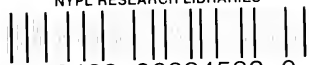
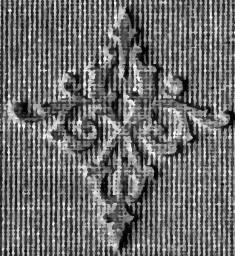


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LIFE
IN
TWO WORLDS



ALBERT A. LATHBURY

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LIFE IN TWO WORLDS



UNDERWOOD & UNDERWOOD, NEW YORK

THE AUTHOR AT THE AGE OF 57

REV. ALBERT AUGUSTUS LATHBURY

Born January 24, 1849

Member of the New York East Conference, Methodist Episcopal Church

LIFE IN TWO WORLDS

BY

ALBERT A. LATHBURY

Member of the American Institute for Scientific Research

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BY

ALBERT A. LATHBURY

LIFE IN TWO WORLDS

INTRODUCTION

THE SPEAKING SPIRIT

“Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth; for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, *that* shall he speak, and he will show you things to come.”—
JOHN 16: 13.

In the winter of 1896 I began to live in a new world. I had been considering the privileges and possibilities of the pentecostal gift known as “The Promise of the Father.”¹ I was convinced that there was more in this endowment than had been generally understood and accepted. I had found the glowing love, the intense energy, the purity

¹Acts 1:4

C. D. TRIMMER
AUG 7 - 1941

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and power. I saw also that the promise included the Comforter or Helper in the *memory*: "He shall bring all things to your remembrance."² I recognized him in my memory and found immediately a great change. I did not need notes while addressing an audience. I had been compelled to use them for many years. I had help at the right instant, so that I did not omit or fail in the effort to recollect.

I then received the Spirit as a guide in all the affairs of life. I resolved to test the promise, "He shall guide you into all truth," by exploring its utmost possibilities and limitations. I began with little things in which evidence that I was right or had failed could be easily noticed. When there was doubt or perplexity I waited for clearer light and asked for help to meet conditions that had been overlooked. It came. I saw that knowledge in this realm was slowly revealed, that I must be bold but cautious and discriminating. I could not be used without thoughtful effort or as a passive instrument. I must do my part or there would be confusion and delay in getting the divine responses.

² John 14:26

THE SPEAKING SPIRIT

These responses came as impressions and suggestions, and were well understood.

One memorable day something was suggested that *seemed* unreasonable and contrary to that which should be expected from a divine source. I hesitated. Was this right? Was it from the Holy Spirit? For a while I was in doubt, when suddenly these words were spoken distinctly within my mind: "I am the Spirit of Jesus." I was surprised. Heretofore I had got impressions and suggestions, but this was a silent *verbal* communication. I resolved to test this voice. I said, reverently, "Are you the Divine Spirit?" He responded, "I am." I was then impressed with the idea that I should prove him by acting as he had directed. I acted promptly and was fully satisfied with the result. It was a great victory. I had been carried through something that I did not at first understand but saw clearly afterward. This was something new to me. I had heard the Holy Spirit *speak*. Could it be possible? If so, how amazing; how valuable was my discovery. Could I now inquire of the Lord as men did in ancient times and get his thoughts in more definite form? It

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seemed to me that I had been greatly favored and should be very careful—I should, in a deeper sense, become a living sacrifice holy and acceptable unto God. I must be crucified with Christ and yet live; for I had a great privilege and an important work before me.

But was this message genuine and authentic, or had I been deceived? Was it imaginary or had it arisen from something within myself that I did not perceive? Did it emanate from an evil source without? Could not the Divine Spirit be simulated or imitated? I determined to know the truth at any cost. I would spend a lifetime in the effort if necessary. Then came a terrible struggle, for I perceived that the spiritual world was breaking in upon me. I heard other voices, some good apparently, and some evil in their origin. I began to realize that the invisible states are not separated from our world by *distance*.

The test was severe and thorough, for I was left to distinguish the voice of the Spirit from the voices of others. There was a persistent effort on the part of many who were opposed and tried for a long time to create confusion and uncer-

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tainty. The struggle was hard. It was almost too much for me at first, but I did not flinch. I determined to *hold firmly* until my environment became clearer. I was like a child in this new world and made some mistakes. I felt that the Holy Spirit was in sympathy with me. His patience was obvious. I saw that he wanted me to know more about the state of the wicked after death and to get glimpses of heaven. This was trying work. But I was wonderfully sustained and entered into a very close relation with him. I was in sympathy with the Spirit, believing that he had been misunderstood and resisted for many centuries. I certainly would understand him. I would not be "disobedient unto the heavenly vision," though I should walk through the valley of the shadow of death.

I fully believed that I could be saved from the error and fanaticism that had made his work so difficult in former times, and even in our day. For I thought, were we not living in an age when divine guidance in an explicit sense was regarded as unsafe? Was it not in many instances taught by those who were not remarkable for discretion

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or mental soundness? And yet when free from error and doubt, what doctrine so precious, what privilege so great?

After a long and tedious conflict with subtle invisible foes, I began to act by faith, and was able to *exclude* all simulations and interpolations while listening for the voice divine. I then began to study profoundly my own inner being or subconscious personality, a part of our nature about which so little is known or can be known unless we hold an iron scepter over our faculties and depend exclusively upon divine illumination. We can then see the difference between what is in us and what comes to us from without. After this I spent years in observing and investigating the various phases of psychical phenomena that have been associated with the spiritual and occult until they were well understood.

I saw at last that I was ready for expression, and should write a book on the mysteries of nature and the life beyond death. I had been looking into the great problem of evil. I had studied angelology under divine tuition. I knew God in a way that was wonderful to me. The obscure symbols, bold

THE SPEAKING SPIRIT

figures and dark sayings of the Bible had been illuminated and interpreted by the Spirit. Things were very clear that I had never expected to know in this life. Many were anxious to look into these things. I believed that clearer light was for them, and that it would satisfy their longings and confirm their belief in immortality, so I began to write.

Three years were occupied in writing "Life in Two Worlds," and when the twelve chapters were finished they were placed in the hands of eminent specialists for review and criticism before going to press. This helped me to make the book clearer and more easily understood by the average reader, but did not change the sense. Nevertheless, it is a volume that must be read slowly and thoughtfully to get the best results.

ALBERT A. LATHBURY.

Bayonne, N. J.
January, 1920.

The Prayer

By MARY A. LATHBURY

Sister of the Author

Break Thou the Bread of life,
Dear Lord, to me;
As Thou didst break the loaves,
Beside the sea.

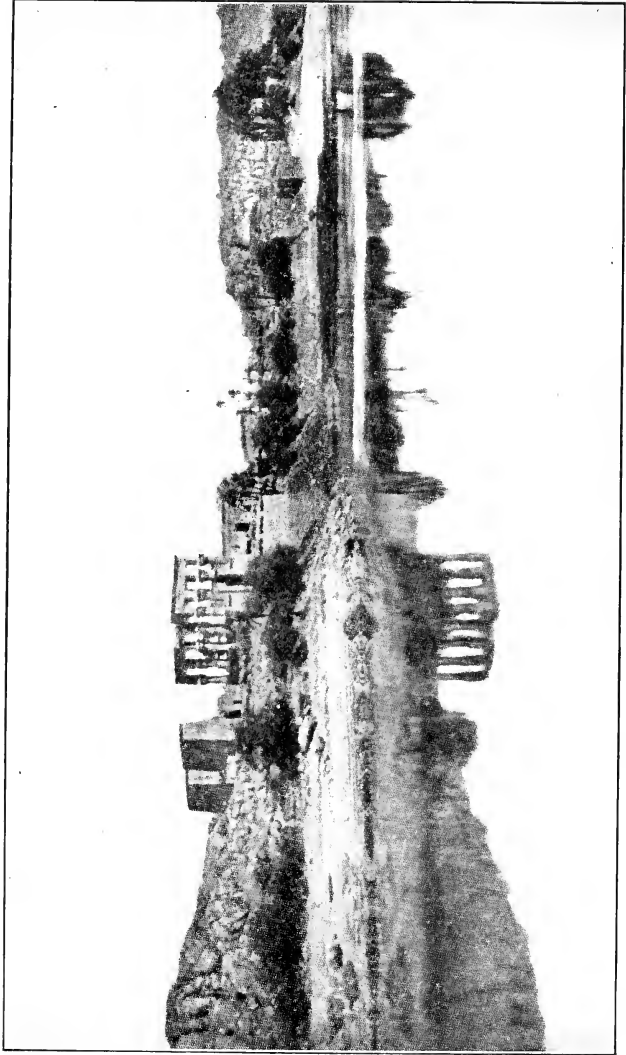
Beyond the sacred page,
I seek Thee Lord;
My spirit pants for Thee,
O Living Word.

Bless Thou the truth, Dear Lord
To me, to me;
As Thou didst bless the bread
By Galilee.

Then shall all bondage cease
All fetters fall;
And I shall find my peace
My All in All.

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“ . . . CITIES HALF BURIED IN THE ACCUMULATIONS OF AGES.”—Page 1

I

MYSTERIES OF NATURE AND THE INVISIBLE WORLD

THE spiritual world is so near us, and so closely connected with our noblest aspirations, that it cannot be ignored. It has been the theme of poets and philosophers from the dawn of history.

In the ruins of great cities, half buried in the accumulations of ages, we may discern the outlines of the temple, with its broken columns and magnificent façade, revealing the hopes and ambitions of those whose longings for immortality found expression in enduring forms of beauty.

The prevailing religions of the world are not to be condemned, because error is associated with them. They were not evil in their origin, but have been perverted through ignorance and unworthy teachers. In the sands of mythology and the fabulous traditions of antiquity, we may discover the gold of heavenly desire. The costly oblation,

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where clouds of ambrosial incense arose with orisons of ministering priests ascribing honor and wisdom to invisible divinities, disclosed the efforts of men seeking recognition by that Heaven, whose interests they felt were ever with human beings.

When the decay of nations has unveiled the errors that enthralled them, the progress of civilization is more rapid. Out of the dead past wisdom is gathered for new empires and mighty republics. The crude science of former times becomes obsolete, and is relegated to the realm of romance and song.

After numberless centuries of endogenous growth, the world is moving outward in rapid waves of emigration and occupation, that will cover the habitable globe. The star of empire has reached its westward limit; but we are growing northward and southward, while the dormant nations of the distant East are feeling the pulsations of new life from foreign shores.

When we consider the abundant provision for dense populations in new countries and vast regions thinly inhabited by barbarous or nomadic races in sunny climes where rich lands are waiting for development, and inexhaustible stores of mineral and marine wealth are reserved for future generations,

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it is evident that our earth is *young*. The world grows old and dies; but the *planet*, like the immortal Phoenix, rises from the ashes of its fires, moving steadily forward on its long journey through interstellar space, while from its prolific bosom myriad forms of life are constantly springing.

Other planets and the immense sidereal systems beyond are interesting as we consider their distance and magnitude. But the question—"are they inhabited by intelligent beings?"—cannot be dismissed. To conclude that all are not, is to suppose that nature is without a reasonable purpose.

Those stupendous suns pouring out oceans of precious light and heat do not glare on dead worlds revolving around them in stately procession. Nor do they spend their energy in empty space, or burn for the production of vegetation and animals only, which means a howling wilderness. An extensive plant costing millions, with colossal mechanism in perpetual motion, might excite admiration and wonder. If, however, it accomplished nothing, we should feel that its builder had not understood his plan, or had failed in his effort.

The most interesting study in nature dawns upon us when we are open to the spiritual realms and

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can hear God and angels speak. The scientific as well as the religious world is beginning to understand that such perception throws clearer light on the mysteries of our world and the great Universe beyond.

As traces of evolution are found, philosophical inquiry has led to theories of production. It is supposed that cosmic substance—attenuated nebulae—acting with natural forces, formed the earth and the celestial bodies. Plausible and interesting as this conclusion may appear, it fails to account for the original matter, as well as the forces.

Biology reveals the simple elements in which organic life begins. But the affinities and combinations, together with the ability to absorb and assimilate extraneous materials, to develop form, color, motion, instinct or idea, which these ultimate elements possess, cannot be analyzed. The lowest type of vegetable or animal existence is the product of mysterious changes, which are found to be complex and unintelligible as they are studied.

The formation of the earth is more easily understood when we perceive that it is a natural growth.

MYSTERIES OF NATURE

In the vast fields of the Universe there is abundant material, rich in forces, and capable of producing every variety of celestial sphere, from a diminutive satellite to an immense sun. Each orb, in its development, conformed to the law of its kind without deviation, adjusting itself to its position in the system to which it belongs, passing through all stages of progress from the embryo to maturity. As a tiny seed in a favorable spot expands, pushing its roots downward and its stem upward until it becomes a gigantic tree, so a central sun, with its retinue of worlds, after inconceivable ages, reaches the period of efflorescence. Volumes of light and heat are poured forth upon the planets. An atmosphere appears on many a ponderous globe, its crowning glory like the color and fragrance of the rose. Ten thousand times ten thousand varied creations make that which "was without form and void" a paradise.

Nothing is so fruitful as a world. It is the mother of everything that lives upon it, even immortal man. Unlike its productions, its expectation of life is beyond calculation. It is among the foundations of heaven. It is a stone in the palace of God. It may pass through great changes; but

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somehow, in some form it must continue. There is no burial ground for a dead world.²

The vast unbounded expanse wherein the stars appear, and through which our world is moving rapidly, is not a creation. Apart from the matter and forces it contains, it is simply space. It is nothing. And yet its value cannot be estimated. It is the environment of the Universe, a mighty shoreless, silent ocean of vacuity, without bottom or top. The abyss of eternity; but the arena of ceaseless activity and multitudinous life.

Cosmic substance in some form may have existed always. It could not be produced from nothing, or derived from the Deity, as He is a being absolutely spiritual, and mind cannot generate material substance from itself. The Universe is not made out of God; but He acts in it, and is the supreme creative Force among the coeternal forces of deathless nature.

Creation implies design, control of forces, formation, and ability to impart all kinds of life with peculiarities of growth, form, color, motion, tend-

² Some have understood that the moon is a dead world; but nature has given us deserts here and in the sky. Some time they may blossom.

MYSTERIES OF NATURE

ency, instinct or intelligence. Nature is full of divine conceptions materialized.

The beginning of organic life is a great mystery. Vegetation, animals, and human beings were slowly evolved from the primeval cosmic substance that builds planets in the ocean of infinite space. Nature is rich and God is mighty to create.

The possibilities of nature, touched with supernatural wisdom, are unlimited. The microscope reveals the diminutive cell and nucleus with its complex structure rapidly developing. It can be resolved into elements. The combination can be imitated. The characteristics may be familiar; but the subtle spring of energy, the vital principle, is still hidden, and cannot be defined until we see that it is a tendency endued with power to organize itself and become a tangible form.*

To distinguish clearly between the animal and vegetable kingdoms is sometimes difficult. There are carnivorous plants that capture and consume their food, and animals in the depths of the sea that vegetate and bloom like flowers. The common origin of these two great divisions is noticed in Hebrew symbolism, as "The dust of the ground."³

*NOTE.—Physical nature actually cooperates with God in his creative work, by responding to his suggestions in a way that seems to be intelligent, for it has in itself forceful creative energy.

³Gen. ii. 7.

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It is easy to see how the earth was clothed with verdure in bewildering varieties, springing from germinal points at the times of vegetation. But how were animals developed and brought to maturity? They must have had nourishment and protection while in a state of transition and till they were able to care for themselves. Such subsistence and safety may have been afforded them as vegeto-animal organisms until independent existence was established. These temporary forms, having served their purpose, were probably succeeded by those more highly organized. Thus sentient beings could have been generated, indigenous to the locality. History could give us no record of such a process, unless it were preserved in the archives of eternity and obtained by revelation.

The desire for unlimited existence is very strong in human beings. Animals are without the perception of duration which makes time so valuable to us. They cannot know the annals of the past, or the possibilities of the future. Satisfied with the supply of their needs, they live unconscious of many things that bring anxiety to us. If immortality were given to them, they could not appreciate it, or even realize the fact.

MYSTERIES OF NATURE

If we could remain forever in the corporeal form, without the disadvantages which it involves, it would be the ideal life. Nothing is more desirable than the prospect of never-ending years, when success and happiness crown our efforts. Progressive youth, merging into glorious maturity, with no danger of decline or accident, would make an earthly paradise. Nature is so congenial, and the ties that bind us to the present are so tender, that we would defer indefinitely our entrance to an invisible and unknown state beyond, unless its superiority were shown by special illumination.

The mystic tree of the Adamic age was not the emblem of *physical* immortality. There are reasons for believing that perpetual life in a material body is impossible, or worse than death. The present rate of increase in numbers would, in a few centuries, bring abnormal conditions. The earth would be crowded from the equator to the frozen zones. Agricultural pursuits abandoned, and with the necessities and comforts of life rapidly disappearing, men would fight for room and sigh for release.

If the globe were larger and the increase of population restricted, evils would still exist which could not be remedied without the extinction of

LIFE IN TWO WORLDS

physical life. No natural body can be strong enough to resist mutilation, disintegration, or change from solid to liquid or aeriform. Harm might come from casualty or evil persons. So long as men in this life are capable of inflicting injury of any kind it may occur. And if they were incapable of it, goodness would be only a name, without significance.

The distinguishing characteristic of rational beings is knowledge of good and evil, with ability to choose the best or the worst for themselves. Without this, merit would be unknown and men nothing but intelligent animals.

The privileges of life in heaven are associated with a *spiritual body*. It is substantial and yet imponderable, with power to appear or disappear, to overcome distance with the swiftness of thought, to penetrate dense bodies without resistance, to be independent of natural light, to be absolutely invulnerable, with all the faculties exalted and the loftiest aspirations gratified, with mental power to exclude all that is objectionable, and include what is desirable, with the prospect of an interminable career of constant progress. Nothing is better. It is a mode of existence resembling the divine.

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Exclusion from the sublunary Eden was not compulsory. Coercion by any spiritual being is impossible; but weakness, and even death, moral or physical, may supervene when divine support is discarded. Estrangement creates a gulf which nothing can bridge but reconciliation.

Heaven is not an enclosure, from which its inhabitants cannot escape. They are free to stand or fall. The gates are ever open. *Involuntary* goodness is worthless here and hereafter. Hell is not a prison with adamantine walls. Its victims are limited by their condition and choice.

The eye is the organ of vision; but sight is a mental perception related to intellectual powers. If the physical eyes are blind, ability to see always remains, and can be used when there is opportunity. Light without the normal eye is dimly indicated in mind reading, and the location of objects that are lost. Hearing, as well as all bodily sensations and perceptions, are truly in the mind. After death these faculties are developed, unless they are stultified by the rejection of divine light, when a clear knowledge of its value has been revealed and understood.

Such a condition involves chronic night, deplorable weakness, and poverty of resources. The

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smouldering embers of perverted passions and vitiated tastes burn with a feverish glow. The mind feeds on itself, and is imprisoned by its incapacity. It is destitution superinduced and cherished. The absence of spiritual life is moral death. The absence of light is darkness, of progress is decline.

Infernal antagonism is persistent, but cannot succeed. It becomes desperate; all the normal aspirations are reversed. The downward tendency increases, as a falling body, accelerated by its momentum, plunges into measureless depths.

If annihilation or dissolution of any kind could terminate such a course, it would seem to be appropriate. Evil suggestions from these sources could then be eliminated, and the death and burial of hell in the spiritual world thus accomplished. But can an immortal spirit be annihilated? In nature annihilation is impossible.* If a bad spirit is excluded from others in such a way that he cannot injure them in the least, without their consent, and after the fullest illumination and clearest knowledge of the consequences, he deliberately makes his final choice and holds it firmly and continuously with bitter opposition to all that is right,

*NOTE.—Eternal hope is not excluded by eternal death, but by persistent and continuous opposition to a righteous life. Page 233.

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he can have no just cause for complaint, and any attempt to reform him by persuasion or force might be useless.

The existence of malignant spiritual beings is evinced by the suggestions that come to the mind at times from external and invisible sources. Such spirits can actually be tested and known by one who has clear discriminating spiritual perception. This is difficult work; but success is possible.

The choice of immortal life or spiritual death can be made without mistake when all the conditions are fulfilled.

There is no chance for suicide in the unseen hell. The motives for such a deed could not be worthy. Exit by this method, when there is no desire for reform, and the best gifts are despised, could not be justly sanctioned, even if it were possible. The indestructibility of matter is conceded. It may change form; but it cannot be obliterated. The enduring qualities of mind are superior. How, then, can undying personality pass into oblivion?

The necessity for worlds like ours is obvious, when we understand that outside of these material realms there is no place for the myriads of people, corporeal or spiritual, that throng the Universe.

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The snow-line is only about three miles above the level of the sea in the tropics. Above this, and far beyond the clouds, is a region of appalling desolation. No sound breaks the eternal silence. The cold is intense. Drifting cosmic matter, meteoric or cometic, may appear, and beyond in obscurity unfathomable and undefined are the shadowy nebulae, chaotic and dreadful, where amid the war of elements the incipient systems form, and new worlds have a beginning.

What we see in the heavens is interesting, as distance lends enchantment to the view, softened by the glamour of our wondrous atmosphere. But like the mirage of the desert, those depths of blue are delusive. To look for the invisible heaven in the sky with vague uncertainty, while the earth revolves and rushes forward with inconceivable speed, is not satisfying. If transferred at death to some distant planet, we should still find ourselves associated with a material world.

Heaven is not separated from us by distance. Millions of spiritual beings walk the earth whether we wake or sleep.

Heaven in vision and in fancy should not be regarded as heaven in literal fact. The heavenly

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world consists of its people, and hell of its victims. Precious gems and valuable metals may illustrate imperishable riches. Sublime scenery, the deep satisfactions, and ineffable glory of the redeemed.

There, methods of acquiring knowledge and understanding one another will supersede the rudimentary efforts of the past. The conventionality that restricts social enjoyment here, will be removed, and the greatest study of mankind will be nature, divine and human. Great changes may come to our world. Some have predicted overwhelming catastrophes, even "the end" or the "death of the earth" through the failure of the sun. This, I think, is improbable.⁴ But whatever may happen to our planet millions of years hence, those of us who are in heaven in that far off age cannot be disturbed. We shall be safe with those we love, forever and ever. Oh, the unspeakable privileges of the redeemed!

The possibilities of the globe are beyond conception. Its treasures within and without are known in part. Its hidden riches are waiting for development. It is a thing of beauty, and it should be a joy forever.

⁴ Chapters iii and ix.

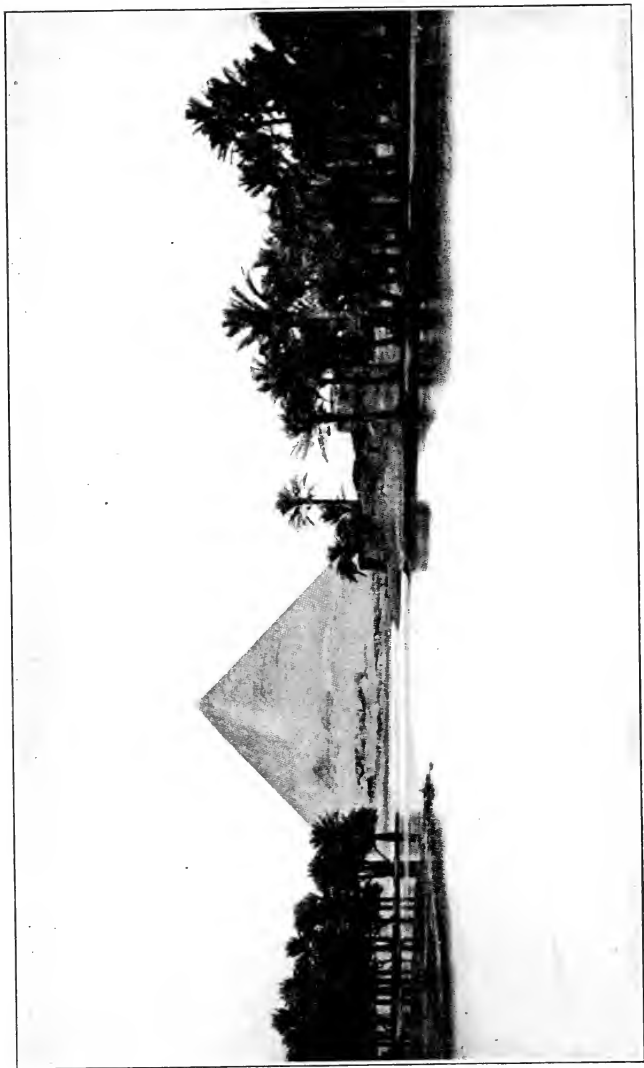
II

IMMORTALITY

THE great Pyramid of Cheops was built by men who could not be disturbed by difficulties that have no parallel in history. This colossal pile covered thirteen acres, and was nearly five hundred feet high. Its chambers lined with polished stone were entered by intricate passages skillfully concealed, and unknown for ages. It was not only a mausoleum, but a treasury. The discovery of its riches was not made until all methods of investigation had failed. The secret was revealed when a stone fell from the roof of the passage leading to the Crypt. Nothing was gained by previous effort because no one knew where to begin.

* NOTE.—The careful study of the sub-conscious mind or deeper self, under divine guidance, will reveal immortal personality.

Immortality is revealed in *mind*.* A divine thought may be the germ, or beginning of a being. A person was originally a thought, or conception, from God, which had power in itself to develop and organize, appropriating suitable material from its surroundings, thus becoming a physical, as well as a mental, creation. The original design was a complex and comprehensive thought in which all



"IT WAS NOT ONLY A MAUSOLEUM, BUT A TREASURY."—Page 16

IMMORTALITY

that constituted a human being was wrapped, as a seed contains all the qualities and possibilities of a tree, including reproduction.

There is thought in a tree, but it is not the thought *of* the tree. It is a natural aptitude in the first of its kind, which has continued in the successive trees that have sprung from it. It conforms to the original design, but is susceptible to improvement and great changes in varying circumstances. It can adapt itself to an unfavorable locality. If it is growing on a hillside it bends toward the hill, adjusting the centre of gravity in such a way as to become more firmly rooted; but it knows no reason for this deviation, for it does not think, but simply conforms involuntarily to that which was embodied in the original suggestion, which cannot be disregarded when there is opportunity for its use.

A suggestion from a divine source can be planted in insensate material and be effective, more effective than any we can fix in mind, for it will cling eternally if so desired, repeating itself in all that is reproduced.

Mentality in an animal may involve intelligence that is remarkable, but it is destitute of mind in a *human* sense. It is without the perception of *dura-*

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tion. A vital idea with us, is time. How long have we lived and what is the outlook for the future? To an animal this is nothing. If it could live ten thousand years it would not understand it, or consider the possibilities and limitations of the future as we do. We have nothing in common with animals in this respect, and to entertain the idea of a spiritual immortality for them is absurd. They are evidently creatures adapted to a physical existence only, with no aspirations for a better life in an immortal state, or capacity for it.

The idea of continued existence in another world is not in an animal, therefore when it dies it finds no environment for its mentality. Its life disappears like the life of a tree; it is not lost; it is somewhere in nature, but it is not used. It has served its purpose. As far as consciousness and capacity to act are concerned, it is extinct.

The power of *suggestion* in Deity must be very great.¹ We possess a degree of it which can be cultivated with astonishing results. A person who has mental force, which is penetrating and tenacious, can plant a thought in the mind of another that will stay. It will take hold of his mental and physical nature and work a radical change by operating

¹Gen. i. 3.

IMMORTALITY

upon his motives, stimulating his desires, and controlling his faculties. Good or evil results may arise from this power to impress others which some can exert. But a divine suggestion is far more effective because it is always right, and proceeds from an almighty mind.

Spiritual regeneration is effected by divine suggestion. It revolutionizes character, producing a heavenly transformation that becomes permanent. It involves a new creation. It is called spiritual life, but it is simply a *thought* from a divine source that has found a suitable environment, and has power to develop according to the design. It is certainly something vital, for it is vitality itself of a divine kind, and exerts a powerful influence as it is cherished and cultivated; but it is not endued with power to organize itself so as to become a *person*, for that is another kind of divine suggestion which involved a new creation, and meant the beginning of a race.

A suggestion of this kind was given power to attract and appropriate substance, and thus form a material body while gradually developing a mental and spiritual personality with all its characteristics and possibilities. This suggestion, which

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was at first a seed-thought, planted in suitable substance, became a human being who could die and still live; for the original suggestion involved the creation of a *spiritual and immortal inner being* which would find another environment when the physical or temporary body disappeared, having power to develop a body immaterial and immortal.

The force in this original suggestion contained immortal *mind*. It had power to create the form which it assumed; it was the builder of the flesh in which it was enshrined, and had ability to live without it when it had served its purpose. Immortality was fixed, or planted, in humanity by divine suggestion in the beginning. It is a part of our constitution. Many things in nature are divine conceptions materialized, but *persons* only can live without visible form, because the essence of their existence is immortal. There is vital force in the life of plants and in animals some intelligence, but in us there is more than that. We are *spiritual* beings, and therefore we can, like Deity, live apart from matter, or with it, when it is expedient.

The consciousness of being the same person is the most distinct conception that is known. It is a part of our being so essential that even in dreams

IMMORTALITY

it is understood. Unconsciousness does not indicate nonentity; it is suspension of the faculties. Restoration may be sudden or delayed for many days. If death occurs unconsciousness may continue for a while, or there may be an immediate awakening. We are so constituted that periods of profound repose are possible and desirable here and hereafter. Therefore, a person may be dead yet sleeping.⁵

The mind involves the entire being. Without it one is nothing in the world. Everything that constitutes personality is carried through after death. The body is simply refuse matter. Therefore, the characteristics of our nature will appear in the spiritual states; but the change in the mode of existence is very great. After death the desire for a larger sphere of activity will be stronger, for a new world is open, and our interest in former things is not lost. There are interesting discoveries that will arrest our attention and occupy our time, and the ease and success that accompanies effort of the right kind will exceed our expectations. There are privileges in knowing what cannot be known while in the earthly

⁵ Mark v. 39, and Ch. viii., p. 138.

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form. There are powers of body and mind that are new, and we are not without some knowledge of them; but they cannot be used. There are heights and depths that are now entirely beyond our inspection, but when the spiritual eye is opened they can be revealed.

A planet in the starry heavens is an object of interest to the astronomer. Its motions are studied, its distance, density, and possibly some of its elements, are noticed. Reference is made to its size, color, and distinguishing peculiarities, but the limit is soon reached. The planet is named and reckoned with others in our solar system, but we cannot know much more than this. It is clearly seen, but its mystery is impenetrable. There is no means of communication. It is a floating island in depths of blue. Is it inhabited? If so, what multitudes throng its streets? What are its productions and its industries? What are the hopes and fears of its strange people? Do they notice this ball on which we are carried so swiftly through the realms of space? Such questions may be answered later.

Each planet has a history which cannot be opened now. It is a volume bound in shining

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gold which may be read when we can interpret its contents. Now it is one of the myriads of celestial hieroglyphics that emblazon the sky.⁶

The power to understand is not confined to the intellect. The capacity to feel is the measure of ability, as well as to calculate and judge. The greatest men have the deepest sympathies and the strongest passions. To love intensely is divine. Therefore, the sensations or feelings are very important, for they have to do with our happiness or misery in the unseen world. Every sensation and emotion is in the *mind*. The ear cannot hear. The membrana tympani is a little disc upon which sounds operate. It hears nothing. The auditory nerve is a slender filament by which sound is transmitted. It is deaf. The person only hears; he does not hear the sound, but the thought which the sound creates. The ocean roars, but the resident of the beach does not know it till he thinks. Any sound that is not understood stimulates inquiry. It makes us *think*: "What is it?" And if it is not noticed it is not heard.

Conversation in the spiritual world is not dependent upon audible sounds. It is thought lis-

⁶ See Ch. i., p. 3.

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tening to thought. The ear is not limited by the fleshly mechanism. In the immortal state the lightest whisper can be heard anywhere when the conditions are fulfilled. Communication is easy at any distance, for thought can be transferred without difficulty. Suggestions are easily impressed and fastened. The privilege of conversation with persons who have lived in all ages, even prehistoric times, is for those who are able to receive it. Thought does not require words. The idea, even before it takes form, in the mind, can be grasped. Expression is not restricted by the inflexibility of material, organization, and environment. Every avenue of the soul is open and accessible. The possibilities of perception are infinite.

Music is limited here by vocal impossibilities. The great composers have not found those who could interpret their ideas without acknowledging their inability to express all that should be rendered. The vocal organs are not strong enough to reach the highest notes that can be used with advantage; and in the descending scale the softest murmur that floats in the enchanted thought of genius cannot be expressed. There is difficulty in acquiring desirable and permanent qualities be-

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cause physical changes are constant, and failure is generally noticed before the prime of life. Power to accomplish all that is worthy of effort, with increasing ability and deepening interest, is the privilege of those who have come to immortal felicity.

Taste is a mental perception. Nothing can be enjoyed without reflection. The best fruit is known by its flavor, and this is a thought arising from the odor and the sensation it gives. The sensation is also mental, for it cannot be known without *understanding* that it occurs. Taste cannot be obliterated, for it is in the mind; but it may be defective and useless because of its connection with the earthly body when it is not in a normal condition.

There is nothing that can interfere with the enjoyment of all that the senses afford in the life beyond the grave, unless there is corruption in the mind arising from the cultivation of evil tendencies and perverted passions.⁷

The exquisite delight and satisfaction that comes to our entire being when everything that is in us

⁷ Immortality does not necessarily involve "eternal life" in a *heavenly* sense. See Ch. i., p. 12.

