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DIALOGUES AND RECITATIONS

ADAPTED TO

THE CHILDREN'S

Progressive Lessons;

AND OTHER FORMS OF

USEFUL AND LIBERAL INSTRUCTION.

By MRS. LOUISA SHEPARD.



"A Child in the household is a well-spring of pleasure."

—TUPPER.

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DEDICATION.

To the bright Spirits who originated the beautiful system of instruction, THE CHILDREN'S PROGRESSIVE LYCEUM; to that noble man and spiritually-developed soul, ANDREW JACKSON DAVIS, through whom it was given to mortals—to the faithful workers, Officers and Children of the Lyceum everywhere—and to CHILDHOOD, as the flower-budding heart-center of pure exalting Spiritualism, this little volume is dedicated by the

AUTHOR.



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OPENING LYCEUM SONG.

INVOCATION.

BY EMMA TUTTLE.

O, ye who once were mortals
Enrobed like us in clay,
Come down from Heaven's blue meadows,
And be with us to-day !
Instruct us, loving angels,
The way your glory came,
And wreath about our foreheads
Truth's glowing ring of flame.

Bring down a breath of Eden,
And let us breathe it in,
Till its surpassing sweetness
Makes us forget to sin.
Our hearts are mounting upward
Like singing larks in Spring,
And every soul is willing
To learn the truths you bring.

Come down, oh, blessed angels,
Make Earth and Heaven one,
And when our paths are shadowed,
Be ye our rising sun.
Unfold us in God's wisdom,
His beauty and His love,
And may the Earth-life fit us
To be like you above.

DIALOGUES AND RECITATIONS.

CHAPTER I.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN A LEADER OF A LYCEUM AND ITS MEMBERS—SPIRITUALISM—WHAT ARE WE LABORING FOR?—WHAT DO WE WANT?—GOODNESS—THE OLD AND THE NEW—WHAT MAKES US BEAUTIFUL?—WHO AND WHAT IS GOD? PART FIRST—PART SECOND—CONVERSATION BETWEEN A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER AND A PUPIL.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN A LEADER OF A LYCEUM AND ITS MEMBERS.

Mary.—I hear people talk about a Saviour. What is a Saviour; how can we be saved, and what shall we be saved from?

Leader.—My child, we need to be saved from ignorance. Knowledge is our Saviour, and that only can save us from physical and mental suffering.

Mary.—Is education and knowledge the same thing?

Leader.—Not exactly; education represents the ways and means, and the act of acquiring knowledge, while knowledge is something acquired or gained.

Katie.—Must we have education to be civilized?

Leader.—Education is the main spring to civilization, to all reform ; it is the stepping stone to knowledge, wisdom, virtue and true greatness.

Mary.—Is knowledge like a savings bank ?

Leader.—Knowledge is truly a savings bank, and the best we can find. That is—to empty our purse into our heads, by getting a thorough education, gives us the best capital we can possess. It is always at our command, and cannot be exhausted or squandered.

Julia.—Is that the only way to make noble men and women ?

Leader.—In no other way can we approach true greatness, for knowledge is the only currency of the celestial spheres.

Mary.—Will the time ever come when people will be valued according to the intelligence they possess rather than their money ?

Leader.—The time will come, when all will be measured by their minds and not by their purse ; the mind is like the treasure spoken of in the Bible, “that moth and rust doth not corrupt nor thieves break through and steal.”

Katie.—Is knowledge inexhaustible ?

Leader.—Yes, give all you will, and you never have the less.

Mary.—Is that education which is taught in our schools ?

Leader.—What is commonly called education embraces a routine of study adopted in our schools and colleges, for they are stepping stones to a higher education of principles. Our schools and colleges discipline the mind to action, develop the power to think, and thus aid in presenting new forms of truth to the world.

Julia.—If we do nothing to aid and assist mankind, will the world be any better for our living in it?

Leader.—We can only make the world better by a thorough knowledge of ourselves, and of nature, and learn how to make ourselves and those around us happy.

Mary.—Is there any difference between soul and spirit?

Leader.—Yes, there is; although the learned theologians have never found it out. I will explain it by the walnut :—The shuck is the body, the soul is the shell, the meat is the spirit.

Katie.—Is a thing any the more true because we affirm it to be so?

Leader.—We may have a thousand conjectures, and make a thousand affirmations upon any subject, but if we put them all together they never establish a single truth.

Julia.—Should we not be content to talk about things we can know, and not be always fretting about things we never can comprehend?

Leader.—Yes, far better ; as it is impossible for limited, finite minds, to calculate with certainty, the beginning or end of matter, or the Great first cause, however desirous and ambitious they may be of doing so.

Mary.—Can we reason only from what we know?

Leader.—Scientific research must and will settle all differences of opinion.

Katie.—Does it make an idea any the more true by its being generally believed ?

Leader.—A truth is none the more true for its being generally received, or false for its being strenuously rejected.

Julia.—Will it be a happy time for earth's children when all cease to endorse the old rites and foolish superstitions of the past ?

Leader.—Indeed it will be a glorious time for humanity when all shall be governed by reason, rather than blind faith, in religion as well as all other things.

Mary.—What is death ?

Leader.—There is no death ? What is called death is only change ; a dropping of the curtain to the scenes of this life preparatory to the new and more beautiful scenes of the same life in spirit.

Katie.—Are not the Christian sects keeping man back from great scientific truths, leaving the world to find them out as best they can ?

Leader.—Yes, shame on them, to wish or try to deprive mortals of the illumination of science—God's most radiant sunlight—and thus rob knowledge of its chiefest glory.

SPIRITUALISM.

Charley.—Uncle, what is Spiritualism; what is its object and its use?

Uncle.—It is to bring mortals into communion with higher intelligence, from whom they may receive wisdom and instruction on every subject pertaining to man's happiness and well being.

Charley.—Will that elevate humanity?

Uncle.—Its influence is to raise humanity from its present plane of ignorance, selfishness and sensuality, to a more heavenly one of intelligence and Spirituality.

Charley.—What does Spiritualism embrace?

Unc'e.—The whole domain of mind, in this life and also in spirit life.

Charley.—Is it a philosophy?

Uncle.—Yes, it explains the attributes of Deity, the beautiful order and harmony of everything in nature, and the relation existing between those on earth, and those in spirit life.

Charley.—Does Spiritualism teach us that we are immortal?

Uncle.—Yes, and from no other source have we positive proof of eternal life. Spiritualism teaches that by the law of growth,—not of grace—good works—not high sounding professions—is our divine nature unfolded and what the true relation of the spirit is to the physical.

Charley.—Is present Spiritualism like Bible Spiritualism ?

Uncle.—It is the same in principle, but differing somewhat in manifestation ; though in the main the phenomena are the same. It has an Infinite Spirit of Goodness, and spirit messengers to bring it into the world, and infuse its principles into the spirit of man. It arouses inquiry ; refers all things to reason, rather than blind faith ; and utterly discarding miracles, shows that all spirit manifestation is in harmony with the natural law of cause and effect.

Charley.—If there is communication between spirits in the form and those that have left it, what evidence have we of it ?

Uncle.—There are two kinds of evidence in Spiritualism. The external and the internal. One who has received both, cannot, will not, doubt its truth, Might as well doubt his own existence.

Charley.—How can we know when we have received the internal evidence, as you call it ?

Uncle.—By the soul's intuitions, or what is more properly called the process of inductive reasoning. It is the highest form of knowledge.

Charley.—Should we receive all that comes to us as truth ?

Uncle.—No ! we ought not to receive anything as incontrovertibly true, until we have demonstrated it to be such, no matter from what source it comes.

Charley.—How can we distinguish the false from the true ?

Uncle.—Only by the exercise of that God-like power, reason ; with which mankind are happily endowed.

Charley.—Is it the mission of those that come from the spirit-land to teach mankind new truths and to break the shackles of error ?

Uncle.—Yes ! and it is indeed a glorious mission, to aid in bringing the sunlight of truth into bigoted minds, thereby dispelling the darkness of error, causing its gloomy cells to radiate with truth's practical teaching, as an emanation from the divine mind.

Charley.—Should that teach us to love our friends and enemies ?

Uncle.—Yes ! did you ever try to love an enemy exactly as you do a friend ? That you could not do. Nor is it required ; but to feel no ill-will, no revenge, and be willing to do them a kindly act whenever it is in our power, is what is meant by loving our enemies.

Charley.—Can we always do this ?

Uncle.—Each one is capable of doing this, when hatred and prejudice is removed from their minds.

Charley.—Should we condemn others if they do not think as we do?

Uncle.—By no means. Condemn not others if they do not think as you do, or see with your eyes as each must receive the truth when presented according to their understanding of it; else it is not received.

Charley.—Should we not, then, be patient one with another?

Uncle.—Yes; and remember that the soul of him who has received the largest amount of truth, will manifest the largest charity.

Charlie.—Can you explain the philosophy of the prophet's power?

Uncle.—Yes, by Spiritualism. Those who have attempted any other explanation have invariably been confounded, and have shown an utter inability to make it other than spirit power.

Charlie.—When an individual is charged with an offense, is he not deemed innocent until he is proved guilty? Is the same spirit of justice manifested towards Spiritualism by its opponents?

Uncle.—Certainly; in law and in justice every individual must be considered innocent until proven guilty. As regards Spiritualism, without investigation many pronounce it a fraud, and only worthy of contempt.

Charlie.—What is the cause of their skepticism?

Uncle.—The Bible has been held up by the Christian world as being the only reliable authority and teaching man's future existence. But as intelligence increased, it led to a critical examination of these claims and the Book, which disclosed not only many contradictory passages, but the plain and undeniable *fact*, that the Book, instead of being of Divine origin was of human origin—that instead of being God's Book it is man's Book—man made and man devised—which discovery created a wide-spread skepticism, so that before the advent of modern Spiritualism, a majority of educated and intelligent minds had no substantial faith in the existence of the soul after death.

Charlie.—Are all creeds founded on the Bible?

Uncle.—Yes; and the conflicting of these creeds destroying one another, compel every thinking mind to reject everything in religion that does not appeal directly to reason, convincing the understanding and judgment.

Charlie.—Is there a necessity of a general manifestation, at the present time, of spirit life beyond the grave to prove the future existence of the soul?

Uncle.—Yes; and does not modern Spiritualism do this for all who give it a fair and thorough trial? We have yet to learn the first instance of a failure, while its *facts establish beyond a doubt* the future existence of man, its philosophy harmonizes with his

reason, and satisfies the highest aspirations of his nature.

Charley.—What does Spiritualism teach?

Uncle.—It teaches me, first, to be a humble seeker after truth; second, that the great life-power, and good of all things, is God; that it pervades all space throughout all extent; that it is in all things, giving it life and power.

Charley.—Should that teach me to earnestly wish to know and do what is right, and to be truthful to myself and just to all men?

Uncle.—Yes it should teach us charity, truth and wisdom. Charity to forgive trespasses, and the weaknesses and shortcomings of all.

Charley.—Do spirits, who have left the earthly body, know what we are doing?

Uncle.—Yes, and they sanction and encourage our most humble efforts and desires for good, and thereby we are enabled to renew our strength, and be prepared for greater responsibilities. They whisper into our souls the assurance that every pure desire, every noble deed, however unknown, shall not pass without its influence on others, as well as ourselves. They bid us despair not; but with pure hearts, clear minds, and unfaltering purposes, press on bravely in the great battle of life, opposing evil and error, which shall be overcome at last by the good and the true.

Charley.—Does Spiritualism enable us to see all persons and all things as they are, while we are permitted to judge none with severity?

Uncle.—Benevolence and charity shall wield their influence over the warring elements of evil, and virtue shall yet reign enthroned above vice.

Charley.—Must we labor until we fall?

Uncle.—What though we fall on the battle field, death is disarmed of all terror, and wreaths of immortality shall crown the spiritual warrior's brow. We should live worthy at all times of being welcomed home by angels.

Charley.—Is there a better day coming?

Uncle.—Yes, the day is fast coming when this world will be more like heaven. Love and harmony shall reign. The good spirits give us this glorious assurance.

