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A Friendly Controversy,

BETWEEN

REV. MR. —,

A BAPTIST MINISTER,

AND

J. B. LANGELL,

THE AUTHOR OF

WHY I AM A SPIRITUALIST,

AND

WHY I AM NOT AN ORTHODOX.



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Why I am a Spiritualist, and Why I am not an Orthodox.

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Truth is Divine, whether outside the Bible or in? Is error
Divine because inside the Bible? *Never!*

RED BANK, N. J.

1875.



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MR. J. B. ANGELL :

My Dear Friend:— Mr. B—— informs me that you will not be at his house to-day. This may be as well, so far as any conversation about our future destiny is concerned, though I should be glad to meet you. It will not avail anything for us to hold a contest of reason about spiritualism, for you deny the premises of all my reasoning, viz.—*the Bible*. I have no other basis for my views of salvation through Jesus Christ, and you cannot be led to see the error of your system, except from the same source. We must have an authoritative standard of truth and doctrine as a guide or we can never agree or settle anything.

But all erroneous systems of belief that men sieze upon to give them hope for the future life, *first* deny in part or in toto the Bible as the revealed word of God, and then of course it is all plain sailing for them. Since the world began these systems of error and unbelief have existed, but they all begin just where the serpent began with the woman, by denying the word of God; and then they draw out their systems as best suits their wickedness or the fancy of the human mind.

Sweedenborg devised a cunning system, partly formed on the Bible and partly of human reason, not to say satanic device. And the same is true of this subtle and bewitching system of error into which you have fallen, and to which you have given a soul too noble for such employment. These systems all have their rise and fall, their changes and new revelations, but the Word of God abides through the ages, the blessing of all who receive its truth.

In that Word I find a divine Saviour, not a medium, but an Almighty, all-loving Saviour, who comes to me and puts a new life into my soul, and then leads me by the hand into pure and holy ways, leads me towards the heaven he has prepared for me and for all who will follow him.

O how much better to be led by the Son of God than by rapping and often lying spirits, even if Spiritualism were true! Now my dear friend, I want you to know this Saviour, by personal communion with him, *through prayer*, (for being divine he is to be worshiped,) I want you to know his love, his sweet, comforting, soul-satisfying love. No man can know true peace and true life that does not find it in Jesus Christ.

I know something of these ways outside of Christ; know something of the many theories that men have devised to satisfy their souls; and I know they *do not* satisfy the wants of the human soul. I can roll up an amount of testimony on this point that ought to convince any one. Swedenborgism, Spiritualism, Rationalism, Free loveism, Unitarianism, Universalism, Hindooism, (they are too numerous to name half of them) *not one* of them all satisfies the soul.

We are charmed by them, but they don't satisfy the deep longings of the soul, they don't answer *to die by*.

O, my friend, you have fallen into the snare of satan, who is binding your soul unto eternal death. You are trusting in a subtle theory that will vanish in the eternal world like vapour and leave you without any resting place for your soul. As sure as Saul of old was led to self-destruction by this same destructive doctrine, so are you hastening to your own destruction in this belief of the communication of Spirits. Our good Heavenly Father never intended that we should receive our instruction and guidance in the great matters of the future life or of this life, through any such means. He sent his *Son* to us, not spirits. What strange credulity that men will believe a word or letter of one whom they know to be immoral and wicked, who will accept their pretended communications and still reject the word of God through his Son. *This is condemnation!*

I can't tell why but there has seemed to be a strange sympathy of feeling between us from the first. And without

flattery I am free to say that I recognize a nobleness of nature in you that has drawn me towards you. And I have had a strange longing to help you out of the snare of the fowler which I am sure is holding you to everlasting ruin (except you escape). O that I could help you, and that you would see the danger you are in! How ardently I pray for you, and will pray that you may see the danger you are in. What would I not do to help you to see the truth and to find the way of life which God has cast up for the redeemed to walk in! Do you realize the fearful end of a fatal mistake in this matter! A soul lost, there is no loss like this! I beg you to seek guidance from God in most earnest prayer! Do not trust this theory or system which rests on nothing but the fancy or sentiment of man (unless it have a *worse author*). Man can make himself believe what he wants to believe and find proof of the same, but the truth as God has given it to us will alone save the soul. If you will be counseled by me I entreat you to seek God and not to seek after spirits who at best are but creatures, and all need the guidance and support of their Creator.

Make your application to the Son of God and ask of him guidance and wisdom, forgiveness of sins and eternal life.

That you may do so, and leave off seeking after the spirits, is my most earnest prayer for you, and is your only hope. I am as certain that you will be lost in the way you are in as I am that God saves only through his Son Jesus Christ.

Yours in highest regard,

PHALANX, *January 16th*, 1874.

My Dear Friend:—Yours without date, came when I was absent to the city. Mrs. Holms, who took care of my house while I was gone, forgot to call my attention

to it, but in time I discovered it lying upon my centre table. I read it with great interest. I saw in it an earnest honesty of purpose, fully confirming my previous impressions of the untiring sincerity of its author, and I do not think it would be safe for any one to say that its author has a greater respect for me, than the respect I entertain towards him in return.

You state it will not avail anything for us to hold a contest of reason about Spiritualism, because of its base differing from yours. Now is it safe for any man to drive down his stake and say he is perfect in any important direction and more especially so in his religious views? For does not history tell us that we have been progressing from way down the ages when they worshiped mere storks and stones up to our present highest ideas of a living God, and that our intelligent judgment plainly tells us we are, as it were, infinitely more below perfection than the stork and stone worshipers were below us? Under these considerations it seems to me an exhibition of undue presumption for a man to say, it is useless for two friends to meet together to test the comparative evidences of our different positions; for him, as it were, to say, I know mine to be true, and yours to be a mere shadow. It was but a few years ago, doubtless, your particular religion was considered a mere shadow, or something worse, for they considered its position so demoralizing that they burned old John Rogers at the stake for daring to preach his so-called heresy, and now if one attempts to adopt the same privilege of entertaining further new ideas, more in accordance in my estimation with justice, mercy, and sound judgment, to be sure you do not burn him at the stake, but you tell him in substance, that if he perseveres in his course, that eternal death is his sure destiny, compared with which in my estimation, the burning at the stake would be immeasurably preferable.

Of course your knowledge of spiritualism is very lim-

ited, and doubtless much that you have learned respecting it, has come through minds prejudiced against it, who have siezed only upon the evil reports respecting it, without investigating its great and glorious truths.

If you recollect the Sunday I attended your church, Mr. DeWitt described a mother who had lost an only child, and when it was being deposited in the grave, the effect upon her was heart-rending in the extreme. Do you suppose her agony would have been so intense if she had been a spiritualist? Suppose she had received such vivid evidence as Mrs. Angell had experienced, (the description of which you must have read in my pamphlet). And further, I will describe to you another experience. Hearing through the papers of Mr. Mumler's spirit photography in New York, Mrs. Angell and myself decided to call upon him the earliest opportunity and see what we could for ourselves. We did so, but Mr. Mumler was not in; his wife was there and showed us an album containing quite a number of spirit pictures in connection with the principle ones. One, I recollect was the picture of a gentleman, (a Banker in Wall St.,) sitting in a chair, and near him stood a lady back of his left side with her arm partly around his neck, over his right shoulder, coming down over his breast with a bunch of flowers in her hand. This Mrs. Mumler told us was recognized at once by the gentleman as his wife, who had left the form some years before, and he took it among her former acquaintances; and they all recognized it. (These spirit pictures are not as plain as the principle one, but plain enough to be unmistakably rognized.) Another that I saw was a lady's, who had lost an only child, aparently some ten or twelve years old. The lady was impressed at times that the spirit of her child was with her. She was well convinced; she could feel its influence. Hearing of Mumler's spirit photography she decided to go and see what she could attain, much against the advice of her husband, for they were both prominent members

of the Episcopal Church; considering such tamperings almost sacriligious, nothing but the vivid impressions of the mother would have prevailed upon her to attempt the experiment. She took her seat in the chair for the picture, hoping that if her child's picture was presented, it would appear with her mother's arms around her, with the child's face leaning upon her mother's breast as they often used to while at prayer. The picture was taken, and sure enough there the child was, just as she desired it; the whole size and form, and make up, corresponding with the child while living. Can language describe the joyful contemplation of a loving mother whose very heart strings, as it were, (from parting from her only child a short time before,) had been torn from their deepest centre. And now to realize such vivid, and unmistakable evidence that her child was still with her! This induced her husband to take a sitting, and his desire was to have the child, if it was presented, to be leaning upon his arm, a favorite position of theirs while the child was living in the body. He placed his arm in a position for such a result without letting the photographer know why he sat in that form, for the photographer criticised his position, saying it would not look well for a picture. The picture was taken, and there was the little daughter just in the position he wished it, looking up into his countenance with an expression of the most winning sweetness. He gave a look at it and burst forth with exclamations of holy joy, closing with, *now I know my child lives!*

The skeptic will naturally say, this was a statement from a stranger, and an interested party. Now I will tell you what a turn it took. Soon after we were there, Mr. Mumler was taken up by the Mayor of New York, for swindling the people. Of course, in time, the trial came off. Nearly all the parties to the pictures which we saw there, and Mrs. Mumler described to us, were brought forward as evidence to prove the genuineness of his pictures, and this evidence was reported entire, in all the leading pa-

pers of the city, and the sworn evidence as far as the pictures she described to us went, agreed with her statement, word for word, as near as we could recollect, throughout; and although the Judge, the Mayor, and a'l the parties that opposed him, were bitter enemies, apparently, to Spiritualism; the evidence was so positive in favor of the genuineness of his Spiritual Pictures, that they dared not do any other than clear him. That was some three years ago, since which, he has been taking pictures right along in Boston

If this woman that Mr. DeWitt described, had been a Spiritualist, she would already have been impressed with a positive knowledge of the glorious existence of her child in spirit and further, this Spiritualism would tell her that was eventually the destination of all, whether outside of the Church, or in. I did not understand Mr. DeWitt to state, whether this woman's child belonged to the church or not. But suppose he should meet a similar case, where the child was outside of the Church. Do you suppose he could, as it were, pour live coals upon her bleeding wound, by telling her that her child was not only lost to her forever, but that it was doomed to misery throughout eternity, *nay, nay, never!*

A man apparently of such a nobleness of soul, with marks of such an undeviating eye to justice, with a sympathy for his kind, that apparently was gushing out at every pore; could never take his creed in his hand and read out the child's doom, to a mother in that condition! How much rather would he say, get thee behind me the satanic part of my creed, and adopting the Spiritualistic idea of pouring the healing ointment into her bleeding wound, saying, my dear woman, take comfort, for I positively know, that your child not only lives in glory, but that in time, when your scenes closes with your present form, you will meet her in the midst of that glory, with the full appreciation of a mother's love

towards her child. Does this look like the wiles of the serpent over the woman? Does this look as if I was led by the evil one? Would you not rather say that the eternal condemnation part of the Orthodox Creed was more in consonance with the character of the evil one? And can it appear strange to you that the present living evidence that I have had presented to me, should seem more reliable to me, than that, that was recorded some two to five thousand years ago. At times, too when bigotry was so intense, and the prejudices were so fierce, they would hang a Quaker, burn a Baptist, or nail a Christian to the cross, for daring to promulgate their so-called heresies to the people? And will you condemn me to eternal death, when perhaps I could no more believe your doctrine, than you could believe the necessity of the Hindoo Widow sacrificing herself upon the funeral pile of her husband? Or that the mother throwing her only begotten into the Ganges, that it might be saved in glory?

