

ESSENCE AND SUBSTANCE:

A TREATISE ON

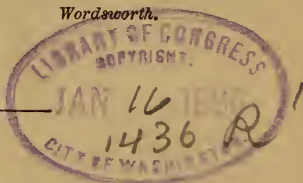
ORGANIC AND INORGANIC MATTER: THE FINITE AND
THE INFINITE: TRANSIENT AND ETERNAL LIFE.

BY WARREN CHASE.

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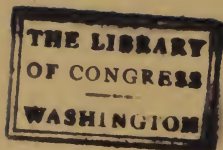
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"Our birth is but a sleep and a forgetting;
The soul that rises with us, our life's star,
Hath had elsewhere its setting,
And cometh from afar;
Not in entire forgetfulness,
And not in utter nakedness,
But, trailing clouds of glory, do we come
From God, who is our home."

Wordsworth.



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PREFACE.

IN presenting this little work to the public, I do not claim any discovery, for I am aware that other speakers and writers have given to the public in various fragmentary utterances most, if not all, of the views expressed herein; but I do it more to leave my testimony in a permanent form, since my lectures, not having been written, and seldom reported, are rarely to be seen in print; and as I am nearly through my earthly pilgrimage, I leave this a legacy of belief to my many friends.

WARREN CHASE.

INTRODUCTION.

As I need no introduction to my audiences, as a speaker, so this *brochure* will need no introduction, but pass on its own merits into, or through, the minds of those who read it:—

“Countless chords of heavenly music
Struck ere earthly time began,
Vibrate in immortal concord
To the answering soul of man;
Countless rays of heavenly glory
Shine through spirit, pent in clay,
On the wise men at their labors,
On the children at their play.
Man has gazed on heavenly secrets,
Sunned himself in heavenly glow,
Seen in glory, heard the music,—
We are wiser than we know.”

Charles Mackay.

ESSENCE AND SUBSTANCE.

CHAPTER I.

I SHALL start this treatise with a somewhat bold, and old, but incontrovertible assumption, which I accept as an axiom, viz., that whatever has one end must, necessarily, have two, whether measured in space or time, distance or duration. I shall adhere strictly to this as law throughout this treatise, and if I cannot find evidence sufficient to establish a belief in eternal life, with this law in full force, shall surrender the point, and still retain the demonstrated and fully established fact of the spiritual life, as a continuation of this life after the soul casts off the body. Certainly, proof of spiritual life is not more proof of its eternal duration than is the fact of this life proof in itself that we shall live always here.

My rule of measure, which determines ends from beginnings in all things, is certainly absolute and universal in all organic objects within the scope of scientific experiment and philosophic observation on our earth, and is apparent beyond it from the changes in planets also. The vegetable and animal kingdoms

each evidently revolves in its own sphere, and on its own axis, and in each every form that is born dies; every organization is disorganized sooner or later, and though some forms vastly outlive and out-measure us, yet none outlive our capacity to determine their ending; even the granite, the quartz, and the diamond must follow the law that produced them, and sooner or later the particles will be separated. Cohesion cannot forever bind any two or more particles of gross matter into a form; repulsion and segregation are as certain and absolute as attraction and aggregation.

If, then, this law holds good in each and every form of matter in the three kingdoms below,—or inferior to man, and is equally apparent in, and more rapid in, the physical and ponderable form of man, also,—what argument, evidence, or reason have we here that a spiritual or elemental body is started into form and being here, and in this shell, that was, or is, dependent on it for existence? It sets aside the law of its own creation, and that which governs all other forms, and its shell, and, defying time and decay, but not change, holds on to, and sets up, eternal life from that point; or, rather, a life with but one end,—for it could not be eternal if it had one end; even if it was like the old symbol of eternity, the snake, with its tail in its mouth, forever swallowing itself, and yet endless. I confess my inability to see the evidence from analogy, or to find it in testimony, that the spirit life, which grows out of this, if it starts here, is to continue forever after without being renewed and started again.

To me any theory or belief seems inconsistent and unreliable, however desirable, which teaches that the spirit or soul of man is made up from refined particles of matter from the earth, and cast in the human mold of form, and, when taken out of the mold, is perfect; or, being imperfect, becomes so, and is ever after indestructible, if not unchangeable. How a soul can be *refined* soil, or plant, or animal, and be no longer subject to the law that refined it, and ever governed both the forms and particles of which it was made, I cannot understand; but I can understand how the ignorant, bigoted, superstitious, and, often wicked, religious teachers would promise anything for their favorites and friends, and threaten any torments for enemies, and thus establish beliefs and creeds. The monarchy of Heaven and the tyranny of hell were little less inconsistent than the theory of unchangeable and endless life after death, — a never-ending song, and a never-ending Sabbath (of course, with preaching); but the time has come when rational minds must have some better evidence than Bible authority or creed doctrine. Faith and belief will not answer longer. We cannot accept the belief of a stupid dunce as evidence of its own truth, even if he assert that he has had his heart changed from nature to grace, and yet such, instead of philosophy, has been mainly the evidence not only of eternal life but of any life after death, as presented by the zealous Christians. Persons who, from their own vain imaginings, drag in a miracle to intercept natural law, and change the order of nature to secure their desires, are not worthy of notice, and, of

course, are born to be deceived by their own false delusions. Those who hang a hope of immortality on the love of life and dread of death will find the hope hanging on a slender thread, as likely to be clipped as it is in the animal kingdom, which shows equally strong love of life. To satisfy the reasoning mind, some more substantial and reliable evidence must be furnished; and I am not entirely satisfied with the testimony of spirits, for it seems often vague, unsettled, and speculative, and, to a great extent, like the beliefs of those who live here. Sound philosophy seems almost as rare with those spirits who communicate through mediums as with our public teachers, and we seldom get new principles or theories from them through mediums until they have been announced by some normal speaker or writer; but after such announcement in one place, they are often taken up by mediums far from the place, and who never saw or heard of them, and then, to many, seem original. A truth having been born into expression somewhere, it is, no doubt, accessible to many spirits, and by them carried far and wide, and given out in many new places. But I am also satisfied that many ideas given by normal speakers are from the spirit world when we do not recognize that as the source, and no doubt they often originate there, for it is evident that a large amount of impression and inspiration is received from spirits, and not credited.

I will not take up every argument in favor of immortality, and show the fallacy of each; but since belief and desire are the Christian's basis and foundation of nearly all, and these being NO reliable evi-

dence, I dispense with the whole of them at once. Claims of promise, by word of God and Bible authority, I do not consider worthy notice in a treatise of this kind, as they have no claims upon the standard of reason, nor hardly upon that of common sense.

Having cleared away and dispensed with the common arguments for immortality, I may as well state here that I believe in the eternal existence of every human being, and, of course, that includes the past as well as the future of conscious or unconscious individualized existence. I believe in it from evidences not embraced in the above, and in no wise conflicting with the axiom laid down at the start, and which I will endeavor to set forth as clearly as my control of language will allow.

CHAPTER II.

THE universe consists of two distinct ingredients, which I call ESSENCE and SUBSTANCE, or MIND and MATTER. The qualities, properties, and actions of each are distinct from the other, and yet they are blended throughout the universe. One originates motive, will-force, the other action-forms. Essence is simple, perfect, unchangeable, absolute, infinite, positive, masculine, is Law and God, and never increased or decreased in quantity, or changed in quality. Its highest manifestation in our world is in intelligence, which is ever exhibited in finite degree, and in accordance with the peculiar structure of the organic form through which it is exhibited in person to person. It may not be improper to term Essence law, since law is God, and God is law, and not love, as is so frequently asserted.

Substance is the covering of every germ of being, and the organic matter of every form; its very name denotes its inferiority,—*sub*, inferior or *under*, stance. It, too, is never increased or decreased in quantity, or in its simples changed in quality, but in combination and forms forever changing. In the simple cell that starts each organic being, essence is the germ, and substance is the covering, shell, globe, or globule; and the same is true of worlds as of these minute

globules with life in them. All germs of existence are of the Divine Essence, and clothed upon, or draw around them substance,—thus making forms, *all* of which change and decay. Substance is, of itself, inert; essence, never. Matter never exhibits inertia to us, because it is forever and everywhere connected with and impelled by, essence, or God, as the strongly religious and slightly intellectual world more properly say. All material which combines in forms of organic life is substance, and negative, and is everywhere and forever kept in motion; consequently, *no form* is of eternal duration, and no particle of substance forever in the same place, or same connection. All forms of outer being are ephemeral; all combinations of substance temporary; and hence all beings and things are changing and changeable, and *no form* eternal, whilst every particle, and simple part of every form, is eternal. Quantity and quality of essence and substance have never changed, and never can, neither can one ever supply the place of the other. Substance never becomes essence, essence never becomes substance.

In the gradations of matter, one kingdom feeds and supplies the forms of another,—mineral the vegetable, vegetable the animal, animal the human, human the spiritual; but in the volitions of soul or essence, one kingdom does not supply another, but each revolves in its own orbit, bringing out motion in the mineral, life in the vegetable, sensation in the animal, intelligence in the human, and harmony in the spiritual. Manifestations that are highest in one kingdom appear as lower in the next, which adds its own

peculiar feature,—thus life reappears in the animal, but does not come from the vegetable, and sensation reappears in the human, but does not come from the animal to the human. I use the terms high and low in this treatise as they are used in ordinary conversation, not because they exist in the *absolute*, but only in the relative. High and low are only the discrete or distinct degrees by which one condition is marked to designate it from another. What we call high and low might as well be reversed, and be as appropriate terms to respective conditions, as progression is only change. A horse with his four feet is perfect to the horse; a man, with only two, is imperfect; and so of each form of existence, which, to itself, is highest. To the infinite there is no high or low, good or bad; hence, of course, what we call progression is only change. 'There is no general law by which to distinguish high from low, certainly not by length or duration of form, or, if so, rocks and trees have superiority over animals and man in the aggregate. It is not yet certain what is the general duration of spirit forms, since we have but recently ascertained for a certainty that such really exist, and are a continuation of human life and form in bodies composed of sensation which seems to enter but slightly into the composition of their bodies, if it is to be found at all in them, but which is a part of the universe of substance as much as that which composes these bodies.' Experiments have not yet been successful in establishing the nature and composition of the materials that compose spirit bodies, but no doubt will be in time; but there is certainly no proba-

bility that any discovery will be made that will prove these materials are not subject to the general law of change of partners as particles of matter, and consequent aggregation and segregation, or life and death of forms, to which law essence is not subject, and consequently when a tree dies its soul does not die, —its *form* dies; the life which was with that form is as real after as before its death, and is not even changed, only the shell that for a time surrounded it has dropped off, while the real tree, so far as life is concerned, remains as permanent as before its death, and before it had the covering of earthy matter. The soul germs of all organic bodies exist forever, and before and after the forms are put on and off. They are never seen, for only substance, and that only in combination, is visible as a form. Reduced to its simples, substance is out of the reach of mortals, if not of spiritual vision. Substances cohere and produce all the varieties of compound forms. Essences are individual sovereignties; the essence of a tree is forever a tree; the essence of a horse is forever a horse; the essence of a man is forever a man,—each absolute or eternal, whether clothed upon by form in matter or not. All germs of being are of and in God, a part of the Divine Mind of the universe, which, in part and whole, is eternal and unchangeable. Every human being is eternally human; never sinks below or rises above its grade or sphere of being; but may sink or float on, or in, its kingdom, and rise to the top or sink to the bottom of its kingdom, but can never be an animal nor a *winged* angel, but may be an angel without wings, for such are human, as the

term embraces all forms that were within its physiological law. No human soul germ ever was or ever will be any other than a human soul germ, sometimes with, and sometimes without, a material form or clothing in substance, and sometimes with an imperfect, and sometimes with a perfect, one; and ever with corresponding faculties, powers, expressions, and sufferings or enjoyments,—all of which pertain to, and are uttered in and through, the form. Essential existence is eternal existence, and is the divine life that was and is, and is to be forever the same perfect, pure, holy, and unchangeable “yesterday, today, and forever” the same. Man is individualized in essence, hence is immortal; he involuntarily and unconsciously secretes and combines substance in form, which is forever the human form, and could be no other with or without will, because such is the form of the essence,—soul germ.

Immortality and identity of being exist only in essence and germ, never in substance or material compound. The one *essential*—a divine property, life, of the soul—remains intact through all changes of clothing and variations of combination which make up the complicated and ever-changing matter that robes the soul germ during its eternal life; for, as it is divine, it partakes of the divine perfection. Immortality of essence exists equally in the animal and vegetable kingdoms as in the human, and each is, and must, be robed in material forms upon its own plane of being. Plants must forever be plants if they have forms, and horses must ever be horses if the soul germ have a form, and each form must live

upon, and in, its own element and aliment; and as horses, cattle, and swine would be greatly out of place in the elegant parlors of man and woman on earth, so they would be much more out of place in the still more elegant homes of the spirit life to which man is so appropriately fitted both in form and feeling. That the spirit world has trees and plants, and flowers, and birds, and beasts, is evident from the testimony of nearly all spirits that communicate to us from that life; but their forms, evidently, are indigenous to the sphere, as are some animals to the different periods, climates, and localities of our world. Some germs may go from this life and be reclothed there, but a majority do not go from the stables, styes, and kennels of this sphere with continued, conscious identity and individuality as man does from his palaces, kennels, and huts. Indeed, it is doubtful whether any animal has *conscious* individuality at all, as consciousness is a quality dependent on peculiarity of form and material as well as on soul germ, and is transient even in the highest condition attainable by man, so far as we yet know. Consciousness is not essential to existence more in man or beast than in trees, and is ever incidental. Memory is a power of reflection, or reproduction, weak in some men, strong in others, and the same in animals, and never subject to the will, but capable of cultivation in both man and beast. It exists only in the higher orders of animals and in man, and in man it is a failing institution by which he is ever dropping the past, and recalling it few or many times, and at last getting out of reach of each event entirely, as the

accumulations become too numerous between the occurrence and the present. We drag some events, by memory, over a vast amount of rubbish, and recall them often, and many times, but lose them at last, and it is well we do, else our load would encumber us more than the pack of Bunyan's fabled pilgrim. That memory fails to recall events of the past centuries is not evidence that we had no conscious existence, and no full or complete forms in those remote ages of anterior existence both of ourselves and our world. The souls of things keep no record of time or events. Records are kept on, and in, the forms as scars are on the body, and not on the spirit of mortals; so memory is on the form, and pertains to it. Our spirit life would carry no record of this were it not begun here with this and the spirit body already formed, and written upon in this life. As the soul germ, or mind, brought no body to this planet, or cycle of life, it brings no scrip of memory-record from another or anterior life; but I put no dependence on any such transient and ephemeral evidences of existence, or non-existence. If there is a spark of the Divine in us, IT must partake of the Divine nature and being itself; so much of God must be so far perfect and unchangeable; and as God works in the universe to ultimate ends from beginnings of forms, so this spark, or soul germ, must work, from its God-like nature, though unconsciously, to the end of creating and ultimating a form,—a human form,—and as it possesses this inherent power, and ever did, it must have been forever working out forms in the ever-changing matter of the uni-

verse, each and all of which must have been like our present bodies, of short duration, while the soul, or mind, was eternal, unchangeable, and eternally the same both in nature, power, and action.

But at this stage of our search after eternal life many questions naturally arise in the mind, and must be met by some reasonable solution, or our theory is like a ship on the ocean without compass or beacon-light. What and where were we, each one, a thousand years ago? To a Christian, I would reply, by asking: What, and where, was God before the *beginning*, spoken of in the first chapter of Genesis? But to a skeptic and inquirer I would suggest that, as all matter is eternal, we might have had forms in some of the older worlds of the universe, and from them emigrated to this new one to seek our fortunes in the spheres that surround this crusted globe, entering first in the crust. The lethean stream through which we passed on our journey here having washed off our old bodies, with every speck of the memory-record, the soul germ begins its form here anew, and picks up its items slowly for a new library of events to fill up the shelves of memory, and ultimately to be again destroyed, perhaps not for millions of centuries, or may be within one century. Where I shall be one thousand years hence is as unsettled and uncertain as where I was one thousand years ago, so both are really speculative; yet facts and philosophy furnish good grounds for a life of an immortality, at least better than any the Christian has yet furnished.

It has long been known that the germs of all

organic forms in our world are single and simple cells, or "hollow globes," or containing protoplasm and life force that we cannot detect with the eye; the soul germ which works out and develops the form, provided suitable material is at hand, and within reach of its powers of attraction, if not, the form is an abortion, and the cell destroyed, while the essence remains in its perfection awaiting another covering of substance, or matter, in which to ultimate its form, whether of plant, beast, or man. Each kingdom of beings ultimates and revolves in its own sphere; plants, rooted in earth, and ultimated in atmosphere, revolve therein, and fulfill their mission and reach perfection in, and on, our earth, and lose identity to us with dissolution of form, but never to God; hence, all plants that exist exist forever. Animals evidently follow the same law, for both show powers of reaching into an elemental or spiritual life. Religious aspiration and intelligent reflection are entirely wanting in both these kingdoms, while in man they are universal attributes of the race, and yet man is supposed to go on without it. Man does not ultimate, ripen, or decay in this sphere, even though his earthly shell does, and breaks only to let the real man out and into his sphere of real life to ripen and perfect.

