

# The Progressive Thinker.

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

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## FOLLOWING NATURE.

Nature Is a Word of Large But Somewhat Indefinite Meaning. With Some Persons It Includes Everything That Exists. With Others, It Includes the Physical World, All the Animals Below Man, and His Physical Frame, Leaving the Psychological and Spiritual Man as Belonging to Another Order of Being.

The ancient Greeks, beyond any other people that ever lived, cultivated the love of Nature. They celebrated the beauties of the natural world in song and story, and embodied them in art and sculpture. Nature furnished their models, and they could use no language too strong to express their delight in whatever appealed to the eye and ear of man.

In later centuries, a new mood came over the mind of man. He conceived the idea that Nature was corrupt and depraved, and that the highest duty consisted in crushing and subjugating it. To forsake the pleasures of life and repair to the desert, to extinguish natural desires and to overcome natural appetites; to learn to despise the body and whatever sustains it—this was considered the highest object of life and necessary to prepare man for the solemn realities which awaited him beyond the grave. Gibbon and Locke, in their philosophic sagas, have described the results of this distorted conception of life and duty. It converted men into hermits and anchorites, and unfitted them for the secular pursuits of life, without any valuable intellectual or moral results.

Rousseau's teaching that Nature is perfect and to be followed implicitly, was a natural reaction from the asceticism of previous centuries. He went so far as to teach that men should return to a state of Nature, giving up all artificialities, all luxuries, and simply follow the methods of Nature in all her simplicity.

In these days, we avoid both these extremes, and take the ground that Nature, in her entirety, is wholesome and sound; that her methods are not to be despised, nor her mandates disregarded. At the same time, experience has taught us that Nature, far from being absolutely perfect, may be improved even by our own efforts; that we may change our environment to correspond with our own higher ideal conditions. By art and science we have improved our grain and fruits, our poultry, horses, cattle and swine, adapting them to our needs by making use of nature's own methods, without the violation of any of Nature's laws. We stock our water with species and varieties of fish brought from afar. In short, we change our surroundings at will, so far as our knowledge will permit. Our luscious fruits, such as the apple and the peach, have been developed from natural products that were scarcely fit to eat, and hundreds of our vegetable and animal products have been so transformed by the art of man that they bear only the slightest resemblance to their progenitors.

It is indeed the work of man to-day to change the face of the earth, and everything with which he has to do, in order to increase their usefulness and suitability to his wants. Whether Nature is so defined as to comprehend the mental and moral part of man or not is unimportant. We at least can improve it by education, by discipline, by self-restraint, as well as by anything as we can improve our physical constitution by observation of the laws of physical health.

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

## THE NEW RELIGION.

Atheism and Religion Do Not Harmonize, Says the Dictionary.

According to the dictionary's definition of Atheism and Religion, the two names do not harmonize. Webster's New Counting-House and Family Dictionary says: Atheism, One who denies the existence of God. Religion, Recognition of God as an object of worship, love and obedience.

The same dictionary records: "Free-thinker; Deist; Atheist; Skeptic; Unbeliever—some have endeavored to blend the sense of Infidel so as to embrace Atheism and every form of unbelief, but this has failed. A Free-thinker is now only another name for Infidel." It is noticeable that the author of this new religion, in the Progressive Thinker of November 24, describes right living, which belongs to everybody, and calls it Atheist's religion. He tells us that it inclines and leads us to the cultivation of things that are good, useful and beautiful, and requires the friction of use to prove its value. Then enumerates the humanitarian words which describe right living, or real Spiritualism. Just what its votaries demand of its adherents.

Why call it a religion? Right living, like Spiritualism, belongs to humanity. No more to the Atheist than to the Hotentot. Free to all.

There have been so many crimes committed in the name of religion, that the word means to many something far different from right living. A good woman was heard to say, "I have no particular religion, but try to do the best I can for myself and others." Another woman when solicited to attend religious services where numbers were being converted and getting religion, thus being prepared for heaven, modestly replied: "If taking care of my little ones and doing the best I can for my family won't take me to heaven, I'll stay." These women cared more for right living than they did for religion, and no doubt were at the same time in the enjoyment of real heaven by doing what they deemed best.

T. J. Shelton says religion and politics are twins.

Real Spiritualists have little in common with either, which is one reason why they have been so much at the mercy of politicians and religionists. If religion meant following the teachings of Christ, it would not be odious. A good man will be a good man with his religion, while a bad man will use it for a cloak to cover his villainy.

Spiritualists do not commit murder, nor are they found in jails or penitentiaries. Being called Atheist or Infidel does not make them so. As a liberal-minded orthodox minister once said to me: "I might be arrested and put in jail, but that would not make me a thief."

MRS. C. K. SMITH.

San Diego, Cal.

The practice of self-restraint and renunciation is not happiness, though it may be something much better.—T. H. Huxley.

## SCINTILLATIONS

As They Emanate from the California Philosopher—His Views in Regard to "Our Own Future."

In the following article Mr. Dawbarn gives much excellent material for reflection, and it would be well for each one to carefully and thoughtfully consider the same. The limitations of Spirit Control and the lack of harmony in the teachings of spirits will ever be a fruitful theme for Spiritualists to consider. Read and re-read what the California Philosopher has to say.

"THE ONE POINT I WANT THE READER TO NOTE IS THAT EVERY PEOPLE, NO MATTER WHAT FORM ITS RELIGION HAS TAKEN, HAS ALWAYS HAD ITS SENSITIVES AND MEDIUMS TO VOICE MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT SIDE OF LIFE. LET US KEEP THAT IN MIND AS THE MOST IMPORTANT FACT IN HUMAN HISTORY."

"SO FAR WE FIND ONLY A MASS OF CONTRADICTIONS AS TO THE DETAILS OF SPIRIT LIFE, EACH NATION AND TRIBE, AND ALMOST EVERY SENSITIVE, APPARENTLY COLORING HIS OR ITS TALE TO SUIT THE RELIGIOUS BELIEFS OF THE LISTENER. IN OTHER WORDS, THE WORLD HAS NO RELIABLE INFORMATION AS TO WHAT WAS GOING ON IN THE LIFE BEYOND DEATH."

"THESE ARE ALL POINTS TO BE REMEMBERED, FOR OUR 'SENSITIVE' USUALLY BELIEVES HE IS GIVING US A SPIRIT COMMUNICATION. THEY ARE ALWAYS FOUND-

ED ON EXPERIENCES IN EARTH LIFE. I HAVE SO REPEATEDLY GIVEN THE SCIENTIFIC REASONS FOR MY ASSERTION THAT BOTH SPIRIT AND MORTAL ARE IN FOGLAND WHEN THEY MEET THAT I NEED NOT REPEAT THEM NOW. BUT MORTAL EXPERIENCE IS OF ITSELF QUITE SUFFICIENT TO PROVE THE UNTRUSTWORTHINESS OF ALL TALES OF SPIRIT LIFE."

"WHEN I ASK THE AMERICAN SPIRITUALIST WHAT HE BELIEVES AS TO HIS OWN FUTURE HE IMMEDIATELY QUOTES WHAT HE HAS HEARD FROM HIS LOVED ONE, OR PERHAPS HIS GRANDMOTHER, THROUGH HIS FAVORITE MEDIUM, OR POSSIBLY THROUGH HIS OWN ORGANISM. HERE BEGINS THE TROUBLE. FOR THE LOVED ONES OF THE FRENCHMAN TELL A DIFFERENT TALE. AND THE SISTERS AND COUSINS AND AUNTS OF THE THEOSOPHIST COME BACK TO DENY BOTH AUTHORITIES."

