

THE PROGRESSIVE THINKER

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

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A MOTHER'S FRANTIC GRIEF

Christianity No Consolation in Time of Death.

He who lives in the narrow and contracted sphere of mere selfish and sensual enjoyment is on the material plane of life and has no higher aspirations; and whose realization must be as brief and transitory as mortal existence itself. The real merit and virtue of anything is in its service. When the service is no longer needed, the thing has no value.

If life ceases at the death of the body, it has no value; for it has accomplished nothing but what has perished. That only is valuable which persists. Life, eternally persistent, and endowed with infinite possibilities, is of infinite value. It is in constant activity; and were it not for endless progress, its value would be diminished to the vanishing point.

The grandeur and glory of life consist in its immortality and eternal progress. A realization of this is a source of constant inspiration. To press onward and upward forever and ever, to enlarge the capacity for happiness without limit, is a thought too deep and glorious to contemplate; yet the inspiration deepens and intensifies as life advances and this thought serves as a constant source of the most happy anticipations.

This, to the Spiritualist; but to the Christian, alas no such soul-cheering thoughts come to his mind. He simply hopes and believes; he is often tormented with doubts and fears; but hopes and beliefs are largely founded on errors and propitious absurdities and accepted as unquestionable truths. If he looks around him he cannot fail to see how opinions and creeds are changing which he must know are evidences of fallacy in them—not a cheerful thought.

If he would think again, he would become aware of the fact that there is no progression in the heaven he hopes to win. Though this may not worry him now, yet should he reach such a heaven, he would eventually get tired of his harp and crown and waving palm, and long for a glimpse beyond the Jasper walls and streets of gold.

While the few favored ones are singing praises and shouting, hallelujahs, the great mass of mankind who have passed from mortal sight, are writhing in eternal torment. According to Christian statistics, more than ninety per cent of God's children are doomed to endless misery. Even in Christianity, the finally impatient, who constitute the large majority, are doomed to a like destiny. Our dearest relatives, if they do not believe as we do, and employ the same means of grace as prescribed by the church—they are forever lost to us; and what is infinitely worse, we know they are suffering the tortures of the damned forever and ever. Imagine your child in a fiery flame. How cheering the thought!

A case of this kind recently occurred in this place. A young man of excellent character passed on to the other side of life. His mother became frantic with grief, and acted wildly—was well-nigh insane. She had endeavored time and again to get him to join the church; but he could not believe the creed and would not; and died an unbeliever. The case assumes this formula: Premise: "He that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark 16:17). He did not believe, therefore he is damned. This was fully realized by the mother. No language can express them. She was absolutely inconsolable. She sat at the head of the coffin and moaned constantly during the funeral sermon: "Oh, my boy, my poor lost boy! I will never see him more," and had to be supported by one on each side of her.

The preacher in sympathetic tones tried to lighten her grief by eulogizing her son; but could offer no ray of hope to cheer her. Here was the sentence of his doom, directly from the lips of the judge of the quick and the dead, ringing in her ears: "He that believeth not shall be damned," and her dead son did not believe! May the angels pity her! God in his wrath, does not, for He requires such torment to appease His anger. What soul-sickening horror! What agony is endured by those whose impatient dear ones have passed beyond their sight!

But with the Spiritualist, how different! He believes nothing. He knows. His loved ones are ever near and around him, cheering him on, inspiring him with noble thoughts and loving words. No gloomy thoughts nor painful doubts distract his mind. To him life is a journey to a glorious union with the loved ones gone before, and every day is one step nearer to its ending.

Nothing can retard his onward and upward march. No angry God to imperil his destiny; no wily Devil to thwart his plans and defeat his purposes.

What a contrast! The one, a blighting curse; the other, an inestimable blessing. The one terrifies and enslaves; the other, cheers and liberates! The one divides and separates earth's children into hostile sects and eternal animosities, giving rise to persecutions and wars innumerable; the other tends to peace and union, and good will to all mankind.

And strange to say, notwithstanding the vast amount of evidence accessible to all, demonstrating immortality to man, and the return and communion with mortals—with the loved of long ago; the great majority turn a deaf ear to the voices of the departed, and shut their eyes to the evidence of the return and communion of the dwellers in the Beautiful Beyond with their loved still on earth. Strange perversity! To what can it be attributed? To nothing but the darkening and debasing influences that have their rise in the curse of an angry God! So long as ecclesiasticism rules the world, there will be opposition to the advance of Spiritualism; but its power is waning, and the dark and dismal clouds are breaking away.

Spring Hill, Kansas. J. SCHILLHOUS.

Our Finer Forces =

An Essay on Their Nature and Uses.

By Ella Dare, Austin, Ill.

To the altar of life we come as earnest seekers. Reverently we pause before the sacred shrine. With prayer for light to see and understand, we turn the pages of God's living book.

We search for truth. Our faith in this divine impulse is based upon Christ's immortal promise: "Ask and ye shall receive, seek and ye shall find, knock and it shall be opened unto you."

Our own age claims to be highly practical. Proofs, material measurements, demonstrations of plain, solid, sensible facts, are demanded, but just here we stop because in the face of all these imperative protestations we are confronted with the undeniable truth that the most common, every-day, universal things in the world, are the most secret and hidden. Gravitation, heat, electricity, sound, light, ether—all these rulers of the material realm are unseen.

Because we dwell amongst these verities, because we accept without thought these ministrations, because these wonders are our constant companions we cease to regard them with question or surprise.

Infinite in its complexity of construction and functional activity is man's physical body. Unceasing research for ages by the most learned minds, has failed to fully explore or conquer its powers and resources.

Still the work goes on, as day by day and year by year new relations of its composite character are discovered and classified.

Therefore, because of these unseen forces which are the component parts of our every-day life, we will put aside prejudice, and enter carefully, but fearlessly, into any path that may lead to truth.

Our bodies have been likened to cities of individual atoms, obeying like good citizens the laws of molecular motion, coming to and emigrating from, according to conditions and circumstances formulated by higher forces.

