

# RELIGIO PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL

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Truth wears no mask, bows at no human shrine, seeks neither place nor applause: she only asks a hearing.

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Readers of the JOURNAL are especially requested to send in items of news. Don't say "I can't write for the press." Send the facts, make plain what you want to say, and "cut it short." All such communications will be properly arranged for publication by the Editors. Notices of Meetings, information concerning the organization of new Societies or the condition of old ones; movements of lecturers and mediums, interesting incidents of spirit communication, and well authenticated accounts of spirit phenomena are always in place and will be published as soon as possible.

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## HOW TO DIE.

A Sermon by Rev. Minot J. Savage.

Does it seem strange to any, perhaps incongruous, that on this June Sunday, in the midst of a growing world, where everything is thrilling with life, I should take for a topic a subject like "How to Die"? And yet the beauty of June, and the joy that our hearts feel in it, are not interfered with because we know they are to be followed by November; for we know that after the November there is to be another June. But, though there were to be no other June, yet, if we could so consider the subject of November as to take away something of the gloom and the shadow that are apt to haunt us in connection with the thought that all that is beautiful and all that we love must fade, even then a consideration of it might possibly add to the brightness of the day, might possibly help us even to enjoy more keenly the glory of spring. So, if I can take away, by any considerations that I may offer, something of the foreboding, something of the shadow, something of the dread of dying, may I not put it within your power to find even a sweeter, keener, more restful relish in those things of life that are so desirable, and that we clasp to our arms with such a tender sense of possession?

It is a purpose like this that I have in mind. We have inherited—I cannot go at any length into the causes of it—a series of fancies, of forebodings, of dark traditions, that surround the thought of the transition through which we must all pass from this life to what we hope is to be another, that fill our minds with gloom. Death is figured to us under every possible aspect of horror. He is the shapeless, headless image, son of sin and Satan, who stands by the portal of hell, as Lucifer starts out on his journey in search of the new created earth. He stands there, glowing with the awful anticipation that his famished hunger for human life, by the ministry of sin and evil, is going at last to be filled. We have pictured death under the figure of skull and crossbones; we have made him a skeleton with scythe and hour-glass, and brandishing a dreadful dart; we have clothed him with all sorts of horrors,—until, at the very mention of his name, we think only of decay, of pain, of separation, of everything from which the loving heart as well as the living flesh shrinks.

Let us see if we can find some other way of looking at the fact, and try to discover what is the reasonable method of considering this inevitable fact in every human career. Believing, as I do, that death is not the end of life, but only an incident in it, it seems to me pre-eminently fitting that I should close this series of sermons on "Helps for Daily Living" by a consideration of the question "How we shall Die."

At the outset, then, let us dwell for a little while on the alternative. If it were not death, since we are here, then what would it have to be? We shrink sometimes from a disagreeable fact without stopping to consider whether the alternative of that fact might not be something quite as disagreeable, if not more so. Suppose, for instance, that I could have conferred upon me at this moment the gift of physical immortality here on this planet, or the privilege of living here as long as the planet should endure: unless there were conferred upon me the gift of immortal youth at the same time, it would be something unspeakably horrible to grow old, decrepit, to find my faculties fading, one after another, and still not have the power to die, not be able to rid myself of the growing burden of weakness and of pain.

But suppose, along with the gift of immortality, I should also have conferred upon me, and upon me alone, the gift of eternal youth. Then what? Why, then, it seems to me, the alternative would be hardly less endurable. Indeed, might be more, with capacity and possibility of enjoyment, of a keen relish for the beauty of sky and the delights of earth; and yet I should pass through an experience, only intensified beyond expression, such as many who had not my prolonged existence on earth had passed through. One after another those I love would go, and I should find myself by and by with only half a dozen persons that I knew in my childhood or youth. Then there would be five, four, three, two, and then one; and at last I must see that one go and I be left alone, compelled to make new acquaintances, or else to wander like the Wandering Jew, one of the most gruesome and horrible imaginations of all ages, alone and homeless in the world,—to become an antiquated curiosity, the representative of a long-past age. Why, since the very meaning, the very heart and soul of life, is the companionship of people for whom we care, it seems to me that under these conditions any one of us would pray for death as he never prayed for life,—pray to go with a friend. Think me not irreverent when I say I would take my chances rather to go anywhere with a friend than to stay here under such conditions. Hell itself might be conceived of as endurable with a friend, yet not even heaven without one.

Take another supposition. Suppose all of us who are alive on earth could have immediately conferred upon us the gift of continued existence here on our planet. What then? Why, we would set all the bells ringing, we would be jubilant and glad for a while. But let the years go on, and by and by the world would become full, with no more room for any more people. Then no more marriages, no more homes, no more little children, none of the laughter and joy and wonder of childish lives growing up around our feet. A world full of grown people! But what next? After a while, we would exhaust the planet; we would see everything that was to be seen, we would do everything that anybody could do, we would learn everything that anybody could learn, we would go through all experiences that anybody could understand or appreciate. And then what? Think of yourself snow-blocked at some way-station, and finding a small cottage or tavern where you could rest and keep warm and wait! Then think of yourself as compelled to stay there for an indefinite time! You would read all the books, you would do everything you could think of to pass away the time; but then a day would come when a prison even in exchange would be glad relief, so weary would you be of it all. So, I take it, that, even if we could have immortality here on our planet, we should become so weary of it at last that it would be unendurable. The only thing that could make such a dream as this bearable would be that in some way we might be endowed with faculties and powers to visit other planets, to visit other earths, to move through the deeps of space. But that, we know, would be physically impossible, clothed with such bodies as we now possess. It is conceivable, scientifically perfectly conceivable, that we might be endowed with faculties and powers adapting us to the doing of just this; but a necessary condition of that would be just this horrible thing that we call death. We have met with this body first, must be clothed upon with some other kind of body.