Suppose a Chinese Buddhist should tell you, to prove the truth of his position, that his doctrine had stood the test of ages. That they had piled up such mountains of witnessess that it seemed as if it ought to convince any one. You see at once, the advantage he has over you in this kind of evidence as a proof of the truth of, his doctrine, for it has stood the ages of more thousands, of years than your particular denomination has hundreds, and they have and now are counting up witnesses by the hundred millions, where yours does by the single millions. Would such evidence as that have a feather's weight towards convincing you of their truth? Never. You would say truly, that it only proved the low mental and moral condition or status of their average mind.

And is your position free from the appropriateness of a similar application? What can be said of a class who professed to be followers of Christ, the spirit of whose life was to love their enemies, return good for evil, if a man

smite you on one cheek, turn the other also, and immediately following tell us, as I have heard your ministers state, that God, through his wrath, hurls his children into eternal misery for their stubbornness against his plan of salvation? Is that returning good for evil? Does that possess the precious jewel, consistency? And does not this make your God possess a quality you would most unhesitatingly condemn in man!

You most earnestly tell me that if I want to enjoy sweet, soul-satisfying peace of mind to be prevailed upon to take your advice, and come into your line of salvation. Could it be possible that I should enjoy a self-satisfied state of mind, believing that four-fifths of my nearest and dearest connections and friends that had left the body, were already foregoing their doom of undescrivable misery in the bottomless pit, and this doom was pronounced upon them, not because they were not the very patterns, perhaps, of justice, mercy and truth, not only sundays, but every day, but because they failed to subscribe to your 39, more or less, articles of faith, a faith that had planks in it that they could no more believe in than you could believe in Catholicism, Jesuitism, or Mahomedanism.

My Dear Mr. ——— is that justice? If I was so constituted as to have so little sympathy for my kind, that I could with truth say I enjoyed a sweet peace of mind under such circumstances, would not I be a subject for pity? And, furthermore, would not I especially be a subject for pity, if my mental organization was such, that some of the main features of my doctrine must be composed of wrath, vengeance, and retaliation, or it would not seem a truth to me? Would not the state of my mind be in a melancholy condition? It appears to me it would be my most earnest prayer, that not only myself but that *all* of my brethren might be prevailed upon to *come up higher!*

Is it not plain, as intelligence advances, these things become better understood? It appears to me you have to

exert yourselves more and more every year, to tax your ingenuity more, to take advantage of conditions so as to keep up the standard of interest. For instance, as an illustration, to try to prevail upon the young, and plead for parents to bring their children even. For while the clay is young and supple, it is more easily moulded according to the design of the potter. And if you can hold it in shape long enough to get upon it a good church bake, doubtless you feel it then quite secure, for it is not easy to alter a form of clay into a new and perhaps more desirable shape, after it has been well set. There is much clay, very much that is so gross that if you can knead it over, and bake it into your form, and make it equal to your standard, you have gained a great point. Herein, perhaps, is your work. But there is much clay that is in a condition for a higher religious standard, a higher round on the ladder, and adapted for living ornaments upon that round, but you level all to the same form, and if one has a desire to take another step up the ladder you will, if you can, pull him back. Here is your mistake. You make them all as it were, for illustration, into Orthodox jugs, which are well enough, and useful, if you would fill them with pure and wholesome material such as flows from the fount of Christ. But no, you mix with it wrath, vengeance, and, in my estimation, you can no more take this kind of mixture into your moral stomach, without its having its demoralizing effect, than you can take poisonous alcohol into your physical stomach, without its having its evil influence. The toper may flatter himself that he has quieted its desperate alcoholic influence by covering it over with honey and sugar, so that it will be very pleasant and apparently harmless to the palate, but as it is landed upon the laboratory of the stomach, the poison is taken up by the valves, and is sent hissing through the veins over the whole system, and the consequences are, if persevered in, inflamed blood, blotched and swollen face and limbs, delirium, insanity, and a premature grave. And it is much so

with the angry passions of our creeds. You may so cover it with the true Christ principles that they will seem very pleasant to the moral palate, but when they land upon the laboratory of the moral stomach, the poison is sent hissing through the moral and mental veins, and it strikes out in irritability, family bickerings, neighborly quarrels, national wars, and even in extreme cases, murder. For how tame is the anger of man up to the murder point, compared with that of a God, who through his anger, hurls his children throughout the world by thousands every hour into eternal misery, each moment of which is immeasurably more severe, than the momentary suffering of the murdered man, while his life is being taken! Is it strange that the daily papers are teeming with accounts of deadly conflict, when a great proportion of our very religion nurses in its bosom the seeds of such desperate passionate qualities? But you see I am in the main trying to convince you of your position by the exercise of reason upon the subject. I believe the Orthodox generally try to prevail upon their people not to reason. Mr. C—— your predecessor, told us in a sermon he preached in our schoolhouse, that we must not reason upon their plan of salvation; mind you, he did not hesitate to reason most sharply upon the short comings of other plans (is not here another jewel missing), suppose you conclude to swallow blind the whole of your doctrine, the good, bad, and indifferent, does that hoodwink nature's laws? Suppose you should undertake to plead for the reformation of a toper, telling him that if he persevered in his indulgences he would land in ruin. O, says he, I see you are exercising your reason, you must not reason upon the subject. Do you suppose that would stay the demoralizing effect of the alcoholic poison? Does not the very fact of your over anxiety for smothering reason awaken a suspicion that you fear its light? How, pray, can we make up an enlightened judgment upon any important subject, excepting through

our reason, and the more important the subject, the greater the importance that we exercise upon it our soundest judgment. Does truth lose lustre by intelligent and unprejudiced investigation? *Never!* This is what spiritualists are constantly, and most earnestly pleading, that skeptics come up and investigate. No matter how strong the intellect, the more powerful the mind of the investigator, the more as they progress will they appreciate its glorious beauties, and the more they enlighten themselves upon the subject, and the more they progress through its teachings here, the further in advance will they be able to take their starting point hereafter. And may you be prevailed upon to investigate this subject, which in time, if persevered in, will place you in sympathy with the idea of a God, whose plan of salvation covers *all!* What a glorious change must come over so expansive a soul as I feel well assured is that of yours, after so long entertaining such a narrow seven by nine heaven that takes in but one twelfth of the human race at best, to be able to spread your arms wide, and open the doors of your soul to their greatest tension and say, now I know my God will eventually *save all* from the least to the greatest! Not a sparrow shall fall beyond the point of his redemption. That you may realize this glorious condition before your time for passing over, so that you may prepare your mind not only for a higher stand here, but for a more advanced position hereafter, is the *most earnest* prayer of your *Sincere Friend,*

J. B. ANGELL.

J. B. ANGELL,

My Dear Friend:—I perused your communication with care and made some notes, the substance of which I will give to you in this paper.

1st, On the claim of perfection of views which christians make, the case is simply this: our views, or doctrines, are

taught in the holy Scriptures, they are not *ours*, they are those laid down in that book, we have no responsibility for them. If the book is false, then of course we are wrong; but if the book is true, then our position is not only *invulnerable*, but *infallible*. You must fight it out with the Bible, and not with Christians. We believe the Bible as it stands, you do not, therefore there is no possible ground for agreement between us except on the divine authorship or divine inspiration of the Scriptures. That battle has been fought out and won triumphantly for the Bible in every age for ten centuries, and it is too late in this generation to go back to do that work again. Every civilization for a thousand years is the direct outgrowth of the Bible, and to deny the divine authorship of that book *now* is to deny the best part of all human history.

2d, There never has been any such progression of religion, or worship, among God's people as you speak of. God's people have never been idolators, except when they left the true God, and then they were chastened till they came back. The Bible taught the same doctrine, and God's people believed the same since Abraham's day till now. You would charge upon the Bible, and upon Christianity, the follies and errors and passions of those who have perverted and corrupted religion. It is just as reasonable to say that the Republican Government is responsible for all the wrongs and frauds and corruptions connected with the operations of our Government. How unfair to yourself is your reasoning?

3d, On men being condemned to punishment, you charge this to *us*, to *me*. It is not my doctrine, nor my teaching I did not say "These shall go away into everlasting punishment." "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched." It is the language of the Son of God! You must battle it out with Him. I will say this, what I also preach, God never made hell for man, but for the devil and his angels, and man chooses to act with the devil and

serve him, so that God has no alternative but to send man with his master. Then shall he say also unto them on the left hand. Read Math. 25-41: "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels:" Man loses himself. When God opens the most gracious way of life and sends me to proclaim it to you, and you refuse to accept it, but say *I have a way of my own*, and are lost, finally, who will be to blame therefor? Christians don't condemn any man, nor judge any man, but simply stand on the word of the eternal God.