Science aims to establish a law of unity between all forms of motion as expressed in light, heat, electricity, sound and color. That all of these agencies rule in the human body, and that upon their harmonious or inharmonious action depends our health, or disease, is a fact fully verified.

Let us examine some of the wonders contained in this living temple which we inhabit!

First of all we must recognize the close relation between the body and its environment. Absolutely dependent it is upon the air, light and food supplied from without. It has been proven that the body is in fact the brain extended, and that by intervening fibres the brain cells are brought in contact with the other cells of the body. Again it is declared that the body itself is composed of minute living, atomic organisms, which penetrate its vital fluid, and that they assume our own individual characteristics; that also, by our thoughts and deeds we modify these atomic existences, and cast them out upon the air about us, thus materially influencing our surroundings.

Dr. H. Baraduc of Paris holds the theory that every human being is a "miniature sun," or a "man-sun," surrounded by a luminous atmosphere, called a photosphere, even as is the physical sun; and also that the human photosphere accurately reflects our own spiritual conditions. With his assistants, he succeeded in taking several photographs of vibrations from human bodies, which conformed to the peaceful, or perturbed conditions of mental action.

In the middle of the last century, Baron Reichenbach discovered that every magnet is surrounded by living rays of light that trace distinct lines of force, and that these lines are physical. He also claimed that man is a kind of magnet in a magnetic field.

Mr. J. J. G. Wilkinson in 1857 maintained that the skin, or the nervous system through it, pours forth a subtle radiation of tremendous efficacy on other organic creatures, and through this battery of surfaces, the animal creation, and man, most of all, is constantly impressing a character upon external nature, literally magnetizing it. From phenomena well known to physiologists he demonstrates a "manifold nervous fluid" which passes through

space and from body to body. In accordance with this truth it was, that Prof. Denton, the eminent geologist and scientist, succeeded so admirably in his psychometric experiments related in the book entitled, "The Soul of Things."

As we consider the law of vibration and all that it means to the body, we are met by tremendous truths of limitless significance. Physiological functions how to this unerring force. In all life, within and without, universal pulsation is present. Vibration is the law of the universe. Visit, if you will, some power-house in the city where the whirr of machinery fills the air, and communicates to you, its high tension—then, with your own fingers, lightly stop your ears, and you will be conscious of a power-house within your body, where the activity of the Infinite is working in full force.

Mrs. Watt Hughes has discovered the fact that the human voice is capable of printing form upon matter. A singer sends the voice against the surface of a membrane covered with a semi-fluid paste, which is placed over the mouth of a hollow receiver—the note strikes the paste in accurately outlined forms—those of flower-forms appearing most frequently.

That each body has a key-note which arises from and is modified by the prevailing emotions, is also proven in a similar way.

Mr. Crookes, the scientist, gives a list of vibrations in the ether, of millions, billions, and trillions, corresponding to electricity, light, heat, color, and those vibrations known as the X-ray.

Science also declares that there is only one force, and only one matter, subject each to infinite variations.

Herbert Spencer defines life as "the continuous adjustment of internal relations, to external relations." Swedenborg said that "Love is the life of man." Thought itself proceeds from love. Truth proceeds from love as light from flame.

Mrs. Browning declared that "He lives most life, who ever breathes most air."

Our first act in entering this world is to breathe, and we leave it with our last breath. Breath is, therefore, a living power, the arbiter, the dictator, the boundary of our physical being. Every minute portion of our organism, brain, nerve, muscle and fibre responds to this mighty and invisible force.

Words are sign-boards along the broad highway of truth; and carry with them an inner meaning. In all languages, the air is used as the representative of spirit. The word soul is derived from a term meaning air, wind, breath. The Latin *animus* and *anima* come from the Greek word *anemos*, meaning wind. The old Saxon word for spirit, ghost, and the German *geist* are similarly derived. The word *aspire* is from the Latin *ad*, toward, and *spiro*, to breathe. The French *esprit*, the Italian *spirito*, the Spanish *espíritu*, and the Latin *spiritus*, all express the same meaning.

All-powerful is breath, and its divine agencies! God "breathed into us the breath of life!" Through this sacred utterance beats the heart of transcendent truth. Breath is the vital elixir, the unseen guide that leads us into the measureless fields of ever-widening potencies, where we may learn to know ourselves as manifestations of infinite love and wisdom!

In his "First Principles of Philosophy," Herbert Spencer says that "All motion in the universe is rhythmic—the movement of the pendulum, the ebb and flow of tides, day and night, the systolic and diastolic action of the heart, and the inspiration and expiration of the lungs. Our breathing is a double motion of the universal ether, an active and re-active movement. When we breathe in harmony with this movement we are well; when we breathe inharmoniously we are ill."

But, back of these manifestations moves the one divine energy, the one infinite love, the one all-encompassing life—God!

Our thoughts mold and shape our bodies, and direct our lives. Creative of good or ill, they hold sovereign sway. Love and hate, charity and ill-will, not only speak through our own organisms, but send out their individual

vibrations into limitless thought realms, and generate therein the qualities of their own nature.

By the control of this tremendous force our souls can be liberated from ills that oppress. Fear, anger, hatred, impatience, hurry of spirit, jealousy, revenge, are all destructive, not only in tearing down the bodily tissues, but they imprison the mind and charge it with poisonous activities. Love, good cheer, gentleness, charity, sympathy and tenderness build up the physical powers, promote health, and bless with the radiance of the spirit's sunshine.

These thought forces enter into the smallest details of our lives—into our family matters, our social relations, our religious aspirations, and our business interests.

The command of thought, the power to hold it and direct it, may be gained by cultivation and concentration. "But how is this to be done?" is asked. "It is utterly impossible for me to concentrate my thought on one object to the exclusion of all other things," is the common objection.