Charley.—What are the effects of Spiritualism.

Uncle.—The teachings of Spiritualism, as proved by its effects, are most salutary and beneficial. Its principles are world-wide and all-embracing in their application to the varied conditions of human life. When truly lived, it brings health to the body; a harmoniously developed power of reason to guide, and the spirit thus freed from the darkening veil of creeds and popular superstitions, beholds the glory of God revealed in Nature, and in human life, as the highest and divinest manifestation thereof.

Charley.—Is life made more holy ?

Uncle.—Yes, Spiritualism makes life more holy and beautiful, for it gives us unmistakable proof of immortality. Our capacities and affections point to a progressive destiny, and we hear the voice of our own souls mingling with the sweet spirit voices of the loved ones gone before, calling us forever onward and upward.

Charley.—Is it safe to trust to this simple faith ?

Uncle.—It is not a faith simply, it is knowledge ; and there is perfect rest in the sublime truth ; for we know that not an aspiration born within the soul, but has a corresponding answer ; and this divine illumination of the spirit is ever seeking expression, action, and demanding freedom. Blessed Spiritualism ! A safe guide to mortal feet through the devious paths of life ; so gloriously illuminating its dark and thorny ways ; so divinely vindicating the loving Father's eternal and unchanging laws.

WHAT ARE WE LABORING FOR ?

Henry.—Brother John, what are we all laboring for ?

John.—All minds agree upon one question, namely : mankind ought to be better than they now are ; to this end all institutions of government and religion are established.

Henry.—What does the Christian preacher labor for?

John.—The Christian preacher claims this to be the end and aim of his life's labor, and that God gave the Bible, and Christ to die on calvary to make mankind better.

Henry.—Why are so many costly churches built all over the land, and clergymen employed to preach in them every Sunday at such high salaries?

John.—The same answer comes, to make mankind better.

Henry.—Ask the lawyer the aim and end of the law.

John.—He takes the priests' words in his mouth, and says, to make mankind better.

Henry.—Ask the reformer why he so untiringly labors to tear down these time-honored institutions.

John.—He returns the same reply, to make mankind better.

Henry.—Ask the spirits why they turn back in their upward flight from this world, to give us lessons of love and charity and mercy.

John.—Still comes the same response, to make mankind better.

WHAT MAKES US BEAUTIFUL?

Jane.—What a homely little creature!

Katie.—She will be beautiful in heaven, I'm sure.

Jane.—Will she, indeed! I would like to know how you can tell that?

Katie.—In the other life, the good are beautiful, and the evil are deformed and homely.

Jane.—How do you know that?

Katie.—Any one that opens their eyes, may see and know that it will be true; is not the most beautiful face rendered disagreeable when any bad passion is exhibited, and does not the homeliest face become pleasant to look on, when goodness makes it beautiful? And she will be beautiful in heaven, for she is a good little girl, homely as she is.

WHAT DO WE WANT?

Susan.—Mother, where do the Christians say we must look for salvation?

Mother.—The Christian sees in the Bible with Christ as a savior from and sacrifice for sin, the only way whereby mankind can be made better.

Susan.—Where does the Rationalist look for salvation?

Mother.—The Rationalist sees the cultivation of knowledge, and the exercise of reason, the only means of salvation.

Susan.—Where does the Moralist look for salvation ?

Mother.—In the daily practice of good works.

Susan.—Where do the Spiritualists look for salvation.

Mother.—The Reformers, including the Spiritualists, look for the world to be regenerated, only through the clearing away of all the old beliefs, creeds and institutions, that a new universal system may be reared which will meet the wants of all humanity.

Susan.—What do the Spirits from the other life seek to do to elevate humanity ?

Mother.—They seek to tear out from beneath our feet the old platforms, laid down years ago, and compel us to step up higher.

Susan.—What does the Church say to that ?

Mother.—The church says, not one step can you take from this infallible platform, the Bible, lest you fall into hell.

Susan.—What does the Intellectual Student require ?

Mother.—The Intellectual Student requires something more than imagination or faith on a subject of such vast importance, and not finding any rational philosophy taught in the schools, he graduates an Infidel.

Susan.—What do we all want ?

Mother.—We want something more rational than dreams; something more philosophical than the alleged physical resurrection of Christ. and something more reasonable than a blind faith in the theological dogmas for evidence of a future life.

GOODNESS.

Mary.—Mother, are all things good?

Mother.—Yes, my child, they are surely good and precious gifts, and we should improve them for the general good, as the great giver has given them, believing that nothing was ever created in vain.

Mary.—Did that power that formed me and gave me reason, give it to lead me astray and then punish me forever for it?

Mother.—No, my child, I cannot believe such inconsistencies. Nature, or whatever it may be, must be just and good, and would not do such cruel deeds.

Mary.—Must we all do our own work?

Mother.—Yes, every man and woman has his or her own work to perform, and we must work it out single-handed.

Mary.—Are we all different, and is our work different?

Mother.—In a greater or less degree we see and feel differently, we think differently, and we judge differently of what is our duty.

Mary.—Have we a right to do so ?

Mother.—Yes, so long as we do not trespass on the rights of others.

Mary.—Should we try to teach others ?

Mother.—Yes, we may help one another, do good to each other, and teach each other in all things, but we should first be sure that we are right, before we undertake to teach others ; there should be no beam in our own eye when we undertake to cast the mote out of our brother's eye.

Mary.—Should we learn to love mankind as brothers and sisters ?

Mother.—Yes ! be kind and charitable to all, for we do not know of their birth, their education and moral training and their susceptibility to surrounding influences which help to shape and mould their character.

Mary.—Do all influences attract as the needle to the pole ?

Mother.—Yes ! we cannot see why the needle points northward, or southward, but we know it does. Neither do we know why a man is led to get drunk, or to steal when he has plenty of everything he needs.

Mary.—Does the power within them lead them on ?

Mother.—It leads all differently ; and that should teach us charity.

Mary.—Is lightning and thunder, though terrible at times, needful ?

Mother.—Yes ! they bring a healthy condition to the atmosphere ; so are all of what we call evils ; they are only relative or comparative good, though we may not see it.

Mary.—Is the great life-power, and good of all things, God, and does it fill all space ?

Mother.—Yes, it pervades all space, everywhere, throughout all extent.

It is in all things, giving life to all things, all seeming evils are only parts thereof, and should teach us truth, charity and wisdom to forgive the short comings of all.

Mary.—Should we investigate all things before receiving them as truth or rejecting them as falsities.

Mother.—We should investigate, seeking for truth earnestly, wishing to know and do what is right in all things, truthful to thyself, truthful to the great spirit, and just to all men.

Mary.—Should we learn these truths ?

Mother.—Yes, let us know these things ; how elevating the tendency. While the beloved Angels are sending forth messages of divine love to fill our souls with light and love for humanity, all selfishness lust, pride and hate must sink before the clear-seeing eye of heaven.

Sarah.—Who beholds us ?

Mother.—A sainted father or mother, brother or sister, child or friend, stands by us, like an ever present sentinel of God.

Sarah.—Will such a belief prepare us better for the future ?

Mother.—In view of the eternal destiny, opening in the future, who can squander the priceless moments of time, or prostitute to base purposes the God-like energies of our being ?

Sarah.—Will that teach us to value time ?

Mother.—Yes, we shall see that this life is too short for its discipline to be lost, and its opportunities too brief and precious to be exchanged for cheating baubles. Oh, ye messengers from the land immortal, lend us your aid, that each soul, conscious of its eternity, may rise with higher, holier aspirations.

THE OLD AND THE NEW.

A Conversation between two Sisters.

Lillie.—How strange things seem, they say we are standing to-day on the verge of the old and looking into the new, and everything is in commotion.

Sarah.—Yes, and this is a fitting time to look back, review our lives, to see what we have and what we

have not done, and to settle our accounts with the past and see what account we have to render to it. Has it brought bright hopes or heart-achings ; joy or sadness ? Have helpless age and pleading poverty held forth their hands to us in vain ? Have we refused the cup of love to those that ask it, and sent the poor starving soul with curses away ? Have we helped to plait a crown of thorns for our sister's brow and sent her with bleeding feet and broken heart up the mount of crucifixion ? We must interrogate our own souls, and see if we have been true to ourselves and faithful to our friends, for the world moves.

Lillie.—Yes, Sarah, the world moves, but it moves backwards. There once was a time when people had some confidence in each other ; but it is not so now. In olden time societies settled a minister for life, no one thought of ever dismissing him ; his word was law to the people. And when one married they married for life ; no one thought of a divorce ; they took each other for better or worse, faults and all. But now, courtship and marriage are carried on by concealing every defect and exhibiting every attraction. Blinded by superficial accomplishments, young people attend gay parties—parade in broad-cloths, silks and satins—study poetry, French and novels—fall violently in love—and after two or three years of wedded life, they apply for a divorce.

Sarah.—Yes, sister, humanity is throwing off needless restraint, and ignores authority, and is constantly struggling for individualization. Some in all ages have been too eager in grasping after new ideas, and thus have become unbalanced. Truth is the law, although some reach after it without knowing how to apply it. Truth upon some souls is like a strong light upon weak eyes; some are able to receive more truth than others without losing their equilibrium. But when a soul is striving after truth, that which is accepted by it must be the fullness of truth to that soul, until demonstrations bring something more clear and truthful. Thus we see the world moves, and man is becoming more true to his brother man, and thus developing and manifesting more of his religious nature.

Lillie.—The relations existing between man and man, are called morality; they are not religious;—both Protestants and Catholics hold that religion is something between God and man. Religion is believing in the Bible, vicarious atonement, and being born again.

Sarah.—No, sister, the grand idea of life is to find out what our duty is to each other, and do it. Feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, giving drink to the thirsty, caring for the poor, needy, suffering ones of earth, will secure us admission into the kingdom

prepared for such from the foundation of the world. It matters not whether we believe in one bible or many bibles ; one religion or many religions ; one church or many churches ; one Savior, many Savors, or no Savior—for love to God and humanity and strict obedience to the physical, mental, and spiritual laws of our being, is all the salvation we need.

Lillie.—Well, sister, we read that Satan will be let loose for a season, and I think that time has really come, for the world has forsaken the God of their fathers and gone after strange Gods. Your father, grandfather, or your great-grandfather, never taught any such doctrines, and why should people be so much wiser to-day ?

Sarah.—Man to-day, by virtue of the law of progress, is vastly superior, intellectually and morally, to the men of any other age or generation, consequently they are less bigoted and intolerant. If we may not know anything that our grandfathers did not know, how are we to progress ?

Lillie.—But people are now mixing up religion with temporal things ; and with nature ; setting aside all miracles and claiming that every thing is governed by law, as though man were a part of God, and religion was something we could learn.

Sarah.—Yes, sister, the bright gifts of knowledge can only come by experience. We are born into

this world, and will find the object of life to be, amid the changing experiences of repeated failures and successes, our spiritual growth and development, thereby securing all the wisdom and happiness possible to attain while in the body.

Lillie.—We have great reason to fear that the blind are leading the blind, and both will fall into the ditch; and they will find their mistake when it is eternally too late, and will end in eternal perdition.

Sarah.—Man begins to realize his nobility, his manhood, and boldly asks for light, more light. And though the ignorant and bigoted cover their eyes, and cry with holy horror, “Humbug!” and “Devil!” it does not frighten or deter him. Truth is his object, and wherever it calls he will surely go.

Lillie.—Man needs and must have some restraining influence over his passions and inclinations to evil; he needs the fear of personal punishment to deter him from crime. Thus God says, “The wicked shall go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into life eternal.”

Sarah.—That was Moses’ God, a God of wrath—Christ’s God was altogether a higher personage—a God of love and peace. Yes, the world moves. So we see from Moses to Christ, humanity has gradually

advanced. Man only needs restraints while in an undeveloped condition, a condition of childhood ; while in that state it may render him good service, but when sufficiently developed to comprehend the God within man, he will be law unto himself, and in obedience to his own nature practising love, mercy and forgiveness. The Christian world, in this day, profess an undying love for Christ and his teachings ; and rest all their hope of future happiness on Him, yet never make a practical application of them, but content themselves with preaching Christ and practicing Moses.