I cannot, then, think of any alternative to dying, as I consider it carefully and look over the world, that seems to me in the least attractive. So I am brought face to face with this question: If we believe in God, are we not forced to the conclusion that, however we understand it or do not understand it, death must somehow be a good and blessed thing, and not an evil? If there be wisdom in this universe controlling and guiding it, then that wisdom knows best. If there be power, then that power cannot be hindered. If there be love, then that love desires the best. Such a being as that would not, could not, appoint to any of his children anything that in its nature was necessary evil; and death has been appointed to every one of his children. It seems to me, then, that if we cherish, if we dare fold to our hearts this trust, we must take along with it that which is its inevitable corollary,—the trust that death, also, is a good thing and not an evil thing.

I ask you to bear with me now while I consider a few of the things that have intensified the natural fear of dissolution.

One of the first things is an inherited tradition as to the origin and cause of death. One of the foolish and utterly baseless fancies of the Hebrews was that death came into the world as the result of sin; that, if Adam had not transgressed at the outset, then there would have been no such thing as dying. But we know that this is purely a fancy, and that death, whatever else we may think about it, is a natural and necessary incident of our career, created as a part of the original plan by the very One who preordained the fact of birth.

Death, then, is not a finality, not an end. We are not to think of it as a sign of the wrath of God, as his laying his hand upon us in the way of punishment. It is nothing of the sort. We have been haunted by this idea which we have inherited from the old theology. Some of us who think we are rid of the last shred of that old theology still have somewhere hidden away in brain or nerve the haunting images and shadows of this old

penalty, led into the presence of the judge to receive our sentence; and this suggests the prison, the scaffold, the black cap, and the execution. But these ideas belong to a conception of the universe, a government of the universe, and our relation to God, which is utterly baseless.

Then it seems to me that we allow ourselves to be troubled in a way for which there is no foundation by the anticipation of pain as accompanying death. We talk about the struggle, the death struggle, the death agony, the last keen pain and anguish; and yet I verily believe that there is not a person here this morning who has not suffered, over and over again; a dozen, perhaps a hundred, times more than any one of you is ever likely to suffer in the process of death. Study and experience and watching by death-beds has convinced me of one fact—I believe it to be a fact, I believe that almost every educated physician, as the result of wide experience, would agree with me—that the act of death is generally painless. There is pain, there is suffering, in the disease that leads up to it; but there is suffering in those diseases from which we recover. There is a natural process of anaesthesia in the approach to the moment of death, so I believe that almost always it is simply falling asleep. Though we stand by the side of a friend who is dying, and watch the involuntary muscular movement, the contraction of the brow, the quivering of the lip,—signs that seem to us to indicate pain,—if we could really know, there is hardly a question that, in almost all cases, these convulsions are merely nervous, muscular, automatic, unconscious. They do not mean that there is any such suffering as we are apt to think. So I believe that in most cases we have suffered more a dozen times over, even in the dreams that have come to us in our sleep, than we shall ever suffer in dying.

Then is it not true that most of us are haunted by a sort of grewsome and uncanny fancy connected with the grave? I think I should be rendering humanity a service if I could only get these fancies, these imaginations, completely out of people's minds. My childhood was spent close by a cemetery, so that it was one of the most familiar objects of those days; but I know that I was always haunted with a certain imaginary horror in the thought of burial. Is it not true that sometimes we stand by an open grave and have a sense of suffocation or smothering, at the thought that we some time must be placed under the sod? And yet how shrewd in its humor as well as in its sense was that word of Socrates, who, when his friends asked him how they should bury him, answered, "Bury me in any way you please if you can only catch me." I do not expect to be buried. We have worn three, or four, or five, or six complete human bodies that are not ours now. Why not suffer from the thought as to what has become of them? They are buried somewhere, or passed into grass and flowers and trees.

I do not expect to suffer any more from this one being buried than I suffer already from any one of them. Let us put away from us, then, all these artificial horrors and imaginations. I think this matter of burial is made a matter of peculiar fear by our still barbaric burial customs. I have no time to go into this subject now; but, if I had, I should have a good deal to say, a good many earnest protests to utter. I think in the matter of burial and the associations surrounding it we are not yet half civilized.

Again, we are haunted still, as Hamlet was, by the fear of that something after death. What? If we believed, as we have been taught for centuries, that this life is only a probation, and that when we have crossed the dead line our conditions for good or ill are fixed forever, then, indeed, we might tremble. I wonder that those who hold these ideas do not tremble more than they do. I remember persons who have come within the range of my pastoral experience in past years, who have been generally the noblest, sweetest, most refined, most sensitive persons, who carried a very real horror in the thought that possibly the hope they cherished of the safety of their own souls was a mistake, so that they looked upon the thought of death with terror, lest they should wake up to find that the lurid cloud of God's wrath still overhung their souls. But we do not believe that any longer. We believe that the same God, the same law, the same right, the same wrong, the same possibility of going downward or going upward that we find here, will be found over there.

I do not believe that there is anything, then, about death that in the least changes our characters, our natures, our possibilities, our tendencies, or sets us in any different relations to God, any more than there was about going to sleep last night and waking up this morning. Five minutes after death we are what we were five minutes before death; and it is the same God, the same universe, the same laws, the same conditions, the same possibilities there as here. Let us, then, put aside that haunting fear. If you are not afraid of to-morrow, then you ought not to be afraid of the to-morrow of death. The inexorable judgment, the conditions that attach to our characters and actions, which have followed us from birth until to-day, will follow us from to-day into to-morrow. One and the same law governs the master of our passing into the next world, as we call it, and this.