Every people on earth has some descriptive faith in its own future as individuals. That this is colored by national characteristics is well known. The important fact is that two nations have the same conception as to the details of their life beyond death. The Norseman whose highest ideal of manhood was battle to the death, believed he would go on fighting, and if killed, would be again the next morning ready to begin all over again. It was just his mortal life grafted on to eternity. The red Indian was to have a happy hunting ground where he could chase and kill as in his present life. Only there was to be no death for himself or the animals he hunted. The all important fact is that two nations have the same conception as to the details of their life beyond death. The Norseman whose highest ideal of manhood was battle to the death, believed he would go on fighting, and if killed, would be again the next morning ready to begin all over again. It was just his mortal life grafted on to eternity. The red Indian was to have a happy hunting ground where he could chase and kill as in his present life. Only there was to be no death for himself or the animals he hunted. The all important fact is that two nations have the same conception as to the details of their life beyond death.

At last, we are told, a number of powerful spirits, who had been eminent in earth life, got together and determined they would open a school of truth for the benefit of the whole race of mortals. There had been sporadic attempts previously such as through the Shakers, through Swedenborg, Andrew Jackson Davis, Hudson Tuttle and others, but the wonderful era of truth for the masses was supposed to begin with the advent of Hydesville. It was then that Modern Spiritualism was born.

The tests given by these spirit visitors were often convincing, but necessarily had to be on the plane of mortal life. They used every power of the sensitive as if it were at Hydesville. It was then that Modern Spiritualism was born. The troubles of earth life were often relieved, and his pains and sorrows soothed. The happenings of earth life were sometimes known to the spirit in minute detail, so that, at last, these controls of sensitives were often almost worshipped as truth-tellers. The consequences to the mortal are not the purpose of this article. It is enough for us to recognize that it seemed natural that if a spirit could tell you the truth about this life he would be just as reliable when he told you about his daily experiences in his spirit home. But the fact that he almost never brought to earth any new statement of fact not known to some mortal somewhere, began at last to arouse suspicion as to his limitations in other respects. So it happened that the spirit teacher became himself a subject for scientific study.

It was realized by the present writer that if we could not perceive or sense the vibrations of his life while we were normal mortals, neither could we sense our vibrations while he was a normal spirit. In fact normal mortals could not sense the vibrations of his life while he was a normal spirit. In fact normal mortals could not sense the vibrations of his life while he was a normal spirit. In fact normal mortals could not sense the vibrations of his life while he was a normal spirit.

The one point I want the reader to note is that every people, no matter what form its religion has taken, has always had its sensitives and mediums to voice messages from the spirit side of life. Let us keep that in mind as the most important fact in human history.

Now we turn to the "Modern Spiritualist" and ask him to give us his descriptive faith in his own future. He professes to have a telephone through which, for a dollar, he can chat with a spirit at almost any time. Sometimes he has a telephone of his own, that is to say, he is so sensitive that he can hear spirit sounds, and see spirit sights inaudible and invisible to the rest of us. All history tells us of such sensitives in every nation and tribe on the face of the earth.

Such sensitives were, however, never plentiful. They were always oracles, wonder workers and miracle dispensers. Sometimes the influences seemed to be diabolical, and gained power by threats at other times they talked love, and coaxed their followers by miracles of healing. But all alike had something to say about another life, and claimed belief because they were there, and therefore knew all about it. Still, taken as a whole, they were very human, and always quarreling with the followers of some other sensitive. And, as civilization advanced one set of believers got the

better of the rest both in numbers and power, and then usually called any intercourse with spirits "witchcraft, and therefore criminal unless endorsed by the priest in power. So far we find only a mass of contradictions as to the details of spirit life, each nation and tribe, and almost every sensitive, apparently coloring his or its tale to suit the religious beliefs of the listener. In other words, the world has no reliable information as to what was going on in the life beyond death.

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sufficient to prove the untrustworthiness of all tales of spirit life.

The utterances of "spirits" through their mediums are full of contradictions on questions of fact. We can get nothing of value from a "control" concerning any event in the distant past, that is to say, no statement that will not be contradicted by some other spirit. In fact we are obliged to acknowledge, if we are careful seekers of truth, that the usual tales of mortal and spirit life is about as uncertain in its effects as the drug mixture of the learned doctor. And, as a matter of fact, how much is spirit, and how much is mortal cannot be decided by any mortal jury. We may almost as easily accept the tale of the mortal as the tale of the spirit. The real value in mortal life comes from the psychic powers of the sensitive, stimulated and possibly inspired by an invisible helper. Under such conditions how much of either the truth or the fiction of such tales can be ascertained? The right to accept the SPIRIT TRUTH? And it is the future which is the really important fact for each of us. We each want to know, if it is possible to KNOW, something of our own coming future.

The reader will please understand that in writing this article I am not anxious as he is to discover the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth concerning my own future as well as his. For we are fellow mortals, and one day our future will be relatively the same. I have no sympathy with the spiritualists who believe that intelligence is created by the brain, just as bile is by the liver. He believes that when brain and liver disintegrate intelligence and bile are in a state of nothingness. My own personal experiences in "spirit return," as well as the scientific teachings of the Society for Psychical Research, have convinced me that immortality is as much a fact as man the mortal. Aha, I take it, this is the position of most of my readers. It is the next step that is trouble.

When I ask the American Spiritualist what he believes his own future he immediately quotes what he has heard from his loved one, or perhaps his grandmother, through his favorite medium, or possibly through his own organism. Here begins the trouble. For the loved ones of the Frenchman tell a different tale. And the sisters and cousins and aunts of the Theosophist come back to deny both authorities. A sensitive in America telling some thrilling tale of spirit life in the name of a spirit, as his personal experience, is as true as the tale of the mortal. It is always beautifully natural, and cause just a glorified copy of earth life, flavored with a few quite unexplainable conditions that leave out the disagreeables of mortal existence. But the Theosophist claims to be in contact with intelligences who have crossed the divide, and who contradict both the American and the French teachings. So we are beginning to have sects founded upon the different teachings of spirits, each with his own personal experience.

We have a yet more serious perplexity in the fact that our own spirit teachers, who are supposed to be able to tell us the truth, and very likely contradict it through another. This is the case at the present time through the spirits who were evangelist teachers through Stainton Moses, and now contradict him through Mrs. Piper. I want to make it plain that the facts must realize that all is uncertainty as to the details of the life into which he is presently going. In the midst of so much uncertainty the one important question becomes this: What do we care about man the mortal, which must more or less be his future? I don't mean from the theological teachings of our clergy. And I don't mean from the teachings of these contradictory returning spirits. Both offer us a befuddling mixture that upsets the sane judgment of every earnest seeker after truth.

I know it is fashionable among the theologians and Spiritualists to sneer at the scientist who passes his life accumulating facts, and labeling them for future reference. But facts are facts, and that is what we are after. I don't care how many of my readers have studied, or even read, the proved scientific fact that the personality of man the mortal can be split into fragments by shock or disease. But the reader will please remember that our conception of our own future is founded on our belief that we carry our own personality with us to the next life. If we carried it, we go there wicked. If we have a noble life, our immediate future is to be a replica of this. I know the theologian absurdly teaches that our future is to be determined by the good or bad we have done in this life. I believe that to that nonsense I am not playing. But our earth conduct is an altogether different matter. And here we face the deepest problem of mortal existence, which cannot be solved without scientific assistance, at least of "spirit return." It becomes a question of our own future, and the lesson of our own past.

We have first the myriad cases like that of Miss Beauchamp, studied and recorded by Dr. Morton Prince in his wonderful book, "Disassociated Personality." Such cases prove, on reader, that your personality and mine can be divided into fragments by shock or disease, and that such fragments become each a new personality. Once accept that as a natural fact and we have made the most momentous discovery since the day that man was able to think. When added to the fact that "spirit return" has been proven that a man is only partly expressed in mortal life. You ask what are the facts that tell us this tale of a newly discovered truth? We find them in spirit return itself.