Man is evidently only in the gestation state of his real life while in earthy substance or an earthy body, and is newly born at death; and a great majority from our country, at this time, are prematurely born, greatly to their disadvantage, except in cases where this life is so perverted from its true purpose as to

render it almost or entirely useless to the soul, which is not unfrequently the case. The necessity of planting souls here to germinate and start a spiritual body is the same as for planting seed in the ground, or birds in the egg, before starting to flutter and fly; but the spiritual body that clothes the essence, or mind—the soul germ—is also substance, or matter, ephemeral and changeable, as is most conclusively established by the testimony that those who enter that life from an infancy or feebleness here, change, grow, strengthen, and increase in form and powers there. In its appropriate place, the physical body starts, and, if not obstructed, fills out its measure and growth on earth and in air, and in it, as a womb or chrysalis shell, the spirit starts and fills out its manhood or womanhood in the sphere of ether and element that surrounds this globe, and ends its career there as the earthly body does here; but the mind or soul germ is there, as here, independent of the form, perfect, unchangeable, eternal, it being a part—finite part—of the Infinite Divine mind of the universe. Each soul germ of us may have, nay, must have, lived through countless worlds, and systems of worlds, and may or may not be now on its first and last pilgrimage to this little planet and its spiritual spheres of discreted degrees, and when ripened in the outer circle of earth's spiritual atmosphere will as willingly lay off its body, and passing the lethean river that divides this planet and its inhabitants from the next, begin a new form, and enter organic existence on the next, or on some one of the numberless worlds, and run its career through

the circles and cycles of that, and thus on and on through the endless extent of worlds and time.

Such, I conceive, to be eternal life, and by this theory—for it is nothing else—it can be seen at once that the essence of man is not progressive, but perfect, as part of God, if we choose to call essence God. Progression is only temporary,—a relative growth and development of form and manifestation of powers in it; but to God, and soul essence, is only outward change of no vital importance to either, as it produces no change in either, or on the destiny of the essence of any soul incased in form of substance.

Many will object to this theory, because they are to lose in the lethean river of transition the memory pictures collected in the life and experiences of each stage; but we cannot accommodate a theory to the likes or dislikes, or whims of feeling, in one or many. No doubt, the law is such as to give us the greatest amount of enjoyment in the long race that we are capable of, and that the Infinite Divine, or Divine mind, has perfection in all its parts, including man.

There is an ancient philosophy of immortality somewhat resembling this, said to have been taught by, if not starting from, Pythagoras, a very wise philosopher of ancient Greece, and also by Kreeshna, of the Hindoos; but it taught that what we call death is the return of essence to its unconscious condition in the Divine mind, but we have abundance of proof, both by testimony and scientific fact and philosophical deductions that it is not so. That the

spirit life as a, *or the*, real life of man is now fully established, but that the spirit spheres that now surround this earth, and may contain all the spirits that ever lived on it, are to remain permanent, and catch every spirit as it bursts its shell of clay, and that they are to remain the same when our earth has melted away in electric light and heat is simply absurd. It is true there is room enough in the belt of ether around our planet for a vastly greater number of spirits than have yet entered it from earth; but time would fill and overstock it if the race ran on as it is now running, increasing, and sending over there the spirit germs, unless many should prove, as some able writers assert, to be abortions, and never appear there. Equally absurd is the idea that spirits are manufactured on our earth, finished up, varnished, and labeled in the spirit sphere around it, and then sent off missionarying among the planets and fixed stars to relate the story how Jesus was crucified, and saved man by his death from his totally depraved nature, which otherwise would have kept these very souls in confinement and misery forever. This earth is not a place where immortal spirits are manufactured for a roaming existence through infinite extent to meet and visit other spirits made up on other worlds, and thus singly, or in pairs, or families, or tribes, go trailing through the infinite heavens, like Indians in the forests of our country before European discovery reached it.

The generally received theory of the origin of man among Christians is that two persons, male and female, start the organic existence of each human

being, while God, at some period not defined, but at or soon after the commencement of the body, puts a new soul into it which had no existence before, yet never ceases to exist after, but leaves the body at its death, and enters upon an unchangeable state of existence for eternity, in misery or happiness, according as it had been successful or unsuccessful in overcoming its totally depraved nature, in which it was made, and with which it was clothed in the body as the result of the sinful act of parents,—some say of the first pair, and first act of the kind,—and some lay it to the act that started the body, with its depraved nature. A large portion, however, believe that the Devil is the author and creator of the wicked souls, which are the tares sown by him, as it is said in the Scriptures, and that a large part of the souls are his offspring, and, consequently, wicked as the bodies are, and inherit endless misery as a reward for being born, over which event they had no control. All varieties of these Christian theories teach that man has no voluntary action or choice in entering upon this existence, yet is made accountable and responsible for *not* altering his depraved nature. Whether these souls are made up out of nothing, as our world is said to have been, or are sparks of God, thus lessening his being so much each time, we are not informed. Of all the theories of soul and soul-life, ancient and modern, none is more ridiculous, unreasonable, and absurd than the general belief of Christians. Bodies made up of earthly matter die, dissolve, and are scattered, and then are to be collected, resurrected, and live forever, even though the same particles have

lived and died in scores of different bodies; yet God can do as he pleases, and make the same particle of matter fill a score of places in as many bodies at the same time, and these renovated bodies are to be deathless, and not subject to such losses as operate on them before death, and are to live somewhere that is now nowhere, in a heaven of joy or hell of misery forever and ever. Souls that God made, of which He is father, are a part of them, to return to Him in or out of these bodies, and enjoy bliss forever, and another part are given to His enemy, and tormented by that enemy forever for not doing, or for doing, as they were obliged to do in this life by an inexorable fate. Souls that are both something and nothing at the same time, and somewhere and nowhere at the same time, children of both God and the Devil, one furnishing the nature and the body, and the other the soul or germ, or each furnishing both; so on through an almost endless range of absurdities runs Christianity with its six hundred sectarian headings.

If this theory of immortality is not more rational and consistent than any one taught by Christians, as a doctrine, it must share their fate, and disappear in a more intelligent age.

If the essence of the universe is not particled in forms of eternal durability, then all forms of being in their soul germs are blended and lost in the universal Godhead, or Divine Mind; but if the Divine essence contains an infinite variety of never-ending, never-changing, never-varying germs of form, which are ever seeking conditions and working out organic coverings in substance, and ever suffering and enjoy-

ing in each according to *its* condition and relation to other objects, then we have the secret and key to all the manifestations we witness in our ever-changing and ever-varying world, and the kingdoms of beings about it.

Forms, center, circumference, diameter, location, time, and all such terms, apply to all individualities in substance, and the same in essence, in whole or in part, but no form can be detected by us, except in substance. Yet germs of form abound everywhere, and are ever ready to concentrate and cohere particles when material is in reach,—for plant in its sphere, beast in its sphere, or man in his. Man does not vary from the law, and would not escape from the earth, and would end in death were he not by nature a spiritual being, beginning his form of soul and soul life here as soon and as effectually as he does his body and its life. He revolves in his sphere, which is a spiritual or elemental one, and the beast does in his, which may be a sensual and sensuous one. Man never is satisfied with this life; feed him to satiety, he is hungry still; quench his thirst, and still it burns into his being's core; give him power, and he wants more; give him riches, and he is more and more afraid of poverty, and craves and craves forever something he has not. This is not *his* sphere. Animals can be fed to satiety, and content; man cannot. His restless spirit hungers and thirsts for the aliment it cannot reach on earth or in gross matter; but only in the spiritual world, where he is at home, or can reach a home of content, and can be satisfied. Love is an element of this world, and

aliment of the spirit and spirit world, and so deranged in this life as to seldom satisfy the human demand. Most of those who require and need it fail to get it, and most of those who have it bestow it so badly and improperly as to do about as much injury as good with it. In our restless, turbulent world, love seems to create nearly as much misery as happiness, yet even here we could not dispense with it; but in our real life it will act as important part as air does here, feeding the system with a necessary ingredient of life. In the rudest and coarsest condition of earth life, man is so near the animal as to show little signs of his kinship with spirit life; yet in every stage is the germ of spirit, or soul germ, working out an elemental form to have a form for its true and real life in the spiritual spheres.

There are among Christian believers in immortality the most vague and indefinite ideas of spirit life, with scarcely a ray of consistency. Few of them have any definite idea of form and substance in the soul or spirit, and none that I ever met with have any locality for heaven or hell. What souls are, and *where* they live, is only to be believed in, not to be carried farther, as that would be too inquisitive for God's goodness, and He would be angry at us, as infidels, for using our intellects to know the particulars; but, as skeptics or Spiritualists, we are bound to have a consistent belief, and know all we can of particulars. A. J. Davis has given a very rational and consistent theory of body, soul, and spirit, which I somewhat reverse in description by starting with mind, or essence, which corresponds to his theory of

spirit, and spirit form which corresponds to his soul or elemental form, spirit body, as most Spiritualists call it, and earthly body, on which we, of course, all agree, except, perhaps, that I believe it to be the effect of the soul germ, or essence, which was in itself as complete before as after, and as perfect, and which, lodged in the congenial soil, at once began to surround itself with a body of substance. I do not agree with other writers on the point of origin. I cannot conceive of the streams of being rising so far above their fountains as to have spirit life or forms arise from, or flow out of, this earthly life as material eliminated and refined from minerals, by passing through plants, animals, and man's body till fine enough for souls, and, lastly, for spirit essence, and of course at last to make gods; if this is true of the body, it cannot be of the immortal part. To me it seems far more reasonable that God, or essence, is perfect and complete, and does not grow out of earthy matter, nor can I more clearly see how the soul germ, or essence, of man, which is the Divine in him, could be eliminated from refined matter. Matter in combination could by no process of refinement rise above its simples, or be more pure than when in its primary condition. All the refinement it could attain would be to fall back to its original condition of simple and inert matter, in which condition each particle would still contain essence in its pure and germinating condition, ever reaching out its feelers of attraction for other particles to join it, and build a form in combinations of substance in some one of the infinite variety of forms that forever people the

universe, the essence of no one of which ever dies or is ever lost, or ever leaves its orbit to take on a different form from the one of the kingdom to which it belongs, but which may vary and range in its own kingdom sufficiently to be from the same germ, wheat or dust, oats or barley, maize or smut, horse or mule, duck or goose, Indian or Negro, Caucasian or Malay, but never to rise over its kingdom, and be in one age a horse and next a man, or first a tree and then a horse, as this involves the crossing of a line that forever separates forms of being. Each kingdom revolves in its own orbit in essence as in substance, and hence man is man forever, and beast beast, and plant. plant through all the eternal round of endless changes that pertain to being.

The great point of discovery is to establish the boundaries of kingdoms and the orbits in which they revolve, and to settle the question of transitions. Science has placed in our hands some well-established facts in the species below, if not in ours. Worms to butterflies, tadpoles to frogs, wigglers to mosquitoes, ants with wings, and a host of other facts, all go to show that man may cast his shell, or skin, and soar away to his real life, as the *articulata* so often do, and that this may only be the "ante-natal tomb where" spirits "dream of the life to come," since it has been ascertained that the simple elements of matter may cohere and form bodies as remote from our physical senses as the ethereal particles are. Hence it is no longer a mystery how we may live on when death takes the body; nor is it strange that the spirit world should be a sphere in which forms

grow, ripen, and decay, subject to the laws of elemental life which certainly may as well supply the growth of forms, and waste of forms, as those which govern physical life and growth here. But if we would fix a bound to growth and decay, and establish a fixed condition from which there was no change through eternity, we must certainly introduce a miracle, or a new law, not yet known to mortals, and most especially wonderful if it could keep the joints of an organic being like man lubricated with oil forever, and establish in his form a perpetual motion that should run forever without supply or waste. Such law is not yet known to operate in any sphere except the miraculous and fabulous sphere of the Christian's imaginary heaven and hell.

If the spirit world of our and other globes were eliminated and refined particles from the solid portions, and entered into the fixed and unchangeable bodies of spirits or souls, however slow the process, the whole amount of material would ultimately be made up into souls, and the process stop for want of material, if from no other cause; and, indeed, if the process had been going on through all past time it would have used it all up long before this period, and creation would have stopped, unless the Infinite Mind could make new material out of nothing to supply the place of that made up into souls. Any process of exhaustion of the material must, of necessity, unless it stop, use up any given or limited quantity, as we know the globes to be; hence that theory is fallacious, or self-destroying. If, on the other hand, the souls, after passing a long period in the

refined state, and enjoying mostly a range of elemental being, are to be set back into fluids, liquids, solids, and, finally, disintegrated particles of matter appear again for another visit in the elysian chambers of a new celestial heaven, and thus go round and round in this endless chain of conscious and unconscious being, the theory at least is consistent, if at first repulsive, to the finer feelings of a sensitive person. We do not crave an existence again in rocks and trees, if we have been there, nor do we want to go back to saurians or monkeys, if we came from them,—which we do not believe, but we have no objection to going back to God our Father. We can accept the theory that our bodies, which are of vegetable and animal origin, should return, if we escape, intact, as souls, and are not dragged back with them; and when we have exhausted man and womanhood, we can consent to begin again in childhood, only let us always be working out and developing *human* forms, if in a world of substance. To me the theory seems rational and simple, that each grade of matter, and each kingdom of beings, continues in itself, material never in any sense decreasing or increasing in quantity or quality, combinations forever doing it, and returning each cast off particle to its own kingdom, whether a soul germ of human form or a particle of the body, or a soul germ of animal or plant. Yet, I cannot see why a germ of plant may not range its kingdom from the cryptogamous mosses and ferns to the pine, the apple, or the peach; nor why the animal germ may not range its kingdom, from the toad to the elephant, from the

wren to the eagle, or from the rabbit to the horse; nor why human soul germs may not be born under such widely different circumstances, and with such widely different surroundings as to develop a Negro or Malay, a red or white man or woman, a base scoundrel or a bright, intelligent, virtuous man or woman. I do not see why souls may not range the whole kingdom of human forms, and be in germ, or essence, the same, and always perfect,—as parts of a Divine Mind, which is perfect in the aggregate, as each part in itself must be, of the same nature.

Perhaps the most difficult point to establish in this theory is the individuality and identity of each human germ of soul and body, whether in or out of a form of substance. Without this we should, of course, be lost and swallowed up in the Divine vortex of being, and have no chance of individual recognition. In whatever combination you find matter or substance, it is in particles, and these are *never* destroyed by any combination, analysis, or separation; and, if these particles have specific forms, and never lose or change them, why may not the same be true of mind, or essence, as of substance, and why may not these germs be the real germs that never lose their form or capacity to develop such in outer expression? To me it seems both rational and consistent that it should be so. By this theory I can surmount all the obstacles to immortality of soul or mind. Yet some will think it nearly equal to annihilation to forget the past in each succeeding stage of being; but to a comprehensive mind there is little of the earth life worth remembering for a very long

time. We easily forget the tops, and dolls, and toys of childhood, and the feelings we once had for and toward them, as we ripen in years; and certainly there is nothing in our business or social relations of life here that bears a stronger or more lasting resemblance in relation to our spiritual future than the toys of childhood to ripe man and womanhood; even our earth is of not much more account in the universe and range of eternity than the new top of the boy of five or six years' experience in this life is to him. Even in the little time we stay here our feelings entirely change, often so that we sometimes hate intensely the very object or person we a few years before loved intensely. Not only do our feelings change, but we also grow cold, neglectful, and forget the most lovely and delightful partners of our earlier years. Some people think somehow they are to be made to love eternally, and know forever the objects that are at the time the objects of love and knowledge; but if they wait ten or ten thousand years, the love has changed, and the objects are passed by in neglect. Why, then, should death put a stop to these changes, and fix forever the objects that are dear to us, or surround us at that time, and leave all forgotten objects, and the feelings we had for them, entirely and forever out? Or will death renew all our earlier loves and recollections, and keep them before us forever? Or will it only bring up the loved, and lovely objects, and leave out the hate and hateful? To me it seems we must be consistent in our theories to sustain them. Truly, we carry forward memories to the spirit life, because

this is a part of it; but we have brought none here with the essence of our being as it entered the cell to form this body, because it was stripped of its substantial form on which it had recorded them, lost the tables of stone on which the commands were written, and hence brought no Bible with it from the world it inhabited before, washed off all the stains in the lethean river through which it walked on its journey to the earth.

Edward Beecher, and other writers of some celebrity, talk about "new-created minds," as if some power was creating minds out of nothing, as it is said to have created our world, at the beginning of time, out of nothing; but such folly of expression in our intellectual age is unworthy of notice. Such bundles of folly, absurdity, and nonsense as Mr. Beecher's *Conflict of Ages* is worth only its weight for paper rags in an age of reason and intellect.

Theological writers often speak of the consciousness of the mind. The mind has no consciousness of itself. Consciousness is a faculty of the organization, and may be opened and shut almost as readily as the eyes, and has no effect on existence, or even on life. We are as really alive when asleep as when awake, and yet consciousness has no cognizance of this material life or action at the time. In fact, we are really unconscious about one-third of our lives, and yet the machinery runs as well in one state as the other; but the mind does not sleep, nor are its powers or functions diminished. We can rest upon the fact that individual existence does not depend upon consciousness or

memory of past events, as we can surely live without either.

Nearly every intelligent person will admit the Divine origin of the essence, or soul, of each human being, and claim a parentage in God for all men ; but most persons are content to assert their belief, and give no theory or law by which it can be so. They usually leave the whole subject shrouded in mystery about as absurd as the line of descent from David to Joseph, by which the New-Testament writers proved that Jesus was of the seed of David, when Joseph was not his father ; but the Scripture must be fulfilled, and so it was, even though a mystery to us. I am not content to stop with a belief unless I can show at least a reasonable argument for it ; hence I put out these propositions: The essence of each human being is in, and of, the Divine and Infinite and universal Mind, and must be, like it, eternal, perfect, and unchangeable.