Perhaps this drifting of the mind may be best illustrated by the Oriental story, which is no doubt familiar to many. "There was a monkey, and like all other monkeys, he was restless, moving continually from one thing to another. Some one gave him wine to drink, and he grew more restless. A scorpion stung him, and that served to accentuate his activity, and then a demon entered into him, and he became an embodiment of perpetual motion. This illustrates the human mind as it jumps from one thing to another with a speed that words cannot measure.

The remedy suggested for this turbulent state, is to sit quietly and let the mind run on. As if you yourself were an outsider, watching its antics and its capers. It is claimed that with each day's practice these high-rolling thought waves will gradually subside until at last they can be perfectly controlled. Time alone can accomplish it, but the result justifies the expenditure.

Another method in controlling the thought, may be practiced with profit in connection with our daily duties.

Bring your thought directly to bear upon the specific act of the moment, though it may be of the most trifling nature. When you dress in the morning hold your thought to the matter in detail. Don't let it go down town, or out into the kitchen in advance of your body. This is tiresome; that is a waste of force. Just dress yourself. Don't use up your strength in analyzing and working out all that lies before you for the day. Meet each demand as it presents itself. If you conserve your force, your work will be well done, and corresponding results will be satisfactory. You will feel no fatigue. Things will come easy, and work without tension will be pleasure.

Hurry of spirit is one of the worst types of mental impatience, and production of a vast number of nervous diseases. Avoid hurry. Check yourself, even if it be a hundred times a day, and for one moment be deliberate. In time the habit will come to stay, and you will feel better and live longer.

"Faith is the substance of things hoped for." That is the promise.

Every thought we think is a reality in unseen substance. If we hold it steadily it will find shape in the outer world, whether it be the thought of hatred, of love, or the thought of success in any special undertaking—to us will come its fruition of good or ill in accordance with that other divine promise, that "as ye sow, so shall ye also reap." It is the law. Seed sown in the unseen soil of thought germinates and grows for us in the visible world around us.

If you desire to accomplish some certain aim, your success will be more assured if you speak of that desire to no one, unless to those who are in perfect accord with you and your desire. By intrusting your project to people uninterested, you weaken your own thought-power. Avoid entering into active sympathy with the thought of despondent or unhappy people, lest thereby you impair your own power to aid them. Rather hold steadily your faith in the Supreme Good, and minister to them from its abundance.

Be wise in the exercise of the emotions, for they are the

key-board of our being, and must be kept in perfect tune if we would live in health and harmony.

These are only hints of almost innumerable ways by which we may attain to thought-control. If these are practiced, self-suggested means will appear with the needs that call for them. "Within yourself," says H. W. Trine, "lies the cause, of whatever enters into your life. To come into the full realization of your own awakened, interior powers, is to be able to condition your life in exact accord with what you would have it."

An occult writer has beautifully said that "Motion is the ever-weaving shuttle of Omnipotence, bringing to light the thought of Infinite Mind."

In the inner temple of each one's being, love and understanding, emotion and intellect, with their infinite radiations flow from one exhaustless source, the divine creative intelligence, that speaks in harmonious vibrations. Recognizing our relations to both planes of being, the physical and the spiritual, progress and soul-growth must depend on the cultivation of our own powers.

In Romans 8:6 we read: "To be spiritually-minded is life and peace."

Prof. Drummond says: "The natural life owes all to environment—so must the spiritual. Now the environment of the spiritual life is God, as nature, therefore, forms the complement of the natural life. God is the complement of the spiritual life. It is not a strange thing, then, for the soul to find its life in God. This is its native air."

If you would cultivate the spiritual perception, seek the silence. Sit apart and alone. That the nerves may become tranquil, invoke the aid of regular, and rhythmic breathing. Breath is the bridge between the physical and spiritual kingdoms. Relax the body. Let each breath be a messenger, of the soul's aspiration. Dismiss from the mind the cares and anxieties, the prejudices and animosities of the outer life. Though difficult at first, it can be done. Send out the thought to God—the Supreme Good—and in a short time the realization of harmonic vibrations will be achieved. You will be conscious of thrills or pulsations about, around, and permeating the whole being. Call then upon the law that lifts the soul to upper heights—the law of universal love.

Deeper and slower and more quiet will the breathing become, for, as the functions of the outer being are less active, the soul's inner respiration is made manifest.

Be faithful and steadfast. Through this unfoldment you will learn of higher truths, which will lift the daily duties out of the dull and prosaic into a light that transforms drudgery into a luminous significance, linking it to larger uses.

Individual life will extend its narrow earthly outlines into the unutterable grandeur and majesty of the soul's eternal growth.

As day follows darkness, so surely rises the sun of knowledge within the soul. "Seek and ye shall find," strip off the bandages of doubt. Look for the light, and its baptism shall bless you. Attune your thought to life's inner harmonies. Let the beneficence of truth illumine your soul with its glowing radiance.

Pursue with unwavering ardor the unseen pathways of the spiritual nature, and your whole life will set itself to the higher virtues, in octaves of uplifting melody.

The great map of the soul will be unrolled, and as little by little you acquaint yourself with its geography, you will conquer sense-limitations, and pass out into unexplored regions. An exaltation of spirit will lead you into larger fields of truth.

If you ask for guidance in the cares of every day in the complex ways about, listen to that voice that speaks within the temple dome of your own soul. Out of God's soundless silence it will give you counsel. Prove all things by your own highest measure of truth and justice. It will never fail you.

Around us and about us, as close to us as breath itself, are answers to our questions. Let us be ready to receive them. Let us apply them to universal good, and countless more will wait to do us service.

Austin Station, Chicago, Ill.

ELLA DARE.

COLORLESS CHRISTIANITY.

The Origins of Religions, and the Effect of an Oft Repeated Assertion.