Certain men who have devoted their lives to the scientific study of the psychology of the mortal, like Myers of England, and Holmes who recently died in Boston, are almost unanimous in their testimony that the personality of man the mortal is divided into fragments by shock or disease, and that such fragments become each a new personality. Once accept that as a natural fact and we have made the most momentous discovery since the day that man was able to think. When added to the fact that "spirit return" has been proven that a man is only partly expressed in mortal life. You ask what are the facts that tell us this tale of a newly discovered truth? We find them in spirit return itself.

in some respects from that he manifested in earth life.

When it is once proved and accepted as a fact in nature that mortal personality is but an uncertain factor for any of us, we have the key to these discrepancies, uncertainties and contradictions that too often make spirit return little but a farce. If a shock can break up a personality into several personalities, each demanding separate identification as "spirit return," how is it possible to make any asserted proof more than a test of the identity of the personality we knew in earth life? Take the case reported with such care by Dr. Wier Mitchell of Mary Reynolds, who had two distinct personalities. The last, the better of the two, remained for twenty-five years, and she died with it. But how are those who only knew the first Mary Reynolds to find her spirit if personality remains unchanged by death? When I take such facts, and the myriad others now on record, I am obliged to come to the conclusion that neither the reader nor I know what will be our personality after we have left life behind. I know that some seem to be almost changed at first, but such seem almost always to belong to the earth-bound class. But as soon as they have made real progress there is such a change of personality that they can hardly recall any details of their earth life when they return.

Of course there are some who will say we have not yet enough recorded cases of "disassociated personality" to justify this conclusion. But after thousands of carefully recorded cases of spirit return, many scientists are still clamoring for more before they can believe in their own immortality. We are told that Newton caught the law of universal attraction from the fall of one apple. That was a fact to him, and he learned its lesson. And the independent thinker will likewise learn the lesson of these recorded "disassociations" which, with other facts I have pointed out, prove that our own personality after death is, most likely, but a faint resemblance of our earth selfhood by which we know one another now.

This article is already too long, so I will close with a brief summary. Accepting the fact that a change of personality is possible and proved, we can know little or nothing of the new personality, or any of its experiences. The only personality that gets back must be so closely related to earth life that its tales of spirit life must be little more than mortal experience. Those who would return from a higher spirit level can only reach us through FOGLAND, and thus leave their present personality as an unknown quantity to the investigator, and their identity unprovable.

We know that many a spirit has brought with him a blessing to earth life. We have to also acknowledge that tales of spirit life are absolutely unprovable, and that the present personality of our spirit visitor is also unprovable. This being a logical deduction from gathered facts, we are compelled to acknowledge that any asserted detail of our own future remains also unprovable. The love that can not get and the present personality of our spirit visitor is also unprovable. This being a logical deduction from gathered facts, we are compelled to acknowledge that any asserted detail of our own future remains also unprovable. The love that can not get and the present personality of our spirit visitor is also unprovable.

Such is the lesson for us all from the many recorded destructions of the personalities by which we know each other in earth life.

CHAS. DAWBARN.

San Leandro, Cal.

MOSES HULL.

Close the folds of his tent! Softly tread

The brown turf, for our Chieftain lies dead.

In camp there is woe!

Spears, flashing prone, lie deep in the dust.

Tears splashing their brightness with rust.

And camp fires burn low.

Heavy chains to white slave-limbs, of old,

Were forged, fastened by fetters of gold.

In bondage of shame!

We had marched thro' the wilderness, of old,

Hope at last saw a light, and a star—

O'er Bethlehem came.

In the midst of the march he hath died.

And the host are encamped at his side.

Dark shadows creep down

From the hilltops that rise to the sun.

Death! thou steal'st ere the battle is done.

From victor, the crown.

Close the folds of his tent! Softly tread

The brown turf, for our Chieftain lies dead.

His armor still on.

Thro' the shadows the heights we must gain.

Onward march, though we weep for our slain.

Through mists of the dawn.

Saviors, thorn-crowned, have died.

Heroes fall!

But the truths they upheld conquer all!

At last, and for aye!

Our grand Chieftain e'er loved Earth's oppress;

Fought Oppressor and gave it no rest.

By night nor by day.

Close the folds of his tent! Softly tread

The brown turf, for our Chieftain lies dead.

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## THE CONSTITUTION.

And Its Relation to Religion—"If the People of the State of New York, for Instance, Were So Disposed They Could Make the Roman Catholic Church or Any Other Church the State Establishment, and Dr. Silverman Would Inevitably Invoke the National Constitution Against It in Vain."

Rev. Dr. Joseph Silverman of Temple Emanuel, New York, recently delivered a discourse on the separation of church and state. He said, among other things: "It may be a surprise to many of our patriotic citizens and our legislators to learn that while technically and constitutionally there is a separation of church and state in this country there is in fact a decided union between religion and government."

That there is recognition of religion by our governments, state and national, is true. As the Chronicle recently stated, it is customary to open the sessions of political bodies with prayer. The senate and the house of representatives in Washington are so opened. The same is true of the houses of most if not all of our state legislatures. The national and often the state conventions of most of our political parties are usually opened in like manner.

Formerly our public schools were usually opened with bible-reading and prayer, but that practice has been generally discontinued, though from what Dr. Silverman says it is to be inferred that it still prevails in the city of New York. The same is true of public officials, judges, jurors and witnesses in a manner implying some measure of religious belief.

It is undeniably true also that in all this recognition of religion by government preference is given to the Christian religion. It certainly is not given to Judaism or Mohammedanism, nor is any recognition given to any religion which is essentially idolatrous or pantheistic.

But this preference so far as the government of the United States is concerned is by no means in violation of the letter or the spirit of the national constitution, as Dr. Silverman seems to think. The constitution provides that "no religious test shall ever be required as a qualification for any office or public trust in the United States." It also provides that "congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof."

That is all the national constitution says on the subject. There is nothing in either provision to forbid such preference as is shown. Such preference does not set up a religious test as a qualification for office or trust. It does not have the force of law respecting an establishment of religion or prohibiting the free exercise thereof.

It is therefore not inconsistent with the constitution.

Dr. Silverman shows himself still more mistaken when he says: "It is folly to say that bible reading and prayer in the public school are no violation of the constitution—that is, of the national constitution."

It may be a surprise to Dr. Silverman himself to learn that the public schools, excepting in the District of Columbia and the territories, including reservations, are state institutions conducted under state constitutions and laws, and that the states are at liberty to prescribe such religious observances and exercises for their public schools as they please.

As such as they are, there is nothing in the national constitution to prevent any state from establishing a church if it chooses. It can provide that there shall be bible reading and prayer in its public schools if it so pleases, and there is not a word in the constitution of the United States to prevent.

Undoubtedly no state in the union wants a state church, unless it is Utah. Undoubtedly no other state is disposed to prescribe a religious qualification for office or public trust, and there is no word in the constitution of the United States to prevent.

## IMPORTANT NOTICE.

To the Spiritualists of Wisconsin, Greetings.

Your attention is called to the seventh annual convention of the State Association, to be held in Milwaukee, Wis., April 16, 17, 18, and 19, at the Hotel Jefferson, street, between Martin and Juneau avenue, has been secured for the occasion; good music and talent, both local and outside.

The ladies of Milwaukee will serve dinner and luncheon at convention hall for a small amount of money to all visitors and delegates.

Miss Elizabeth Harlow of Columbus, Ohio, will be the main speaker for the evening meetings. Mrs. Georgia Gladys Cookey of Chicago, Ill., who was the message medium at the National Spiritualists' Convention, held in Chicago, last October, and whose wonderful descriptions and messages to the spirits who heard her, will be the test medium at all public meetings.