If I am wrong and the Bible a book of fables, then your doctrine will catch me, but if the Bible chance to be true, and you are wrong, you are lost and there is no hope. Now who is in the safer position? Your opposition to the Bible doctrine of eternal punishment is Universalism rehashed, and every religious system outside of Christianity fights this doctrine of the punishment of the wicked; the unregenerate heart of man don't like it, and resists it and denies it. Now let me show you just where this resistance and denial of this truth of God's word began. Look at Genesis, 3-4, "And the serpent said unto the woman, ye shall not surely die:" and you have the origin of your faith on this doctrine. There is where it began, and all through the ages unbelieving souls have been asserting these words of Satan "*Ye shall not surely die.*" Now whether you like or dislike the doctrine of punishment matters not to the truth of it. I know the natural heart does not like it no more than the law-breaking and wicked people in society like punishment. You show your unfairness when you state that only one in twelve are saved and the rest lost. The Bible does not teach that. To begin with, the infant part of the race are saved, which is nearly or quite *one half*. Besides no estimate can be made on which to base a conclusion. The race is rapidly coming to accept the gospel. The heathen races are coming, millions are added every year. Now if the great portion of the race shall accept Christ as the Saviour,

and the world stand for many ages, yet, you see how the case would be changed. How ridiculous must our deductions from our limited knowledge seem in the eyes of God!

I see no other points that need to be touched in your communication, unless the one about the use of the reason in christianity. The Bible opens the widest field for the use of human reason, and nothing makes mind greater, or broader than to study the Bible. And probably there has been more of the best thought of the race expended on the great themes of the Bible than in any other direction. You seem to think I am bound in by creed, that the doctrine of the Bible enslaves the mind. The Bible makes mind free if we accept it. Like God, the Bible is a limitless ocean of truth and mind can swim in it forever and be free. It is yourself that is bound down by one narrow and soul destroying system, in bondage to evil spirits, bound to receive their vain babblings and credit their powers to make pictures to lead the credulous astray. You take the *creature* for your guide. I take the *Creator*. Is there any difference? We shall see.

If you would inquire the way of life *in the Bible*, I would love to talk with you, but if you wish to *reason against the Bible*, I would say not until you have gone over the whole field of evidences for its divine inspiration and refuted them. Simply to say that a system or a truth is inconsistent, or cannot be, is the word of one man against another. The Bible, as it stands, has endured nearly nineteen centuries all the opposition of the bitterest foes and is planted in more hearts to-day than ever before. It will endure when all its opposers and foes are beaten down.

With great respect for your candor and sincerity, but with sorrow over your error and over the destruction that awaits you if you finally reject Jesus Christ as the Son of God and Saviour of men, I add my prayer to this for you.

I do most cordially invite you to attend my ministrations on the Sabbath, and at other times, if you are willing to

hear what you do not believe. Because I regard you as an honest and true-minded man, I have hoped that the Holy Spirit of God and the Word of his truth might reach your understanding and conscience. Do not look upon anything herein as colored with personal feeling in the least, but all in the love of Christ. Your Sincere Friend——.

My Dear Sir :——I have read your paper with care and interest. It affords me pleasure to exchange thought with a man who evidently is so sincere and earnest in what he believes to be right. When I named idol worship in my last, I had my mind on profane history as well as divine. But it seems to me there has been some broadening of liberality in the divine since Abraham. For the Christ principle of returning good for evil I suppose was introduced since Abraham. It seems that Catholicism, and Jesuitism had the main sway for many centuries until old stout Martin Luther and Calvin, and somewhere the Baptists came in for an advance ahead. As an evidence it was a step towards greater liberality is the persecution they had to encounter. Then came the Wesleys, the Unitarians, the Universalists and the Spiritualists. These latter, I presume you will not admit as progressive. Here is where we might differ. But, I presume you will think with me that infant salvation is more liberal than their condemnation. For the paving over hell with infants not a span long, never did have a very pleasant sound, I presume, with either of us. There is where we could strike hands most cordially, and I am happy to feel that I can meet you thus far. Now, then, if we could manage in any way to call the whole race infants, which I fully believe we are, in comparison with what God has got in store for us, and you was to talk it up right stoutly, I think you would find your humble servant at your Church occasionally, ready to gather the precious mental jewels that would be dropping from your pulpit.

You state you thought my statement of the proportion lost an unfair one. The infants in your particular case makes a wide difference. But aside from the infants, I think my plan for estimation bears from the very facts the most satisfactory approach to a correct proportion of the lost to the saved, of any I have ever seen. It was explained in my pamphlet. You may have forgotten it. I will restate it.

The general estimate, in round numbers, of the race is ten hundred millions, two-thirds of which, as put down by geographers, are heathen, which leaves 333,000,000 about for the Christian countries. Now, it is estimated that in the Christian countries there is, some say, one to four, others, one to five, that are actual members of some church; in the United States it is one to four, including the Catholics. Now, one-fourth of 333,000,000 is nearly 83 millions, which is about one twelveth of 1,000,000,000. But, as I there stated, if my statistics are not entirely correct, if the real number is a little more or a little less, it would only alter the degree, not the principle in the least. You say the Bible does not teach the proportion lost. This is not a Bible question; it depends upon statistics outside the Bible. It appears to me the above is the most satisfactory approximation to the proportion lost that I ever saw made, and that your term unfairness in the case, is not warrantable. You say the heathen are being converted, hence, they cannot be estimated. Now, I very much doubt whether the converted more than keep pace with the increase of the population, hence, it would not alter the proportion. You state that civilization has advanced since the Orthodox religion prevailed. Does that prove that still more progressive steps higher up the ladder would not make still greater advances. In some instances you have opposed progress. Astronomy was headed off in Galileo's time with the whole force of the then prevailing religion, and Geology was opposed with bitterness, and Phrenol-

ogy did not escape fierce invectives being hurled at it, and now Spiritualism (the presentation of which is the greatest of any single step in advance since the history of man) is opposed by the whole Orthodox force, with a vehemence and fierceness only limited by their capacity for not being able to do more. But with all this opposition, it has made unprecedented strides in its progress. Some four or five years ago the Catholics had a convention in Baltimore of their highest dignitaries, such as Bishops and Archbishops, and in the course of their deliberations they gave the statistics of the various denominations in the United States, and after naming the number of each they then summed up, stating that the whole number, including their own, amounted to about nine millions, and that the Spiritualists outnumbered them all, for they figured up some eleven millions.

Now I presume there is no body so thoroughly qualified for rendering correct statistics as the Catholics, and this, mind you, was some 4 or 5 years ago. And there is no reason to suppose that they would put down a greater number than they thought there was. This statement astonished the most of the Spiritualists, for they have no general organization or means for positive estimation. But Judge Edmonds, who is qualified as well as any other individual to judge of their true numbers, gave it as his opinion that the Catholics were correct, for he said there were hosts of believers who had not the courage to come out for fear of their popularity. He said he had received letters from Ministers asking his advice what they should do, for they had received evidence so direct, they could not deny its truth. And this gain has been established by positive, undeniable facts, for no one can say that these people have been led to this belief from their prejudices, or for popularity, or for position, but they have been made by positive, living, facts in spite of all these influences directly to the contrary. Judge Edmonds himself was broken down from the high-

est Judiciary position in the State of N. Y. on account of his expressing his convictions of the truth of Spiritualism. They pronounced him insane. (A short time ago I saw it stated in a paper, that his judgment as counsellor at law brought him in some thirty thousand dollars per year, and they further stated, it was a pretty good income for the market value of the counsel of a crazy man.)

Who are those that positively assert that Spiritualism is true? It is those who have investigated, and amongst those are men of the strongest minds. And who are those that say Spiritualism is not true? It is those who have not investigated. Now, who ought to know best? In speaking of the pictures I described to you in my last, you wound up by telling me I am worshipping the creature, you the Creator. Then you say we shall see; we Spiritualists already see. There is no necessity for waiting until we pass over for us to see. The evidence is coming more and more amongst us, and is presenting itself in more and more positive and vivid forms. The spirits of our departed friends, as a rule, are more anxious even than we are, that we seek for mediums, so that they can inform us of their beautiful conditions, and of their nearness to us. For they can, if they choose, place themselves so that they can observe our daily walks, and rejoice when we conduct ourselves in a commendable manner, one towards another, or deeply mourn over us when we make ourselves miserable by leading miserable lives. Now I most positively assert, that if you were to investigate this subject with an earnestness anything in proportion to the importance of it, that before six months passed over your head, you would receive evidence of its truth, of such a positive nature, that you would have to deny your senses to deny it. And suppose you do not investigate does that alter the facts? You must take into consideration that in the main, Spiritualists are brought to their convictions when their minds are matured, not mainly while they are young, and some of

them, mere children, as it were, surrounded by large numbers with their magnetism all concentrated in one direction, and their feelings and fears wrought upon by intellects capable of making such appliances tell in their most effectual manner. In my estimation, there is not one person in fifty, under the age of sixteen, with fair intelligence, that could go through such an ordeal if persevered in without being powerfully wrought upon, (I have had some powerfully vivid experiences of these things myself, but not until I was old enough to think for myself.) But Spiritualists are not converted in any such manner. The facts, as a rule, are presented in an unmistakable form, with the intellect left free to exercise its judgment upon it, and why is its convictions, under all these adverse circumstances, making such unprecedented head-way? Because it convinces the intellect, through the senses, under the full play of the soundest judgment. When a person sees, and hears and feels, a thing, under circumstances where there cannot possibly be any deception, he becomes convinced in spite of himself. If I was to go on board of a steamboat and saw the engineer turn on the steam, and saw that steam start up the machinery, and feel the motion of the boat, and see that she is moving directly against the wind and tide, and know there can be no deception, can I doubt there is in steam, under proper conditions, a propelling quality?

In most instances seeing alone is conclusive as in those spirit photographs I described to you in my last. How could the likeness of the child come there except from the child's spirit? They were entire strangers to Mr. Mumler, he knew nothing of their history or afflictions until after the pictures were taken. And there was another point presented at this trial to show there was no deception. A neighboring photographer got Mumler to go into his own office and use his neighbor's implements throughout, giving the privilege to watch all the manipulations throughout, and the spirit pictures were produced the same, (this was all sworn to in court.)

You speak of these pictures very lightly. To be sure an ordinary picture of itself is of no great import. Neither is the falling of an ordinary apple much of an affair. But when the apple falls before the genius of a Newton, that suggests to him the laws that govern the motions of the universe, the import of that particular apple was tremendous. So, if the rendering these pictures gives to us a key that opens the door so that we can freely look in and learn the positive conditions of our eternal future! Why, the falling of that Newtonian apple was nothing compared with it.