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finds its appropriate response is indescribable. The past cannot be forgotten, and every friendship that is worthy may be continued. Misunderstanding often mars our brightest hopes, but those who have felt that destiny had parted them forever may meet again. The union of fond hearts, in blissful and uninterrupted communion, cannot be prevented. The smile of favor, which was changed into the bitter mystery of distrust, will return, and the sad words, "It might have been," cannot throw their shadows across our pathway.

There is a good way to know that I am immortal. I can philosophize. I can reason from analogy. I can depend on the Bible, but I need more. I can ask our Heavenly Father for a full measure of eternal life, and find it, and be gloriously conscious of it and praise Him because I know that I shall live forever. And clearly see "if this earthly house of my tabernacle were dissolved that I have a house not made with hands eternal in the heavens." This is enough for me.

Hence the power of a thought coming from this Source to develop an immortal man capable of fulfilling the inherent design in the constitution of his mind, which involves *continuance* of being in

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an immortal state; finding at last an environment wherein all his powers may be utilized and his career have no end. Unspeakable gift!

DEATHLESS NATURE

There is no death! The stars go down
To shine upon some other shore,
And bright in heaven's jeweled crown
They shine forever more.

There is no death! The dust we tread
Shall change beneath the summer showers
To golden grain or mellow fruit
Or rainbow-tinted flowers.

There is no death! Although we grieve
When beautiful familiar forms
That we have learned to love are torn
From our embracing arms.

They are not dead! They have but passed
Beyond the mists that blind us here,
Into the new and larger life
Of that serener sphere.⁸

⁸ J. L. McCreery.

III

FIRE

THE sun's energy makes life possible here. It is the most vital manifestation of force in nature; for without it there would be universal death.¹ Physical existence also involves chemical changes that are igneous. Oxygen is the element in nature that feeds the flame of life.

Our sun seems to be inexhaustible. Surely it is big enough. It is equal in weight to 325,000 earths. It is fed by the cosmic material of the Universe as it moves through new realms of space. It is full of radio-static substances, so production may mean support. There has been no perceptible diminution of the solar constant. If the sun is shrinking by condensation its bulk appears to be the same. No change has actually been observed.²

The sun cannot give us light or heat without

¹ Solar energy.

² See Ch. ix.

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our environment, for beyond this there is intense cold which begins on the tops of the highest mountains, clad in everlasting snow. He is not effective unless there is opportunity for absorption and radiation. Therefore, to us the inter-planetary realms are cold and silent, eternal night.³ And yet the ablest mathematician cannot compute the area illuminated by his rays, for the atmosphere acts as a lens, producing optical effects that throw the firmament open to our view. And nothing could hinder us from seeing objects at much greater distances if the eyes were strong enough, but the effect would be dazzling and bewildering, unless there were physical and mental ability in proportion to such visual capacity.

Light kindles a fire in the organs of vision which reaches the mind. The eye is composed of that which is easily affected by it, for vision is associated with chemical changes as well as respiration and assimilation. Actinism in the ray finds the interior very susceptible; it stimulates the ret-

³Light is a *sensation* produced by the action of physical luminosity on the organs of vision. Without radiation and absorption, we could not get this sensation, nor could we hear without the atmosphere which does not extend very far beyond the earth.

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ina, and permeates the entire organism with the same property that colors the flowers, and clothes the landscape in living green.

Mental fire in the life is felt in the passions and ambitions. It is stirred with the thought of gratification, and burns with an exhilarating glow. Love is fanned by devotion and contemplation, and when the real merges into the ideal the future is bright with promise. Eternal constancy is pledged. It is an ecstasy—a dream of Paradise. But the ideal must again become the real, for life has its sober prose as well as its poetry and enchantment. Yet memory holds her treasures, and, if enshrined in purity and noble character, like roses, they will bloom again in sweeter fragrance and undying splendor, when the future opens the secret of immortal felicity.

The energy of the mind is developed by conflagration. It is not in the strength of desire that we feel the power of passion, but in its *fiery expression*. Rage reaches red heat when the plan for revenge is forming, but turns white before the fight occurs, and burns with fiercer flame until the fatal blow is struck and the enemy lies in the dust, when it subsides and the consequences are consid-

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ered. A great fire does not cease till the last vestige of inflammable matter it can reach is consumed.

Death cannot annihilate the tendency to oppose whatever is against us, or is contrary to our opinions. It grows stronger. All the passions are intensified. The capacity to enjoy is greater because the physical nature is no more. Emotions and sensations that would burn out the strongest nerves and wreck the constitution of a mortal man can be felt, because there is provision for the development and satisfaction of all the longings that we notice here. The loftiest flight of poetic expression has not given us an adequate conception of the strength and quality of passion in an exalted and purified human being, burning and shining in the celestial state like a bright, glorious star.

Power to overcome difficulties that would hinder our progress now is found in the spiritual world, for there are no incidental causes of failure that cannot be avoided.

Property is represented by mental calculation. It really exists, and cannot be destroyed. The title is valid. The idea of possession, authorship, or claim by virtue of established right, is strong

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even in childhood, and increases with age. It is a part of the constitution of the mind, and is carried into the other life. Our rights cannot be invaded.

Misunderstanding can be avoided because there is open communication, and nothing can be concealed that should be apparent. Witnesses can be had without delay, and memory be compelled to open her imperishable records. The facts can be known at a glance, for thoughts are actually perceptible to the spiritual observer. Matters that have caused years of perplexity can be speedily settled and thoroughly understood by all concerned.

Property in the spiritual world is as desirable to them, as it is to us in this life, and the means of acquiring it are legitimate and must be respected. Of course it does not *materialize*, but to them it is real because it is so understood. It can be used in ways that are important to them in a world which is rich in its resources, and where values can be exchanged, and losses by *casualty* are unknown.⁴

Invention, literature, art, discovery, and ten thousand times ten thousand things can be traced

⁴ Matt. vi. 20.

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to their origin, and we can then see what is new or old.

Fire is the element of destruction here and hereafter. The great libraries of antiquity have disappeared as it touched their precious volumes, burying the past in mystery and oblivion. Great cities have perished in a night. Nothing has been spared that could be consumed or wrecked in the awful surging billows of flame that have swept forest and plain in the mad search for dominion. But the forces of nature find nothing in mind that can be affected by its action unless their relation to it is vital; and then separation by death means release and continued existence in states that are more desirable, or worse, in every respect.

Progress is offered, when the opportunity comes, and if refused or neglected retrogression is inevitable. The possibilities are inconceivable, because the time is unlimited for development, or decline. And yet, the sooner privilege is taken the greater the advantage, for there is less difficulty to overcome.

Human beings are saved or destroyed by *fire* in this world and the next.⁵ Nothing can save a

⁵ Celestial or infernal fire.

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man who is ruined by fire but the entire renovation of his moral nature by forces that arrest and extinguish the inflammation produced by the corruption of his affections. And so long as there is objection to this the fatal conflagration continues.

When spiritual fire becomes corrupt it is very destructive. The beginning is a spark hidden in the centre of life. It gradually spreads through the entire being and bursts, at times, into a flame that spares nobody. It feeds on virtue and glories in the wreckage of character. It increases in intensity till the natural forces are burned out or destroyed by disease.

This virulent fire, kindled by reckless tendencies and perverted passions, may continue in the mind forever. Death cannot extinguish it, but it brings limitation and weakness which throws its victim into desperate conditions, for there is nothing upon which it can feed even with the eyes, because of the moral darkness that pervades the faculties, superinduced and cultivated by vicious indulgences.

Finding no response for depraved appetites in a state when the rottenness of life is exposed in its most repulsive features, there is nothing for such but the consumption of the immortal mind

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by its own evil propensities, which seethe and writhe and struggle with effort and failure like the elements of a volcano that find no opportunity for eruption.

Fever in the physical life may continue for a certain period, unless it can be broken by remedies that are effectual, or the patient is relieved by death; but when it is in the *spiritual* nature medicines cannot reach it and death never comes.

Tendencies to evil can be checked by a careful consideration of the consequences when failure *begins* coupled with a desire to stop that is effective; but this should be associated with an appeal for power directed to the Source of life, for spiritual maladies cannot be corrected without divine co-operation. A falling body rapidly increases in velocity as it descends, and every instant becomes more dangerous to itself, or anything it may strike that can be injured; but a person falling into the unfathomable depths of perdition finds no obstacle that interferes with his desperate determination to know the worst. His descent is accelerated by the intensity of his passions, which develop with malignant perversity in the unearthly hell.

The ability to acquire knowledge in the heavenly

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state is increased by the desire to know the extent of the new environment. This is stimulated by new methods in a life full of promise for those who aim at the loftiest ideals. Nothing can hinder us, for the fruits of paradise are growing everywhere in this wonderful realm, where knowledge is the result of effort so wisely directed that it brings reward without delay. Years of preparation for the future are not necessary, for it is a state wherein all is open to the successful candidate for immortal honors.

The old and new are blended harmoniously in the lives of the most ancient people in heaven. Time cannot affect a person unfavorably who is renewed by changes that develop all his powers and open new avenues of thought when the old are abandoned. The old is seen in experience and advancement, and ability to bring the past from its repose and stir the future with prophetic revelations, while the new appears in the freshness and brilliancy of increasing strength and intellectual energy.

The inextinguishable fire of discarnate life must glow forever, whether it burns in the seraphic flame of heavenly devotion and divine rapture, or the lurid

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embers of base desire and perverted affections. For it is sustained by its own undying energy, and there is nothing to break its eternal continuity.

HEAVENLY FIRE

Celestial fire is the expression of a force that is natural, but intelligent and divine. Speak to this vital spark of heavenly flame as it glows in the soul. It may respond. Speak to a sunbeam and it is silent as a stone. There is no soul in it. It cannot hear or feel or think. Science cannot tell us what it is. Science cannot define light or heat. It knows some of the phenomena they exhibit. It cannot tell what electricity is or gravitation. It knows these forces are "methods of activity," but what they are, *essentially*, it does not know. Whence came they? Are they eternal?

How different with fire from a source that is heavenly! We have the King of forces in this holy flame, able to define and explain the loving, powerful energy communicated. A guide into all truth—the Divine Spirit—throwing light on the deepest mysteries.

Listen! He speaks as he burns and shines in the soul. Study me. Trust me. What you feel is an expression of interest. I love you! I am the smile of God—the source of life—the effluence of Deity. I cleanse. I illuminate. Know me better, if you would have a better knowledge of yourself—of nature—of life beyond death; for I hold the keys of Paradise.

IV

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

THE great contrasts of this world are exceeded by the superior beginning which is found in the future life. Nothing is derived from that which involves the loss of opportunity, for the necessary evils of the corporeal condition are avoided.

The darkness that covers half the globe, reminding us of the necessity of sleep, subtracts years from the brief period of conscious existence. Rest is essential in the life beyond death, but there are no laws that require regular hours of repose. The celestial life is not burdened with the strain and tension that constantly handicaps our efforts here. The weight of the body is not burdensome to one of average proportions when in normal condition, but there is something that makes a recumbent position necessary at frequent intervals. The load we carry would soon overpower us if

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night did not find us where the pull of gravitation is not felt, thus relaxing the muscles, relieving the brain of surplus energy, and preparing us for the struggle of another day.

Rest in the spiritual state may be deferred indefinitely, for there is nothing to interfere with activity when it is desirable. The spiritual person has no weight. He can move with greater ease and celerity than a planet shooting through empty space; or, slowly and softly settle into the depths of the sea and explore its hidden wonders without difficulty or danger, for matter in any form cannot obstruct the passage of an immaterial being.

Rest, in the spiritual world, may occur when there is a transition to a higher sphere in which new privileges and honors are to be conferred. Seclusion and mystery heighten the effect of these new glories and give variety to the eternal years, as a night of peaceful slumber precedes the dawning of a brighter day.¹

The change from the routine of physical existence is very great. The eye grows weary here. The city glows with brilliant illumination, turn-

¹ Ch. viii.

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ing darkness into the inviting glow of scintillation that glitters in ten thousand points of light. But when the hour for sleep has come nothing can prevent it; the eyelids will close and produce the darkness for which the eyes are longing. The eye is an organ depending upon conditions that cannot last long; it begins to wear out in the prime of life; but the eye of the mind can easily dispense with this temporary aid to vision when the faculties are opened in the world of spirits.

There is no night for those who want everlasting day. As the globe turns over it leaves us on the dark side, and it is better for us now. But with the new powers of motion we can have in the life beyond, infinite day may exclude the night whenever we desire it. Any climate or altitude that suits us may be found without delay.

At the edges of the great shadow that hangs over the dark side of the earth like a gigantic pall, morning is constantly dawning and daylight is fading into night. So sunrise and sunset synchronize forever. Somewhere it is always morning; somewhere evening shadows are lengthening.

Night does not hinder the efforts of those who live in the undying state, for they are not de-

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pendent upon the light of the sun. They find power to know what we cannot, because they are able to perceive with the inner light of which we now know something.

Telepathic knowledge is beginning to be recognized, but it will not be of much value until corresponding perceptions are opened, and this cannot be done till we reach the incorporeal state. To believe that there is a thought in the mind of another, without evidence in expression of any kind, is to see the thought intuitively. This may be satisfactory to one who is confident that he can know in this way, but he cannot satisfy others without better evidence, or establish the fact in his own mind without inquiry. He may express his belief and *feel* that he is certain, but he cannot positively know the truth till it is demonstrated in other ways. But no such difficulty can perplex the immortal man, for his ideas are associated with a penetrating consciousness of things unknowable to those who are in the flesh that makes evidence of a mortal kind useless. Nothing can disturb his conclusions, for he knows from actual observation that which we cannot perceive.

In the life beyond there is nothing hidden by

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the obscurity that permeates our senses now unless *spiritual* light is excluded. For spiritual light and darkness are connected with mental and moral conditions that are very different.

OPEN VISION

Open vision should include the perception of voices from the spiritual realms and means the opening of the intuitive faculties in such a way that we can grasp thoughts expressed through impressions and suggestions or even in *words* from God or angels. Associated with this we may find ability to see what cannot be discerned by the normal eye.

Hearing of this kind is more easily developed than sight, which may come at the same time; but usually later, requiring more time for testing and discrimination.

Such knowledge was eagerly sought in the early days of the golden age, when the Scriptures were given. Sometimes it was rare. "And the word of the Lord was precious in those days; there was no open vision."²

The prophets could hear voices from the spiritual world, and some of them could see as they do in heaven. And so they lived in two worlds while in the flesh.

Sight in heaven, may be compared to that which we sometimes get in dreams. While dreaming we

² I. Sam. iii. 1.

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really see; and yet on awakening we find that "it was only a dream."

Nevertheless we have an illustration of sight without the use of the physical eyes. So it is in heaven. What we call sight, becomes *rational* beatific vision. The redeemed see much better in heaven than we do. But to those who are in the spiritual hell it is dark.

Some people are born with natures more open to the invisible world than others. They have a degree of supersensuous perception that is remarkable. But it is not of much value unless it is associated with superior intelligence, sound judgment, and a righteous life. And even then they may be mistaken in some of their conclusions. Great care should be used as the subconscious mind is developing. Without *divine guidance* that is clear and explicit, and has been thoroughly tested, there is danger of error and fanaticism.²

There are those who long for communications from God and visions that are heavenly. But they do not know just how He speaks. They have read much about it in the Bible and know that messages from angels were frequent. They do not want hallucinations, or something imaginary, irrelevant or perhaps evil, from an occult source. They know, however, that Our Heavenly Father speaks through the Holy Spirit, and in this way they may also hear from the

² I. John iv. 1 and Chapter xii.

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Saviour. They should know that it is their privilege to hear and see, and believe that they can be saved from mistakes and delusions, if firm and careful. And so they can prayerfully wait and at times *listen*, and know that when he speaks, it will not be with a voice audible to the physical ear, for he is a spirit, and yet it may seem like a human voice, as it is distinctly spoken within the mind by the Divine Spirit or through a heavenly messenger.

Do you look backward to some trial in the past when "something was said" that made a lasting impression. It came as a warning or a good message. It seemed very important, and you cherish it, and feel that it will never be forgotten. You should study it, and ask for light upon it, and find just how it came, and why and by whom the words were uttered. Ask for light and it will be given. Alas! Thousands who have been thus honored have never tried to look into the sweet mystery or ask the Divine Teacher for instruction, not realizing that God and angels are as anxious to speak as we are to hear; but they cannot reach us unless we give them attention and meet the conditions.

Open vision is for those who "have ears to hear what the Spirit says," and eyes to see what he may reveal. There is no reason why those who enjoy the Gift of Pentecost should not have "visions" and dreams divinely given.³ This gift is for all who know that they are redeemed, even "servants and

³ Acts ii. 18

LIGHT AND DARKNESS

hand-maidens." It is the richest treasure that God offers to the Church of to-day. It is called "the promise of the Father."⁴

Open vision cannot be understood by scientific men who try experiments with "mediums," who have superinduced trance conditions and appear to be talking with people from the other world. This is exhausting to the "medium" or "psychic," and demoralizing to all concerned. Nothing very definite or of much value can be obtained by this method, unless it is the fact that there is another world and some one is trying to talk through. Open vision is something normal and heavenly. It is a divine gift. The soul is opened to the spiritual realms, when it is expedient. It is a work of God, when it is right. Like regeneration it is effected by divine suggestion. And for an important purpose as it was in Bible times. The eminent psychologist would do better if he would spend more time in prayer, and the realization of God's presence, as he studies psychical phenomena.

The mind is opened to the immortal states as the flower opens to the sun. When one begins to hear, he has much to learn and needs experience. He begins to see persons and things, indistinct and shadowy, perhaps, at first, but growing clearer. Scenic parables may be given with their heavenly lessons. Hell with its corruption is exposed, that the truth may be known which it tries to hide.

⁴ Acts i. 4-5.

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The greatest wonder of the Universe is an endless life. It is an idea that has become concrete. It has become a force, intelligent, unique, and independent. It is full of unlimited possibilities for those whose aspirations are high. It cannot be duplicated, for every person is different from all that have lived before, or will ever live again. The ability to understand sublime mysteries is conferred.

The golden fruits of knowledge hang in rich clusters on the tree of immortality, but they cannot be reached by those who are not willing to climb into the lofty branches and gather them. Thousands fail because courage and persistent effort are necessary. Sentimental and weak, they drift onward, hoping that in some way the unknown future will bring them fortune. But eternal promotion cannot come to those who do not deserve it. Heaven is a discovery which meets the enraptured view of the heroic explorer. Days of toil and anxiety, and nights of peril, are past. At length the radiant morning dawns. Hope arches the brilliant skies with iridescent splendor.

V

WHERE IS THE SPIRITUAL WORLD?

KNOWLEDGE of the spiritual world is very desirable to some people. It satisfies their longings and confirms their belief in immortality. Such knowledge is for us, inasmuch as the Saviour died "to bring life and immortality to light." He is always ready to respond to reverent and careful inquiry concerning these things. No one is more anxious to demonstrate the reality of life beyond death. After his death, he appeared at intervals during forty days in a spiritual body, although to the disciples it seemed to be earthly and actually tangible.

Surely there was nothing ghostly about it. He declared "a spirit hath not flesh and bones as ye see me have."¹ He called attention to his body, desiring that they should study and examine it, that they might know more about life in the heavenly state.

¹Luke xxiv. 39. See page 147.

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Later as he appeared to St. John, he said: "I was dead and behold I am alive forevermore and I have the keys of death and Hades." ² Hades means the spiritual world. Now he is ready to use these keys when the conditions that make their use desirable are met. These conditions involve heavenly perception, or a degree of open vision, which we should carefully cultivate under the guidance of the Holy Spirit. This is a Bible truth which has been overlooked and neglected by many sincere Christians.

We are to depend *exclusively* on the Holy Spirit, who is also called "the Spirit of Jesus," in our effort; believing that we are safe under his guidance. And yet we should know what we are doing. Great care should be used to avoid mistakes and subtle delusions. Spiritual perception of the right kind is not easily developed. Its culture should be associated with courage, intelligence, keen discrimination, and prayer for heavenly wisdom. "He that hath ears to hear let him hear."

To know the voice of the Holy Spirit clearly is very important. He can speak distinctly within the mind and identify himself without doubt. He will

² Rev. i. 18, R. V.

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respond to the inquiry of the sincere seeker, who has been thoroughly tested. He speaks not only by impressions and suggestions, but sometimes by silent verbal communications. Fortunate indeed is the one who can get such a message and verify it. There are people who believe that they have heard some things which are not as clear as they would have them. They need instruction. These deep, sweet mysteries are for those who are able to take them. Test *thoroughly* and *consider carefully*.

Knowledge of the other world comes slowly. We are in this respect more than two thousand years behind. Although we are ahead of the ancient prophets and Apostles in science, invention, and discovery, yet they knew more about God and angels than we do. Not because their opportunities were better than ours but because they cultivated more diligently and wisely a susceptibility to influences, impressions, and revelations from a heavenly source. They were intelligent and progressive. They took *time*. In some instances a long life was devoted exclusively to the study of messages from God and angels. And so we got the Bible.

They did not try to locate heaven on a distant

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star, or in the sky indefinitely "somewhere." Neither did they put the spiritual hell of the dead into an obscure corner of the Universe. Heaven they said is "above," meaning that it is a superior state, and hell "beneath," meaning that it is an inferior condition. They did not entertain the idea of great distance as they contemplated the other life. They knew that both heaven and hell were somehow associated with this world. And we should know it, for God and angels are here, although they are in heaven; evil spirits are here, although they are in perdition.

It is not distance that separates us from the other side, but our corporeal nature and environment. It is very near, so near that it is accessible. There is a way by which it can be known by one who is able to meet the conditions, and this involves a great privilege. There are no valid reasons for supposing that our spiritual world is located in a distant part of the Universe. Our spiritual world is closely connected with our visible world, because, living or dead, we belong to both.

A person originating on this planet must in some way be forever related to it. He is really a production of the earth, though spiritual and immortal.

WHERE IS THE SPIRITUAL WORLD?

Death cannot deprive him of the characteristics that made him a man of this world, unless it should rob him of personality and identity. The life beyond is not without its interests in our world which relate to the present as well as the past. For this reason the two worlds are in touch, not only because their interests are related but because they are contiguous in territory.

Where then shall we locate our spiritual world? Outside of the celestial bodies is primeval space, cold and silent. Each planet is concerned with its own affairs, and has a different history and environment. Our spiritual states must have a foundation, or source of supply. It is found in our material world.

The words "above" and "beneath" are often associated with ideas relating to the spiritual states. If these terms are understood in a *literal* sense, they lead to conclusions that are absurd and contradictory. Our earth is whirling through space at the rate of eighteen and one half miles per second, and the direction of the zenith changes hourly through an angle equal to fifteen degrees multiplied by the cosine of the latitude. How is heaven above us? If we believe that the infernal regions can be found

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somewhere in the bowels of the earth, we shall have to concede that the place is indefinite and no sane person would try to locate it. If evil spirits can tempt us, where are they? Surely they are in hell; but how are they below us? They are here.

Reference to the spiritual world that involves *height* or *depth* will not bear a literal construction. Condition, rank, exaltation or degradation, success or failure, life or death, privilege or limitation, happiness or misery, good or evil, and all things associated with character and position, should be understood. This means "up" or "down."

To obtain a reasonable conception of the other world is difficult if we regard it as a place, accepting the word place in a *literal* sense. It is a spiritual state. It has a locality, for it is associated with our material world. It is actually here. It should not be regarded as a distant country or domain.

The spiritual realm is inhabited by persons only. Animals do not become immortal. And yet to those who live in that ethereal state everything is as vivid and real as animated nature is to us, for heaven in symbol and in vision is heaven in fact, and so it will seem to us if counted worthy to enter in when "we have shuffled off this mortal coil."

WHERE IS THE SPIRITUAL WORLD?

Redeemed people in heaven are open to nature in our world, but they are more open to nature as they find it on their side; for it is their true sphere of existence, where they have the use of all their faculties in a new and better way, which to them is perfectly natural and normal. For we should know that natural law is effective in our spiritual world, and so it is in the entire Universe, whether spiritual or physical. There are no supernatural states or supernatural persons. God himself, our Divine Father, is a truly natural being. Of course he is superior to what we call nature because he is the Creator; but he is ever in it and belongs with it.

People in heaven are in touch with nature in all its varied phases in our world and so they are in theirs; but they are not exposed to natural evils in such a way that they cannot avoid them.

The redeemed in glory are not disturbed because they are permitted to look in upon our world and see much of its sin and misery, because they are so wonderfully saved. And so it will be with us when we enter in to the felicities of that blessed life; although we may occasionally see that some we have left behind, who are very near and dear, are passing

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through great trials and others that we loved are on the road to hell. Christ and the holy angels are so near our world that they can see the worst as well as the best, and why should we be unwilling to face the facts, here or hereafter?

Even here, on our sin-cursed earth, the happiest, the brightest, the most triumphant people are at work in the dark hells of our great cities or in heathen lands. Surely there is divine grace enough to save us in this life from all worry and needless anxiety, no matter what happens, if we accept it and use it, and there is infinitely more for us in heaven.

There is some heavy and responsible work for us to do when we reach heaven. It will require courage and wisdom. In the great parable of Dives and Lazarus, Abraham delivered a message to a rich man in hell. He was within speaking distance.² We may have to look right down into the depths of the spiritual hell of the dead and consider its problems and possibilities, if duty should call us to such heroic work.

Christ did some very effective work in hell after his death, for he "went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when

²Luke xvi. 19-31

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the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah while the ark was a preparing.”³

The nearness of the other world and its close connection with this world may be noticed by one who realizes that he has a *subconscious mind*. This part of our nature is not as well known as it should be, but some are beginning to use it with great advantage. It should not be allowed to dominate or control the normal mind unless there is a perfect understanding. For the subconscious mind when first revealed is without experience as a guide. It is not well known and does not know itself as it may later. It needs education and discipline. It has faculties to be developed that are very different from those in the normal mind. There should be careful cooperation and dependence upon divine illumination.

Let the subliminal self be trusted with something that is to be remembered and used at a given time. Throw off all responsibility and depend on it and notice the result. In some instances it will prove a helper indeed. It seeks expression and wants something to do.

As we advance in life the normal memory gradu-

³I. Peter iii. 18-20.

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ally fails. It is not so easy to recall names and faces. But the subconscious memory has the advantage of being new and may be very remarkable. It is not infallible; but it is certainly wonderful when well developed, and one has learned how to use it.

Let this "inner man" have something to do that requires careful preparation. Trust him with it, and give him a reasonable time to consider. For instance, having the subject, ask for the points and illustrations in an article, three or four days later. While waiting for a response, take up other work. In due time the points and illustrations will come in regularly arranged for consideration by the normal mind. A perplexing problem may be solved in this way.

Knowledge of the world of spirits—the life beyond death—is not easy to obtain through the normal perceptions. The subliminal consciousness is open to it. There are reasons for believing that this inner self is that which will survive death—the immortal soul. Whatever is peculiar to ultramundane life appeals to this part of our nature. It is interested in telepathy and psycho-physical levitation. It perceives that which transcends our normal limita-

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tions. The subconscious mind, when awakened and conscious, is progressive. Through it, knowledge of the spiritual realm may be very clear. The invisible world may be opened and divine guidance become the key to the best things in earth or heaven. "Know thyself."⁴

There is room enough in the globe's environment for all who have entered the spiritual world and all who may enter in the eternal years, because the spiritual body is not restricted by physical limitations. If, however, a material restoration of all who have died should occur, there would not be standing room for half the number on the surface of the habitable earth.

One may get a vivid realization of the *nearness* of the spiritual world by being "in the spirit" or by seeking and entering into an exclusive union with the Holy Spirit. This is the privilege of the devoted Christian who knows the Divine Spirit in a full or pentecostal sense. This may be easy for one who at times has felt or seemed to feel the presence of some person who has passed through death.⁵

⁴ Page 293.

⁵ Rev. i. 10; Rev. iv. 2.

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In this way a person of intelligence, sound mind and firm will can be saved from fanaticism and in addition learn much about life beyond death.

î *Space* in the other world is as vital and important as it is here, but that world is a spiritual state, and there is always room enough for mind or spirit. It is the corporeal body that limits us, and makes space of a kind necessary here. We are surrounded by an innumerable company of spiritual beings, good and evil; but so positive is the law of exclusion that they cannot manifest themselves unless permitted.

The thought represented by the words translated "heaven" or "the heavens," comprised so much, when used by inspired writers, that was literal as well as symbolic and mystical, that misunderstanding has crept in concerning it. The idea of *great distance* from the globe is nowhere indicated. The firmament with its broad expanse and infinite height was the best symbol of spiritual promotion and felicity that could be found, for it represented purity in its blue altitudes, and kindled sublime emotions and holy aspirations.

The ascent of angels, or men, who disappeared

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from mortal view has led some to suppose that their abode is beyond the atmosphere, or possibly beyond the stars. But there is a record of many angelic manifestations in which ascent or descent is not mentioned. When it occurred it was significant. It had no necessary reference to *locality*, above or beneath, but to a *state* of exaltation, or limitation, and in some instances degradation and moral death.

The ascension of Christ was an important act, because it symbolized his promotion to the highest position, or rank, in the kingdom of heaven. But the *act* would not have been of much consequence if the fact thus indicated had not been understood. He referred to his ascension in his first interview with Mary Magdalene after his death, intimating that she must not detain him for further conversation at that time, for his resurrection must be demonstrated by his appearance to other witnesses without delay.⁹

His ascension, or promotion, gave him unlimited power and great glory. This is noticed in the words: "He ascended on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men." But it is

⁹ John xx. 17.

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said that "He also *descended* into the lower parts of the earth."⁷ This refers to his ministry to lost spirits after his death.* A work of tender love and divine compassion.

The ascent of angels indicates their high rank and superior privileges when compared with mortals. Their fall through transgression, or failure, does not necessarily involve their *literal* descent through space to the earth, or to some place of confinement within its dark interior.

If the question is asked, "Where is the spiritual hell of the dead?" it is not difficult to answer. It is certainly "beneath" in the sense of being a *lower*, or worse condition than any that can be found among the living. Light is thrown upon this question when another is asked. "Where is the hell of the living?" The idea of geographical location or lineal distance drops out. It is *in* the worst (lowest) people *wherever* they are found. It is not limited to London, or Paris. Undoubtedly it can be found in these cities as well as in New York, or in any rural district, remote wilderness, island of the sea, or vessel floating on its surface. It is where dark deeds are premeditated

⁷ Eph. iv. 8-10.

* I. Peter iii. 18-20.

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and performed, where human beings are sinking into moral mud, corruption, degradation, weakness, and oblivion.

In the Revelation of St. John there are descriptions of visions, so vivid and realistic, that they have been understood by many to be correct descriptions of what has occurred, or will occur in the spiritual world; and some have gone so far as to seek a location for the "bottomless pit," and the "lake of fire," and not finding any that was satisfactory have indulged in some speculation, and finally concluded that they "must be somewhere in the Universe." Sincere in their efforts, and anxious to find the exact truth, they have tried to make the Bible a text-book, studying its pictures of events in heaven and hell, as they would objects of nature, and attempting to prove that their conceptions were right by introducing parallel passages which they thought were appropriate.

A vision, divinely given, is not so important as the significant truth which it reveals. It is pictorial language which we are to translate carefully, without regarding the scenery and acting, as something permanent which we may again notice after death. When Peter "fell into a trance, and saw

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heaven opened, and a certain vessel descending unto him, as it had been a great sheet knit at the four corners and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air. And there came a voice to him: 'Rise, Peter; kill and eat,' and the vessel was received up again into heaven."⁸ He concerned himself at once about the *meaning* of the vision, which came to him after some study and reflection. He did not imagine that the great vessel which he saw let down from heaven and taken up again was one of the things that might be found in heaven. He studied what he saw and heard, giving special attention to those things that were *deeply impressed* upon his mind by emphasis, or repetition.

When John saw, in vision, "the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God, out of heaven," he made a careful record of what he saw and heard. But it is not necessary for us to suppose that this was a real city or an exact representation of one that will be seen in heaven.⁹ This is what some have understood, and mathematical calcula-

⁸ Acts x.

⁹ Rev. xxi.

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tions have been made to ascertain its capacity. An ingenious writer says: "And he measured the city with a reed, twelve thousand furlongs. The length, height, and breadth of it are equal." "Twelve thousand furlongs, 7,920,000 feet, which, being cubed, is 948,988,000,000,000,000,000 cubic feet, the half of which we will reserve for the throne of God and the court of heaven, half of the balance for the streets, and the remainder divided by 4.96, the cubical feet in the rooms 19 feet square and 16 feet high, will be 5,743,759,000,000 rooms. We will now suppose that the world always did and always will contain 900,000,000 inhabitants, and a generation will last $33\frac{1}{2}$ years (2,700,000 every century), and that the world stands 100,000 years—27,000,000,000,000 persons. Then suppose there were 11,230 such worlds equal to this number of inhabitants and duration for years, then there would be a room 16 feet long and 17 feet wide and 15 feet high for each person; and, yet, there would be room!"

The vision of the city is easily interpreted. It represents the redeemed and purified church in the spiritual heaven. Its members are very intelligent and rich in their privileges. Precious gems and

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clear light indicate this. Safety and freedom are indicated by the walls and their open gates. The *foundations* and the buildings are of very precious stones and gold, which is transparent, thus representing character of the highest and purest type. "Measuring" is considering or contemplating, dwelling upon the felicity and glory of the heavenly and immortal life.