But many liberals who have put that fear idea. So, when we think of death, we think of ourselves as perhaps criminals, under away are still haunted by another fear. I know many tender, loving souls who shrink

from going out into that other life. Why? Because it seems to them like leaving a cosy home. Here is a bright fire, and we sit round it with our friends. We can touch hands. We can speak to each other. There are associations and companionships here; and people shrink from leaving them, as they would shrink from being put out of such a home as I have pictured into the dark ways of the night, in a strange land, not knowing which way to go nor what the next step would be. So I think there are persons who dread going out into that great world alone. Who is over there? Whom shall we meet? What kind of a place will it be? It seems so desolate, so vast; and they turn from the thought, and rush clinging back to the friends here, as a frightened child rushes to grasp the skirts of its mother. We must learn to trust. We lived before we became conscious of it. When we came into this world, we found ourselves in the hands of loving, tender care. I do not believe that a God who provides such a reception for us as we had here will leave us without as good a reception when we go away. All of us have friends over there. I hope they know all about it and are getting ready for us. I believe, at any rate, that the infinite tenderness and care will guard us and help us. It seems to me that we need right here to get rid of our inherited notions as to the great gulf between life here and life over yonder. People have apparently thought that life, if there is to be one there, is utterly distinct and separate from this, unlike it. Why do you think so? Because we have our heads full of the pictures of traditional angels with wings.

Is there any sense in thinking of people's wearing wings over there? It is utterly incongruous, a part of the mythology of the past, absurd on the very face of it. We think of them as dressed in long robes, until they suggest to us nothing but the ghosts that frightened our childish imaginations. Is there any reason for thinking of them in this way? Not in the least. We talk about cherubim and seraphim with faces so bright that we cannot look upon them without being dazzled. Is there anything but poetry in that thought? Is a person spiritually better or morally higher by being turned into a being upon whom one cannot look with open eyes? Let us get rid of all these conventional notions, and think of the people over there as real folk, just like ourselves, just as human, just as real, just as companionable. I would not wish to go if I thought otherwise.

Let us, then, get rid of all these hauntings about death as a spectre, and think of him as God's angel. What does angel mean? Merely a messenger, merely somebody sent on an errand, who need not be dressed in white nor ornamented with wings. To be a messenger is to be an angel. I wish to close this part of my sermon by reading to you a suggestion of the kind of thought you should hold about death. It is by Mr. Edward Rowland Hill:

"What if some morning when the stars were paling,  
And the dawn whitened, and the east was clear,  
Strange peace and rest fell on me from the presence  
Of a benignant Spirit standing near;  
"And I should tell him as he stood beside me:  
'This is our Earth, most friendly Earth and fair;  
Daily its sea and shore through sun and shadow  
Faithful it turns, robed in its azure air."  
"There is blest living here, loving and serving,  
And quest of truth, and serene friendships dear;  
But stay not, Spirit! Earth has one destroyer—  
His name is Death. Flee, lest he find thee here!"  
"And what if then, while the still morning bright-  
ened  
And freshened in the sun the summer's breath,  
Should gravely smile on me the gentle angel,  
And take my hand, and say, 'My name is Death,'"  
With this thought, then, as to what death is, I turn to consider for a moment a few things bearing on the method of getting ready to die. How shall we prepare for it?

I would not have you trouble your minds for one single instant with any of the old ideas as to getting ready for death. Dying is easy enough: it is living that I have found to be hard,—living ideally, nobly, truly. I find more trouble in living in one single day than I ever expect to find in dying.  
What shall we do, then, in getting ready for death? The first thing—and a very commonplace thing it is—is to live rightly, healthfully; for a very large part of that which makes death hard to our thinking, is the pain that precedes and accompanies it. A large part of the suffering that precedes and accompanies death, in most instances, is the result of our own careless or willful breaking of the laws of health before we come to die. As Bryant sings of his old man:  
"No chronic tortures racked his aged limb,  
For luxury and sloth had nourished none for him."  
If we were perfectly healthy, I think the most of us would grow old and die as naturally as the leaf fades in the fall. It would be as quiet a process as the sunset. Most of the storm and trouble linked with it are the results of our own thoughts and words and deeds.

The second suggestion I would make is that we make up our minds to die but once, and to die all at once when the time comes, and not be twenty or thirty or forty years about it. I think the most of us die in imagination over and over again, and suffer a great deal more in the process than we shall in the actual fact when we come to face it. Suppose Damocles's sword is hanging over my head, and I know it. It is going to fall only once. I cannot prevent it, and I cannot reach it to take it down. I do not know when it is going to fall; but let me go about my

business. It does not concern me, since I cannot help myself. Let us leave that out of mind, and only see to it how we live; and the matter as to how we are to die will take care of itself.

Then, in the third place, I think that the sorrows that accompany death, and that we link with the thought of it, are sometimes keenest of all because we have done or said certain things, or we have not done or said certain things, that touched the person who is gone. The keenest pang about the fact of death with a great many people, if they would unbosom themselves and tell the secrets of their hearts, would be certain remembrances. I did not speak such words as I ought to have spoken, while my friend could hear me. I did not tell that friend how dear he was, how I loved him. I did not make him know how large a part of my life he was, how I depended on him. If I could only tell him now! If I had only told him then, it would have made his life so much brighter, so much cheerier. Or we remember bitter, spiteful words spoken, that we would give so much if we could take back; and we wonder if, even there on the other side, he remembers it. We wonder if it remains a tiny, bitter drop even in his cup of bliss.

The way, then, for us to get ready to die, as it seems to me, is to begin this minute—not thinking much about death, except as an inevitable fact somewhere in the future—to live just as we shall wish we had lived; speak to-day the words that we shall wish we had spoken if some friend dies to-day and goes beyond our reach; do the things we shall wish we had done; love so that the living shall understand our love. Let them know how much they are to us. Let them taste the sweet comfort of it as we go along.