Christians who admit the Divine origin of the soul must hang on one of these three positions if they attempt an explanation : 1st. The soul germ, being of Divine origin, may be made up, *de novo*, for each being out of nothing by the will and power of God. 2nd. It may be made up for each being out of raw material already existing, in which case it must be composed of parts, or particles. 3rd. It may be a unit which has eternally existed in the Divine Mind, and is not changed by entering into the organic form of a human being. The first of these involves an impossibility as well as absurdity, and is, therefore, rejected at once ; for it is a well-settled fact that

nothing can never become something, even by Divine power, nor can something ever be reduced to nothing by any power; so we will dismiss the idea of "new-made" minds or souls from material which did not before exist. Next comes a more consistent and possible proposition: that the soul germ, or essence, of each human being is made up and constituted of parts or particles, as is the first simple cell from which starts the body of each human being, and that these particles are in, and of, the Divine essence, pure and perfect forever, but only having individuality, consciousness, and accountability when combined and clothed upon by an earthly or spiritual body. I cannot refute this theory; it is not only possible but plausible, and may be true; but, if so, we lose our eternal life, and the axiom which I started with cuts off both body and soul, and even soul germ, of each form, and we fall back in particles into the great vortex of Divine essence, perhaps each, or a part, of the particles to be again united in some other soul, or never more to be clothed with a material garment. But whether so or not, it is equally an end to us and to individuality forever. Persons who cannot, or will not, reason upon such subjects may accept the first absurdity, and may as well append eternal life to it as not, for it could not be more ridiculous by increasing the quantity of absurdities when the quality is the same. Persons who accept the second cannot append the eternal life without bringing in a miracle, and, by a stretch of Divine power, reversing a law of nature, set up a continual existence in opposition to all other facts and experi-

ences and an axiom in philosophy. I cannot do this, and hence, if I accept the first proposition, I must lose the entity and identity of each human being at some period of time. I do, at least in my feelings, most cordially accept, and willingly believe in, the third proposition,—that each soul germ of a human or spiritual being is a single and simple particle of the Divine Mind, and, consequently, indivisible, indestructible, unchangeable, and eternally a human or spiritual soul germ,—ever active, and by inherent, unconscious, involuntary powers is forever working out, or reaching after, a form of matter in substance, and will ever have one when material is within reach to compose it,—ever has, and ever will, periodically live in some outward garment in human form, if not shut out from material which, in the universe, is abundant. Hence, I see no reason why each soul germ may not have had millions of bodies, and have millions more, and, in fact, let its eternal life run through the ephemeral forms forever and ever, dropping each for a new start, as the cycles of time carry it through each world and planet, with its surrounding spiritual spheres.

If all germs of being have their individual and eternal existence in the Divine Essence, and are unchangeable particles of the Infinite, with the ever-failing and ephemeral outer forms of matter constantly dressing and undressing the soul germ, which works and lives and enjoys existence, be true, then, surely, we have a consistent and clear explanation of ephemeral and eternal life; and even though we may dislike to lose consciousness and memory of events,

now fresh and strong, yet we have experience enough in both to enable us to be so used to it as to bear up under the inexorable fate that gives us eternal life, and changes our locality and partners, surroundings, and attractions.

Incident to this belief arises the question of Divine consciousness, motive, will, design, etc. These may all be full, complete, perfect in the Infinite Divine Mind, and yet not in its parts; no one organ of the human body or brain has either of these faculties of itself, nor has the soul germ; yet, with suitable and perfect conditions of form and parts, each shows itself in us. Yet I cannot see the law which gives voluntary and absolute power to the Divine Mind. I cannot better illustrate my position on this point than by a conversation I once had with a D. D., at the head of one of our colleges. He accused me of fatalism, because I did not believe God could do all or anything whether possible in itself or not; said he was not a fatalist, and believed God could, and did, do as He wished, etc.; but upon my asking him if he believed God could annihilate Himself, and all existence, he answered: "NO," and, of course, at once became a fatalist with me. So must most reasoners who follow this subject, and will at last admit that God is Law, and Law is God. All we can know of God is by discovering and knowing the laws of our own and other existences. We never had a word of communication from God, except in these laws, and, indeed, it would be more ridiculous for God to talk to or communicate with a finite being, *if it were possible*, than for a man to talk to his toes or the hairs

of his head. But still further is this from fact than ridiculousness could make it. It is impossible; for essence can only communicate to essence in its own language,—finite to finite, and Infinite to Infinite. Trees communicate to trees, as they propagate only vegetable in vegetable; so is their language,—beast to beast, and man with man. We set up no schools for dogs or horses, although we do break and train them; yet they do not progress into education, nor talk, think, reflect, reason, and argue with us; and man has even less capacity to correspond with Deity, or to get language to and from the Divine Mind. Fables and human assumption prove nothing, as they are not evidence at all. I shall not bring in any person's opinion to support my theory, if there be any; for, although such is the common custom of writers, to me the opinions or beliefs of others are not authority, nor shall I fill up my book with the texts of Bible or other books, for these are no authority to me; hence, I have only to place my views, opinions, and conclusions before the reader, and leave others free to do the same, and each reader to use his own reason and judgment on them, and accept or reject as seemeth right and proper; but I shall greatly need Scripture, and other texts and extracts, to fill out as large a volume as most authors would make to set forth even half the theory I shall put out in this. My subject, also, utterly precludes scientific demonstration by chemical or other experiments, and comes rather to the reader as a metaphysical or philosophical treatise. What A, B, or C said or believed on this subject must be sought elsewhere,

and if others have, or have had, opinions like these, I am not aware of it at this time of writing; nor have I borrowed anything from them, unless it be by impression from spirits, to which I am aware of some susceptibility at times. But these views have long been entertained in parts or as a whole, and satisfy my mind on some questions that before were troublesome to me.

CHAPTER III.

THE Divine essence manifests its superior power and sphere in all its earthly evolutions and revolutions. It is the aspiration of nature in our world, and in the rocks or mineral kingdom exhibits motion as its effect and evidence of its presence; but cohesion and gravitation are its highest properties in such forms and garments, putting particles together, and into compact forms. When the loosened mold of earth enables another material element (life) to enter into the forms, and constitute a part of the structure, or clothing, of the essence or Divine motive-power of germination and growth, then and there the essence exhibits its aspiration, and puts out feelers for a higher sphere, evidently trying, unconsciously, to carry the forms of plant and tree away from the rock and soil, for it counteracts gravitation, and draws, or rolls, the particles up from the earth, and stretches them out in strange and fantastic forms, exhibiting wild freaks, and making havoc with the law of gravity on which the student is made to place much reliance in his early studies. But the effort of essence in the vegetable kingdom to get away from the earth in living forms is evidently a failure, as it can only point out, but must retain its rooted anchorage in the earth, or, losing it, life departs from the

form, and the balance of materials falls back, subject to the same law as the rocks and soil.

The next kingdom makes one step more toward the spiritual life to which the essence is ever pointing, as the finite force of man points to the Infinite God, and to which it is ever drawing its forms by unconscious actions on individual organizations, which, in the forms, show signs of progression. The animal, taking in another ingredient, or more than one, additional to those of plants (sensation), is able to cut loose from anchorage, and sometimes from solid earth, and roam on the surface, in the liquids, and above in the fluid air, still holding fast individuality and life, which the tree loses if taken from the soil. This is one more step, but still something is yet wanting to get a form away from the earth, and retain a substantial structure in which the Divine essence can exhibit more powers, and greater joy and happiness, than is commensurate with our earthly existence. It may fail to do this in the animals and also in the plants. At least one more ingredient is necessary in the form to secure the growth of a body that can cut loose entirely from the soil and earthy matter, and soar away independent of earth, water, and air, and still retain the forms and identity. This step is reached in man, adding, at least, one more ingredient to the structure, spirituality, though very weak in some forms, yet evidently to be found in some degree of power in all human forms. When this human form, structure, and composition is reached, this essence is able to ultimate and eliminate a spiritual body, and go off with it

from the earth, and dwell in it in a more ethereal realm where greater powers are unfolded and enjoyed than can be on, or in, the earthy matter, like the little insect, which casts its skin off in the water, opens its new wings, and rises into air, to fly and sing, and sometimes sting us, as an exhibition of its higher and superior powers to those it had in the water. Is this an evidence that these spiritual forms are to exist eternally, and pass from realm to realm when our earth has finished its course, and having wrought out its mission as a globe, is dissolved and recombined with other matter? To me it is not; and it would take more than priests' word or pretended gods' word to satisfy me of such a change and reversion of the great law of nature, by which all forms are combined and dissolved,—at least all whose existence is within the reach of our experiments. I can perceive the permanency of essence in all forms, and the escape of germs intact, perfect, and complete, as each and every grade of form drops off and leaves the soul germ to start again, and again repeat its outer existence in a new form of the same type as the last. If each distinct kingdom of being repeats only in its own grade of forms and existences, then surely man did not spring from the animal; and as the animal did not, and does not, spring from the vegetable, nor the vegetable from the mineral, yet each is a base for the other in part, I see no more reason for supposing man sprung from the animal. I do not think it would be more a disgrace to have our origin in a monkey or a saurian than in a lump of mud or heap of dirt, as the Bible teaches; but I look

for the authority in nature and correspondence. The vegetable and animal kingdoms start at about the same era in the geologic period of history. The animal does not wait for the development of the vegetable, and rise from its apex; why, then, should man wait for, and rise from, the apex of the animal? In truth, he does not, although he is evidently of much later origin here, and waited long for conditions to fit the earth for his reception, and when he came it was in rude specimens of form,—very coarse in texture, uncouth in appearance, and various in complexion; several species yet extant show the variety of origin, and different dates of inception of race. I have not found evidence that one kingdom arises out of the other in any of those belonging to our earth.

Next arises the question of distinction between the animal and human. If the human is not a distinct kingdom, my hopes, theory, and all the glowing expectations of the future may fail, for we may follow our ancestors, and return to the mold in which we were originally cast. It certainly is the order of nature to “fire and fall back.” All nature, as all planets, moves in orbits, and returns to each point. There are no straight lines in astronomy; all are circles and parts of circles, curves and arcs. Eternity was represented by the ancients as a hoop, or snake, with its tail in its mouth, swallowing itself, and constantly running out and through itself, and hence always complete. Such is man, and beast, and plant. By man I mean man in his true life and sphere, the spiritual. If man was only an overgrown (mentally) animal, he might revolve in this life and sphere as

the horse and dog may; but since we are *sure* he is a spiritual being, and has a life after and out of this and his earth body, we are also sure he constitutes a distinct kingdom of creation, and has his axis and polarity in the spiritual life as the beast has in this, where he lives and dies, turns and returns, and, apparently, fills the measure of his capacity. It required the scientific facts of Spiritualism to establish beyond a doubt the real and true sphere of the human race. Theology, which presented only a multitude of fictitious heavens, hells, purgatories, sleeps, dreams, resurrections, somewhere and nowhere for a future life, could give us no base for supplies of evidence for supporting our claims to a separate kingdom for our race. Its dreamy fables, and six hundred doctrines, had all they could attend to in keeping down reason, bewildering intellect, competing with each other, and playing upon the passions of the ignorant and stupid. The highest honor a man could have, in the midst of these sects, before the facts of Spiritualism, was to be an infidel, as that denoted one whose intellect was superior to his passions and prejudices, one who would not be swayed by interest against reason. Most of this class of persons, who have had a chance to examine the facts of Spiritualism, have become convinced of its truth, and will also look over the grounds herein presented, and, if well established, can also accept them; but I have no expectation or hope of reaching minds who cannot, or will not, reason; nor those whose feelings and prejudices are too strong for the judgment to be made up against them. I can only set forth my views and

conclusions, and leave the rest to time. To me there seems to be evidence to establish the conclusions herein set forth, that the sphere of essence is perfect, infinite, unchangeable in its particled germs of being; active, positive, masculine, and paternal to all forms of being; while substance, or matter, is equally eternal and unchangeable in quantity or quality; but negative, feminine, and maternal, forming the womb and furnishing the forms of every organic being, and the material and aliment for every changing form of existence; the essence running through every change of form unchanged, and every form always and forever changing, the essence taking on and casting off particles of matter constantly, the same in the spirit world as in this.

To me each globe or world seems to have a cycle in time, and many circles, or strata, of existences on, or in, the time of its cycle, revolving each kingdom in itself the soul germs not confined in duration to the globe, but each during a period sufficient to fill out its time and development of form in its respective kingdom, dressing itself up in material clothing temporarily, and often repeatedly, — each holding only by memory what it has imprinted on its form. Animals at each transition, losing the entire form, may have in each life no recollection of the past, and human beings may lose all memory of a past life when the form is entirely lost that carried the pictures collected in and on it. We *know* our earthy bodies fall back to earth, with all the ponderable matter pertaining to them; every particle of the solids and liquids, if not fluids, that composed them.

We also *know* that the imponderable spirit form of elemental or attenuated matter continues its existence as an organic being, independent of the earthy shell, and that the material of which it is composed is also subject to the law of aggregation and segregation, and it seems to be only a little finer material than that which our senses and instruments take cognizance of.

Existence without memory of the past is quite unsatisfactory to many persons, and yet we have it. We brought no record from God, or any previous life, to this, and it seems as precious as if it were loaded with a bundle of former experiences mixed and entangled with joys and sorrows such as we accumulate here. Should we go to another planet, and develop forms and lives there, of what use would such a bundle of memories as this earth life furnishes be to us? And if we have more pleasant, and larger and longer experiences in our spirit homes, we would hardly wish it hanging in a picture before us as we have it in a life like this. I do not know but we may be able in our ripened spiritual life to recall and remember the past life, or a part of it,—at least sufficient to satisfy us that we are immortal. Possibly this gestation stage of being is not the one sufficiently unfolded to enable our powers to extend backward, and clasp in conscious memory the existence which we possess and inherit from our divine nature, and the capacity of our soul essence, and yet it may be within the reach of us in a more advanced stage of being. In this life we possess many powers that are utterly unknown to the unborn child, and

why may there not be some correspondence to this in the next birth,—the birth of the spirit into its full life? The sphere of spirits that communicate with us from the other life is mostly that of our friends, who have but recently entered upon that life, and of course know but little about it, and even when some ancient or far-advanced philosopher has given us his name and date, we have generally found he has either been only represented by one near us in capacity and condition, or has so far left his advanced condition as to adapt his words and sentiments and truths to us as a nurse does to a child, or a teacher to his pupil; and hence we do not get the wisdom of the advanced spheres, even if their inhabitants approach us in the special intercourse of the present time. We do not think of presenting philosophy to infants, even if they are precocious. It is not warrantable to crowd even the advanced and premature children in our life, nor is it profitable to us to be instructed in the wisdom of a higher life when that wisdom is not in any way useful or profitable in this life, or as a fitting education or discipline for the next. I cannot see any possible use (if use is a law of nature) for us to retain in this brief and troublesome stage of being the pleasant and varied memories of a previous life. To me it seems better to count this, the opening of a new progressive life, so far as our feelings can reach and take cognizance of existence; but if the intellect and reason can reach the past and happy ages we have been through, and couple them with the future by this short coupling-link of earth life, it would be no injury, as the

feelings would not thereby be so enlisted as to make us unreconciled to this. The germinal state of any life has little of the real life or real powers that pertain to that life in its unfolded condition. We *may* come into possession of powers and capacities (and I believe we shall) that, in this life, are not dreamed of, or even heard of, and that may not be known even to our spirit friends who now communicate to us from the border of the great celestial sphere.

CHAPTER IV.

GOD — FATALITY — IS WHATEVER IS RIGHT ?

OF God I need not say much in addition to what I have set forth in the foregoing chapter; yet some readers may infer from my statements that, if each soul germ works unconsciously, such is the case with the Infinite, or Divine Mind, and that organization alone brings consciousness. Essence in the aggregate is God and Law. It is forever clothed upon and embodied in the material universe, and hence is never without that opposite and combined relation which forever gives it consciousness, intelligence, design, and will, or voluntary action, such as we have in a finite and feeble degree when in full and perfect health of body and mind. No incidents of nature are especially ordered, nor are, or can be, any laws or orders of nature changed; yet God forever acts "both to will and to do of His own good pleasure." Unchangeable both in power and being, and unchangeable because perfect, and perfect because unchangeable. Center is at every point alike of infinite extent, and circumference is nowhere and never, either in time or space. God-essence works from an infinite number and variety of centers, each in itself unconsciously, as the action of each organ in the human brain, yet acts in the whole with a perfect

consciousness. Every finite power of the perfect human organism is infinite in God. Only the perfect man is a miniature God in germ of intelligence, and that not in this life, but the spiritual, and not in earthy and gestation form, but in the spiritual state or higher life. There is no discord, no inharmony, no opposition, no evil or enemy to God in the whole vast universe, nor can there be, as it would be a sore on the Divine form, like a cancer on the human body. The "soul of things" feels none of our wranglings, wars, or discords of human action. Nor does God feel the jar that rends the earth's crust in the partial or general irruptions of earthquakes, volcanoes, or geologic upheavals. No jar of tumbling mountains or struggling nations disturbs the harmony or order of God, or His perfect and harmonious laws. The maddened fury of rivers or man is the same to this Infinite Essence. A crash of worlds would no more disturb the harmony of the Infinite than a crash of insects disturbs the revolutions of our planet. Even Milton's fabled war in Heaven was never heard of by the God in the universe, nor was the crumbling of stones and darkening of the sun at the crucifixion of Jesus; and even had they taken place, they would have been as harmless and insignificant as the stir of an insect among the planets. All these old fabled stories serve to mark "the twilight of the soul." They are the toys of a religious childhood, the baby-rays of our infancy. Men and women even in this earth life as effectually outgrow such stories as fill the Holy Bibles of all the early nations as they outgrow tops and kites, whistles and marbles.