Hotel headquarters have been established at the St. Charles Hotel at reasonable rates.

The order of convention business will be about as follows:

Monday, April 15, 8 p. m., reception at St. Charles Hotel, parlors for officers, delegates and friends.

Tuesday, April 16, morning, meeting of delegates and members at the hall, for the purpose of introducing and outlining for the convention; afternoon, business meeting; evening, public meeting.

Wednesday, April 17, morning and afternoon, business meeting; evening, public meeting.

Thursday, April 18, morning, business meeting and election of officers; afternoon, public meeting devoted to demonstration of mediumship; evening, public meeting.

Legislation for this convention will comprise important points of interest to all Spiritualists, and fixing of place for next convention, election of delegates to the N. S. A. convention; election of officers of the State Association and other questions of vital importance will be disposed of.

For further information concerning the convention apply to the Secretary, Miss Louise G. Loebel, 202 North Ave., Milwaukee, Wis.

It is hoped that every member of the Association and all friends of the cause will be present and add their influence to this convention, to make it serve the best interests to the cause of Spiritualism and its unhappiness.

GEO. H. BROOKS, Pres't.

LOUISE G. LOEBEL, Sec'y.

## What Happens When We Die

O, DEATH, WHERE IS THY MYSTERY IF HUMANKIND CAN STUDY THY WAYS AND SEE THE ROAD THOU GOEST?

ANNIE BESANT, THE FAMOUS ENGLISH EDUCATOR IN INDIA, SAYS THERE ARE MANY LIVING PEOPLE WHO HAVE STUDIED DEATH FIRST HAND, AND THAT SHE HAS HAD CONVERSE WITH SUCH.

THE PROCESS OF THE MAN'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE BODY HAS BEEN WATCHED BY CLAIRVOYANTS AND DEFINITELY DESCRIBED, DECLARES MRS. BESANT.

O, Death, where is thy mystery if humankind can study thy ways and see the road thou goest? Another.

Annie Besant, the famous English educator in India, says there are many living people who have studied death first-hand, and that she has had converse with such.

The process of the man's withdrawal from the body has been watched by clairvoyants and definitely described, declares Mrs. Besant. Thus Andrew Jackson Davis, "the Poughkeepsie seer," describes how he himself watched the escape of the ethereal body, and the student that he could not break for more than 36 hours after apparent death. Others have described how they saw a faint violet mist rise from the dying body, gradually condensing into a figure which was the counterpart of the earthly person and attached to that person by a glistening thread.

Soul Attached to Body by Magnetic Thread.

The snapping of the thread means the breaking of the last magnetic link between the dense body and the remaining principles of the human constitution; the body has dropped away from the man; he is excommunicated, disembodied; six principles still remain as his constitution immediately after death, the seventh, or his dense physical body, being left as a cast-off garment.

The body now is left to the rioting of the countless lives of which it is composed, and begins to decay—that is, break up, and with the disintegration of the body, the molecules pass into other combinations.

Death, says Mrs. Besant, consists in a repeated process of unrobing or unshaking. The immortal part of man shakes off from itself one after another its outer casings, and—as the snake sheds its skin, the butterfly from its chrysalis, emerges from one after the other, passing into a higher state of consciousness. Now, she says, it is the fact that this escape from the body and this dwelling of the conscious entity, either in the vehicle called the body or in the etheric double, is a process of unrobing or unshaking, and a yet more ethereal thought body, can be effected during earth-life; so that man may become familiar with the excommunicated condition, and it may lose for him all the terrors that encircle the unknown.

Leaving the Body at Will.

He can know himself as a conscious entity in either of these vehicles, and so prove to his own satisfaction that the astral body is not dependent on a physical body. Why should man, who thus repeatedly has "shed" his lower bodies, and has found the process result not in unconsciousness, but in a vastly extended freedom and increase of life—why should he fear the passing away of his fetters and the freeing of his mortal self from the flesh that he realizes as the prison of the flesh?

Man is held to be a spark, a living flame, passing out from the central fire of life. Life is the power that for itself covering within which it dwells, and thus becomes the reflection of the immortal self.

This sends out its ray, which becomes incased in grosser matter, in the dense body or karmic elements, the passions, nature, and in the etheric double and the physical body. The once free immortal intelligence thus entangled, ensnared, enchained, works heavily and laboriously through the coatings that envelope it. In its own nature it remains ever the bird of heaven, but its wings are bound to its sides by the matter into which it is plunged.

When man recognizes his own inherent nature he learns to open his prison doors occasionally and escapes from his prison jail. First, he learns to identify himself with the immortal part of his nature, and rises above the body and its passions into a pure and moral state. When he learns that the unquenchable light cannot be held in prison, and he unlocks its door and steps out into the sunshine of the true life. So when death unlocks the door for him he knows the country into which he emerges, having trodden its ways as his own way. And at last he grows to recognize that fact of supreme importance, that life has nothing to do with body and with this material plane; that life is his conscious body and with this material plane; that life is his conscious existence, unbroken, unbreakable, and that the soul enters into that life during which he sojourns on earth, are but a minute fraction of his conscious existence, and a fraction, moreover, during which he is less alive because of the heavy coverings which weigh him down.

Opening the Doors of the Prison-House.

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Shadow Life Double of the Body.

The etheric double is the etheric part of the man's body of mass. It is the double that is sometimes seen during life in the neighborhood of the body, and its absence from the body generally is marked by the heaviness or semi-lethargy of the latter. Acting as the reservoir or vehicle of the life principle during earth life, it is withdrawn from the body naturally as marked by the lowering of all vital functions, even while the cord which unites the two still is unbroken. The snapping of the cord means the death of the dense physical body.

When the etheric double finally quits the body it does not travel to any distance from it. Normally it remains floating over the body, the state of consciousness being dreamy and peaceful, unless tumultuous distress and violent emotion surround the corpse whence it just has departed, and here it may be well to say that during the slow process of dying, while the etheric double is withdrawing from the body, taking with it the higher principles, as after it has withdrawn, extreme quiet and self-control should be observed in the case of death. For during the time the whole life passes swiftly in review before the ego, the individual, as those have related who have passed into the unconscious and pulseless state.

Memory Is Active at Last Moments.

A master has written: "At the last moment the whole life is reflected in

our memory, and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one after another. The man often may appear dead, yet from the last pulsation, from and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, the brain thinks, and the ego lives over in those brief seconds his whole life. Speak in whispers, yet who assist at a deathbed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after death. I have laid my clammy hand upon the body, and the student that he could not break for more than 36 hours after apparent death. Others have described how they saw a faint violet mist rise from the dying body, gradually condensing into a figure which was the counterpart of the earthly person and attached to that person by a glistening thread.

This vivid sight is succeeded in the ordinary person by a dreamy, peaceful semi-consciousness, as the etheric double floats above the body to which it has belonged. Sometimes this double is seen by persons in the house or in the neighborhood, when the thought of the dying has been strongly turned to someone left behind, when some anxiety or fear, or when, at the last, something left undone which needed doing, or when some local disturbance has shaken the tranquillity of the passing entity. Under these conditions or others of a similar nature the double may be seen or heard; when it shows a dreamy, hazy consciousness, is silent, vague in its aspect, unresponsive.

Ethereal Body Appears as Wrath.

As the days go on the five higher principles gradually disengage themselves from the etheric double, and shake this off as they previously shook off the grosser body. They press on, as a fivefold entity, into a state next to be considered as leaving the etheric double with the dense body of which it is the counterpart, thus becoming an ethereal corpse as much as the body had become a dense corpse. The ethereal corpse remains near the dense one, and they integrate together.