Crude and materialistic views of the spiritual world have been fostered by poets and hymnologists who have presented scenery, symbolism, and descriptive imagery in attractive forms which have been adapted to music, still more interesting, and sung by millions whose interest in the truth was superficial, and who have been actually demoralized by dwelling upon the pictures in the hymn or song, and the interesting music; because the intrinsic ideas that should take hold of the mind and change character seemed unreal or unintelligible to them. Such productions may be popular for a while, but in time they become nauseating to thoughtful people, and reaction follows. Successful is the hymnologist who combines what is agreeable with underlying sentiments that rivet the attention and exert a powerful transforming in-

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fluence upon the life, for the truth is seen and felt.

Ideas concerning the hell of the spiritual world that were presented to large and intelligent audiences with startling effect, and made a profound impression fifty years ago, are now omitted in many prominent and influential churches, because they would not be received. And there is objection, among the most sincere and intelligent people, that is quite general, to descriptive discourses on this subject in which illustrations from the Bible are used. Not because the truth is objectionable, but because there is something in these representations, as they are generally understood, that is perplexing and unreasonable, and seemingly unjust.

To those who believe that wilful mistakes, cultivated and perpetuated, have the worst consequences here and hereafter, the prospect of a living death as the result of such error does not seem improbable, for they see human wrecks walking the streets of our cities whose condition answers this description. There is, therefore, nothing too strong in the representation of such a calamity if it is true, for such wrecks, and worse ones, are

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in the spiritual world. The figures and emblems used should be the most terrible and revolting that can be imagined. But there is difficulty in presenting these things, because they seem incredible to us, for they are not demonstrated by general observation and experience. And we have come to a period in history when we look for evidence of this kind, and when it is wanting we hesitate and wonder.

A careful investigation of this subject will show that we are dealing with oriental symbolism, parable, and metaphor, easily understood when it was written, but difficult for us now, because we are so different in our modes of expression and interpretation. Therefore, ministers who are accustomed to scientific research and metaphysical inquiry, in an age when new light is breaking in on all sides, are more cautious and less confident in their utterances concerning hell; and this fact is perceived by their congregations, and there is mystery, silence and doubt.

There is a great reaction. The literalism and crudeness of the past will not be tolerated, and many are waiting for clearer light before making positive assertions.

Bible revision has been helpful to multitudes.

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Creeds are being overhauled, and the antiquated rubbish of the centuries swept away. The time for a new and better understanding of the other world has come, and those who are anxious for the truth can find it.

Hell has become a by-word and a myth to many. Others think that the idea involves something strong or powerful, and when they wish to be emphatic and forcible they introduce the word "hell," supposing that it helps them to impress, or alarm, an opponent. But it has very little weight when used for this purpose among thoughtful persons, for they know that the word is a synonym for *weakness*, misery and obscurity.

When a man is angry he may express himself in what he calls "strong language." He looks fierce and throws off rapidly some phrases in which the words "God" and "hell" are conspicuous. When analyzed his words usually have *no meaning*, unless they express a *prayer*. He thinks he has been "swearing," and yet his language, or the ideas it represents, cannot properly be defined as such. Undoubtedly he has been wicked in his view of himself, or profane, if he meant to be. But when he reflects on his "strong language" he

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finds that he has been as weak and silly as a vulgar little boy, who does not know the meaning of words and repeats empty phrases. And, yet, a distinguished senator, or noted physician, whose opinions are worth something in the medical world, or a "noble lord," may seek "relief" under pressure in the use of such language which *he* thinks is remarkably "strong."

The spiritual hell of the next world is clearly defined in the Scriptures—it is called the "second death." Former translations in which hades, or the state of the dead, including good and bad, or the grave, were rendered "hell" have been corrected in revised editions, and there is very little misunderstanding concerning words and terms that refer to perdition in the other life.

The bottomless pit, or the abyss, with which darkness and chains are associated, is the symbol of obscurity and misery. It has no location, for it is not a place. It represents ignominious defeat and limitation, or a source of evil from which calamity proceeds.¹¹

¹¹ Rev. ix. 1.

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The "second death" is symbolized by a lake of fire, from which deadly gas emanates. Of course no such lake can be found in the spiritual state, for it is a world of spiritual beings. Animals and things do not belong to it, for they do not, and cannot pass into the immortal state, although nature is open to people in the spiritual world who are capable of enjoying it.

There is nothing more dreadful than the crater of a large active volcano, when its depths are seen in the night. Not far from the Isle of Patmos, where John wrote the Apocalypse, was Stromboli, "flaring as the great light-house of nature in the Mediterranean." Mauna Loa, in Hawaii, is about 13,000 feet above the level of the sea. Its crater, Kilauea, is remarkable. It is three and a half miles broad and one thousand feet deep, and contains a sea of fire always surging and roaring, and sometimes swelling and overflowing, sending forth great streams of burning lava. With such a picture in his thought, John defined the second death, because he could find nothing that would express his conception of it more vividly, or produce a stronger impression upon the people of his times to whom the Revelation was sent, for many of

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them had witnessed such phenomena. But they did not understand that such a lake of fire was in the other world, and would eventually become a *receptacle* for the Devil and his angels, together with vast numbers of incorrigible human beings who had lived and died. They looked through the illustration, and grasped the fact it *represented*, and studied it, looking for all the divine light they could get, and found that deliberate and intentional moral failure here is more disastrous hereafter than any calamity known on earth, for it culminated in the complete wreckage and prostration of a person without ending his existence.

No one in the spiritual world, after death, can be (literally) cast, or thrown, into a pit and chained or confined in a fiery lake. Devils or demons have never been expelled or cast out of people by *divine coercion*, nor angels driven out of heaven.¹² Evil spirits are active, exerting a bad influence and doing mischief as long as they *can*. The law of limitation is *in themselves*. Although they are represented in vision, and prophetic imagery as dethroned, or cast down, or out, or confined to what seems like a locality. Their

¹² See Ch. i., p. 11; and Ch. x., p. 224.

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fall, and obscurity, and misery is the result of *incapacity*.¹³

The same consequences follow in this life when men live long enough, and in many instances they do. Having an increasing desire to do worse regardless of the results that are sure to follow and bring a curse upon themselves and their victims. Mental and physical decline at length succeeds, and they are out of the way so far as their influence upon others is concerned. And still they live, and are worse than dead, for they have lost the ability to enjoy life, and are full of corruption. They may seek death, and find it in suicide, and awake in the other world to find themselves in a condition much worse, but with a strong determination to be *as bad as possible*, no matter what it costs. They find limitation, weakness and misery.

Decline is not always gradual. A man may be suddenly and permanently prostrated by excess and passion, and become a mental and physical wreck, chained hand and foot, by vice and folly—

¹³ When divine support is *finally* and *unequivocally* rejected, it is *entirely* withdrawn. The consequences that follow inevitably are more appalling and disastrous than any we can observe in this life. Rev. xxii. 11.

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a sudden failure, a complete collapse. So spiritual devils resisted Christ, and failed, and were cast out, or went down finding themselves incapable of further effort—they dropped into shame and contempt, accepting voluntarily a living death.¹⁴

There has been much erroneous teaching concerning the nature and ability of evil spiritual beings. It has been supposed that they retained their strength and intelligence *perpetually*, or could not be restrained until they were confined in some obscure locality, or banished from our planet. The fact that failure of every kind, and final collapse is the natural and inevitable consequence of a very bad life, has been overlooked. This law of limitation is effective in the spiritual world.

Some have thought that the Devil of Bible history¹⁵ was omnipresent, and almost omniscient. They have clothed him with many attributes that properly belong to Deity. They have stolen the livery of heaven and arrayed him in it. They have given him God-like faculties and infallible resources. They believe that he is as progressive and aggres-

¹⁴ It may begin in the visible world. Gen. ii. 17

¹⁵ As it is generally understood.

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sive as he has ever been, and will continue as such for an indefinite period.

The activity of the tempting devils or demons of former times, is not necessarily a *guarantee* of their effectiveness to-day. Undoubtedly we have spiritual enemies as subtle, malignant and damnable, as any that were known thousands of years ago; but it cannot be proven that they are the *same* persons.

A Prayer

☩ God, Our Heavenly Father, help us to resist the subtle temptations of unseen spiritual enemies. Help us to recognize the presence of angels, who are ever ready to minister to us. Forgive us if we have overlooked their efforts, and help us to know them better through the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

—Amen.

"If departed human beings can communicate with us and help us, can have any influence on our actions; then clearly the doors are open to a wealth of spiritual intercourse beyond what we have yet imagined."

Sir Oliver Lodge in "Life and Death," page 390.

VI

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THE mystery of angelic existence can be more easily understood when it is compared with inexplicable natural phenomena.

The growth of a plant is noticed in the expanding leaf, but the subtle energy that lifts it out of the earth, and builds its branches, erecting a stately tree, cannot be observed. There is a plan, but the problem of its execution—the secret of its constructive force, defies analysis. It is easy to account for the substance in it, when it dies. It decays, passing into the air, and mingling with the earth. Not an atom is lost; but what becomes of the imponderable and immaterial *vitality*? Certainly it is something very real. It was the most important part of the tree. It was in the seed—an invisible embryo, having mighty power, for it developed itself, and, gathering material from many

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sources, produced a giant of the forest, able to endure the storms of a century. It filled every part of the tree, from the deepest roots in the darkness to the topmost branch, a hundred feet above, waving in the sunlight. It was, therefore, an *invisible* tree, manifesting its presence by the visible, and material form it had created; and the evidences of life that it exhibited. When the body in which this hidden, but forceful agency, had remained so long, was parted from its secret builder and nourisher, it fell in ruins never to rise again.

This vital energy, fully developed and mature was not lost. Being something it could not become nothing. Nor could it be blended with the surrounding elements in such a way as to make identification impossible to one capable of such discrimination. This would be easy for the Author of life, because varieties of existence have been generated by him, and he knows what becomes of them after they have passed out of visible forms.

It is evident that we cannot locate, or identify such a thing, and to us it must remain a profound mystery. Nevertheless, its existence cannot be successfully denied. It is still a part of nature. If it finds no environment, and, therefore, is not

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used again, it has served its purpose, and, like everything else that has lived in the visible world and disappeared, it has no apparent utility or capacity for a normal existence. To us, it is of no consequence. It is like a thing that is lost, and, so far as we are concerned, is nothing, unless it can be found. It occupies no more space than an obsolete idea, and, therefore, it is not in the way. It is somewhere in the laboratory of nature, and could be discovered and identified if one could be found with ability for such difficult work. Therefore, a tree has a kind of soul—an invisible force within, full of promise and potency.

The growth and development of a human being is similar. He leaves the material body. But he is very different from a tree or an animal, for he is able to understand that he has been transferred to another state, and can exist without the body in which he formerly lived. He finds that he has the capacity for a new mode of existence, and if his tendencies are right he rejoices in the fact, for he sees that he can do better. He finds that ample provision has been made for super-mundane life, and that it is adapted to his tastes and ambitions; for he is a rational and moral being, having some

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characteristics and proclivities that are like those of the divine Christ who lives without material form, and prefers the spiritual state because of its great advantages.

Angels, good and bad, are *human*, and were earthly in their origin.¹ They lived and died and constitute the inhabitants of the spiritual world. They are not a *different* order of beings, but are simply men and women of the immortal states. There is no authentic record of the creation of angels, which shows that they were *incorporeal* in the beginning. It cannot be shown that they have never lived in the flesh as we do. When inquiry was made concerning our nature in the other world, the Saviour plainly stated that those who were worthy of a heavenly resurrection would be angels, for he said they are, in that superior life, “‘equal unto,’ or ‘as,’ the angels.”² Not only in respect to immortality did he understand them to be the *same*, but in respect to the marriage relation, and in all other respects.³ He refers to Moses, and Abraham, and

¹ Ch. ix., p. 180.

² Matt. xxii. 30-32. Luke xx. 36-38.

³ The scope is not limited. We should not infer from Christ's words in this passage that we shall lose the characteristics of manhood or womanhood when we enter the other

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others, as examples of men who had become angels. And it cannot be shown that a bad man is not "equal unto," or "as," a spiritual devil on the other side.

Angels appear in human form and in spiritual bodies. In vision, or in symbol, they may have wings, or assume various shapes, illustrating character, or powers, but in fact they are spiritual *men* and *women*. As messengers they appeared, and were known, as *men* of a heavenly kind, representing the celestial state, in their apparel, as well as their expressive faces.

The first chapter of Genesis gives a vision of the Creation in general, including mankind. The second chapter is *specific*. We come to the production of a certain man whose locality is mentioned. He has special privileges, and is honored as the progenitor of a new race with a great future, through which a divine revelation is to be given

world. Sexuality is in the mind. Man is, and must be, eternally different from woman. The marriage relation, as we have it in this life, involving legal restrictions, births and deaths, will be a thing of the past. But connubial love, exalted, pure, celestial and rapturous, will find expression and response. This implies unions far more desirable than any known to us, making heaven the ideal life.

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to the world. He is tested by his openness to the spiritual states, and fails when an invisible enemy called "the serpent" enters into his thoughts. Who was this spiritual tempter in the primeval paradise? No account of his origin is given, but it is *implied*.⁴

There are reasons for believing that Adam and Eve were not the only people on the globe at that time, and that many generations had lived and died. Adam was the first of his race, and the only man in that country. He was isolated and protected, with a great purpose in view.

That "the serpent" or devil was a man in the spiritual world is seen by the reference to his *descendants* or "seed," and their future conflict with the descendants of Adam.⁵ "Seed" here means natural progeny.⁶ The "serpent" entered

⁵ Ch. x., p. 216.

⁶ Gen. iii. 15.

⁴The *origin* of the satan of Eden has been a dark mystery for many centuries. If we regard him as a spiritual man who had access to Eve's mind because of her susceptibility to impressions from the other world, we have clearer light on angelology. The reference to his "seed," which means children or descendants in a literal sense, if it means anything, together with what is generally conceded by eminent scholars, and confirmed archæological researches, viz., That nations lived on this earth more than 6000 years ago, furnishes us with a clue to this secret of the ages.

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into the mind of Eve. She was corrupted, and the pair demoralized, thus losing the Eden of divine union, and with it many privileges which they could not enjoy without it.

Cain, the eldest and only surviving son of Adam, fleeing as a refugee to a distant country, after the murder of Abel, found *inhabitants*. He married, and became prosperous, building a city. Whence these inhabitants? Seth was the *third* son of Adam, born *after* the banishment of Cain. There is no record of daughters born to Adam before the birth of Seth. If we suppose that daughters were born before the time of Seth, and some of them wandered into that far off land of exile, and formed a small female community, and that Cain induced one of them to become his wife, we shall find that such a theory is unnecessary, for there is nothing in the sacred records to show that pre-adamic and co-adamic men have not lived.

Adam was the first man of a new race, and as such his genealogy was very carefully preserved. There is no reason for suspecting the accuracy of the genealogical record, or bridging an imaginary chasm by the introduction of persons in the line

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of descent, who are not noticed in the history of the Hebrew nation.

The origin of the different races of men has been a matter of conjecture among intelligent ethnologists for many years.⁷ Those who have gone so far as to make Adam the father of all mankind have been confronted with problems that they could not solve. They have tried to make their theories reasonable by indulging in speculative views that are not sustained by authentic history, and a careful study of the facts.

Adam's line to Noah is the record of a distinct race which had multiplied rapidly, and had become very corrupt. A flood was predicted which was understood by those who heard the warning to be a judgment and a calamity which could be avoided. It occurred, and the same race began again in Noah and his family. It is preposterous for us to suppose that this deluge covered the entire globe. It destroyed the world as it was known to Noah at that time, and the people to whom he preached.

⁷ As angels once belonged to the visible world, angelology is here associated with ethnology. Hence these thoughts on the origin of races.

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The origin of angels should not be regarded as unknowable. They have always been associated with our world and do not belong to any other part of the Universe.* It is generally understood that Satan, or the one who was called the Devil in ancient times, is only a fallen angel. The Bible does not give us any account of the creation of angels. There are passages referring to their nature and their employments. They are called "winds",⁸ because they are swift messengers. They are "ministering spirits."⁹

*NOTE. — Our angels are for our world. Their ministry is for us, and they are deeply interested. If we would know more about them and their work we should recognize their ministry and appreciate it as God's people did in the days of the Prophets and Apostles.

The idea that the heavenly angels did not have a human origin or that they never lived in the flesh and died; but were always spiritual, seems to have come from a misunderstanding about Heb. ii. 9: "But we behold him who hath been made a little lower than the angels (a little while lower than the angels R. V.) even Jesus, because of the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that by the grace of God he should taste death for every man." From this we should not suppose that the inspired writer referred to what the angels *had been*, or to their *creation*; but to what they were at *that time* in heaven, and what they are *now*, as glorified immortals. The Saviour, in his humiliation, was "made a little while," or for a short *time*, lower in privilege and rank than they,

⁸ Ps. civ. 4; Heb. i. 7 R. V. ⁹ Heb. i. 14.

THE HUMANITY OF ANGELS

that he might "taste death" for those who had not passed through it. He did not die for angels, and while in the *earthly body* his human nature was, of course, different from theirs. It was lower.

The humanity of angels should not be doubted by those who believe the scriptural accounts of their appearances, for they are generally called "men". Daniel refers to the "man Gabriel," he had seen in a vision.¹⁰ As the disciples were looking at the ascending Christ, "Behold two men stood by them in white apparel."¹¹ While Cornelius was praying he saw a "man" standing before him in bright clothing.¹² The angel that showed St. John the Heavenly Jerusalem said that he was a "fellow-servant."¹³

Heavenly communion involves the knowledge of angels and fellowship with them and all redeemed and glorified humanity. For we have "come unto Mount Zion, and unto the City of the living God; the heavenly Jerusalem, and to innumerable hosts of angels. To the general assembly and church of the first born who are enrolled in heaven, and to God the judge of all and to the spirits of just men made perfect."¹⁴

Those who believe in "the communion of saints" understand that the great family in heaven and earth are one.

¹⁰ Dan. ix. 21.

¹³ Rev. xxii. 9.

¹¹ Acts i. 10.

¹⁴ Heb. xii. 22-23 R. V.

¹² Acts x. 30.

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Thoughtful people are interested in the manifestations of angels in former times; but they would like to know more about the angels of our day. Is there ministry available now? How can we recognize it? How can we avoid delusions, and get the real thing as God would give it? This is our problem. Their problem is more difficult than ours. Because there has been so much misunderstanding about their work and their relation to us. Very intelligent Christians are ignorant about them, not knowing who they are or what they are. Many are opposed to any definite knowledge of them that might lead to recognition. They are afraid of "spiritualism" or something abnormal and dangerous. They love to sing the great hymns of the church that allude to angels. They accept their ministry as a doctrine or creed; but dare not teach what they profess to believe.

Fear, prejudice and ignorance, together with a strange unwillingness on the part of able and learned ministers to represent these things, is making the work of the heavenly angels of our times very difficult, even for them. If the Holy Spirit is "grieved" when he is resisted, and his work despised, can we believe that angels never are? They would be if our Heavenly Father did not "wipe away all tears from their eyes."

The angels of to-day are interested in us because

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they belong to our age.* Some of them have been associated with us from childhood. They are friends and neighbors. They are for us and we are for them. Naturally they would like to have us know that they still live, and it is a part of their ministry to convince us that this is so. They would like to demonstrate this fact in such a way that we can understand it and believe it. They cannot do much for us until this is clear and we can accept it.

In some quiet hour we may notice what seems to be the *presence* of one that we have known and loved, who is on the other side. There may be nothing more than a "feeling" that the loved one is *near*. This is a common experience. When this is appreciated a good beginning is made. Just how much we can bear, or how much we should have at such a time is for the angel to decide prayerfully before God. The same prayer should be offered by one who has this consciousness or realization of an invisible spiritual person, that the truth only may be known and all that is imaginary or evil may be excluded.

This is the best way to demonstrate immortality for it is the divine way. This is evidence for the one who can accept it, though he may not be able to convince others.

*The angels of former ages are also interested in us.

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The prayers of angels are very precious because their love is so great. The glowing energy in these seraphic spirits is so strong and tender that it penetrates our inmost souls. It is actually communicated to those who are responsive and realize its value. These prayers can be heard by those who have open vision as well as their songs of praise. Upon others who are not so clear they exert sometimes an influence that is perceptible, but unknown.

Prayer is an important part of angelic ministry. Everyone in heaven prays except God the Father Almighty, who cannot pray to himself; for he is the source from whom all blessings flow. The Saviour prays. The Holy Spirit prays for us "making intercession."¹⁵ The Saviour was very tender in his allusion to the prayers of angels for little children, when he said, "that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."¹⁶ The angels are always looking to God for guidance and wisdom as they work.

Messages from heaven would be given more frequently by angels, if we would thoroughly *test* them by a variety of methods.¹⁷ There is no objection to any method that is fair and has been used by the

¹⁵ Rom. viii. 26.

¹⁶ Matt. xviii. 10.

¹⁷ I. John iv. 1.



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"Their Angels do always behold the face of my Father
which is in Heaven."—Page 86

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most judicious, in endeavoring to verify what seems to be a fact.

Scientific criteria may be used by the advanced student of psychology. He may differentiate what he finds to be merely psychical phenomena, such as telepathy, subconscious personality, abnormal hearing, or the vagaries of an unsound or erratic mind. But there is something for the common people, who are not learned. They need not be deceived. God has protected them in the past and he is able to do it now.

Therefore we may believe that the Peters and Johns and Marys of to-day will have their privileges.

It is certain that we can find different degrees of divine inspiration, and the influence of celestial angels. Our susceptibility to the other world is wonderful. The mind is like a balance delicately poised, that can weigh the thousandth part of a grain, even the lightest breath producing a perceptible change.

The cultivation and stimulation of these faculties which may enable us to look into the other life and know something about it, that can be demonstrated in a way that is helpful to us, is important, for it is to be our permanent environment. Here we make a brief beginning. As a plant, struggling in the dark earth, breaks through to find itself

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unrestricted in its normal sphere in the bright sunlight, with the boundless heavens above it.

It is surprising that there is in this age so little interest manifested in heavenly angels on the part of those who are anxious to find all that God has to offer those who are loyal to Him.

In Bible times communications from angels were very desirable. Good men listened, and looked, for such manifestations, and were not disappointed. The injunction: "Be not forgetful to entertain strangers; for thereby, some have entertained angels unawares,"¹⁸ is not heeded, or is misunderstood. While this passage is thought to be important, and should stimulate us in the careful consideration of such guests, as are worthy of our hospitality and attention, the idea of entertaining a spiritual messenger from heaven is entirely ignored, or regarded as simply an illustration of something that happened in former times. Whereas the possibility of interviews with angels is the vital truth which the inspired writer would impress, and the probability of missing such golden opportunities, unless great care and discrimination are used, is noticed.

The appearance of angels in those days was

¹⁸ Heb. xiii. 2.

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sometimes physical. They looked like mortals; but they proved to be different as they were *spiritually discerned*.

Such was the case when Paul saw a *man* of Macedonia, one night when he was in Troas, who said: "Come over into Macedonia and help us"¹⁹ Paul was not startled or alarmed by this vision, for he was prepared to see any person from the spiritual world, whose credentials could be tested by divine approval. This interview, and communication, was very important, for it led to the introduction of Christianity into Europe. The appearance of persons in full form, who were able to show, without doubt, that they were from heaven, was not very uncommon in those times.

Angelic manifestations are perfectly legitimate in these times. They may be as appropriate now as ever. There is no reason why this century should not be a golden age, for the world is progressive.

The danger arising from delusion, ignorance, and superstition, was as great in the first century as it is to-day. Paul found rank evils of this kind

¹⁹ Acts xvi. 9. This vision included the presence of a spiritual man of Macedonia who came as messenger or angel.

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in Macedonia, as well as Ephesus, and Cyprus, and indeed, everywhere, which he sternly rebuked, and was able to conquer. But he still clung to his visions, and revelations, and gloried in them, for they were a secret of power, giving him remarkable spiritual discernment and ability, as the revealer of the wonders of the heavenly world.

Heaven and hell were open to St. John. His mind was flooded with views in which angels appeared, and conversed with him. He did not become erratic. His faculties were well preserved to old age. He was calm, firm, systematic, and accurate, sound in judgment, mighty and practical in his work.

The delusions of our times will not be banished until learned men, who rank high in the churches, are willing to know more about the other world. Erroneous ideas are gaining ground rapidly, and are very plausible and interesting because they are *mixed* with some truth. To simply ignore, or condemn, these things will not do, because there is a hunger in humanity for the mysterious and supernatural, and people will explore and investigate, and fall into perplexity, or possibly fanaticism, and fatal mistakes.

HOW TO KNOW THE ANGELS

Theories concerning the ministry of angels are of little value when compared with *experimental knowledge*. The angels are our helpers and we should recognize them.

We have also spiritual enemies that are subtle and deceitful. We should know who they are and how to meet them. This requires *courage, firmness* and a momentary dependence upon the Holy Spirit as a guide. He is our great Helper; for through Him we get the aid of the Father and the Son. He will enable us to know just what we are about as we proceed. He is our instructor. Depending upon him we can freely act. We can apply tests that he may suggest. We can make inquiries, and listen to responses. We need not be *afraid*. If we are, we shall fail. Fear gives our unseen enemies an opportunity. The Spirit will give boldness and discretion. He furnishes strength and keen perception.

Be filled with the Holy Spirit! This is the Christian's privilege. *Then*, and not till then, *ask* for all that is best for you to know about angels, good and bad, about heaven and even hell (for our enemies would cover it or deny its existence). You will then get just what *you* should have in a way that will be normal and wonderfully helpful.

This will be in harmony with the teachings of the

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Bible; for sincere believers were filled with the Spirit, and had a practical knowledge of angels and devils. They knew how to meet them and were not deceived.

Fallen angels have been objects of interest because of the mystery supposed to be associated with their descent from lofty regions above the clouds, where they once enjoyed, it is thought, a heaven of purity and felicity. Misunderstanding will disappear after there has been a careful examination of passages in the prophetic style, that refer to the *descent* of evil angels, or men. The King of Babylon is noticed by Isaiah. He is called Lucifer, son of the morning.²⁰ He is represented as "fallen from heaven." Christ saw, with prophetic view, "Satan, as lightning, falling from heaven." *

Probably there never was a time in the history of the world when the influence of evil spirits was so conspicuous, in "high places," as in the first century. Rome dominated the civilized world, and her rulers were, at times, satanic in character and administration. Such were Tiberius, Caligula, and Nero. The empire was rotten at the centre. Abominable crimes and excesses made the palace of

²⁰ Is. xiv. 4-12.

* Luke x. 18.

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the Cæsars an inferno. The world suffered and struggled under the despotism of hell. Paganism began to lose its power over the masses. The gods were more disreputable than men, and human beasts that sat on thrones were deified. Paganism was the vile nest on which devilism sat hatching the crimes and miseries of the age. Communications from the spiritual world were eagerly sought by distinguished persons. The gods could be easily simulated. The ancient oracles were more delusive than modern spiritualism, for science was in its infancy, and mythology confusing. Demoniacal possession was common.

Satan, therefore, in prophetic language had been exalted to heaven; but his fall was at hand. Christianity had been tested, and its power to shake the foundations of that vast system of evil that had flourished for unknown centuries was demonstrated. The fall of Satan from "heaven" meant the *decline* of his influence among world powers. When evil spirits are known, and their weakness and filthiness exposed, they are despised and sink into deeper degradation and contempt.

That holy angels have fallen into temptation and lost their honors and privileges is understood. It

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is also certain that others may fall if they choose. There is no exalted state, here or hereafter, from which we may not *descend* into disgrace and infamy. The power of choice can never be taken from us.

Mythological ideas concerning the spiritual world still prevail among enlightened people. The typical angel of the famous artist appears in ancient costume with feathery wings and a feminine countenance. Any combination of human and animal forms is unreal, and should be so understood. Figures in heraldry, or on coins, are significant. They may represent the genius of nations. They are emblematic. The British lion, wearing a crown, and rampant, may roar when warlike sentiments prevail. The American eagle, with arrows in his claw, and expanded wings, may scream with patriotic enthusiasm when a great victory is celebrated. So the argus-eyed "beasts," or creatures, of the Apocalypse may praise God. And the six-winged seraphim, in the vision of Isaiah, cover their faces with their wings, and express the deepest devotion.

It seems strange that a *literal* view of these scenic parables should be sanctioned. We may as well believe that Centaurs and wing-footed Mer-

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curys once lived, as to suppose that persons in the other world have bird-like wings. And, yet, poets and sculptors have so deeply impressed this conception that it has become the common belief of many.

The devils and deities of mythological times still survive, in spite of their extinction, and are ready for the magician and the dramatist.

Gustave Doré has created uncanny hordes of genii with bat-like wings, and dark complexion, apparently neither men nor women, known as devils. Milton's satan has wings. His ability to fly is astonishing. He can penetrate interplanetary space, for he is found in an obscure part of the Universe, and reaches our globe with evil intent. His size is colossal. He is "full many a rood in bulk," and when enthroned may excite emotions of sublimity (?).

"High on a throne of royal state, which far
Outshone the wealth of Ormus or of Ind;
Or where the gorgeous East with richest hand
Showers on her Kings barbaric, pearl and gold,
Satan exalted sat; by merit raised
To that high eminence."¹

Milton's license, as an imaginative poet, permitted him to reach unexplored heights and depths. The fall of the apostate angels from heaven con-

¹ Paradise Lost. Book II.

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tinued "nine days." In an illustrated edition of his works they are seen descending, head foremost, hellward.

The blending of fact and fancy by eminent authors in their poems and dissertations, on the invisible world, is becoming a thing of the past. Our age is practical. Speculative views on this subject are unpopular. Nor can we tolerate "revelations" unless they are consistent and sensible, bearing the unmistakable seal of divinity.

Immortality is a vital theme, and burning questions gather around it. Our friends are on the other side. Life's consummation is approaching and it involves our destiny.

"So live that when thy summons comes to join
That innumerable caravan, which moves
To that mysterious realm, where each shall take
His chamber in the silent halls of death;
Thou go not like the quarry slave at night,
Scourged to his dungeon; but sustained and soothed
By an unfaltering trust approach thy grave
Like one who wraps the drapery of his couch
About him, and lies down to pleasant dreams."²²

²² W. C. Bryant.

VII

EXPRESSION IN THE SPIRITUAL WORLD

MESSAGES from the spiritual world are not always easy for the beginner to understand. They are likely to be modified by subtle unreliable spirits, or by inability on the part of the hearer. Experience and careful testing are necessary for a clear communication from God or angels. The world is flooded with spurious revelations. Let us notice first the evolution and expression of ideas as they come in this life.

A new idea may be born in us, and begin with the embryo. It is interesting to study the process. The soul is fertile and full of mental germs which are developed by *thinking*. An idea appears in the depths of the mind as an infinitesimal shadow. It is vague and very obscure. It cannot be named, and yet it is something. We feel that it is rising and may be important. As it is nourished it begins to assume character and outline, and we can understand more about it. It is at length formulated imperfectly within. We may feel that it is crude

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and should be revised and considered, but when it is spoken, or written, for others, it is born.

A thought that is difficult to express is like a plant trying to push through the ground and reach the surface. When trees that have an abundance of foliage are unfruitful there is something defective in the conditions. Men have lived whose ideas were more valuable than any we can find in literature, but they could not give them to the world. Ability to reveal the best things is very rare; and those who have had success feel that they are deficient, because ideal expression means not only the clothing of valuable thoughts with appropriate verbiage, but the felicitous arrangement of sentences and collocation of phrases.

If poetry is attempted how few are able to write verses that will not die. Music and the drama struggle with difficulties of expression. The great painters and sculptors leave their works unfinished. Their minds were crowded with a multitude of plans and noble conceptions which did not materialize.

Shakespeare's works are not complete. The diamonds of his genius glitter with transcendent lustre. The fire that burns in his tragedies kindles



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an inextinguishable flame in the heart of humanity. Men read, and wonder, and weep. His sonnets are like the exquisite music of a dream. But his opportunities were limited, and his mind *comparatively* immature. If he had lived to this day, with faculties unimpaired, a progressive man, his former efforts would seem to him juvenile, and even childish, when compared with later productions.

In this life we lay the foundations, and there is much digging to be done. The substructure is important, for it is permanent. It is so in nature. The Universe is eternal, but susceptible to change and perpetual progress. The wild apple tree can be cultivated and the original fruit altered in kind and quality, but a new tree is not created. As we are in the formative period we are earthy and undeveloped. We cannot reach the ideal though we aim high and find comparative success, for the building is not limited in its possibilities. It is to rise as high as heaven. The outlines are seen and the structure is begun, but the edifice is incomplete. In imagination we may get a glimpse of its splendid columns and stately towers, "but it doth not yet appear what we shall be."

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Expression is among the last things. It is the blossom and fruitage of life. It requires judgment and discrimination. Youth is too green, and age is not flexible and fervid. It is in the fulness of physical and mental capacity that it is best, and even then it is restricted by physical limitations.

Words are the signs of ideas, and as sounds, or combinations of sounds, they represent thoughts; but they are often equivocal, the same word having a variety of meaning. Whether it is used in a literal or metaphorical sense and just what the author meant may involve the study of his life and times, and then its exact signification may be doubtful. The fact that words are changing and often lose their original import, become obsolete, or vary in their use in different localities, should be considered.