Death is either one of two things. Let us for a moment consider it under its very worst aspect. If it is the end of life, if none of those who have lived on this planet are living now, if we must join this great army of silence, then as the very worst it is only sleeping. It will not be pain. There will be no regret, there will be nothing. If not that, then it certainly is this, or, this, or that—have spoken of and that I believe. And if it is that, then no words can overpicture it, no poet can overstep it, no music can over suggest it. Why, sometimes I have such an intense feeling of curiosity about that other life! And yet I do not want to leave here until my time comes. But I am glad to think that, when I do leave here, I shall not go away beyond the possibility of knowing how this dear old world that I love so much is getting on. There is only one century that would rather be an inhabitant of than the present one, and that is the next. I do not care to live in any one that is past, but I would like to see the next one. I would like to see how some of these movements that are going on will come out,—what will be the changes in the social, the religious, the political life; what the next step in discovery, in conquest, of this wonderful earth of ours will be. And, if the end is not eternal silence, I expect to know. I expect to keep the run of these movements, even if I go to some distant planet. If I am engaged in work that will take me to a distance, I will get the news, or I will come back again now and then and see for myself. If that theory is true, just think of it for a moment! How would you enjoy seeing gathered in some great hall to-day the company of all the immortals that have distinguished the history of our race by their physical, their intellectual, their moral, or their spiritual glories? How would you like to look upon the face of Shakespeare, to see if Dante has got rid of that sadness that he wore, to talk with Goethe, to hear the music of Mozart and Mendelssohn? If this theory is true, we shall meet all these; we shall find them, and so have in our grasp all the past of the earth and watch the growth of all the future. No wonder that Goethe and Dante kindled at the thought, and he said, "If this be so, then let me die again and again."—if this be the condition.

Such, then, being my mind the best way of getting ready to die, I wish to close by reading to you a poem, the authorship of which I do not know, but which seems to state in beautiful words this attitude in which we ought to stand towards the question of death:—

"If I were told that I must die to-morrow,  
That the next sun  
Which sinks should bear me past all fear and sorrow  
For any one,  
All the fight fought and all the journey through,  
What should I do?"

"I do not think that I should shrink or falter,  
But just go on  
Doing my work, nor change, nor seek to alter  
But rise and move and love and smile and pray  
For one more day."

"And, lying down at night for a last sleeping,  
Say in his ear  
Which hearsken ever, 'Lord, within thy keeping,  
How should I fear?  
And, when to-morrow brings Thee nearer still,  
Do Thou Thy will!"

"I might not sleep, for awe; but peaceful, tender,  
My soul would lie  
All the night long; and when the morning splendor  
Flashed o'er the sky,  
I think that I could smile, could calmly say,  
'It is His day!'"

"But if a wondrous hand from the blue yonder  
Held out a scroll  
On which my life was writ, and I with wonder  
Beheld unroll  
To a long century's end its mystic clew,  
What should I do?"

(Continued on Eighth Page.)





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CHICAGO, ILL., Saturday, August 3, 1889.

Religious Instruction in the Public Schools.

His Opinion has published a most invigorating series of answers by leading men to questions: "Is religious instruction in public schools expedient? If so what be its character and limitations?" The answers have more than a passing interest as they show not only what the individual writers think, but the prevailing sentiment of the great classes they represent.

John Gibbons takes extreme views in favor of a strictly religious education. He

is not enough for children to have a religious education; they must receive a religious training. Indeed, religious knowledge is as far above human science as the soul is above the body, as heaven is above the earth, as eternity is above time. We want our children to receive an education that will make them not only learned, but pious men. We want them to be not only polished men of society, but also conscientious Christians.

How this religious instruction is to be given, and its character, is indicated in the sentence: "The little child who is familiar with the Christian Catechism is really more enlightened on truths that should come home to every rational mind, than the most profound philosophers of pagan antiquity, or even than many of the so-called philosophers of our own time."

He says this catechetical instruction given in the Sunday-school is not enough; it should be given every day with the course of study, as "It is important that the children should breathe every day a healthy religious atmosphere in schools in which not only are their minds enlightened, but the seeds of Christian faith, piety and sound morality are nourished and invigorated."

The Cardinal having thus committed himself, acknowledges the great difficulties awaiting the practical application of his ideas to the public schools, and his only escape is by appealing to God to solve this problem. His views lead directly to making the public schools denominational, and after deciding on the catechism to be used, he "religious instruction" will be little more than a parrot rehearsal of its barren formulae. The cardinal confounds moral education with religion, which he narrows to the ritual and creed of a church, and if he were pressed to answer what church, he would be forced by his position to say his own!

Rev. Dr. Thomas Hill, ex-president of Harvard University, follows in a laborious and exhaustive answer, in which he shows to his own satisfaction why the Catholics and agnostics should not complain of the moral or religious instructions in the schools. He urges with great vehemence the necessity of the children of the republic being brought up in moral lives, as though the matter had ever been disputed. He gives his entire position away when he admits: "That it is not becoming, and not in accordance with the spirit of the first amendment, for a teacher to endeavor to impress upon a child religious views that are peculiar to particular sects of Christendom. But it is becoming, it is consonant with liberty of conscience, to have teachers of young children endeavor to impress with them sentiments of piety and morality."

True, and no agnostic or free thinker will object to having moral teachers, and to have moral instruction duly attended to. It is the introduction of the Bible as an infallible guide, and the sectarian influence con-

stantly seeking for expression, which call forth the animadversions of liberal minds. These object, because what is intended by religious instruction and morality, always means sectarianism in a more or less intense form. The advocates of such instruction regard morality as impossible outside of their dogmatic creeds. It is sectarian morality they seek to foist on the people, forgetting the impracticability of determining which of the many diverse sects shall receive the preference.

It is well that Rev. Minot J. Savage takes part in this symposium, and speaks with that simple directness which leaves no doubt in his hearer's mind. After clearing away the rubbish which would be likely to obscure his conclusions, he says:

Turn now to the basis of the public school system and see what it is for. Many wise men are of opinion that the education of children is purely a parental matter, and no part of public right at all. But though that position might be made good in a monarchy, it cannot possibly hold in a democracy. Under a monarchy the individual may have little to do in determining the public welfare. But under our form of government, every man is a voter, and every voter has power to help shape public affairs. The State legislature, then, or the National Congress, may compel such a popular education as fits a man intelligently to vote, as a measure of public safety. It has the same right to do it, as it has to suspend the writ of habeas corpus, or to declare war for the National defense.

But what education is necessary? and so, what comes within the scope of public right? The national jurisdiction is confined strictly to this world. There are good citizens of all religions and of no religion. The only thing the State, as a State, is interested in, or has any right to be interested in, is the matter of a man's behavior, as a citizen, in this world. It is none of the State's business to engage in the work of saving souls in the next world. If it is, then it ought to decide which religion is true. Then it should adopt it. Then it should devote its first and chief energies to the conversion of the rest of this world. But America will probably think twice before it will decide to go back to the eleventh century. The world's experiments in this direction are not over-encouraging.