Clairvoyants see general wreaths in church-yards, sometimes showing likeness to the dead dense body, sometimes as violet mists or lights.

The man now is clothed with the body of death, often termed a "veil," easily do it during earth life take any form impressed upon it from without or molded from within.

The desire-body undergoes a marked change soon after death. The different densities of the astral matter of which it is composed arrange themselves in a series of shells or envelopes, the densest being outside, shutting the consciousness away from all but limited consciousness or expression.

Up to the point of this rearrangement of the matter of the desire body, the man's experience of earth life is the same—a dreamy, peaceful semi-consciousness. And this in the happiest cases passes without vivid awakening into the deeper unconsciousness, which ends with the blissful awakening into the new period of repose that intervenes between two incarnations.

Earthly Emotions Haunt the Soul.

But the average man or woman has lived much in the enjoyment of objects of sense and in the pleasures of the emotions, hence they cannot quickly disentangle themselves from the desire or astral body, the seat of the emotions. Hence a considerable delay in the passing of the desire body, and the soul is detained at a point at which they no longer detain the soul with their clinging arms. This is the purgatorial state, the life in paradise or heaven is reached.

Some of the communications made through mediums are from this source, from the disembodied man thus drawn back to the earth sphere, a cruel kindness, delaying its orderly evolution.

Finally the man sets himself free from the desire body and passes on to the higher state of consciousness, and in the field, rich or poor according to the fruitage of his life. He now is wholly beyond the sphere of earth. He is in heaven. Life in heaven is the fruition of the aspirations of earth life; the individual prolongation of a single instant, but its intense developments, the various incidents based upon the one single moment of moments of rapture. Into heaven enters nothing that defileth, for gross matter has been left behind. But if the soul has bowed but little to the earthly harvest will be meager.

Living Men May Visit Heaven.

These regions of purgatory and heaven are known, says Mrs. Besant, to many men and women by personal experience. All that is needed for the study of these regions is the evolution of the faculties latent in every man; a "living" man, in ordinary parlance, can leave the dense and ethereal bodies behind him and employ these regions without going through death's gateway. In this way these regions become matters of knowledge.

These regions interpretate our own world and are interpreted by it, but the student who enters them by the two worlds differs, they co-exist without the knowledge of the intelligent beings in either. Only under abnormal circumstances can consciousness of each other's presence arise in the inhabitants of the different worlds.

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## IN RE SPIRITUALISM.

The President of the N. S. A. Defends Our Cause Against the Violent Attack of Prof. H. Spencer Lewis.

To the Editor Washington Post:—In behalf of 300,000 Spiritualists, in the United States and Canada, who have the courage to avow themselves as such before the world, and can give good and sufficient reasons "for the faith that is in them," I respectfully request the use of your columns for a brief reply to an article from the pen of Prof. H. Spencer Lewis, that appeared under prominent headlines in the columns of your highly esteemed Journal, January 13, 1907. With much that Prof. Lewis has said, all well informed Spiritualists are in full accord; for we cannot condemn fraud and charlatanry more vigorously nor more conscientiously than they do. His illustrations as to the ring, the weeping parents, the amazed teacher, and the bogus materialization may all be drawn from fact. Without doubt, many things transpire that are ascribed by the uninformed and over-credulous Spiritualists to the agency of excommunicated beings. No one among us who has studied the subject of Spiritualism from its scientific, philosophical, and religious aspects could or would be deceived by such simple tricks as those Prof. Lewis exploits as typical of all phenomenal manifestations in Spiritualism. As a matter of fact, all well-informed, progressive members of our denomination, outgrow, all of these phenomena, and easily explained, operations of the "mediums" and "psychics" who were ever known. He has assumed to set forth as evidence of his prowess, and discernment of soul, a few absurdities, which, in his lack of knowledge, he has seen fit to label psychic phenomena. He has succeeded in showing his readers that he knows little or nothing of the subject of which he writes.

His expose of the simple tricks in his two-column article is but the addition of one more testimony to the multitude, that the Spiritualists have collected through their own fearless exposure of the knaves who have endeavored to steal the livery of heaven in which to serve Satan. No man, even if he be as opinionated as Prof. Lewis, can gain as much knowledge in the study of the occult and the occultists as men and women of equal and even superior mental power, have gained through MANY experiments extending over a period of more than sixty years.

In brief, there are people as well qualified to lift and determine evidences as Prof. Lewis, even though they may not be members of his highly respected and most thoroughly respectable society. He has constituted himself counsel for both sides, the Judge and the jury, and has pronounced a verdict, which he has long before he overheard of psychic phenomena, or tried to test a phenomenon. If the facts do not conform to his theory, so much the worse for the facts. This statement is warranted by the evidence of the Spiritualists, who have yet to give a single proof of spirit communication. He has egotistically placed himself above the wisest and best minds of the ages, to say nothing of such wonderful seers and prophets as the gentle Nazarene, the apostle Paul, the great John, and the Charles Wesley, Flannery, C. B. Varley, A. R. Wallis, J. J. Mapes and hundreds of others in comparison with whom Spencer Lewis, Professor though he is, is as a mole-hill to a mountain, a pygmy to a giant.

It is quite clear that Prof. Lewis is not posted with regard to what his intelligent superiors accomplished in the field of psychic science long before he entered it. Andrew Jackson Davis as long ago as 1845 proved beyond position the fact of spirit communication. The Spiritualists can and do communicate with the denizens of the earth. John and Swedenborg, did the same thing in the eighteenth century. Upon the proof given by Jesus of Nazareth, the apostle Paul, the great John, and the Charles Wesley, Flannery, C. B. Varley, A. R. Wallis, J. J. Mapes and hundreds of others in comparison with whom Spencer Lewis, Professor though he is, is as a mole-hill to a mountain, a pygmy to a giant.

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"Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye compass sea and land to make one proselyte; and when he is made, ye make him twofold more the child of hell than yourselves."

Reader, don't mistake, and suppose the above words were addressed to the missionary element of to-day, however close the resemblance between the hypocrites of those times and the propagandists of the faith in these later years.

The text, a gem in a mass of rubbish, is an admirable one for Spiritualists, as well for Agnostics, and it may with great propriety be called into service by them, not because Jesus or Seneca—born before him—used those words, but because a great truth is there declared without regard to who uttered them, that merits immortality.

THE "DEAD EASIES."  
The "Rev." "Dr." Hugh Moore has been a notorious character in Spiritualism, his principal phase of mediumship being "materialization." Special prominence has been given to the man by the insatiable gullibles and the "eminent" "Dead Easies," who have cast a dark shadow over our cause, by their lack of ordinary discrimination and intelligence in matters of this kind. In New York Moore reaped a rich financial harvest, but the end has come, as has been expected for some time.

DELETED ARTICLES.  
Prof. W. M. Lockwood's Article on "Divorce," and several other communications of special importance which we expected to have space for this week, will appear later on.



# "The Great Work."

The Veteran Worker, Lyman C. Howe, Gives a General Survey and Concluding Review of this Epoch-Making Book.

In this, as preceding volumes, the author makes his own definitions, without respect to lexicons. This enables the reader to understand his meaning. Spirituality is, according to his definition: "A state or condition of the soul of man wherein it is brought into conscious and immediate contact with the world of spiritual material, and spiritual things, through the channels of the five spiritual senses."

"Morality is man's established harmonic relation to the Constructive Principle of his own being."

Consciousness is found difficult to define. It embraces so much, and has so many subtle suggestions, and shades of meaning that it is regarded as well nigh infinite. Nevertheless, "The Great Work" makes the attempt to corral it long enough to condense some salient meanings into a sentence thus: Consciousness, the fundamental-receiving attribute of the intelligent soul. "The sensorium of the soul."