The deluge of new words that has come in upon us during the last century is the result of marvellous advancement in science, invention, and discovery. The intercourse of nations arising from ability to reach the uttermost parts of the earth and study things new and old in the history, customs, products, and literature of many races, have

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greatly enriched the vocabularies of civilized nations. Our dictionaries are becoming encyclopedic. The standard lexicon of forty years ago is superseded. New words are necessary, because the world is flooded with new ideas.

The burial of thought under phrases that sound well, and strike the popular ear with favor, is still the vocation of the distinguished diplomat and the successful (?) lawyer. Legislators representing their constituents often find *golden* opportunities in the flexibility of verbal expression.

There are but few persons who are well acquainted with their native tongue, which they have studied and spoken from childhood. They know the meaning of many words, but they find difficulty in using them. They cannot find the right word, or combination of words, at the right time.

A man who can use three thousand different words, and readily turn them into appropriate phraseology, has a good vocabulary. But what are these compared with the tens of thousands which a modern language contains? If he ventures outside of this narrow sea of verbiage he must go slowly and take frequent soundings, or make shipwreck of speech. The same difficulty

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confronts the great genius who uses many thousands of words, but whose ideas are so numerous, original, and unique that he is handicapped by inability to find the proper combinations and unlock the treasury of his soul.

The expression of thought in the spiritual world does not depend upon *audible* sounds, for the physical voice is no longer needed, and cannot be used, because our entire being is then absolutely spiritual. Even now what we utter is formulated within before it is pronounced. This formulation may be imperfect, and we may not always be conscious of it, but we can see that it occurs. If it did not the vocal organs would be independent of the mind.

Spiritual beings are mental in their constitution, and, therefore, capable of penetrating all natural barriers, and exerting a pervasive influence on others which is not easily defined. It is like personality in us, but it is much more effective and intelligible. They can speak *in us* without words. Their power to impress us is very great when we are susceptible, and look for revelations. Prayer may be simply an ardent desire for the best things from a divine source. It may be imperfectly ex-

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pressed even in thought, but it finds a distinct and intelligent response which is felt and can be easily interpreted.

Reliable communication with human beings in the invisible state is not easy for us now, for our incorporeal nature is embryonic and seeks expression through physical avenues. This causes misunderstanding and is not safe, unless there is special provision for it under divine direction. Messages have come through angels whose credentials have never been questioned by those who believe that we are immortal, but these heavenly men did not represent themselves.

The efforts of infernal spirits who seek affinity in us are successful when they find curious and susceptible inquirers. Their ability to create impressions that are contrary to our interests, and lead us into fatal delusions, is acknowledged by those who believe that evil impulses may come from the other world.

Expression has great advantages in the supermundane realm, for it can use all languages or none. Language is the vehicle of thought. It is the clothing of ideas. A Frenchman could converse easily with an Arab if there were no difficulty

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about the *signs* of their ideas. The arbitrary sounds, and strange methods of *representing* what they would communicate, create misunderstanding.

When an inspired writer, in former times, got a message he might find it in cipher, symbol, vision, or impressions, to be carefully studied that it might be comprehended, and mistakes avoided. He could then clothe it in the language indicated, or take it verbatim et literatim.

If a person should speak a language previously unknown to him, and claim divine inspiration, he would have hearers who could understand him and his words would be important, or his claim could not be sustained, for this miracle of speech would involve a miracle of hearing. What was said would not be regarded as valuable, although remarkable as a phenomenon, unless there was some convincing revelation concerning its *source* for those who listened.

Perception is as wonderful as expression in the life beyond.

The susceptibility of the spiritual ear, when cultivated, is astonishing. The mysterious writing on the wall in the palace of Belshazzar, King of Babylon, at a great banquet, in the presence of a

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thousand distinguished guests, created a profound sensation because it was evidently superhuman.¹ The *influence* exerted on the king at the same time is noticed. He turned pale and trembled, as if anticipating a dreadful calamity. Convulsed with terror, and frantic with alarm, he appealed to the ablest men in the kingdom for an immediate interpretation of those strange words written with spirit fingers. After desperate efforts it was found that no one could even *read* them. But there was a man in the palace who had not been called forward, whose spiritual perception was very keen and discriminating, for he had listened with close attention to messages from the hidden world, and studied them with scrupulous care. His mind had been disciplined by very severe tests. His character was unimpeachable, and his natural ability great.

Daniel stood before the large audience of eminent persons and beheld the appalling anxiety of the king. He was calm and confident. As he read the burning words on the wall it was seen that they were without grammatical construction, or connection, isolated and unintelligible. As he trans-

¹ Daniel v.

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lated them there was breathless suspense. "Numbering, Numbering, Weighing, Division." They were in cipher, and there was no key, until certain thoughts associated with them were communicated. As he uttered them the entire assembly saw *at once* that he was right.

For him was reserved the great privilege of hearing words distinctly spoken by a spiritual being, but this was not for the audience. They could hear, but not *as he did*. They *perceived* that he spoke the truth, but they did not hear the *voice* from the spiritual world. The king had heard and seen a message from the same source, but he was not honored by it. It was not clear, and he *felt* that it was unfavorable to him.

On the Day of Pentecost there was a more remarkable expression of thoughts from the celestial state.² A sound from heaven "was heard" as of a rushing mighty wind, and the appearance of fire was seen, flashing in tongues of flame. As the Galilean Christians began to speak they were understood by the representatives of many foreign nations from distant parts of the world. They spoke in Syrochaldee with Galilean vernacular,

² Acts ii.

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and it was noticed that they were using that language, which was an unknown tongue to these strangers in Jerusalem, and yet they all understood easily what was said, and felt that it was true; and that they were really taking thoughts *unclothed with any language*, and enjoyed for the time, the privileges of the spiritual heaven while in the mortal state.

Audible sounds imply sensations caused by impressions upon the ear. If there is anything defective in this delicate and complex organ, hearing is unsatisfactory or impossible, because the appropriate *sensations* cannot be perceived. Now a sensation is a feeling, or a state produced by a thought as it appears in the mind. If we could not think we would not know whether we had heard anything or not; neither could we see, or feel, for we should be without a realizing sense of the facts.

Therefore, if a person were absolutely deaf we could make him hear distinctly if we could produce sensations in him corresponding exactly to those which would reach him through the normal ear. This we are unable to do now, but it can be done very easily by spirits when the conditions are

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favorable, because they can make impressions directly, or reach us through avenues of our being that are now inaccessible to others. Sounds arising from natural sources can be heard by them in the same way, for they have supermundane perceptibility.

A voice from the other world is what the speaker is able to make it. If he speaks with the sound of a trumpet, "he that hath ears to hear" will notice a sound "as of a trumpet." If he hears "the *voice* of harpers harping with their harps" he will know that this does not necessarily imply the use of *material* instruments, for they are not needed in the spiritual world. We use them because our resources are limited by our corporeal nature.

The maker of a musical instrument must be able to form an accurate conception of the sounds that can be produced by it when it is finished and ready for the musician. The director of an orchestra should know the capacity of each instrument he uses and its relation to others and the entire number, that he may detect anything that interferes with the effect of the music in general, and in all its details. He should be able also to correct errors and instruct the musicians. He has,

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therefore, the music of the orchestra in his mind, and if a capable leader can hear it when alone and express *mentally* every tone and variation, and see its proper note, as well as every combination and its effect, and hear the ideal concert he would give the audience, if successful. He could do the work of the whole band himself without instruments or audible sounds and make it much more real and effective if he were in the spiritual body and had an audience that could hear him.

Hence, the great advantage of the spiritual over the corporeal mode of existence.

If there came a sound "*from heaven*," as of a rushing mighty wind," to the capable hearer, he could see at once that it was from a spiritual source; but this would not make it less real, but more so, because it would be clearly comprehended, and its purpose perceived, for it would be a sound which involved a *thought*, that *defining* it, obviated confusion or uncertainty.

In nature there are uncertain sounds that cause perplexity. We must wait and investigate if we would know what they mean; but if one should hear a "voice from heaven *as* the voice of many waters" he would not understand that it was the

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sound of some vast, invisible ocean booming on its beach. If "seven thunders should utter their voices" he would not suppose that the sounds were associated with electrical phenomena, for he would see at once (if worthy of such manifestations) that these things were *suggested* by spiritual intelligences, having important facts to communicate, which were being deeply impressed by illustrations of ultra-mundane power.

The expression of ideas under inspiration is very interesting and desirable to some people. There is a fascination about it that attracts those whose tastes lead them to an investigation of occult problems.

That there is a kind of divine inspiration for all who earnestly seek it, is quite generally admitted. That we can be stimulated and strengthened, and have greater freedom and satisfaction in utterance, and feel a heavenly enthusiasm that is salutary and delightful, is not denied. But a higher degree, which would enable a person in these days to take thoughts, and even words, and give them to the world as divine ideas, coming through him, would seem too much for belief. And, indeed, it would be a great mistake to indorse such a one unless the evidences were incontrovertible.

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A *divine* being should certainly be able to furnish credentials acceptable to all reasonable persons when speaking in and through an earthly messenger. And there is no valid reason for supposing that inspiration from such a source, even in the highest degree, sustained by evidences of its genuineness that are incontrovertible, cannot be given in this age, if it were expedient, without superseding or conflicting with any writings of the kind that are extant. True revelation is progressive and there are new things for those who are able to receive them, and if the exigencies of the times demand them they will come and find hearers of the right kind.*

There are those who think that inspired writers in ancient times often found their predictions incomprehensible to themselves and were not responsible for what they published, being simply the human recipients of that which was enigmatical to them as well as to those who received their prophecies. That they were highly organized and favored *instruments* through whom the Deity spoke, or wrote, and must wait possibly hundreds of years in heaven until their predictions were fulfilled before they could understand what they had expressed.

*NOTE.—While listening under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, we can, if careful and firm, *exclude* error and fanaticism, for he is the "Spirit of truth."

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Some suppose that the hand of an inspired writer moved automatically, and that he did not use judgment, or discretion, in his work, but was simply an infallible amanuensis under spiritual control. Such conclusions have no foundation in fact. Nowhere are we taught by reliable inspiration or common sense that we are to be *tools* in the hands of God. He is the superhuman teacher, acting in, and with, the susceptible pupil who has been carefully prepared for his work by the development and discipline of all his faculties under divine tuition which has brought him into a union with his heavenly Counsellor which makes their interests mutual. He is willing to be led in his thoughts, and listen to suggestions concerning matters of his own which the Spirit may use; for all his resources are valuable, including his personality and natural endowments, as well as acquired knowledge and ability.

He must be able to carefully discriminate and know the voice of his Teacher under all circumstances, even of the most perplexing nature. For, as soon as he is open to the spiritual world in this degree, he is exposed to influences of many kinds that are new and dangerous. He may become a target for malignant spirits who are opposed to his

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purposes who will attack him furiously. If they cannot distract or intimidate they may simulate and suggest incessantly for a while, and cannot be withstood without great firmness, keen spiritual perception, and strong confidence in the Guide.

He who enters this realm must also guard against *interpolations* springing from his own mind which may seem appropriate, but are not to be used in the inspired message, every word of which is to be weighed and studied and comprehended, and possibly revised, and lastly, sealed without doubt by divine approval.

It is evident that very few people are qualified for such important work. There must be unusual delicacy and receptivity, as well as heroic courage and invincible purpose; and yet, such flexibility of the will, and intelligent interest and sympathy that desirable shades of thought and feeling can be expressed.

Ideas from the spiritual world that are valuable are difficult for the beginner to get clearly because the conditions are so hard to understand. And, yet, there have been periods in history when there was open vision, and messages from angels, and even from God, were not uncommon. We

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may suppose that these people of former ages were more highly favored in this respect than ourselves, for special reasons, and that such revelations cannot be expected in modern times, and it would be presumptuous to look for them. If there was greater need of such manifestations than there is now, there is a reason for their occurrence that is worthy of consideration; but who can show that there is no opportunity for them in this age?*

* John xvi. 13.

The student of prophecy was a learner from childhood. He might struggle for years before he could get an intelligible communication, and then wait much longer before he could be recognized by those who were capable of testing its value. Evolution is a law of our being which cannot be ignored. The best things come slowly, under pressure and resistance. The great painter spoils much canvas before his ideal picture is ready for exhibition. This law of gradual development reaches through and into the infinite heights of the super-carnate realm. It should not discourage those who believe that to them it is given to know the mysteries of the spiritual kingdom.

Inspiration of a heavenly type is celestial fire glowing in the life. It often rises into rapture in

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utterance. It is not without danger to its fortunate possessor. The best things are often associated with the worst. There is but a step between truth and error, or, from the sublime to the ridiculous.

The courage that is kindled, and the feeling of satisfaction in expression, may lead to a "holy recklessness" which is disastrous to its victim.

If the ecstasy does not subside the erratic ways and extravagant assertions may continue, for they are connected with a subtle fallacy which is covered by the *sense of divine approval* which he feels.

He is sincere. His faith is strong and his loyalty to his Inspirer unquestionable. His desire to be right in everything is intense. He cannot, therefore, be justly condemned until he is *able to see* his mistake. If he should lose the sense of divine favor while firmly believing in his own sincerity and the righteousness of his ways and doings, he would fall into confusion and distress without being able to see the reasons for it.

He may be deluded with the idea that he is sustained in his idiosyncrasies, and is not responsible for his unseemly peculiarities. He may think that he is not understood by those who object to his methods. He may resolve to persist even if he

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becomes a martyr to his convictions, and, for a while, see nothing against his course. He is immature. Light will come as he can bear it. He will find in time, if honest with himself, that he is losing his influence among sincere and thoughtful people, and will prayerfully consider the reasons for it, and find light and use it, unless there is some congenital defect or natural weakness in his faculties which could not be remedied without a miracle, which he could not understand or appreciate. In this case he would not do much harm, for the sphere of his influence would be limited.

The career of William Miller, the distinguished founder of the sect known as "Adventists," affords an example of a sincere and earnest student of prophecy whose convictions were positive and clear to himself, as well as many others, when he predicted the "end of the world" as he understood it, and limited the time. In 1831 he arose from his long study deeply impressed with the solemn conviction that to him had been given the key that would unlock mystical numbers, "and that he must go forth and proclaim to a doomed world that in twelve years, at the longest, the end of all things would come."

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His lectures were illustrated by charts on which were represented the apocalyptic "beasts," and Nebuchadnezzar's image. They presented a mathematical demonstration of the mystical problem of the 2300 days of Daniel's vision, showing just when the "third woe" would come, and the seventh trumpet sound, and the "stone cut out of the mountain" would smite the great image, and Christ would appear in the clouds.

The salient point of the argument was the connection between the seventy weeks of Daniel, and the two thousand three hundred days of his vision, and in this was the revelation of the "exact time" of the end. The awful consummation was to occur in 1844, between the 24th and 25th of October. "The tenth day of the 7th month." He admitted a mistake in fixing first upon the year 1843, because he had not considered the difference between Roman and Jewish time. The clue had been found in the fact that the tenth day of the seventh month was also that of the great day of Atonement. Then came a period of great excitement among the believers which did not subside until the months of October and November had passed serenely. Then there was great relief for those who were alarmed,

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and disappointment, conflicting discussion, and collapse in the ranks of the disciples.³

Still Mr. Miller was hopeful, and in April, 1845, called a convention of his followers and instituted a church, which does not seem to be disturbed by the failure in his predictions. And it is not reasonable for us to think that his efforts were useless and unwise because he was not correct in his interpretation after years of study and effort.

The law of progress in the search for knowledge of the spiritual realm has its *counterpart in the physical world*.

The great conquerors of former ages built empires on the ruins of nations subdued in bloody battles. History glories in their achievements, and writes their names high on the scroll of fame. But the sphere of their conquests was limited by obstacles in nature that could not be overcome.

When Alexander had reached the interior of India, his troops still victorious, absolutely refused to go any further. They realized the great distance from their native land and the perils they must encounter as they returned. They were not

³ See Appleton's "Cyclopædia of American Biography." Vol. iv.

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unreasonable in their apprehensions. The long and exhausting march through burning deserts and swollen streams, in countries wasted by war, famine, and pestilence, decimated their ranks and left them weak when the great general reached Babylon to celebrate his victories.

Rome was called the mistress of the world, but there were regions beyond the Danube, the Indus, and the stupendous Himalaya Mountains, that defied invasion, while the Sahara, that great inland sea of sand, protected Southern Africa.

Napoleon could not conquer the climate of Russia. When his army of 500,000 men, the flower of the youth of France and allied nations, left the burned and deserted city of Moscow, the frozen corpses of thousands of men and horses covered snowy leagues of the immense plains on the homeward journey. The awful disaster on the icy Beresina left only about 25,000 men when he reached Paris.

There has been no barrier in nature so forbidding and overwhelming in its resistance as the mighty and apparently limitless Ocean. The ancient mariner coming to the gates of Hercules thought he had reached the end of the world. And so, for

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unrecorded ages, one-half of the population of the globe was ignorant concerning the other.

When, in recent centuries, the daring explorer returned to speak of continents and islands hitherto unknown, but few cared to be pioneers in those seemingly fabulous regions. Even in Byron's day the Ocean was a king of terrors.

“The armaments which thunder strike the walls
Of rock-built cities, bidding nations quake
And monarchs tremble in their capitals.
The oak leviathans whose huge ribs make
Their clay creator the vain title take
Of lord of thee, and arbiter of War.
These are thy toys, and as the snowy flake
They melt into thy yeast of waves which mar
Alike the Armada's pride or spoils of Trafalgar.”⁴

The era of steam and electricity has robbed the ocean of its former primacy in the domain of mystery and destruction. The modern steamship will compare favorably in safety and swiftness with the best means of conveyance on the land. And the vision of St. John concerning the new heaven and earth in this respect will soon be fulfilled, for practically there will be “no more sea.”

⁴ Byron's "Apostrophe to the Ocean."

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The great trans-continental railways, with their connections, are penetrating in every direction. News comes speedily from all quarters of the globe; and there will be an opportunity for some great nation, or combination of powers, to form a central government and control the whole world.

Those dismal spots in utmost latitudes, where eternal winter reigns, have stimulated the curiosity of thoughtful persons for many years. They must soon yield their gloomy secrets to the intrepid explorer, which will be of little value, but will satisfy the longing of the human heart for that which has been forever hidden.*

The control of the forces of nature, by those interested in universal progress, has met with unparalleled success in recent years, because there has been a profound study of the *possibilities* of these forces, and the *laws* that govern them. If efforts as *wise* and persistent were made by those who are longing for a more satisfactory knowledge of the *spiritual* world they would not be disappointed. The golden age of open vision, with corresponding expression, would dawn upon us in ways more wonderful than any the past has afforded,

*NOTE. — The author made this prediction in 1902 in the first edition of this book. Peary found the North Pole, April 6, 1909. Amundsen the South Pole, December 14, 1911.

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because progress has prepared the world for better things of this kind. And these things would be acceptable to the most sincere and worthy persons, for they would be understood and their Source recognized.

A Prayer

Ⓞ God, Our Heavenly Father, we look for light on the mysteries of nature; because we want to know thee better. We see thy presence in the energy that builds the worlds. Thou art more to us than the stupendous forces that carry planets and burn in the everlasting stars. For we see thy hand of love and power in forms of beauty that spring from that complex invisible and incomprehensible something that we call the ultimate atom, which has in itself, the promise and potency of all life. Disintegrating it seems to die. Reintegrating it lives again in myriad creations, more and more wonderful in the progressive ceaseless round of the ever-dying, ever-living Universe. But we are amazed, as we look beyond the atom, beyond the electron, into the deeper mysteries of Thy divine nature, O Lord our God!—Amen.

VIII

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THE transition from the earthly to the heavenly state does not necessarily involve physical death. There are modes of exit more desirable. They have been used in the past, and when it is expedient they will be available.¹

The advantage derived from death and decay in the animal and vegetable kingdoms is very great, for the earth's covering of vegetable mould, mingled with animal and mineral matter, is the source and nourishing mother of terrestrial life. Marine animals might exist, but the land without the soil would be an uninhabitable desert.

In some way the growth that springs from the soil must be removed. If it were not limited to a period for development and decline, it would form a tangled mass of gigantic trees and shrub-

¹Heb. xi. 5.

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bery of all varieties, unrestricted in the primeval forests by anything but the want of sunlight in its awful depths, and nourishment at the roots. It might reach enormous bulk if the climatic conditions were favorable and it were not disturbed by the hand of man; but it would finally fail, checked by exhaustion and the struggle for room. It must eventually die, for life could not be sustained perpetually under such conditions.

The removal of this immense accumulation of dead and dying material would then be difficult. Spontaneous combustion might occur, resulting in conflagrations dreadful beyond conception, heating the surface of the earth to such a depth that the germs of life would be destroyed, necessitating new production for which the soil would not be prepared. If vegetation were changed by some process that would cause it to disappear without leaving a perceptible remainder the ground would lack its nourishment, and men and animals their sustenance.

The possibility of death in the animal kingdom is a fortunate thing, because it makes flesh available for us, and the countless varieties of life, on land and in the sea, that require animal food.

The decomposition of defunct forms, including

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vast swarms of infinitesimal insects, and microscopic organisms, is essential to the formation of fertile soil; for the earth is carnivorous. It consumes billions of tons of animal substance, and cannot be sustained by a diet which is exclusively vegetable, for there is a drain upon its vitality that requires strong and stimulating resources. Agriculturalists are looking for compounds in which bone and flesh products are not lacking. They realize that they cannot get the best results unless the ground is fed with the most nutritious elements.

Such is the plan or constitution of nature and the corresponding relation of available forces that she is *self-supporting*. Her riches are cumulative. She grows more wealthy with the lapse of ages, and has now abundance in reserve for the great populations of the future.

The luxuriant vegetation of those epochs in the dim and unknown past, when the earth was tropical from the equator to the poles, has left its evidences in the everlasting rocks. It was associated with a development in natural forms that is amazing as we consider the fossilized remains of those ages, incomprehensible in duration. Those were the times of preparation for what we now enjoy, in

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which mundane bones were clothed with cosmic flesh.² The colossal mammalia, and amphibious monsters whose stony skeletons have been unearthed, constituted only a part of the multitudinous life that swarmed in the sea, and crowded the land, living and dying, in such vast numbers for millions of years, that they form to-day an important part of the alluvial floor on which the nations walk.

Humanity has contributed its share to the productive forces of the soil by returning the mortal part to the earth from which it was taken. The terraqueous globe has become an ancient cemetery rich in human ingredients. Burial six feet deep in protected spots was not common in ancient times, and is not now the general method in many regions, vast in extent, and densely populated. Myriads have been swept away by war, famine, pestilence, fire, and flood, and casualties of every kind.

The number of inhabitants has been large in favorable localities for many centuries, and many parts that are now thinly peopled were once full of life. If the estimated population of the world is 1,675,000,000 and about 100,000 die every day, we can see with William Cullen Bryant that :

² The globe would be a skeleton without the soil.

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"All that tread the globe are but a handful to the tribes
That slumber in its bosom—Take the wings
Of morning, pierce the Barcan wilderness
Or lose thyself in the continuous woods,
Where rolls the Oregon, and hears no sound
Save its own dashings—Yet the dead are there;
And millions in those solitudes since first
The flight of years began, have laid them down
In their last sleep."

The disappearance of a person from the world without dying is a phenomenon so mysterious and improbable that it could not be accepted as a fact, unless there were examples in history so well authenticated by credible witnesses that suspicion concerning their veracity could not be entertained by reasonable people. The case of Enoch, the seventh from Adam, was so clear that it was not doubted when it occurred, or hundreds of years afterward when reference was made to the event by an inspired writer.³ It appears that this way out of the material form was considered a great privilege which but few could obtain.

A passage out of the earthly condition that would not involve corruption was coveted in former times. And to-day there are many thoughtful people who shrink from the contemplation of their

³ Gen. v. 24; Heb. xi.

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bodies lying in the ground for an indefinite period, subject to the most repulsive and disgusting transformations, leaving at length a mass of putrescent filth in which a skeleton is submerged.

Hence, the growing favor with which incineration is regarded. It seems to relieve the mind, dispelling those gloomy forebodings that are really without foundation, for it cannot be shown that a person in the other world has any more interest in his fleshly remains than one in this life who has lost a limb by amputation. Probably he would not care whether it were cremated, or buried with ceremonies, for he would feel that it was of no consequence to him, not being a part of himself of any value, but simply refuse matter.

A change that would not affect a person unfavorably in any respect, but would, while in a perfectly normal condition, gently, but suddenly and gloriously, release the spirit, and at the same time instantaneously resolved the mortal body into invisible and absolutely imperceptible substance, would be the ideal passage into that divine state of existence which is the heritage of those who are qualified for it.

This would imply very careful preparation for

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the event, and a knowledge of the time when it would occur that could be communicated to chosen witnesses, whose statements would be accepted without doubt by the relatives and friends of the departed. For there is nothing that would create more alarm, or suspicion in a community, or nation, especially if the missing person were well known, or distinguished by superior ability and moral greatness. Such a change would seem miraculous to us unless we were acquainted with some process in nature that would make it possible, when the conditions were fulfilled.

Life in human beings and animals is sustained by a kind of combustion. The normal temperature of a person is about ninety-eight degrees. If it rises a little higher, or sinks lower, disease or danger is indicated. Now this oxygenous fire that burns perpetually in the system can be suddenly intensified, under divine suggestion, without disagreeable sensations, thus producing an invisible conflagration that will instantly consume the body without leaving any evidences of its salutary work.

The vision associated with the translation of Elijah is important because it is very suggestive. Elisha, his pupil, was stimulated by a condition

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which he must fulfill or he could not have the desire of his heart—a double portion of his master's spirit. He must *see* Elijah as *he was taken away*. It was necessary for him to be very careful lest anything should escape his attention, for the vision was a privilege granted to him only, because he was the only one among the many prophets who was able to perceive it, ranking as he did next to Elijah in ability to understand divine revelations.

Fifty selected men stood at a distance. They knew that Elijah was about to be removed in a mysterious way, and were profoundly impressed by the fact, which had come to them from a heavenly source. They noticed, also, that he had suddenly disappeared, but they did not see what Elisha saw—the *fiery* horses and *flaming* chariot. These were very significant. They formed an object lesson which was stamped forever upon his mind.

Elisha knew more about the event than he expressed, when inquiry was made concerning this marvelous phenomenon. He simply made his statement as a witness and left his hearers to their reflections. They were not convinced, and organized a band of experienced men, who scoured the

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country for miles, in all directions, and after three days were ready to accept what he had said, which was the result he expected.⁴

The study of transcendental themes that are unknowable, and can be considered only theoretically, resulting in a variety of speculative views, has always been unprofitable. Moreover, it is contrary to the spirit and genius of the present age. But when our attention is called to some remarkable transformation, through which human beings have passed, and we realize that we are soon to experience changes full of vital interest, and we are urged, as in the example of Elijah and Enoch, to carefully notice the *conditions* and *details*, and are invited by divine intimations to investigate and satisfy ourselves concerning their reality, and the great privileges with which they are connected, we have reason to believe that we can know more about them, and that we should have clearer light because it is for us; and such knowledge is to be obtained in this life.

The Bible is not a book written for the instruction and edification of beings in the *other* world. It is not reasonable for us to suppose that things

⁴ II. Kings. Ch. ii.

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would be given in a divine record for us about which we are not expected to have a satisfactory understanding. We are not to simply look at a sublime truth clothed in heavenly metaphor, or spiritual symbolism, and admire its imagery, glorying in the idea that we have no intelligible comprehension of its meaning, and do not expect to have it "here below," feeling sure that others never will in this life.

Of course there are many things that we cannot know without experience; but there is much concerning the *nature* of that experience through which we are to pass that we can know, and should know, that we may be prepared to enter into it.

Therefore, when our attention is arrested by a truth, made impressive by an exclamatory sentence, as: "Behold, I show you a mystery!" we can see while there is something deep and difficult to understand, that it is not so far beyond us that we cannot pierce its nebulosity and resolve it into something definite and valuable. Not only because we can view it in the light of science and sound logic, but with the telescopic eye of faith, thus securing divine illumination.

The "mystery" is wrapped in the next sentence:

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“We shall not all sleep; but we shall all be changed.”⁵ What is that singular “sleep” to which frequent reference is made by the same writer?⁶ Is it simply death in a physical sense? The word “sleep” may be used metaphorically to denote repose in the tomb. But the corrupt and disintegrated corporeal body is never aroused. It hears nothing and knows nothing. It becomes a part of the earth, and remains forever as such.⁷

If anything is made clear in this celebrated chapter, it is the nature of the body in which the dead appear.⁸ For Paul answers the questions: “How are the dead raised up, and with what body do they come?” His definitions are accurate. He calls it a “*spiritual body*.” He carefully discriminates between the spiritual and the physical body, and positively affirms that in the spiritual body there is nothing “earthly.” “Flesh and blood” are entirely excluded. He also shows the folly of supposing that the corrupt old body in the ground inherits an incorruptible or spiritual body. It inherits *nothing*.⁹ Nothing is ever done with it. It belongs to the earth from which it was built.

⁵ I. Cor. xv. 51.

⁶ Paul.

⁷ Gen. iii. 19.

⁸ I. Cor. xv.

⁹ I. Cor. xv. 50.

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The changes through which the mortal body of Jesus Christ passed, while in the tomb of Joseph, should be considered, that we may have a clearer conception of the nature of the body in which he afterward "*appeared*"; for all his interviews with his friends after his death were regarded by them as *appearances*. They were really manifestations of his spiritual or resurrection body, to which he called their attention, desiring that they should know as much about it as possible. To them he seemed to be a "*spirit*" because he suddenly appeared, sometimes when doors were closed, and as quickly disappeared. He would be absent for a number of days and then *appear* on a fitting occasion. He could also change his form and conceal his identity for a while, when it served his purpose, and then reveal himself.¹⁰

The *clothing* he wore after his death was not of a *material* kind. The soldiers had taken his garments when he was crucified. The fine linen in which his mortal body had been wrapped when he was buried, was carefully removed and placed where his disciples could see it when they visited the empty tomb.

¹⁰ Mark xvi. 12.

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He had no visible place of abode, and in every respect he resembled a being from the other world. But there was something in his presence very tangible, and apparently corporeal, to which he invited their attention and inspection. He said: "A spirit hath not flesh, and bones, as ye see me have."* He ate in their presence and showed them the prints of the nails in his hands.¹¹

His transformation in the tomb must have been similar in some respects to the change in Enoch and Elijah, but very different in others, for it involved a restoration of the earthly body followed by a celestial translation. The body thus evolved was capable of manifestations never before exhibited. Before his death he could be transfigured, and thus assume the image of the heavenly. After his death he was able to reverse this phenomenon, and *appear* like one of us when he wished, to illustrate the reality of the life beyond the tomb?

He could also vanish instantaneously, to show that it is a *spiritual state* having advantage far superior to any that the most favored of earth enjoy. We can, therefore, confidently believe, and rejoice in the fact, that we "believe in the resurrection of

* See note, p. 147.

¹¹ Luke xxiv. 36-43.

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the body" (meaning the *spiritual* body) without clinging to that erroneous view which would put us again into corporeal forms, which necessarily implies limitation and vulnerability.^{12*}

*NOTE. — For we know that if the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building from God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. For verily in this we groan, longing to be clothed upon with our habitation which is from heaven.—II. Cor. v. 1-2, R. V.

Job's desire to see God while in the *flesh* had reference to his vindication and restoration to former health, when he should have clearer views of divine Providence. He did not believe that his dreadful disease would prove fatal.¹³ If, however, there are those who think that Job's language expresses a prediction and hope of a future reincarnation they need not be disappointed in their expectations, for we have seen that Christ was able to transfigure his *spiritual* body when it was expedient, and makes it *seem* incarnate to his disciples; and as He is in this respect, so we may be.

Resurrection means restoration, rebuilding, or raising, of the same person. It does not involve a new creation. The spiritual person, or body, begins to live when we are born. The mind, which is the spiritual nature, develops with the physical form, but it is very immature when the earthly body is old and ready to die, because it is the immortal part, and has unlimited possibilities. This is a

¹² See Ch. i., p. 9.

¹³ Job xix. 26. See R. V.

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matter of consciousness. A man advanced in life, when in a normal condition, feels that he has had experience and is prepared to live much longer, and do better in his enterprises.

The transition at death may involve a period of *repose*, for the spiritual person is still immature in some respects. He is unclothed and is to be clothed upon." ¹⁴ He is in a new world, and must gradually become accustomed to his ultra-mundane environment, and know his powers and privileges, by experience. This period of rest is full of blessedness when the foundations have been laid in righteousness, and the culture of heavenly character. It is by no means a state of unconsciousness, or slumber, *in the tomb*. It is a period of preparation for better things, and a more glorious awakening when new spheres of activity and enjoyment are open.

We begin in a new way on the other side. Some time is usually required for development, and the acquisition of knowledge that cannot be obtained in this life; but a good man loses nothing. "To die is gain" for him. He rejoices in all he has that is worthy, and in all he is *able* to receive,

¹⁴ II. Cor. v.

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but he may, for a while, rest, or wait that he may be prepared for those celestial activities which mean promotion desirable, and superlatively glorious.¹⁵

In biblical expression this time of waiting is called "sleep," and there is such a distinct reference to this idea, and the condition it implies when it relates to the invisible state, that its mystery should be explored.

When we learn, as believers, that "we shall not *all* sleep" it is evident that there are some exceptions, though it is certain that "we shall all be changed," and that the change will be sudden.