God! What is God? Everybody who can talk talks about God; and everybody has some idea of God; but we cannot expect "grapes from thorns, nor figs from thistles," nor can we put a quart of water in a gill cup. Capacity determines the qualities of such ideas as are common to all human minds. God is God to every mind, and that is about all we can say for each one's idea of his or her God. It is well it is so, for an idea of God is one of the distinguishing features of our common humanity, and, of course, the idea must be in variety to accommodate itself to the great variety of capacities in the multitude of human minds. How could an Esquimaux receive the Unitarian idea of God, or a Samoyde the Calvinist's creed? How would Parker or Emerson be appreciated in the interior of Africa? or Beecher among the Arabs? Let each have a God after his own capacity. A toy God for childhood, an imaginary God for the unfolding of the youthful mind, and Law, or Essence, for the ripened age of intellect, which is now breaking upon us in the philosophy of Spiritualism. Jehovah for the Jews, and Christ for the Christians, Brahma for the Hindoos, and Manitou for the Indians; a Serpent for the Egyptians, and Jupiter for the Greeks,—and a hundred others, ranging from a Lamb to the great Grand Man of the Swedenborgians. With the change of two words in Pope's sentence, the ideas to me seem a fair description: "All are but parts of one stupendous whole, whose Body" Substance is, and Essence the Soul; the never-changing, never-varying "soul of things," or essence of all forms.

Fatality! Are we, or are we not, fixed in fate, and bound fast by decrees antecedent to our earthly existence, which reach to, and control, our every act and thought? I will not seize the arguments nor the evidence of the Calvinist to prove that we are; for, so far as that is Bible evidence, it is not to me authority, and proves nothing. The evidence drawn in to support fatality and total depravity, from the history and experience of man, is like the evidence of the senses brought in to support the Bible story of our earth being flat. Fatality and depravity are coupled together in the Calvinistic creeds; pre-knowledge becomes decree, and decree becomes fate, and leaves no free will, and, of course, destroys responsibility and accountability in such beings as much as in plants and animals. Such a doctrine could never have succeeded except in the contrast with the broader and more arbitrary one of Catholicism. Creed after creed among the warring partizans arises on the absurdities of each other, and incorporates almost as great, and sometimes greater, in itself. The philosophy of fate and free will is natural and simple as the cause of day and night in the earth's motions, and needs none of the God's-word authority or creed absurdities to sustain or explain it. Each particle of the Divine Essence is governed by immutable laws, subject in the whole to absolute and infinite control, and works out its destiny, unfolds its form, and ultimates in a form by those laws over which, and in which, it lives, moves, and has its being, for it has no will or choice of existence in the act or result. Such is the soul germ of each being and organization,

part of, and subject to, the fatality of Divine law, government, and control; hence, always perfect, harmonious, pure, active, self-existent, and possessing inherent powers of unfoldment, or, rather, embodiment of forms in matter, for which, and the character of which, it is never accountable, as it always uses the best material at hand, or in its reach. So each human *form* is combined and organized, matured, and developed; it reaches by degrees to will-power and intelligence, and as they act, and only as they act, is the individual accountable or responsible for the result, and that to itself. Will is never free but as it acts in and by intelligence, makes the person responsible for results; remove intelligence, as in cases of idiocy and insanity, and the responsibility ceases. Will is the executive officer of the intelligence, and not the motive power of a human being. Fatality rules in the essence of all beings; in the substance and forms are to be found incidents, accidents, abortions, and perfections, voluntary and involuntary action, accountability and unaccountability, harmony and inharmony, right and wrong, good and evil, God and Devil,—these all belong to material forms. Will is never free, as it is an executive, with a power behind it; intelligence is always free, when it is developed to voluntary action, or sends the will out to execute its decrees,—then, and never before, is accountable, and only accountable to itself or other intelligences for its dealings with them. There is no accountability of man to God, for there is no voluntary act of the essence or soul germ within us. A large and worthy class of Christians have centrally summed up

from their word of God and their own feelings, based on it, these three items: first, man's "deep, innate depravity as an individual; second, his subjection to the power of depraved social organizations, called the world; third, his subjection to the power of unseen, malignant spirits, who are controlled by Satan." Such, in part or whole, can be little else than absurd nonsense to clear, reasoning minds, especially if we accept their conclusions that man is to be held accountable, and rewarded or punished after all this, for his accepting or rejecting truths he cannot comprehend or understand, and take joy or misery as an eternal and unchangeable lot. Satan, of course, is a fabled personage, and the malignant spirits are mostly in earth forms, and ever have been mainly in the churches, from and by which they have ever wrung the breasts of martyrs for advancing new truths, and a majority of the depraved organizations of society have ever been religious, of which the Christian has had its full share, and the deep, innate depravity of man is a fiction which priests have used to get control of the ignorant masses.

Whenever a soul germ has found in its reach materials suitable in quantity and quality for a good, healthy form, intelligence has been the result, and free agency — as it is improperly termed — is the consequence, and accountability follows of course; and when it has failed to reach, in quantity or quality, sufficient material for such, it made an imperfect form, and an idiot, or semi-intelligent person came forth. Accountability accordingly failed, and so of free agency. Nature is always pure and perfect, and

never depraved, neither totally or partially. The extraordinary and supernatural efforts to restore it are, consequently, useless, and all religious changes of heart have left the victims with the same nature, disposition, and tendencies which in bad organizations with education and surroundings corresponding, are no doubt "prone to evil as the sparks to fly upward," but not from any inherent quality, as it is always the result of these three conditions of the person, all of which are external and ephemeral, viz., organization, education, and surroundings. Intellect has power over some circumstances, and shapes them to ends, but is itself dependent on superior powers, lodged in fate, or immutable laws, which give or withhold it without any voluntary action. These laws penetrate through matter as the blood through the living body, and execute themselves without the least regard to what we call right or wrong. Calvinism and Calvin teaches that the new-born infant is "a seed of sin," and "abominable to God," and yet even in this enlightened age Calvinism holds up its sectarian head in our own country as high as any, and tops out several colleges with its "abominable" doctrine. I am glad they father it over on God in the doctrine of pre-ordination, and thus relieve us. This Calvinistic authority, with the Synod of Dort at its back, declares that we are all "conceived in sin," hence, of course, no regenerated persons ever beget or bring forth any children, nor can they spring from God, but must all come from sinners and the unregenerate. If any are regenerated from sin, they cannot, of course, have sinful

acts in conceiving or begetting children ; but as even the clergymen's sons are as bad, wild, rude, and wicked as any, no wonder these wise teachers make for them no exceptions, but put all into the general law of wicked conception. But why do not the regenerate stop this greatest of all sins in bringing these wicked and depraved beings into existence? If their doctrines be true, the greatest sin in our world is to start one of these wicked souls for its eternal misery. They also go so far as to assert that we cannot think a good thought of ourselves, nor do any but wicked deeds, except by the grace of God acting on or in us. This is fatalism with a vengeance, and a most diabolical one! In summing up the depravity of human nature, and the fatality involved in it, the Christian represents the effects of our nature as "a glowing furnace constantly emitting flames and sparks, a fountain sending out polluted streams, a seed-plant of sin," etc.; "a stain or infection pervading all the powers of the soul."

The most astonishing fact connected with these wicked and absurd doctrines which thus implicate God, and disgrace man, is that they find intelligent beings to believe them, and have them preached; but the doctrine itself furnishes the teachers from those who accept and apply it, and try to prove it true in themselves, and do carry it forward often in their children by stamping it on them at conception and in gestation. This species of Christian fatalism is in itself sufficiently terrible to frighten all timid minds back from examining the facts of a real fatalism which exists in the essence of all things, and its

purity and destiny. In the outer forms of organic life fatality is not the law universally, for where intellect is developed, it, being a centerstance, to an extent controls circumstances and changes relations by its action. Of course, interior to it, and remote from our senses, is the essence working outward, and subject to the immutable laws of destiny, and though you may put your house up two stories or three stories higher, it is so accordingly; yet, before it was built, fate decided it should disappear entirely, and leave no story. Yet the hight was determined and decided by intellect at the time. But some fatalists ask if the intellect *could* decide any otherwise than as it *does*. It *seems* so; yet it does *not*, and that is the only argument to prove that it cannot do different from what it does.

The Calvinist text is that we cannot think a good thought, or do a good act, or have a good motive, except by the grace and especial act of God; being bound fast in a fatal necessity to evil by our depraved nature, which *we* cannot change. This philosophy teaches that the essence of every human being, of and in God forever, and always like its parent, and bound in a fatal necessity to work out harmony and ultimate happiness in *every* circle and cycle of being through which it revolves, and find for its body a complete ripening and development before it casts it off, and always, and in every form, receive full pay and reward for all its sufferings, whatever they may be, in some stages of its growth; that an earthly abortion is no abortion of the soul, and a broken and miserable life here has its end

secure in fate for joy in the spiritual world; that fatalism is on the side of purity, and not depravity, and is of the essence of being, and not the form; is the divine motive of man's existence, and not man's intellectual motive of action,—the former being always right, and the latter sometimes wrong. I have to alter another sentence of Pope to express his sentiment and mine, with my use of terms, viz., “Binding nature fast in fate, left free” human intelligence. It is not the will that is left in freedom, for the will is blind, and only goes as it is sent to strike the blow; but it is intellect sitting in judgment, and it alone is accountable. Insane persons have will, and many act in, and by, will whom we never hold accountable to the law, but whoso acteth in the judgment of intellect is held accountable for his action, “with malice aforethought,”—*a prepenſe* is the legal term. In our jurisprudence, which is far in advance of our religion, we never hold the will to account, but we do the intellect, and when the court can be satisfied that an intellectual decision did not precede the will, and act of the will, it releases the culprit from the penalty of the law. It is not always easy for superficial minds to distinguish between the will and the intelligence, but there is as much difference as between the judge and the sheriff. Fatality in no wise conflicts with the action or decisions of the judgment, for it is anterior to and remote from it, and carries it round in its orbit as the earth carries the moon, while it leaves it to revolve in its own orbit, and on its own axis. The Divine Mind holds the whole as the sun holds the solar system,

and, while it governs all, leaves each planet free in its motions and short journeys. So man is as much subject to the Divine government as planets to the sun, and as free. Each human soul has its own body, motions, and atmospheric belts, and passes through its changes for itself. We cannot escape consequences nor accountability by this theory, as we are taught that we may by Christian creeds.

The Calvinist, while actually throwing all responsibility for depravity and sin on God, still, with a reckless Christian inconsistency, shifts the horrible consequences over upon man, and tortures him eternally for God's own work in giving him the depraved nature in the fatal decree. But God had "power over the clay," and made the vessel to dishonor, and we have nothing to do but bear it, or await His grace to save a few, of which we stand poor chance to be a part,—or, at least, I do, for I certainly would not choose to be saved by such a God, in such a way, and with such company, and am thankful the doctrine is not true, but, instead, that Servetus was Calvin's judge in the spirit world, and not the partial God. If Servetus could forgive him, God would not arrest or reverse the decision, as He had no interest in the affair between them. As the martyr's stake was the only effective argument Calvin could find here against Servetus's stronger reason and rationalism, it was powerless and out of his reach when both were in the spirit world, and such is true of the persecutors and persecuted of our time and country.

A friend asks me why I use the masculine pronoun for God, when I use one at all, and I reply :

first, because it is a custom that I have no good reason for changing; second, if we use the terms positive and negative, it is customary to apply the masculine to the positive; and as I have no good reason, except custom, and no good reason for changing it, I rest it here, while I acknowledge no superiority in masculine over feminine in our or any race or world. It is a defect in our language that we have no suitable term without gender to apply to God, and hence the very word itself implies the masculine, and, of course, is pronounced in that gender, if at all, and most especially in a country where so many believe God was personified and incarnated in a man whom they call the Christ, the Lamb, the Messiah, etc.,—all of which are in the masculine, the Lamb being from the Aries of the Zodiac, and never applied to Mary the Mother, which was from Virgo, also of mythological and astronomical history. I do not think the worshipers of Christ, as God, need complain, since it is admitted his mother was a woman, and, of course, he was an obedient and dutiful child; and some of them say his wife, or bride, is the church, of which we have rather a poor opinion from the specimens we meet with generally, and, from the number of churches coming from him, I suppose he must be a polygamist. I think we had better let it go in the masculine at present, except where we can use the plural, and put in Father and Mother, Brother and Sister, Husband and Wife, and I certainly have no objection to such terms for God.

To return to, and once more state, the doctrine of fatality. Fatality, pre-ordination, and decree are a

part of, and absolute in, God, who is Law, Essence, Motive Power, and purpose, and contains all past and future events at the same time, as time has no record on the unchangeable, but only on us and changeable objects of substance, which have forms and measure in space, as well as time. But fatality and perfection are both lacking in the changing forms of our own and other lives on earth, and yet it is often said a person who is born to be hanged cannot be drowned, for if drowned, of course, he or she was born to be drowned; but the decisions of the court may determine the mode of death for a culprit, and after we know, we declare that was *the* fate, and it could not be changed, but we never set up this fatalism till the act is secured lest it be changed. Even this free action of intellect is exceedingly limited, for we often determine and resolve to get rich, or fat, or well, and fail, because we cannot control enough of circumstances to accomplish it. Wicked acts, and oppressive tyrannies, and corrupt institutions, are the effect of man's free agency, and proof enough that he has power in his intellect to resist at least the laws of nature to his own injury, or even physical destruction; but this free agency never reaches in motive or effect the essence of his being, and never corrupts or impairs the soul germ, or interior spirit, which is the divine part of man, and lives in its own fatality beyond the reach of free agency, and, consequently, beyond the reach of injury from a false or corrupt decision, or action, or motive. Free agency, or semi-voluntary action, is the law of finite intelligences, hence the blunders and entanglements of

social, political, moral, religious, and sexual life. Responsibility and accountability hanging partially to it makes the effects fall on us with double force, and we become doubly entangled by our efforts to set up legal, moral, and religious standards, and force all to observe and feel their value and importance, when many are so organized that the standard is entirely out of their reach, they being either too short or too long for the Procrustean bedstead. This free will, or free agency, would at first seem to be a curse to man, and might be mistaken for the embodiment of the Satanic rebellion of Milton's fables; but, after all, like the knowledge obtained by Adam and Eve in eating the fruit, it proves to be at last a blessing, for we could hardly have conceived a worse condition than the race would have been in (if there had been any race) if Adam had not partaken of the tree that opened his eyes to good and evil. This old fable, no doubt, personifies and implies free agency, or a voluntary action of the finite intelligence, without which there would have been no volition in the human world more than among trees or animals, and, of course, no accountability or moral responsibility. I think we would prefer to keep the knowledge obtained by the *fabled fall*, even though it sometimes makes us ashamed. Sin, shame, knowledge, free agency, responsibility, and accountability seem to be near akin, and to come into the catalogue of human events and experiences at about the same period in Jewish history, which is not, however, reliable for any historic statement about the race or its creation. Certainly, if man is not a free agent, he

cannot be a sinner, as the sinfulness of an act implies a reflective and voluntary action, with knowledge that it is wrong. That there is some degree of sinfulness, and some degree of accountability, and a full degree of responsibility in man in our state of society, and in Christian countries, I think all must admit, and this in itself admits so much of free agency, and relaxes so much of fatality as to comprise these, all of which are confined to the outward organic form of earthly or spiritual body. Summing up the subject, it may be stated as follows: Fatality is in the Infinite, free agency in the finite. The Infinite comprehends and controls the finite as a whole, and as the ocean does its drops of water, while individual intelligences revolve by their own central power and act voluntarily to the extent of their own capacity, which is exceedingly limited; man alone of earthly beings, coming within the scope of intelligent organization and free agency or accountability. It is said by some that an agent is not free. To an extent this is true, and yet he could not be an agent without some degree of freedom,—freedom at least to obey or disobey orders and instructions which most agents certainly have the power to do, at least intelligent ones have. Agency is consistent only with a certain degree of freedom, and not without it; such is man's free agency. It is limited in the outlines, and not in the filling up, in the warp and not in the woof. God stretches the warp and man puts in the woof. Essence is the warp of life, substance the woof, and the free agency is in striping the web in filling it up. Existence is folded in the endless warp

around the beam of partied Deity, and the lines cannot be broken as the shuttle of will is sent in its filling-mission; it stripes with white and black, good and ill, love and hate, joy and grief; and when directed by intelligence, consistently and in accordance with nature's laws, makes a harmonious and beautiful life-web of this stage of being. Take another illustration: a boy is sent to school by his parents; he keeps on his way till out of sight; then, finding he is a free agent, he goes to the grocery instead of the school-house; there men feed him with liquor; he starts back, falls in the mud, reaches home, and gets a whipping or a fever. Was he, or was he not, free to act independent of the parents, or what power controlled him? Was it not his imperfect intellect that made the blunder? Was it free agency to whip him, and to give him liquor? I would hold the lines of accountability tightly over all, and make the accountability not to a Christian a Christian law, a Christian creed, or a Christian God, but to the law of Nature, obedience to which would bring harmony, peace, and love among the race. No arbitrary standard set up by a person, a society, or a nation can be the standard of moral or religious accountability. If each individual sets up his own for himself alone the variety would not be as intolerable as the forced regulations of sectarian bigotry, but even this would not answer with our inherited depravity and perverted educations. As we discuss Nature's laws, and set them up for the standard of moral law and religious action, we get the truest standard of harmony.

I ought, perhaps, to ask pardon for using the old Jewish fables to explain principles, but, like modern novels, and in almost the same ratio, they are "founded on facts." When Adam was only a machine, and exercised no judgment, and did no voluntary act but as he was bid, he had no sin, and showed no free agency; but the first act arising from freedom and his judgment was the sinful one by the story, and yet to the race the greatest blessing that had or could come to it, and especially if it, and it alone, "brought death into the world," for of all curses none, it seems to me, would be greater than to live on this little globe forever, and be simple machines obeying orders. Total depravity and *total* free agency are absurd assumptions that cannot be sustained in the justice of God or the experience of man; but the *partial* depravity and partial free agency of man is apparent to all, and consistent both with the justice of God and experience of man. The almost universally-received doctrine (among Christians) of total depravity has led its ablest defenders into labyrinths of absurdity from which Edward Beecher tries in vain to extricate them in his *Conflict of Ages*, and a few bolstering sermons. Such is equally true of the advocates of absolute free agency, or absolute fatality; neither is correct as absolute. We are finite and limited; depravity is limited; free agency is limited; fatalism is limited; and man is limited in all his powers, except only that the soul germ, or divine essence, is eternal in duration and with eternal inherent powers of organizing forms.