Rev. Dr. J. E. Roberts, pastor of the Church of This World, Kansas City, Mo., addressed a large audience at the Century theatre. He took for his subject, "A Colorless Christianity." Dr. Roberts said in part:

The origins of religions are always obscure. It is not easy to point out the sources whence they come. What was the secret of the power of Moses? What gave Buddha his command and kept still keeps in loyalty; countless thousands to a system more ancient than Christianity? What was the secret of Mahomet's reckless and ruthless sway? What made Jesus of Nazareth potent to impress the world? It has always been the cherished infatuation of the adherents of every religion that "Our religion is of divine origin." Christianity is in no wise unique or peculiar in that belief. That has been the dogma for which the disciples of most of the great religions have contended, sometimes with blood and warfare.

The fact seems to be that man, by nature, is a religious being, or, at least, that he has been such in all the past. Perhaps we can not go back of the statement that there is within man the mystery of passion and thought, the dreamer of dreams, the creator of ideals, the strange complex of mud and the celestial substance, the vast and monstrous blend between the brute and the angel, that there is within him something that demands and religion answers the demand. It is one of the grave problems whether or not man will so change by development, knowledge, refinement and civilization as to outgrow the necessity of religion. It is a problem that no man yet is able to solve whether or not religion will be slowly eliminated from the thoughts of

men, or whether it will be panoplied with new power and go forth to make new conquests in the centuries yet to be.

Although we may not discern the origins of religions, the secret springs whence they arise, we can yet discern certain things that invariably accompany the growth and development of every religion. Conspicuous among these things is the simple power that awaits upon assertion. Let a man with sufficient verve reiterate a thing, how impossible or absurd, he will at last find followers. Moses came down from the mountain and without any direct appeal to the justness, the equity and the necessity of the laws which he carried in his hands, said: "Thus saith the Lord"; he did not for a moment risk the acceptance of that code upon their merits; he knew the people with whom he had to deal, and he stood there, that gray, grizzled man, and in order to make sure his command said, "This is God's law." The people believed it.

Mahomet, the camel driver, unsheathed his sword and with one swift and simple message, repeated a thousand times, said, "There is one God, and Mahomet is his prophet," and ten thousand swords leaped from their scabbards and ten thousand eager, impetuous lips cried out, "There is one God and Mahomet is his prophet."

Psychologists, students of the story of man, claim that physicians can name the malady that constituted the secret upon one thing, saw nothing else; he inspired and an element of command, he swept resistlessly to power.

The same thing was illustrated in the origin of Christianity. Peter, stung with indignation at the coldness and incredulity with which his teacher was received, said, "Thou art the Son of God!" The disciples took it up, and in the face of defeat and slaughter, menaced by enemies, covered with disappointment, overwhelmed with disaster and death, they continued the cry, "Jesus is the Son of God," and millions upon millions have repeated it, carried away by the subtle force of a vehement assertion. It is not implied or contended that these great founders were insane. It would be shallow to imagine that they had, with cunning and forethought, worked out a device or assertion, and then gone forth to acquire power with it. This is the real view. What humanity demanded, what was lying dormant, but rising within the consciousness of the age, some unexpected thought that was pressing and throbbing for lips caught up these men and made them its instrument and led them to conquest. The same element of human nature that made the demand for that stimulus supplied it in the persons of these different originators.

Still another thing invariably accompanying the rise of a religion is the miraculous. There never was a religion instituted among men without the miracle. Men have not been in the past able to conceive of a man as great in his simple right of humanity. They have invariably attributed to them miraculous births and conferred upon them the exercises of miraculous powers. If they did not have the miracles at hand, it was the simplest matter of logical consistency to invent them. "If this man is divinely born, and gifted with supreme powers, of course he must have some time displayed such powers." So miracles are grown up with the growth of every religion. They have been a tribute exacted by ignorance and superstition of the reason and thought of men.

One thing attending the growth of religion has been poverty. Its founders have almost without exception been poor. The carpenter, the camel driver, the exiles, have been the founders of great religions. The prince of India abdicated his throne, gave up his kingdom, took off his royal robes and in the coarse garment of a mendicant went in his search for wisdom and sat beneath the tree-trunks shaded awaiting

the divine illumination. If now these conditions that attended the development of Christianity might or did continue, if the old conditions could still obtain if the gospel that once burst forth like a flash of light upon the startled vision of a waiting generation could now adapt itself to the changed conditions in which the generations of men find themselves, its old power might continue, its old conquests might increase, but the world is different. Through the restlessness of progress, the mighty advance of knowledge, the slow but steady elevation of the moral sense, through the change in the demands of the spiritual life of the world, generations of men are different. Vehement assertion will not persuade or win. There has been a transition from the mere authority to reason.

The great founders of religion did not argue, they did not temporize, they did not attempt to square or harmonize their teachings with discoveries, or with science or with demonstrations. There was a fine frenzy, a splendid zeal, a magnificent personality about those rude conquerors of the world's heart. The power of assertion is sometimes seen in the present age, but never in the interest of current Christianity. There is a gentleman in Chicago that says, "I am Elijah, Elijah Number Two," and thousands of people believe it, intelligent men and women, industrious men and women, money-earning men and women, and in the course of a few years this second Elijah has accumulated industries and properties and commercial interests approaching \$200,000. How can it be explained?

When a man simply says, "I am Elijah the Second," how can you account for the fact that anybody with any sense believed it, but there are the facts, one of the religious facts, one of the things that shows by their modern illustration how religions become current.

A certain woman says: "There is no such thing as death, sickness does not exist, no one ever felt a pain," and thousands of people believe it. How

can it be accounted for? These same people follow their dead to the grave, saying, "Men do not die," they say by the side of the bed of suffering and say, "There is no pain," they visit and heal the diseased and say, "There is no sickness." It is a matter of moment as well as surprise that that strange development of religion has made more converts in a given period than any new thing in the religious history of the modern world.

A clerical gentleman of London is just now reported by the papers as going into his pulpit one day and saying, "I am the Christ, the spirit of the Nazarene has entered into me, behold the second Christ." The community mobs him and stones the church, but the congregation believes what he says. How can it be accounted for? A gentleman comes to our own city and says: "The old power of miracles is still extant; and if you will come and study in my school, and pray in my meetings, you will be given the power to speak with tongues; you can speak French, and German, and Italian, without the use of books, or learning, and if you are devoted enough maybe you can sometimes speak Chinese." People believe it. How can it be accounted for? Only by that subtle force of the command of one mind over another.