You say God made hell for the Devil and his angels, not for man, but if man disobeyed his laws it obliged God to send him with the devil. History tells us that man, the heathen portion especially, way down as far as the record reaches, finds him but little above the beasts of the field, perfectly incapable of a worship higher than the grossest idols, and it evidently run on with some shades of improvements for thousands of years before a Christ was heard of. Now, was man responsible for his low condition? Was it his work that he was first started so low in the scale of existence? What a curious statement, to say God made hell, not for man, and then made man in such a low condition that he could not conduct himself in any other way than that God, according to your plan, must, from necessity, turn him over to the Devil and his angels, and continue to do so for thousands of years, and even now nearly two thousand years since Christ's advent, the knowledge of it has been conducted through such narrow channels, that even yet a great portion of the human race never heard of him, and are lost without a possibility of escape. Is this the limitless ocean for Reason, Justice, and Mercy, and an enlarged idea of God to swim in?

You speak about the divinity of the Bible, I heartily agree with you in the divinity of the truths in the Bible,

such as laid down by Christ in doing unto others as you would that they should do unto you, Love thy neighbor as thyself ; Return good for evil, which sayings were so emphatically backed up by his life. This, in my estimation, is divine in its highest sense. But passages that contain in them injustice, vengeance and retaliation, in my estimation there is not Bible lids thick enough, or theological talent, single or combined, strong enough to make such passages as those divine. And any denomination, single or combined, that undertakes to carry in their creed, such a load, has got in it the seeds of destruction. As I have said before in my pamphlet, you may soda wash the stock and branches, and get up a fitful resemblance of vivid life, but if you leave the grub worm of injustice girdling at the roots, in time the whole tree will surely perish," This is one of Gods's immutable laws.

You say that Spiritualism is Universalism rehashed. Why, one would think that you was terribly alarmed for fear something would happen that would make our God to be a liberal God. That he had so arranged his plans that he would eventually save the whole of his children. Why, Mr. ———, what a short-sighted, unfeeling God that would be !

Your statement about your extra safety, providing my course is false, would be all very well if there was any doubts, but, as I know there is none, it is not of the least consequence. It would be something like this. If a man was in the habit of carrying his grain in bags upon his mule's back, balanced with a stone in one end, and you was to come along, and, seeing how the case was, you would naturally tell him if he would take out the stone and divide the grain he could carry twice the amount of grain as easy as one-half in the old way. But, by the way, you might add, I think you had better take the stone with you for fear the grain-dividing principle might fail you.

Now, Mr. ———, that devil and hell business you speak of in your last which seems to me to so trouble you to fix up, even to your own satisfaction, *is all a myth*. I never, from the earliest moment of my recollection, entertained the least doubt upon that point. And, since Spiritualism has opened the doors between this and the other life, now, I know there is nothing of the kind.

In my estimation, there is not a man that walks the streets of your city, (I am in earnest) that has a truer sense of justice than you have. Neither do I believe there is one that has less vindictiveness in his nature, and how you should have been caught in a doctrine that has hanging to it this old relic of barbarism is passing strange to me. I cannot account for it in any other way, than that you was brought into this way of thought when you was too young to give it a serious consideration. In that made good the saying of the poet, first endured, then pitied, then embraced. If you theologians had taken half the pains to explain out these eternal punishment passages, that you do to explain out the passages that support Unitarianism, Universalism, and Spiritualism, these offensive passages would have become obsolete centuries ago, and there would not have been any necessity for my trying to explain to you their demoralizing effects, and of your dodging behind them, and begging me to fire at them, not at you.

I will give a few points that come to my mind of our experience within the last half century. There was mental philosophy, which was considered so profound a subject that it enlisted minds of the deepest thought, such as Brown, Lock, Bacon, &c., who spent the main part of their lives in writing and lecturing upon the subject. But not long since there came forth Gall, Spurzheim, and Combs, who had discovered and mainly matured the science of phrenology, which gave us so simple a key to the work-

ings of the mental organization, that a student of moderate capacity could learn more of the real science of the mind in a few weeks, than scores of these profoundest philosophers could tell us under their form in the whole course of their existence.

Then, again, but a few years ago, comparatively, we were sending messages by belted Indians, relays of horses, and locomotives, the last of which we thought was wonderful quick. But, not long since, Morse matured a plan so that a man now can step into his office with his plans, well matured, and can send a question to the remotest bounds of the earth, and get an answer back before you can fairly begin to get up the steam in a locomotive.

Then, as it regards our religion. As you truly say "Probably, there has been more of the best thought of the race expended upon the Bible than in any other direction." Theologians by millions have spent their lives, and their profoundest thought, in propounding to us how we must conduct ourselves to attain our best condition in the hereafter, and what would probably be our condition there. Now, Spiritualism has presented itself, and has opened the doors between this and the future, so that our departed friends and others can come forth and proclaim to us their experiences in their new life, and tell us their conditions, there, and also tell us how we must conduct ourselves to attain our best conditions when our time comes for passing over. With these advantages, a man of fair intelligence with a good medium, and surrounded with proper conditions, can get more knowledge about our conditions in the eternal future in a few hours than the whole array of Theologians from the time the race began could tell us (without this aid) in their life time.

The so called Orthodoxy has been preached and advocated with its strongest mental lights for thousands of years, and here in the United States it has had its fullest freedom

to promulgate its ideas. And now as light advances with such increased velocity, it is becoming terribly alarmed about its stability, and feels faint, and weak, to that extent that it is marshaling its forces to try to prevail upon Congress to put forth its strong arm and try to save it from toppling over!

Does Astronomy, Geology, Phrenology, Magnetic Telegraphy, Spiritualism, Love thy neighbour as thyself, Whatsoever ye would that men should do to you do you even so to them. Do truths of this character fear intelligent investigation? *Never*. The more thoroughly you investigate, and the harder you rub a truth the *stronger and brighter* it grows! It is error, malignant error, that fears the light.

I tell you Mr. ——— we are blest with the privilege of living in the midst of stirring events! so much so that if a man drives down his stake and closes the shutters of his soul in every other direction, he will stand a mighty lively chance of waking up some morning and finding himself wonderfully behind the times!

May you be prevailed upon to open wide the shutters of your soul and may the light of truth shine therein, and may it take root, and bring forth to you an abundant harvest, is the *sincere desire of your friend indeed*.

J. B. ANGELL.

MR. J. B. ANGELL:

My Dear Friend:—I received and read with care yours which came to hand a few days ago. I will notice a few points. It is singular with what tenacity the opposers of the religion of Jesus hold to old and exploded objections to Christian doctrines. For instance, you quote and evidently believe, the doctrine of infant damnation, using the worn out slur against the salvation by Christ, of "paving hell with infants;" etc. I am sure the objector

to Christianity has well nigh spent himself, when he feels the necessity of using that argument. My friend, don't you know that the Church of Jesus Christ has never held that doctrine ; and on the contrary, has ever held to the salvation of infants, and that through Jesus Christ. Some individuals may have put forth the doctrine you refer to ; but the authorities of Christ's Church, in every age, have held forth none other than that we now teach, viz., the salvation of all those who are not responsible for their own acts or state. We need not discuss further the proportion of the saved to the lost. That can only be estimated at the close of *of the world, when the figures are all in*. It is a question that belongs to God, and not to us. When Jesus was asked about this matter, by one curious to know how many, etc., he said, " Strive to enter in at the straight gate, for many I say unto you shall seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Luke. xiii., 34. And again he said, " Except ye *repent*, ye shall ALL likewise perish." Luke, iii., 5. Ponder these words of Christ, my friend, and rest assured they will abide true. Your attempt to put Unitarianism, Universalism, Spiritualism, etc., into the company of Christianity, almost causes an *audible* smile. No, no, my friend, that won't do ; the wolf may have the sheep's clothing, but his nature is the same still. You cannot talk of all these *isms* as steps in the ladder of progress. Christianity *alone* is the progressive power in the world. Christ is the *life*, as he is the *light* of men. Read John's Gospel, first chapter. In what part of the world has there been light, or a progressive civilization, where Christ is not preached as the only Saviour and Son of God ? That clouds of ignorance and superstition have darkened the truth, is true, but Christ truly preached gives light and life to man. I don't wonder, therefore, that all these anti-christianisms want to get into the company of Christianity, and be stamped as sharing its glories. But they rise and fall, they get their

skin torn off by and by, and then flee out of sight, to come up in some other form. They shall perish, but He endureth forever.

Now, supposing all you say about the numbers of Spiritualists is true, it proves nothing, unless the people have a great capacity in this age to swallow error. See how Mahomedanism spread, and how long it has held on. Does that prove that it is God's true doctrine and way of salvation of men? Your statement about Spiritualism, proves the Gospel to be true "Little children, it is the last time: and as ye have heard that Anti christ shall come, even now are there many Anti-christs; whereby we know 'that it is the last time'" 1 John, xii., 18. "Now the spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to *seducing spirits and doctrines of devils*; 2d. Speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3d. Forbidding to marry." 1 Timothy, iv., 1, 3. God will cause the wrath of men to praise him. He makes them prove his word true by their false doctrines. It is truly a hard way to travel to oppose God.

Now a word about investigating. *Jugglery* and the *black arts* have been in existence since the devil gained sway over man, and has been carried to such a point of completeness, that one unacquainted with it cannot explain its works. But must I therefore assent to whatever explanation the practicers of that art put upon it? I have not the least doubt, but the great deceiver of man, the devil, makes full use of Spiritualism to ruin the souls of men. There are no doubt subtle laws ruling mind and matter, and subtle forces within us, which we do not understand, and here is a mysterious field for devils and wicked persons to work in, and to get up a system which persons of enormous credulity will receive, when substituted for the true religious belief. Man will believe almost anything that does not disturb him in his sins. Now, when you tell

me that you receive fresh communications from your departed wife, but that they were first delivered to a man in whom you nor the community have confidence as to the purity and integrity of his moral character, I must be permitted to think you are *wofully duped*. If your dear wife had power and priveledge to communicate with you, would she not come directly to you, and not go to some one by whom she would not have sent a message of love when living? No, no, my friend, there is too much *humbuggery* in all these pretended communications from the other world for me to undertake to *investigate*. Look at the writings of the so-called mediums; did any one ever see such stuff as is attempted to be palmed off for the productions of the great minds of the dead? I once heard a woman *reel* off stuff she called poetry, while she was in a medium state. It was made up as she went along, every word of it, and when she could not get hold of a word, she would choke and take on at a great rate to get time. Humbug, I said then, and have changed my view only in the addition of one other element *humbug* and *deviltry*.