The depravity which modern Christian writers

attribute to *nature*, I attribute to our sectarian Christianity. Nation warring upon nation, sect upon sect, individual upon individual, and the whole upon nature, with the abominable and inconsistent and cruel doctrine of total depravity and infant damnation, which is a consistent part of it, has produced more than any other cause the wicked and corrupt state of society which we have around us.

Among the blundering absurdities of our common Christian teachers is the doctrine that we all enter this state of existence fresh from the hand of God (at least if born in wedlock), on an even plane of total depravity, accountability, and moral responsibility, and hence are all alike to be charged and credited with what we are in life, when the fact is that none are born moral, virtuous, religious or even Christian, some vile, wicked, thieves, drunkards, libertines, and some with a more religious germ, and that not Christian, nor capable of being developed into it, or any idolatrous devotion; and all these are inherited from parents, and forced upon us by circumstances over which we had no control, as they preceded birth and voluntary action, and whether called good or bad, were derived especially from the parents, and the circumstances that surrounded the mother during gestation. But a glaring absurdity, that any simpleton can see, is the statement that we are all the children of God, who is perfect, and we totally depraved, and yet free agents; and it is equally absurd to fix any standard as the one governing all human actions, for we are organized in such variety that some persons are in their nature and vol-

untary action as harmless as doves and pure as angels, while others are incarnate demons from their earliest voluntary action; and neither is really nor especially in the least attributable to nature, but to the parents and circumstances that controlled the mother from conception to birth, and the surroundings afterward. Nature covers the whole ground of variety, as she does the great variety of plants and animals, and would have variety in harmony, order, and beauty.

Edward Beecher says the doctrine of endless future punishment will never be entirely abandoned. What a short-sighted mortal not to see that it is already abandoned by nearly all educated and intelligent persons; and must, in a few centuries, by all human beings on our planet and in the spheres, be abandoned as a relic of barbarism applied to God in the ignorance of man. That doctrine, and all others, which have no other or better foundation or authority than the Bible, will melt away before science as the frost before a bright sun in the spring-time. Nothing which reason does not authorize and establish on her authority, can withstand the advance of science, and the two alone and together must, and will, make up the philosophy for the future in every department of intellectual action. In such an arrangement the sifting of our theology will throw out nearly all the articles of belief and faith in popular Christianity. We may certainly look for an age of reason, and a reasonable and consistent explanation of the phenomena of life, death, and immortality, before many years to prevail.

Intellect is a condition of physical development in finite beings; so is responsibility and accountability; and so is free agency, conscientiousness, and consciousness both of being and accountability in the moral nature of man; and as we are not born with any of these qualities, of course, it would be unjust in any power setting us into life here to hold us accountable, or condemn us, for sins of others or ourselves, even if we did, or could, commit them. We are certainly entitled to a fair start in this life, and if fate had doomed us to endless misery before we were born, or entangled us in depravity from which only a miracle could save us, it would be useless to call God just, or good, or wise, to reasoning beings. To me it seems consistent and reasonable that every human being is born with an ultimate destiny, and can feel security for absolute happiness, and a full measure of joy, harmony and love in some stage of each existence. Immutable laws work out their ends in all existence, but free agency in intelligences is one of the laws that works with the rest from its introduction in our organic forms. Intelligence plans and executes, succeeds or fails, in conformity with its ability to control and place things and circumstances by its agent the will. If we admit, that God said to man "Thou shalt not kill" as an imperative command, He should have so made him that he could not, or would not, kill, then it would have been obeyed, and man saved.

IS WHATEVER IS RIGHT? In considering this question, much, or all, will depend on the use of terms. It is doubtful whether there is any absolute standard

of right and wrong, that is, one which is not changed by circumstances, and even reversed by the judgment of man. Murder is generally called wrong, but there are circumstances under which it is approved, both in wholesale and detail, by the judgment of most men. So of all lesser crimes, as they are called. Christianity has at some stage, and under some circumstances, sanctioned or sanctified nearly every crime, and, I believe, the Jewish God is charged with them all in detail in the Bible as ordering most of them to be committed by man. If we were to take the judgment of men and authority of church, we should fail as we would in selecting a holy day for a Sabbath, where we should find some claiming each till all were sacred days. By this rule, all acts of man may be right and sanctified in turn, and on each deed of life, that, more than any authority of church, would be cited as an evidence of depravity, if not total. Still, as we use words to name and qualify things, acts, and events, and they are all in great variety, so must the words be that represent them, and although we change the term we apply to all under different circumstances, and call the same both right and wrong, yet we need both terms. That which is wrong today, under certain circumstances, is not right at the same time and under the same circumstances. It is not both right and wrong, although by some standards may be held to be one, and by other standards the other conscientiously held to be. How, then, can we say "whatever is is right"? To me it is wrong to hang a man by the neck till dead, even by order of judge and jury; to others it is right, although

both terms apply to it, and the act is not absolutely either of itself; yet it is absurd to say it is right, and I must yield my conscience to it; and it is equally unjust to force my opponents to consent to my definition of the act. We see, then, that there are two terms that convey a meaning which places an act directly opposite in relation to our consciences, and the same act in opposite relations to the same conscience under changed circumstances. For instance: a rape, outside of marriage is, by nearly all civilized people and Christians, called wrong, and, in the worst sense, is so to me; and yet, in marriage, it is called right by a majority of the same people, though to me as heinous in as out of marriage, being everywhere a crime and sign of depravity, and yet many people really and honestly believe it right soon as the parties are married, and even the law takes its shield of defence from the victim in such cases. But there are still other causes for reverses in the qualifying term to the same act. We all say it is wrong to steal the property of another and convert it to our use; but most of us will say it is right for a man to steal food to save his wife and children from starving, if he can get it thus, and cannot get it otherwise. Using, then, these distinguishing terms to express the quality of an action as it appears to us respectively under the circumstances, by and in which it was at the time produced, we certainly have need of both, and could not consistently use one of them for all phases under which the act could appear. I am, therefore, compelled to answer the question that, according to our use of terms, and in the sphere of intelligent action, and

what there is of free agency, all acts are *not* to me right. Whatever is *is*, but is not always right, and the same act is not always right or wrong even to the same person. But while we view this in the sphere of finite and intelligent beings, we can also take a larger view of the universe, and go outside of these and all qualifying adjectives that are necessary to define the relative corresponding quality of acts to us either morally or physically. To us, darkness is as real as light, and cold as real as heat, but we can realize that these are only negative and relative qualities to us at times and in places. To the Infinite, and even to us in a new position or condition, they disappear, and are not either real or apparent. Such is equally true morally as well as physically both of condition and our vision and relation to the acts and our present condition. What is wrong now, morally, may, at a future time, be right, or lose all its qualities of right or wrong entirely. No acts under all changes in us, and all relations of us to them, can be either wholly right or wrong forever. Nor is it probable that any one act will remain on the face of time more permanently than a dark day, or cold night, or cloudy sky. Even now acts that stand back in history are often changed from bad to good, or from right to wrong, according as we view them from new standpoints, and under changed circumstances. We cannot admit that God the Infinite can realize the existence of what is dark to us, or of what is cold to us, nor can we conceive any corresponding conditions to the perfection of the Divine Mind. Why should the moral darkness or religious coldness have a more

permanent, or extended, or durable existence? Right and wrong, or cold and heat, are neither convertible terms, nor at all appropriate to infinite powers. They have no meaning or existence beyond the finite use made of them by finite beings, and even in that use are mainly applicable to their rudimental state of being. Moral standards of right and wrong appropriately exist within the sphere of finite accountability and partial free agency, but do not extend beyond it or to the realm of essences. To the Infinite there is no right or wrong; such terms have no meaning; but the fact only exists in whatever is *is*, and without quality to infinity. There can be no evil, or opposite, positive or relative, to infinite perfection, else it were not perfect: for to be perfect and infinite implies no opposition and no deteriorating, or opposing force or power, and hence man cannot sin against God.

The absurd idea of a Devil originated in the sphere where darkness and cold had demonstrative existence, and could be personified and represented. Finite beings see and feel evil and wrong, moral and physical. They realize darkness and coldness (absence of light and heat), are partially free agents, and accountable, while God — Essence and the inner soul germ of being — has no realization of such conditions, for to it they are not. Fatalism, perfection, and eternal action are its attributes forever. Discords, variety, change, good and evil (which are only relative to each other) exist in the outer sphere of substance and forms, but never in the inner, or essence. The terrible conflict between eminent Christians, which

has been going on since the Reformation, and has crazed or bewildered so many able minds, has almost invariably arisen from admitting false premises to start with, and acknowledging the fatal, foolish error of the positive nature of evil and its opposing relation to God, with the depravity of man appended to his existence as innate, and either total or partial. If they had started right, the conflict could not have occurred, nor the evil to them have resulted. This has arisen in most cases from taking the Bible for a guide, or a standard of truth, when it was as fallible in morals, in ethics, in metaphysical truths as in geology and chronology, and entirely unreliable in all. An abandonment of this basis of falsehood, and an escape from these muddy and murky waters of superstition and sectarianism, will give us a clear perception through the eye of reason of these great truths of pre-existence and future life, of the endless rounds and cycles of being, and the lethean pools in which we wash off all the useless rubbish accumulated in each preceding life or world,—or, perhaps, lose it only as we pass the deeper stream between the cycles that include many worlds and lives.

Much of our Christian theology has its origin in the fables and follies of other books than the Bible, and are so woven in with it as to be inextricable by any but the best of scholars, and few of such are willing to expose what they know to the ignorant and prejudiced multitude of worshipers. There is little doubt that their idea of the Trinity in the Godhead had its origin in India, as worshiped in the three-headed God of the Hindoos, and the origin of Devil,

no doubt, was in Persia, and from the Zoroastrian theory of the Zend Avesta, and good and evil powers personified in Ormuzd and Ahriman, and their perpetual wars and conflicts of day and night, or light and darkness.

I cannot see how a strict sense of justice can any more exclude the Devil from his place, or from a desire to rule, than it does his adversary; nor can I see how it is right or proper for God and his servants to secure and convert the children of the Devil, and induce them to desert, than it is for the Devil and his servants to do the same thing by catching God's servants. According to the Christian theory both are pursuing something like the trade of Negro-stealing in Africa, in which the poor victims are made into a sort of chattel-servants, and kept so, unless they desert, or become fugitives. There is, indeed, a curious use made of the terms right and wrong when applied to one or the other of these great imaginary personages. We are taught to call every act of God right, even though the same in man, or the Devil, is the most superlatively wrong of all the acts in the calendar. The indiscriminate murder of men, women, and children, said to be ordered by God, in the Old Testament, we are taught to say was right; but if ordered by any other authority it would be heinously wrong. Most persons would condemn as wrong, in man or Devil, the act which is said to have brought Jesus into our world; but, in the Holy Ghost, it was right, and would be again, and a thousand times repeated if we needed any more Saviours of men not already saved. Perhaps such a personage in our

day might escape crucifixion, but he could not persecution. If, as individuals, we fix in our minds each a standard of right and wrong, I do not know why we should not try the acts of God by it, the same as those of man, if He actually did, or ordered, acts as man does. I could not call an act right in God which I would condemn in man as wrong, when the effect was the same on the objects. I should call acts of a parent wrong such as God is said to have often performed to the children of men; and to me it would be equally criminal in God, as a parent, if it were true as stated in the Bible. Eternal punishment could never, by any standard of right which I have, be justified, because it can work no benefit to those involved in it, nor to those who escape it; and to me it is, therefore, wrong in God to inflict it as it would be in man. Neither does Edward Beecher's theory of a pre-existence relieve God from the injustice and wrong; for if we come here, and suffer, and suffer on eternally, and with totally depraved natures, and yet do not know for what or where, when and how, we have sinned, so as to deserve "of all evils the essence and force," I can see no plea of justification by that more than without it; for, if the victim has no knowledge of the crime for which he is punished, it is certainly unjust and wrong to him, and the only defence left is a warning to others for the safety of the innocent, and as no such result can accrue, there is left nothing but wrong, without even palliating justification.

I can see no consistency in the sentence "whatever is is right" when used by, or applied to, us as

finite intelligences. Infinite Essence, which is LAW, may have but one cause of action, one standard of judgment, and one motive and object, and that may be qualified with one term; but we subvert, and pervert, and invert, overturn and underturn, and play all the varieties we can, and need a variety of words to qualify our actions, among which none are more appropriate than right and wrong. It seems to me that no act can, at all times and under all circumstances, be termed wrong or right, and yet some are appropriately termed wrong and some right at all times under the variety of circumstances.

Children, under some circumstances, are born with so strong a propensity to steal as to be almost, or quite, irresistible. In such, and to such, the act is not wrong; no conscience condemns it in them, and to a rational mind no criminality can attach to such person; indeed, to such person it is right. When two entire strangers meet on the battle-field in opposing armies, each tries to kill the other, and the successful one feels that he has done no wrong, and usually feels that he has done right, and has an approving conscience. Yet if they had met elsewhere, and under other circumstances, and he had slain the stranger, both his own conscience and the public would have condemned it, and called it wrong. Yet to the Divine Mind there can be no difference and no justification in the military array, or clash of arms. Infinite intelligence can have no interest in our wars and conflicts, not even in our theological controversies and sectarian wrangles. Infinity has no standard of right and wrong; but most of the miseries of

our world, arising from persecution and vindictive punishment, have arisen from persons setting up as Divine authority moral and religious standards of their own, and fixing arbitrary systems of right and wrong, to which they would bring all the various consciences of man, lengthening and shortening to the measure which is often a cruelty and severity that crushes out life. Well-educated divines, of high standing in the church, often assert that God has, at great self-denial, devised a system merciful to the fallen sinners of our race, and that He deeply grieves at the sins [wrongs] of mortals. Such a degraded idea of God cannot for a moment have a place in my mind, as applied to the author and parent of our existence and of infinite power and wisdom. Infinity cannot grieve, nor can IT make self-sacrifices or sacrifices of any kind. The wide space between us, as finite beings, and Infinity, must be such as to forever preclude any of the qualities which belong to us ever affecting Deity. The very term, perfection, passes the object possessing it beyond grief and self-sacrifice, and every quality that can in the least disturb harmony and joy. How such narrow and ridiculous ideas of Deity can still be entertained by intelligent minds in our day is to me almost unaccountable, except on the basis of their own theory of depravity, by which we can suppose they do not believe them, but teach them to the ignorant to retain power and influence, which they might lose by elevating the common standard of knowledge and reason. Eat not of the tree of knowledge — use not your *carnal* reason — has long been the command of the Church.

Infinite Essence is eternal, and eternally the same, filling all time and space, and comprehending all acts and events; and all *essential* existences are forever the same in quality, character, and attributes, being part of the Divine Mind, with its perfections, etc. To God, therefore, there is no wrong, because no opposing power, no worrying experiences, no conflict within or without the Essence that ever can influence or affect IT in whole or in parts. In man, the interior soul germ, or essence, sits enthroned, calm and supreme, over all changes and conflicts of this and every outward organic existence, sure of its eternal inheritance and inherent powers; forever right, because forever in harmony with its parent, God, and forever obedient to Divine law. Therefore, in the sphere and realm of essence, where all is perfection, harmony, law, and order, without change, variation "or shadow of turning," there is no wrong, no blame, no sin, no depravity. From that realm we drop down into the outer world where all is change, conflict, variation, right, wrong, either, neither, light, darkness, cold, heat, both of body and spirit. In all the realm of our outer organic forms there are the conflicts and contacts of change, aggregation and segregation, life, death, and still to us an immortality in the soul essence in its individual existence,—an eternal purpose, which its inherent powers and never-changing activity is forever carrying out, and which is to build "in matter house for mind" organic in the sphere of substance a limited temple in which the various powers can be expressed in the union of the masculine essence with the feminine substance,—the very

prefix, *sub*, expressing its inferiority,—producing that never-ending affinity which we call creation, but which is only the union and action of essence and substance. Here is the sphere of right and wrong, good and evil; here the realm of free agency and accountability, and here man makes his creeds, sets up his dogmatic and arbitrary authority of morals, religion, and politics, and forces by combinations individuals into subjection to power by the force of circumstances wholly or partially controlled by the free agency of intellect. Motives, often right when acts are wrong, and motives often wrong when acts are right, and often both wrong or both right when tried by nature,—the only standard of infallibility in our sphere of existence. I cannot say polygamy was wrong to the wise Solomon, or to Brigham Young. I can only say it is wrong to me. I cannot say it is wrong in the Shakers to entirely separate the sexes. I can only say it is wrong to me. I cannot say cannibalism is wrong to the Feejee. I can only say it is wrong to me; and so is the sexual tyranny and abuse of woman by man in the best society of our own or any country. To each and all of us there is a standard of right and wrong, and we can each see it, but we all look through our own organizations and our educated consciences, and hence the variety of interpretations of what is right or wrong. The cannibal, born and educated in his own belief, is no more accountable for eating human flesh than the ox for eating grass, or the thief or drunkard for the effects of the overmastering appetite or propensity with which he was born. The Ethiopian cannot change his skin, nor the leopard his spots;

but man can be educated into, or out of, such habits as nature, reason, or experience teach him are destructive or injurious to him or his race. As soon as any being rises to a scale of intelligent and rational action and accountability, he or she must have *a* (*not the*) standard of right and wrong, and both must be apparent and consistent to his or her capacity and development. Without it there certainly would be no accountability, and, I doubt, if there could possibly be intelligent action. All acts are not right; all acts are not wrong; all are not either right or wrong, but fall between both extremes. There is no uniform human standard of right and wrong; never can be; and the Divine standard is ever beyond human reach, and perfect in itself. Our acts are never judged by the Divine standard; and, as we are not accountable to God, are never tried by it, but as we are accountable to ourselves and our race, we are tried by the consciousness within, and the statutes without, ourselves. Scars on the body are healed in this world; scars on the spirit are only healed in the next; and the latter are the sins against the Holy Ghost, spoken of in Scripture (if it had any consistent meaning), and are not forgiven here or in the spirit world, but may be cured in time, as wounds are here on the body. Right and wrong apply to body and spirit; are both physical and spiritual in application and effect; both are ephemeral, and their effect transitory. There is no eternal right or wrong acts or effects, and no universal standard by which any one act is forever right or wrong, for it is subject to "variableness and shadow of turning." It is not safe or expedient to fix a

standard of right and wrong for the acts of others than ourselves, neither as individuals or communities, for we cannot know the motives nor the conscience of the actors; but it is right and proper to establish statutory and legal enactments for protection of the weak against the strong, both for the weak in arm and the weak in intellect, and to keep these enactments before the whole people, and, of course, enforce them upon offenders as well as we can for the good of the violator and the safety of the innocent. Yet, by any such enactments, innocent persons must often suffer and be wronged both in the violation and execution of the law. It may not be proper to call it law, for legislatures never make laws; they enact statutes, and sometimes discover laws and enact them into statutes; when they do this they have, so far, statutes that are in harmony with nature.