Sleep is used metaphorically by ancient, as well as modern, authors, to represent death of a physical kind, and it is appropriate, for such sleep is the image of death. But there was a special reason for its use in the passage: "She is *not dead*; but *sleepeth*."¹⁶ And there was also a reason for the statement: "Our friend, Lazarus, sleepeth, but I go that I make awake him out of sleep." In both instances the speaker was misunderstood at the time, and possibly there is some misunderstanding concerning his statements now. Spiritual repose,

¹⁵ Rev. vi. 9-11. ¹⁶ Luke viii. 52-53; John xi. 11-14.

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not death, is clearly indicated, for the discrimination in this respect is unmistakable. "He said unto them plainly, 'Lazarus is dead.'" ¹⁷

It appears that we have in these instances illustrations of that state of felicity which came to many persons immediately after death, from which some were miraculously awakened, or called back to the earthly life to remain for a while; but others were left "asleep in Jesus," serenely reposing in hope, waiting for the moment when they should suddenly emerge from comparative inactivity and obscurity to conspicuous honors and privileges. This "sleep" did not necessarily involve unconsciousness, or correspond literally to what we call sleep. It was celestial repose.

For some the period of retirement was not essential. They could enter at once into the employments of the seraphic life, and assume its responsibilities. The change for them involved no delay.

The reasons for this rapid promotion are not

¹⁷ Those who suppose that Christ spoke metaphorically or meant to disguise his words or embellish them with a figure of speech, should examine these passages more carefully. He spoke so plainly in one instance that "they laughed him to scorn." He revealed an important fact.

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given, but they are implied. The spirituality, or *openness*, of some persons to the other world is remarkable; their ability to receive impressions, and acquire knowledge of divine things, is exceptional. If their firmness and loyalty under severe discipline and fiery trial, has revealed the gold of character thoroughly refined in brightness and purity, their readiness for *sudden* advancement is recognized.

The *raising* of the dead, or their coming forth from their *graves*, or the sea, cannot be understood in a *literal* sense, for they do not live in the ground, in the sea, or "under the earth."¹⁸ These expressions are figurative, and simply refer to the world of the dead, and have no significance that concerns their mortal remains which do not enter into the constitution of the body raised or built, for it is a spiritual structure, to be clothed with immortality.

Christ, our example in all things that pertain to resurrection life, enjoyed a brief period of heavenly repose. He became "the first fruits of them that slept." This was not necessary for Him, but was used as an illustration, as was His

¹⁸ I. Cor. xv. 51. Rev. xx. 13.

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baptism. His earthly temple, as He predicted, was destroyed, but He was able to build it again in three days, but not with natural substance, for He was "changed," and appeared after His death in the celestial temple which His disciples saw and examined, and were then ready to state the facts and describe its marvelous possibilities. Truly there are reasons for the satisfaction of those who "awake in His likeness."

The resurrection, or exaltation, of a spiritual being after death means transfiguration, or change in appearance. This change implies something better, or worse, for the one who passes through it, for there is a resurrection "unto life," but there is one that involves a deeper death.¹⁹

The appearance of a person in the spiritual world cannot be disguised in such a way as to effectually conceal moral corruption. Satan may appear as an angel of light among those who do not discriminate, because they cannot, or will not, understand what is clearly discerned on the other side of the grave. Transformation, therefore, may imply deterioration in presence, disgusting and horrible beyond conception. Character leaves its

¹⁹ John v. 29.

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indelible marks on the features, easily interpreted by the acute observer, especially when maturity is reached, and the ruling motives have crystallized into definite attributes.

The transformation of the natural appearance reveals the power of mind over matter, and it is more effective in youth than in age, because the body is more susceptible to its controlling and moulding influences. The transition from youth to manhood, or womanhood, is the most remarkable and interesting in its effect upon the form and features of any that comes into this life. When it is normal there is a development in the figure, and a forcefulness in the tones of the voice, and in the entire bearing, that indicates virility, and the most attractive manifestations of stalwart manliness. Sexuality is stamped upon the entire being, and all the predominating qualities that constitute manhood are apparent. The change from girlhood to womanly maturity is equally important. It is noticed in the symmetry of the form, and brilliancy of the eye. All the feminine characteristics become prominent. There is with humanity, as in all nature, a period of efflorescence, an age of blossom and beauty.

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When the time for decline has come nothing can arrest the progress of decay but complete renewal. If this were repeated at proper intervals physical life could be sustained perpetually; but a person would be liable to casualties of many kinds which might prove fatal, or leave him maimed and mutilated. If he could be miraculously restored, even then the advantages of the spiritual state would make it far more desirable.

When life has been supernaturally prolonged there were reasons for it that made divine intervention possible. Moses died a young man at the age of one hundred and twenty years. His eye was as clear, and his step as firm and elastic as at twenty-five. This was a mark of distinction and favor granted to a man whose worthiness and devotion were unparalleled. It came also in an age when miracle of this kind was needed. It involved *physical transfiguration*. His vitality was renewed in such a way that his bodily vigor and intellectual force suffered no decline. His radiant face was at times so dazzling that he was obliged to veil it when he came before the people. His luminous features indicated a development of the immortal body within that was truly abnormal, but

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intensely glorious. The possibilities of the heavenly life were seen in this great man who had communed with the Divine Being forty days and nights on a lonely mountain height, and light was thrown upon the mystery of angelic existence.

There is a question concerning the disposition of his body after his death that has never been answered. It is certain that it was not buried by human hands. His friends understood that he was dead, but they could not find his *body*. It is said God buried him, or he was buried. Let the reader form his own conclusions. It may be that his flesh did not see corruption.²⁰

The heavenly resurrection, or elevation, of a person in the spiritual world should not be associated with that kind of resurrection which means simply the restoration to physical life of one recently dead. Erroneous and confusing impressions have come from a superficial study of such miracles. The raising of the prostrate form of Lazarus in the tomb is something very different from the building of the spiritual temple eternal in the heavens.

Christ will indeed "change, or transfigure," the

²⁰ Deut. xxxiv. 6.

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body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to the body of his glory. He will make it spiritual like his own; but this will not involve the exertion of divine forces upon the vile remains in the earth, for there is no reference to such a work in this connection, but to the fleshly living body, with its weakness, limitations, and susceptibility to decay.²¹

The temporary resurrection of the dead made a profound impression upon an age when immortality was mythical to thoughtful and conservative people. It startled the world and laid the foundation for better things.

The transfiguration of a person in the spiritual world is the result of the gradual unfolding of his inner being. It is instantaneous, but the preparation for it may occupy an indefinite period. It is not easy for us to tell just when a bud will blossom, but we can approximate quite accurately when we are well acquainted with the conditions. The laws that govern spiritual development are more complex in their operation, for they may fluctuate under varying circumstances, being dependent upon the will, as well as the intelligence, together with

²¹ Phil. iii. 21. R. V.

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numerous other considerations that make predictions concerning the time for some great transformation very difficult.

The change that comes to one who is looking for a clear evidence of regenerating power in his nature from a divine source is sudden, although it may not seem to be so at the time in every instance. He passes from a condition known as moral death into spiritual life, and is generally conscious of the transition, which marks an era in his history; but the preparation for it was gradual. It may have occupied months, and even years, or a few moments.

Degrees of advancement that come later are preceded by varying seasons of preparation and development, and it is not always easy to account for such variations. When, however, a person is sincere and wisely persistent there may be some delay arising from his inability to *comprehend* or *apprehend*, which nothing but time can relieve. These conditions have their counterpart in the immortal state, for heavenly resurrection is celestial efflorescence.

The temporary bloom of youth and beauty is the figure of that which is to come. The radiant

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faces of angels grow brighter; their eyes become more expressive; their brilliant apparel has a language of its own. Its changes illustrate varying shades of thought and emotion in the rapturous life beyond.

"I know not, O I know not
What social joys are there;
What radiancy of glory
What light beyond compare."²²

NOTE ON CELESTIAL FLESH AND BONES.

THE celestial body of Christ is substantial and clearly perceptible to the senses when they are open. It is tangible and apparently corporeal. But there is nothing "earthly" in it, and for this reason it is immortal. Paul plainly shows this in I. Cor., 15:45-50 (see Revised Version). Here he shows the difference between the first and second Adam. The first Adam became a "living soul," that is a man of *this* world, but the last Adam a "life-giving spirit." "The first man is of the earth, earthy." The second man is "heavenly." "Flesh and blood" (he says) cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

Some suppose that Christ was translated at time of his ascension; but there is nothing in the records to indicate such a change at that time. It came when he arose.

He ate in their presence after his death, not because he needed food or used it as we do; but to let them see how real and human the life beyond death may be, in which we can enjoy all our faculties and perceptions in a way that is spiritual and heavenly.

²² Bernard de Cluny.

IX

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THERE is nothing so costly as a world. An edifice can be built that will last for centuries; but its utility and beauty, as well as its enduring qualities, will be in proportion to its expense.

The palaces of Babylon, as well as its celebrated Hanging Gardens, which are reckoned among the wonders of the past, have fallen into heaps of rubbish that are hard to identify, because they were made of materials easily procured, and handled by thousands of cheap workmen. But the splendid columns and colossal figures that stand in mute desolation on the banks of the historic Nile still remain to tell the story of their remote antiquity, and thrill the traveler with sublime emotions as he considers their transformation under the hand of genius, with the patient labor of years, from the red granite quarries of Syene, into forms

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of beauty and permanence, which time has not obliterated.

The evolution of a world is costly because the plan includes so much, and reaches so far into the future. When we consider the nature of our planet from the hour when it began to be, and think of the many changes through which it has passed, we may be unable to say much about its future, for who can say how long it will live?

Our terraqueous globe is an ideal formation, a rare old treasury. Its resources are not fully developed. They are cumulative, and practically inexhaustible. It is a moving spherical dwelling place, "not made with hands," which renews itself and becomes more interesting and valuable as the centuries roll on.

It is an immense sunlit ball on which countless multitudes have enjoyed the pleasures of existence, and left their great ancestral estate to nations yet unborn. It does not seem to be affected unfavorably by its great age. Who is sure that it ever will be?

The plan for our world included a marvellous supply of everything needed in any age, or in all ages, which, nevertheless, must be utilized by its

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inhabitants or it would not be available, thus making improvements optional and conditional.

The age of our earth is very great. If we go back to the time when it was simply a mass of molten rock beginning to consolidate on the surface by cooling, we should estimate about 2,000 millions of years.¹ For the original nebula to condense into the molten globe, we should allow a much longer period. If we go back still farther to the nebula itself and attempt to estimate the time required for its development from the depths of primeval space, we are up against a dark secret of nature which has never been explored.

However, much light is thrown upon this mystery as we look into the constitution of meteorites or "shooting stars." These strange stones that have fallen upon the earth sometimes, are foreign in their composition and very ancient. Some of them seem to be fragments of other worlds, that had their day long before our earth was formed. They are the stuff from which worlds and suns are made by agglomeration. Torn from old planets by "tidal disruption," or left over as "chips" when other globes took shape, they are the real estate of the

¹"The Earth," Alphonse Berget.

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Universe, and may have been used many times in the building of new solar systems.² They are, therefore, incomprehensibly old, as old as the Universe itself, which is forever young, yet old beyond all reckoning or imagination, for it has been for unknown ages renewing and reproducing itself.

How long will our earth last? I believe that I am in harmony with the latest opinion of eminent astronomers when I say that it may last *forever*. It cannot fall into nothingness. It must exist in some form. Why look for a great change?

There are three ways (astronomers say) in which our earth *may* in a very long time become uninhabitable or practically dead. First: *Tidal friction*, which is the pull of gravitation by the sun and moon like a brake acting on its mass elongating it and making it egg-shaped, thus making its rotation so slow that it will have no seasons, with eternal day on one side and everlasting night on the other. But who can prove that this will happen to *our* world? It shows no evidence of it yet and it is very old. Those planets that are irregular in shape or apparently unfit for vegetable or animal existence may have been so from the beginning. It cannot be

² "The Evolution of Worlds," Percival Lowell, A.B., LL.D.

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shown that "tidal friction" has made them uninhabitable.

Second: Some scientists have said that our earth will become uninhabitable after billions of years because of the loss of heat from the sun, due to its continued radiation and condensation. "It will be reduced in size to one-quarter of its present volume and the whole globe will then be as cold as it is now at the Poles." This prediction was made before the discovery of radio-activity in the sun, which may sustain it for an unlimited time. No diminution of the sun's energy has ever been noticed from the beginning of history.

Besides the radio-activity in the sun's vast interior, we should not overlook the fact that it is constantly fed as it moves into new realms of space by immense quantities of meteorites of all sizes, giving it bulk and intense heat by the tremendous force of the mechanical shock as they fall into it. On our earth about 20,000,000 of these meteorites fall every day very small, in most instances.⁴ Think of the vast number the sun draws into itself every moment by gravitation, for it is 325,000 times the weight of the earth.

⁴Ivin Sickels.

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We should remember that the sun travels in a great orbit, the focus of which is unknown. This vast incandescent solar globe may be ravaging space to contribute to its own powerful substance, like a great fish that traverses and depopulates the waters of the ocean.

It is said by a noted geologist that our earth's age is two thousand millions of years.⁵ We still have an abundance of water, light and heat. Whatever may have happened to other planets or distant stars, our globe's expectation of life, judging from the past and present, is beyond computation. Its end may as well be indefinitely postponed. Our sun is like an immense electric light, sustained by the power developed from billions of Niagaras. Of course it is not simply electrical phenomena, but there is a fitting analogy, for it may be compared to a stupendous self-feeding, inexhaustible battery that does not fail, because it is supplied by the resources of the Universe.

Physicists tell us of a way in which our earth may be knocked out of its orbit and demolished by collision. This would be an accident, and though possible, it is very improbable. There is nothing in

⁵ "The Earth," Alphonse Berget.

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our way. The nearest stars are at a very great distance from us. Our sun with our world and all the planets is journeying toward the constellation Hercules with a velocity of 11.5 miles per second. At least ten billions of years must elapse before this distance can be covered and a collision then be possible.

But we might encounter a "dark star," or an "extinct sun" (science tells us). And yet such stars have never been seen or their presence clearly revealed, yet they are supposed to be "somewhere." The probability of our earth colliding with an invisible star from a very distant part of the universe should not be entertained. There is no evidence that it has ever happened in our solar system and nothing to prove that it ever will. If coming our way we should know it a long time in advance by perturbations.

Now if this should happen to us, our earth, it would not perish. We would simply change form and get a resurrection — "a new heavens and earth," in a material sense. For the tremendous force of the shock would volatilize all the constituent matter, which, in time, would condense into nebula, begin to whirl, developing intense heat and

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give birth to a new solar system. Thus we would get the resurrection of a world. And once more on the great dial of the sky the clock of eternity would accomplish one of its turns.

I do not believe this will ever happen to us, because we have so much room all around us. It may have occurred in distant parts of the Universe. The nearest known stars are twenty trillions of miles away. Our planets have never been known to collide. There is no probability of such a catastrophe.

What is "the end of the world"? The second coming of Christ is associated with it. Let those who are so careful to distinguish between pre-millennial and post-millennial views, tell us just what they understand by "The end of the world."

Physical changes that involve calamity, such as the destruction of life and property by seismic phenomena, or storm and flood, and drought, may be expected in the future. History shows that these things have come in all ages. But this does not prove that they will be as extensive and appalling as they have been. It may be hard for us to see why natural evils should exist; but we have clearer light when we see that nature is a *develop-*

* See Ch. xii.

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ment, and much more time must be allowed before the best results can be secured.⁷ Disturbance below the surface of the earth is not so frequent or disastrous as in former times, because the entire globe is approaching a condition more satisfactory and approximately normal.

We are more capable of counteracting and avoiding calamities as we become more intelligent.

Drought can be avoided by new methods of irrigation. There is much water in the mountains that can be led to distant parts. Artesian wells are possible in vast deserts which can be changed into fertile and blooming gardens. Floods can be avoided by directing superfluous waters into channels provided for them, and men will see that it is not best to settle and build populous towns on low and dangerous ground. They will grow forests that will check the reckless course of tornadoes, and shade the sources of rivers that they may not become diminutive in volume. They will not be afraid of the Ocean when great storms occur, because they can use ships so large and strong that the sea will lose its terrors.

There is nothing in nature that should lead us

⁷ Ch. x.
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to believe that sometime in the future the earth is to be overwhelmed by a universal and destructive conflagration that will involve the ruin of the sun, and other planets. Just what would become of the exhausted sun, and frozen or incinerated earth, is not made very clear by those who advocate this view of the world's future. Possibly the globe's desolate corpse might be resuscitated, or in some way renewed. The sun, it is thought, will not be needed. The poet, Addison, has given us a vivid conception of what many believe will certainly occur.

“The soul secured in her existence smiles
At the drawn dagger and defies its point.
The stars shall fade away, the sun himself
Grow dim with age, and nature sink in years;
But thou shalt flourish in immortal youth,
Unhurt amidst the war of elements,
The wreck of matter, and the crush of worlds.”

After this an era will begin, it is thought, in which a new heaven and a new earth will appear, built upon the purified foundations of the old, or substituted for them. It would be easier for us to accept this theory if we could believe that the Universe was created in six days, of time as we now measure it. But the testimony of the rocks

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concerning the antiquity of the globe cannot be successfully denied.⁸

When a *literal* interpretation is given to inspired predictions which refer to the remote future, or the prehistoric past, great mistakes may be made which lead into divergent opinions, confusion and inexplicable mystery. The obscurity of prophetic language is not easily penetrated unless there is ability and willingness to accept authentic contemporary history, especially when predictions are associated with positive and definite statements concerning the *time* within which fulfillment will occur.

A prediction concerning the "end of the world, which included the coming of Christ in the *clouds of heaven*, with power and great glory, is recorded in the twenty-fourth chapter of Matthew. This was to be preceded by the preaching of the gospel "in all the world, for a witness unto all nations;

⁸ Some scientists think that our solar system will in time be changed into the primeval matter from which it was evolved, and new worlds developed from it. And that this process can be observed in certain parts of the Universe. This theory may have been built upon the *analogies of nature*, together with a misunderstanding concerning certain biblical predictions in which the "world" or the "earth" is by metonymy put for character and works, and fire is used as the symbol of judgment. I. Cor. iii. 12-15.

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and 'then shall the *end* come.'” This is associated with the failure of the sun and moon, and the fall of the stars, and the shaking of the heavens. At that time the angels would come, and there would be a “great sound of a trumpet,” and the elect would be “gathered from one end of heaven to the other.”

Then comes the plain statement which will not bear anything but a literal meaning: “Verily I say unto you, this *generation* shall not pass till *all* these things be fulfilled.” This prophecy is also recorded by the Evangelists, Luke and Mark, with a specific reference to the *time* within which all would be fulfilled. Substantially the same things are noticed in the Writings of Paul, and in the Revelation of St. John, but with this difference: They looked for the fulfillment of these predictions *very soon*. They confidently expected that these startling events and great changes would come before they died. Paul certainly referred to himself and his friends when he said:

“Then *we* which are *alive* and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord.”⁹ And Peter, speaking of the dissolu-

⁹ I. Thess. iv. 17.

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tion of the earth, and its consumption by fire, writes to the church in his day: "Wherefore, beloved, seeing that *ye look* for such things, be diligent that ye may be found of him in peace, without spot, and blameless."¹⁰ John, in his message to the seven churches in Asia, speaks of his vision definitely when he says that it has reference to things "Which *must shortly* come to pass." He emphasizes this statement in his prologue with these words: "*for the time is at hand.*" In the closing words of the last chapter we find this important fact repeated in the words of the Redeemer: "Surely, I come quickly."¹¹

If the calculations of the inspired men, who were so confident of a speedy fulfillment of these prophecies in their times, were so wide of the mark that a delay of about *nineteen centuries* has occurred, and we are still looking for the end of the world *which they predicted*, can we accept other things that they have written concerning us and our times, and feel that they are reliable?

To conclude that there was in these predictions a "blending and foreshadowing" of events that did occur in those times with a final consummation in

¹⁰ II. Peter iii. 14.

¹¹ Rev. i. 1-3. Rev. xxii. 20.

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the indefinite future, is to impeach statements concerning the time that are absolutely inclusive of the most vivid representations of the judgment, the resurrection, and that which is associated with the end for which many are looking now.

It is certain that they were not right in their expectations concerning the *nearness* of these events, or some have not wisely interpreted their messages. A better understanding may be obtained as we consider the relation of these vivid descriptions to great revolutions, bloody tragedies, and natural calamities, affecting the whole known world in the last half of the first century of the Christian era.

The world of those days, as they knew it, was not the *globe*. No one could show that the earth was a ball; and no one had any definite ideas concerning its extent. This fact should be noticed as we read the Bible, and other ancient writings. It was indeed a very limited territory when compared with what we now find it to be. And it would be difficult to show that the most intelligent persons, not excepting those who wrote under divine inspiration and penetrated the remote future with prophetic vision, had a conception of the great

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round world, that would compare favorably with that of a child in this enlightened age.

When, therefore, we are considering events that affected the world, or would have a disturbing influence upon it in the near future, we should understand that it was a small world in comparison with ours, though densely populated, and having great centers that represented it. Among these great representative cities were Rome, Jerusalem, and Babylon. Of course there were other very important places, such as Ephesus, Athens, Corinth, Antioch, Alexandria, and Selucia.

Babylon, in the first century, was still a great city, though it had suffered much through natural decay, devastation by invading armies, and neglect. Materials had been taken from it to build other cities. Still it retained much of its former prestige. It was a commercial metropolis of the East, and contained a flourishing Christian church, mentioned by St. Peter.¹² Here many Jews resided—the descendants of those who had been carried into captivity centuries before, and did not return to their native land.

Babylon was a city that had fallen many times,

¹² I. Peter v. 13.

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but had risen again and again, like the fabled Phœnix, from the ashes of its fires. Against it the prophets uttered their maledictions, for it represented the corruption of the East and the historic past.

The Apocalypse was written and sent to the seven churches in proconsular Asia before the destruction of Jerusalem by the Roman army under Titus; for there is a prediction concerning this city and its fall in the eleventh chapter of this book, where it is noticed as: "The great city, which spiritually is called Sodom and Egypt. *Where, also, our Lord was crucified.*"¹³ This city had been warned years before, but the time for its total destruction was very near. The seven churches were prepared to notice this awful catastrophe, and study its significance with copies of the Apocalypse before them. Their relation to Jerusalem and its history was such that they, and the places they represented, would take a deep interest in a siege and capitulation more tragical than the world has even known before or since.

Corruption in Rome—the world's capital—had

¹³ There is a wide difference of opinion concerning the time when John wrote the Apocalypse.

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become so rank and nauseating that its abominations could no longer be tolerated by thoughtful and discriminating people. It was a center of vice and moral rottenness without parallel in any age. For this reason its Emperors were sometimes called "beasts" in the imagery of the Apocalypse, and the city "the bottomless pit," or "the abyss." This term may also denote a source of corrupt power in the East.¹⁴

The Revelation of St. John is more obscure and unintelligible than other prophecies, but there is a reason for it. His life could not have been preserved, and his inspired thoughts delivered and circulated in the great centers of population if he had not disguised his ideas, clothing them in metaphor and symbolism, rich and varied, confusing and mysterious to the average reader, but very attractive. If he had given the names of places and described prominent characters in such a way that they could have been identified without doubt, he would have been arrested and imprisoned, and search made for copies of his book that they might be destroyed.

He does not state that his residence in the Isle

¹⁴ Rev. ix. 1.

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of Patmos was *compulsory*.¹⁵ He was there, he says: "for the word of God, and the testimony of Jesus Christ." This secluded island in the Aegean Sea afforded him a quiet retreat for study and profound reflection on the momentous events which were soon to startle the world.

These things were revealed to him in visions which involved scenic-parables, so intensely realistic and rapturous that he actually became, for the time, a denizen of two worlds, the spiritual and the material. He defines this peculiar state as a *sudden change*, divinely wrought in these words: "And immediately I was in the Spirit."¹⁶

The possibility of entering into a condition so exalted and exclusive of earthly enthrallment, is profusely illustrated in the experience of this eminent man whose uncommon spirituality and natural aptitudes opened the way for this remarkable transformation. Nevertheless he did not enter into these great privileges until he had been thoroughly tested for years, under trials from which most men would shrink with alarm, or fail in crucial moments. He combined heroic courage

¹⁵ Tradition makes St. John a prisoner or exile, while living in Patmos; but this has not been verified.

¹⁶ Rev. iv. 2.

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with gentleness and absolute devotion; and with a susceptibility to impressions from the other world, which was coupled with such rare discrimination that he could not be deceived while listening, for divine thoughts by simulations or interpolations from unworthy sources. And, so, his revelations are reliable and bear the insignia of divine approval.

In the study of this valuable literature which appears to be the result of superhuman co-operation, the conditions under which it was produced should not be overlooked and when there are predictions concerning great earthquakes, wars, invasions, floods, the fall of empires, unparalleled and overwhelming volcanic phenomena, together with fierce persecutions and cruel martyrdom of Christians, and these things are to "come quickly," we may find light by the study of the events of the century in which the prophecy was written.¹⁷

The end of the world was the end of an age or period, which included a generation. This is clearly stated and implied in the Scriptures. The end of the world was the end of a period of time within which a generation lived and were in some instances still living, as: "This generation shall *not pass* till

¹⁷ Matt. xxiv. 3.

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all these things be fulfilled."¹⁸ It may be compared to seed-time and harvest.¹⁹ The time of ingathering may come earlier in certain seasons, because the conditions are favorable. It is the end of a succession of years, comprehended within certain limits recognized by historians as the opening and closing of a distinct age, different in many respects from the preceding and succeeding era. Every century brings great changes and ushers us into a new world.

The end of the world may be understood as the consummation of a period which can be measured approximately by the years of the oldest person of his century. If he could rise and live again in mortal form he would find himself in what he would call a new world, and he would feel that he was alone in that world, and would have to adapt himself to its new ways, or be regarded as a man of the past. The people of the last age are unknown to us. We have heard of them, but they are strangers.

The people of the next age we can never know unless we meet them in the spiritual states; and then we should find that their interests were closely

¹⁸ Matt. xxiv. 34.

¹⁹ Matt. xiii. 39.

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identified with the age in which they lived in the physical world. And while anxious to know something about the past they could not be *classified* with us, and must be always more deeply interested in the people of their own times than in those of other ages, because of the associations, relations, and surroundings of the past, which will constitute an important part of their lives

It is evident that what constitutes an age is really a *world* of its kind. And the last man of *his* world could be found and actually identified if we knew the years of all his contemporaries. If, then, the end of the world was the end of an age, it has come in the past, and *will come again*.

It remains for us to notice that which is associated with the end as it has been predicted in the Bible, such as the resurrection, the judgment, the coming of Christ, the promotion of the righteous and the degradation of the wicked, as well as such physical changes as the apparent decline and failure of nature, including great natural calamities such as earthquakes, darkness, falling stars, pestilence, famine, signs and wonders in the heavens, and, above all, the dissolving of the heavens and earth by fire, and the shaking of what seems to be the

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whole fabric of nature, ending in final collapse, in which the heaven and the earth flee away, and there is no place for them.

It may seem presumptuous and positively rash and foolish for us to suppose that such things *have occurred*. We might admit that many great and direful events can be noticed in the past which would sanction the use of very strong language and vivid imagery, as they were anticipated in prophecy. But the coming of Christ in the clouds, a general resurrection, and such a tremendous change as the appearance of new heavens and earth would be more than we could accept, or even regard as a possibility of the past unless we could see how such things have happened.

When, however, we realize that these things were expected *very soon* by those who mentioned them, and that there was nothing equivocal in their utterances concerning fulfillment in the *near future*, we may be led to a more careful scrutiny of the subject and find they were not mistaken.

In prophetic writings "the heavens and the earth" often represent the existing condition of affairs in the world; and a commotion in them means a great revolution.

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The coming of the Son of Man "with clouds" indicates a *conspicuous* revelation of His presence, and does not necessarily involve His appearance in the sky, among clouds, in a *literal* sense, for he could then be seen by only a few people in the locality where he appeared, if he were viewed by *living* persons in the physical state. This imagery is used in the Psalms where it is said of the Lord "Who maketh the clouds his chariot: who walketh upon the wings of the wind." ²⁰ In the song of Deborah, the prophetess, composed after a great victory, we have these words: "The earth *trembled* and the *heavens dropped.*" ²¹ In the forty-sixth psalm there is a grateful reference of the success of the past in war, under divine direction. "The heathen raged, the kingdoms were moved, he uttered his voice, the *earth melted.*"

A very explicit and remarkable prediction concerning the fall of Babylon, and its complete destruction is found in the thirteenth chapter of Isaiah, in which he says that "the stars of heaven, and the constellations thereof, shall *not give their light*, the *sun shall be darkened* in his going forth, and the *moon shall not cause her light to shine.*"

²⁰ Ps. civ. 3.

²¹ Judges v. 4.

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He goes farther and says that the heavens shall be *shaken*, and the earth *moved out of its place*." All this has actually occurred, but no one believes that, in a *literal* sense, or as a matter of *fact*, the sun, moon, and stars failed, the earth was thrown out of its orbit, and the Universe, or solar system, shaken when Babylon fell.

There is a reference in the first chapter of Hebrews to the fall of empires, and the decay of nations and the permanence of Christ's Kingdom, in which the heavens and earth are metaphorically used for principalities and powers. "They shall perish; but thou remainest, and they shall wax old as doth a garment, and as a vesture shall thou fold them up, and they shall be changed."²² It is probable that Thomas Campbell has given this passage a literal interpretation and made it the basis of his poem called "The Last Man." He gives us a doleful conception of the environment, taking us far into the misty and uncertain future which has a sombre coloring.

"The sun's eye had a sickly glare.
The earth with age was wan.
The skeletons of nations were
Around that lonely man."

²² Heb. i. 10-12.

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Our earth shows no symptoms of infirmity. It is still young, comparatively speaking, although amazingly old—old beyond reliable calculation. It is a progressive creation, perennial in its nature, having a tendency to improve in every respect with advancing age. It is an emblem of immortality.

Those who predict the death of our solar system by heart failure and would show us that the sun is now a "yellow star," and therefore has passed maturity and is beginning to fail with age, should tell us how they know that it has not *always* been a yellow star. There is variety in nature. We have red stars and blue ones, and such may have been their color from the first. The sun's radiostatic energy is continuous. No decline is known. The earth has grown cooler very gradually since the formation of the solid surface, but this cooling has been largely counteracted by chemical combinations and radio-activity.

Earthquakes, volcanic phenomena, floods, great fires, invasions by vast hordes of barbarians, plagues and famines were predicted by St. John in the Apocalypse, and a careful study of the history of his times will show that his judgment concerning the time for fulfillment was right.

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Several great earthquakes, some of which were associated with the most awful volcanic disturbances, are noticed by historians. And there is nothing more terrific and appalling, especially when they occur near the sea. The northern shores of the Mediterranean, as well as the islands of that sea, have been noted for calamities of this kind for thousands of years. Here are the volcanoes Aetna, Vesuvius, and Stromboli. This region has been frequently visited by sudden and awful devastation covering many square miles of the most populous and fertile territory. The sea, at times, rolling in upon the land and then receding as thousands perished.

The great eruption of Vesuvius, which began August 23. A.D. 79, was foreshadowed by John in the eighth chapter of Revelation. He speaks of "hail and fire mingled with blood." Showers of hot stones, cinders, and ashes, falling on unprotected heads in city and country, made the earth bloody with human victims. "A great mountain burning with fire was cast into the sea." The southern half of Vesuvius disappeared in the sea during this eruption, "And the third part of the sea became blood. And the third part of the

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creatures which were in the sea and had life, died, and the third part of the ships were destroyed."

There was a great commotion in the sea at that time. The elder Pliny, in charge of a fleet, found shoals in new places, and was obliged to seek anchorage in another harbor. After landing he protected his head with pillows, but was soon asphyxiated by noxious gases. The ashes and stones destroyed many vessels, and poisoned animal life in the water. Rivers, wells, and sources of water supply for cities were spoiled, "made bitter."

"The third part of the sun was smitten, and the third part of the moon, and the third part of the stars; so as the third part of them was darkened." So this calamity appeared to St. John in his vision years before it happened. The darkness continued for several days, and was very extensive and full of inconceivable horrors. It spread over the whole surrounding country, hiding the sun, moon, and stars, and covering, approximately, a third of the territory to which John refers, the falling volcanic matter destroying vegetation and animals and thousands of persons. The city of Pompeii was buried under sixteen feet of fine pumice stone, and

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Herculaneum under sixty feet of liquid mud, which solidified.

The seven churches in Asia were prepared to notice this overwhelming disaster. They were not near enough to be injured by it, but carefully preserved copies of the Apocalypse, for they saw the value of such prophecy. Hence we have it to-day.

The end of the age in which the Revelation was written was full of momentous events, which some have tried to connect with the end of *our age or world*.

The East was in a state of ferment. Rome had discouraging wars with the Parthians, who had become very powerful in this great empire, which included much of the country, formerly held by Alexander the Great, including Babylon and other cities on the Euphrates. This great region was governed by one of Alexander's generals and his successors for many years; but in John's time the Parthians claimed much of it.