I am optimistic enough to believe that if religion had been rational from the beginning, if it had been free from avarice and unholiness, if it had taught men instead of trying to convert them, if it had been free from the time when poverty was forced upon no man, when crime was made the necessity for none who is weak. Humanity must, in the future, as in the past, make its own religions. In the conservative Orient the old systems may continue still longer and satisfy the heart, but the new world, the new civilization, the new republic must awake new inspirations, exalt new ideals, and equip itself with new power. Why should we continue still to be imitators? How vainly have the prophets wrought if they have

not stirred mankind to the energy of independent action, and original resolve. Humanity possesses now all the energy, if the power, all the impulse, all the uplift that it ever possessed—all and more. Humanity is sweeping forward to larger, nobler and better destinies. If there was a God in Judea, there is surely a God in America. Let us not believe that the infinite has abandoned the world, or committed its keeping to an arrogant hierarchy, or a selfish and avaricious priesthood. The religion that sought for its power in appeals to a waiting hall and a deferred heaven has lost its command over men. The one does no longer terrify, the other does no longer entice. One is fear, the other is selfishness—and both are base. Humanity must find its inspirations in its work for humanity. This world must be the chief concern of those who have the cheerful habit of living in this world now. To destroy superstition, to dispel the darkness of ignorance, to destroy injustice, to condemn and eradicate oppression, to make poverty unnecessary, to make opportunities the same and equal, to illumine the conscience and civilize the heart of mankind—this must be the work of religion.

Prof. Lockwood's Book.

To the Editor:—As I do not know the present address of Prof. Wm. Lockwood, would you kindly allow me a little space in your valuable paper to tell him that I received his new book entitled "The Continuity of Life, A Cosmic Truth." I wish to say right here, if our thinking men and women want a book that will tell them more truth about the true and living God, who, where and what God is, I would advise them to get a copy of said book; it has opened my eyes more in one hour than years of church teaching has ever done.

MRS. S. G. COLLEEN.

Jacksonville, Fla.

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All books advertised in the columns of The Progressive Thinker are for sale at this office. Bear this in mind.

Fears Burial Alive.

A New York special to the Chicago American states that Nellie Corcoran, the sleeping girl, who was buried in the Vineland Hospital from October 19 to November 1 without waking from a semi-hypnotic sleep, into which she had fallen, did not wake up Tuesday. Since Sunday she has hardly spoken. On that day and on the previous Saturday she was awake for a few hours, but could not describe her symptoms to the physicians, who are at a loss to diagnose her ailment.

Her temperature was high Tuesday and her pulse rapid and weak. She moaned a great deal, and the doctors thought she was trying to communicate with those about her, as during her few waking hours last Saturday she said that she had been trying unavailingly to throw off the sleep which oppressed her.

She fears she will be buried alive while conscious, but is unable to communicate with those about her. Last Monday morning she asked whether there had been any intention to bury her when all efforts to arouse her failed. At that time she spoke of being buried alive as though she dreaded the possibility.

Dr. Bradshaw, the hypnotic expert of St. Vincent's Hospital, fears that the patient's moaning indicates that she is torn with the foreboding of burial alive.

Later advices state that the girl has since died.

The incident should serve to impress people with the terrible experience of one lying in a helpless condition, unable to speak or move, yet mentally awake, and fearing that most horrible fate of being entombed alive. There is grave reason to believe that many instances occur of burial alive. Carelessness, too great haste to get the supposed dead laid away in the grave, the ignorance of doctors who pronounce persons dead when they are in a sort of cataleptic trance—all of these lead to entombment of the living.

So many instances have occurred of persons pronounced dead by physicians, and yet have revived after being prepared for burial, and lived many years afterward—it would seem that such things should cause great care that burial alive would be impossible.

And it would seem that the only real proof of death is the disappearance of decomposition in the body.

Many supposed dead have been killed by the embalmers.

Political Rights of Women in England.

In England, where male suffrage is not universal, the women have more privileges than in our great Republic.

In every election in England, for every public body, except in that for Parliament, women have a vote on the same terms as men—the terms being the payment of tax. The women who pay taxes vote for members of school boards, boards of guardians and boards of charities, besides the town and city councils, for which they have voted since 1869. In this way the women have a hand in the city sanitation, the expenditure of public money, the water supply and all those things that touch the homes so closely. They also vote for district, parish and county councils which have the moral and intellectual government of the cities under them.

The licensing of places of amusement, public parks, lunatic asylums, etc., come under their jurisdiction. When these were established in 1884, no question was raised as to whether women might vote for them. They had voted so naturally for twenty years for city councils and school boards, that, as a matter of course, they were given the same rights in the new county councils.

The rights of English women in public life has not only been a great force for service and benefit.

It is to that great continent, Australia, however, that the greatest honor is due. For forty years its women have enjoyed school and municipal suffrage, and both have worked so well, that for suffrage, within the last ten years, was granted to the women of South and West Australia and New Zealand.

The bill for full suffrage throughout Australia was introduced eight times and passed the lower house each time by an increased majority. The upper house, which is not elected by the people, each time defeated it. Last February the bill was introduced again and this time passed both houses by a practically unanimous vote, thus granting full franchise to 765,400 citizens.

"Lisbeth, A Story of Two Worlds." By Carrie E. S. Tving. Richly imbued with the philosophy of Spiritualism. Price \$1. For sale at this office.

"The Life Booklets." By Ralph Waldo Trine. Three daintily beautiful little books, finely adapted for holiday presents. The titles are, "Character Building by Thought Power," "Every Living Creature," and "The Greatest Thing Ever Known." The matter is of high-toned spiritual character and of helpful purpose. Price 35 cents each, or \$1.00 for the three.

Illuminate the Mind of a Child.