The general trend of this unique volume is to urge the importance of constructive evolution, moral living, individualization and development of character; and disparagement of mediocrity.

All development by means of the "destructive principle" is deprecated, its evolutionary and wrong. But nature employs that process in her normal methods of advancing individual life. Death is the climax of the destructive process, and inevitable in all progressive individualization. It accomplishes in a few hours, the great desideratum for the attainment of which the Great School requires many years of discipline, self-control, and moral exaction. Here is the

## Great Psychic Conundrum.

Why are such rigid moral requirements indispensable to the evolution of those psychic conditions that enable the Master to see, hear, and converse at will with extraneous spirits? It is agreed that death does not change the moral character; but it does open the spiritual senses, and presumably, an spirit can exercise the same powers, at will, which requires years of strenuous living, and earnest effort for students in the Great School to accomplish; and they must heed and live the moral law to attain it, and lose it as soon as they lapse from that moral standard; whereas, the death-emancipated souls come into possession of the same powers at once, and without effort or any moral preparation. If the unfused soul is as immoral and degraded as they are represented to be, surely it cannot require much moral discipline to fit any of us to share in their companionship.

The only hindrance to the free and full possession of this power seems to be the physical body, and death removes that, by the destructive process. Since this is the only way it can be removed, it must be nature's normal process and in no way harmful to the individual soul. I know of no evidence that the most moral spirits have any advantage over the immoral so far as it effects the spiritual senses in seeing, hearing, and conversing with each other.

In this world, any man with good eyes and ears, can see, hear and converse with all grades of moral and immoral people, though he be of the lowest moral character, or a desperate criminal. But the claim is that these powers (seeing, hearing and conversing with the unfused) are exercised at will, at any time or place, while the seer is in a perfectly normal condition, in the full, active exercise of all his faculties, capacities and powers. That he can mingle freely with

various grades of spirits, and survey the different spheres and societies in the spirit world, with as much freedom and familiarity as he converses with people in this world. Now this is a condition that must be gained by practice, and long continued discipline, and when attained, is it a normal condition? Evidently not.

The author uses the egg and the hatching process to illustrate this method of pushing the soul out of its shell into familiar touch with the spirit world before its normal ripening. To make the simile complete the chick should begin to see, and use its wings while yet in the shell, and the body half grown. But this would be abnormal; and if the effort were successful, it would likely be fatal to the life of the bird. Besides the hatching process depends as much upon outside influences as the inside. Keep the egg at a temperature of 34 degrees Fahrenheit, and no amount of inside effort will produce a living chick. When it is full grown in the shell, under the congenial warmth of the mother's body, lower the temperature 10 degrees and all progress stops and the chick dies. But when all goes well, it often happens that the shell is too much for the struggling chick, and it must have help, or die. Then the hypnotist comes to the rescue, and gently removes the obstruction, and perhaps warms the young bird with his magnetic hands, and sets it free. I have done this myself, and I could never see that I or the chick was the worse for it.

But the encouragement of morality is always to be commended. Spirituality teaches that. The gravity that draws spirits together and unites them in harmonious groups and societies is

in the moral nature, and all variations are determined by the degrees of moral evolution in each individual.

A short chapter on "Desire and Choice" makes so many illogical statements that the limits of this letter will not permit any approximate analysis of it. A few samples will indicate its character. He refers to those who "Profess to believe that Will is an automatic instrument of Desire," and assumes that "if such could be demonstrated as a literal fact of nature it would carry with it the following inevitable results: It would reduce man from the status of an individualized intelligent entity to that of an automatic instrument under the absolute domination and control of his inherent desires." Well, if his "inherent desires" do not control him, what does? Is it outersense desires? All that he does consciously and voluntarily, he does in response to desires, whether inherent or not. Can the author tell us how the will can act without the authority of a motive behind it? Are not motives constructed from desires? Is there a sphere of effects without causes?

"2. It would destroy completely and irrevocably man's acknowledged power of individual choice." This is an assertion without proof. Automatism as defined by Webster is "a self-moving machine, or one which has the moving power within itself." Is not man a self-moving, organized individual? Nothing can destroy man's power of choice, except a rule of chance, which all advocates of independent free will, consciously or unconsciously, support. If choice is not caused it is accident. If accident, it has no merit or demerit attached to any of its proceedings. There can be no responsibility attached to any conduct that is dictated and directed by independent free will (or chance). The moment you set the police on its track with threatening of the penalties that follow disobedience, your independent free will disappears. What is the object of police if it be not to control the conduct of persons who may be disposed to evil? If they are controlled, in whole or in part, where is the freedom of the will? Those policemen are vigorous manufacturers of desire. They create motives, and dictate the authority of the will.

If individuals could be free and independent no law could reach them, no punishment could touch them, no authority could hold them responsible. But I must omit much that is very significant in this particular sphere of thought, and refer to one more illustration.

The author supposes a soul between two conflicting desires. He cannot respond to both. He must choose between them. Here is the way this situation is analyzed. "In this instance there were two desires. 'The will acted in the line of only one of them.' . . . 'There was at least one of these desires that did not control the action of the will.'" "This proves at least that there are some desires that do not control the will." Who ever suspected that all desires control the will? But the illustration is extended. He supposes fifty different desires from which the soul must make its choice. "It finally chooses but one of these." "It matters not what may have been the motive which actuated that particular choice. The important fact is that forty-nine desires have been set aside, denied, or overruled by the Soul."

"Now if the will were an automatic instrument of desire it would be compelled by the law of its relation to respond, in this instance, to fifty different desires at the same time instead of one."

If that is not sophistry, where will you find it?

Because the will obeys the strongest appeal, as it always must, is no reason that the other forty-nine desires do not exercise their influence in deciding the motive for action; nor is it any proof that the will is not controlled by causes acting through the intellect to determine the choice which rules the action. No man ever consciously and voluntarily exercises the will without an motive; and the strongest desire, or desires, that make up the choice, invariably rule the will in action. If this be not so, then the choice is a chance, and cause and effect are ruled out of the case. No amount of spirituality, or special pleading can disturb this position. The author seems to think it necessary to establish uncaused choices and independent free will to justify his claim that the vast majority of the human race take the "Pathway that leads to the North toward the land of spiritual darkness and death." Just what is meant by these two "pathways," the one to the North and the other to the South, is not clear. Are they real "pathways"? Do they represent the points of compass on the earth? Or are they mere figures of speech, to express imaginary conditions? At best, the picture, as presented, is a most dismal, improbable, not to say impossible and irrational travesty upon the order of Nature. It represents Nature as an infinite abortion. After tolling up the ages in progressive-evolution of types, and reaching the climax of individuality in man, she ceases her work, and places the issues of eternity in the keeping of weak, undeveloped individual men and women, with conditions, and acting causes, which assure the final destruction of all but a fated few who by accident choose the "pathway that leads to the South."

Is there a more delicate, and more delicate of human destiny, and of the mad mockery of nature and her works, to be found in the creeds of savages, or the dark ages of Christianity? In what infinite contrast is the spiritual philosophy, which presents a consistent system of progressive evolution that continues the work of past ages in a universal advancement of the splendid attainment expressed in man, and loses not one individual out of the triumphant march of human progress from plane to plane and from sphere to sphere through the countless ages of eternity.

LYMAN C. HOWE.

# "The Great Work."

It Has Created a Cyclonic Brain Storm all along the Line.

It is highly interesting to note the different views of the intellectual lights now illuminating the world. All of them who are admitted to the columns of *The Progressive Thinker* firmly believe in Spirit Return and its attendant, multifarious phenomena, but when you attach an "ism" thereto—Spiritism or Spiritualism—many of them strenuously object to being so labeled.