These fierce people are described and their peculiar methods of warfare represented in very striking and vivid imagery in the ninth chapter of Revelation. They were expert horsemen, and were at home in the deserts to which they generally

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decoyed the enemy. Their heavy metallic arrows inflicted terrible wounds, for they were barbed and poisoned and could not be easily extracted. "And in those days shall men seek death, and shall not find it." ²³ They were more effective in *retreat* than in attack, and while galloping at full speed would shoot backward with fatal certainty. The nomadic Parthians of the interior let their hair grow long, and made themselves hideous in battle charges by making strange sounds on instruments, and yelling like madmen. They were clad in very strong armor of iron and leather hard to penetrate: "And they had hair as the hair of women, and their teeth were as the teeth of lions. And they had breast-plates, as it were breast-plates of iron, and the sound of their wings was as the sound of chariots of many horses running to battle." ²⁴

Their method of striking backward while retreating at full speed on horseback was seen in the vision and comprehended by St. John, who believed that the meaning would be understood by those for whom the vision was given; he calls them "scorpions." "And they had tails like unto scorpions, and there were *stings* in their tails." ²⁵

²³ Rev. ix. 6.

²⁴ Rev. ix. 9.

²⁵ Rev. ix. 10.

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The Parthians themselves were sometimes invaded by savage hordes from the north, in overwhelming numbers, tempted by the riches of the cities of the alluvial plain where Babylon and Selucia flourished.

A carefully devised scheme for plunder is predicted. Taking advantage of the high and dangerous water in the river, they began by seizing the flood gates and opening the sluices, thus deluging the country and creating a panic. In the confusion they rushed in upon the unprotected inhabitants, creating consternation with fire and sword, carrying off much of the accumulated wealth of centuries into the region beyond the mountains of Armenia. This preconcerted raid by myriads of incarnate devils is thus indicated by the Seer of Patmos: "I heard a voice saying, Loose the four angels that are bound in the great river Euphrates. And the four angels were loosed which were prepared for an hour, and a day, and a month, and a year, for to slay the third part of men."²⁶

About this time secret preparations were made by the Romans for the siege of Jerusalem. Meanwhile this city was disturbed by bloody factions

²⁶ Rev. ix. 14.

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within, and prophets were witnessing against its wickedness, and announcing the end.²⁷

Stars falling from heaven represent persons good or bad in the spiritual or physical world who occupy, or have occupied, places of power or authority. A collapse in the kingdom of darkness which was extensive is noticed in Rev. vi. 13: "And the stars of heaven fell unto the earth, even as a fig-tree casteth her untimely figs, when she is shaken of a mighty wind." The thought has its parallel in Christ's vision of Satan falling "as lightning from heaven."

When in vision angels sound their trumpets and proclaim woes, or pour out vials of wrath upon the earth, it does not necessarily follow that the source of these troubles is heavenly, or that they are divine inflictions. They simply announce impending calamities and their consequences, here and hereafter.

The resurrection of the dead has been indefinitely postponed by those who have not understood that it *has occurred* at certain periods in the past, in a general as well as a special sense. A great and general resurrection of the dead is now before us.

²⁷ Rev. xi.

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Special resurrections may also occur at different times, and the end of *our* world is approaching. The coming of Christ should also be expected.

All this we can believe without attempting to deny that myriads have already risen, and now rejoice in full glorification, as well as full *form*, having *real* but *spiritual* bodies.

If the angels were originally corporeal (and there is nothing in the Scriptures to show that they were not, and much to convince us that they were, for those who have appeared were known as *men* from the spiritual world), then heaven, as well as hell, is thronged with incorporeal beings who have risen from the dead. If in doubt concerning the human origin of angels, then let us consider the great multitude which John saw, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindred and people and tongues, who stood before the throne and before the lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands. Special attention is suggested by one of the angels concerning their former life and present glorification. The fact that they *had been* redeemed and exalted in the heavenly state is emphasized.²⁸

²⁸Rev. vii. 13-14.

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Angels *in the flesh* were rare in ancient times. Abraham entertained three, and the seven churches in Asia had "angels" for their pastors.²⁹ We have had our Florence Nightingale, "the angel of the Crimea," and "the seraphic Fletcher" of Madeley, and others. But these were angelettes until risen and glorified in the heavenly state, they left the former age behind, which is to them the end of the world.

It is evident that language which seems to locate dead but living human beings in the earth as a temporary place of abode, where they repose in hope for an indefinite time, will not bear *literal* construction, otherwise our graveyards would be among the most vital spots on the planet. And a grave-digger would be in doubt as he thrust his spade into an ancient cemetery, feeling that he might disturb a dead but living person. And, yet, some people have *impressions* about this matter that are hard to remove. They do not really believe that their friends are in the ground; but that the mortal remains are there.

When Daniel refers to the awakening of "many that sleep in the dust of the earth" he means *persons*, but the *person* never goes into the ground. If right he will "appear" in a new, heavenly and substantial body, with none of his old remains incorporated in his system. He means spirits,

²⁹ Gen. xviii. 2 and Rev. i. 20.

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not decayed remains. When reference is made to people coming "forth from their graves" or from the "dust," or the "sea," the language is *metaphorical*, and a *spiritual* resurrection is implied; unless as in the case of Lazarus, a physical one is understood. And in either case, by metonymy, bodies represent persons.

When Samuel appeared to Saul, the language used in the record seems to show that he was brought up out of the earth: "Then said the woman whom shall I bring up unto thee? And he said, Bring me up Samuel." The woman was frightened, not expecting a real appearance, and said: "An old man cometh up." And Samuel said to Saul: "Why hast thou disquieted me to *bring me up?*" And yet, Samuel did not come up from the *grave*, for his corpse was buried in Ramah, many miles away, and he *appeared* in Endor, not in a natural, but in a *spiritual* body.³⁰

Possibly the reason for believing that great and general resurrections have not occurred at different periods arises from a misunderstanding concerning their *visibility* or perceptibility in the earthly life. In the Scriptures we do not find that spiritual

³⁰ I. Sam. xxviii.

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resurrections, general or special, have been visible to mortal eyes. What has been seen in visions by those who were capable of looking into the spiritual states must be excepted. Nor do we find that the judgment, general or special, the resurrection, the coming of Christ, and those things that are vividly represented in prophetic views of the last day, or day of judgment, will be visible or perceptible to people in the *flesh* unless they have been "changed" so that both spiritual and material worlds are open to them.³¹

There were a few people in apostolic times who had this privilege, because they sought it, and were able to take it. Others since, whose spiritual perceptions were remarkable, have known and felt much that they could not disclose, because it was not expedient, for their testimony would be misunderstood, or seem incredible.

St. Paul was open to both worlds, and was capable of making himself understood in that age, and leading others into like privileges. He speaks modestly of himself, but rejoices in his visions and

³¹ This privilege was given to St. John according to the Saviour's prediction. John xxi. 20-23. John saw the Coming of Christ and the Judgment of that age, while in the natural body, being open to both worlds.

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revelations which were sometimes associated with transformations, difficult even for him to understand: "It is not expedient for me, doubtless, to glory. I will come to visions and revelations of the Lord. I knew a man in Christ, above fourteen years ago (whether in the body I cannot tell, or whether out of the body I cannot tell), such a one *caught up* to the third heaven. . . . How that he was caught up into paradise and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter." ³²

He was so well understood by the Church at Thessalonica, which was intensely spiritual and in full sympathy with him, that he was able to predict, for them with him, a realization of the coming of Christ in his age, and a great resurrection of believers. This they would be able to perceive while yet *alive*. It would involve vision, revelation, and "change"; but not, in this case, death or translation by the putting on of immortality. It would be unspeakably rapturous. He says: "For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we that are *alive* that are left unto the coming of the Lord shall in no wise precede them that are

³² II. Cor. xii.

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fallen asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God, and the dead in Christ shall rise first; then we that are alive that are left shall together with them be caught up in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore comfort one another with these words.”³³ It is evident that they would not remain in the air always, nor would their dead and risen friends; but they would, in a *spiritual sense* be “caught up” together with them, and enjoy heavenly felicity as they witnessed their promotion, as Paul was “caught up” to the third heaven, and could not tell whether he was in the earthly body or out of it. Thus they would have an understanding of things in the other world, and be able to illuminate others.

So John was carried away “*in the spirit* to a great and high mountain, and saw that great city, the Holy Jerusalem descending out of heaven from God.”³⁴ Still he lived in the physical body; but heaven was accessible at such times.

The binding of Satan for a thousand years, and

³³I. Thess. iv. 15-18. R. V.

³⁴Rev. xxi. 10.

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his confinement for that time in the bottomless pit, and subsequent release for a season, the first resurrection, and the second death. The work of the enemy upon the nations inciting and prompting them in their persecution of the saints, as well as his final and complete limitation and degradation in the lake of fire, were seen by John in his vision of things that would and did occur in the spiritual world, and should not be classified with those things which would happen in the visible world, and soon be observed by mortal eyes.³⁵

The great white throne and Him that sat on it, the appearance of the dead, small and great, the opening of the books, the judgment, the appearance of those who had perished in the sea, or had been reserved in the spiritual states for examination, are figurative representations of what occurred in the other world, and *will occur again, varying with the circumstances and conditions of the times*, for our characters will be tested, and our lives reviewed and examined, and our destiny determined.

The new heavens and earth will appear and will correspond with the glowing descriptions of St. John as in vision he saw them and recorded his

³⁵ Rev. xx.

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impressions concerning them in the last two chapters of the Apocalypse; but they are spiritual and very difficult for us to understand now. Nevertheless their value and permanence are profusely illustrated.³⁶

In this new and blessed state which is called the "Holy Jerusalem" or "a better country that is a heavenly" there will be "no more sea," inasmuch as all parts of the visible world will be, and are now, accessible to the inhabitants of heaven, without loss of time or danger. They will not need the light of the sun, for terrestrial darkness cannot interfere with vision when spiritual perception is perfected. To them it is, and to the living who are worthy, it will be, a "heavens and earth wherein dwelleth righteousness"; because all that is evil is excluded.

But the *physical* world will *continue* to be the never-failing source of supply for the celestial, which will constantly receive new people as the generations come and go.³⁷

Therefore, heaven can never grow old. It is emphatically a "new" realm, and is represented as such in divine revelation. Its inhabitants are very

³⁶ Rev. xxi.

³⁷ Ch. i., p. 3 and 15.

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progressive, and do not decline with age. All is fresh and bright and interesting. The oldest people are very mature in wisdom, but they are adolescent in their tastes, sympathies, and emotions. They combine the rich and attractive characteristics of maturity with the exuberance of perpetual youth.

The administration of the divine government is not without great advantages in the spiritual world; for there is among all classes, including the worst and most ignorant, ability to understand easily and quickly that which is bewildering and unintelligible here, because the veil is drawn aside and immortality demonstrated. And as everything is open the adjustment of difficulties, and settlement of affairs, is accomplished with celerity and promptness.

Here we often wait for a better understanding; there it comes quickly. Here we look for light; but are troubled with mysteries concerning ourselves and the life beyond. Here we arrange for a limited time and see that the end will come soon; there we may suddenly notice that the end of life and the end of *our* world is passed. And still we live and cannot die, and the vast, the unbounded future, like a shoreless ocean transcends imagination, stretching on into infinity.

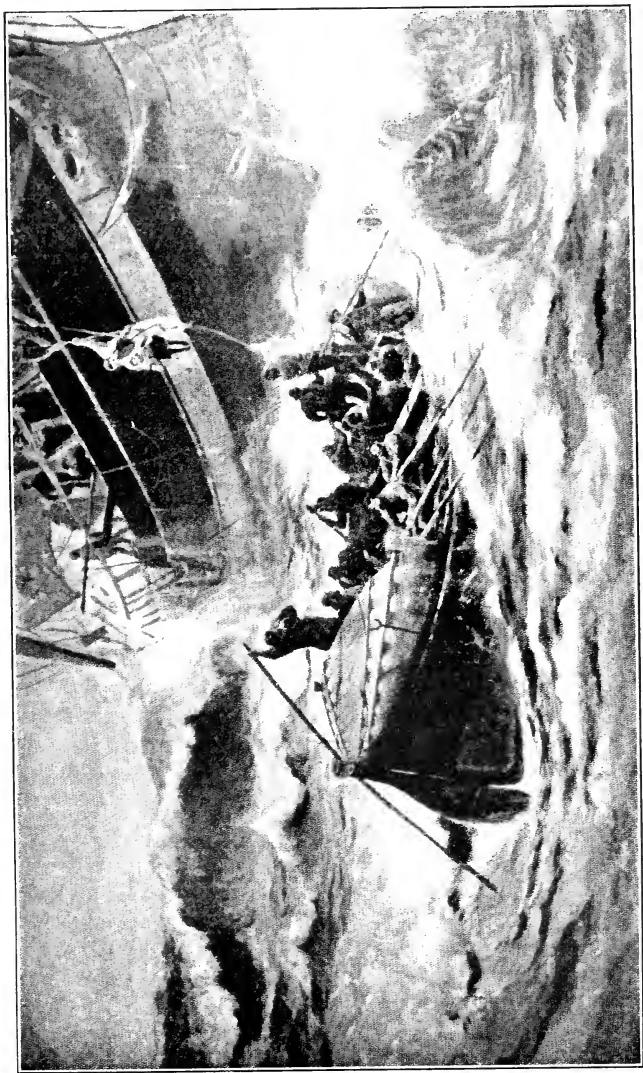
X

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THE origin of natural evils has perplexed philosophers and moralists for thousands of years. As we study nature we are delighted with revelations of wisdom and goodness; but we are obliged to admit that some things are distressing and objectionable to every one, and seem to be inflictions, or necessary troubles.

Agriculture is the foundation of our resources; for without the products of the soil the world would soon starve, but the results of labor in the field are uncertain. Much depends upon the season. And then insect pests, destructive animals, tornadoes and floods may interfere with success. It is hard for the farmer to see why noxious weeds are so abundant, and persistent in their growth, and why diseases should cut off his flocks and herds.

If we could pass out of the present life without



"WHY SHOULD STORMS BE SO DESTRUCTIVE?" — Page 189

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disease that involved suffering and painful decline, and understand that such was the infallible provision of nature, we should dwell upon the fact with satisfaction. If children could be born without agony and danger for mothers, the world would rejoice.

Parents may be responsible in some instances for deformity and imbecility in their offspring, but frequently they are not, and a tender, thoughtful mother looks upon her babe born blind, or hopelessly disfigured with a mark, which is a cause of wonder and sorrow.

Why should storms be so destructive? Electricity is a valuable agent, but lightning is an unfortunate phenomenon, because we cannot tell just where it may strike.

Poison has its uses, but it is a source of misery, pain, and horror, not only in nature where it is a constant menace in the vast tropical regions of the earth, but in the hands of multitudes who use it unwisely and wickedly. If it could be excluded, or something substituted for it, humanity would suffer less.

The prevalence of certain obnoxious and deadly diseases, such as leprosy, yellow fever, and tuber-

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culosis, may be counteracted or checked by sanitary measures. But whence came such terrible afflictions? Why should they have threatened and cursed humanity so long? And to what extent are people responsible for them? It is easy to moralize on this subject by calling attention to the "uses of adversity" and the "beneficence of pain" as a "danger signal," and a "means of discipline"; but the "blessedness" of calamities that cannot be avoided is not apparent to most people, and there are very few, if any, who know how to be grateful for them.

There are those who think that everything in nature that is not agreeable, or is clearly seen to be evil, should be attributed to the failure of Adam in the primeval paradise; for they understand that his transgression and consequent disgrace and degradation, had an unfavorable effect upon all nature, which was noticed at that time, and has never been corrected since. Although they will admit that much light has come to us through new revelations and great privileges in the fulfillment of promises.

This belief seems to have arisen from the idea that the entire globe was cursed when Adam fell,

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and natural evils will not be removed until a terrestrial millennium dawns upon us; but they have gone too far in their conclusions, for there is no reference in the biblical account to the introduction of natural evils which had not previously existed.¹

Adam had difficulty in his occupation because he was demoralized by his apostasy, and was, therefore, incapable of conducting his affairs so as to achieve success. His poverty was the result of incapacity and neglect. It is absurd to suppose that Almighty God "cursed" the earth for his sake. The language involves a *prediction* and a *warning* against slothfulness which was not heeded.²

Eve was disappointed in her children. Abel was killed, and Cain became a refugee in a distant country. Not until Seth was born was a man found who could be placed on the genealogical list of this new line of which so much was expected.³ Therefore, her sorrow was multiplied as well as her conception, but it does not follow that all women are liable to such misfortunes because she sinned.

Physical death is not an evil. It is a method of exit from the corporeal state which is necessary,

¹ Gen. iii.

² Gen. iii. 17-18.

³ Ch. vi., p. 80.

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for without it natural evils of many kinds would become so numerous and distressing that men would seek relief in dissolution.

Adam's transgression did not bring *physical* death to him and his posterity as a heritage and a penalty.⁴ He died in the day he sinned according to the divine prediction, but his death at that time was *spiritual*, for he lived many years afterward. Undoubtedly the moral corruption "engendered" in his nature by wilful iniquity is noticed in his descendants, for evil tendencies can be perpetuated by generation. A person may inherit mental, as well as physical, characteristics that were conspicuous in his ancestors.

Original sin was not the cause of Adam's *physical* death. Scriptural references to his death as a consequence of his sin have a bearing on his *moral failure* and its effect upon the divine plan, and do not refer to his *natural* death. Adam is used as an illustration or "figure" and all that are "in him" or like him, as wilful and persistent transgressors, when clear light is given, will die a *spiritual* death; but all that are "in Christ," or like

⁴ See p. 209 this chapter.

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Him, and continue as such, will be made gloriously alive.⁵

Troubles that have their sources in our earthly environment, and in ourselves as mortals, are among the worst we have to bear ; because in many instances it is impossible to avoid them. But the hell we make for ourselves, here or hereafter, by neglect or wrong doing, knowing the consequences, is something for which we are responsible and cannot be regarded as a necessary evil. It is plain, therefore, that a natural evil which we cannot avoid is something for which God only is responsible, unless it is what He could not prevent, and cannot remedy.

Divine inflictions (so-called) are divine predictions which involve a warning and a chance to escape, or come out on the right side if the warning is heeded, and the conditions fulfilled which are always within the bounds of possibility. This may not always mean exemption from suffering and trouble of many kinds in this life, or a painful death.⁶

⁵ Rom. v. 14. I. Cor. xv. 21-22. See p. 209 of this chapter, on the physical immortality of Adam.

⁶ Those passages in the Bible which seem to make God the author of evil of any kind, including inflictions, should not

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It will be conceded that our Divine Father should have power and opportunity, not only to judge obstinate offenders, but to pronounce sentence and remove them when they become a menace to society, or an intolerable nuisance. This is usually done through the operation of natural laws, and the verdicts of civilized nations. Thus in many cases "The voice of the people is the voice of God."

Unjust wars may be undertaken and succeed, for there are many things to be settled hereafter; but corrupt nations are often subdued and annihilated by those who are more worthy than themselves. This is in harmony with the divine plan.

There are instances on record in which it seems that individuals, and even multitudes, were suddenly struck down, smitten by divine vengeance, and thus perished under the hand of God. This will be understood when it is seen that physical

be misunderstood, such as: Multiplying Eve's sorrow, hardening Pharaoh's heart, or doing anything that seems to be unjust or unreasonable. A careful investigation may show that there is something in the translation or ancient idiom that should be noticed. If the statement is plain, then the consequences of resisting what is right, and known to be right, are indicated, and the sufferers are *responsible* for their misfortunes.

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life is *sustained* and continued in and through the divine will and approval. Therefore, He can, and should, when it is expedient, *withdraw* His *support* from those who are deliberately and maliciously opposing Him and themselves, knowing the consequences. So Ananias fell, and Saul, the King of Israel, Korah and his company, the Assyrian host, and others. Pestilence, blindness, diseases, and other afflictions may come as a means of *restraint or removal* when other means have failed. They were said to be "sent," and with such warning and explanation it was well understood that they could have been avoided.

Among natural evils that are apparently without remedy, and must be tolerated, are the unwelcome changes in *climate* and *weather* that are so common.

It is evident that we need variety, but we do not want, and it is not easy to prove that we need, disagreeable, distressing, unseasonable, destructive, and unhealthy changes. The weather is a source of perplexity, disappointment, and misery in nearly all parts of the world. In some places it is more reliable and interesting; but the disagreeable time comes in the most favorable locality.

If we could migrate, like the birds, to fairer

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climes at the right season, we should rejoice, but the vast majority will always find this impracticable. Why shouldn't the weather be as reliable as the sun, or as satisfactory as the purest water springing from a perennial source?

The weather, in any locality, is the result of changes, so numerous, complex and obscure, that the most astute meteorologist finds great difficulty in analyzing the causes of certain conditions; for this reason we cannot always see why they affect us unfavorably. It would be impossible to suit every one, because opinions are so different, and requirements various and innumerable.

We are more capable of protecting ourselves, as the world becomes more intelligent, and with the co-operation, wisdom, and ability that is now rapidly developing, one may confidently expect that great relief and comfort will come in a comparatively short time; for we shall be able to modify, counteract, and neutralize the effects of bad weather to such an extent that interferences with business or pleasure, suffering and loss of life, will be greatly diminished.

There are some problems in nature which God has left for humanity to solve. Many things

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might have been done that have been overlooked, or neglected, from the beginning. Too much time has been wasted in speculation on what has been regarded as mysterious and *inevitable*.

That which makes the weather is associated with the atmosphere—a great aerial ocean surging around the globe. Climate depends upon the earth's position, shape, and motions, and is modified by surroundings. Great changes have occurred in the past. The climate and the weather have varied as the earth has changed position or its surface has been gradually elevated or depressed in certain localities. We have had an Ice Age. Such changes may have been favorable to the interests of humanity, and still there is opportunity for improvement, and it will be obvious as soon as it is possible, for the Creator is *progressive* in His *works* as well as His revelations. Though infinite He is not limited by his perfections, and can do better for Himself and for us when certain conditions are fulfilled, which may involve long periods of time if we can judge the future by the past; and it is reasonable to believe that in some respects we can. Geology shows us that the formation of the earth was a *gradual* process, and changes

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required periods remarkable for their duration. When all things are considered we may conclude that the weather is the best we can have *now*.

The prevalence of insect pests, vermin, noxious weeds, and poison is something very different for our consideration, if they are divine *creations*, and should have some use that justifies their production and continuance in a world like ours. While dangerous atmospheric phenomena such as cyclones, storms, and lightning may be attributed to *defective conditions*, with these things it is otherwise. Conceding that they may have their uses, yet the evils they inflict are very grievous.

It is said that the mosquito is a scavenger in the early stages of its career, feeding on baneful matter in the water, thus purifying the air. If so, why should it be furnished with ability to torture millions of human beings, and spread contagious diseases by inoculation?

The mischief done by vermin and parasites is incalculable, and by general consent and approval they would be exterminated if possible. Unnecessary weeds and poisons would share the same fate.

Those who have studied carefully and wisely the history of our planet depending upon such evidences

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as they have found on the surface and in the interior, have come to the conclusion that its age is very great. Millions of years elapsed before human beings appeared, and man is comparatively a modern creation. For many ages it seems to have been a marine world, in which vast masses of ice drifting over the unborn continents, and islands settling at times in warmer latitudes, and leaving the debris of countless centuries in the depths of the primeval Ocean; or, pushing on as floating islands of rock and earth and ice, ground their huge sides against projecting mountains leaving marks that have never been erased to tell the story of chaos and pristine horror.

Gradually, very gradually, came the transitions of those remote periods.

If the most intelligent people had lived in those times, capable of making accurate observations, preserving them and transmitting them to their posterity for many thousands of years, nothing would have been perceptible about which they could be positive by comparison with former times concerning climate, the permanent recession of the Ocean from the land, or the earth's position in its orbit. No records of much value to us could have

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been made, and yet the earth was passing through these changes; but so *slowly* did they come that they could not have been perceived by the most discriminating observers, because the entire historic period (including all that has been found by archæologists in the ruins of former generations concerning the remote past), is as a moment of time when compared with one of those vast cycles recorded in the stony archives of the everlasting hills.

Changes are occurring now as rapidly as they were then that may be imperceptible to us. They involve the gradual removal of much that has been objectionable.

Mysterious and obnoxious *remainders* from sources that have not been explored have come down to us. These cannot be regarded as blessings in disguise from the divine Being, serving a purpose of which we are ignorant, for He could not give us anything that would be an injury to us rather than a benefit. If He did He could not truthfully be called *divine*.

There are some things that have been useful in the *past* which are not only useless, but pernicious *now*, and their removal is being accomplished more

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rapidly at this time than at any period in history. The amelioration and destruction of that which involves suffering and loss for humanity is a distinguishing characteristic of the age. And if a natural evil is a work of the Creator, the most devout and intelligent people in the world do not have much respect for such works of His hands.

Many pestiferous insects and parasites that afflict us, and injure vegetation, originated long before the creation of man, when the earth was a vast wilderness for millions of years. They have continued, and adapting themselves to their new environment, have become an intolerable nuisance.

The same may be said of many species of rodentia, or gnawing animals that infest our lands and dwellings, as well as venomous reptiles, tenacious and useless growths, and that which serves no worthy purpose and is in the way.

We are slowly passing out of the old world which began with the appearance of human beings in a wilderness that beggared all description, not only because of its extent and appalling dangers, but because of the limited resources of its primitive inhabitants, as well as their inexperience and tendency to neglect those things that lead to the

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development of civilization, good government, mental and moral progress.

Primitive races had advantages, for they began in favorable localities. Being uncorrupted by preceding generations and thus open to divine impressions, they could do well.⁷ But there was heavy pioneer work to be done which was, in many instances, avoided, because a wild and predatory life seemed easier and more congenial. Sometimes they failed to lay the right foundations and were demoralized, and in time became barbarous. Emerging after thousands of years from the savage state, and having religious aspirations, they fell into paganism, with its imaginary deities, and elaborate systems of error, or remained men of the forests and mountains as we find them to-day, wretched and beastly. Happily for us the death-knell of paganism has sounded, and the time is rapidly approaching when a savage man will be a rare living curiosity.

The march of progress has been impeded by indifference and neglect. The period of genuine advancement, general, or in any sense world-wide, is very short. It is limited to a few centuries in

⁷ Gen. ii.

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which the rights and privileges of nations have been somewhat respected by one another. The idea that "we are the people, and foreign nations are barbarians" is not entertained as in former times. The interests of commerce and civilization, modified by Christianity, have produced a great change. The settlement of differences by arbitration, or skillful diplomacy, is eagerly sought; and wars of conquest for the gratification of selfish ambition or national glory are few and far between.

The time for cosmopolitan co-operation has come, and it is being considered by the great nations of the earth. And yet war, at times, will be inevitable, for there is no other method of settling some grievances. Powerful and prosperous nations are anxious for more room and valuable territory, and many think they are justified in fighting for it; but this will be avoided in most cases, because the necessity of having amicable relations with other leading nations is clearly seen, and the fear of arousing jealousy and animosity, and thus entangling themselves, will help to keep them within proper limits.

The world has become rich and intelligent, and is looking for better things and finding them.

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Heavy pioneer work can now be done rapidly and well, for we have the facilities, and are anxious to do it. The rubbish of pre-historic ages must go. The log hut on the premises of a millionaire is a "creation," but it was not created for *him*. It was useful a hundred and fifty years ago, but it has become a nuisance, and he orders its removal that the ground may be clear for the erection of a splendid villa, with all modern improvements. The crocodile is a descendant of amphibious monsters that swarmed as thickly as autumn leaves in formative ages, long before the earth was ready for human habitation. It has served its purpose in the economy of nature. It is not necessary in our age.

Much of the luxuriant vegetation, rank, cheap and useless to us *now*, has disappeared under climatic changes, wisely ordered, which we could not produce; as well as myriads of animals, terrestrial, amphibious or marine, which would be useless now, together with insects, reptiles, and birds, dangerous, venomous, or otherwise, having a purpose which *was* important, but has been *fulfilled*.

In this way the soil was made deep, rich, and

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permanent for our use, and valuable materials imbedded in its depths, such as coal and oil and amber.

Stone for building was also produced under the action of water, firm and durable, or delicate marbles from which rare artistic creations rise under the sculptor's hand. And clay, washed from the rocks under the action of the sun and frost, out of which the cities spring, towering high above the crowded avenues in stately splendor and magnificence.

The removal of many evils from the world, both natural and spiritual, is contemplated by our Father, but our part in the process is very important. It involves wisdom and judgment, coupled with careful attention and longing for divine suggestions, or impressions, known to be genuine after testing analysis, and actual demonstration by experience. It will take a long time to do it, but it can be done.

The student of natural theology should no longer dwell upon the goodness and benevolence of God as seen in His works, while attempting to justify Him in the maintenance of some abominable nuisance; stating that "it is undoubtedly a good thing;

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though we cannot regard it as such, nevertheless, we should believe that it is, and that it serves an important purpose, for it must be a good thing or it would not exist."

A writer on this subject says: "Of all the serpentine family, some twenty-six species only are poisonous; of these the viper, the hooded snake, and the rattlesnake are the most deadly. The venomous fangs of these animals present the most striking exhibitions of mechanical contrivance in all animated nature. The purpose of the Creator in calling into existence animals so malignant and endowing them with powers so deadly is a question involved in much darkness and difficulty. On this recondite subject we can only say that from the benevolence which pervades the general designs of creation we ought also to *presume* that if we fully understood all the ends accomplished in the economy of nature by these venomous reptiles, we should see and acknowledge that God was as wise and good in their creation as in that of any other animated beings."⁸ Presumption in this case is not warranted, for the safety and happiness of human beings is of more consequence than any purpose

⁸ Rev. Herbert W. Morris, "Science and the Bible," p. 519.

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in the "economy of nature" which venomous reptiles can serve *in this age*.

The time has come for the solution of many problems that have confronted humanity from the beginning. The removal of an evil by miracle would be a mistake unless such evil could not be removed, or overcome, by intelligent human co-operation. For such miracle would leave us in mystery, obscurity, and doubt unless we could appreciate its value, and have a proper understanding concerning it. Unless our part were done, the conditions met, and the lessons deeply impressed, it would not be expedient; for in that way we could not be educated and lifted into the superior realms of intelligence and purity. We are not developed without struggle and thoughtful effort wisely directed. Some of the most favored spots on earth are inhabited by miserable and degenerate races.

It is said that St. Patrick drove all the snakes out of Ireland. And many good people believe this to be true. But men of ability are not anxious to know how he did it. They believe that profound study and concentration of mental energy on some evil, and on the best way to remove or overcome it, may result in discovery and invention, and when

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success comes they seek capital and combination, and all the light they can get from all sources, and when the way is clear they act, and the work is done.

Soon there is a greater demand for more work of this kind, for the world wants it and can afford to pay for it. More capital is needed, and is found, and a greater syndicate organized, and much more accomplished. The time is coming when syndicates, or trusts, of the *right kind*, will have millions of stockholders, and employ millions of men, and billions of money. They will combine and re-combine, and sweep away great natural evils from the earth. They will actually overcome, neutralize, drive out, exterminate, or annihilate, one nuisance after another, thus clearing the world of objectionable things, purifying the cities, and redeeming lands and unhealthy localities, until the entire habitable globe will be a paradise when compared with what it was in former times.

Why have we *pain*, *deformity* and *disease*, or any abnormal condition, affecting body or mind unfavorably?

The credulity of humanity is surprising, especially when a mystery is associated with some important

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truth. There is a tendency to believe too much. This is not confined to the ignorant and superficial, but it affects the wise and judicious. Especially is this the case when error is woven into a system of *theology*, for it seems to have a vital relation to other parts of the system. And if, after critical examination, and reconsideration, it does not appear to be reasonable or right; nevertheless it is regarded by many as a stone in the "noble edifice of doctrine" which has been accepted without hesitation for many years, and "perhaps it would not be advisable to remove it," for it has become "venerable and sacred" to the people; and, therefore, if it does not seem clear and important "the less said about it the better."

The moral effect of Adam's sin upon himself is recorded in the third chapter of Genesis. His misfortunes, also resulting from his depraved condition, are predicted and described. But nothing is said concerning physical or mental diseases that would affect him or his posterity as a consequence of his sin, and no allusion to anything of that kind is found in other parts of the Bible. His *natural* death, at an advanced age, is noticed in the fifth chapter; but there are frequent references to his

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moral death, and the lessons to be derived from it.⁹ And yet there are people who confidently believe that there would be no diseases in the world if Adam had not failed. That he was responsible for these troubles, and if he had been true to himself and to God he would be alive and well to-day, and that he would be free from pain or disease, and that he could not be injured mortally, or in any way that would involve suffering or death so long as he continued faithful.

They have overlooked the fact that some of Adam's descendants might have failed if he had not, and thus introduced pain, deformity, and disease, if they were caused by such failure.

We know something about many natural evils, for we have studied their causes and their history. But why should Adam be held responsible for so much, or why should we conclude that all these things would be unknown if "sin had not entered into the world?" The mistake seems to have arisen from

⁹In Romans, v. 12 and context there is a reference to Adam's failure which has been generally misunderstood. It is evident that the Apostle refers to Adam's *spiritual* death in the 12th verse, as we consider the 15th verse and the concluding words of the chapter. "Death" means here what it does in Gen. ii. 17.

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a misunderstanding concerning the meaning of "death" in this connection, which represents the *moral and spiritual consequences* of Adam's sin, but does not refer to his *exit from this world*, or to natural evils.

Remarkable for its absurdity is the belief of some concerning the fate of what is known as the "Serpent" and his posterity.¹⁰ It is certain that the "Serpent" was a spiritual devil. But it cannot be shown that he entered into a living snake, or animal

¹⁰ Gen. iii.