I do not mean to cast any reproach upon yourself nor the multitude of honest minded persons, like yourself, who sincerely hold to the belief. I mean by *humbuggery*, *deception*. I feel you are deceived, caught in a net of mysterious meshes, which is hauled by the devil. I can speak plain about the *system* or *ism*, and not reproachfully or disrespectfully of those who hold it. I have very dear friends who are caught just as you are, and I pray for them, as I do for you, that they may be delivered before it shall be too late.

I must beg to corre t you in one point. History does not show that man was *started low* down in the scale of culture and intelligence. That is a theory of those who oppose the Bible. Darwin would start us from the ape, or lower still, from the mere pulpy, jelly-like substance

that clings to rocks in water or floats. And so sceptics ever would *start* man at the level of the brute. But man before the flood was as intelligent as 4,000 years after. Adam, doubtless, was more of a man than we are, and so in every age down, man has not lacked intelligence. See the races that have ever dwelt on the Asiatic continent; their civilization goes back to the first. So your objection to my statement goes for nothing. You suppose a state of things that has not a shadow of reality about it, and then would prove your case, or disprove my statement by it. That won't do.

I perfectly agree with you in your statement, that a book or creed that embodies the principles, or teaches "in justice, vengeance, and retaliation," cannot continue long, and ought not to. But that is not true with the Bible, nor with any creed founded on the Bible. The Bible teaches justice, mercy, love, and teaches that God is love. Look at this: "For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him, should not perish, but have everlasting life "

"For God sent not his Son into the world, to condemn the world, but that the world through him might be saved."

"He that believeth on him, is not condemned: but he that believeth not, is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God," *John* 3-16. Now can there be any higher evidence of God's love for man than this? Look at it and ponder it. One great error in your belief is that man does not need regeneration, that he may be educated and trained up to love God and his neighbor so as to be like God, holy and pure. Well, the word of God teaches otherwise, and Jesus taught otherwise, and I must follow the word of God. You speak *absolutely positive* in your knowledge about the things of a future state, so much so that it looks suspicious. - At least, you must base your belief on communication of spirits,

and I believe you acknowledge there are *lying spirits*. Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.

Let me call your mind to the great religious awakening now going on in this land. By the preaching of the doctrine of salvation through Jesus Christ and by prayer, these spiritual awakenings have come down all over the land in a marvelous way. Doubtless half a million souls have been and will be converted to Christ and begin to live his life this winter. I must send you the account of this in St. Louis. It is simply impossible to explain it on mere human causes. Well, while you and others are fighting Christ and his religion, he is moving the land and turning hundreds of thousands to himself. In every age his enemies are going to have his old doctrine die out, and new truths are to take their place; but they don't die, they *live and save, isms* die and the opposers of Christ and his church pass away.

I want you to read the 72d psalm which refers to Christ. Also this verse in 89th psalm which also refers to Christ. "His seed (disciples) shall endure for ever, and his throne as the sun before me."

But I will close this by saying, that God would save you, and all who will come to him through Christ; but if you prefer, like the prodigal, to feed on the husks, then he can't save you, and that your eternal loss will not be on God's hands, but on your own hands. You have rejected the way of salvation given in his word, and chosen a way of your own, you have assumed all the responsibility.

1 Cor., iii., 11. "For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ." Jno., x., 1. "Verily, verily, I say unto you. He that cometh not by the door into the sheepfold, but cometh up some other way, the same is a thief and a robber."

But why should I point you to these words of God's book. You have put them aside, and have other things to put in their stead. O, how fearful will be your sur-

prise, when you wake by and by, and find that the Bible, this old book of Christians, the guide and comfort of Christ's hosts, *was true, after all*. The apostate Julian said on his dying bed, while his soul was in awful agony, "O, Galileean, thou has conquered at last." All who oppose Christ will say that at last; for every knee shall bow to him, and every tongue confess that he is the Lord.

I do not feel that you are coming at all nearer to Christ; but rather fighting against him, and against his loving kingdom. But I shall yet pray for you, that you may throw up that shadowy, vague, uncertain system, that has brought nothing good to the world yet, and accept of the truth as it was revealed in Jesus Christ. I wish you would come to my church, at least once in a while. I treat every kind of belief fairly, and do most certainly love all my fellow men, and want to see them saved from the punishment of their sins.

Yours, sincerely,

*WHAT IS DEATH?

The erroneous ideas on this subject which have for so long a time been inculcated by the theology of the day and the consequently false opinions which have prevailed among men, will evidently require much time and many teachings to correct. Such teachings, however, are now and for a quarter of a century have been coming with increasing frequency and it seems to me to be the manifest duty of those who receive them to give them to the world.

Acting under that impression, I have already made public much on the subject, and now add to the number the fol-

* I sent Mr ——— this communication, marked in the *Banner of Light*, to illustrate to him, that with those who conducted themselves properly, how quiet and easy was their transition from this to the other life and how natural and pleasant was their experience while entering upon this other life.

lowing, which I have lately received from one of the victims of the late collision at sea between the steamer Ville Du Havre and a British sailing vessel.

Judge Peckham was a member of the Court of Appeals of New York—the highest Court in the State—and had acquired a high reputation as a jurist. He took passage with his wife in the steamer, and died in the bloom of his manhood and in the full vigor of his intellect; so that he was fully competent to comprehend and relate all that occurred around him. His spirit came to me lately, and identifying himself to my satisfaction, gave me the following communication, which I now transcribe in the precise language in which I received it.

J. W. EDMONDS.

New York, Feb. 14th, 1874.

MY DEAR FRIEND—I shall waive all ceremony with you and enter upon this, our interview, not assuming but knowing that you are aware of my presence almost as tangibly as when I last met you in Albany, in the Court Room where you and I had listened and tried to be still, out of respect to the majesty of the law. You left the Court Room in advance of me. I tried to see you again, but you left that evening. We meet again here under different circumstances. I will not say I am from the Higher Court to-day, for as yet I have found no court or sphere into which your thoughts, which represent your spirit, do not come. Hence there are no severed links in our friendship when we still sit in council with those we knew and loved.

Had I have chosen the manner of my departure from the body, I should not have selected the one to which I was obliged to succumb. However, I find no fault, now that I realize the life which has opened before me so suddenly, so strangely.

In the dying moments I lived my life all over. Every

scene, every act passed before me as vividly as if written on my brain with living light. Not a friend that I had known in early or later life was forgotten. I saw, as I sank, with my wife folded to my heart, my mother and father. The former lifted me out of the wave with a strength which I can at this moment feel, and I have no recollection of suffering.

From the moment that I knew the waves would engulf us, I had no sensation of fear, of cold, or of suffocation, I did not hear the waves break. I parted with that which was my body, and, with my wife still in my arms, followed my mother whither she led me.

The first sad thought was for my dear brother. This my mother saw and felt, and at once said, "Your brother will soon be with you!" From that moment sorrow seemed to fade away, and I sat down to look about upon the scene through which I had so recently passed. I felt solicitude for my fellow-passengers; looked for them and saw them being lifted out of the waves in precisely the same manner that your strong arm, nerved by love, would lift your drowning child from the great waves which would swallow him up.

For a time this appeared so real, that, had it not have been for the presence of those whom I knew to be dead, I should have believed myself acting as rescuer with the spirits.

I write plainly to you, hoping that you will send words of comfort to those who imagine that their friends suffered mortal agony in drowning.

There was a fulfilment of that glorious triumph of faith, and the shadow of death became an illumination, which enabled so many to say that death's waves were swallowed up in the victory which love hath brought to light in the ministry of angels and spirits.

I need not tell you the greetings which awaited me when the many, whom you and I knew and loved, welcomed me

to the realms of the life immortal. Not having been sick or suffering, I was ready at once to accept facts, and to move forward to the attractions which, if on earth's plane, have the power to charm away sorrow, how much more enchanting here, where the scene has changed so quickly, so gloriously, that we do not murmur at the haste, nor think that it is disappointment or accident that summoned us unceremoniously hither !

I am aware that many will ask, if we could be helped to pass out of the body without pain, why could not the accident have been prevented ? In our investigations we have learned this fact, namely, that the officer in charge was so entirely deceived in regard to the distance between the Loch Earn and his own vessel, that no power on earth or that which the spirit-world could bring to bear, could have prevented it. Hence the collision was inevitable. There are conditions of sight, particularly on the water, when the water will seem to possess a power of deception almost marvelous and past belief. The ablest and best are liable to these conditions, particularly at just the position that these vessels must have been in. Hence there should be no blame attached to that man. It is done, and the survivors most need sympathy, and I know of no way to give it more direct than to assure them that their loved friends are not slumbering in the caverns of the deep awaiting the final trump to sound, but that at all times they await and look for the proper channels through which to echo the unmistakable evidence of life immortal.

My thanks are due to our mutual friends, Tallmadge, Van Buren, Hill* and many others, for this delightful re-

*The allusion here is to N. P. Tallmadge, U. S. Senator, President Van Buren, and Nicholas Hill, formerly an eminent lawyer at Albany, all of whom have frequently communed with me.

union with you ; nor can I end it without thanking you for a faith which, although silent between us, made me to respect you the more. I have come now into that nearer circle of friendship which I shall cherish as I know you will—sacred as the love which makes us to rejoice in one Great and All-wise Father, who doeth all things well.

Craving pardon for the length of my letter, I promise you and myself still further intercourse with your friend.

RUFUS W. PECKHAM.

Mr. J. B. ANGELL,

My Dear Friend :—I have read the letter pretending to be from Judge Peckham, and I felt to say when I had finished it, and looked it over again, if that is all you have to say about that strange midnight scene on the dark ocean, why should you have pretended to speak to us at all? My friend, you have too much mind, if you would use it rightly, to be deceived by letters and communications of this sort, claimed to be sent from the other world.

Does that world so weaken mind, does it so remove its occupants from the realms of facts and good sense, as to leave them to send us nothing but the *wishy washy* stuff, the childish *twaddle and nonsense* that is claimed to come from them?