WHAT IS GOD?—PART I.

Rose.—Who, what, and where is God, and how can we worship him ?

Mother.—My child, God is everywhere ; there is no place where he is not ; there is nothing that has not the seal of Divinity upon it.

Mary.—Is God a being, or is he a principle ?

Mother.—God is impersonal. The God-power, or life-power, is everywhere. I believe in worshipping all that is worthy of worship ; if it is the flower, let us worship that ; if it is a lofty thought, let us worship that ; or, if a human soul, let us worship wherever we see anything that seems to us divine.

Mary.—What is progression ?

Mother.—Progression, to me, is simply change. The soul progresses in cycles, as does life. It regenerates itself again and again, ever revolving round its centre, God, and at each revolution takes on newer life, exhibits more perfect attributes, stretches out farther into infinity, and becomes wiser and holier.

Mary.—Is temptation necessary to progression?

Mother.—Yes, because temptation, when rightly understood, is the propelling power by which intelligence of all grades must progress.

Rose.—How came the idea into the world that sin could be removed by sacrifice?

Mother.—Minds in an undeveloped state, know that sin must be removed; there must be some power by which wrong can be overcome. The old method was by sacrifice, either human or otherwise.

Mary.—How can Jesus be the sacrifice for all sin?

Mother.—When Jesus came, he was said to be the sacrifice for all humanity, that all might be saved through him. They mistook the letter for the spirit, the body for the inner life.

Rose.—How can this idea of sacrifice be removed from the minds of the people?

Mother.—By natural and spiritual growth, and in no other way; an idea that is forced into the mind before it has grown large enough to receive it, will never bear any fruit. Remember, "he that is con-

vinced against his will, is of the same opinion still."

Mary.—Have we the power to be good enough here, in this world, to be always happy?

Mother.—Certainly not; nor would it be well for us always to be happy. The soul needs the discipline of unhappiness, in order to know what happiness is.

Mary.—Is there a sphere of knowledge outside and independent of organized minds, into which we may enter and receive knowledge and instruction?

Mother.—All the wisdom that belongs to the mental sphere, belongs to the human sphere; the wisdom of God is the combined wisdom of all intellectual life.

Rose.—Is there as much evil existing in the spirit world as there is here?

Mother.—Death does not change us; it only takes away the external shell and leaves the man precisely the same. The spirit world finds you precisely where this lays you down. You do not become a saint on entering the spirit world, when you have left this world a sinner.

PART II.

Rose.—How can we find God?

Mother.—Whatsoever is, is God, and ever must be. Spirit is above all external form, as right is above wrong.

Mary.—What is evil?

Mother —What we call evil is only our limited conception of what is embraced in universal good. It is a limited or lesser good; as there cannot be light without darkness, heat without cold, summer without winter, so positive and negative forces must exist. All is good, but all is not yet fully understood.

Rose.—Must we always be learning?

Mother.—We are made to learn, and when we shall have so learned as to know what to do, and do what we know, we need not be afraid of any evil.

Mary.—Are we always subject to conditions?

Mother.—It is an absurdity to expect to attain any good without complying with conditions.

Mary.—How is it that persons living in this world can communicate with those gone to the spirit world?

Mother.—Spirit is a positive force, matter negative. That being true, spirits can just as well communicate after leaving the form, having made themselves acquainted with the law, as persons can communicate with those who have changed their earthly homes. The soul possesses unlimited power, but it does not know of its possession; only by degrees can it control the forces which belong to itself.

Mary.—On entering spirit life, does the soul possess all wisdom?

Mother.—Only step by step can the soul climb up the ladder of eternal wisdom. Just so far as the soul

understands itself, and its relations to its surroundings, can it control those surroundings, and no farther.

Rose.—How can we pray best?

Mother.—Beecher says the best prayer for a poor man is a loaf of bread and a few kind words.

Mary.—What is justice?

Mother.—Justice is a basic element of infinite life; it is divinest law, mightiest power, purest love, highest wisdom, tenderest mercy, the essential, God.

Mary.—Is there any infallible rule of right and wrong, by which all can be governed alike?

Mother.—There is no special rule of right that will apply to every individual alike; there are no two blades of grass exactly alike, no two leaves alike, all the petals of the flowers differ, all the stars differ; then how can we expect to erect one general standard of right for all? It cannot be done.

CONVERSATION BETWEEN A SABBATH SCHOOL TEACHER
AND A PUPIL.

Teacher.—Henry, I want you to remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.

Henry.—Is the Sabbath better than other days?

Teacher.—Yes, the minister says it is God's day.

Henry.—Are not all days God's days? Whose days

are they if that is God's day more than the rest? Why didn't he make it different, so we may know it when it comes?

Teacher.—The Bible says God rested that day from all his works.

Henry.—Didn't God make all things?

Teacher.—Yes.

Henry.—Then why don't he have the things which he has made, rest? The grass grows, the water runs, the birds sing, the lambs play, and I can't see any difference in the days.

Teacher.—The Bible says it is God's day and it is holy time.

Henry.—But who made the Bible—where did we get it?

Teacher.—God's inspired ministers.

Henry.—Then it is the ministers' Bible and the ministers' day, is it? Don't they work? What day do they earn their living, if it isn't that day?

Teacher.—The ministers preach that day, to save souls.

Henry.—But their Bible says, "Work out your own salvation."

Teacher.—The ministers say that the Sabbath is the clergyman's working day; that it was given to Christians, and when they receive Christ into their souls, they receive the Sabbath.

Henry.—Then all who do not receive Christ as their Saviour, are not bound to keep the Sabbath.

Teacher.—The day is peculiarly adapted to our growth in grace. We all want to do what we can for Jesus.

Henry.—Does Jesus progress for us? If he does, it would be wise to keep that day; if not, then we have no time to lose, for every moment is precious to labor for ourselves and the best good of humanity, in the way that will do the most good to the greatest number.

Teacher.—Then you don't regard the Sabbath as holy time?

Henry.—Not more than other days. All days are holy time to me, for all days are precious to prove all things and hold fast to that which is good, seeking earnestly for wisdom to know and do what is right to myself and all humanity.

Home to Mother.

BY MRS. CAROLINE FAIRFIELD CORBIN.

[The mother of the writer has four children in the Spirit world, from whom she received a message not long since, that they had always spent many happy hours in their mother's home ; that from infancy, whatever had been their occupation, their happiest vocation had always been to "go home to mother."']

We have one mother, four of us
Still linger in earth's shadows,
And four are singing in the light
That floods the heavenly meadows.
But still their song comes faintly down
Distinct from every other,
"We study, work, then take our rest,
And all go home to mother.

Home to mother, home to mother ;
Our day's work done, the guerdon won
We all go home to mother."

We seek the culture of the spheres
We gather heavenly treasure,
Of knowledge, wisdom and delight,
And love beyond all measure ;
But still one joy remains for us
More blessed than all others,
We gather in one happy band,
And all go home to mother.
The years are passing, in that face
So noble and so tender,
Earth's shadows fall ; yet through them gleams
Somewhat of heavenly splendor ;
And soon 'tis we, who linger here,
Shall weep with one another,
And whisper through our falling tears,
We shall go home to mother.

Home to mother, home to mother,
Our life work done, and heaven won,
We'll all go home to mother.

There in some mansion large and fair,
Some dwelling-place immortal,
Our mother's heavenly home shall be,
And Love shall guard the portal.
And when we all have reached that shore,
Four sisters and four brothers,
We'll join in one unbroken band,
And ALL go home to mother.

Home to mother, home to mother,
Oh ! speed the happy, happy day,
When we are ALL with mother.

—*Lyceum Banner.*

CHAPTER II.

EVERYTHING IS BREAKING UP—MAKING YOUR MARK—DOING YOUR PRAYERS—MARRIAGE—HELPING GOD—DIFFERENCE OF OPINION—SPIRITUAL FREEDOM.

EVERYTHING IS BREAKING UP—PART FIRST.

Julia.—I hear people say everything is breaking up; what does that mean?

Leader.—It means the drifting away of the flood-wood floating on the sea of society.

Julia.—But are not most people in society conscientious in their professions?

Leader.—Men and women join in church, join in marriage, wheel in with political parties, eat and drink, walk and talk, love and hate, more as though they were governed by surrounding circumstances than by the deep convictions of their own God-given natures. At the present time we seem nearing a fearful crisis in Society, Church, and State; and there are evils, errors, slanders and corruptions which seem ripening for a general disruption. On what party or sect can we look for an improved condition of our race; where can we look for help unless we turn our eyes heavenward and call on the hosts of living Angels, who from the higher sun-lit

realms of spirit-life are enabled to look down and penetrate causes lying deeper than mortal vision can scan?

Julia.—But is not the Church able to control the evils of society?

Leader.—The present condition of the church is universally conceded to be unstable, unsafe, and fast tending to decay. It is rapidly waning among advanced minds. Intelligent doubters and unbelievers are rarely reached, and popular preaching is powerless over the masses. The young are fast outgrowing the dogmas of the past, and will not be hampered with old creeds and teachings. Give us something new, is the demand of the day.

Julia.—Is not the church and its doctrines the means of salvation.

Leader.—Popular churches are supported more on the score of policy, convenience and self-interest, than on the ground of absolute utility as means of grace and salvation, and but few are looking to them as a refuge from immorality, irreligion and infidelity. Where are the safeguards of the Church, while crimes are repeatedly perpetrated beneath the ample folds of her pious cloak, which almost turns the cheek of darkness pale!

Julia.—But cannot we look to our politics for safety

Leader.—Politics, judging from the dominant parties, give little hope. Demagogues are rampant; shameless bribery and untold political iniquity seem to be the order of the day; while through sophistry and deception the people are made the dupes of vile, designing politicians, seeking office and power, to line their pockets and live in ease. Even the capital of the nation is stained with the blood of martyrs, and the political course of all the dominant parties seemingly is tending downwards.

Julia.—Cannot we trust in the popular opinion?

Leader.—Our popular society, in the main, is a sham; whoever can show off the best, takes the first place. Superficial wit, gossip, silk and satin, are always at a premium price. Lord save us from the bore of society; give us a crust of bread with one true friend, in a shanty, rather than a parlor full of sofa-cushion dandies primmed up with soulless accomplishments. Society, as it now is, is a place for the practice of hypocrisy, and the concealment of hearts and souls.

Julia.—Will society ever change?

Leader.—Society moves slowly. It is well that it should. It is well that old established forms and ceremonies should be girded round by conservatism, as it prevents rashness and too great haste in matters of reform.

Julia.—But are we all constantly changing?

Leader.—Yes, we live by change; the spirit can complete its growth only by the law of change. It becomes allied to organized matter, and expresses its conscientiousness by that means. The spirit passes out of its external covering and enters the soul—the spirit body, by a given law, as it enters its physical body,—and on these conditions and possibilities of life, through the law of change, death is robbed of its sting; the grave cheated of its victory; while the spirit passes on to higher experiences in spirit life.

Julia.—Shall we always retain our identity?

Leader.—You are constantly changing in development and growth, but not in identity. You are not the same you were a year ago, morally, mentally, spiritually, or physically; you are constantly changing in expression.

Julia.—How shall we know our friends if we change continually?

Leader.—There is an identity of the spirit which is always retained.

Julia.—Do we retain the same affection for our friends we have here?

Leader.—The human affections are subject to change here and in spirit life.

Julia.—Why is it that good people differ so much in opinion?

Leader.—It is perfectly in harmony with the undeveloped state of human life; when the soul is fully unfolded and comes to learn all the laws by which it is surrounded, it will then understand that it cannot possibly inflict suffering on others without suffering itself; that the curses which are sent out to rest upon others, will return with vengeance upon our own heads; and when we come to know this, we shall learn to exercise love and charity.

Julia.—But how can this be brought about?