Once granted, then, that it is not the State's business to save souls, and it follows with inexorable logic that it is none of the State's business to undertake the work of teaching anybody a special religion. If a Calvinistic father wants to teach his boy Calvinism, nobody questions his right to do it. But most certainly he has no right to take money out of my pocket (by a tax or in any other way) to do it with. And the same holds true of the Romanist, or the Jew, or the Agnostic.

The principle, then, is as clear as daylight. The public school, supported by the equal taxation of the people of all beliefs, exists, and has a right to exist, simply and solely for the sake of such education as fits for citizenship, and so is for the public good. The church and the home give ample scope for all individual peculiarities of belief or theory. The public school is for the people and for all the people. Let it be kept true to its own high and sacred mission.

Prof. W. T. Harris, editor of the Journal of Speculative Philosophy, coincides with the views of Mr. Savage, and thinks that in the public schools as they are, morality is well taken care of, while in parochial schools secular studies are neglected for religious training.

Thus the agitation goes on, and whenever a liberal thinker is allowed the right of reply the audacity and dishonesty of sectarian claims become apparent. The animus of the agitation comes from the Catholic Church, and the Protestant sects are not shrewd enough to know that it is for the ulterior purpose of breaking down the barriers which now prevent its parochial schools being supported by the public funds. In diplomacy Rome has no equal, and ever with her relentless persistency the "end justifies the means." Change the character of the schools by introducing sectarian instruction, and the Catholics would quickly apply for their equal share of the funds for the maintenance of their schools.

The Bible in the Public Schools.

South Amboy, is in New Jersey, and the people of that State want the Bible read in their schools. They are unhappy if it is not, and disrespect in this matter is regarded as a manifestation of crankiness. The Park Public School was presided over by Prof. Corkery, and he is regarded by the South Amboy villagers as a crank and "smart as a whip." He wearied of teaching under such restrictions, but before he bade the Park School good-by he determined to make an impression that would preserve his memory green for at least one generation. The two hundred and fifty members of the school with the four young lady assistants were assembled, when Prof. Corkery arose and in an impressive manner began reading a chapter from the Bible as provided for by good old Jersey law. He selected the 33rd chapter of Genesis, which describes the adventures of old Judah with Tamar, who would be styled as a "fast" grass widow now a days. It is a narrative that no publisher would dare to issue at present for fear of the law against obscene literature, but appropriate to the manners of life of the coarse and rude nomadic tribes.

It is said that during the reading the school teachers blushed, some of the modest misses hid their faces, and foolish little girls giggled. After the reading Professor Corkery advanced to the front of the platform, and addressed the pupils. He said that undoubtedly their modesty had been shocked, and it ought to be. He did not wish them to think him a blackguard for selecting such a chapter. His own sense of propriety was outraged as much as theirs, but he had made it to show the absurdity of the law. Then in an impassioned manner he exclaimed: "I will show you by my conduct what I think of it!" Seizing the Bible he tore out the offending chapter, and threw the leaves into the waste basket standing near. A New York paper commenting on the matter sagely says:

"Corkery's day as a pedagogue in South Amboy has passed. He will never more have a chance to play the freak there in the guise of a trainer of the young minds."

If the Bible is a divinely inspired book, that is, dictated by God, modesty ought not to blush at reading any passage thereof; and after the legislature has made its reading

obligatory, to ostracize a teacher because he does not select moral passages here and there for public reading is wholly unjustifiable. We by no means sanction Prof. Corkery's method, at the same time it must be acknowledged that his action will do more to open people's eyes, and show the absurdity of the requirement than any amount of argument.

A crank is at times a necessity to get a leverage, so as to move an inert shaft and start the machinery; once started the movement will continue. A thousand teachers have argued the point and been forgotten, but one poor crank in a rough-shod manner has called the attention of the whole country to the immoral as well as moral character of a book which its worshippers would have the world accept as without fault or blemish.

Revival Preaching and Its Effects.

The slang preacher is the last forlorn hope of evangelization, and he has no lasting qualities. The world and the church weary of him, and after the edge of his novelty is worn off he is relegated to the clown and Punch and Judy show where he belongs. Sam Jones and Sam Small have had their brief day, and the churches that introduced and backed them are ashamed of so doing. Jones had a faculty of hitting both ways, right and left. His words were boomerangs and more often came back on his friends, the clergy, than on the infidel. Small is a smaller and less reliable edition of Jones, and so we may go on down to the "cowboy preacher" who has with still less sense a more complete vocabulary of slang and profanity. But the people are readers and are becoming educated. They demand more than abusive exhortations in execrable English. The pioneers once hailed the circuit rider who was a sort of news carrier from one settlement to another, but his day is past with that of the exhorter who kept him company. Now and then, however, these slang-dealing evangelists strike a community susceptible to their methods, and reap a harvest. The outgrowth of a revival at Coloma, Mich., was a sad exhibition of fanaticism. A Mrs. Jansen became convinced that every musical tone was from the devil, and as a blow direct from the shoulder, tumbled her parlor organ into the street and made a bonfire of it. She was encouraged by a large crowd of friends. Mrs. Wilson was convinced that all articles of luxury were an abomination to the Lord, and pleasing to the devil, and to give the latter a black eye she took an ax and smashed a new buggy, purchased for special use and pleasure. Mrs. Tompkins heard the voice of God demanding that she sacrifice her babe, and had the knife uplifted when the voice again spoke and told her to desist. That story of Abraham sacrificing Isaac has a series of black crimes to answer for, and as an example of the extreme measure of obedience God demanded of man, has exerted a most deleterious influence.

The Probate Court is endeavoring to settle the question whether these women are insane. The sympathy of the people are with them, and their actions are regarded with especial favor as praiseworthy and devout.