If my son, twelve years of age, should go to Europe, and not write me more reasonable and intelligent letters, setting forth facts in a more intelligent way, than all the pretended communications that ever I have read from the other world do, I would write him not to send me any more letters, till he had spent some time under tutors.

Now, there is one thing in Judge Peckham's pretended letter, that exposes the whole thing as a sham, to my mind. This he says, "write, tell friends of the lost that

their friends are not sleeping in the caverns of the deep, but are with him in the other world.”

If the spirit of Judge P. ever dictated that letter, he must be either willfully false, (and this he was not when on the earth,) or have become very ignorant in the other world. For the Bible does not teach that the spirits of the dead remain in the grave, or in the deep, but go to God who gave them. And I never heard of any sect who took the Bible for their guide, that did believe as the letter indicates.

I really do not think there is much danger of the world all being swallowed up in Spiritualism.

Yours, truly,

Mr. _____

My Dear Friend:—I received your third letter and perused it with care. And in the starting, I perceive in respect to the redemption of infants, you have some how or other entirely misunderstood me. For you say, I quote, and evidently believe, the doctrine of infant damnation, using the worn out slur against the salvation by Christ, of paving over hell with infants, etc. Now, my notes tell me, which I copied my letter from to you. “But I presume, you will think with me, that the infant salvation is more liberal than their condemnation; for the old paving the streets of hell with infants, not a span long, never did have a very pleasant sound, I presume, with either of us. There is where we could strike hands most cordially, and I am happy to feel that I can meet you thus far, etc.”

Now, I think this whole sentence, as far as I have copied, and to the end, carries upon the face of it, a vein of pleasantry. That certainly was the light I intended it

should be received in, and certainly it cannot be construed into a slur upon your doctrine, for you had stated you did not advocate it. You say that there is no denomination, as a body, that do advocate it. Well, I am happy to hear it. At the time I wrote I did not know. But this I know, there are individuals who said they believed it, and preached it too. And if what I said is construed into a slur, it hits them, not you. I did not intend it as a slur for any one. And, then, pray, how did you come at the idea that I evidently believed in infantile damnation? Why, I have told you before, I have never believed in the eternal damnation of any soul, from the beginning of man up, and so on throughout eternity, much less, if it is possible, do I believe in the damnation of infants!

You state, we need not discuss further the proportion saved to the lost, that can only be estimated at the close of the world, when the figures are all in. My estimation was for the proportion lost to the saved at present, not for the future, or the past. Since I wrote you last, I have come into possession of a book, giving a short history of all Christian sects, and an introductory account of Deist, Jews, Mahomedans, Pagans, etc., published by John Evans, L. L. D. And he puts down the approximate numbers of all those who belong to reformed churches, at sixty millions, which figures up about one in seventeen that are saved. If I had gone into an estimation of the proportion lost, to those saved, from the commencement of the race, up to the present time, and taken into consideration the four thousand years of generations that had passed off before any being saved, and then at Christ's advent the saving commenced at a point, and now after nearly two thousand years widening, and in its best condition there is only about one in twelve saved; thus, taking it from the beginning, under these plain circumstances, what an unmistakable small amount it must be of those that have been saved, to those that have been lost, per-

haps, not one in a thousand. I am thus particular in these points, so as to show you how near an utter failure, according to your doctrine, has been thus far God's plan of salvation. And I have used figures as much as I could for their meaning is not so easily mistaken, neither are they so easily staved off. We cannot in the main only speculate about the future. But there is this much for a basis to speculate upon. According to the Bible account, the world has been in existence about six thousand years, and the Christian religion has existed about two thousand years, and in the course of six thousand years we have gained about ten hundred millions, it is no ways probable but the last third of the time has gained fully its proportion of the ten hundred millions. Hence, while the race has been gaining between three and four hundred millions, protestantism has only gained from sixty to about eighty millions. At this ratio, if the world should exist many thousand years, the proportion saved to those lost, would be reduced to a pretty small point.

You seemed to be wonderfully astonished that I should consider Unitarianism, Universalism and Spiritualism, more advanced than your Christianity. Now I always considered, the more liberal a class of people were, the more they were advanced. According to Mr. Evans, the Unitarians and Universalists each, have about the same number of passages in the Bible, to support their faith, that your doctrine has, and they speak out as conclusively in their direction, as yours does in your direction; hence it is certainly more liberal to make choice of those passages that prove that God saves the whole of his children, than to choose those passages that makes God save but a small part. Mr. Evans does not say anything about Spiritualism, but this comes in for an ample support from the same source, and you say these doctrines are wolves in sheep's clothing. Is not a generous idea more

in accordance with the character of the lamb, than a vindictive one? You carry the idea that your doctrine is not vindictive. Does a true father ever punish his child, excepting for the child's good? But if for an offence of his child, he should, if he could, punish him throughout eternity, does not that put it beyond the possibility of its being for the child's good, and does it not become at once a vindictive punishment, a punishment of vengeance, and is this not more in accordance with the character of the wolf, than Unitarianism, Universalism, and Spiritualism, who punish only for the child's good, and when you try to make out that your God is a God of love, and of supreme liberality, is it not trying to cover a doctrine possessing a wolfish principle with sheep's clothing? It appears to me that certainly when you say that these doctrines are wolves in sheep's clothing, you have put the boot on the wrong leg. I am thus plain, because it seems at times you try to stave off, by speaking lightly of my statements in favor of Spiritualism, and making much of that in favor of your position. You first say that you can bring such a cloud of witnesses to prove the truth of your doctrine, that it ought to convince any man. Then, by and by, when I tell you, that according to our best information, that the number of witnesses in favor of Spiritualism outnumbers all other denominations, you directly say, that is no proof of its truth, and call my attention to the spread of Mahomedanism, as a proof of it, forgetting at the same time that that proof is just as good against your cloud of witnesses, as it is against mine. And immediately you send me a slip of paper, giving a glowing account of the revival that is taking place in the city of St. Louis, and, according to the various accounts, it is pretty general throughout the country; and you state you think that there must be half a million added to the church this winter, and you seem to think you see the hand

of God in it, (I think by referring back you will find in times of panic, there has been a corresponding movement in the religious line,) and when I prove to you that Spiritualism has averaged nearly half a million of converts right along from one year to another, (converts that generally stay, too, there are not many backsliders from spiritualism,) not by taking the advantage of panics, not by employing your De Witts, and Hammonds, who are peculiarly adapted for working upon the feelings and fears of mainly youths and children, but mainly by the works of the very spirits themselves, who are daily presenting witnesses by scores, of such a startling and conclusive character that if they had occurred two thousand years ago, you would have called them miracles sent by God to prove his divinity; but if they occur now you call it all the works of the devil!

What is the general idea of the character of your devil? I believe the general idea is that he is intensely vindictive in his nature, utterly void of principle, or a generous feeling, and the more intensely miserable he can make those who come under his dominions, the greater does he feel glorified, and that the most precious moments of his enjoyment is when he can look down upon his subjects wreathing in the most intense suffering and agony, feeling at the same time the superlative satisfaction that this is to last them throughout eternity! And what is the character of this spiritualistic devil you speak of so derisively? It is to go up and down the land healing the sick and suffering, making the blind to see, the deaf to hear, the lame and bed-ridden to arise and walk, and up they straightway get and do walk, and the general information from the advanced spirits is, that those who live through this life the truest to his neighbour, is the most glorified hereafter and with such heaven begins here, and continues right along to the hereafter, and that each is punished just in proportion to the wrongs he has committed, and no

long life of evil doing and crime, can be ruled out by a single death bed repentance, but he will have to realize for each act, its due punishment, not in any physical hell, but a hell of remorse, the intensity of which will be in proportion to the intensity of the crime committed. And some of the prominent ways of working out their salvation, are by assisting, and teaching those below them the way for coming up higher, and by seeking out mediums and through them relieving the suffering and afflicted that are yet in the flesh, and there are none so low but in time they will work their way up, and the testimony is that this has been the rule from the beginning of man, and will continue so as long as man exists. How does this compare with the hell your God made? and how does this spiritualist devil compare with the devil your God appointed to rule over your God's hell? Your attempt to shake off the responsibility from God, by stating that God made hell not for man, but for the devil and his angels, and left it to man to make his choice, &c., when you well know that according to the Bible, God made man and spread him over the earth for some four thousand years without preparing for him a possibility for a chance other than going to this same hell that he did not make for him! It appears to me this attempt at shaking off the responsibility of God in this matter, is too thin for any full grown man to make.

Do you suppose a God that has so perfectly arranged his plans that even a sparrow cannot fall, without his especial cognizance, could not fully realize what course four thousand years of generations must unavoidably take? and this you call the works of the Creator! Mine the works of the creature!

In the course of your letter you have cut out verses from the Bible, and pasted them on the letter you sent me, I suppose so as to impress me more understandingly

of their significance, and the one you seem to lay the most stress upon is the one where you wish to impress me with the great love of God, by sending his only begotten son, etc. And you ask me to ponder upon it. Well, I have. And the first question that naturally arises is, why did God put it off so long before he sent his only begotten son to save the race? Why did he wait until unnumbered millions of his children had passed into eternal perdition, beyond a possibility of redemption, before he ever gave them a possible chance for escape? And why did he make this place of eternal perdition, this hell, at all, if he had such a great love as you try to make him out to possess for his children? And then to cap the whole, why did he appoint the devil, whose fierce vindictiveness knows no bounds, to rule over them, and why was he to be so eternally afflicted, because he did not believe in God's only begotten son, which only begotten son was not given for a portion, at least under some three or four thousand years after they had been doomed to an eternal hell? And this state of things you wish me to ponder upon, as an exhibition of God's great love!

Here, I think, is a good place to bring in your twelve year old son. And if he could not get up a doctrine more sensible, more just, and more merciful than that, I think that his mind might be said to be in such a hopeless condition, that no medicine in the shape of education, would be powerful enough to save him.