Leader.—Every one of us must be a worker, every hand must be raised to help on the car of progress. God assigned it to us when he gave us powers, talent, energy and intellect. Every one of us should fill some place advantageously. If the gifts of fortune are showered on you, that you need not labor, think of the poor; think of the helpless woman surrounded by piteous little children huddled together in hunger, nakedness, filth and ignorance, and she compelled to leave them to seek employment. There is your place to work, as teachers of the poor, as missionary angels in the haunts of darkness. Lament not that the world is full of wrong, so long as you keep your hand back from helping to establish the right.

Julia.—How can we know what is right, while everything is breaking up, and good people differ so much?

Leader.—If you ask for your rights, commence by giving others their rights.

Julia.—Can women do anything to help on the car of progress?

Leader.—Women are the saviors of the race—they hold in their right hand the destiny of nations! By a proper education of sons and daughters, the mothers of this land need not lament that their children occupy the position in society of mere speculators in matrimonial match-making! All true mothers will correct this and save their children from so lamentable and degrading a position.

Julia.—Can girls work?

Leader.—Yes, work, work, teach. This blessed gospel of angel ministration made practical, will lift all burdens, heal all sicknesses, reconcile all antipathies, quicken all souls, lead all reforms, mould all laws, crown all with their God-given rights, feed all souls, dry up all tears and brighten the pathway of each and every being up to the homes of the blessed.

EVERYTHING IS BREAKING UP—PART SECOND.

Julia.—Mother, is the Church reforming the world?

Leader.—All things have their use; the existing dispensation of laws, customs and institutions have their use; still, men and women must be more en-

lightened in preparation for the new, before they can reject the old.

Julia.—Is the Church losing its influence ?

Leader.—In every age of agitation we need have no fears of aught that stands on a solid foundation. Houses, homes, compacts, parties and churches, built on the rock of eternal truth, shall stand the test that time is making of all things, growing more beautiful and useful with the passing ages. Wendell Phillips says, "Everything is breaking up."

Julia.—If everything "breaks up" will not anarchy reign ?

Leader.—While these conditions of Church, State, and Society, are every day becoming more and more apparent, many are growing perplexed and alarmed at its final results;—a fearful crisis seems impending !

Julia.—But what is the cause ?

Leader.—It is the inevitable consequence of the progressive spirit of the age. Old ideas are fast passing away. Individualism is being manifest more and more. It is being demonstrated that past customs and institutions destroy a true sense of individual responsibility.

Julia.—Is the present any better ?

Leader.—The present dispensation seeks rather to address the inner consciousness of the individual soul, as the highest and most absolute authority ;

while it proclaims the supremacy of Deity, the influence of the angel world, and the fraternity of man, it appeals to the higher law written in the intelligence of humanity and to the court of reason, as final authority.

Julia.—What is the cause of the present state of things?

Leader.—While the multitude have been held so long under false authority and enslaving restraints, in view of individual liberty proclaimed by this present dispensation, no marvel many should suffer a rebound to the opposite extreme, and repudiate all laws. In rejecting false authorities and unjust restraints, there is a tendency to reject all authority and all restraint. In throwing off the yoke of tyrannical laws there is a tendency to reject all law; and in breaking loose from the trammels of false creeds and forms, there is danger of rejecting all beliefs and all religious order; in escaping from false social customs, many are liable to break loose from all healthful restraints, and claiming individual license for freedom, reckless in regard to results, society, the church, and state, are constantly giving evidence of the licentiousness, corruption and crime that have been gathering under the cloak of each, and which are thrown to the surface by the struggle of individual souls, for larger liberty and more truth.

Julia.—But what shall we do? Shall we conceal our lights, deny our liberty, and turn love into hate because men abuse these divine gifts?

Leader.—No; let us rather seek to establish the principles we profess, and appropriate them to a legitimate reform. What if they are liable to abuse; so is the sunlight and air of Heaven. Light and liberty are the legitimate inheritance of all. Better these were enjoyed, though now and then abused, than that humanity should be kept in false, ignoble servitude.

Julia.—Are there not those who will almost entirely disregard every reasonable restraint?

Leader.—Yes, but there are those who need this liberty, and know how to use it for their own good, and the good of humanity.

Julia.—Have we anything to do in this great work of reform?

Leader.—Yes, we have each a noble work to perform, and one requiring all the energies of our nature.

BREAKING UP—PART THIRD.

Julia.—Are we connected here, with more than one life?

Leader.—Yes, we are living here in this world, three distinct lives: the life which belongs to the animal world, that which belongs to the spiritual

world, and that which belongs to the soul, or divine life—three in one; that is the trinity which is yet to be understood.

Julia.—Is there to be a new order of things?

Leader.—Yes, but God still reigns, the earth rejoices, and humanity is safe in the light of this dispensation. The law of conjugal love, of true marriage, of home harmony and the relations existing between parents and children, are being understood, so as to reveal the falsities, and the causes of the infernal discords of the past, and inspire a hope of a new era, in which men and women shall overcome all that is at war with genuine conjugal relationship; and why should we fear the result?

Julia.—Should we not be anxious to keep our reputation good?

Leader.—That is well, but it is more important that our lives, hearts and motives should be good, our aims lofty and unselfish, and let our reputation take care of itself.

Julia.—Must God's law be written on our hearts?

Leader.—God's law is written by angel hands, in every fibre of our being.

Julia.—Is the time coming, spoken of in the Bible, that will try men's souls?

Leader.—The time is fast coming when the revolutions now upheaving the old order of things, will

try every one as by fire. It is now as it was when Jesus walked the earth centuries ago: the elements are coming in fearful conflict, agitation is stirring the deep waters covering the face of humanity, and divisions and dissensions are dividing church and society, in preparation for the kingdom of heaven which is at hand.

Julia.—Leader, did you say that everything is breaking up?

Leader.—Yes; kingcraft and priestcraft are passing away before the rising intelligence of the people, who will not trust in the purity and perfection of any political party or religious sect. No party now in existence, affords a broad platform on which the entire race can stand, claiming their God-given rights.

Julia.—Are not our social laws right?

Leader.—Our social customs and compacts are but a compromise of convenience, and the divinest affections are bartered in the shambles of false public sentiment.

Julia.—Is there nothing to be trusted?

Leader.—No; not without question. We are in the midst of agitation, rocking the religious and social world, demanding an utter change in many of the existing laws, customs and institutions.

Julia.—How can we serve humanity best in this time of trial?

Leader.—The time has come when we are called upon to speak and act independently, and in seeming violence to the feelings of those nearest and dearest to our hearts; and if we are misunderstood, and for a time made to suffer the deepest sorrow, it has been thus with all true, noble pioneer souls.

Julia.—Shall we have our reward?

Leader.—Yes; we are to find our highest recompense in the consciousness of speaking and acting according to our highest conviction of duty. If in doing this, we come in conflict with the evils and errors of the world, we are to remember the greater need of our firmness, freedom, fortitude and heroism. The world can be redeemed only as we meet these falsities face to face, and rise above them in spite of all opposing influences. Millions are groaning in social, civil and religious bondage, from which they can never be saved unless Messiah souls of this dispensation stand forth as examples of heroism, clothed with the armor of God, and the spirit-world recognizing God as father of all humanity, as equal in dignity and divinity, of origin and nature; man as immortal in communion with Deity and the angel world, beneath whose inspiration he is called upon to speak and act, in accordance with his own untrammelled reason.

MAKING YOUR MARK.

Susan.—Mother, I hear people talk of making their mark, what do they mean?

Mother.—My child, it is to do something to benefit the world, to be remembered when we have passed out of it. There are at the present time, a goodly number of men and women engaged in the great work of reform; there have been many efforts made to harmonize the world; religion, schools, societies, houses of correction, all of which is so much testimony of human progress; yet, while we discover, here and there improvements, we are compelled to acknowledge that their labors have mostly failed to accomplish what they have designed. We discover as one great reason for their failure, that mankind have labored to reform, while they have overlooked the first great principles necessary in human elevation; which is a proper knowledge of the requisite conditions for the birth of a healthy child, with a harmoniously balanced elemental force of mind, from which, as being organic, true manhood and womanhood alone can come.

Susan.—If I was rich I should love to go out into the world, and do something for humanity, and make my mark.

Mother.—My child, the greatest gift of God lies within the hands and hearts of his people. All the

world needs, is to know how to help themselves ; open the treasures of industry and learning to the community and you open a mine richer than that of gold. Teach them how to find their own treasures, and that each one must obtain whatever wealth of mind they possess by their own efforts.

Susan.—But why is it that all do not try to make others happy, while by so doing they would make themselves happy ?

Mother.—My child, they do not see it so. The prime cause of evil and error in the world, is due to inherited evil propensities, originating in corrupt and inharmonious conditions before birth.

Susan.—But cannot we teach them, and make them better ?

Mother.—To try to teach a child who is badly born is like attempting to straiten a crooked tree.

Susan.—But who is responsible for these things while we are ignorant and undeveloped ?

Mother.—It is false modesty, prudishness which, allows people to discuss freely in public, in the family and in private, the most approved means of producing the finest specimen of the horse, the ox, the sheep, the dog, and even the hog ; but when you call their attention to man, that highest, most wonderful and crowning form of life in God's universe, and talk about elevating him by teaching him the universal laws which govern reproduction, Mrs. Grundy's

indignation is aroused.—she gathers all her forces, mounts her war horse of wounded modesty, and so securely and effectually guards the encampments of ignorance, that those who would break in upon them are compelled to retreat:

Susan.—How can humanity ever rise to a proper comprehension of life and philosophy with such a load of prejudice and ignorance?

Mother.—By educating the masses, teaching them there is nothing too sacred to be investigated.

Susan.—When I hear people talk about great minds doing so much good in the world, I am discouraged it is so little I can do.

Mother.—My child, we are not expected to do great things; it is the many little things that make up great results. If we all do a little a great deal will be done. We must not be discouraged because we cannot do more, and so do nothing. We must do good little by little until everything is good with which we are connected.

Susan.—But there are many things in the way of doing good. We cannot accomplish much.

Mother.—You will find that your life will be very much like your garden. There will be storms that will seem very terrible to you, but they all have their purpose; there will be winds that will sweep over you; but they will all eventuate in some good, just

as in Nature there are ample provisions for your flowers, so has the law of an Infinite and Universal Intelligence, of which you are a part, provided for all the events of your life, if you only desire to be good and try to learn, for we can never know so much but what we can learn something more.

Susan.—Is man as perfect in his sphere as the lower order of creation ?

Mother.—It is a well understood law of nature that for every form possessing life there are natural provisions for the complete expression of that life ; that its highest possible development may be attained in obedience to that law. The farmer sows his seed, knowing that its life will find full expression and reach its ultimate in the ripened grain. Take any of the beasts of the field and you will find none where the requirements of their nature are not complied with, which gives evidence of this grand and universal truth.

Susan.—Is man the only creature that desires a future life ?

Mother.—Man alone has those aspirations of soul that outlive all earthly possibilities, demanding a change from earthly forms. Does nature give completeness to every form of life except human, and then leave the highest and most finished of all her creatures to “fight out” their existence in sorrow

and despair? Does she give contentment and happiness to the brute and stamp despair on the brow of man? Does she place inferior forms where their lives find full expression, and then leave the higher to feel a want that can never be satisfied? Man's consciousness demands a future state of existence. The brute does not possess it,—or at least never manifests a desire for a future existence. Man has capacities and powers fitted for another condition of life.

Susan.—Why is it that every one cannot see spirits?

Mother.—Because all do not possess the same organization, capacities and powers. The power to see spirits depends upon the possibilities organic in the physical body. If these exist in any individual their spirit will be enabled, under favorable conditions, to see “clairvoyantly;” or with spiritual sight will see spirits. Spirits communicate with mortals by speech, by sight, by inspiration, and by various other methods in the form of “tests.”

Susan.—I want to be inspired, and do something for humanity, and make my mark.

Mother.—The mind which is most active, gives to those around it, which are in a more passive and receptive condition, the thoughts which are in that mind. Inspiration depends as much upon the passivity of one mind, as the thoughts to be communicated by the other.

“In the quarry if you toil, make your mark;
If you delve upon the soil, make your mark;
In whatever place you stand, with a firm and honest hand,
Make your mark, make your mark”

DOING YOUR PRAYERS.