We do not object to religion. The more true religion the better, yet it ought not to be forgotten that this is the closing years of the nineteenth century, in which the infatuated belief in literal scripture interpretation has no place. As a poet has strongly written:

"New occasions teach new duties, Time makes ancient goods uncouth, He must upward still and onward, Who would keep abreast of truth."

It is the kind of religion we find fault with, and this is of a kind the more an individual has the worse he is.

The influence of revivals, in the end is the same. From the excitement of the hour there is a reaction, which ends in moral lethargy. The revival is a fine illustration of hypnotism, or mesmerism, and the "Power of the Lord" felt on such occasions, is the united magnetisms of the audience directed by the preacher, first affecting the most sensitive, gaining power until sometimes all are influenced. Then the revival is closed, the people have time to recover from their hypnotic state, and wonder why they thought and acted so irrationally.

Thus without knowing the three women who are declared insane, but understanding the laws by which they are affected, we would say, that they are not subjects for an asylum; that all required, is time for, and relief from, the sympathetic influence of friends, to bring them back to a normal mental state.

At the same time we would hold them up with thousands of other similar cases, as a warning to those who advocate the revival as a means of extending religion. No other method is so well calculated to bring religion into disgrace, or to sink the moral sense to a lower level. At its best it is an infatuation and prolific in destroying the just balance of the mind. The churches, if they comprehend what is for their best advantage will frown on every form of revival fanaticism, as of the past and unworthy of the higher mental attainments of the present.

Theosophy—Spiritualism.

Of late some space has been given to the discussion of the different phases of Theosophy, its relation to Spiritualism, and the schemes of Madame Blavatsky and her adherents. This has been necessary for truth's sake and in justice to Spiritualism as well as to our own work and position.

Whenever Theosophists, or any other class of persons, use their high sounding pretensions to cast a slight on Spiritualism—to make it puerile and vulgar in comparison

with their professedly nobler views and aims—they must stop walking on stilts or be tumbled flat on the ground. To lift up hypothetical mahatmas above the wise denizens of the Summer Land, is an absurdity not to be passed by unnoticed. Insidious efforts to undermine the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL and to belittle Spiritualism, that the cry may be, "Great is Theosophy!" must be exposed in their true aspect of darkness. Hence this discussion. Justice to a class of Theosophists of larger views and higher sense of right, has also made these statements and exposures necessary. Between these and those of the Blavatsky type a clear distinction should be made. Their right to assume what name they please, and to use all fair means to promulgate their opinions should be respected.

In fair and frank criticism a suggestion is offered to this better class: If you believe in Spiritualism, or hold it in respect, speak out and say so, never using a cloak to hide your faith. Give to the cause that needs assistance the weight of your influence.

To us Spiritualism, in its wide significance and higher aspects as a Philosophy of Life, includes all that is true in Theosophy, and also the great truths of the continuity of personal existence beyond the change called death and of spirit return,—truths which shed heavenly light on the daily path. Therefore, while in unity with the higher aims of the better sort of Theosophists, we wish all who consistently can would hold fast to the good old name and be Spiritualists. Those good people interested in matters spiritual and psychical, but who have been repelled from Spiritualism through the fraud of pseudo-mediums and the rank fanaticism of illy-balanced devotees, and have turned to Theosophy hoping to obtain the same knowledge through less objectionable channels, will learn by present-day developments that in endeavoring to avoid the Charybdis of commercial Spiritualism they ran straight into the Scylla of Blavatskian Theosophy. Rank as have been the delusions, frauds and corruptions in Spiritualism they are insignificant compared with those of the Blavatsky-Oleott cult, which was conceived in sin and born in iniquity. The vital truths of Spiritualism, under whatever name they are searched for, will live in all their tremendous potency. The shams and shallows will wreck only weaklings.

A Word on Camp Meetings.

One day last week the editor took passage on the commodious and fast side-wheel steamer, "City of Detroit," for St. Joseph and Benton Harbor, two beautifully located villages sixty miles across the lake, on the Michigan shore.

Mr. D. Boynton, of Riverside, Michigan, six miles from Benton Harbor, had invited us to inspect Potawatamie Park, the location selected by him for a week's camp meeting, beginning on Saturday, August 3rd. Mr. Boynton is a farmer, a model of the class on whom rests the welfare of the country. Leading a laborious life, and one illy recompensed in so far as adequate financial returns go, Bro. B. finds time to study the great problems affecting man, both spiritual and temporal; and is ever ready to enlighten and assist those less fortunate. We found Potawatamie Park a most lovely, restful, invigorating spot; a place only needing some money and care to make of it one of the finest resorts for campers, and for grove meetings. It is, however, too far from St. Joseph, and the facilities for reaching it too restricted at present, to render it desirable as a permanent location for a large camp meeting. The Park is on a well-wooded bluff nearly 100 feet above the waters of Lake Michigan, which lave the sands at its base. A pier extending into water deep enough to float large steamers would be absolutely essential were a permanent camp to be established. With such a pier the main difficulty and greatest item of expense would be met. Michigan Spiritualists desiring a camp to rival Lake Pleasant, Onset and Cassadaga in numbers, and surpass them in other essential particulars, must look for a location on the east shore of Lake Michigan, and not more than six hours by steamer from Chicago—three or four hours were better. With such a location and in the hands of a broad-minded management not afraid to put up money, and ready to carry the enterprise forward in a manner commensurate with the dignity and importance of the cause of which it would be an auxiliary; with such a location and management, a camp can be founded which will be to Spiritualists and liberal religionists what Chautauqua now is to the evangelical sects. Such a camp is needed and its success is assured from the start if only properly managed. It will be established somewhere. Shall it be in the West? Spiritualists and liberal thinkers have it in their power to answer.