A word about the communications from my late wife, and your statement about the character of the medium. You say, "Now, when you tell me that you receive fresh communications from your departed wife, but that they were first delivered to a man in whom you nor the community have confidence, as to the purity and integrity of his moral character," etc. As to the opinion of the community, that is not for me to say. But when you say

I have not confidence in the purity and integrity of his moral character, you are as wide of the mark as you could put it. He was my nearest neighbor the most of the three or four years that he was with us, and I do not think there was one in the neighborhood who was on more intimate terms, and had more dealings with him, than I had, and in all this experience, I never had the first cause to doubt his integrity, or the purity of his moral character. And it appears to me, when you undertake to assume an opinion of mine, of the above character, you have undertaken that that does not become you.*

Now, in respect to my late wife's communications to me. It is very plain that you are not acquainted with the laws that control communication, or else you suppose I am a medium, which I do not know that I am to any practical extent, and the rule is, a spirit cannot communicate directly to a person who is not a medium. To do so, they have to take possession of one who is, and either speak or write to the one they wish to communicate with. And to enlighten you why she would be likely to communicate through our friend, I will give some of our past experience. As soon as we found out, after our friend came into the neighborhood, that he was a medium for spirits to communicate through, we directly commenced having circles, regularly twice a week, alternating mainly between his and our houses, and continued them, I should think, some two or three years, and I think there was no recreation that Mrs. Angell enjoyed more in the whole course of her life, than the attending these circles. And after they had

* It affords me pleasure to say, that as soon as Mr. — learned the true state of this case, he apparently improved the earliest opportunity to verbally apologize, freely and fully. without (if I may judge his feelings by my own,) leaving even a ripple of feeling between us personally, either for this, or for any other point in our controversy, for whatever has been said, has been said in reference to our respective religious positions, not with reference to each other in the least.

moved away, she used to often, *often*, say, how she missed the privilege of attending those circles, and how she would like to be, as it were, dropped down in their midst, or they in ours, all unexpected, as an agreeable surprise. And, under the circumstances, there is nothing more probable or reasonable, than, if she could, that she should go there, and take possession of him, and write to me. And in these communications she states in substance, that we must not let our feelings follow her old body, which had fulfilled its destiny, and was cast off, but transfer them to her spirit, which still, if possible, is more alive than ever, with scarcely a perceptible difference in the realization of her likes and dislikes, and that she felt the same earnest interest in her children and myself, and even in her pets, such as plants, flowers, etc., etc., that she used to while with us in the body, and she begs of us not to mourn, and feel so unpleasantly about her change, for in her sympathy for us, it affected her happiness in proportion to the intensity of our affliction. Which, in fact, seems to her to be her only drawback to her perfect enjoyment of her present existence. And is not this a glorious privilege, to live in times when we all, who have an appreciative intellect, can, if we will, avail ourselves of the evidence that is, as it were, all about us, within easy reach, if we can only be prevailed upon to tear away the terrible incrustation of bigotry and deep prejudice that so completely encircles, and darkens so many of us, and if we will open our eyes, the evidence will shine in, of such a conclusive nature, that conviction unavoidably follows. And what is the nature of this conviction? It is that our near and dear friends, whose spirits have left the body, still take as lively an interest in us and our affairs, as formerly, and instead of believing, as many do, that at best, but a few are taken up, perhaps, some vast distance, to be placed in glory, at the

right hand of God, and the great mass to sink down, down, into a bottomless pit of interminable woe, and amongst those, perhaps, are many of our nearest and dearest connections and friends. I say, that instead of having to forego this terrible experience of death, that in reality it is very much like going to sleep, and in a short time waking upon the other side, free from the pains and afflictions of the old body, with every thing at first appearing so natural, that they scarcely realize that they are in their new condition, were it not for the fact, that they are constantly being greeted by friends that they know had passed from their bodies, perhaps, long before them; and these friends they find in a greater or less advanced condition, according to their real character while in the body, or the progress they had made since passing over. It was to illustrate the quiet and natural way in which the spirit leaves the body, at the time of what we usually call death, that I sent you Judge Peckham's account of what purported to be his experience, to which account my attention was first called by my neighbor, who first saw it in one of the secular papers, and spoke of the style and character of his description of his experience in the highest terms, and when I came to read the communication it impressed me as coming from an unusually strong mind, well stored with language to express his experience in a very plain and comprehensive manner, and you may readily imagine that when I received your opinion upon it, I was somewhat astonished, and think I, can it be, that my neighbor and myself both were so much mistaken, and upon my first opportunity I re-read the piece more carefully, and got others to read it, upon whose judgment I felt that I could rely, and my conclusion was, that even the rays of my friend's judgment was liable to be somewhat diverged from their true course, where

they shine through his prejudices; and although I did not seem to enlighten him in the direction I intended, it certainly gave me some light in another direction, for upon this basis I might imagine the possibilities of the real merits of that stuff the medium woman called poetry, over which she choked at such a rate to get time. And some other hints, towards never having discovered any merits or good from Spiritualism. And also about the reliableness of his opinion of the excessive gullibility of all these millions of believers in Spiritualism, many of which are certainly considered very sound in every other direction, and is it possible that they should become all at once so susceptible of gullibility in this? I should much sooner believe that the judgment was made up through his prejudices, (with my above light) than that all this should be the real condition of things. When you come to the part of Judge Peckham's communication, where he wishes to relieve the friends of those that were lost, from the feeling that their souls were not in the cavern of the mighty deep. This seemed to put the last finishing touch to your opinion of the fallacy of the whole communication, as coming from Judge Peckham. Now I presume there is not one in a thousand, when they have a friend, or connection drowned, but feel a sort of horror at having his or her body remain and perish in the water, so much so, that they will search for it as long as there is a hope for its recovery. I presume the Judge had no intention of conveying a doctrinal idea, but to try to change this common feeling that so naturally follows the supposed condition of these bodies, to the real condition of their souls, which he saw they were fully appreciating their new conditions similar to himself, under which circumstances whatever condition the old body may be in, its condition is not of the least consequence.

After I had finished mainly the foregoing notes, I received from you the two lectures, one from the Rev. Mr. G. P. Thompson, D. D., the other from Rev. G. C. Baldwin, D. D. And they came in very timely. Aside from what you have written me upon the subject, and our short conversation on board the steamer "Sea Bird" the other day, I have not had scarcely any opportunity to learn what can be said from prominent Orthodox quarters, against Spiritualism, which seems to me so worthy of our highest thought and most earnest investigation. For you are the only theological minister I ever exchanged thought with upon the subject. So that I am almost entirely inexperienced in the way of controversy in this line, and consequently very illy prepared to do the subject justice. But still, if I have by investigation, had awakened in me a thought that I feel well assured it would be a benefit to my fellow man to know it, I have not the least desire to hide it under a bushel, but otherwise, feel it a religious duty to express it, so that my brother may be realizing the benefits of it as well as myself. And I feel very grateful to you for expressing to me your convictions so freely and fully, and for sending me these two lectures, so that I can avail myself of the thoughts of other strong minds upon the subject, and by looking their lectures over, I can readily perceive that they are men of no ordinary intellects, and are full of resources, and are much better posted upon Spiritualism than I suppose the clergy generally are. Well, I have read their lectures over pretty carefully, and Mr. Thompson goes on describing Spiritualism in various forms, for nearly three columns of the *Examiner* without making apparently what he considers himself very damaging criticisms, until he comes to describe the unrelia- bleness of the communications, and upon this point he says the whole system breaks down. Suppose

they are not reliable in some respects, to that degree that we could wish. It is the only opportunity that we have any control over that we have ever had presented to us for getting information about our future state, and is not the subject of intense importance, and does it not become us to make the most of such as it is, especially as every year's experience makes marked improvements in the reliability of these communications. Almost every great movement ahead has been gained step by step, Steam Power, Magnetic Telegraphy, Photography, Phrenology, Astronomy, Geology, Chemistry, Natural Philosophy, all of what we know about them were come at, in the main, by degrees, and there are none of them, even yet, that are probably perfect, and the most of them we are, as it were, only nibbling at the edges of them, in comparison with what there is yet to learn, and there is no one of them, or all of them together, that compares in importance to us to the investigation of a subject that offers to us a living hope that we may eventually, if not already gain reliable and positive information about our eternal future, and shall those of us who have investigated this subject until we are satisfied of its truth, and this truth bringing to us a fulness of joy unspeakable; shall we try to dash this truth all to the ground because it happens to tread upon some theological toes?

When Mr. Thomson says there is nothing reliable that is presented to us, he is certainly mistaken. Some mediums retain their consciousness while the spirits are communicating through them, and they can judge much of the character of a strange spirit by the sensation his presence produces, by which he can form quite an intelligent basis for judging of his character. Then there are spirits who have a natural affinity for a particular medium, and they become acquainted, and, as it were, attached to each other, and the medium can tell at once when they take control of them, and this acquaintance, perhaps, has continued for years, and they never have been deceived by them, and this confi-

dence is established the same as we in the main establish confidence in each other in this life. Then there are many mediums that spirits take control of altogether, and the mediums have no knowledge of what they say or do while under this control, and if the medium and the character of their mediumship is of sufficient importance, this mediumship is generally taken control of by a band of advanced spirits, who see to it that no spirits communicate through them, excepting they communicate the truth. This is especially the case with Mrs. J. F. Conant, the medium that the spirits communicate through at the Free Circle Rooms in the *Banner of Light* Building, No. 9 Montgomery place, Boston. (You may have noticed a description of them in in the *Banner* I sent you.) The main object, apparently, of these communications are for tests, and also to inform the friends of the departed their condition in their spirit life, &c., and to make the tests more perfect they always tell their names and their age, when they died, and how long they had been dead, and what was their business, and perhaps their religion, giving these general particulars, so that there shall be no mistake about their friends recognition of them, and these communications are published in the *Banner* weekly, ranging from six to eight per week, and then a *Banner* is sent free containing these communications to each of the friends of the spirits who communicate, and this has been their regular practice for some twelve or fifteen years, and this has been in the midst of people of the fiercest prejudices against spiritualism, who would glory in the opportunity of detecting a single flaw, so they could trumpet it before the world. But although this has been in practice for so long a time, and all open, plain, and so fair, I never have heard of the detection of a single mistake. Does this look like an utter failure of the reliability of these communications? But these communications are only one of the many phases of proof upon which spiritualism relies for the evidence of its truth, and under these circumstances does he state the case fairly when he

says "Spiritualists may say what they will, their whole scheme breaks down at this point."