Johnny.—Mother, I wish God would bless poor little children who have no beds to-night, it is so cold.

Mother.—You want God to bless them, but what will you do for them?

Johnny.—When I get all the money I want, and have some to spare, I will give them some.

Mother.—But we never get all the money we want, we always want more; what will you do for them now?

Johnny.—I would work and buy them some bread, if I could.

Mother.—They would starve while you are working.

Johnny.—I have one shilling, I will give them half of it, wouldn't that be right?

Mother.—What can you do with the other half? that will do you as much good as it would them, when they have no bed and nothing to eat?

Johnny.—Well, then, I will give them the other half, for I can do without candy better than they can do without something to eat, and I wish I had more for them.

Mother.—You will feel happier when you lie down in your soft bed, thinking your money has helped some other poor child to a bed, who has no father or mother, and good angels will watch over you more lovingly for your kindness of heart.

Jane.—Mother, what do we live for, and what do we go to the Lyceum for?

Mother.—We live to gain experience, knowledge and wisdom, and we go to the Lyceum to learn how to get it.

Jane.—Must we learn all we know?

Mother.—All we know we have to learn. Do these boys think there ever was a time when our Legislators, Congressmen, and President, did not know any more than they do now? Do these girls ever think that our great and “strong-minded women” have to learn all they know, just as you do?

Jane.—Do we all come here to learn?

Mother.—Yes, and we never shall know so much but what we can learn something more.

Jane.—Will any of these boys ever be great men?

Mother.—These boys and girls are soon to be the leaders of the Nation. Its destiny will soon rest in their hands. It is for them to say whether they will be great and honored, and the nation prosperous and happy.

Jane.—Have we commenced a life which will never end?

Mother.—Yes, my child. you have commenced an existence which is never to terminate. You are always to live. This earthly life is the commencement, and by the beautiful law of change, it is continued in spirit life. All we learn here, we shall not have to learn there.

MARRIAGE.

Mary —Mother, we have been talking about getting married. What do you think of it?

Mother.—It is all well enough to marry, if you only marry right.

Mary.—I shall marry for money—that is right enough for me.

Rose.—Well, I shan't; I shall marry to be useful in life. That is the way God has designed us to live. That is according to nature. The Bible says, God created them male and female, and desired they should live together.

Viola.—I shall marry for love. I think love ought to be the ruling element. If we get love, we can work for money; but if we marry for money, it is hard working for love, and sometimes hard to get it.

Mother.—You have all expressed your opinions freely, and I am glad to hear it. Now I will express

mine. Young people often make a very light thing of marrying, and often have but one object in view. You should count the cost.

Mary.—It don't cost but little to get married, only enough to pay the priest, and that John will pay; he is rich.

Mother.—You may think, my daughter, it costs more, when you have tried it awhile. There are many things to be considered in a contract for life. If you marry only for money, riches often take wings and fly away. If there is no love only that bought with money, when poverty comes in at the door, love flies out at the window.

Rose.—I wish to take a sensible view of life, and look to all its duties and responsibilities. We cannot expect all sunshine. It takes many things to make up life; many joys and many sorrows.

Mother.—Yes, my daughter. You take a very rational view of things. I am happy to see you so reflective. Things put on such a false appearance in this world, we hardly know what we are dealing with. All certainly wish to do well, but they differ in opinion and in judgment. It is very important that those who are going to marry, should study each other's disposition; if they have a mild, kind disposition, be careful to keep it so by your kindness to them. Remember "a continual dropping will wear away a stone."

Viola.—I think love is the lever that will eventually move the world. Love smooths all the rough places of life, calms all the stormy tempests, subdues the most stubborn, obstinate will—covers all imperfections—drives away all fear and jealousy—cheers us up under all sorrow and misfortune—harmonizes all conflicting elements, and makes a heaven on earth. That is the way I wish to live, and if I wish to be loved, I will try and make myself lovely.

Mother.—Well, my daughter, I rejoice in your decision. You have chosen the good part which may never be taken from you. God grant all your desires may be realized.

Mary.—I don't agree with Viola. She thinks love will do all things. I suppose she would be willing to marry a beggar for love. I think I will marry John. I don't like him very well, he is not very agreeable; then I don't think he has a very good disposition. He is rather old, and he is not handsome, but he is rich and there is no living in this world without money, you know. I don't like to work very well or very hard; I can then live at my ease, spend all the money I want, and if John scolds, I can scold back, and if we have a fuss now and then, it won't make much difference, only keep up appearances and put on a smooth face when any one comes in. Rich men, you know, are apt to be very close, and if he scolds because I spend so much

money, I will provoke him to do something, then I will apply for a divorce. You know the law gives a bounty on a woman being ugly. A good wife can have only the use of one-third of her husband's property, even when he is dead, and nothing while he is alive, only what he sees fit to give her—not even if she earned it all. The law says she has a claim on one-third; let her apply for a divorce and she will get her third, and she can do what she pleases with it, and get rid of her old man to take care of.

Mother.—My daughter, you know this is a world of probation. We are all compelled to take the consequences of our own deeds.

Rose.—I am more and more convinced we should live to be useful, not only to seek our own happiness but the happiness of those around us, and if we profess to believe in justice, we must practice it. As I look upon life, I am convinced that true marriage is the highest and best form of human society, and that the duties and responsibilities connected therewith, best prepare us for usefulness here, and for enjoyment in the life hereafter.

Seba.—Mother, I have been listening to hear you, and Rose, and Mary and Viola talk about getting married, and I have come to the conclusion that it is not best to marry. It is safest living in single blessedness. This losing one's individuality, and I might say, identity, I don't think much of. While unmar-

ried you are free; your time, your talents, your earnings, are all your own. As soon as you are married, your identity is lost in the person of your husband; he is the legal owner of your time and the avails of it; you are entitled simply to food and clothing. You may be clothed in purple and fine linen—that depends on the kindness of your husband. And that is not all—a married woman has no children—they all belong to her husband; he can bind them out, give them away, appoint guardians at his death, and all without her consent; and when he dies, then comes the wormwood and the gall. The faithful wife and patient mother is entitled to the *use of one-third*, if she has any children, and that she cannot dispose of! Although she may have earned or inherited every cent of the property, it is no longer hers. Hence, this is in effect, a bounty paid for not having children, or committing crime by destroying them! The childless are invested with rights of property which are wholly denied to those who have children. If that is what you call justice in the marriage relation, I do not care to invest in it. Counting up all the cost, as mother says, I think not best to marry.

Mother.—My children, this is an age of individualization. We must gain all the knowledge we can, and try to make the best use of it. The trials of life are many and severe, but we need the discipline to

develop us as perfect men and women. This life is only our primary school; these are only our first lessons of life. If we only study to be wise, we shall come out all right. It takes many storms and many tempests to make the tree grow strong and its foundation firm. We are only just commencing to live, and we have a long eternity in which to develop.

HELPING GOD.

John.—Can poor, weak humanity help God, who is all power?

Teacher.—Yes, there are a great many ways in which we can help God. When a man makes two blades of grass grow where only one grew before, he helps God, and blesses humanity by increasing the beauty and productiveness of creation.

John.—Is it helping God, to make the trees beautiful and the world good?

Teacher.—Can there be a higher aim or diviner purpose in human life than to help God in all His ways and works; to help him point mankind by the colors of heaven to a life of purity and love? Can life be consecrated to a more worthy purpose?

John.—But does God need the help of mortals to accomplish his plans?

Teacher.—God gives the raw material, but leaves to man the task of working it up.

John.—How is that?

Teacher.—Where the florist, by his careful culture, changes the simple wild rose into all the variety and beauty of those queenly flowers, which crown with their loveliness and perfume, the month of June, he helps God unfold the possibilities which are hidden by the wayside blossoms.

John.—But is not God's work a spiritual work?

Teacher.—Yes, all things are spiritual. When the gardener takes a rough piece of ground and transforms it into a smooth lawn, with short, shining turf, handsome shrubs, winding walks, blooming flowers and sparkling fountains, he has been helping God and humanity, just as truly as though he had converted a soul.

John.—Is there no difference between physical work and spiritual work?

Teacher.—Yes there is a difference, and yet there is such an intimate and divine relationship between the physical and the spiritual that when you help one you help both. So that whoever helps man helps God.

John.—Does not God require of us special worship of himself?

Teacher.—Every farmer who reclaims a swamp, every one who, with flowers and trees and green

grass, beautifies an unsightly place ; every child who tends a vine in the garden, is a partner with God in making glorious and lovely this sublime temple of the universe.

John.—Does not God require of us a greater work than to help beautify this world ?

Teacher.—Not only does man help God by adding to the beauty of this world, but he assists in increasing its fruitfulness and its use. Man cultivates and develops nature, and enhances the value of her products.

John.—Do science and invention aid God and humanity in spiritual things ?

Teacher.—Yes, God gives the human body, and we clothe and ornament it ; God gives us two feet and we add to this primal means of locomotion the steamship and the railroad car ; God gives two hands, and we multiply them by endless and intricate machinery, until they spin and weave, with marvelous dexterity, various fabrics and forms.

John.—Are we co-workers with God in all that we do ?

Teacher.—Certainly we are. God gives the eye ; we supplement it by the microscope, searching the mysteries of life ; the telescope, unfolding the wonders of space. God gives thought ; we train and discipline it, and organize it into science ; we print it in books ; we discover by it elemental forces which,

with the speed of lightning, transmit our ideas across continents and under seas. Thus are we co-workers with God, filling this world with use and beauty. As in nature, man must help God before all its beauties are unfolded, so in moral and physical things.

John.—Then God cannot win battles unless we fight under his banner.

Teacher.—No, the divine kingdom will not come, except through human endeavors. Whenever we strive for right; whenever we stand for truth, or encourage virtue or goodness; whenever we think a high thought, speak a noble word, do a worthy deed, we help God. Help him make man better, help him spread truth and righteousness, help him bring in the reign of peace and love.

John.—But we are weak mortals, and can do but little.

Teacher.—We may think we are weak, but there is a spot somewhere we can keep bright—a heart somewhere we can comfort—a child somewhere we can guide and teach. What an ennobling thought, that we are co-workers with God; that our faithfulness makes us true noble men and women in this life.

DIFFERENCE IN OPINION.

Ida.—What is the use in toiling all one's lifetime to get a living? I don't believe in it. Father is rich, and he can support me without work. Let Minnie work; she is not as pretty as I am. It won't hurt her for she is homely. There is no use in my soiling my hands. People say I am handsome, and a gentleman told me the other day, I was a perfect doll. I can study French and Latin, and play on the piano, and be admired, and marry some rich nabob some day. Let those work who are obliged to—I shan't.

Minnie.—Somebody must work, and I feel proud of being able and willing to make myself useful. It is the meanest thing I can think of, to wish others to do for us what we are ashamed or unwilling to do for ourselves. Ida is handsome; what has she to boast of? Who made us to differ?—and beauty is but skin deep after all.

Katie.—I do not see as nature is very partial after all. If Ida has the beauty, Minnie has the good sense, which is much more to be admired. Who does not admire one who has a kind, loving heart; ready to grant to others all they ask for themselves; willing to make sacrifices cheerfully for the good of others; loving to learn all that is useful; and who tries to make the best use of what they learn, and do good because they love to be good.

Julia.—I do not think it is best to go to extremes, neither all work nor all play, for we have three natures to care for—physical, intellectual and spiritual. Physical—take good care of your health; intellectual—lay up a good store of useful knowledge; spiritual—which is wisdom—study to be wise, for “wisdom’s ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace.”

SPIRITUAL FREEDOM.

Mary.—Mother, what is the meaning of “spiritual freedom,” that I hear you so often speaking about?

Mother.—It means the breaking down of those distinctions which are now kept up as walls of partition between man and his brother; and in their stead shall arise a new social structure, in which peace, freedom, and social equality shall be the ruling elements; when man, in his enlarged individual selfhood, shall be a law unto himself, with a full and practical recognition of the brotherhood of the race.

Mary.—What will accomplish all this?