Self-protection and self-preservation are, of course, right even if they sometimes require a wrong to another. The exact locality of the imaginary line between right and wrong is like the equator, uncertain, and never really ascertained; but there is no difficulty in determining the difference between the frigid and torrid zone; so there is no difficulty in deciding by our standards what is externally right and what is externally wrong in our judgment or our feelings, as we decide the heat or cold. A man raised in the torrid zone, and carried to Greenland, would call it cold, when the one raised there, and accustomed to that climate, would not perceive it cold at all. We ought to be wise enough to know

our moral and religious standards are as different as those by which we judge of temperature, and we are no more to be condemned for the one than the other. The legal accountability of persons to known and acknowledged statutes of the government is a well and fully-established fact, and to me seems right. But the moral accountability of any person to any standard, except the conscience within, is not well established, and I cannot recognize any other for myself, and would not force mine on others. There are strange, and to us, with our present limited knowledge, mysterious laws working in us, and shaping us to ends and distances without our voluntary action, or even knowledge. For instance: it is a well-established fact that children born of a woman in her second marriage, after the death of her first husband, as often partake of the character and habits of the first as the second husband, and yet our science has no rational explanation to dispose of the fact. This, and many such facts, the laws for which are unknown, must affect vitally the rule of accountability, and may establish at last the assertion that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children in several generations, and even scattered so as to affect psychologically other children than their own. In the above case, there can be no particles left by the first man that form part of the *bodies* of the succeeding man's children; but there *may* be, and no doubt are, particles, elemental, left with the woman that go into and help to make up the spirit bodies of the children born at later periods from other fathers. We may find that the elements that make up the

spiritual body are gathered from more sources than those which make up the physical, and are secreted differently, retained longer in the female, and imparted by equally natural law to form the real child, or spirit form. It is also well established that a man will carry forward characteristics of a former and deceased wife, and give them to the children of a second or third wife. All those, and many more, such facts must be taken into account when we set up standards of right and wrong, and hold persons accountable to them. There can be little doubt of the correctness of Robert Owen's theory, that our characters are formed for us, and not by us; but to me this would only modify and not destroy accountability. It would only bring the moral standard within the line of circumference of each conscience, and under the jurisdiction of intelligent free agency. A Feejee to his conscience; a Turk to his; an Indian to his; an African to his; a Hindoo to his; a Catholic Christian to his; and a Materialist to his,—each to his own standard, both of free agency and conscience. If Adam, in the fable, did not know good from evil, he could not be accountable for evil, of course, and Eve certainly could not be blamed for yielding to the allurements of the serpent, if they overpowered her feelings, and she had no knowledge of consequences, and especially as no command was given her not to eat the fruit. Individuals knowing no wrong can do none, and no standard outside of the person can decide for such person what is right or wrong; but each intelligent person has a conscien-

tious standard within, and by it must make a distinction between acts that determine some to be right and others wrong, or opposite in quality. Right and wrong, good and evil, are relative. Existence, perfection, and harmony are absolute and positive in the Divine Essence where the whole and its parts are forever the same. In *its* sphere all is right, and all the same perfection,—our Congregational and Episcopal convention resolutions and declarations of faith to the contrary notwithstanding. Where there is no language of words to represent conditions, of course there can never be right and wrong, and in the essence of the universe there is only perpetual harmony, order, and law.

The finite standards of mortals, set up by tyrants, either as individuals, governments, or churches, to regulate the morals of human beings, have ever been nearly or quite as destructive as preservative of harmony, order, happiness, and human prosperity. Such institutions are, therefore, morally wrong.

If the Divine Mind had created man with full powers of free agency, and at the same time so constituted him that he *could* commit a sin involving endless misery, and even with a complete knowledge (which he never has had) of the terrible consequences of the sin, and man ever did commit the sin and suffer the penalty, there is not even a possibility of rescuing God from the consequences and responsibility, nor from having done a wrong action. For certainly in man such act, with the knowledge and power, would be wrong, and, of course, must also be

in God by man's judgment. I cannot screen God from any law of justice, or of right and wrong, by which I try myself or my fellow-beings, so long as I bring his acts within the scope of human powers, capacities, and principles.

CHAPTER V.

DISCRETED DEGREES AND DISTINCTIVE ELEMENTS IN ORGANIC FORMS. — SEXUALITY.

THE simple and Omnipotent Essence filling all space, and blending in every form of being with the various and ever-varying exhibitions of *substance*, also in infinite space, produces the many discreted degrees of finite intelligence always in accordance with the peculiar combination of ingredients composing the form, in the same manner as the mixture of colors in painting produces the tints and shades.

Distinct degrees exist in the essence germs of all forms, each permanent and eternal. The soul germ of a human being will never develop a frog or horse, if it cannot a man, and the essence germ of a dog will never ultimate a human being. Every kingdom works ever in its own world, but different species may, to a limited extent, hybridize even though science proves that two species cannot propagate in the hybrid, but must go or come to one side of the line, carrying the hybrid in. What distinctive features in the spirit bodies pertain to the different human species I cannot yet say. Whether the Negro and Indian keep distinct features in their spirit forms permanently through that life, we have not

yet had fully established by the testimony of the few who have visited us from that country. If the distinct degrees existed only in the outer forms of being, we might find human soul germs in animals, and be guilty of murder in taking their lives as much as in taking the life of a fellow-being at its birth. Yet the degree that distinguishes the human from the animal may not establish a principle by which there could be a similar one between the different human species. Indeed, there may be no distinction between the soul germ of one species and another of our race, and hence justice would require the same great and fundamental principles of honor and justice to be exercised over each division of the race, even if weaker, especially by the stronger over the weaker in arm or intellect. A distinct degree in form may distinguish permanently a soul germ of man from that of an animal and not of an Indian from a Negro or Caucasian; for under various and changed circumstances one can be made to possess all the qualities and characteristics of the other species, and this can be carried to a very great extent; but with no surrounding circumstances can any species of animals be made human, or any human be reduced fully to animal. There is an evident difference between the soul germs of the individuals of the different kingdoms, and, for aught I know, may be between some species or races of men and animals.

A question arises here in regard to sexuality. Is it not a permanent distinction of the soul germ, or essence? From such evidence as we now possess it seems not to be a distinction in the essence. Physi-

ology gives sufficient evidence to induce in some minds the belief that it is only a *physical* condition of development. Mentally and spiritually each sex may represent the other, and some persons believe we have no sexual distinction in the spirit life; but there is plenty of evidence of the sexuality in that life as distinct as in this, and also in the gestation that precedes this, except in the first stages of that state and in the soul germ, where it cannot be detected if it exists. Some men are distinctly feminine, and some women masculine, in every essential quality of character, and could easily pass through life as members of the sex to which they do not belong, if sufficiently cautious, and some fall physically between both sexes, — sexual abortions. It seems to be almost or quite certain that circumstances, partially under our control, determine the sex of offspring; and, no doubt, when we know more of the laws of generation, and depend more on generation than on regeneration for goodness and salvation, we may entirely control the sex of the child in and after conception. But it is not probable (nor, if my theory be correct, possible,) that human beings can be produced from the germs of animal life, nor in any but the human mold. I am aware that persons with acute feelings and obtuse intellect will shudder at a theory that peoples infinite space and eternal time with unconscious soul germs, ever seeking, by involuntary inherent unconscious action, embodiment in matter a “home for mind,” and forever finding it, and living on and on, round and round, through circles and cycles of immense duration and countless numbers. This the-

ory, when compared to the narrow system of Christianity, is like modern astronomy compared to the ancient, and startles the thinker and feeler in much the same manner as that system did when first broached. I claim for this theory little, if any, originality. It has been set forth, at least in fragments and parts, perhaps the whole of it, and I only put it together in my feeble and imperfect way. When we understand the laws of generation, and observe them in our race, even as well as stock-breeders do in those of animals, we shall soon see the fallacy of the doctrine of depravity, original sin, and Adam's fall. When we learn that with the soul germs of Divine Essence, pure and perfect, every form of human being is started, and that we furnish the material for both body and spirit forms, and train the form in its physical and spiritual growth as we do a plant in the garden or green-house, we shall then know that society is to a great degree responsible for the conduct and character of its individuals, and mainly for the acts of its criminal victims. The most deplorable picture which our nation and civilization presents is the reckless manner in which our laws of marriage, and social standard of morals, peoples our country with victims of lust, depravity, dissipation, superstition, selfishness, revenge, and every vice that is so prevalent in our cities and large towns. Could the veil be lifted that hides the real life of our public, popular men and women, and especially the professional, and most especially the clergy, from outer observation, and the knowledge of character with the knowledge of persons as they are in the other life,

how astonished would the more honest and deceived masses be? No pen can write, no tongue can tell, what a nauseous mass of corruption is often hidden under the outer garb of popularity and clerical sanctity. After many years of study, observation, and research, with extraordinary means and facilities for gaining knowledge of the real and true social state in our country, I am constantly awakened and startled by new discoveries revealing degrees of social depravity that more and more strengthen the doctrine of its totality, and justify the Christian consciousness on which it has been mainly based, with Bible testimony, and might give its advocates a strong position were it not a fact that their regenerated souls and exempted saints are as bad as others, and that we can find the cause in the wicked, deceitful, false, and corrupting institutions of our Christian country. As well might we attribute the foot-rot in sheep to total depravity in the nature of sheep as to attribute scrofula in the body, or lust in the passions of a human being, to depravity, and as well pray God to remove the disease from the sheep as from our children while we feed ourselves and them on pork, whiskey, tobacco, and other scrofulous and lust-supplying substances. Some writer says: "There is no use talking about religion with no flour in the house," so there is no use talking about purity of the affections with a mouth full of tobacco and the stomach full of swine's flesh and fat, preserved in poison-whiskey. While we will use it, and marry our most vicious, dissolute, corrupt, vulgar, wicked, profane, and dissipated men and women for fathers

and mothers of the next generation, how can we expect any but a depraved race? If God does it, no human breeder of stock does as badly. Certainly, in society, as it now is, especially in the large cities, this class does a large share of the breeding; in the better and more moral families there are generally far less children born, and more of those born die in infancy. Is there, or is there not, any remedy? Christianity has none, or has applied none; neither has the State as yet found a remedy. Neither can it while we admit the doctrine of natural total depravity, and the God-creation of all children when born with corrupt and depraved natures inherited from Adam. If God is the parent of all children, and author of all existence, what right has man to establish any rules, except such as God has given and set up for the regulation and propagation of the race? Of course, none; and hence the Church sets up and establishes *her* law of marriage as God-given and ordained by Him, and the State enacts it; and the corruptions follow, because it is unnatural, and an abuse of nature to put woman into the power of man, and bind her by law or religion to such corrupt and lustful bodies and souls as we are constantly breeding in our diseased condition of sexuality, and under authority of Church and State.

Summing up, and setting forward this subject, we assert that the Divine Essence in human soul germs has, from all eternity, in the midst of an infinite number of worlds, been unconsciously collecting, developing, ripening, and abandoning organic human forms, each of which has been more or less varied in

material, quality, quantity, and structure, by surrounding circumstances at its organic formation, which has ever, and in each, varied the quantity and degree of intelligence, free agency, and moral accountability, all of which are the *qualities* of essence and substance combined in an organic human form,—coming with it and ceasing with it, to be renewed again in the next; shutting us up and opening us by the same law and uniformity that we are shut and opened in by sleep and wakefulness which we soon learn not to dread as annihilation. In sleep we are not accountable, intelligent, or conscious; and it is as virtually annihilation as is the space the soul germ walks over between two worlds, or two organic bodies. In this theory we can see the necessity of properly surrounding every soul germ that enters and commences a form in our world, and of properly nursing and providing for its perfect and harmonious development of a good body and spirit form, that its career of life here and with our earth may be a pleasant and profitable one to itself and all it associates with.

It is not more strange or inconsistent that essence should be particled in soul germs than that matter such as we can deal with chemically should be particled. The particles of iron are different from those of gold, and the one cannot be changed to the other even in form. Those of light are different from the electric particles, etc. There are constitutional and absolute differences in the forms of the simple particles in these and other cases, and no chemical dissolution and recombination can change them. They

are permanent, the flat particle in gold giving it the greatest malleability of any metal, and the globular particle of iron enabling us to work fine wire threads, etc. Why may not essence be as well and as permanently particled in germs of being, some of which forever make up the human form, and some the animal, and some the vegetable, and those particles not only make up the form, but the quality thus and so formed in so far as specific powers are concerned for each kingdom? When once we enter into and engage in experiments and speculation in this interior realm of being, we may find as great a field for discovery and theory as in that of outer and ponderable matter. If we could once lift off the great flat stone of superstition and bigotry, and search in the spirit world of forms as we do in chemistry, there is no counting the treasures that would be found awaiting us in these rich mines of essence and substance.

Love is undoubtedly particled material substance, which enters into the combination and formation of the human form and spirit body, and if sexual passion is to be attributed to it, it also enters into the formation of our other bodies and those of animals, if not of plants. The sexual passion may be an element separate and of somewhat similar, and somewhat dissimilar, nature from love, and yet be often drawn in and blended with the element of love. It is certain that there are many ways in which love shows its strongest powers without a sign of the sexual feeling,—as in a mother's love for her child, which is, perhaps, the strongest expression of love we find on earth; but the love of some males and

females, who have had no sexual relations, is perhaps sometimes as strong, if not stronger, and such is seldom strengthened, but often weakened, by more intimate sexual union. Sometimes the new element (if it be one), or the new and extended expression of love in sexual passion after marriage, centralizes and often destroys the first pure and strong courtship, love of each sex, and quite often of the female. There are strong grounds for asserting that sexual passion exists in, or is produced by, another and grosser element than pure love. Certainly the love of God, of which Christians talk so much, if it have any existence at all (which I sometimes doubt) has not manifested this passion in its earthly parentage, and also the love for God, where females love Jesus through the beautiful pictures of Him in the Catholic churches, or the ideal pictures in other churches, and where the church is called the bride or wife of Jesus; sometimes, at least in low and sensual organizations, such may bring in the sexual passion in feeling, if not language. There are plenty of cases of love without a single sign or emotion of passion of this nature, and such prove that love can and does exist without the thought of sexuality, and often sexuality exists without any passion, if not without love. The peculiar manifestation of sexual passion in animals, and especially in the female, and to some extent also in our race in that sex, would go to show that it was not the effect of love, but of some element more fluctuating and partially periodical in some organizations where love is strong and permanent, or where it is almost wanting. In some the passion is

very strong, and love can scarcely be detected; in others, love is very strong all the time, and this passion entirely wanting, or only periodical and slight. Further inquiry and experiment may satisfy us of the existence of two distinct elements producing these manifestations, and in some persons, or cases, or seasons, blended in producing the effects we witness of mutual love and sexual passion, and in others the one and not the other, even though sexuality and proper physical relations exist for both at the time. The infinite region and infinite variety of substance no doubt includes many elements which are only recognized by us in their effects which we witness, and which are often attributed to wrong causes. It is, indeed, a serious question how far the element of love is subject to the intellect or free agency of the mind. We are, by our pious and God-loving Christians, held to be accountable for not loving God and the church, even though we find no love in us, and cannot get any from those around us. Of course, if we are without the element, we cannot give it, and if we have it, it is doubtful if we can give it by any voluntary action of the intellect, with the will for an executive officer. Superficial minds that know nothing about philosophy prate about free love, and also about God being Love, in which case, of course, Love is God, and would be free in whole and in part in defiance of all human power; but Love is not God, nor more free than electricity or other elements, nor more subject to the will or intellect of man. Both are subject to laws, and so far as we can control the laws we control the elements subject to them

respectively. When men understand that both love and the sexual passion are elements, or an element, and that they and their effects are subject to laws, as electricity and other elements, we shall better know how to establish rules to regulate it. If the maternal and paternal attachments are the effects of love, it is certainly found in animals; and if the attachment we call love of God is to be attributed to the same element, there might be some corresponding feature in animals; and yet we find none, and attribute the cause to the organic structure in the lack of religious organs in the brain. But this theory puts it in the essence, or soul germ, where there exists a fundamental and eternal distinction, making of them separate kingdoms. Yet, as lime and other ingredients of a ponderable nature are found in common as parts of the forms in both kingdoms, so may love and lust be, and yet they may be so ethereal and subtle as to compose a part of the spiritual bodies of human beings as well as to be manifest in the outer forms of both kingdoms. Society will some day be able to regulate its institutions so as to avoid the terrible calamities arising from our miserable system of propagation under the almost universally-forced relation of maternity in marriage, and the usually accidental cases out of marriage. It seems strange that we cannot treat the subject of love, marriage, parentage, and sexual intercourse scientifically as we would any other subject, and by that means secure the necessary knowledge for improving the race in each succeeding generation. At present, society is debased, increased, and degraded by the