When he says his ancient miracles, such as healing the sick, restoring soundness to the cripple, etc., were wrought openly, not in private seances, of predetermined believers, and in darkened chambers. Here again he misstates our healing mediums, who perform many as wonderful cures as those of old, and they are not performed as a rule in any circle at all, but are done by individuals in open daylight. I saw an account some time since by an individual in Providence where I used to live, who I know by reputation, of a lady who was so afflicted that she had not been able to walk for years, and all the surrounding medical talent had been tried without giving any relief. Finally, she heard of Dr. J. R. Newton, the healing medium, and she decided to try him for her case. He came, and after making a few passes over her, he told her to arise and walk, and she straightway arose and did walk down a pair of stairs and out into the street, and traveled a mile and back, and up the stairs again, and from that time set herself about her household duties, and continued so up to the time of his writing some three or four weeks after she was cured. Is this "on a level with jugglery?" Is this in "darkened chambers," which Thomson so derisively calls our attention to? No doubt the people in the neighborhood, "marveled at the mighty cure," and no doubt also the orthodox neighbors said, like the Pharisees of old, "Not venturing to deny the facts of the cure," "He casteth out devils through Belezebub, the prince of devils." Perhaps, not using precisely these terms, for the more modern phrase is, "it is all the works of the devil." What fallacy for Thomson to advance the idea that it was a proof that the old form of healing was miracles, because everybody in their ignorance at that time believed they were miracles. When since which our knowledge of the natural laws has taken such strides in advance, that when the very same things

are performed, we see at once very clearly they are performed through natural laws. Even if the spirits aid us, their aid is by the same laws. And would it be sound in us to say that these same things being performed two thousand years ago were contraventions of nature's laws, because everybody then believed they were such, when we see plainly that it was through their ignorance of these laws that they believed it. And because we have arrived at these conclusions Mr. Thomson says we want to get rid of God. Is it possible that we want to get rid of God because we find him capable of establishing laws that never change, that endure throughout eternity, and that He never has to contravene them for some supposed unforeseen specialty. He might as well say that we would want to get rid of God because of old, in their ignorance, the race supposed that these stars that appear over our heads were placed there for mere ornaments or for astrologers to get up devinations from, (and does it make astrology true at that day because everybody then believed it true;) and because we have discovered that these once supposed ornaments are worlds and suns poised in limitless space, perhaps millions deep, all moving with such undeviating order that if one should vary in the least from its true course it would involve chaos throughout the whole. I say would it be an evidence that we want to get rid of God because of this discovery. And would we be likely to have less reverence for God from discovering that he was capable of controlling this limitless universe of heavenly bodies with such apparent ease and precision?

Mr. Thomson says, towards the close of his remarks, speaking of what people say. You do say there certainly is a reality in it that spirits do speak; so much the worse. The reason is all the stronger for having nothing to do with it.

“Hear God in his word, who cannot lie to you, and have nothing to do with the lying spirits of men.”

“I implore spiritualists, and especially such as may be enclining to spiritualism, to ponder what I have said, and to give heed in this relation to the apostolic injunction in my text, let them prove this new religion if it can be called a religion, which it confessedly does not come from God. Let them subject it dispassionately and fairly to the test of sober and sound reason, and hold fast to it if it is good, or otherwise reject it, and put it away.” What a strange medley. He first tells us to have nothing to do with it, and then it would seem his text brings him round somewhat to his senses, and he says: “let them prove this new religion if it can be called a religion. Let them subject it dispassionately and fairly to the test of sober and sound reason, and hold fast to it if it is good.” “Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.” Now the sentiment of this apostolic text is one of the foremost above all others, the spiritualist I presume, are praying for skeptics to dispassionately, and fairly put in practice. But when Mr. Thomson pronounces (as he does in his lecture,) spiritualism to be one of the “baldest impositions that ever cheated and cursed the world” and that, God characterizes it an abomination” and a work of the devil,” and then commands us to ‘have nothing to do with the lying spirits of men, does that look like preparing his hearers to look at the subject dispassionately, and fairly with their sober reason or to prove all things, &c. ?

But if I spend all my time on Mr. Thomson, I shall have no space left for your friend Baldwin. Well I see he takes up nearly four columns of the Examiner, in mainly trying to make it appear that the Witch of Endor could read the mind of Saul Clairvoyantly, therefore knew what to say to him. But what does this all amount to, especially after he admits himself that there is communicating matter which is not in the mind of the consulter, and he stated that the progress of the scientific research during the last

twenty years has demonstrated that all the phenomena, on which spiritualism bases its claims, are to be traced to mundane sources. And he says, with this agree Carpenter, Farriday, Crooks & Huggins. If I mistake not all of these men were appointed on a committee with many others some three or four years ago, to give spiritualism a thorough scientific investigation. But they a'l soon found out that spiritualism presented phenomena that none of their known science could reach, and they nearly all backed down saying in the main, they had more important business to attend to.

Excepting Prof. Varley, the great e'lectrician, Wallace, and Mr. Crooks. They were honest, and independent enough to persevere with the investigation, and have devoted more or less of their time to it ever since, especially the latter, who has made the investigation of the subject a specialty. I have before me at this very moment the April number of the *Herald of Health*, containing a communication from Mr. Crooks taking up some sixteen double column pages upon this very subject, giving light touches along of his three or four years investigating in this line. He makes no conclusion of his investigations but reserves that I presume for a volume which he is preparing for the public upon the subject. He says this much, "That he has witnessed phenomena that directly oppose the most firmly rooted articles of scientific belief." When this volume comes out the public will have phenomena presented to them of the most startling character. That is if the various accounts we get from time to time of his experience is a criterion. Does this look like the scientific minds having traced it all to mundane sources. When Mr. Baldwin says

"As the case now stands every class of the phenomena put forward by Spiritualists can be, and has been produced by scientific experiment." Does he not very much over-do himself when he makes such a statement as that. That strikes at the very root of the whole matter. It appears to me

that if such a result was once established, that it would be blazoned forth with such energy, that scarcely twenty four hours wou'd have passed over our heads, before the world within the sweep of the telegraph wires would have been made acquainted with it, and is it possible that so important a point should be born so silent that Mr. Baldwin only should have found it out, and that too over two years ago and the knowledge of it not having extended even yet any further?

It certainly looks very much as if your friend was measuring his statements by as much as he was capable of saying, not by the facts of the case, and if we find he does so where we are acquainted with the facts, is it not safe to conclude he may do so where we are not acquainted with the circumstances; I believe that is sound logic.

There is another point about the reputed number of Spiritualists in this country. Is it probable that a stranger from England, should know more about the number of Spiritualists, than those who have always lived in their midst; and he says Mr. Tedd's account has a mighty falling off from those of heated partisans. If report is true, the Catholic's account is over ten millions greater than Mr. Tedd's; and can that be called from heated partisans?

I see he harps a great deal upon the idea that Spiritualists think their Spiritualistic ideas are new. I think that Spiritualists, as a rule, believe that the idea existed in its crude state, at the beginning of the race. But since its later developement, it has been brought into a more practical and reliable form, and the laws that govern it are much better understood. To illustrate: who would have thought but a few years ago, that the magnetic element which mainly was known for its capacity for wrenching the mighty oaks as so many withs, and cleaving asunder powerfu' edifices like air castles, making the very earth tremble, and the people stand aghast before its terrible

power, would so soon, by the discovery and invention of man be guided so harmlessly to the earth; and then so gently and efficiently, almost annihilate space in the transmission of messages throughout the world; and are there any who believe, because we have learned to guide this magnetic element into this new and wonderful course, that we have discovered a new material; that it is not the same that it was at the birth of the globe?

And who would have thought but a few years ago, that those of us, because possessed of a mediumistic quality in our nature, were so terribly persecuted, not only by being called witches, wizards, being in league with the devil; but even were decided by Church and State, as being worthy of execution, and were executed by scores of thousands in the various terrible forms of hanging, drowning, burning, pressed to death by heavy weights, drawn into quarters, &c., would so soon be quietly opening the doors between this and the other, our future life, making it free and within easy reach of all who have a mind to open their eyes and look in, and begin to take incipient steps of knowledge towards their eternal future! and does any intelligent Spiritualist believe, that because of the discovery of this new feature, (which is one of the greatest blessings that God has vouchsafed to man,) that it differs in its nature from that of the earliest evidences of it at the beginning of the race? Here again Mr Baldwin misstates us. And towards the close he goes on with a stream of exaggerations, which are only limited apparently by his not being equal to saying more; and this too, without apparently any regard to their real merits. But it becomes us to make due allowance for his straighteued position.

There is nothing, perhaps, that is a greater strain or trial upon a man's conscience, than to undertake to stand up for a long cherished failing cause, against an array of facts, so positive and conclusive, and so easy of investigation, and

when investigated, to find it the embodiment of justice, mercy, and sound common sense; I say, when a man gets up and advocates a cause, a portion of which is wanting in all of these points, against one that possesses them all, he must, unavoidably as it were, stifle his conscience, and resort to anathemas, invectives and over wrought exaggerations, or he would have nothing to say. For Spiritualism as it were, has absorbed all the facts upon the subject.

With all the communications that I have read in the *Banner of Light*, and all of those through my friend, and as unreliable and lying as Mr. Thomson would like to make out that the spirits are, I have never yet heard of one who had the hardihood to state that he had discovered or heard of an eternal hell in the future state of existence. And here is where the shoe pinches with the church. I presume there is very rarely a church of many members but what contain more or less mediums through which their departed friends would like to communicate. But the moment they do so they are crushed, for they straightway begin to tell truths about the future state, that would directly upset the whole eternal punishment scheme, and if this is taken out the whole thing would soon fall to the ground. You might as well expect a stream to continue to flow if you was to cut off the showers and springs, or that intemperance would continue to flourish if you was to permanently cut off all forms of manufacturing alcoholic poisons. Take away the privilege of holding the fear of an eternal hell over the heads of youths and children, and the new members of the orthodox faith would straightway dwindle down to a very small point. Doubtless there are many who would rejoice in the privilege of having this quality dropped out of their creed if they could do so with hope of sustaining their position. What a melancholy position for a liberal, high-toned, progressive, philantrop-

pic mind, to be so chained down to a form so repulsive to his progressive nature, even for this life. And then what a store of regret, disappointment, humiliation, and remorse there is being piled up for him for the future. And that you may be prevailed upon to escape from this experience, is the ever earnest prayer of your sincere friend,

J. B. ANGELL.



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