Mother.—Nothing short of Spiritualism, in its broadest application, can raise man from his present plane of antagonism and intolerance, to so high and godlike a position, in the earth-life. It is the religion of freedom.

Julia.—Can we believe what the God within us cannot comprehend?

Mother.—No. Spirits are endeavoring to free the mind from the traditionary legends of the past, and the accumulated rubbish of ages, thus laying the foundation of the truly magnificent edifice of reason and science.

Julia.—Do not spirits teach us that all things in their time are right?

Mother.—Yes, but the law of progress forbids that the soul should slumber on in peaceful rest, satisfied with the beliefs of yesterday.

Julia.—Is light breaking in upon the human mind, and do all trials forward us in wisdom and knowledge?

Mother.—Not one ray of sunlight has ever fallen upon the world; not one frozen flake of snow has ever come down from the clouds; not one joy has come to the human heart, out of place; not one sorrow has borne down the human soul, without its use; not a truth has ever reached the human mind, out of time and place; not one error has prevailed, but existed in obedience to the law that gave it birth and being.

Julia.—Has the world always been in error and ignorance?

Mother.—Yes, but it has gained strength in the meantime, to rise in might and gain the victory.

Julia.—But has the world always rejected its saviors, and those who taught higher truths?

Mother.—Jesus taught the truth; so did Thomas Paine, but the world was not ready for them. It had not gained the condition necessary to adopt their truth, and so it slumbered on.

Mary.—Is there a clearer recognition of the truth to-day than ever before?

Mother.—Yes, and so far as we are able to perceive it, it is our duty to accept and live up to it. The glory that awaiteth the world, surpasseth the understanding of man. Earth will be changed to heaven, and heaven to earth, and love that “worketh no ill to his neighbor,” will become the law.

Julia.—Do all hope to reach the kingdom of eternal glory?

Mother.—Yes, this is the natural expectation of all mankind. What is heaven, my child? Did you ever ask yourself the question? If so, have you not shuddered to think that you despise the ways of heaven in every selfish act, in every ungenerous thought?

Mary.—Would there be any heaven to us, while we are selfish, to be suddenly transported to an abode where all is purity and love?

Mother.—No, my child, there is no other heaven but such as we make ourselves. What a field for labor is this world, wherein we may build ourselves a heaven

daily. How innumerable are the ways of doing good; how blessed are the rewards of such doing: and yet, few that try to do more than what the world calls duty; how few love humanity as Jesus did—a love that makes them turn from all the honors of this world, for the sake of doing good in the humble walks of life, as he did.

Julia.—When men see the door that opens into heaven, will they enter therein?

Mother.—Remember you can never reach heaven in any other way than by building it up within yourself. That is the only way to reach the abode of bliss.

Julia.—Will not changing worlds take us there?

Mother.—Changing worlds will not take you there. You must make your own heaven by doing good because it is right, and for your own happiness. Remember this, and hasten to do thyself good, and be thankful that the ways are so many by which we can do it.

Julia.—Mother, why do the churches complain of Spiritualism?

Mother.—Because they do not understand it. Their prejudices are so great that they will not investigate. They are blinded by error, and do not see the truth, and they fear to come to the light, lest their creeds should be found in error, and their ignorance reproved.

Julia.—They say because we have no creed, we have nothing to build upon.

Mother.—The truth is, our foundation is too broad for them to reach round it; our religion too expansive for sectarians to circumscribe. Because Spiritualism is not local and dogmatic, does it follow that angel teachings signify nothing?

Mary.—Is the march of mind onward and upward?

Mother.—Yes, and the ball is rolling; and whoever dares put forth his hand to stop it, will be crushed by it.

Julia.—They say evil spirits communicate.

Mother.—So do evil men, but we are not bound by their councils. Shall we repudiate the post office because evil men mail letters? Men have evil creeds but we need not be bound by them.

Mary.—Is good positive and truth eternal?

Mother.—Yes; strange thoughts are finding their way from lips unaccustomed to uttering new ideas. These thoughts are startling the dreamy world. For time the human heart stands still, listens and wonders; a voice like the voice of God comes, saying, "Be not afraid, for I am speaking."

Julia.—Will the brave and the true take heart?

Mother.—Yes, and be thankful for courage and light.

Mary.—But what will the cowards do?

Mother.—They will listen and turn away, saying “These things may be true, but the world is not ready for them yet.”

Julia.—Was the world ever ready for a new truth? Was there ever a time when the independent thinker was not branded as an infidel?

Mother.—No, there never was a time when conservatism and old fogysm, in both politics and religion, did not stoutly oppose all reformation, condemn, and if they had the power, crucify the world’s reformers.

Mary.—Will the time come when the truth-seeker may learn of nature, and translate her laws, free from the influence of sectarian dogma, and the tyranizing power of priestcraft?

Mother.—Yes, we hope so; but new ideas always come too soon for the convenience of old ones. Socrates told the truth too soon; the Athenians were not ready to put away their idols, and worship at the shrine of scientific truth; the philanthropic Jesus spoke the truth quite too soon, for the good opinion of the Jews.

Julia.—Did all the ancients suffer persecution, that told a new truth?

Mother.—Yes; Galileo subjected himself to the scorn and derision of the religious bigots of his day, to dungeon and to death, by not waiting their time.

Luther sowed the seeds of sedition too soon. The

mother church was not ready to hear her darling dogmas denounced. Our Puritan fathers put forth their noble efforts to establish independence, all too soon for the accommodation of George the Fourth. The Quakers, Baptists and Methodists, all preached their new doctrines too soon to avoid suffering and persecution.

Mary.—Is it not strange that the fanatics will disturb the quiet of the world?

Mother.—Franklin sent forth his kite and questioned the lightning, but the righteous world denounced the blasphemer; they were not ready to hear a man talk of saving buildings, that God in his wrath had destined to be destroyed by fire.

Julia.—Is it not a pity Franklin was born so soon by a hundred years? Now the lightnings of heaven are running along countless wires, praising and glorifying his name.

Mother.—Fitch and Fulton were fanatics. They told steam stories long before the people could comprehend them. Andrew Jackson Davis proclaimed the doctrine of Spiritualism quite too soon; the Christian world, all alarmed, cries, "Hold! hold! you demolish our hell and our devil, and what have we left, with which to scare people into goodness, right and truth." Notwithstanding their cry, that spirits cannot come, they intuitively know that spirits do communicate,

and that their mission is to demolish all crafts and isms in the wide world.

Mary.—They seem to be already terribly frightened, lest Spiritualism succeed.

Mother.—Yes, but the end is not yet ; their private sanctuaries will be invaded, their golden gods will be demolished, their darling dogmas will be taken away, and, with soul unmasked, they will be compelled to listen to the beautiful truths of Spiritualism ; learn its laws and obey its divine requirements.

Julia.—Will not changing worlds take us to heaven ?

Mother.—Changing worlds will not take you there. You must make your own heaven by doing good because it is right, and for your own happiness. Remember this, and hasten to do thyself good, and be thankful that the ways are so many by which you can do it.

Julia.—Mother, why do the churches complain of Spiritualism ?

Mother.—Because they do not understand it. Their prejudices are so great that they will not investigate. They are blinded by error, and do not see the truth, and they fear to come to the light, lest their creeds should be found in error, and their ignorance reproved.

Julia.—But Christians are not ready for this terrible overthrow ; they say, “perhaps spirits do commu-

nicate, but we are not ready to listen to their teachings, and, besides, it is not popular to be a Spiritualist." What then is to be done?

Mother.—If popularity is to be the guide rather than truth and right, nothing can be done but to hush the voice of reason—be false—live a lie—bow like the veriest of menial before the merciless task master, public opinion—put on the strait jacket of the law—put a seal to your lips, and fetters upon the soul, and sit down quietly and contentedly, and wait the world's time for the advent of peace, justice, freedom and truth, and see how you will come out. Sluggards will only do this. Humanity's progress is as certain as its life and growth. Angel friends will aid in the world's advancement, and the ultimate triumph of spiritual freedom to all.

The Seeds and the Sowers.

Ever so little the seed may be,
 Ever so little the hand,
But when it is sown it must grow, you see,
And develop its nature, weed, flower or tree;
The sunshine, the air and the dew are free
 At its command.

If the seed be good, we rejoice in hope
 Of the harvest it will yield;
We wait and watch for its springing up,
Admire its growth and count on the crop
That will come from the little seeds we drop
 In the great wide field.

But if we heedlessly scatter wide
 Seeds we may happen to find,
We care not for culture or what may betide,
We sow here-and-there on the highway side—
Whether they've lived or whether they've died,
 We never mind.

Yet every sower must one day reap
 Fruit from the seed he has sown.
How carefully, then, it becomes us to keep
A watchful eye on the seed, and seek
To sow what is good, that we may not weep
 To receive our own!

CHAPTER III.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN AUNT CHLOE AND HER
NEPHEW AND NIECE—THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE
—A CONVERSATION—BENEVOLENCE—A SURE
GUIDE.

A CONVERSATION BETWEEN AUNT CHLOE AND
HER NEPHEW AND NIECE.

Aunt Chloe.—Emery and Anna, what of these reforms that are making so much stir in the world.

Emery.—Aunt, what reform is it you are so alarmed about?

Aunt Chloe.—It is said there are many reforms—there is the Land reform, the School reform, the temperance reform, the Women's Rights reform and many others.

Anna.—Aunt, what would you have us do here in this back corner of creation?

Aunt Chloe.—Why, we must lay hold of some wheel and push or pull, and try to keep out of the way, for the machine is drawn by attraction, of no less power than God Almighty, and stay it we cannot, for it is destined to cover the world; the multitude now clog the wheels and throw it off the track,

but by some unseen power it flies back and on it goes right over them.

Emery.—Well, and if the reform must go on where can we get hold to do the most good? It occurs to me, that self reform would be the most effectual, that is propelled by the power of the will, and we can keep a share of that ourselves.

Aunt Chloe.—People are getting to be mighty generous these days, they give away all of their reforms; there is neighbor A, he talks about Land reform, but how will he get at it? If you give young men all their land, and they have nothing to do to earn it, it will encourage them to be idle; he is honest in thinking they had better work and get it as he did, so he is behind the times, and he must be reformed. Neighbor B, he talks about the School reform; he thinks it would all be well enough if it would do any good, but learning is so cheap now, the manner of instruction so easy, and all paid at the expense of the public, that their time seems worth nothing to them, so they idle it away, and when it becomes necessary to write a letter, they must go to their grandmother to know how to spell! He thinks if they had to do as he did—go to work and roll up their log school houses; raise grain to pay their teacher, and study their lessons by fire-light, they would prize their learning more. So he is behind the times, and he

must be reformed. Neighbor C, he talks about woman's rights; he thinks the women have all the rights they are entitled to, and if they had any more, there would be no living with them. Mrs. C says she has all the rights she wants, and she don't know but everybody else has as many as she has, at any rate, she don't care to trouble herself about her neighbor's affairs, so you see they are all behind the times and must be reformed.

Anna.—Aunt, have you learned any more about those reforms you was telling us about last week?

Aunt Chloe.—Yes, the world is all alive with reform, women know more than the men; wives more than their husbands; children more than their parents, and the niggers more than the white folks! When I was young there was not such a fuss about woman's rights, the women they cooked the victuals, washed the clothes, spun and wove, tended the babies, obeyed their husbands, read the bible and psalm book, went to meeting on Sunday and helped pay the preacher, and that was enough, they did not think for themselves as they do now-a-days, the preacher told them what to do, and they did it. Paul said, "if a woman would know anything let her ask her husband at home."

Emery.—Aunt, don't you think there is need of reform?

Aunt Chloe.—What kind of reform?

Anna.—A religious reform.

Aunt Chloe.—A religious reform! a reform in religion! horrible! how absurd! Religion is the same, yesterday, to-day and forever. There is no new thing in religion, but there is need of a revival.

Emery.—You mean revive up the old one, do you? What do you call a revival?

Aunt Chloe.—Why, repent of your sins, get religion and prepare to go to heaven.

Anna.—Aunt, where do you suppose heaven is? Christ said, "the kingdom of heaven is within you."