tyranny and bondage of social organizations rather than improved, especially in our large cities, where depravity much more prevails. There is no subject on which the people are so ignorant, which is important in life, as the propagation of the race, and sexual relations of life. Marriage usually unites two young persons, one or both utterly and entirely ignorant of all that pertains to their sexual passions, and, of course, utterly disqualified to become parents, and in their new relation to secure health, harmony, and happiness. Why not educate them scientifically on the marital relations, and the use and abuse of themselves, as on diet, disease, respiration, etc.? A breeder of animals would be called a poor and foolish speculator who would breed constantly only from diseased animals, and more especially if he paired and mated simply on the sexual attraction which draws many men and women into marriage. But the rule of breeding animals will not in all respects apply to the distinctive human kingdom, which is a spiritual one, and has laws especially pertaining to itself; yet, so far as the laws of organic corporal growth and physiological life are concerned, there are many laws common to both, which might be with good effect applied to the human as successfully as to animals, and yet need not disturb or intrude on the permanent dual sexual relations of true marriage, which we believe is natural. Of all the evils which each generation transmits to its successor, no one is more deplorable than the system of promiscuous breeding which is mostly covered by legalized marriage, which every pair, however ignorant, are permitted to carry on as they please, without the

least regard to qualification in themselves for parents, or ability to support and educate offspring, resulting in the introduction of soul germs into forms, often under most unsuitable conditions, and, in Christian society, ascribing the evils that ensue to God, while the parents, by voluntary action, often unwise and inconsistent, started the organic forms upon their career of growth. As there is room enough, and time enough, for all germs, each is entitled to the best conditions. A true system of anthropology, applied practically to human life and society, would be a great blessing, and its effects felt beneficially; but we can never have such until we deal with the real and simple elements of the body and spirit form, and discover the laws that can control them both in the love relations and passions of the sexes, and especially in the propagation of the race. Arbitrary laws that unite two of opposite sex, without regard to their fitness for parentage, and yet so bound as to make them parents, can never reform the race. How far nature establishes a single and exclusive sexual and passional attraction as a basis of the marriage relations, I have no scientific or philosophical evidence to enable me to decide; but I am sure that in the male sex at least, so far as history and observation can testify, exclusiveness has been the exception and not the rule in the passions of married and unmarried parties. And if we take the love relations independent of sexual passion, exclusiveness is again the exception in females. Society does not so much object to variety in love if the sexual is confined by marriage, even though the latter disease

or degrade the offspring. It is plain to all who study society as it is that our marriage laws, as they now are, bind together more who are *not* congenial, and would part, were it not for the law and public opinion, than of those who are congenial, and would not part. It is also certain that if free, and left to themselves, those who are exclusive, congenial, and do not wish to part, would still remain united, and be the ones, if not the only ones, who really ought to live together, and if otherwise adapted to it, raise their share of the children. I am sure that law does not make people love each other, even though it can make them live together, and pretend to love. Law can restrain the passions, and *it ought to do so* far more than it does, and ought to protect a woman as much against her husband as against any other man when he is forcing on her maternity, or ruining her health by personal abuse, even degrading her morals.

But to return to the elemental origin of the passions, and renew the questions: Does or does not the sexual passion of man and beast originate in, and arise from, the same elemental source as the love of a mother for her offspring? of the love of a Christian for his God? or the fraternal love of dear friends? Does or does not the passional love of a refined, sensitive, and spiritual woman for flowers or paintings arise in and from the same element and source as the love of a drunkard for rum, or a glutton for meat? Are there distinct elements producing these distinct attractions, or does the same element produce these varieties and shades of manifestation? I cannot answer these questions from any scientific experi-

ments or philosophical principles as yet established, but incline to the side of variety in elemental origin and mixture of elements. I do not believe one is evil and the other good, but each subject to both terms by turns, and in different actions both good or bad. A love of paintings may run to bawdy and vulgar pictures; and a sexual passion may lead the male to defend, protect, rescue, and secure the welfare of his victim. How we can make laws to control or regulate the elements of love and passion, without knowing the nature of them, and do justice to all parties, I know not. That there is a large number of elements in our physical and spiritual bodies which produce the various passional actions is evident. How to regulate them so as to produce the best effects and results to society should be the study of all who seek the interest and welfare of the race. It is evident that a large part of the passional intercourse between human beings is merely mechanical, and arises mostly from habit, and produces the most debased moral and destructive physical results upon the victims, more so than the use of tobacco or intoxicating drinks, which are bad enough; and these evils cannot be cured until we discover and use the laws that regulate the elements which are the source and cause of the passions. It is undoubtedly the substances within us seeking affinities that produce both the passional attractions and the appetites. Pus in the body, producing scrofula, almost invariably craves its affinity in swine's flesh and lard cakes. So, also, a nervous and irritable condition of the system, produced by tobacco, requires narcotics

and stimulants to feed the system with materials to keep it up. Thousands of people take tobacco or tea to quiet their nerves or arouse them to action from an unnatural state, caused by the very material sent to relieve it, on the Hanneman plan of "hair of the same dog curing the bite." Our systems of treatment are nearly all wrong in dealing with effects instead of causes, venting our spite on victims, often innocent, for they are the inherited and organic evils of individuals. If we had a system of education that would draw off or neutralize the excessive elements, and supply the deficient, we could cure or prevent most of the evils that afflict society and its members. There are principles underlying all human actions and elements producing them; and when we find the elements, as we have distinctly, we can put up lightning-rods to prevent the passions from striking, and conducting-wires to carry off and carry on the elemental circulations in the human organism, as well as in the outer and inorganic matter of our world. Love is not subject to the will or intellect, irrespective of circumstances and conditions, but only by and through laws. It is an element more dangerous for the ignorant than electricity or magnetism, or any of the gases, and we are easily blown up by it if ignorant of the laws that regulate it. The passional expression of love we try to regulate by law, but succeed so poorly it is unless to talk of free love, or bound love, or conjugal love, until we can consistently deal with it by the laws of nature that can regulate and control it, which I believe are as simple as the laws that control electricity.

CHAPTER VI.

CIRCLES AND CYCLES OF HUMAN EXISTENCE.

WE will now speculate upon the deeper philosophy of life, death, and immortality. Having laid out the timbers, and prepared the several parts of the structure, I will endeavor to put them together into a system of life that is eternal, or **ENDLESS**. The reader will pardon me if I take my own case, and, in personifying it, find the line, or path, of all human beings. I am *now* an inhabitant of the solar system, and of the particular planet Earth, and in the first circle of earth life, where all soul germs enter that have bodies, either physical or spiritual, on or around this planet. I shall go through all the strata grades and discreted degrees of human (spirit) life that belong to this planet before I leave it, and so will all who enter forms here, but none are born (or created) out of, or above, this plane in which I now reside. This is the germinal or gestation sphere or stratum of this, as the solid matter of each planet is of its own inhabitants,—the soil in which the seeds are planted. I *may* have, probably did, pass from Venus, and from the outer and last sphere of that planet, where I left my last spirit form, and washing the soul germ in the lethean stream between it and earth,

resting a night between two days of my eternal life, awoke and began my earthly life in this sphere as I had done before in a remote period, far away in time,—too far in centuries for the “reeling brain” to compute. I *may* have, probably did, pass to Venus from Mercury, where I had filled the measure of my life and traced the circle of that planet from its lowest to its highest condition of human form and fineness. I may, or I may not (do not yet even conjecture), have passed from the Sun to Mercury, or I may have passed from the outer planet and outer circle of the outer planet of some other sun or star; and, having completed the cycle of that sun and its planets, passed the deep lethean stream and left all its substance behind, entered upon a new cycle and the many new circles, or planets, that pertain to it; and when I have run my course outward through every stratum of each planet, and thus completed the cycle of the Sun, I shall be ready to pass on to another sun and its planets, and thus continue my eternal life. But only the soul germ passes on this; only the essence, or divine part, of me, and of each of us, moves on, and lives on thus forever, forming new and ever-changing bodies in the infinite variety of substances which it uses for its forms, and in which it lives and dies continually, forever renewing its existence and powers of expression and enjoyment. The space or time between each planet, or system of planets, is like the night between two days, and while thus conditioned our experience is like that of sleep-unconsciousness, and it makes no difference to us whether it is one or one thousand years, as it makes no

difference to us when we sleep whether the time is one or ten hours. The interior or divine germ of each human being has thus run its eternal career of life unto death, and death unto life, never losing its identity, and never securing an immortal body, nor is it more likely to secure one on this earth than it has been on other planets before, and, indeed, it never can in its career of endless activity, as such result would put a stop to change, and be to it little else than inertia, or annihilation. It is a great stretch of the mind to even conceive of an infinity of worlds and systems of worlds, and the endless round of nakedness and clothing which the soul germ has before and behind its **HERE** and **NOW**. It is a remarkable degree of power for a finite being to comprehend its world and itself in connection with the world on which it lives at the time of calculation, but to stretch out and grope after a whole system of worlds, and the cycle of being walking over them forever — an entity, forever human, forever safe and self-existent — is too much for the capacity of most minds in this life; but in the manhood of our race, when we get out of these shells and this gestation state, we can more easily comprehend and understand it. Like astronomy, it is too sublime and vast for the young student, but adapted to some expanded minds: it has cost me years of hard and close study to receive and accept it. The periods of time that it takes a soul germ to pass through all the discreted degrees, or spirit spheres of each world or globe, is no doubt different with different individuals; but evidently each germ, when once encased and entered upon its journey,

takes a through ticket, and goes to the ultimate, last, or most eliminated circle of the globe, and thence to another system or sun with its planets. New created bodies are constantly rising up before us, and spirit forms inhabit them awhile, then, casting them off, as a healed cripple would his crutches, walk without them on the ether, supplying the elemental form from corresponding material with as much ease and as little effort as we supply the lungs with air in this life. When the necessities of labor to support the body are no longer burdening us, we shall have ample time for spiritual growth, mental development, and enjoyment which we cannot have in this life of trial, trouble, and pain. It would not be strange if, in such a sphere of being, we should recall some part of past life anterior to our gestation here, and add some snatches of recollection to the philosophy of eternal existence which must surely be clear in that higher life. If all organizations are aggregations of simple particles of matter, there must surely be a germ of sufficient essential potency to begin and continue the collection and arrangement of such particles, so as to make the specific form; and, if this were a blind and unguided effort of matter alone, there would be no uniformity in species or kingdoms, but one species of animal or plant would bring forth forms of other animals and plants, and the human kingdom would bring forth animals, and animals human children. It is certain the forms are not like castings in a furnace, run in molds, each form to take shape or size from the mold, but the depositories are reservoirs in which varieties of forms can be devel-

oped, as we see by the various abortions and malformations in our race. The type is evidently in the soul germ which molds and guides the form in its first stages of development, and gives its own form to the outer shape in every instance where the work is not interrupted by causes that disturb the mechanical operation of construction of parts.

There is law, order, and intelligence guiding the formation of children; and he must be a dunce who attributes it to marriage, or to the parents, or the direct and especial agency of God. It certainly is not the guiding intelligence of the parents that gives form to the child, and is not accidental. Two other explanations have been brought forward with authority to inform the youthful inquirer how we came into being and shape as we are. One is that Nature does it. If so, Nature is not *totally* depraved, and it certainly is intelligent; and, if intelligent, may as well be called God at once, as we shall need no other to account for all phenomena. This would be falling back to Pantheism, and to a rational system at least of giving a name and power to nature sufficient to harmonize the universe without other God or intelligence, and, indeed, it might be stretched sufficiently to cover entirely any system of explanations for all existence; for to me all *is* natural and in accordance with Law, and Law is God. The other explanation is that of Christians, that God superintends the formation of all human bodies for the purpose of putting souls in them to be damned or saved for His own glory to all eternity. If this be so, He is culpable for all the births out of *unholy* wedlock,

and for all the abortions and idiots and malformations in it, and for all defects of body which so often cause sin as well as suffering through life; and if He work in and through nature, which He controls, He is not less culpable for all these defects. If there is a God superintending the making of children, He is either wicked, ignorant, or incompetent. But this is only childish folly, and too silly to be repeated to intelligent minds, and we must seek some more consistent explanation of the birth of human bodies and souls.

In the infinite universe of essence and substance are countless millions of soul germs, by inherent, instinctive, unconscious, and involuntary action, ever seeking encasement in forms, and moving, by Law, from planet to planet in a law of affinity and attraction which bears them on, as liberated gases are borne to upper strata by specific gravity when liberated from lower; and as these soul germs are themselves distinctive in form, they use the best means at hand to build the form in which they can ultimate, and often falling short in quantity, quality, or surroundings, they furnish the abortions and malformations from which they escape with or without a spirit form. If with one, they go on to complete the man or womanhood in the spirit spheres; if without one, the germ still seeks in the earth encasement, and finds success at last in starting a form that ultimates and ripens, by which it is enabled to pass through the "gate of birth" into the spirit realm into which it can only come with its form taken on in the rudimental sphere. Soul germs, following the

law of forms, must enter our, and each, planet in the stratum of ponderable matter, and be clothed in it to reach the next, or any other. As well might we talk of having children without conception or gestation as of having spirits in the spheres that were not born in the rudimental world. As we go to the proper place and materials for garments for the body, so we must for the spirit, and also for the soul germ. Soul germs move by specific laws from planet to planet, and from system to system, entering each in its inner belt of matter where forms can be organized, and gravitating outward through every stratum of organic life, from base to summit, and at the outer belt casting off the last particle belonging to that planet, its *day* of life was reached, its covering and the germ of essence is prepared to retire for its night of unconsciousness and rest, from which it awakes at the base of another world, and again begins its renewed day of toil and reward.

The involuntary, unconscious, and inherent action of soul germs in seeking encasement in forms of matter accounts for the success and failures, abortions and malformations by a uniform law that has no regard for human institutions of marriage or prostitution. The germs seek their destiny and start into form wherever conditions admit, and all find, sooner or later, the starting-point, and begin the life that ultimates in full germ forms, and lives to its old age in spirit life. For a long period in the geologic history of the earth no human forms were upon its surface, but the earth had not then reached its age of puberty; it was not in a *bearing* condition. To us,

finite beings, only was the time long. Childhood *seems* long to children, and the childhood of a planet to man. To infinity and in eternity one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day. There can be no loss of time to that which is immortal or eternal. A soul germ can lose no time, and gain none. Hence we lose nothing and gain nothing by length of time between worlds or in worlds (I mean globes, including all the spirit spheres with each). Since this divine essence is part of God, and, consequently, forever perfect, and perfectly harmonious, IT can never suffer, suffering belonging entirely to the form and its imperfections and temporary phases of ephemeral existence and relative position.

CHAPTER VII.

MISCELLANEOUS.

GERMS of truth wander about the human world sometimes for centuries before some finite intelligence secures them, and encases them in a consistent theory or philosophic system, for truth is admitted to be immortal. Such were the facts of incarnation, or reincarnation, of transmigration, of pre-existence, of eternal life, of compensation, of spiritual life, and progression, etc. All of these, and many more, have each a consistent place and mission in this system of life, death, and immortality, as we live it, in circles of worlds, and cycles of systems of worlds; but, in their fragmentary wanderings in the past, they have had no consistent theory combining them, and while each was a truth in itself when rightly understood and applied, yet added to untruths and inconsistent theories, the virtue and value was lost. Among the most absurd attempts to embody pre-existence in a system is that of Edward Beecher, in his *Conflict of Ages*, setting it up wholly as an excuse for total depravity, which he believes we bring here from a fall, or sin, in the previous state, which was a spiritual one. This world would, indeed, be a hell for such if Orthodoxy were the only religion, and had truth

for its basis of the future state of existence. It seems strange that some truths lie dormant so long, or are so long in being taken up and put in suitable forms of theory and demonstration. Such was the power of steam, known over twenty years before applied to mechanical purposes.

The different species of our race on earth evidently have different routes and spheres, if not different destinies after leaving the rudimental or germinal sphere of this life. The Negro, the Indian, the Caucasian, and the Malay have each ruling and peculiar general characteristics which distinguish them, and unfit them for that closer intimacy which binds the individuals of each species, or the families and nations of each together. It is hardly probable that these characteristics will be less peculiar, or less distinctive, in the first stages of spirit life than here. In fact, we all widen into individuality as we recede from childhood, and are all more and most alike when infants, both as species and as individuals of the same species. There is a geographical adaptation, or a climatic one, which in the earth life distinguishes the species as well as a physiological and psychological one. Whether the first has any effect beyond this life I know not; but the latter evidently will. As we go out farther from the center, and beyond the surface of the solid parts of our world, the region is vastly greater, and varieties of condition may be more or less abundant and permanent. There is room enough for all that are born on earth, and time enough for each species and each individual to ripen and mature, and pass on to other worlds. The moon and the satellites of other

planets may have a class and grade of beings different from us, or there may be some spirits more fitted for such worlds. Nature does not mold all intelligences after one pattern. Soul germs of essence may exist, varied in form from us, and varied from each and all of the species of our race, as the widest of our species differ, and yet have the same immortality we do. Since there is time enough and room enough, and can be no crowding, even if the animals are taken in, as there are no new soul germs created, we may safely infer that the space is all and well filled, and to the best advantage for the highest happiness of all organized forms in matter, ultimated from the action of essence.