There are thousands of intelligent men and women in all the various walks of life—in every sect, cult or literary club—who firmly and unqualifiedly know that Spirit Return IS A FACT, and though they do not make a specialty of making converts, and ignore all "isms" in connection with their belief, yet they are doing a MOST WHOLESALE WORK in calling attention to psychic laws, to their experiences, to the benign influence of a belief that the soul actually survives the death of the body, and their influence is most excellent without being tagged with any "ism."

There are others, equally intelligent, who imbued with a reverential feeling, have formulated a RELIGION out of Spirit Return and its attendant phenomena, and they are exerting a fine beneficial influence in connection therewith.

But with Spirit Return there comes an endless variety of conflicting views and all are uplifting from a spiritual standpoint, if founded on right ETHICAL teachings, inspiring each one to DO GOOD and BE GOOD, to live moral lives, ever striving to aid the unfortunate, to feed the hungry and clothe the naked—with that foundation the diverse views from the spirit side of life do no harm, but possibly do great good, as different lines are sought wherein to uplift humanity. Among these divergent views as to Spirit Return, none stands out more prominently than the following communication:

To the Editor:—Mr. Lyman C. Howe's "review" of "The Great Work" seems to be a very friendly one. AS A SPIRITUALIST I take exception to it. AS A CHRISTIAN and a believer in God's divine word as revealed in the Holy Bible, I absolutely refuse to agree in any way with the postulates laid down in the first chapter, which is passed over by Mr. Howe without any comment, except that the postulates are "the basis for the evolution of vigorous discourse, which an hour's thinking will not exhaust."

It has never been proven that "Nature evolves a man." We read from God's word, that man was a special creation, if the first postulate herefore is founded on false premises, then what is the value of the fantastic claim of "Man evolving a master," and the impious suggestion, or rather the sacrilegious inference to be drawn from "The Master Man evolves a man?"

The author supposes a soul between two conflicting desires. He cannot respond to both. He must choose between them. Here is the way this situation is analyzed. "In this instance there were two desires. 'The will acted in the line of only one of them.' . . . 'There was at least one of these desires that did not control the action of the will.'" "This proves at least that there are some desires that do not control the will." Who ever suspected that all desires control the will? But the illustration is extended. He supposes fifty different desires from which the soul must make its choice. "It finally chooses but one of these." "It matters not what may have been the motive which actuated that particular choice. The important fact is that forty-nine desires have been set aside, denied, or overruled by the Soul."

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Is there a more delicate, and more delicate of human destiny, and of the mad mockery of nature and her works, to be found in the creeds of savages, or the dark ages of Christianity? In what infinite contrast is the spiritual philosophy, which presents a consistent system of progressive evolution that continues the work of past ages in a universal advancement of the splendid attainment expressed in man, and loses not one individual out of the triumphant march of human progress from plane to plane and from sphere to sphere through the countless ages of eternity.

LYMAN C. HOWE.

This is trifling with the truths of revealed religion. An author who is capable of thus attempting to lead his unsuspecting readers from the direct paths of GOD'S WRITTEN MESSAGE to his own creation, into the bewildering mazes of so-called "spiritual enlightenment," endeavors to lure his victims by a sinistral and assumed powers. He surely must invoke the Divine wrath, by denying the divinity of Jesus (God incarnate). To such an one, the further blasphemy of naming the Savior as a member and initiate and "Master" of the "Great School," is only paralleled by the latter statements of his acquaintance with another "Master" of like or greater power with Jesus. It is almost to be wondered at that he does not for himself make acquaintance and equality with Jesus. We know our Lord was the Son of God and co-equal with him. We have so many friends in spirit land who testify to that, and we have so many friends here who can supplement our own knowledge of SPIRIT RETURN, that we are fortified by our own perceptions and the statements of our blessed and controls, in stating that the author of this book has committed a "Great Psychological Crime" in publishing it.

Let all of us who have the privilege of direct communication with the spirit world, bear our best endeavors to PROVE THE TRUTH OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES BY THE EVIDENCES OF SPIRIT RETURN AS GIVEN IN ITS PAGES.

Let us treat with SCORN AND CONTEMPT the efforts of THE CHILDLIKE, who, in the name of the hallowed beliefs of the past, the faith of our parents and our own determination to adhere to those cherished beliefs and faiths, which some of us are privileged to have confirmed by our spirit friends.

I could not say that this book should not be read because of its manifest insincerity. As far as my reading of it is concerned, I see that it emanates from one who while acknowledging spiritual manifestations, has presented the most ingeniously subtle and dangerous array of specious arguments against mediumship, Spiritualism with which we have yet had to contend. It would seem well for us all to be acquainted with the avowed tactics of one who has attempted to destroy our faith, so that we may be doubly armed by having a knowledge of the words and arguments that he may be able to use against us, and confirm our own faith in our sense of the "super-natural" which does not depend upon intellectual understanding or reasoning power.

Yours very respectfully,  
J. B. BENSON.  
56 Main street, Buffalo, N.Y.

All these divergent views endorse Spirit Return, hence must be kindly tolerated. Even the author of THE GREAT WORK knows from actual experience that Spirit Return and its attendant phenomena are facts; hence this discussion, between Lyman C. Howe and other celebrities is exciting great interest all along the line.

## BEAUTIFUL MEMORIAL SERVICE

For Rev. Moses Hull, at San Diego, California.

On Sunday, the 24th of February, the Union Society of Spiritualists of San Diego held memorial service for our ardent brother, Moses Hull. It was before this society that Mr. Hull gave his last address, and its officers and members gladly united in making the memorial service a fitting tribute of love and respect for the memory of one who for many years has been a fearless champion of Modern Spiritualism.

Upon entering the hall at 10 a. m., we found the committee on decoration had transformed the rostrum into a bower of beauty. Across the rear of the platform a bank of evergreens had been placed, and over it hung a large and most beautiful wreath. At the right resting upon an easel, in a handsome frame of white and gold, was a large life-like portrait of Mr. Hull. In the center of the rostrum stood a large chair draped in purple and white. There were many lovely wreaths and vines, their dark leaves contrasting with the long pendants of white and purple ribbon; a profusion of beautiful flowers stood in groups, or drooped in graceful clusters down the steps of the rostrum to the floor.

The services were opened by a musical selection from Mrs. May Muntz's orchestra, followed by a tender and pathetic invocation by Mrs. Hull. Never did the writer witness a more inspiring scene; Mrs. Hull stood among the flowers, her small hands clasped, the silent tears falling like glittering jewels upon the lilies her feet, her low voice chanting among the long pendants of white and purple ribbon; a profusion of beautiful flowers stood in groups, or drooped in graceful clusters down the steps of the rostrum to the floor.

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NETTIE P. FOX.

# "The Great Work."

Dr. J. D. Buck, an Eminent Author and Physician, Has Something Important again to Convey to Our Readers in Reference to The Great Work. He is a firm Believer in Spirit Return and its attendant phenomena.

## "REVIEWS" OF "THE GREAT WORK."

Spiritualism going back to the Fox Sisters and the Eddy Brothers was the first agency in bringing to the attention of modern times a group of psychic phenomena, INCONTRADICTION AS TO FACTS, extending to the boundaries of consciousness far beyond that ordinarily experienced, and demonstrating the existence of disembodied intelligences, and exorcising individuals as communicating with those still in the flesh. This, in brief, is the record of Modern Spiritualism. It is, in itself, a great work, and will stand. The agnostic may deny it; the materialist scout and ridicule it. Who cares?

Back through the ages the same phenomena, extending to the present, have been witnessed or confined as "insane." It remained for the present age to recognize the physical facts, and investigate them in a scientific spirit.