Aunt Chloe.—I never saw anything like it! how inquisitive people are getting to be now-a-days, they must know all the whys and wherefores about a thing

Emery.—And is that the reform?

Aunt Chloe.—What, everybody speak for themselves, think for themselves and act for themselves; that would be a mighty reform, and what would become of the priests, they would have nothing to do.

Anna.—Oh yes, Aunt, enough to do, if they only had a mind to do it.

Aunt Chloe.—What is it?

Anna.—Work in nature's garden—sow the seed of love—pull up the weeds of discord, and pick the fruit of harmony.

Aunt Chloe.—That is very appropriate business for the servants of the Lord, but who will do it.

Emery.—All true reformers.

Aunt Chloe.—That certainly looks rational. I know we read the time would come when the lion and the lamb would lie down together.

Anna.—Is not that the Millenium the church has prayed for so long.

Aunt Chloe.—What! the Millenium come and the church not know it? Can we have a millenium, and no judgment before hand?

Emery.—Yes, everybody judges themselves; you know Christ said, “out of thine own mouth will I judge thee.”

Aunt Chloe.—And there is the work of saving souls, that is the work of the church; they have been laboring and praying many years, that God would in his own set time favor Zion, and bring all to a knowledge of the truth.

Anna.—Well, I think their God will be angry with them for teasing him so long, to do what he has told them to do.

Aunt Chloe.—But we must pray with submission and wait God's time. He will in his own good time favor Zion. The church must do that work, if it is done at all; other societies may be good in their place,

if they have any place, but "God will be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do these things for them," so says the servant of the Lord.

Emery.—If they have labored and prayed so many years and have not liberated one poor sinner from his past sins, I am afraid it will never be done.

Aunt Chloe.—Don't you suppose God loves the church?

Anna.—Yes, *his* church.

Aunt Chloe.—Who do you call his church?

Emery.—All that love to do good to their fellow men, and do unto others as they would have others do unto them.

Aunt Chloe.—Without signing any creed? That would be a queer church, and no church at all.

Anna.—Aunt, have you learned any more about those reforms?

Aunt Chloe.—Yes, they are getting up a reform in religion. I supposed religion would endure for eternity without change.

Emery.—Yes, Aunt, there are a great many kinds of religion.

Aunt Chloe.—A great many kinds of religion! What do you mean by that? Would you say there are a great many ways to get to heaven? There is only one way and that is through Jesus.

Anna.—Yes, Aunt, we make our own heaven or hell.

Aunt Chloe.—What ! make your own heaven, and no Jesus as your saviour? You scare me. You are all getting to be infidels !

Emery.—Infide', that is nothing, only a person who does not accept your notion of things, that is all.

Aunt Chloe.—Well, well, I think these reforms have swallowed up everything—heaven and hell, God and the devil ; they make heaven out to be nothing but a condition, and hell no where, only a guilty conscience, and God no person, only the life of all things, dwelling in all things ; and the devil they have buried and preached his funeral sermon, and we have nothing left now to worship but humanity.

Anna.—Oh yes, Aunt ; God is in humanity.

Aunt Chloe.—The Bible says man was made in the image of God ; but you say God is made in the image of man, or that we imagine our own God.

Emery.—Yes, Aunt ; God is our highest ideal of goodness, benevolence and purity.

Aunt Chloe.—Is that all the God there is, in your opinion ? The Bible says God is in heaven, sitting on a great white throne, and Jesus at his right hand and all the world will be brought up before him to judgment, and he will say unto the righteous, "Come thou blessed, sit on my right hand," and to the wicked, "Depart, ye cursed ; go on the left hand, into

everlasting torments prepared for you before the foundation of the world."

Anna.—What, before they had committed any actual transgression?

Aunt Chloe.—Yes, God elected some to everlasting life, and others to everlasting destruction.

Emery.—Without any merit or demerit of their own?

Aunt Chloe.—Does not the Bible say, "Hath not the potter power over the clay, to make one vessel to honor and another to dishonor?"

Anna.—Then if God made us just what we are, whose fault is it?

Aunt Chloe.—Oh, this carnal reason, to pry into the mysteries of God.

Emery.—What is reason given us for? Should we not use it?

Aunt Chloe.—Yes, when you transact business of this world; in agriculture, in mechanism, in science and in arts; but not in religion. You must take that on faith.

Anna.—Then you would have us go blind in religion.

Aunt Chloe.—No, take God's word, the Bible; that will tell you all you need to know.

Emery.—But God never wrote any book; God's word is everywhere, and all things speak of the wisdom of the Creator.

Aunt Chloe.—Dare you say the Bible is not God's word?

Anna.—Oh yes, Aunt; there are a great many Bibles; they all have some truth, and all truth is God's word.

Aunt Chloe.—I think you must be good chemists; you have analyzed all things down to nothing; and now you would make the Bible out only a history of past events.

Emery.—Oh no, Aunt, there are some prophecies of future events, and some traditional myths in the bible.

Aunt Chloe.—Oh children, if we throw away the Bible, we have nothing left to guide us! We shall be worse than the heathen! We are dependent on that for all our civilization.

Anna.—No, Aunt, science makes civilization. All the improvements of this nineteenth century are the product of science and human energy.

Aunt Chloe.—But that is in worldly things. You must not mix worldly things with religion.

Emery.—But science makes bibles every few generations—makes a new one or alters the old one; this generation has found over twenty thousand mistakes in our Bible, that modern Christians boast of.

Aunt Chloe.—Well! well! it is said that old things would pass away, and all things become new, and I am beginning to think it will be so, for they do

say that the dead come back and talk to folks, and tell them about things in the other world.

Anna.—Yes, Aunt, the angels have come, the gates of heaven are open, they have come to teach us to dispense with all forms and ceremonies, and live in spirit and in truth.

Aunt Chloe.—That does look like the time that Jesus talked about, “when all shall know the Lord from the least to the greatest, and the saints shall possess the whole earth.”

PART SECOND.

Emery.—Aunt, we have come again to talk about these reforms.

Aunt Chloe.—Well, they have got up a reform in religion, and they throw away the Bible. That book is all we have to guide us in this world, and teach us concerning the next. It tells us how the world was made, how God created man and all things, and pronounced it all very good.

Anna.—Yes, and the Bible says, too, it repented God that he had made man, and it grieved him to the heart.

Aunt Chloe.—You must not doubt the Bible; remember he that doubts is damned. The Bible says Adam had two sons, Cain and Abel; that God respected Abel and his offering, but Cain and his offering he did not respect; and Cain got angry with

Abel, his brother, and killed him; and the Lord was angry with Cain, and set a mark upon him, that others finding him might not kill him. Some people say God cursed him and made him black, but the negro says he scared him and turned him white.

Anna.—But who was there to kill him when he had killed Abel, and he was the only one left!

Aunt Chloe.—My child, the Bible does not say who would execute the Lord's vengeance, and we must not be wise above what is written. The Bible says Cain went to the land of Nod and got him a wife.

Emery.—How could he find him a wife in the land of Nod, or any other place, when Cain and his parents were the only people on earth?

Aunt Chloe.—You must not query with the Bible. Remember it is God's truth; that is one of the mysteries; it is all given for our instruction, and were it not for the Bible, we should all be heathen.

Anna.—Heathen! who are heathen?

Aunt Chloe.—Those who do not worship the true God.

Emery.—Who worships the true God? Who knows what God is, or where? Who can comprehend him? Then are we not all heathen?

Aunt Chloe.—The Bible says God is a spirit, and dwells in light, and no man hath seen God at any time.

Anna.—Yes, but Jesus says, “They that have seen me have seen the Father, and they that love me, dwell in me, and I in them

Aunt Chloe.—So God dwells in all humanity, does he? Is that your religion?

Emery.—That is the new religion.

Aunt Chloe.—What do you call it?

Anna.—Spiritualism.

Aunt Chloe.—Spiritualism! what is that?

Anna.—The philosophy of Spiritualism embraces the whole domain of mind, including God, angels and mortals. It explains the relation of cause and effect—the naturalness, duality, oneness and divinity of life—the condition of spirit life, and the relations existing between mortals and all the higher states of existence. It demonstrates the future and eternal progress of the whole race; that the departed live; that man is immortal; that angels come as guardians and guides over the highways of earth; that death is but the door to eternity, where the departed wait to greet all earth’s wanderers home.

Aunt Chloe.—But has Spiritualism done any good?

Emery.—Yes, great good. It has brought heaven down to where we can understand it; it has brought hell up to where we can comprehend it; it makes the knave an honest man; it makes the oppressor a humane man; it makes the egotist a humble man; it makes the cross and unkind husband and father a

kind and affectionate man; it makes the child loving and obedient to its parents; it makes the drunkard a sober man; it makes the bad good, and the good better; it makes one universal family of God's children; it inspires us to do justly, love mercy, and walk humbly; in short, it brings heaven down to earth, and it raises earth up to heaven. Is not that doing good.

Aunt Chloe.—Well, go on, and I will join you, heart and hand. Let your motto be, free and fraternal with all, responsible for none—conscience your creed—truth your search—the inculcation of spiritual graces your aim—the world your church—angels your ministers—God your great high priest, and the dawn of this harmonic age your hope for humanity.

THE NECESSITIES OF LIFE.

Emma.—How true that “life is real, life is earnest,” and each soul alone can know its own sorrows and conflicts.

Helen.—But where are our severest trials?

Emma.—Our severest battles are within ourselves, in the inner chamber of our being, where God and angels are our only witnesses.

Helen.—Then who is best prepared to judge us?

Emma.—An enlightened conscience is our only judge; or in other words, we judge ourselves.

Helen.—Are all our trials designed for our good?

Emma.—All these conflicts have some high and holy use, which we are often unable to see, but in good time they bring profitable lessons.

Helen.—Where are our deepest thoughts and emotions?

Emma.—Our deepest thoughts and emotions are hidden from human sight, and angels alone can see and administer the solace we sometimes need.

Helen.—Why should we be tormented with affliction?

Emma.—Every scene and event in life, however full of sorrow and affliction, has its influence on us, and that influence becomes a discipline which eventuates in our good.

Helen.—Should we live for ourselves alone?

Emma.—No, but for the highest good of all; for ourselves and others as one, yet we must be true to ourselves or we can be of little service to others, or of much value to society.

Helen.—How will suffering benefit us?

Emma.—Suffering will result in the harmonious growth of our individual selves, from the interior of our being, with outward unfoldment of our nature, so that on the calm brow of the suffering will play the pure light of charity and love.

Helen.—Will the honest, sincere soul ever feel condemnation?

Emma.—No, the true in heart, just in action, in-

nocent in soul, can never taste the bitterness of condemnation, because they have not deserved it; but they will love and trust humanity and the angels, and be happy, as will all who observe the great lessons which experience alone can impart.

Helen.—Do the highest spirits come to earth to teach us?

Emma.—The more refined spirits soar above the mass of mind in the earth's sphere; hence as knowledge is imparted to us, it must come through the lower order of intelligence. Were it given direct from the higher, we would be unable to understand it.

Helen.—Can we all understand alike?

Emma.—No! all minds measure according to their capacity and unfoldment.

Helen.—Is it strange then that persons reject whatever is beyond their own capacity?

Emma.—It is not strange. We measure all from our own standpoint; and judging from the surroundings, and thinking what we would do, we feel sure others would do the same. Thus from our plane we reflect our own shadow. When we understand the laws which govern all motives and actions, we shall blame less and strive the more to develop the good and true in man and woman.

Helen.—Does the spiritual mind discern more clearly than the earthly mind?

Emma —The spiritual recognizes the angel in every man, however vile in thought or vagabond in life; in every woman, however degraded or fallen in sinks of iniquity! "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, but the greatest of these is charity."

Helen —What religion do we most need?

Emma.—We want a religion that inculcates righteousness so universal and practical that every one can understand it. A religion that shows forth its usefulness by tangible good works.

Helen.—You mean one that the merchant can take with him to the counting room, and use it in all business transactions; one that the lawyer can take with him into court, refer to it as his law book, preventing him from defending the known guilty under promise of good pay; one that the farmer can take with him into the field as he follows the plough, and make him merciful to his beast; one that the mechanic can take with him into the shop, to make his work upon honor.