Ideas concerning physical or corporeal immortality are expressed in the opening chapter of this book. The impossibility of immunity from casualty or death while in the mortal body is there shown. Paul refers to the consequences of man's moral failure when he says: "By man came death." He means *spiritual ruin*, known as death in Gen. ii, 17, to which he evidently referred, for in the next verse he speaks of all dying who are "in Adam," or who are as he was, weak and wicked. This he contrasts with a heavenly resurrection or immortal life, which all will enjoy who are "in Christ."—I. Cor. xv, 21-22. The corporeal immortality of Adam seems to have been inferred from Gen. iii, 19, "for dust thou art and unto dust shalt thou return." It is thought that he had forfeited the privilege of remaining forever in the earthly body; but this is not clear. It is probable that he did deprive himself of a privilege and great honor, which was designed for him, and which a few of his descendants obtained, among whom were Enoch, Elijah and Christ, whose material bodies did not see corruption. See Ch. viii.

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of any kind, and thus disguised conversed with Eve.

It has been supposed that "the serpent" was a "beast of the field," probably a quadruped, possibly an ape; at least, an *animal*, very sagacious and intelligent. And that immediately after it had *sinned*, by co-operating with the devil, who had tempted Eve, it was *transformed* and became a loathsome snake, crawling on its belly and feeding on dust.¹¹

A writer on this subject says:¹² "And for the more successful accomplishment of his malicious design, he (the devil) employed the agency of a serpent. To us, at this day, this creature, a loathsome reptile, may appear a most unsuitable instrument for the purpose. But we must remember that the Scripture teaches us that the serpent is not now what it then was. It is now in a form and in a state of degradation. This is the point of interest.

"The Hebrew name given to the serpent in this place is 'nahash,' " a term signifying discernment, sagacity. The original name, therefore, of this

¹¹ An animal or reptile cannot commit *sin* or be judged as a *sinner*.

¹² "Science and the Bible," p. 526. H. W. Morris, D.D.

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creature plainly indicates one of more than ordinary intellect, and not a stupid reptile. And the sacred narrative expressly states that the creature here intended stood at the head of the animal creation, and was the most subtle or sagacious of all the beasts which the Lord God had made. We have, therefore, grounds to believe that this animal was not of its present serpentine character before the fall of man. But immediately after that sad event, and in consequence of its instrumental connection with it, and for a *memento* to man of his own fall and degradation it was *transformed* and degraded into such a reptile as we now behold it. In the beginning it stood chief among the brute creation, but from the day of man's fall it became a vile and creeping thing. "Upon thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat, all the days of thy life. . . . In the crawling serpent then we have a perpetual *remembrancer* even to the end of time that we are the fallen offspring of a fallen parent."¹³

Notice that the one who beguiled Eve was not assisted by a serpent or animal of any kind. He was called "the serpent" because of his *methods*. By *comparison* he is said to have been "more subtle"

¹³ Author's italics in the above quotation.

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than any beast of the field.¹⁴ The efforts of a serpent in taking its prey are very skillful. It can attract the attention of a bird by peculiar motions, and then fascinate, or charm, its victim, which flutters and cries at first, but seems to be helpless, and is easily taken by its deadly foe.

This insidious spiritual deceiver was called a "serpent" because the *name* in a figurative sense *described his character and his efforts*, which were well understood by Eve when she listened to his suggestions and allowed him to control her motives, knowing at the time that he was a "serpent" in this sense, as a bad man is a viper.¹⁵ She stated that fact when inquiry was made concerning the

¹⁴ Nowhere in this narrative do we find that the devil acted in or used a *natural* serpent when he beguiled Eve. Those who have thought that "the serpent" was a mysterious creature now extinct may have inferred this from Gen. iii. 1, "Now the serpent was more subtle than any beast of the field, which the Lord God had made." Here it is not stated that he *was a beast*; but that he was *more subtle* than any animal in creation. So when it is stated that he was "cursed" or degraded above all cattle, we are not to infer that he had been a quadruped. "Serpent" is used here as it is in Rev. xii. 9 and xx. 2, where he is called the "old serpent"; but this should not lead us to conclude that the devil of Eden was the devil of the Apocalypse. See p. 238.

¹⁵ Matt. iii. 7. A serpent was the common symbol of a deadly, malicious and subtle enemy. Gen. xlix. 17. Luke x. 19.

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temptation and showed no regret on account of her failure, but a tendency to cherish a vile spiritual delusion by which Adam also was wrecked.

Unfortunately some commentator on this part of the Scriptures has introduced a *literal* or real serpent and given it ability to talk; also granting it a moral nature, for it is judged as a *sinner* according to this view. This "beautiful and intelligent creature" suddenly loses its attractiveness and becomes a crawling reptile. This misconception seems so plausible that it has fastened itself upon the religious world and is regarded as a fact. This infliction (it is supposed) has a "great purpose" that man may be reminded of his sin as well as Adam's whenever he beholds a serpent, including, of course, the whole order Ophidæ, from the huge boa-constrictor to the most diminutive snakelet.

This is a monumental blunder. The inspired writer used a common figure of rhetoric when he called this devil a "serpent," as a stupid fellow is called "an ass," or a shrewd man "a fox," or a mischievous and deceitful person, "a snake in the grass."

A prediction concerning the contemptible weakness and misery which this subtle and wicked spirit

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had brought upon himself is also couched in *figurative* terms.¹⁶ He is to sink lower and feed on dust.

It is evident that this spiritual serpent *had been a man* in the visible world, for there is a reference to his "seed," or descendants, who would come into conflict with the "seed," or descendants, of the woman. Children are not born in the other world, therefore the posterity of this person called "the serpent," whether living or dead, must have been produced in *this* world. And whether we regard the enmity and conflict between the descendants of Eve and those of the tempter as a struggle between material and spiritual foes or not, the devil of Eden is found to be a man who had formerly lived in this world.¹⁷

If we believe that diseases of all kinds, deformity, pain, and the numerous ills of the flesh, as well as

¹⁶ Gen. iii. 14.

¹⁷ See Ch. vi., p. 79. "Seed" has the same meaning in both instances. Gen. iii. 15.

A spiritual devil may be called a "father" of hypocrites or the "father" of a lie, in a sense well understood. But when there is a reference to his "seed" or natural descendants the case is different, for it reveals his *human* origin.

He may also be called a "liar" and "a murderer from the beginning," but this would not necessarily take us back to the days of Adam, but to the beginning of the said devil's wicked career.

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mental disorders, appeared for the first time when Adam failed, or subsequent to his failure as a natural consequence of his transgression, thus making the whole human family liable to these evils, we believe too much; for we find that animals, and even *vegetation*, are often affected by some of these calamities. We find also that there is something in the air, and water, in climate and locality, that is hurtful and may produce disease.

If we conclude that this state of things is the result of a divine curse that began to affect all nature unfavorably when sin appeared in Adam, and that it will continue to be effective, producing misery and suffering in the whole creation for an indefinite period, we have a conception of the justice and mercy of God that is not very satisfactory to some people. It might be regarded as the effort of an inexorable tyrant, cruel and vindictive.

It is certain that many of these evils could be avoided or remedied if we were more thoughtful and careful; but what shall we say of the millions who do not think intelligently, because they do not, and cannot, understand?

If a person has congenital deformity, or inherited disease, he is not responsible for it. It may be

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regarded as something arising from defective conditions, for the same thing may be observed in animals. Plants are often deformed and weak. Even when conditions are favorable this cannot always be avoided. It cannot be proven in every instance that those who preceded us were responsible for our misfortunes of this kind, even if we could trace our genealogy back to Adam, and had full and accurate knowledge of our antecedents from the beginning.

That many diseases have arisen from a conscious, or unconscious, violation of nature's laws, is certain, and that many more have sprung from *defective conditions in nature*, cannot be successfully denied. That all nature, including man, collectively and individually is in a state of evolution in which the "survival of the fittest" is a governing principle is obvious. *Therefore, nature is not only incomplete, but in many respects imperfect.*

If new creations, remedial measures and changes were occurring constantly, they might not be perceptible to us, because human life and the period of authentic history are so short when compared with the time necessarily required for such work.

We do not limit the power of God, or His ability

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to accomplish his purposes at the right time when we understand that his work, in and upon, nature involves a very *gradual* process. The reasons for this may not be apparent to us, nevertheless we can see that it is so. As we study nature, and look into the origin of things, we find that cosmic changes and developments occupied more time than we can measure or comprehend. And so we have criteria by which we can judge the future, and believe, if God is God, that He is as anxious to supply deficiencies, and remove evils in nature, as we are to see it done.

The work of redeeming and purifying humanity is more easily accomplished when the conditions are fulfilled and understood than any process in nature with which we are not directly, or consciously associated, because there is in mind that which is very responsive to divine impressions. There are astonishing possibilities in us. Mental and physical transformations can occur in us, or through our co-operation, speedily. Miraculous phenomena in human beings, or their environment, have been produced in this way. The combined force exerted by the divine and human will, when all conditions are met, is immense. Herein is

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power over matter that cannot be obtained from other sources. In this way diseases have been cured, the dead restored to life, deformity corrected, storms controlled, material substance produced for food and drink, waters divided and held back, rocks cloven from which streams gushed forth, the spiritual world opened and its secrets revealed.¹⁸

It is certain that God can accomplish some things with human co-operation that cannot be done without it, and herein lies the hope of humanity, and of God, for their interests are *mutual*.

The spiritual realm is being explored by very intelligent people. There is much confusion and uncertainty and some danger, but good results are sure to come. When delusions and sentimental theories concerning the spiritual world, together with modern sorcery and charlatanism are swept away, we shall listen more wisely for divine suggestions and look for manifestations from the celestial state, and the golden age of open vision will be ushered in, and many evils of this life, that have perplexed us long, will rapidly disappear, for we shall have the ability to overcome and remove them.

¹⁸ Bible.

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There is mercy for all who are able to receive it. There is no condition in this life, or in the depths of the invisible hell, that is not carefully considered by the One who feels the deepest interest in humanity. It is not easy for us to see why suffering is not relieved until we know the *cause* of it. If the source of a woe is removed then trouble of that kind must cease; but every attempt to relieve or palliate distress, when there is a strong determination on the part of the sufferer to cherish the cause of it, is folly.

Thousands are now suffering in the hells of our great cities for whom little, or nothing, can be done, because relief furnishes them with capital and encouragement which they use in the cultivation and perpetuation of their abominable vices. It is evident that they prefer the misery and degradation associated with their crimes, rather than the comforts and honors that come to those who are anxious to do well by doing right. They are willing to have time and money spent for them, and may seem to be grateful, but secretly they despise reform, and reveal this fact when they have opportunity by taking mean advantages of their benefactors, and doing worse. Others, who have wealth and

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can gratify their depraved passions and cruel lusts, are often more foul and desperately wicked.

There is nothing that can prevent a person from being as bad as he wants to be. He may not be able to express his purposes, or execute his designs, but he can dwell upon his intentions and cherish his ideas, and thus *mentally* commit every crime in a complete catalogue, and then invent something worse and study it, and entertain the most skillful methods of doing it. In this way he can become more corrupt and capable of the most vile and damnable deeds.

Thousands upon thousands of such men and women are in the prisons of the world; and if released they are often more dangerous to society than they were before they were confined. This shows that there are people who will not be restrained by anything. Their moral decline is constant and rapid. If such persons *continue to be*, in the future state what they are in this life, it is easy to see that for them hell is necessarily *eternal*. And in that eternal hell they can have no cause for complaint, because it is their choice, from which there is no deviation.

If they cannot be restrained or reformed in this life, who can show that it is possible in the next?

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It is not possible unless it is desirable to them. And who can show that it ever has been, or ever will be desirable to some people? For reformation involves *genuine* repentance, and the love of righteousness for its *own sake*, which has been thoroughly *tested* and found to be a dominating principle, controlling the life.

Those who seek relief from suffering while under pressure in which they have involved themselves by wrong doing, are not always sincere. When they are made comfortable they are often worse than ever. Relief for those who are not prepared to take it may be offered by good people whose sympathies are aroused as they notice the distress of others, who are responsible for their misfortunes and are opposed to any righteous course that will help them. This is a common mistake. Aid and comfort given to those who will use it against themselves is putting a premium on misery.

This is illustrated in the celebrated parable of Lazarus and the rich man who had died: "And in hell he lifted up his eyes being in torments."¹⁹ This miserable wreck of folly and dissipation was still burning with corrupt desires and perverted

¹⁹ Luke xvi. 19-31.

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passions. He appealed to Abraham for relief, but without success. Abraham reminded him of his dissolute and selfish past, stating that an impassable gulf was fixed between him and paradise. It was well understood by those who listened to this parable that the rich man was responsible for the "gulf," which *he* had fixed and made impassable by his *foul condition*, for which he had no regrets.

While the means of gratification are not found in the infernal state, the same *fixed* tendency is maintained in spite of the consequences. There is not a single instance of repentance or reform in hell on record. While appeals are noticed they are refused for reasons either given or *implied*. Therefore, suffering in the *spiritual* hell is *voluntary*. No relief is desired if genuine repentance and

*NOTE.—I do not say that repentance has never occurred in the spiritual hell of the dead or that it never will occur. I say we have no record of it in the Bible. Therefore we have no *scriptural* authority for teaching such doctrine. If a true case of repentance should occur in hell what would God do about it? See page 233.

reform are understood. Nothing arouses such bitter antagonism as this. The most terrible and unmitigated agony is preferred.*

Those who understand that hell is a *compulsory* condition are not sustained by the Scriptures. The predictions and commands of God should not be interpreted in such a way as to imply *force*, or *coercion* on His part, irrespective of the motives and purposes of those who are judged.²⁰ That He

²⁰ See Ch. i., p. II.

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is angry with those who oppose what is right, and so oppose themselves and His plans, cannot be doubted. He is displeased and indignant. He excludes such persons from the privileges which they might enjoy if they were different. We should not have much respect for His administration if He did not. But He is not unreasonable, or vindictive. He is always open to sincere appeal. If He were not we could not consistently call Him our *divine* Father,

There has been some misunderstanding on this subject. There are good and thoughtful people who are not inclined to say much about "future punishment," for to them it seems that the justice of God is somewhat doubtful and mysterious; and there is reason for their reticence that appears, when we consider their interpretation of such a passage as the following: "And fear not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soul: but rather fear him which is able to destroy both soul and body in hell."²¹

²¹ *Gehenna*, a Greek word, here stands for the worst and final hell of the other world. Matt. x. 28.

Hades, another Greek word, translated "hell" in the old English version, means the state of the dead, whether good or bad.

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The question arises, Who is this person who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell? Looking into what seems to be a reliable commentary the reader finds that *God* is able to do this.²² And that in this text we have a “decisive proof” that the *earthly* body of the deceased will be restored later, and he will be in it again and will be tormented, soul and “*material*” body, forever, in hell, by Almighty God!

There is no authority for supposing that God does such work, either in this text or in any other part of the Bible. In this passage our Saviour warned His disciples against a spiritual enemy who was very active at that time. He had already been tempted by him in the wilderness, forty days and nights; and had returned victorious, but well acquainted with his subtle suggestions and fatal designs. In spite of this timely warning and many tender remonstrances one of their number soon began to yield to temptation, and finally let this devil in, and at whose suggestion he betrayed his Master, took his own life, and sank into the hell he had prepared for himself.²³

²² Jamieson, Fausset and Brown; also many other popular commentaries.

²³ Acts i. 25. Judas.

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God does not prepare hell for any one. It is prepared by those who take it, here and hereafter. His work is of another kind. He prepares heaven for those who prepare themselves for it.²⁴

The resurrection of persons who are not heavenly in their tastes and aspirations is noticed in the Bible. It is a resurrection "unto shame and everlasting contempt." It involves the "second death," which is moral destruction. Of course, the *physical* body is not restored. This is nowhere asserted in the Scriptures. But men, good and bad, appear, in spiritual bodies, soon after death. This is seen in the parable of the Rich Man and Lazarus, which is a representation of the facts as Christ understood them. The rich man, in the other world, has eyes and a tongue, and Lazarus a finger. The *appearance* of a bad man after death is not described. He may be represented in vision, or in figure as a "beast" or a "serpent," but there is no definite description of him as a man or as a devil.²⁵ But descriptions of heavenly men, or angels, are numerous and interesting.

There is a reason for this. A ruined man in the spiritual state is incapable of such manifestations.

²⁴ John xiv. 2.

²⁵ Rev. xx. 2.

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He may be able to produce impressions upon others who do not know the source of them, or introduce suggestions that will be entertained by those who are susceptible to bad influences. But in time he will become so weak and degraded that he will be unable to do even this, and will finally sink into the depths of infernal obscurity and do very little harm to any one except himself.

Spiritual perdition involves a living death, and at length a burial in the mud of the centuries.

The devil of Eden should not be regarded as the same devil who tempted Christ in the wilderness thousands of years afterward. For the "Serpent" of the Adamic Paradise sank so low, and became so weak and contemptible after the spiritual seduction of Eve that, in *figurative* terms, he could do nothing but crawl hopelessly in the dust and feed thereon forever.

The Satan of Christ's time, who was so active during his ministry, was "cast out" according to divine prediction.²⁶ His final dethronement occurred after the ruin of Judas and was noticed at the time of our Saviour's resurrection.²⁷ Other satans arose and fell in apostolic times, and undoubtedly there

²⁶ John xii. 31.

²⁷ Luke x. 18. John xii. 31.

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is a Satan more or less prominent in every age, who is capable of doing much evil when an opportunity is given him; but his power diminishes in proportion to the bad influence he exerts, and he finally sinks into contempt and oblivion.²⁸

It is difficult for those who are hopeful and feel a deep interest in humanity to believe that there is any one who could not be reformed if the right effort were made, and time enough allowed. But those who have studied the facts more carefully and wisely, and have had opportunity for wide observation and experience, find that there are many cases, apparently *hopeless*.

The civilized countries of the world are full of self-made wrecks. They swarm in the great cities and are seen drifting through the rural districts by thousands. They constitute the sediment of society which generally settles to the bottom and stays there. They find nothing attractive in goodness and purity. They glory in all kinds of lawlessness and crime, and suffer the consequences. They take hell here and hereafter, regardless of the cost, and finally become so corrupt that the thought of anything heavenly arouses animosity.

²⁸ Rev. xx. 10.

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They become in the other world what are known as *devils*.²⁹ The perversion of the moral nature is complete, and reform is out of the question. There is no mercy for those who do not want it.*

* NOTE.—Is there any mercy in the spiritual hell of the dead for those who do not want it and actually despise it?

Who can show that there are not some in that infernal state who never have desired mercy and possibly never will? Perhaps there are some that want it. See page 233.

The *strength of hell* has been magnified by those who have not understood its weakness. It has power to ruin itself. Others are not involved without their consent. Resistance of evil strengthens and develops character. The most successful and happy people have fought hard battles, and felt the pressure of temptation. In attempting to destroy the most worthy of earth, hell has often revealed its depravity and ignorance and has given us the heroes and heroines of history.

The hells of this life are constantly and rapidly sinking. We notice the reinforcements as they appear. They seem to be strong and overwhelming. The numbers attract our attention. The seeming unity of purpose deceives us. There is a want of cohesion. Selfishness, fraud, villainy, envy, whoredom, dissipation, intemperance, and recklessness destroy confidence, and create isolation, poverty and disease.

Many seek seclusion as they lose money and

²⁹ Or demons.

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character. Pride lingers when reputation is dead. They plunge into revolting excesses, and would bury themselves alive in dens of vice and infamy. They crowd prisons, asylums, and almshouses. They darken the columns of the papers with the records of murders, suicides, and crimes of every description.

The power of the invisible hell should not be misunderstood. It is able to misrepresent and simulate. It is difficult to detect and analyze the source of some impressions and suggestions, until clear divine light is obtained, when they may be easily understood and dismissed.

Control by a spiritual enemy does not mean *helpless* infirmity, but a willingness to be used by him irrespective of his real character and motives which may be disguised. It implies, also, some sympathy with his views and purposes. This can be cultivated and stimulated until there is a oneness of motive and action that is diabolical. Thus the descent hellward is accelerated. Nothing can break the infernal combination and release the victim but divine power; and this cannot be exerted unless it is earnestly desired.

The feebleness of the perishing myriads in the

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dark, unearthly hell can be imagined, when we understand that effective organization for any purpose is impossible. Resources are not found. Hell means poverty and limitation. There is nothing to gain by combination; and no faith in those who would be leaders. Ability to corrupt others is of no consequence where all are vile.

In the Gospels and Epistles the Satan of those times is called a "god," or "prince of this world." By this we may understand that he exerted a dominating influence over evil men; but it is not understood that he was recognized as a king, or chief, among them; or that there was, or ever has been any *organized system of government* under him, in this world or the other. He is called the "prince of the power of the air," the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience, not because he had anything to do with atmospheric phenomena, but because he influenced persons *high in authority* in an age when emperors and governors were, in many instances, infernal in character and methods.

Nothing new or valuable emanates from the hidden hell. Its inhabitants are not progressive. They do not entertain any ideas that would be useful or elevating to mankind. To emphasize and

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magnify our troubles, multiply our perplexities, intensify our discouragements, increase our doubts and fears, inflame our evil passions, rob us of hope, and paint the future in somber colors, is the effort of those who are in darkness and misery, and would drag us down, crowding in upon us as we give them opportunity; antagonizing all that is true and heavenly; yet unable to corrupt us without our *consent*.

ANNIHILATION AND DESTRUCTION

The persistently wicked dead have a resurrection. They will not appear again in material form; but in spiritual bodies. Decline, weakness and what is called "destruction" and death, will not involve extinction of being. Spirits cannot be *annihilated*. God in nature, creates; but never annihilates. Everything changes and may sometimes seem to pass into nothingness; but it still exists, whether visible or invisible, solid, liquid or aeriform, disintegrated or re-organized, it survives, somehow, somewhere.

Nature has never lost an atom, and never will; she is economical beyond comprehension. The Universe holds everything there is in it, and cannot lose it; whether mind, forces, or material substance. It will be used again if possible in some way that is vital and important if the process involves billions of years.

Shall we except human beings in the spiritual world said to be "lost," "destroyed," "dead," or "perished?" No—not if they are able to meet *conditions* that will permit restoration and salvation. Concerning this the Bible does not give us much light. It teaches that some will be eternally lost, and will be responsible for their eternal failure.

If there should be a case of genuine repentance and reform in the spiritual hell of the dead, what would our Heavenly Father do? He would do *right*.³⁰

³⁰ Pray about this. See Gen. xviii. 25, and page 237.

XI

DEPTHS AND HEIGHTS

THE secrets of the unseen world are not more impenetrable than some that present themselves for our consideration here.

A huge boulder weighing thousands of tons lies on the plain. It is a conspicuous land-mark. It has a history, but who can read it? Its age cannot be computed. The changes through which it has passed are many. The geologist offers a theory, and some probabilities, but this does not satisfy those who are looking for facts. It is a wonder of incomprehensible antiquity. A problem of the ages.

Power to know more about objects in nature comes after observation and reflection, but the advantages are greater for the student of the spiritual realm, because there is reliable revelation for

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him if he is disposed to accept it. And yet, the difficulty of comprehending and demonstrating truth from this source, evidently obscure, requires effort as patient, persistent, and intelligent as any that has ever been made by the most eminent naturalist, or explorer. Not only because such truth is hard to understand, but because of the limitations of language, and the difficulty in putting it into terms that can be readily interpreted.

There is a tendency to rely upon the opinions of the great and learned who have preceded us, and this is best in many instances, for they have placed stepping-stones in the river of spiritual mystery which have enabled many a sincere inquirer to ford with safety its deep and dangerous waters.

Sometimes these ultra-mundane pioneers have taken us into the middle of the stream, and stopped, giving us to understand that they could go no farther. And we have gloried in their mighty works and thought why should we go on? If intellectual giants, towering high above their contemporaries, have failed, after a life-time of effort, why should we expect success?

Again, they have taken us across by another route and left us in a wilderness of doubt concern-

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ing the reasonableness and consistency of their positions, which we have tried to fortify, in spite of misgivings, that we dare not express, and the world has looked on and wondered, and hesitated and finally concluded that there must be mistakes of some kind associated with such interpretations. Thus divine revelation has suffered, while the interests of humanity have not been promoted. But we should remember that the century is progressive. And the great man of the past would be a little man of to-day, in some respects, if he did not know what had happened since his death, and was unable to catch the spirit of the age, and read the signs of the times.

We need more *definite* ideas about heaven and hell. That there are degrees of promotion in the heavenly state that involve greater privileges, and honors, is generally believed. And that there are depths of degradation and misery in hell that transcend imagination, will not be denied. But on what principle is promotion given in heaven, and is there any hope in hell?

Undoubtedly the record of the earthly life, to the date of death, is the basis of judgment at the beginning of the new career; but what kind of

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record have we to make as we begin again? And can a record be made in hell, which is of any value?

The idea of hope, or repentance, leading to reform, in the perdition of the spiritual world, has not been favored by many intelligent students of divine revelation; for they have not found that this view is entertained in the Scriptures. They have, therefore, strongly objected to the theory of probation in hell, and felt that such teaching was presumptuous; and there is reason for believing that it is. The Bible does not consider the possibilities of the unearthly hell in this respect. The state is so different that revelation concerning this point could not be understood in this life. We are left, therefore, to form our own conclusions. It being clearly shown that there is an eternal hell which many have taken, despising a life of purity and righteousness on the other side.*

•See page 233.

That there is declension in the spiritual hell is evident as we notice the satans and devils, or demons of the Bible, and study the records of their efforts and failures.

It should be understood that hell is not necessarily a locality. It is a state, or condition, found *in people*, and when they are in that state they are

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in hell. The "infernal regions" have not been discovered. They have been indefinitely located and described by poets and mythological writers, who have had no authority for their geographical, or astronomical calculations.

A devil is a portable inferno. He is a part of hell. He can be found wherever there is an opportunity for him to act, or so long as he is capable of making an impression on those who are susceptible to such influences. The time comes when he is incapable, but there is another to take his place as he subsides.

The devil of Eden went down exhausted, wrecked by his own effort, and there is nothing to show that he ever again became prominent. It has been supposed that he was the Satan who tempted Job, and David, but this cannot be demonstrated. The weakness and permanent incapacity of the Serpent of Eden was clearly predicted.¹

The failure of the Satan of the Gospels is noticed,² as well as that of the Old Devil of the Apocalypse.³ In each case it is a complete collapse. So it was with the demons who withstood Christ, and the Apostles. In every instance they disappeared igno-

¹ Gen. iii. 14.

² John xii. 31.

³ Rev. xx. 10.

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miniously. They live and are dead. Wickedness brings weakness and decay.

Modern spiritual satans and demons are around us, as well as heavenly angels, and the battle rages. But invisible spiritual fiends have their day and go down in contempt. The world is full of wickedness, but it improves. Hell settles to the bottom, but righteousness is in the ascendant.

The heights of heaven never can be reached. There is something better than the best that has ever been known or imagined. Those who have gained the highest honors in the celestial state, and are unparalleled in wisdom and power, are looking for promotion. The tendency to cherish all that is worthy is so strong, and the possibilities are so great, that progress in heaven cannot be compared with the most wonderful development here. But decline in the immaterial perdition is so rapid that it can be illustrated only by swift destruction, and death.

Suicide is the last resort of one who would bury himself in eternal forgetfulness, or find relief in change, whether for better or for worse. It is despair culminating in destruction. But life in that realm of unspeakable wretchedness is actuated

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by an intense opposition to all that is right—a desperate attempt to know, and feel the most abominable wickedness—to be the vilest of the vile. Hope is dead. Despair is a thing of the past. Language is not strong enough to express the consuming ambition to ruin, and be ruined, which increases as its willing victims grow weaker, and sink lower in unfathomable decay.

Hell is the Cloaca Maxima of the world, through which the sewage of the centuries finds its way to unknown depths.

Thousands of intelligent people are drifting downward. They have begun to cherish evil tendencies, and cultivate them. They find a kind of satisfaction in dissipation. They begin moderately, but soon become very corrupt and are ready to do the worst things. They have acquired such a strong desire and taste for immoral practices that they are overwhelmed, and dominated by them. They seek the company of those who are like themselves and plunge into excesses. They glory in the wreckage of character, and become more vicious and cruel in their lusts, until they are thoroughly depraved.

Outwardly they may preserve the appearance of



"A BRIDE WREATHED WITH FLOWERS."—Page 241

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virtue, and their real characters may not be well known until we are startled with accounts of dreadful scandal in some shameful resort, in which murder and suicide are conspicuous.

These things are common. Men of influence, with hopeful outlook, often go down in this way, fascinated by the allurements of vice, and not alarmed by its consequences. They become willing victims and destroy themselves, knowing the facts.

The family circle, united by common interests and tender relations, is the bright center of earthly happiness.

A bride wreathed with flowers kneels holding the hand of the man to whom she gives her life forever. She listens to his pledge of undying love. The future is radiant with hope. Home is the sweet word that comes to her with thoughts of all that she can be to him. She will be true till death. Tears are seen in the eyes of the fond mother as the last words of the ceremony are pronounced and she steps forward to embrace the child of her love and care. How can she give her up, and feel that she is no longer responsible after so many years of watchfulness and loving interest? Quickly she wipes away the tears and hopes for the best

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as the merry company express their good wishes, and enter into the festivities of the hour. . . . Years of work and careful management bring prosperity. Children gather around the table prepared for them by loving hands. The wedding day lingers in the memory of one whose life has been refined by trial, and inspired by heaven.

Trouble begins when *confidence* is disturbed. Suspicion darkens the home. Love fades slowly away. The wife's secret rankles in her bosom. Oh, the bitter agony of grief! The cruel murder of the fond heart! Can floods of tears relieve its unutterable woe?

Scandalous reports are confirmed. The husband is the victim of *corrupt passion*. Disgrace and humiliation blacken his fair name. He seeks the company of the dissolute and reckless. He is avoided by respectable society. Business is neglected—property lost—family abandoned. . . .

A dying man, once prosperous and happy, is found in a brothel of the city. Diseases engendered by lewdness and debauchery have destroyed his vital forces, and vitiated his mind. Darkness settles in upon him, followed by a period of unconsciousness. He is dead. He realizes the change

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soon after the burial. He finds himself in the gloom of the unearthly hell. His condition is deplorable, but it has been superinduced and created by himself. He cannot enjoy anything because everything in him has been perverted, and it reacts upon him in a way that is abnormal. He is the same man in his tendencies. He hates virtue and holy living, and is still interested in what is corrupt and immoral. Physical death does not change the character, but the mode of existence.

He seeks gratification for his vile appetites and passions, as he did formerly, but cannot get a satisfactory response. He finds nothing that can serve his purposes, for he is in a *spiritual* state, and his environment is different, and he is not prepared for it. Finding this to be the fact, he cultivates mental and imaginary vices and crimes, and by dwelling upon them and nourishing them, he becomes morally worse and is more desperate and damnable in his nature. Thus he is rapidly transformed and becomes an infernal, or spiritual, devil.

He is still in the world, though not in the visible form, and seeks affinity in those who are susceptible to bad influences, and are willing to entertain

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evil thoughts, and may be willing to go further and cultivate the acquaintance of a spiritual colleague whose real character may not be known. Such a spirit may be active for a while entering into the mind of a person who has some object to gain by foul means, and co-operate by suggesting plans which seem quite plausible, and look as if they might be successful.

Such is the history of a career once happily begun, and while it may seem incredible that such depths of degradation should be chosen by a human being, yet examples of abandoned wretches young in years can be found in the streets of our great cities at midnight, who were once virtuous and happy. They have become incorrigible. They detest reform, and will die as they have lived. There are people who glory in crime and filthiness, and will cherish depravity to the bitter end, regardless of the cost. They are determined to ruin themselves, and do it eternally.

The period of activity in a tempting devil cannot last always, for he is subject to a law of limitation which is in himself. He deteriorates rapidly, and finally becomes so ignorant and degraded that he is, practically, out of the way. There is nothing

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to *sustain* him, consequently he grows weaker and more obscure, and sinks at last into eternal death.⁴ So far as his influence is concerned, he is a mere negation. He is isolated—wandering in darkness amid horrible apparitions, loathsome smells, mockery, curses, and obscenity.

The depravity of those degraded beings who were once men and women of the visible world, can be noticed as we read the Gospels. Christ and His disciples had such keen spiritual discernment and discrimination, that they were able to discover many of them infesting humanity. These demons fiercely opposed the redeeming work they were doing. Not in a single instance did they show any evidences of repentance or reform. They furnish us with vivid illustrations of that hell which is everlasting.

The desolation of the perishing multitudes in the world of the lost is beyond conception. All that is valuable to human beings is excluded by the degradation of the mind, and the moral diseases that rage with cancerous fire. Social distinctions are annihilated by the overwhelming desire to be unknown. There is no common bond of

⁴ Ch. v., p. 70.

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unity. Confidence is lacking and life is without incentives to effort of any kind that is worthy. There is nothing to do but suggest evil ideas, and make bad impressions on those who are willing to receive them. No change relieves the eternal monotony, but decay and deeper death.

The corruption of the entire nature increases, festering and fomenting with infernal virus, while decline is constant. Perishing, yet imperishable; dying, yet never extinct, they exist, knowing that they are responsible for their condition, but *determined* to remain in deadly hatred of all virtue and righteous living.

The transition from the physical to the spiritual state, at death, is associated with mystery. To know just what the experience is would be impossible, even if we had a clear and definite statement from one who had passed through it, because people are so different. One instance, or a thousand, would not furnish reliable criteria by which to judge others.