The crying need of a higher intellectual culture, better scientific attainments, a more intimate knowledge of mediumship and the psychical powers of man among leaders, teachers, and mediums in Spiritualism is everywhere felt. There should be a training school for sensitives where mediumship may be intelligently developed and mediums instructed in knowledge, for the want of which so many of them now fall entirely or stumble along in gross ignorance of the commonest necessities essential to the proper use and conservation of their powers. This training school and many other activities absolutely vital to healthy and permanent progress have been steadily ignored or put in the back ground by all the camps from the beginning; but these needs will not down, and the responsibility cannot forever be shirked. The camp which first meets these

wants in an adequate way will absorb the best elements of the others or force them rival its progressive measures. What camp will inaugurate this? Will it be Lake Pleasant, the pioneer camp, or Onset, or Cassadaga, or will it be an entirely new enterprise, free from the trammels of a traditional policy based on dollars and circumscribed by narrow selfishness? Time, and no very long time either, will answer the question. The editor of the JOURNAL is ready to co-operate heartily with any and all camps desiring to meet the demands of the times and ready to back up their desires with money, courage and endeavor.

A most lamentable state of affairs is represented as existing in Liberty County, forty miles below Savannah, Ga. For a number of weeks past a white man known as Dupont Bell has proclaimed himself as the Messiah. His pretensions were readily accepted by the colored people, hundreds of whom deserted their little growing crops, or left the plantations and turpentine farms where they were employed to flock to the standard of the new Messiah, who announced that on August 16th they should ascend with him to heaven. Planters suffered considerably from the lack of labor, and as a last resort Bell was sent to the Milledgeville Insane Asylum. The effect of his ravings still continues. A successor has appeared in Edward James, a colored man, who claims that Bell's spirit has passed into him. He preaches free love, and appears before his followers as scantily attired as Adam was in the Garden of Eden before the fall. His listeners, following his advice, throw their money away, holding that after August 16th, if they do not go directly to heaven, they will take possession of the property of the whites, who will then become as colored folks, the blacks being changed into Caucasians by the miraculous power of the blood of Bell, whom they apparently believe has been taken away for crucifixion. One day David James, a brother of the preacher, and Carter, a friend, went to the camp ground to try to persuade Edward James to give up his calling. The followers of James mobbed the two and beat Carter terribly with their fists and clubs. Both were badly injured. Carter's skull was crushed and death is certain to ensue.

A dispatch from Montreal, Canada, states that several miraculous cures are claimed to have been effected at the shrine St. Anne de Beaupre in connection with the annual Irish Catholic pilgrimage, July 20th. Nearly every parish in the city was largely represented, besides many contingents from abroad. Some of the suffering ones expressed themselves as having been greatly relieved, but at least one of those afflicted claims to have been effectually cured. Mrs. Kenney of Montreal has suffered intense agony for the last nine years from spinal diseases, lying, as it was supposed at one time, at the point of death. She devoutly assisted at all the exercises of the pilgrimage, and with the other pilgrims received holy communion one day lately at the shrine. She, however, experienced no change in her condition until she stepped on the boat on her return trip, when she immediately exclaimed that she was cured, and in support of her statement she sat down on a chair, a thing she has not been able to do during the whole time of her affliction.

Kate Field's temper hasn't been sweetened by the recent attacks of the Prohibitionists. In a letter to the New York Tribune she says: "There seems to be a vast difference between tweedledum and tweedledee. It is proper for Miss Frances Willard to receive a salary as President of the Female Prohibition Society and to be paid for lecturing in its behalf. It is proper for Mrs. Livermore and Mrs. Foster to earn a livelihood in the same way. But it is an absolutely heinous offense for me to accept any remuneration whatever for arguing against Prohibition, which I firmly believe to be the worst form of intemperance. The most despicable creature on the face of the earth is a hypocrite. The hypocrisy of prohibition is its most loathsome characteristic."

Jerry Robinson writes as follows from the Lookout Mountain camp meeting: "Camp meeting began on July 7th. The attendance is increasing. The lecturers are doing a noble work, and the mediums are giving proof daily of spirit return. The meeting is being carried on in perfect harmony, and every one is made welcome. The hotel, presided over by Dr. Geo. A. Fuller and wife, is a model of comfort and pleasure to the guests. We extend an invitation to all Spiritualists to join us at the feast of knowledge given by our gifted lecturers. The JOURNAL is enjoyed by all."

The authorities at Warsaw, Ind., have taken into their custody Mrs. Martha Danks, charged with murder, and her husband, Daniel, as an accessory. Danks recently became a crank on the theme of religion, and, it is said, compelled his wife to strangle their fifteen-month-old child as a sacrifice, claiming the Almighty had promised to resurrect the child on the third day. When Danks was arrested he had been carrying the dead infant in his arms for two days. Dr. Talmage will probably forget to mention this and other cases of aberration caused by his religion.

It is said that at 4 o'clock on the morning of July 27th a prominent citizen of Eau Claire, Wis., expelled his wife and daughter from his house, and they took refuge with relatives in a neighboring city. The cause was trouble over a female faith cure physician whom the prominent citizen had brought from Chicago to attend him in his house.



Voices from the People.

AND INFORMATION ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS

For the Religio-Philosophical Journal Nature's Vesper Hymn.

BELENE BUSH.

Hear the twittering of the birds, The merry, mellow twittering of the birds;

There's the robin in his nest, With the stain upon his breast That the dear Lord gave to him;

Where the purple shadows swim O'er the heavens that shelter him, In the dewy twilight dim,

There's the blue-bird in his nest, With the diamond on his breast, That a star beam gives to him;

Hear the twittering of the birds, All the merry, mellow twittering of the birds, In the early twilight dim;

Every bird that folds its wings, In the early morning sings, Till through arches vast and dim,

Oh! the twittering of the birds, Oh! the merry, mellow twittering of the birds; Whoever music heard

For the Religio-Philosophical Journal THE WINGED ANGEL.

Oh! winged angel, fly away To me of younger thought, Whose form revealed would be the ideal caught.

The Situation.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

To any one who without wishing to lay claim to deep learning, has yet been able to give some time to reading and thought, the claims to a monopoly of "Divine Wisdom" and "Illumination" made by Madame Blavatsky and her adherents, seems most absurd.

No two people are ever alike, and no two people are ever alike in the same way; there must be individuality; but there are a few great principles, a few grand simple rules of action that can be united on.