A phenomenal surgical operation, consisting of the removal of a portion of an abnormally thick or misshapen skull, thus curing a child of idiocy, was performed here. The patient was Isadore Layvine, thirteen years old, who had been an idiot from birth. He is now well and has begun his education.

Dr. Gottlieb Sternberg, who performed the operation, discovered that the boy's brain was pressed down by a thick skull formation. The operation consisted of trepanning the skull just above the eye and removing a circular piece of bone. Then the skull was clipped away for six inches where it rested on the brain. The brain sprang up like a damp sponge and became normal.

This is certainly a most remarkable case, and shows that idiots are entitled to tender consideration and care. It has been supposed by many that idiots do not have the inherent quality that leads to immortality, and that when death came, they were extinguished—no spirit to ascend heavenward to enjoy the beauty and grandeur of the spirit realm. Dr. Sternberg has been instrumental in letting in a flood of light on this question, and the probability is that even the idiot in the future will be accorded the full privilege to advance in spirit life.

Relieved of the confinement that rendered him idiotic he will enter spirit life like an infant, and will commence to improve at once.

Schools for idiots have been established in various parts of the country, and the results achieved under the hands of competent instructors have been most remarkable. Those who have no idea of cleanliness or decency, who cannot feed themselves, or render themselves of service in any branch of intellectual or manual labor, have been so trained that their whole nature has been changed, becoming useful in a variety of ways, and in some cases learning to read—in fact becoming to be idiots in any respect.

It is certainly a gratifying thought that if not through the aid of a surgical operation, it may be accomplished by a new system of modern instruction and training.

It is a fact that nearly everyone is idiotic along certain well defined lines. The man who makes an application for engineer on a railroad will not be accepted if he is idiotic along the color line, or in other words is color blind.

The man who has no appreciation of conception of mathematics, or does not understand the nature of the play of forces, is idiotic, too, in that one respect. Others are idiotic in reference to music; others in regard to the subtleties of chemistry, while others have no conception of the truth, being inveterate liars.

In the future, however, with opportunities for progression, all streaks of idiocy in human nature will disappear, and the spirit go on advancing through all eternity.

Yes, there is hope for the idiot, if not here on earth, then in the spirit realm, where all things that obstruct the free action of the soul will be removed, and the spirit thus relieved, will advance, exhibiting at every step its angelic qualities.

Rev. I. R. Hicks, in a late sermon in St. Louis, pictured most beautifully the wonderful possibilities of the mind.

"Having eyes, see ye not? and having ears, hear ye not? and do ye not remember?" The most awful blight that rests upon the human race, both mentally and spiritually, declared the speaker, was that which he termed "uncircumscribed eyes." He argued throughout his discourse that men and women fall to make proper use of their eyes and ears, and his sermon was a plea for more intelligent employment of these senses. He took the piano as an illustration of his text, and asked what it would be worth, with all its delicate chords, its fine mechanism, its beautiful case, were it not that it has been wrought with great skill for a particular purpose, and because it is capable of giving forth, under delicate touch, that harmony which all nature craves. It is an illustration, the speaker asserted, of the fact that the whole mechanism of creation is a machine designed to lead us to something not to be seen in the first casual glance. The object of the machine is to lead us to the spiritual realm, to the things which we cannot see and hear things which it cannot hear.

He spoke of the trained ear and told of the possibilities of appreciation of high and low notes which the ordinary person is unable to comprehend; and in the same way of the trained eye, which he asserted, could distinguish shades and colors altogether unnoticed by the casual observer. He told of his own experience with the telescope; of his looking into the heavens and seeing white blurs, which under the telescope developed into millions of stars. He said that he had practiced looking into the heavens until he was able to see with his naked eye "hundreds of stars which he really could not see."

Our faculties are necessarily limited, but if trained they will travel on and on, upward and upward, seeing and hearing plainly those things which now are unseen and unheard. He told of certain girls in Milwaukee, which was heard over the telephone by a party in a Missouri city. Fifty people were seated at desks arranged around a room, each with a receiver to his ear. To the onlookers it was a humorous scene. Suddenly, without apparent cause, all of the people would raise their heads and smile; again they would lean forward on their desks as though in deep thought, while at other times they would sit motionless, marking time with their hands and feet, and finally, without any apparent direction, all laid down their receivers and took their seats. Both the onlookers and those at the instruments were able to hear and see, but one party had heard more than the other, and all that those who had not heard could do was to find humor in what they had seen.

Prof. Lockwood's New Book.

I have read with intense interest and pleasure, "The Continuity of Life: A Cosmic Truth," by Prof. Lockwood. This work does not leave Spiritualism at the mercy of phenomena—many times doubtful—but bases its claims upon "The Eternal Principles of Nature," with all genuine phenomena as modes of expression. The book is not only extremely valuable, but timely as well. It contains no "milk for babes," but is full of solid meat for adults and for all who have cultivated the habit of using their minds. It is not only a book to be read, but a book to be thought, and the author has succeeded admirably in presenting a line of scientific thought in a manner to claim the attention and be readily understood by the general reader. It should (and undoubtedly will) have a large circulation.

WILL C. HODGE.

San Diego, Cal.

"Love-Sex-Immortality." By Dr. W. A. Phelps. For sale at this office. Price, 25 cents.

"Mentless Dishes." Very useful. Price 10 cents.

AN ABSTRUSE PROBLEM.

Some Mysteries of Existence, as Set Forth in The Chicago Tribune, by Simon Berger, Lecturer on Philosophy at the University of Sorbonne.

What is man?

We know his body, the origin of the earth on which he dwells. Space whence the solar system was evolved was filled with a vast and diffused nebulous substance.

This nebulous mass furnished the sun and planets of our system. Our earth, one of the planets, was at first one vast ball of fire. Its surface radiating into space little by little was cooled.

When the exterior crust became sufficiently moderate to allow life, plants and creatures in harmony with the climate appeared. At first a luxuriant flora, then a rudimentary fauna. These were transformed according to the laws of natural selection for millions of years, and from the antediluvian we thus reach man.