Emma.—There is just such a religion revealed to every one who will study the text book of his own nature.

Helen.—Is reflection necessary to mental and spiritual growth?

Emma.—When we reflect that we are progressive beings—that we can *know* nothing without mental labor; that whatever greatness we attain is only by

and through the growth of spirit, who will say we have no need of spiritual teachers?

Helen.—Are we all destined to progress?

Emma.—When our tottering infant feet were first moved on the long journey of life, we were helped; it may be by the humblest and ignorant.

Helen.—Then we can learn something from every one?

Emma.—Our untaught minds were tasked to call by name the first letters of the alphabet, and remember their characters; the infant foot, at first put forth with trembling, now steps firmly; and the mind that then knew not why it learned to call those letters and trace those dark and crooked outlines, now takes strong hold of thought, grapples boldly with principles, and aspires to teach the world eternal truths!

Helen.—Should we despise the day of small things?

Emma.—If then it is by the humblest aids, we are led on step by step to mental greatness, it is reasonable to conclude that spiritual greatness is similarly attained.

Helen.—Then we have need of, and should value every aid, however imperfect and insignificant it may seem, so that after attaining spiritual greatness, we cannot look back upon them and say we had no need of them.

Emma.—Is not the idea of mutual help a glorious thought?

Helen.—Yes, indeed; and what would poor humanity do without this reciprocating feeling of assistance, so heavenly and so human? Causing sunshine to enter and permeate so many human lives! But can we attain spiritual greatness all at once?

Emma.—No! no more than full physical growth can be reached in a day. All mental and spiritual attainments, in this world or any other world, must be by the law of growth and progress.

Helen.—So the first taste of spiritual life, perhaps, was imbibed from the simple teaching of a beautiful flower—a sweet child—or some other natural manifestation of nature and God!

Emma.—Yes, therefore the one that unfolds the little flower in this sphere, will ever continue to develop in life's higher stages of growth where forms are only visible to the spirit eye.

Helen.—Can man ever enter a sphere of life, without finding the representation of all the kingdoms of life below him?

Emma.—No! But the objector may ask, what use will there be in the spirit world for the lower forms of matter? I would ask of what use are they here, and of what use is man? Every form has its use, its sphere to fill, in the great panorama of life. If we

deny the eternal existence of any form, we have no assurance that the spirit of man is immortal, for if there is a law by which one spirit form can be destroyed, or pass away, the same law holds good in regard to man, and he too may be annihilated, or lose his identity, in passing to another condition of existence.

Helen.—Are we brought to the conclusion, then, that man is immortal?

Emma.—Spirit has ever existed, and through the countless ages of the past, has been active in unfolding various forms in the different spheres of life.

Helen.—Does the spirit form change like the body and crumble away?

Emma.—No! The action of mind or spirit in thought, according to growth, will continue to change, but its identity is eternally fixed.

Helen.—Will man be anything more or less than man, in spirit life?

Emma.—We know that by the laws of nature he will continue to uphold, to rise higher and higher in the scale of intelligence and moral brightness, but that changing his identity in passing into another form is impossible.

Helen.—Why should we prize life?

Emma.—Because of its manifold beauties, blessings, friendships, loves, and all the glorious realizations it promises in a never ending spirit existence.

Helen.—Can spirits aid and comfort us in suffering and woe?

Emma.—Yes, in communion with angels we can often receive aid and sympathy nowhere else found; they walk by our side—take us by the hand—wipe the tears from our eyes—sweep away the clouds gathering around death, and gladly welcome us to the land of the blest.

A CONVERSATION.

Fred.—Good morning, Frank. I have called to see you, to talk over matters generally, and have a nice time. I have been down to the Spiritualists' National Convention, at Richmond, Ind.; saw many nice people, and heard many smart speeches. I wish you could have been there; you might have heard some things to your advantage.

Frank.—I tell you how it is, Fred: I have no sympathy with Spiritualism or Spiritualists. They are a low, contemptible set of despicable hypocrites. They are trying to destroy all that is sacred in society—the Sabbath, and the Bible, and the God we worship. Their mediums are a set of wandering vagabonds, pretending to be controlled by spirits when it is the spirit of the devil from the infernal pit! The Bible says, Go not after them, nor follow them, nor bid them “God speed.” I profess to be a

Christian, and belong to the church; that is good enough for me. I feel it beneath the dignity of a gentleman, to condescend to investigate such low, miserable trash. None but half-shattered, brainless dupes will have anything to do with it. I would not risk my reputation to be seen in such company!

Fred.—You doubtless feel, my brother, that all are accountable to God and their own consciences, for the deeds done here in the body. Have you reflected that you, also, are responsible for disputing the revelation of spirits, without being able to successfully deny their claims to credulity? Have you really felt that in condescending to investigate the truths which are given from the spirit world, you would disgrace your Christian profession? You have condescended to disregard the philosophy of heaven and reject the outpouring of truth to your own soul. You have condescended to villify mediums, and slander those whom angels have chosen to give truth to their fellow men. You have chosen to stand upon your own supposed dignity, and you will learn that such a foundation is not safe, when you enter the pure spheres from which emanate the hallowed influence of angel purity and love. Have you a moral or religious right to deny the alleged facts which others, have discovered? Is it consistent with your faith and conscience, to repudiate the sincere and positive

testimony that Spiritualism is true, of those whose veracity you allow on all other matters? If you do not *know* they are mistaken, why do you pronounce it a delusion? If you have not the evidence of candid investigation, why do you reject the testimony of unimpeachable witnesses? You will be called upon, at the bar of your own conscience, impartial justice and truth, to decide this matter. You have a responsibility in the matter, and I hope you will meet it like a man.

Elder James.—Fred, do be patient with Frank; he is just as good as he possibly can be, considering his education and surroundings. Was he on a more elevated plane of life, his thoughts, feelings and aspirations, would be of a more elevated character. All communications take the shape of the vessel through which they flow. If his condition is low, low thoughts come to his mind. He is more to be pitied than blamed. As he becomes more pure, and better informed—less of the gross and more of the spiritual—he will be more in harmony with the divine. He will perceive that inner light that safely guides the pure in heart, and then he will learn to investigate all things before condemning any.

A CONVERSATION—PART SECOND.

James.—I have been out in the country, and saw them make garden, and I think we might have one.

Mother.—I have often thought of it, and wished we could have one. You know I am not well enough to work in the garden, and I did not suppose you was big enough.

James.—If you will go out and show me, I guess I can do the work. It may do you good to get out doors and take the fresh air.

Mother.—You must rake off the ground and bury the old bones and chips in one corner. Then we will get a man to spade up the ground.

James.—Yes, and I can lay out the beds, and sow the seeds as I saw them do it in the country. You get me a little hoe and shovel, mother, and I will try it.

Mother.—When I was a little girl and lived at home, we girls always made the garden after it was ploughed and harrowed. Father was so busy getting in the crops he could never spend time.

James.—Oh, how glad I am that you know how, so that you can show me, and we will have a nice garden now. I will sow the seeds if you will tell me what to sow.

Mother.—It makes me feel as if I was a girl again

to see such a nice garden, and work in one as I used to do.

James.—I will sow the peas in drills one side; make the middle into beds; tread out the paths, and leave a broad aisle all around the outside.

Mother.—Oh, James, how nice it is; I did not think you could do so well. This proves we never know what we can do until we try. But we have no corn or beans.

James.—There is a spot for them; it is very rich, and they will grow nice.

Mother.—You can put beans with the corn, and peas with the potatoes, so they will need no bushing. You can put peas on one side of the path and beans on the other, and when the early onions are pulled you can set out turnips.

James.—So we will have all kinds, won't we? I want plenty of beans, for they are good winter and summer, and it is so nice to have them for breakfast or dinner.

Mother.—Now, my little farmer, I feel proud of you. I see you have resolved to become a useful man, and I can hardly feel now that I am a widow.

BENEVOLENCE.

Mother.—My children, I have been thinking about benevolence. Can you tell me what it is? Susan, what do you call benevolence?

Susan.—There are many things called benevolence which do not seem to be that at all. Giving to the poor is called benevolence, but it is not so in all cases. Many are poor because they do not make good use of their time. Time is money when put to a good use. It is often the case, that the poor spend more idle hours than the rich, then they are not apt to be so saving. They are often extravagant and go beyond their means. They do not usually study economy. They often complain they cannot get lucrative employment; doubtless it is so in many cases. Then they have not the means to go into business, so they can help themselves.

Mary.—Mother, it is said by the Church, that giving money to send missionaries to the heathen is benevolence? But who are heathens? Those who do not understand the true God? Who does understand what God is? Who can comprehend God? Are we not then all heathen? If we send our money to the heathen, where shall we send it? If the heathen are those who do not believe in the bible,—what bible? Whose bible? There are a great many bibles; they all have some truth. All truth is God's bible. If the heathen are those who do not belong to the church,—which church? If the heathen are those who live in ignorance and superstition, are they not all about us? Who is free

from it? Shall we look to China for heathen? There are no heathen there. They have books from the smallest pamphlets up to an encyclopedia of five thousand volumes. Are they ignorant of religion? They follow Confucius; Jesus only reiterated his precepts. "Do unto others as you would that they should do unto you." It is not benevolence to send missionaries to them.

Clara.—Mother, it is called Christian benevolence to hire preachers to save souls. But whose soul is to be lost? and how and when are they lost? What is soul? Is it the covering of the immortal spirit? Then *can* it be lost? Are they lost from a knowledge of right from wrong? They never have found it; they need instruction; they are ignorant and undeveloped. But how can we be saved, and what shall we be saved from? What kind of salvation do we need, and how can we attain it? Is it not salvation from ignorance, to gain knowledge? Salvation from folly, to gain wisdom? Salvation from sin, to care to do wrong and learn to do right? Salvation from stupidity, to learn to think? Is it not true benevolence at least to ourselves to gain all the knowledge we can, and make the best use of it, and try to help others to do so?

Mother.—My children, it is no benevolence to bestow upon others that which costs us nothing; it

is no benevolence to do good to be seen or get the praise of others. There is no virtue in selfishness. Benevolence consists in being kind, loving and charitable to all, whether rich or poor; looking for the best good of all humanity; making sacrifices cheerfully for the good of others, and doing good because it's right, and for our own soul's good.

A SURE GUIDE.

On the great prairies of the far West, grows a little blossom called the "Compass Flower." You have seen a compass have you not, my little friends, with its needle always pointing northward? Like the needle of the compass, this little flower turns always to the North, never failing to guide the traveler aright; no matter how thick the clouds are, if he can find one of these little plants he is sure to find his way. Do you not think it nice to have such a little silent, pretty guide? I think so, and I think it very nice that you and I have a compass to guide, though not just like that little flower, but a better one, because it is always with us, and guides us just as truly. We do not call it "compass flower," we call it Conscience; and it tells us very surely which way to go. If we go where it guides, it always gives us its approval, and makes us happy; but if we go different from where it directs us, we always feel guilty and unhappy. Then let us take good heed to

our consciences, my little friends, that they may not condemn us.

CLOSING LYCEUM SONG.

AIR.—“*Crystal Fountain.*”

1

Our hearts are bound together,
A chain of chalice blooms,
Wooing the dews of heaven,
And rich in sweet perfumes
The skill of angel fingers
Combined the circlet fair,
And bade us be love's lillies,
The dusky earth shall wear.

2

We love our march and music,
Our banners bright unfurled,
Our lessons and our teachers,
And all the great wide world.
Our souls behold God's goodness
And blossom into prayer,—
Prayer which shall speak in actions
Of kindness everywhere.

3

We met with glances sparkling
To touch the skirts of Truth,
And plant the germs of wisdom
Along the banks of youth.
The brightly tinted roses
Will bless us bye and bye,
And our glad souls will wear them
Through death in victory.

4

We part, and may each member,
Wherever he may go,
Work for the poor and sinful,
But keep as pure as snow!
Our confidence is boundless,
For though we talk with men,
Angels will watch and guide us
Until we meet again.

Emma Tuttle.

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