But Spiritualism has done another thing, it has CULTIVATED MEDIUMSHIP. Previously the psychic came spontaneously, sporadic, or, as in certain epidemics of the middle ages, it came like the plague or the "Black Death," running through a convent, or affecting a whole community.

A physician may select an opportunity of studying a peculiar case or form of insanity in order to learn something new regarding disease, or an undiscovered principle of the human mind; but what would be thought of the doctor who should, in order to study insanity, order that he might study it? Cruel and inhuman as is vivisection, would not such a doctor be regarded as still more cruel and inhuman?

Now, admitting the facts of mediumship, another question arises: Is it a mediumship, or a healthy and desirable psychic condition for the individual? Does it, per se, "promote bodily health and vigor" or tend to anemia, malnutrition, nervousness, etc., etc. Does it promote, per se, balance, equilibrium, self-control and rational volition? In other words, does mediumship ennoble the man or woman in an all-around sense of health and promote normal evolution? It is claimed by no one that every medium is a mental, moral or physical wreck, or degenerate.

Neither is IT DENIED by anyone that some, if not all these disastrous results occur in some cases. They "know the dark side of mediumship," and then excuse it on the plea of "voluntary self-sacrifice" and "the knowledge of the cause of truth and humanity."

In the first place the sacrifice cannot be "voluntary," if the medium is ignorant of the principles involved, and let us say of the possible results. I have known of scores of young people, setting out to do good, and knowing no more of what it meant or involved than they knew of the planet Mars. It would be so "interesting," and so "nice" to be a medium! Now these are facts, equally with any other facts of Spiritualism.

Now comes a writer who from long observation and study of mediumship admits all the facts and gives Spiritualism FULL CREDIT FOR ITS WORK, and all the good it has accomplished, but says the effect of mediumship, like hypnotism, is sometimes exceedingly dangerous to the individual, and the tendency is always dangerous, and needs to be safeguarded to say the least.

Nearly every intelligent and honest Spiritualist admits those statements as to facts in some cases, the dark side of mediumship. This writer in a calm, kindly and scientific spirit goes over the whole ground, and says, "THERE IS A BETTER WAY" of accomplishing the result, viz., demonstrating a future life without sacrificing the well-being of a single human being, or endangering his evolution, but on the contrary, promoting it in every way and to the highest degree.

Now, as a cold matter of fact, what is the result? One might suppose that Spiritualists and writers in Spiritualistic papers, would give such a proposition a candid and intelligent hearing, and decide on the merits of the case in the interest of the simple truth. As a rule, they do nothing of the kind. This is their attitude: "This writer condemns mediumship as being both dangerous and unnecessary," "therefore we must down him and his book, and defend mediumship, right or wrong." The animus of hostility or special pleading is constantly in evidence. Writers wobble through color after color, and have no more to do with the thesis of the book than the North Star; or they garble extracts, draw false and illogical deductions from them, and call this "reviewing" the book! Scarcely one of these writers has ever touched the real thesis.

Some are outraged because the author conveys his name, and they cannot get at him personally (possibly to make faces and call names), judging from the methods they have employed.

It is this method of treatment of important truth that I am here commenting on. To attempt to follow the lead of these "reviewers," would lead anyone into endless labyrinths that have nothing whatever to do with the question at issue; nor do they see or attempt to discuss any real issue in The Great Work. The danger or desirability of mediumship was the thesis, in part, of a previous volume, The Great Psychological Crime. The Great Work discusses from title page to the end the Constructive Principle of Nature in Individual Life. These reviewers neither discuss this principle, which is the keynote in all human evolution, nor as a rule show that they have grasped or are capable of grasping the idea, no matter whether they accept it or not.

Now in conclusion: It is a mistake to assume that such reviews, such special pleading, and begotting of the real issues will pass for law and gospel with the great mass of intelligent truth-seeking Spiritualists. They will prefer to read the book for themselves and form their own judgments. They are too far removed from Calvinism to accept their mental pabulum in that way, even when it bears the label of Spiritualism.

Second: The writers of Spiritualism in great part, are losing the grandest opportunity of a higher evolution, and opportunity for Spiritualism itself to broaden its field of vision, utilize the purest and best in all its past, and move to higher planes.

By the present methods, they can hope to influence only the more ignorant and thoughtless, and to hold only those swayed by prejudice. They have already seen their ranks injured by fraudulent mediumship, obsessions, and the charge of free-love doctrines. Please observe! I am not charging Spiritualism, per se, with any of these things, but it is not true that those claiming to be Spiritualists have dragged them in, and dragged the name of Spiritualism down? The methods of review and discussion to which this article is devoted, will equally dishonor and degrade Spiritualism, or any other cult, or association of individuals who indulge, connive, or stand for such things.

The Progressive Thinker has done me the honor of publishing one of my brief and imperfect reviews of The Great Work. I trust, Mr. Editor, you will give space to this review of some reviewers and let your thousands of readers judge of the real issues involved.

I am as much a Spiritualist as Theosophist, or a scientist; neither of these cults is all-inclusive, or a finality. Each is good just as far as it contributes to a knowledge of self and the laws and methods that promote the higher evolution of man, and secure individual well-being and happiness.

I refuse to be "labeled" without defining and qualifying myself, the "trade mark." Truth and righteousness, wherever they may be found, are free to every earnest, honest seeker. To prejudice or obscure for the sake of party, creed, cult, or "for the glory of God," or the "good of the church," is simply the same politics under different names. When I am ready for that I will repair to Rome, kiss the pope's toe or ring, and get the best of its kind, and no cheap imitation! THE GREAT WORK was under way ages before the chair of St. Peter was ever heard of, and it will endure long after its detractors and misinterpreters are forgotten; for it means the building of character and the evolution of man toward the ideal selfhood, the real Christ! It speaks no man, but he that earnestly seeketh it with singleness of purpose, and with the determination to "honor every truth by use," will surely find it.

J. D. BUCK.

Cincinnati, Ohio.

The discussion is continued on page 7 by Thos. M. Stewart and Wm. Omer Butler.

## SEARCH FOR CONTENT—AND YET.

I searched the human race for true content.

But never found it without some alloy.

Some longing undefined, or some vague hope.

Does ever fulness of content destroy. I questioned many people, old and young.

In many spheres of life were those I met. Oh, yes; they were content, had peace of mind.

Were resigned "to fate," and yet, and yet—

I found some children whom I questioned close.

And asked them if they were happy at their play?

One shot a glance of pity and exclaimed:

"Us happy? well, now, Mister, I should say!

We run, play hide and seek when days are fair.

And puddle round and wade when it is wet;

We have a lot of fun at any time;

I guess we're happy as can be, and yet.

I watched a maid and youth who smilingly

Walked hand in hand along a shady lane.

Their very mien betokened true content;

Perhaps with these contentment will obtain?

And begging pardon for intruding thus,

I asked if they were free from care and fret?

"O, yes," said they, "we're happy in our love,

Nothing can mar our bliss, and yet, and yet—"

I sighed and let them pass and went my way.

A pang-like pain was tugging at my heart:

Perhaps a wedlock there was true content?

Some wedded couple could this truth impart?

I sought one out and put the question fair.

If they were happy, and had no regrets,

"Yes, we are happy," spoke the two at once.

We think we are; and yet, and yet, and yet—

But still undaunted, and as last resort,

I turned to those who were replete with years.

Perhaps a well-spent life brought full content?

Had content all longings, and vague hopes and fears.

Imagine my surprise, my sad dismay,

When told by these that they would fain forget.

Life's troubled dream, and then would rest content.

But could not yet, not yet, not yet, not yet—

La Envoye.

Since all the progress of the ages past

Strang up through agitation, not content,

'Tis well to prove all things, and then at last,

Contented we shall die when life is spent.

Chicago, Illinois.

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