Each being may be required to remain in, and confined to, each stratum of life and being till fitted for the next, and that may involve reincarnation, as some teach it. This earth life, not being a stratum but a gestation, the next, or spirit sphere near us, may hold all till progressed and fitted for the next; the spirits of children, and rude, undeveloped men and women, must stay near their earthly homes and friends till fitted to take their places in more harmonized and developed circles. No doubt, much of our correspondence with spirits is with this class who are mainly as ignorant as the minds in bodies, and, consequently, we seldom get wisdom of higher grade from spirits than we have taught on earth; but this is not evidence there is no higher, but only evidence that we communicate with our nearest neighbors. For the spirit spheres being stratified, and each soul, as it leaves the body, gravitating to its specific level

of intellect and affection, of course, many of the best are quite remote from our selfish grasp and sensual world, and can only reach us with distorted messages, often through several mediums, each of whom lessens the vitality and spirit of the message that started. If you doubt this, let a rude, unlettered boy read some beautiful poem or speech, and then let one who can enter into the spirit and sense of the subject read it, and see the contrast; and apply this to the messages you get from refined and advanced spirits, and you will not wonder they send us so few messages when they are obliged to use such mediums, or none.

To many, I am aware, this will seem a slender thread that holds us to eternal life through the strata of spheres in each world, and through the cycles of life in the systems of worlds and eternal time; but it is the only thread I can follow out into infinite space and eternal time to which I can hold to keep me from being lost in the universal dissolution of organic forms. It is also the only thread I can find to bind me to Deity, and on which I can follow the essence of Divinity in the finite forms of intelligent beings, and run each forward in that thread to immortality.

The *Westminster Review* for July, 1865, in an article on Herbert Spencer's *Principles of Biology*, furnishes me a text for my whole subject which has been written, and came to my hand at this stage of my work, and is as follows: "The organic body constitutes the point at which man touches the world." There are several strong and beautiful points in this article beside the foregoing, which I would gladly

incorporate into this work, but prefer to refer the reader to the whole article, where he can follow the writer from a pure fountain of truth in nature into a muddy pool of Christian theology, where all great truths lose their beauty and purity alike, and into which all writers for the popular magazines of America and Europe are alike obliged to drift with all articles to secure for them an insertion. If a writer sets out with a valuable truth, like the foregoing, and several others in the same article, he must soon spoil its natural beauty by covering with the slime of supernaturalism, or the sophistry of Divine goodness, or the false logic of especial Providence, and, thus dressed up, put it into the church to be preserved as a sacred relic or Divine revelation for man's salvation. It is well there are some men in our time like Buckle, Lecky, Emerson, and others, who can, and will, occasionally separate a natural truth from the artificial covering in which church writers cover and dress it for the devotion of the multitude. Soon as we can get this important truth of man's existence before conception and after death as a naked truth before human intellect and reason for dissection, examination, and analysis, we shall settle the most important question ever raised: and as the knowledge of the naturalist would soon prove, on examination, that the bony relics of saints in the cathedrals belong mostly to animals of late species, instead of being, as claimed, the bones of saints and martyrs of early church dates; so the scientific examination of the truths in the church would soon prove they were natural, not supernatural, and ex-

isted entirely independent, with all their powers, from all Bible, religious, or Divine revelation. The organic body is truly the point where man, or the soul germ, touches the earth, and touches it only for a moment, branching off again into more ethereal regions where higher powers and enjoyments await it, without any regard to God, Jesus, atonement, judgment, or resurrection, it being a scientific and not a religious truth, existing in nature and not in revelation, without need to be bolstered up by any form of sectarian superstition. Even *in* the church the world moves by such men as Colenso, Strauss, and Renan, and many others, to new religious truths, as it has by aid of Galileo, Newton, Franklin, etc., to new scientific truths, and as it is now doing in our day by the work of Parker, Emerson, Beecher, Frothingham, Colyer, etc. The ablest minds in the churches are constantly rejecting, one after another, the old rotten dogmas of early superstition, and looking up the truths of science and Spiritualism as a basis for discourses in the pulpit, and all these are signs of progress.

A cardinal and vital truth in Christianity is that Jesus had a pre-existence, and since he was born into this life from one before it, we may as well accept the fact, and extend it to the whole race, and each individual in it; for it is not more unreasonable, unnatural, or impossible for any other person to have had a pre-existence than for Jesus. If I were disposed to call in the New Testament to my aid, I could find support in it, and although not an authority to me, it is to many people good authority.

Jesus is said to have told persons in the other life that what good deeds they did in this life to their fellow-beings they did to Him, and to have attributed to others the same common parentage of God the Father, which, of course, gave all a Divine pre-existence, if he had one.

We accept the Christian authority that Jesus lived before he was conceived in this world, and I extend the same law and fact to all his brethern and sisters of earth life, and as we believe in eternal life which cannot be proved with a beginning, I submit to the Christian world whether it will give up the pre-existence of its Jesus, or admit his teachings, that all men are like him in origin and destiny. "If I go, I will draw all men," etc. "The Lord giveth, and the Lord taketh away" life. Then He had IT to give, and has it when taken back; and what is the Lord, or God, but LAW? and what can IT give but what it possesses? Apply this to the Divine Essence, and you have this theory.

It seems useless to spin out this argument, since the truth is embodied in a nut-shell space. We are either circles or straight lines, and with two ends, or none. If the latter, we had pre-existence, and, if the former, must end this by the law that began it. Individual testimony of persons in this life, who draw from fragments of memory, we may regard of some importance, although not wholly reliable, and yet it may be somewhat like spiritual vision which some persons do possess here, but in such imperfect degree that death seems to open to them a new world, and a new vision, about as strange and distinct from this

as to those who never had a spiritual sight in this life.

It is the philosophy of the other life that makes it acceptable to us in this, and not the phenomena. So it is the philosophy of pre-existence that renders it acceptable to us in this, and on which alone we can, with any degree of safety, count upon an endless future. Shut and open these senses, including consciousness, whenever you please, and as often as you please, but leave the soul germ intact and perfect, and we will maintain eternal life, sleep, and wake through eternity and never lose identity, and only slough off from the memory that which is useless to preserve, or which has performed its uses, and fulfilled its mission.

It may be thought useless, if not improper, to introduce this philosophy into this gestation life of the soul where very few can appreciate it; but since we hear and read so much about eternal life which is so utterly inconsistent with the beginning of existence here, we deem it important for those who see as we see the inconsistency of our Christian religion on this subject to correct its errors as far as possible.

We are often asked why the spirits who know this truth, if it be one, do not teach it to all whom they communicate with. We suppose they know many things they do not communicate to us, probably many we are not prepared for, and would not be benefited by being told; and, indeed, it seems their policy to let us find out as many truths as we can by our own researches, no doubt realizing that the effort to us is useful. Gifts are not as useful as labor-acquired prop-

erty. Earn it, and know its value. "*Seek*, and ye shall find." We feel that we have been aided in our efforts to satisfy our honest inquiry on this and other subjects of doubt and difficulty, and, perhaps, as much as was consistent with our best interest. Ever grateful and ever thankful for that spirit guardianship which has for many years been our greatest blessing, we feel to accept what it gives and not ask more, believing our spirit guides know better than we do what we deserve and need from them.

We should add one more Christian item of history to our theory of pre-existence in the person of Mary, the mother of Jesus, who is by Christian authority decided to be immaculate; and as by her history, to be found in the apocryphal New Testament, she was of Divine paternal parentage, the same as Jesus, of course, she had also a pre-existence; and, with little doubt, we might as well add Moses and Samson, and several other mysterious characters of Jewish history, as well as scores of Oriental personages who had no earthly paternal parentage, according to their history. According to Grecian mythology, the gods gave continued or perpetual existence to the children they begot of earthly mothers, but did not admit a pre-existence, as the Christians do, for their God-begotten child or children. The Christian is in advance, in this respect, although to us both are fabulous, except in the fact of eternal life, or of its being a fact.

We submit this whole subject to the candid investigation of our readers, with the expectation that many will at first reject it summarily, and afterward recall or accept it, as this has already been our expe-

rience in presenting it to friends; but we have the fullest assurance that in due time it will be thoroughly canvassed and receive its appropriate recognition, clearing away, as it has with us, many heavy doubts on the subject of future and eternal life, which, in its latter sense, cannot to us be true without this theory.

Edward Beecher, in his theory of pre-existence, asserts that once we all were spiritual inhabitants of Heaven, and enjoying the perfect bliss of that life, but that we joined Satan in his rebellion against God, and became totally depraved thereby, and, as condemned rebels, are sent to this state of existence, where we may accept the atonement, and, for Christ's sake, be saved, if we believe in and rely on Him, but not knowing our former state, have no inducements except what the Scripture and church offer, and, consequently, very few of us ever get back to Heaven, and the rest go to endless perdition, with the "nations that forget God." What was the origin of that pre-existence he does not tell us. I leave the reader to judge between the two systems of pre-existence, and accept either or neither. Some of the Oriental nations teach that our souls are sent into beasts and reptiles of various kinds as a punishment for sins committed in this life; but all these theories bring in a malignant God to sport with our misfortunes. Some more rational ancients, and some modern writers, believe we are swallowed up at death in the Divine essence, losing forever identity and our consciousness of being; but as these are beliefs only, I leave them.

CHAPTER VIII.

INCARNATION AND RE-INCARNATION.

ADMITTING the divine incarnation of several ancient persons who have been worshiped as Gods by succeeding generations, I extend the principle to all persons, both male and female, and to every individual of the race, from the "wickedest man in New York" to the worshiped Jesus of the Catholic church, and find and leave them in all stages and degrees of moral, physical, and spiritual development, with the Divine germ in each that must, and will, ultimately make a Jesus or a Mary of perfection of each. Hence, whatsoever we do to benefit or bless these—"the least of these"—we do to God, and for God, and it becomes a religious act with or without devotional feelings. The time has come to recognize this divine incarnation in the race instead of partially in one or ten of its members.

Every mortal pair who raise a child should do all in their power by fitting themselves, and by care of the object, to raise a Mary or a Jesus in perfection of body and spirit, and thus build up the race to its highest perfection. All efforts would be in the right direction, and the race rapidly improve under such ordering. If one half the care and good judgment

were taken in raising children that is taken in raising horses or cattle, the improvement would be manifest at once in a better class of children.

In our cities and large towns, boys of eight or ten years old can be found smoking and chewing tobacco, having inherited the depraved appetite from married, if not pious, parents, and having no guidance or instruction to avoid the physical and moral depravity. These children are equally incarnations with Jesus, and their sins are mainly from the earthly parents, and have descended through a perverted and polluted line of earthly body-makers, but never reach the soul germ, or divine Essence, of being which will cast off one after another these polluted bodies, and at last attain a harmonized condition of finite happiness.

Our greatest errors of judgment lie in measure and comparison. We measure with a short-time rule, and compare with few specimens, and thus condemn at once each guilty sinner to a final destiny, when there is no final or ultimate destiny, but a ceaseless round of endless change and variety. Even in our own life we often see extremes almost meet in the same person.

Christ and the Devil are the two objects which theology places at the extremes of character in goodness and wickedness, and on the line between these the Christian writers place all human beings, and most of them part the race by an imaginary line, and send each way the feeble and abused race to final and eternal destiny; but these old and superannuated teachings are about "played out," and in their stead

we must have a rational system of origin and destiny for each and all in place of this arbitrary and inconsistent theory; a new answer to the question: "What is the chief end of man?" since he positively refuses to praise and glorify God forever for Christ's sake. Organs and bells have been substituted to do this in our day, and many other devices may be got up to save human effort, and be propelled entirely by machinery so as to save all human effort, since we are a labor-saving people, and have a germ of the Divine ingenuity in us.

The first incarnation was the first human being on earth, and the last the last child born, whether the mother was married or not, or even if, like Mary, she were married after conception, and immaculate till the birth of her first child.

To the Jew and Christian Adam was the first incarnation of God's breath which made Adam a "living soul," he not being such until he received the Divine breath, or spirit of God. The fable says he was threatened with death for disobedience, and that the body did die, but not on the day it ate, as was promised, but that the soul did not die, simply because it could not; so that, as the story runs, the Snake told more nearly the truth to Eve than God did to Adam. Since Eve was not forbidden to eat, I could never see why she should incur the penalty, and not only have to die but suffer the pains of child-birth as a consequence of a sin of disobedience she had never committed, for, as the story runs, she was never designed as anything more than a "help-meet" for the man; but nature seems to disregard all systems of theology,

and to have made man and woman equally with souls and bodies subject to death and life, harmony and discord: the Divine Essence in each pushing out forms, changing and destroying and renewing them eternally.

Of re-incarnation we have not any settled theory. There seems to be some object in a life here, and, if so, those who die in infancy, or at or before birth, certainly do not get the advantage or experience of an earth life, by which it would seem that nature is thwarted in her designs. From what seems to be authentic we learn that these children who lose the experiences of earth life exist in the next, or spiritual life, but how or when they can be re-incarnated so as to get the experience of our earth life and carry it to the spiritual, where it would seem to be needful for their future growth, we do not know. We are not prepared to say that nature is thwarted, or that this earth life is not a necessary link in the experiences and changes of an eternal life, or in the cycle of our earthly and solar rounds; hence we cannot say that in some way nature does not bring each soul germ round into and through an earthly experience by which it can gain the necessary experience of an earthly life. Dissertations on this subject are quite common now, and in time will, no doubt, settle into a theory that may be some time demonstrated, and may substantiate a re-incarnation against which we have no prejudice, to induce us to reject it before the subject is thoroughly canvassed. If there should be a return to the earth of those who enter and leave it in infancy, of course there would be no memory to

link the two together; and if a return after a long or short life here had been once endured and suffered or enjoyed, the utter obliteration of the memory-plates would leave little or no chance for even fragments to be collected, although some persons do assume to remember some part of a former earthly existence; yet these persons are not credited more than are those who claim to be Christ, or some fictitious or real person of the past. The evidence being wanting that such being as the Christian's Christ does or ever did exist, or even that such person as their Jesus ever had a real earthly existence; so the evidence is wanting that any one person now living on earth in a body of *substance* ever had a former similar body life, and yet it may be true, hence we will leave this for further and future investigation. We have met several persons who claimed to be a reincarnation of Jesus, and one that claimed to be an incarnation of Jehovah, and yet none of them had any evidence to give, as not one could do any of the mighty works to prove their claims.

There is a very common error running through the public mind that morality is a part of religion; and some may think that the wicked and vicious will be sent back to this life to be punished, and it is even taught by some that human spirits do return incarnate in animal forms; but, there being no evidence of this, we need not admit it. In fact, morality and religion are as distinct as chemistry and astronomy, and it is easy to show that some form of religion accepts nearly every vice and crime as a part of its religion,—Mormonism adopting polygamy. Sects, strong enough,

rob, steal, and murder ; and our sects, most of them, sanction and take part in war, which is wholesale murder and robbery, and not less wicked and immoral than if it was without the sanction of laws of nations. There is no uniform standard of morality, neither is there of religion ; both fluctuate, and are ephemeral, being popular and unpopular by turns. The morals of the Bible are the most corrupt of any known to enlightened nations, and have caused more murders and wickedness than any other so-called religious code, if not than all other causes known, and as we progress in civilization, we gradually ignore and reject them.

We cannot rely on our feelings or desires to establish any theory or truth in nature ; but if I was, as an individual, to express my choice in this re-incarnation theory, I should say : Let me come back and go round again with the advantages and experiences gained in this trial life ; but, if I am to lose them all, and take my chances as I have in this, with no more knowledge or experience to guide, I should beg to be excused from another trial of earthly vicissitudes. There is no doubt a fixed and inexorable law, and we must submit to it *nolens volens*, and run in the groove our ceaseless rounds of cyclic changes in eternal life. There is no power of annihilation in existence, and whatever is is, and we are, and are to be, and to be pushed along the endless line of being, whatever we will, or declare we will not, do. If any theory of re-incarnation is true, the number of human inhabitants on earth increases, and some immigrants, or new creations, are constantly coming to make up the

increase; and some, surely, must get through and take their final departure from our planet. So, our theory would not be spoiled if re-incarnation should be ultimately proved true.

Since writing the foregoing pages, I have seen some published ideas, the gist of which is the same as I have expressed in this work, and yet differing in one essential particular. Their author teaches that the spirit is objective, and the forms subjective only, and hence not material; holding the theory of Bishop Berkeley, that what we call matter has no real existence. To me both seem to be material, essence positive, and substance negative, and each acting and reacting on the other. Hence objective and subjective would hardly apply to what I call existence in those varied forms. In the case of the mirage, the picture may in one sense be said to be subjective, because it is produced by and from the background, and yet it really is material, for if there was no matter where it appears, it could not appear to our vision. This may be a better illustration of what we daily see and feel in our outer life than the theory of objective and subjective. The background of our being sets out the forms in which we appear; though both are material, but one is eternal in individual existence, and the other ephemeral in form, yet eternal in partied material.

Familiar illustrations of inferior and superior conditions of matter are before us daily. The potent power of steam is in the water, or it could not be produced from it. The alcohol is in the grain and

fruit, or it could not be extracted. In our California wine-cellars they put wine in the still and pump brandy or alcohol out. We watch with interest the curling smoke as it rises in clouds from the chimney, and in a short time, and at a short distance, it entirely disappears. Where has it gone? Not a particle has been lost. It is somewhere still, and forming an active part of the air. We press the life and soul out of organic bodies as we press the wine and brandy from the grain or grape, but we no more destroy the one than the other. The elements are as real that propel the living organism of man and beast as the subtle elements in the grain and fruit, or in the seed germ that starts new forms in the vegetable world. The air we breathe is filled with elements that even the chemist cannot detect, and that no retort can hold. It is time we recognized the existence and potency of this soul of things that appear and disappear before our limited vision.