The human body is perfectly known. From tip to toe there are obscure points. In the soul the scientists, having to do with nothing but the body, do not interest themselves. We search in vain to encounter the soul. Our body has been and will be dust, but the mysterious breath which inspires and animates us—will it survive?

Our fundamental question will be to know the essence or the substance of the soul. Let us take an elementary example, an electric pile. There is a zinc battery, a copper wire, and sulphuric acid. Separately these three bodies are inert. They can remain side by side indefinitely without giving rise to any phenomena. But plunge the zinc and the copper into the sulphuric acid and a circuit is formed with the two wires. Immediately upon their contact chemical reactions are manifested under the form of energy. This energy is denominated an electric current. Here, then, are three substances, zinc, copper, and sulphuric acid, which separated are inert, but which as soon as united react upon each other and give to a force the occasion to be produced. The human body acts just like an electric battery. The molecules of zinc, of copper, of sulphuric acid of the physical machine correspond in the human machine to the molecules termed carbon, ozone, oxygen, phosphorus, and the like. These molecules separated are also inert. But as soon as they are united to form a human body they react upon each other just like the molecules of the electric pile.

Let us say in continuing the comparison that this reaction of the molecules of our body give rise to a manifestation of energy; this energy is the soul. There is then a complete analogy between an electric battery and the human body; the one produces a physical force, electricity; the other a psychic force, the soul. From this remark we can draw the following definition: The human soul is a force resulting from the reaction promoted by the union of the different atoms of our body; this force is transformed into thoughts and intellectual acts.

The electric battery has served as the basis of our comparisons. With any other machine the reasoning would be the same. Here is a locomotive under pressure. It represents the infant coming into the world with the vital force furnished by its parents. The identity here again is complete.

The machine is the human body. Steam, physical force, is produced in it just as soul psychic force is produced in the body. If the machine is kept in repair and the fire fed it will work for a certain time, just like the human body. When, after a long period of usage, the essential parts of the locomotive become worn from service they are separated into old pieces, which in their turn enter into the composition of a new body. The steam which the locomotive produced during its existence as a useful machine has been transformed into the force which propelled the trains. All these phenomena have their exact equivalents in the human body.

If the hypothesis of soul force is exact, if the soul is a force comparable to steam or to electricity, what is the aim of human life? Whatever is created, all that exists, all the efforts of vanished civilizations, this ascension of all people toward an ever loftier ideal, all this work of nature and of man—has it no goal and does it end in a final and absolute nothing? Nature is constantly in motion; the universal gravitation which attracts and impels worlds in the infinity of space, the attraction of the moon controlling the immense fluid spaces of our seas, the embrace of the sun which has promoted and sustained all terrestrial life, are some examples which show us that everywhere and always matter lives and palpitates. Man can only imitate nature; he moves and works. To imitate nature is the surest line of conduct for man. Work should then be a general law, the reason and aim of his existence. Nature has created us to act and to work, to be happy each according to his tastes and inclinations, in order to leave children who will continue under the best possible conditions the labors of their parents. Providence has given us the power of reproducing ourselves in order to permit us to survive effectively, just as we survive morally by our soul transformed into acts. Indeed, since our soul is changed into thoughts and actions each of us survives by his soul force transformed into tangible and appreciable acts. These are the soul forces which in the long course of the centuries, being added each to each, are perfected and thus cause humanity slowly to advance in the luminous way of progress which conduct us to the absolute good. Man, in order to be happy, should think, act, feel, and perpetuate himself. From this succession of intense joys and profound sorrows, of sudden griefs and unexpected happinesses, from cruel deceptions and enervating satisfactions; these days, sometimes so dark and so monotonous, at other times so exciting and eventful, constitute a life beautiful enough and varied enough to be itself a cause and an aim. If we observe nature it becomes evident that she desires man to be sound of body and happy. She wishes for him perfect health and absolute goodness. If we are far from the ideal the fault lies in man, who often disregards the indications of nature. We are so accustomed to follow in the ways of the generations which have preceded us that we cannot perceive the errors we sometimes commit in not following certain essential laws of nature.

Why not call it murder in the second degree for an M. D. to refuse to allow a Christian scientist or magnetic healer or such a faith healer as Dr. Dowle and his followers to treat a patient his scientific education fails to restore to health, and give him the full benefit of the law in such cases?

Why not make it a case of criminal neglect for the M. D. to neglect or refuse to employ any and all known remedies for the relief of a patient, any means that have been known to bring relief?

Why not haul every physician up before the grand jury and subject his acts to an investigation whenever he fails to prevent the death of a patient. If he has used every known remedy the investigation will do him no harm?

As science has about secured a monopoly on the treatment of disease, and as almost all the patients the magnetics secure and restore are those with chronic diseases that have been created through drug medication, why not compel the M. D. to have magnetic healers in close touch with them to whom they can send patients their medicines fall to restore?

Why not compel the M. Ds. to take more interest in the prevention of disease by giving to the world some of their knowledge of the causes thereof?

Why not compel them to take more interest in the health of the people and less in the money they can squeeze out of a big practice?

Why not make this country a healthy one and a free one?

Why not?

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and the Woman's Bible.

One source of the great influence of Elizabeth Cady Stanton was her charm of manner. The popular notion of the early woman suffragists, was that they were angular old maids, or termagant wives with voices strident and sharp, and a disposition to ride rough-shod over other people. Mrs. Stanton's delightful femininity won a hearing for her not only from men but from members of her own sex. Susan B. Anthony repelled. As the idealized work of a talented man who heartily coincided with her views of political and social reform, and as the mother of a large and interesting family of boys and girls, all of whom grew up and attained positions in the world of thought and action in which reflected credit upon their home training, Mrs. Stanton could not be assailed by conservatives with the sharp weapon of personal ridicule. She could not be helped up as a "horrible example." She wrote and spoke with logical precision and with imaginative picturesqueness of phrase and illustration. It is true she was not always judicious. One of her latest undertakings, the authorship and publication of the so-called Woman's Bible, was a work of presumption and folly that will add nothing to her fame. But on the whole she wrought ably and sincerely for ends that she believed to be right, and even those disposed to doubt the efficacy of some of the innovations at which she aimed cannot withhold admiration for the purity, the disinterestedness, and the energy with which she wrought for what she believed to be the good of humanity.—Evening Wisconsin.