The Bank of Devils Lake, D. T., and many of the business men in early days had in use a design for checks and let-headers which was a startling curiosity.

Little Temptations.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

A short time ago I attended a certain church experience meeting, during which an elderly brother, a well-known farmer of the neighborhood, expressed his entire ability to fight against the big temptations that beset his path, but that little temptations he found tough customers to battle with.

This raised quite a smile on the faces of his brethren, as though they had heard something ludicrous. But was it not an honest confession of quite a serious nature? Is it the little temptations against which our unwary feet are always stumbling?

Sitting quite near to the honest confessing brother was another old farmer, whose self-satisfied smile said as plain as could be: "Don't catch me giving way to no little temptations more'n big ones. Sins is sine, let 'em be big or little."

Seated near him was still another smiling brother, who owns such a big farm as to be quite rich. He is one of the foremost in church work, and gives freely of his abundance to help on the cause of what he believes is the "work of the Lord."

Out of the church it is just the same. The "little temptations" are the sharp wedges that get into the weak clefts of our armor. There is Blunt, the wealthy miller. He is particularly given to fall and measure in all his regular business dealings.

Then there is the millionaire up in the grand house. He signed his check for five thousand in the case of the Johnstown sufferers, and who has no need to guard himself from breaking open the vault in a bank.

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North Dover, Ohio.

President John Tyler's Death Forecasted by a Dream.

On leaving the White House, in 1845, ex-President John Tyler took up his residence on Tyler's farm known as "Sherwood Forest," on the James River, where he lived until his death, which occurred at the Exchange Hotel, in Richmond, Jan. 18, 1862.

"Her dream is true," said he, "I leave my wife and children to my God and my country."

The Government and the Telegraphs.

In an article in The North American Review for July, Prof. Richard T. Ely, of Johns Hopkins University, argues strongly in favor of Government control of the telegraph system and says: "It belongs to the nation, and it is for the nation's benefit that the purchase of telegraph lines would improve our civil service immediately, and soon lead to measures which would diminish the 'patronage' of elected office holders, such as Senators, Representatives, President.

A horse that ran away in West Newberry, Mass., wasn't caught until it reached a town twenty-two miles distant, six hours after.

Excellent Manifestations.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal.

Ira Phillips of Ottumwa, Iowa, is a gentleman well known for his integrity and reliability. Mr. P. possesses rare gifts of mediumship, but has not paid any attention to the development of the same for some years, having been engaged in superintending the mines of Phillips Coal Co., of which he is President.

Some time ago one of the workmen, who was a local preacher, inquired of Mr. Phillips what church he belonged to. Mr. P. replied that he did not belong to any church, being a Spiritualist. This aroused the interest of the local preacher, and he asked Mr. P. should give some tests as he had never had an opportunity to examine into the phenomena of Spiritualism.

"You must not measure my love for you, because you are not the same as I am," said the purist and most sacred of which I but a faint inconstant point of light in the illimitable nebulae of Divine Love.

Mr. Hudson Tuttle. The Medium and Daybreak (London) for June 28th, devotes several pages to Mr. Tuttle and his last book. We copy the introductory paragraphs as showing the appreciation in which our valued friend and contributor is held on the other side of the Atlantic.

Hudson Tuttle is one of the grand old men of Spiritualism. He is an example of its peculiar and early mediumistic developments, but he did not remain in his first condition. Had he taken to the study of the occult, he would have been a wizard.

Mr. Tuttle's works have been mostly of a matter-of-fact character. His "Arcana of Nature" led the reader to the most primary geological formations to the highest spiritual states. He wrote volumes on "The God Idea," "The Christ Idea," and "Career of Religious Ideas."

The wonderful trances of Mrs. Emma Althouse of Attica, N. Y., the sleeping beauty, have practically come to an end, and now she only takes a nap of eighteen hours at a time every two days.

The Wonderful Trances of Mrs. Althouse Have Practically Ended.

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A centennial to commemorate the lighting of the world will be the celebration of the sinking of the first telegraph wire between Pennsylvania and Ohio that of that state, New York and Ohio will take part. There will be no difficulty about the illumination.

THE OLD MINER'S GHOST.

How a Murderer was Discovered in California.

San Francisco Chronicle: "I saw a ghost," said an old detective, who, with a number of the men on the night detail, was sitting in the Chief's office waiting for something to turn up.

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Notes and Extracts on Miscellaneous Subjects.

Tom Wilson, of Asheville, N. C., has slain 357 bears in the mountains of that region.

The French have a custom of visiting the graves of their relatives as buried on the 1st of November.

Statistical returns in England show that there are about 1,000,000 more women than men in the country, and that these are nearly all widows.

It has been computed that the average growth of the finger nail is one thirty-second of an inch per week, or a little more than one and one-half inches per year.

It is proposed to gild the dome of St. Paul's Cathedral. The expense is estimated at \$300,000. It would be a very picturesque object in the city's dingy atmosphere.

The Rev. J. M. Smiley, of Shippensburg, Pa., has received 75 cents with interest, from a correspondent who defrauded him of that amount twenty-seven years ago.

Miss Carrie Shaw, a Long Branch belle, while talking to a New York dunder, the other day, was so prodigiously that her jaw became dislocated, and it was necessary to administer ether before it could be set.

John W. Keely of motor fame does not intend that his great secret shall die with him. He says he has written out full instructions, so that if he dies somebody else can take his papers and complete his inventions.

W. H. Putnam, grandson of Gen. Israel Putnam, died at Brooklyn, Conn., lately, of paralysis, at the age of 77. He was the most prominent figure at the recent dedication of Gen. Putnam's monument at Brooklyn.

John M. Langston, the brilliant colored Republican of Virginia, intimates his willingness to run against Mahone should the latter be candidate for Governor. Mr. Langston thinks he would capture three-fourths of the colored vote.

King Menelik, the new ruler of Abyssinia, is a fierce-looking man—dark, tall, thin, and active, with piercing black eyes and a long, straight nose. He is not quite as cruel by nature as the late King John, but nevertheless he manages to awe his subjects into docile submission.