results obtained under vastly different circumstances by the world's greatest and most independent investigators, the leading scientific minds of Christendom in their individual effort to determine the verity of spiritual phenomena—investigators like Askani, Crookes, Varley, Zollner, Hellenbach, Wallace et al. idem homo—our critic eagerly remarks that "learned men are often as easily deceived as ordinary people."

If he had said that certain professionally learned men often display great ignorance if not greater prejudice, especially where it happens to conflict with preconceived notions of their business interests, I could more readily agree with him. For instance, when such "learned men" as the late Dr. Geo. M. Beard, of Brooklyn, and Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, more recently of Washington, publicly announced that there never was a case of clairvoyance and that none could be produced, they but advertised their own ignorance.

But the great effort was made in good faith, without compensation, to submit proof of clairvoyance in Dr. Beard's own home, before any party of gentlemen might choose to have present. A trial in question to be subjected to any man within reason of the public opinion being that if the same were demonstrated to the Doctor's and the company's satisfaction, that he should acknowledge it as publicly as he had previously denied the possibility of its being done. This was openly granted. So, agreeably at the hour, a publicly known gentleman and his wife, old friends of mine for many years, both still living, made a trial on the occasion agreed upon, with the following results: They visited the Doctor's residence and before his assembled guests, the visiting lady was seated in a chair that was placed in the middle of the room, and her eyes carefully bandaged, which the company critically examined to full satisfaction. The Doctor then walked across his library and taking down a book from one of its shelves asked the lady the name of its author. To his great amazement she answered correctly, reading the full title-page. Good for trial number one. But this was claimed might be mind reading, telepathy. They came trial number two. The Doctor walked backward to his library shelves, reached behind him and taking one of the books from its place, opened it at hazard, turned down a leaf and asked the lady what book it was, as he nor any one present did not know. She slowly gave the name of the book, the name of the author, the page turned down, and finally read it without an error. All this was verified when the Doctor brought the book to the front, looked it over, tested the prescribed page and the correctness of the name which was testified to by every one present. Alas! for the mutability of human

hopes and certain men's promises; the good Doctor never had the gracefulness to acknowledge that fact. It was too great a vindication of what he had conceived to be an impossibility. The evidence was overwhelming, and likewise was his discomfiture. He died without making his word good or the truth known.

When one seeks publicly to assail genuine spiritual phenomena, it is essential that he be prepared to submit argument other than that which is based solely on misinformation. It is respectfully suggested that the first prerequisite is at least a little knowledge.

GEORGE A. BACON.
Washington, D. C.

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Herman Hess, clairvoyant lecturer, wants a lady or gentleman to join with him in giving platform tests for Spiritualistic societies, one with gifts, but not fully developed, preferred. Address 303 West Vermont street, Indianapolis, Ind.

tending them for two years, to come to their abode and clear the place of the witches, which the women declare are eternally pursuing them, electrifying the floors and walls, sharpening knives with which to jab their bodies, and descending from the chimney at night to beat them black and blue. It was to escape a blonde-haired witch who came down the chimney for the purpose of beating them, and a blind witch with white hair who had a propensity for sharpening knives on the window sills.

members of this new Spiritual organization to make it a truly educational society in the higher teachings of the spirit world, while at the same time fully demonstrating the phenomena of Spiritualism. Among the audience were many of our old-time Spiritualists, as well as new enquirers: Bros. Samuel Stodder and Wm. Palmer, of the board of directors of the Fraternity of Divine Communion, are in full sympathy with and are generous supporters of this new movement in the interests of

In quest of one poor, little missing lamb
And ceased not in His search till it was
found.

H. A. SMITH, M. D.
Seattle, Wash.

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