The Woman's Bible will in future years add more laurels to the career of Mrs. Stanton than all of her other life works combined. It is unique; it is wholesome; it is reasonable in its conclusions, and will stand the test of the coming ages—a crown, as it were, to this noble woman. The Evening Wisconsin is altogether too orthodox to see the exact truth.

The Drummer Medium.

The Messenger, of Wilmington, N. C., contains the following interesting item:

Mr. George A. Letford, of Chicago, the well known traveling salesman for H. E. Bucklen & Co., after having spent several days in the city, will take his departure to-day, much to the regret of his friends.

Mr. Letford is well known throughout the south as the drummer medium. He does not make any charge for his Spiritualistic work, he nevertheless does a great deal of it on his wide commercial tours. He is as modest and unassuming as he is clever, and never fails to oblige his friends when they call upon him for a demonstration of his power. We have seen him do work that surpassed the efforts of most professionals, and those who have come into his influence are bound to admit that he is a remarkable man.

During his stay in this city he has been invited to private houses and has astonished the parties of ladies and gentlemen who have gathered to have readings from him. Last evening he most interestingly entertained a party at the home of a friend and he certainly astonished them. He placed different ones in communication with departed loved ones, and revealed the secrets of some of the young ladies of the party, describing their sweethearts, even calling their surnames and telling them what kind of rings their fellows gave them, besides other presents. He also described the temperament and characteristics of their young gentlemen friends, telling them which one to stick to and which one to let alone. The young ladies acknowledged that his divining power was accurate and marvelous. Mr. Letford is greatly esteemed in Wilmington and those who have seen his work have appreciated it. He is a welcome visitor on his annual visits to our city, but unfortunately his business does not allow him to be here many days at a time.

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NEW INVENTION. JUST OUT. OVER 12,000 ALREADY SOLD. SPLENDID FOR HEATING AND COOKING.
 Just what you have wanted for years. Write for catalogue, testimonials.
REARICK, NEWARK, N. J.

New sounds came from the tent—calmet.
[During the space of half an hour, a succession of songs were heard, in which a diversity of voices met the ear. From his first entrance, till these songs were finished we heard nothing in the proper voice of the priest; but now he addressed the multitude, declaring the presence of the Great Turtle, and the spirit's readiness to answer such questions as should be proposed. The

of the village, who was silent, however, till after he had put a large quantity of tobacco into the tent (cabinet), introducing it at the aperture. This was a sacrifice offered to the spirit; for spirit

its are supposed, by the Indians, to be as fond of tobacco as themselves. The tobacco accepted, he desired the priest to inquire, whether or not the English were preparing to make war upon the Indians, and whether or not there were at Fort Niagara a large number of Eng-

lish troops? These questions having been put by the priest, the tent [cabin net] instantly shook; and for some seconds after it continued to rock so violently that I expected to see it levelled with the ground. [This was a power-

ful manifestation of spirit power]. All this was a prelude, as I supposed, to the answers to be given; but a terrific cry announced with sufficient intelligibility

A quarter of an hour elapsed in silence and I waited impatiently to discover what was to be the next incident in this scene of imposture [Mr. Henry was not a Spiritualist, and did not understand such things as he was wit-

nessing.] It consisted in the return of the spirit, whose voice was again heard, and who now delivered a continued speech. The language of the spirit, like that which we had heard before, was wholly unintelligible to every

fore, was wholly unintelligible to every ear, that of the priest excepted; and it was therefore, not till the latter gave us an interpretation, which did not commence before the spirit had finished, that we learned the purport of this extraordinary communication.

The spirit, as we were now informed by the priest, had, during his short absence, crossed Lake Huron, and even proceeded as far as Fort Niagara, which is at the head of Lake Ontario, and thence to Montreal. At Fort Niagara

he had seen no great number of soldiers; but, on descending the St. Lawrence as low as Montreal, he had found the river covered with boats, and the boats filled with soldiers, in numbers like the leaves of the trees. He had

"The chief had a third question to propose; and the spirit without a fresh journey to Fort Niagara, was able to give it an instant and most favorable

answer. "If," said the chief, "the Indians visit Sir William Johnson, will they be received as friends?" "Sir William Johnson," said the spirit—and after the spirit, the priest—"Sir William Johnson will fill their canoes with

presents; with blankets, kettles, guns, gunpowder, and shot, and large barrels of rum, such as the stoutest of the Indians will not be able to lift; and every man will return in safety to his family. At this the transport was universal; and amid the clapping of hands a hun-

"The questions of public interest being resolved, individuals were now permitted to seize the opportunity of inquiring into the condition of their at-

giving into the condition of their adjacent friends, and the fate of such as were sick. I observed that the answers given to these questions allowed of much latitude of interpretation.

"The spirit continued to be consulted [1] near midnight, when all the crowd

dispersed to their respective lodges."


A PECULIAR POEM.

To the Editor:—I enclose a poem I

picked up a few years ago, author unknown. As it is along our line of thought, I send it for publication if you so desire. GEO. W. JONES.
Hanover, Mich.

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Miss Whiting finds the title of her new book in these lines from "Aurora Leigh":

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Not one, but every day, feast, fast, and
working-day,
The spiritual significance burn through
The hieroglyphic of material shows,
Hie, hie forward he would paint the
life of the soul."

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ence the author of "The World Beautiful" continues the same argument presented in those volumes in a plea that the future life is the continuation and development of our present life in all its faculties and powers, and that the present may be ennobled by the corresponding sense of the Divine Presence, and a truer knowledge of the nature of man and his relations to God tend to a higher morality and increasing happiness.

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