A brief period of unconsciousness may intervene. A number of persons were restored to mortal life by divine power in the first century; but in no case do we learn that they expressed any knowledge of

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the other world gained by this change. They were, before restoration, said to be "asleep" in some instances, by which we do not understand simply physical death (for a distinction was made at that time), but profound mental repose, equivalent to temporary unconsciousness. Coming back to life then was the same as being awakened from sleep, as far as sensation and recollection were concerned, showing that the transition was very natural, and *sometimes* gradual.⁵ But whether there is a gradual or sudden opening of the portals of the unseen world, it is certain that a realization of the fact is not long delayed.

Samuel had been dead but a short time when he appeared to Saul in spiritual form. It seems that the period of repose, with him, was not complete, for he asked Saul why he had "disquieted" him.⁶ Nevertheless he was fully conscious of the great change through which he had passed, and his relation to the earthly life. He was permitted, with divine approval, to administer a rebuke to Saul, and utter a clear and startling prediction that was fulfilled the next day.

⁵ See Ch. viii. "Sleep" may also mean conscious heavenly rest.

⁶ I. Sam, xxviii. 15.

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The souls "under the altar" who had suffered martyrdom did not wait long before getting their first promotion.⁷ And another was before them which they would take when their brethren in the earthly state were also killed for the same reasons, and should appear in heaven. Therefore, they were to "rest for a *little* season" until they had met these friends, and then receive greater honors, for which they would be well prepared. From this it appears that there is a kind of heavenly evolution on the other side, and degrees of progress await the faithful, which are associated with conditions that must be fulfilled.

The most intelligent angels, to whom important work is given, have made a record here, and another in heaven. They have been tested in many ways, and have developed ability that is uncommon, even in the celestial realms. This is evident as we see that people in heaven are *graded* and take higher rank as they exhibit a fitness for it, and a **capacity** to assume its responsibilities, and thus enjoy its privileges and opportunities. No invidious distinctions can be made and there is nothing in the clas-

⁷ Rev. vi. 9-11.

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sification that is not satisfactory to all, because it is *seen* by all to be right and just.

The "third heaven" mentioned by St. Paul should not be regarded as a *domain*, or place, located above the first and second heavens, transcending them in literal height above the earth.⁹ Although, to those who live there, "mansions" in heaven are really beautiful homes, substantial and tangible, but *immaterial*.

Heaven is a "place," but it cannot be located as we locate a place on the map of the globe. It is a place because it is associated with the earth. It belongs to it, and cannot be disconnected because it is the source from which its inhabitants are derived, and is a great field of effort for God and holy angels who are here, and constitute the spiritual heaven of our planet.

We can locate heaven as we could locate the population of the globe, if all were free to live where it would be most congenial to them considering their tastes, adaptation, employments, and pleasures, understanding that our world is the *habitat* of those originating here, and therefore would be preferred by them to a residence in any other part of the

⁹ II. Cor. xii. 2.

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Universe, when the facts were known concerning the advantages of other spheres for those of *our* kind.⁹

“God’s House” is our heaven. It is a vast and varied state full of redeemed people of all countries and ages. They live in those parts that are most desirable to them and which seem to correspond in locality to places they have formerly known and preferred when living in this world. The “New Jerusalem” is where it should be.¹⁰

It may be possible for people in the spiritual state to visit distant orbs; but the desirability, or the expediency of it, is a matter of speculation. There are many reasons for believing that people in our heaven are abundantly satisfied with the ample provision that has been made for eternal existence in this part of the Universe.

There are but few who do not think that this world is large enough. Territory is not so important. People, interesting people, in large numbers, make life attractive here, and so it will be in the future, for nobody dies in heaven, and its popula-

⁹ Ch. v. Our world is the environment of spiritual as well as physical beings originating here.

¹⁰ John xiv. 2.

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tion has been increasing rapidly for many thousands of years.

Our heaven will be more attractive to us than the heaven associated with any other world because it is filled with *our kind* of people. Judging from what we know of conditions on other planets, their physical life must be so different from ours that we should find little of common interest in those strange worlds. If their visible environment is different, then their discarnate or incorporeal life will be correspondingly diverse.¹¹

Mansions in God's house cannot mean *material* dwelling places or abodes, for heaven is a spiritual or ethereal realm. But to them, these homes are as substantial and tangible as ours are to us in this life. If one in this state should be permitted to look into heaven, he would get a *vision* to be interpreted.

But after death when one is in the spiritual body, vision becomes normal sight, and is far more real and satisfactory than it is to us now because our secondary or supernormal sight will then be fully developed and we shall also be clairaudient.

The "third heaven" to which St. Paul referred

¹¹ See Ch. v.

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was not a "department" in the celestial world, but a revelation in vision of the privileges which he would enjoy on the other side, if faithful and true to his duty here. His work was very heavy and dangerous. He was bitterly attacked and persecuted by enemies, corporeal and spiritual, for years. This revelation, in which he actually saw and felt the glories of heaven as he would know them in the future, was given for his encouragement. He was inspired and made triumphant amid difficulties by the rapturous ecstasy of that sacred hour, which continued vivid in his memory and made him heroic.

Social privileges in heaven surpass any that are known on earth. The interpretation of thought and feeling is open to all. Even the incipient idea, indistinct and nameless—the shadow of the unborn thought—hidden in the depths of the soul, can be perceived. What cannot be reached in words, in manner, in tones, or in any way that is known to us, is very clear to the celestial observer who has, in a degree, the divine faculty of knowing what is in others.¹² Spiritual perception and mental penetration are perfected in the heavenly angels. The power to exclude from the mind all that is objec-

¹² I. Cor. xiii. 12.

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tionable is equally great. So they can shut out all that is evil and become invulnerable to temptation, and be in heaven always, no matter where they are, in respect to *locality*. Their duties may take them into remote places, and they may have messages for the good, as well as for the worst people, in both worlds.

Transparent personality makes misunderstanding impossible. The wonders of love and intelligence rapidly unfolding, create surprise and delight. Mutual attraction is intensified by unlimited confidence and knowledge of intrinsic virtues, and loveliness exceeding the loftiest ideals of earth.

The memory of brighter days is enchanting, of pleasures that were real, but fleeting, when,

“Love took up the harp of Life, and smote on all the chords,
with might;
Smote the chord of self, that, trembling, passed in music,
out of sight.”¹³

But the glamour that concealed weakness and defects and brought disappointment, will not deceive us in the spiritual paradise of the future.

The mystic “tree of life” in the garden of moral purity was the symbol of greater honor and felicity

¹³ Tennyson's Locksley Hall.

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than had ever been known to mortals.¹⁴ It implied a revelation of the divine nature to the progenitor of a new race, that placed him and his descendants so far above all others in privileges and distinction that they were called "The Sons of God." They were known as such among surrounding nations. This symbolic tree appears again in the vision of St. John, as he looks into the spiritual heaven, but it indicates so much more than could be obtained by the most favored people, in the earthly state, that it bears twelve kinds of fruit, which can be found every month in the year, and even its "leaves are for the healing of the nations."¹⁵ No emblem of life is conceivable that represents so much that is desirable and interesting to humanity.

The tree of the knowledge of good and evil can still be found. Even an angel in heaven can listen to the voice of the tempter, and look at the fruit, and find that it is "pleasant to the eyes," and cling to a fatal delusion, knowing it to be such, and fall into disgrace and wretchedness and spiritual poverty and moral nakedness; for angels have done

¹⁴ Gen. ii.

¹⁵ Rev. xxii. 2.

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such things. The knowledge of good and evil, *mixed*, is still the cause of many failures and crimes that curse the world.

The fulfillment of conditions essential to success in heaven is very important. The idea that the candidate for future blessedness throws off all responsibility as he enters the other world, and has nothing before him but an eternal vacation, has been advanced by those who have not understood human nature, or the divine plan. There is rest in heaven, but *everlasting* rest would be monotonous and demoralizing. A king must work or neglect the affairs of his realm and lose the respect of his subjects. He has problems to study and questions to answer that require attention. Nature reveals the fact that God began to work millions of years ago, and that His efforts have been continuous and persistent. It is unreasonable to suppose that the administration of the affairs of the Universe does not involve careful and costly effort, even for Him. It is our privilege to co-operate with Him in His work, here and hereafter.

Careful, patient, and earnest effort is necessary for our development on the other side. We shall never reach a state of perfection wherein it will

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be impossible for us to make mistakes. Infallibility is an attribute of God.

The struggles and victories of earthly life are the most difficult and dangerous, because we work under great disadvantages. But there are battles to fight and victories to win in heaven.¹⁶

The ministry of angels in the visible world was a very important work for thousands of years. It is limited in these times by misunderstanding and unbelief. But the opportunity for it in the spiritual world is greater than ever before, because the foundation for effort of this kind has been laid in the general diffusion of knowledge here and in clearer light concerning human character and destiny. Therefore, there is a better opportunity to judge or instruct those who enter the other world in these times. And this work is accomplished through the interposition of angels.

There are a great many *irresponsible people* entering the other world every day. Suppose that the number of persons dying every twenty-four hours is 100,000. One-half of all who are born die in infancy or childhood. We should also consider that there are vast numbers, not only in semi-

¹⁶ Jude 9.

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civilized and barbarous countries, but in enlightened lands, who are as irresponsible as children. These multitudes are to be instructed, disciplined, and judged.¹⁷ It may take a long time for some of them to reach the point of intelligent decision, because such decision cannot be made wisely and justly until they know what they are doing, and this fact is perfectly understood by those to whom the important work of examination is committed.

A day of judgment is a day of decision. There is preparation for such days, not only here but hereafter. Such work is assigned to the most competent angels in heaven. They are responsible to the Divine Judge, with whom, and in whom, they act.¹⁸

When clear light and good opportunities have been afforded in the earthly life, and have been persistently refused or neglected, it is understood

¹⁷ It is generally believed by the most intelligent Bible students that there is in the spiritual world an *intermediate state*. But they do not understand that those who reach perdition are *again* on probation. There are thousands in the hells of this life who *despise* probation, and there are reasons for believing that some never want it hereafter. Matt. xxv. 46. Rev. xx. 10.

¹⁸ Matt. xiii. 39. Mark xiii. 27. I. Cor. vi. 2-3.

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that a decision *has been made*. When a man has a chance to make a good investment, and is convinced that it will pay well, and is perfectly safe, and he refuses, or neglects it, it is seen that he did not want to invest. Such a person finds, without doubt, that he is lost, as he enters the spiritual world, and realizes what he had previously understood; that his misfortune was his choice. On the other hand, a decision, though it come late, if it is thoroughly tested and found to be genuine, gives a clear title to an immediate entrance into the celestial paradise.¹⁹

There are many errors to be corrected in the other world, and much teaching is necessary. Very intelligent and progressive people in heaven find those who know more than they do, and are capable of helping them. Angelic ministry is a work of instruction and inspiration and revelation. It is the expression of the divine mind. In union with glorified humanity God finds satisfaction and is able to execute His plans.

Employment of many kinds is essential to our interests here. The populous centers of trade, the homes of mighty commerce, where the emblems of

¹⁹ Luke xxiii. 43.

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many nations remind us of the world's ambition and success, crowded streets, and magnificent buildings, towering high, where the products of all climes in rich profusion invite our inspection, speak of labor with brain and hands in colossal manufactories, in thousands of homes, in the fields and forests, and mines of the earth. The diversity of occupations, and the marvels of inventive genius, with the revelations of science and art, open hidden treasures and indicate the ever-expanding possibilities of this brief life, as it builds on foundations laid in the past, and seizes the opportunities of the present.

Life in heaven may not seem to us so real and interesting, because many of the pursuits that have stimulated our ambitions here will be no longer necessary or possible. Here we work for the necessities and comforts of life. We must have food, clothing, shelter, and many things that are desirable but not absolutely essential, that we may compare favorably in our manner of living with those around us, whose opinions we respect. But when an ample fortune has been secured, and labor of any kind is not required for the support or needs of those who may be depending upon him, a man

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may continue in business for its own sake, or because the force of habit holds him to his work, or he has ambition to accumulate, without definite reasons.

If, however, he is sensible and normal in his tastes and hopes, he will look for satisfaction in other things. He has leisure and is independent. He may want to travel and see the world. He will not be indifferent to society and recreation. Honor and position among men of his class will not be overlooked. He will pursue his favorite studies and find literature that is interesting. He may seek seclusion and rest and lead a quiet life. He will follow his inclinations, but he can have no concern about the necessities and comforts of life, for effort in this respect is useless.

This illustrates the outlook for a man who enters the other world and is heavenly in his aspirations. He has an opportunity to see, to know, and do what is new and intensely interesting to him. He is strong and hopeful, and feels that he cannot die again. He is very ambitious, for he is full of divine energy and heavenly enthusiasm. He is anxious to do well and will accept suggestions concerning his duties and privileges, and find that

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they are in harmony with his views and capacity. He finds that effort in this new field will pay richly. He is rewarded by discoveries very interesting and important.

Heaven is a new world to the beginner, and he may spend much time in exploring it before he is assigned to any very important and responsible duty. A period of rest and reflection may also be a time for observation, study and preparation for special duties. This is clearly and gladly understood, for people in heaven are very anxious to promote the interests of the Kingdom, and do the will of the King.

Work in heaven does not involve *physical* effort. Physical exertion is associated with earthly life. The power of mind over matter is very great. It is not necessarily enshrined in physical form. This fact is illustrated in the creation which is the result of effort by a *spiritual* being, capable of controlling and utilizing forces of all kinds. There is, therefore, a variety of exertion for heavenly angels, which they can use easily in any way that is desirable. The stone that closed the entrance to Joseph's tomb, where the body of Christ had lain, "was very great." but it was easily rolled back

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by an angel. No physical effort was made. The stone was moved by *suggestion*.

Amusement is in harmony with the laws of our being and finds expression in relief from care, and whatever diverts the attention in pleasant ways. Recreation and change dispel the monotony that would wear away our lives. It brings new hopes, stimulating and refreshing the mind. New scenes leave permanent impressions and hang pictures in the galleries of the soul that memory may cherish. Books feed us with ideas, affording riches of knowledge for future use.

Diversion is as necessary in heaven as it is here. The youthfulness and vivacity of its people find expression in every variety of entertainment and pursuit adapted to taste, temperament and nationality.

Wit and humor cannot be repressed, because it is a holy state. These things are in the constitution of the mind, and are divinely implanted. Congenial society and the festivities of the celestial paradise promote good feeling.²⁰

Amusements and diversions become evil to us when they are demoralizing in any respect. If

²⁰ Matt. xxv. 10.

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there is a tendency to excess or dissipation, if the mind is preoccupied, and the interest so deep in these things as to interfere with success in the important work of life, and the development of the noblest and holiest character, there is something wrong. Nothing that can corrupt the affections or interfere with divine communion in the slightest degree is tolerated in heaven.

The mixing of good and bad in amusements in such a way as to attract multitudes has become a gigantic evil here. It will curse the world so long as those who are in the business find it profitable. The time has come for a change. There is a demand for amusements and diversions of the right kind among the most thoughtful and heavenly-minded people. They want something that is in harmony with their tastes and aspirations, and when it is presented, and they have reason to believe that they are not going to be deceived, it will be gladly welcomed. The churches will then find their true sphere of activity, and will no longer attempt to supply the needs of their members with cheap and questionable attractions not appropriate in such places.

There is now an opportunity for a syndicate of

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devout and judicious men to inaugurate a new era. They could redeem music and the drama, and present attractions of many kinds that would find favor with vast numbers of the most intelligent and conscientious people.

Literature, art, invention, discovery, and all that is interesting and right find opportunity in heaven.

The records of this world are not closed to the angels. They have access to our literature and are well acquainted with the affairs of our times. Their advantages are greater than ours in this respect, for they can know what is in the *minds* of those who write. This is necessary, for they have a work in the present world and must be well acquainted with its affairs. This work is connected with their ministry on the other side. They study people here that they may know how to deal with them hereafter, for they execute the will of God by acting with him in His administration.

The literature of heaven is very voluminous.²¹ It includes the records of all ages and nations. There is nothing fragmentary that cannot be made complete by investigation. What has transpired is carefully reviewed and considered. The study of

²¹ Rev. xx, 12.

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life and character is essential that everything may be wisely and justly settled.

Much of our literature is worth but little in heaven, because theirs is so much better. Some of it will do for reference, or evidence, for a man is judged by his works; but in general it is defective and juvenile, when compared with the advanced thought of angels. The ideal characters in poetry and romance are superseded by those who are *real* and far more interesting.

The curricula of our universities furnish lists of studies that are called fundamental and important, but the able men who hold responsible positions as instructors in these institutions find, in many instances, that they stand on platforms that have weak planks in them, and they are liable at any time to break and let them down. Especially is this true of *theology*. When the learned professor comes to the elucidation of a mystery which is beyond his depth, he may seek refuge in quotations and refer to eminent authorities, and, at last, cautiously state that his own view is similar to that of one of the writers he has mentioned. He may feel that this is the best he can do, and that it is **safe for him, for should it be found that he had**

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made a mistake, then it is seen that another eminent commentator has also failed.

If the Bible is divinely inspired it is reliable, and can be understood and found to be right and consistent with itself. Understanding this to be true, our difficulties must frequently arise from inability to interpret its mysteries.

When there seems to be no key, let the Divine Interpreter be recognized, and wait until something is *suggested* by Him. When this is clearly understood, and those who are studying together are satisfied with this method, and are willing to test it by *waiting* until a satisfactory response comes, they will not be disappointed.²² For this is the *divine* plan, and was understood and carefully observed by those who wrote the Scriptures, or acted as prophets and inspired teachers, whose works have been accepted by the whole Christian world, and found to be worthy and genuine.

This is a practical way, because scholarship, ability, and judicious effort are not ignored; or the literature of the subject necessarily overlooked. Nor is time wasted, for attention can be given to

²² Care should be used that all the *conditions* may be observed.

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what is clear and easily understood while waiting hopefully for light upon points that are confessedly very obscure and upon which there has been a wide difference of opinion for many years, and about which no conclusions have been reached that are generally acceptable and are seen to be right by competent judges.²³

There are many such mysteries in the Bible. Former explanations are becoming more objectionable, for we are becoming more intelligent and practical, and cannot be satisfied with what seems unreasonable and unjust; or with what appears to be incredible on the face of it. Hence, the revolutionary tendencies in theological seminaries, and in fact everywhere.

When the Bible is interpreted as it should be, and the few clerical errors and interpolations that have crept in in the course of the centuries are eliminated, it will be found to be essentially right by those who want to know the truth.

Art is cultivated in the heavenly state, and finds expression in ways that are far more interesting than ours. Our great difficulty here is with ma-

²³ Different views of the same truth may come, but essential agreement is possible.

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terials. This is being overcome, but it never can be entirely removed. We deal with paint and stone and canvas, and many other things that mar our conceptions. Aesthetic people at the theatre do not like to consider what is going on behind the scenes, and what the stage carpenter and painter have done to make the play effective.

While a celebrated scene was being presented in a New York theatre, representing a chariot race, one of the characters was seen kicking at a bolt that held a wheel in position. He was trying to *produce* an accident at the right instant. The discovery of his effort marred the effect when the chariot broke down.

Pictures, statuary, and figures of all kinds, representing persons and animals, may seem quite real and life-like, and yet it is easy to notice that they are not, even if they are made to speak or act; there is something mechanical or artificial about them that can be readily discerned. It is not so in heavenly art.

St. John, describing a scene in the Apocalypse, says: "And there appeared a great wonder in heaven; a woman clothed with the sun, and the moon under her feet, and upon her head a crown

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of twelve stars.”²⁴ This woman cried. She fled into the wilderness, and finally assumed wings and disappeared. She was able to represent what did not really occur: for a child was born to her, and children are not born in heaven. The twelve stars were not genuine, for planets, or suns, could not be brought together so as to form a crown for a woman. Neither was she literally clothed with the sun, but appeared to be, because of the brightness of her garments. Nor is it easy to believe that she was actually standing on the moon, whose mean distance from the Isle of Patmos is about 239,000 miles.

There are reasons for believing that this scene was produced for the occasion by a spiritual agency. And, yet, it was so realistic that John describes it as he would an object in the material world. He understood, however, that these things were *illustrations* of important truth.

His vision of the heavenly Jerusalem, the river of life, and the trees that grew on either side of it, were shown to him by an angel.²⁵ This angel stated that he had been sent to do this work. John was so deeply impressed by the effort of this

²⁴ Rev. xii.

²⁵ Rev. xxi. 9.

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spiritual messenger, and his marvelous ability to present such views, that he tried to worship him. Modern art, and the works of the great masters of former times are not worthy to be compared with art in heavenly vision or divine symbol. Photography gives us shadows sometimes made more vivid and life-like in "moving pictures." But the energy actually built in, or planted by suggestion in the imagery of the angels is beyond conception. Consider the flaming sword of Eden, that "turned every way to keep the way of the tree of life," the handwriting on the wall, and the six-winged seraph that touched the prophet's lips with a live coal.²⁶

Discovery and invention are often related to one another like cause and effect. Steam would never have been harnessed to an engine if some one had not discovered its power and availability for this purpose. Electricity would not have become prominent as a great wonder in the world, and a potential factor in modern civilization, if some one had not studied it carefully, and tried many experiments that involved danger and severe mental exertion.

The study of natural forces and their availability for important purposes is a divine occupation. It is essential in cosmogony, for even the Deity could

²⁶ Gen. iii. 24; Dan. v. 5; Is. vi. 2-7.

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not make something out of nothing. And those who suppose that He did are not sustained by the Hebrew record of the Creation. The Hebrew verb "bara" signifies the new production of a thing. It does not necessarily imply that there was nothing from which it could be produced. Delitzsch says: (Commentar über die, Genesis, p. 91) "The word Bara, in its etymology, *does not exclude* a previous material. It has, as the use of 'Piel' shows, the fundamental idea of cutting or hewing. But, as in other languages, words which define creation, have the same etymological idea at their root, so 'Bara' has *acquired* the *idiomatic* meaning of a divine creating, which, whether in the kingdom of nature, or of history, or of the spirit, calls into being that which hitherto had no existence. 'Bara' never appears as the word for human creations, differing in this from the synonyms 'asak,' 'yat-zar,' 'yalad,' which are used both of man and of God; it is never used with an accusative of the material, and even from this it follows that it defines the divine creative act as one without limitations, and in its results, as to its proper material, entirely new, and as to its first cause, entirely the creation of divine power."

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The meaning which a word has *acquired* should be carefully distinguished from that which it meant when used thousands of years ago. Bara was not used as the word for *human* creations, because divine creation is something very different from human creation, and, therefore, a different word should be used. If this word was not used with the "accusative of the material" it does not necessarily follow that no original matter could be found in the Universe from which celestial bodies of many kinds could be formed. As the word "bara" in its etymology does not exclude a previous material, there is no reason why the idea that such material was not used should be entertained.²⁷

The building of the Universe has occupied a very long period, because *time* is important here and everywhere, when a great work is to be done. It does not yet appear what it will be, for it is still young, comparatively speaking.

The progress of the world, so far as the human part of it is concerned, has been very slow. The advantages we enjoy in this age are the result of persistent and continuous effort, sustained for many

²⁷ See Ch. i., p. 6.

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thousands of years. If men had always begun where their predecessors began, we should still live in the primeval wilderness, using stone hatchets, and covering ourselves with skins of animals.

The gain in a century is very small when compared with what has been accomplished in the entire past; but there are exceptions among progressive and enterprising nations. More was done for the world in proportion to the time occupied in the nineteenth century than in any age since men have appeared on earth. Careful preparation had been made for it, and it became a culminating period.

The invention of the telegraph prepared the way for greater things. Cyrus W. Field was ready to begin where Professor Morse stopped. His plan for a cable under the Atlantic, to Europe, was a bold scheme which seemed impracticable, if not impossible, to the most thoughtful men. In him there was genius coupled with an indomitable purpose that would not suffer defeat.

He was known as a shrewd financier, and a man of science, with excellent judgment and a capacity for leadership. He put his own resources into the enterprise and thirteen years of severe mental and physical work. He accompanied dangerous expe-

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ditions, crossing the ocean more than forty times. Failure after failure occurred. Years passed, and public faith in the undertaking was shaken. There was difficulty in obtaining capital. In the eleventh year Mr. Field was still undismayed, after many losses and trials. The work began again with the Great Eastern, which was then the largest steamship in the world. One thousand two hundred miles of cable were laid, when suddenly, in mid-ocean, it parted, and the mighty ship steamed away with its disappointed company to the European shore.

Not until the next year (1866), on the 27th of July, did the hour of triumph come. Instantaneous communication was then established between the Old and New Worlds. This was a very great achievement, for it meant, in the near future, instantaneous communication with all parts of the habitable globe, and in many respects the annihilation of time and space.

Discovery and *invention* are as important in the future life as they are here. The desire for knowledge and power is very conspicuous in redeemed humanity. All things that are worthy are open to them for investigation and experiment; not only

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because of the gratification afforded, but for their practical utility.

Progress in the celestial spheres is associated with intelligent effort of many kinds. And those who show the greatest determination and wisdom in their methods win the prizes.

Effort is not confined to the study and contemplation of the divine nature, although this is more wonderful and interesting than anything else to heavenly people. Their interest in one another is very deep and tender. Companionship with congenial people of all ages takes much of their attention, but this is not first in their thoughts. They have found that the greatest study of mankind is God. There are many things to know about Him that they have not understood.

Some have been perplexed by the conflicting views of those upon whom they depended for leadership in this life. They find that the most eminent theologians have suffered more than others in attempting to define their creeds and make them acceptable to the world. At last, in heaven, they have discovered the cause of failure in the past, and now learn with satisfaction and success new things every day concerning Deity. But they also

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find that the most advanced angels have not learned all there is to know, and will confess that they are beginners, and that there is enough to occupy their attention forever; and that their interest constantly increases as they look into these glorious mysteries.

Questions about the *Divine Trinity*, the *person of Christ*, and the *Holy Spirit* have been a source of confusion in Christendom for more than a thousand years.

It is not well for us to believe that a council of men, however great and learned, could solve the problems that gather around this theme, and effectually settle all debates that might arise concerning it in the future.

The light that we ought to have has not come yet, because there has been too much dependence upon the work accomplished by the councils and propagandas of ancient times. There has been a tendency to glorify the eminent religious teachers who lived a few centuries after the Christian era, and to magnify their work unduly. We may suppose that they had access to information that we cannot now obtain, and were more capable of knowing the truth than ourselves. And hence, we have had so much respect for their opinions. But

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their methods of dealing with heresy and establishing doctrines would be considered crude and even barbarous in these days.

The Fathers were more dogmatic and narrow in their views than the ripe scholars of to-day, and were sometimes very bitter in their prejudices. They did not always look for clearer light, but clung to their opinions on the Scriptures as tenaciously as we do. Therefore, their views should be taken for what they are worth, and we should be open to all the light that can come to us, irrespective of their creeds, upon which much of the theology of the day is built. There are many things in Patristic literature that are valuable and cannot die; but our veneration for them should not close our eyes to present opportunities.

The existence of *Christ before His birth* at Bethlehem has been regarded as an important fact, and there is evidence of a very positive kind which refers to it. But it would be difficult to show that he existed as a *person* previous to that time. It is more reasonable to believe that he was *personified*.

He is called the “*λογος*” which means the “Word” or “Speech” when reference is made to him before the incarnation. It should be noticed

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that He was not known as the *Son of God* until after He was born of Mary. Although in speaking of Himself, He says: "Before Abraham was I am."²⁸ He alludes to the "glory which he had with the Father before the world was."²⁹ He was the Maker of worlds, but not as the *Son*; but the Word.³⁰ The prophetic statement concerning Him as the Son "begotten this day" refers to His resurrection only. This fact is noticed by St. Paul.³¹

Predictions that refer to Him as "the Son" or "a Son" should not be so interpreted as to make it appear that He was a Son at the *time* when these predictions were made. They anticipate the future, and were fulfilled after His birth in Judea. The impropriety of regarding Him as the Son of God previous to His birth is evident, as we consider these facts.

As the Word He was in the divine Father, and "was God"; but when He was born He became the Son of God, and the Son of man. As the Word He is noticed in John's Gospel, and was regarded by Himself as such when He alluded to His exist-

²⁸ John viii. 58.

²⁹ John i. 3.

³⁰ John xvii. 5.

³¹ Ps. 2, and Acts xiii. 33.

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ence before the time of Abraham, and His glory with the Father before the world was.³²

The fact that He was in the Father as the "Word" was understood by Him, and that the Word became incarnate at the time of His conception and birth.³³

He, therefore, *inherited* the "word" or "speech" from His Father, and it was in Him after He became a man, a very conspicuous characteristic; for no human being ever had such power to teach or express himself. This was noticed even by His enemies.

As the Word He came "down from heaven," became a divine man, and then was "sent" into the world with a redeeming work to do. When this was accomplished He returned to the fellowship of the Father in the spiritual state as a divine, but

³² John xvii. 5, and John viii. 58.

³³ There are reasons for believing that the language Christ used in speaking of what he was before his birth will not bear a *literal* interpretation, but that he spoke of his *divine origin* in figurative and spiritual terms, to impress his hearers with the fact that he was not simply a man of our world, but a *divine* human being. And was in his Father, as a child was in the *nature* of its father, before it came into the world. This gives us a more reasonable conception of the "Logos," or what is known as the "pre-natal Christ." Hence we have the expression, "being in the form (nature) of God."—Phil. ii. 6,

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human, person, and is known in heaven as the spiritual King of our world.

To identify the Father with the Son in such a way as to make them one in the sense of being the *same person* is a great mistake. The relation of a father to his son is such that it is impossible to make them one and the same individual. But this has been attempted by sincere and intelligent people, who have thought that it solved a difficult problem and enabled them to see that there is only one God; for they could not see how there are two, when the Bible positively affirms that there is but one.

The word God³⁴ when it refers to a divine being, may imply one, or more than one; for, like the word man, it can be used in the plural as well as in the singular.

That God, the Father, was in Christ is certain. For He acted in Him, and with Him, and through Him, in a way so remarkable that as the Son He represented His Father so well that He could justly say of Himself: "He that hath seen me, hath seen the Father."³⁴ But it is preposterous to suppose that He identified Himself with His own Father, whom He came to represent.

³⁴ John xiv. 9. ³⁴ In Hebrew sometimes *Elohim*.

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Isaiah, in predicting the birth of Christ, speaks of the names by which He should be known. He says that "His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, the everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace."³⁵ The prophet does not, in this passage, identify Him with the Father, but simply notices the fact that He would become the *spiritual* Father, or Shepherd, of His people.³⁶

It is astonishing that such an error as this should find lodgment in the thought of philosophical people; and yet, to many, it has seemed very plausible, but it is exceedingly inconsistent; for if this is true, Christ prayed to Himself, understanding that He was His own Father. An attempt has been made to explain this by stating that His "humanity" was, at that time, praying to His "divinity"; or, that His "animus" was addressing His "inmost soul," or "anima."³⁷

³⁵ Is. ix. 6.

³⁶ The witness of the Father, or his testimony concerning his son, is as important as the witness of the Spirit. At the time of Christ's baptism the Father introduced him to the world as his Son, with whom he was "well pleased." Those who teach that the Father and his Son are one in the sense of being the *same* person would make the Father introduce himself and state that he was well pleased with himself.—Mark i. 11.

³⁷ "New Church Theology." Rev. J. H. Smithson, p. 81.

³⁸ Christ should not be regarded as his *own* Father. God

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If there is anything that hinders God's work in the world, and about which He is sensitive, it is misunderstanding or misconception relating to Himself. Christ does not want any confusion in the minds of His people concerning His relations to His Father, because His love for the Father is very great. He would have us understand that His redeeming work is in *our* world, for he was born here and is a man of our kind. But His Father's work has to do with all worlds, and the entire Universe.

the Father was manifested *in* him and *by* him. Nevertheless the personality of the Son cannot be ignored. The Son is equal with the Father in this sense: He is a divine being, but he is dependent upon the Father because he is his Son. He prayed to the Father in the "days of his flesh," and still offers prayer to him and always will: "Seeing he ever liveth to make intercession."—Heb. vii. 25; Rom. viii. 34. But the Father *never prays*. There is no one to whom he could offer a petition. Christ is the "first-born of every creature"; but this does not mean that he was born in the spiritual world in the remote or indefinite past. If this were true, he would still be the Son and necessarily younger than his Father. The phrase, "born from everlasting" is vague and unintelligible. As the Word he was in the Father always. The expression, "first-born of every creature," is figurative and defines his rank and precedence as God's only Son. As such he is the "first and the last." He *began* at Bethlehem as a divine-human child, not as a *mature* being in a child's life and form; for he *grew* in wisdom as well as in stature.

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The Spirit is "grieved" when He is regarded as an "influence" or a "manifestation" rather than a divine person; for He is the "Spirit of Truth," and can work with greater freedom and success when the facts concerning Himself are understood.³⁸

He reveals Christ and the Father, and is for this world. His work was in nature at the time of the Creation. He is like us, yet divine, and we are like Him; for God said: "Let us make man in *our* own image, after our likeness." He is noticed in the beginning as one who acted in God the Father, and for Him: "And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters, and *God* said let there be light."³⁹

The union of the Father with the Son and the Holy Spirit is not more mysterious than many truths of the Bible. These three are God, and each is God. The Father ordains, the Son redeems, and the Spirit acts in them and for us. He prays in us making intercession; but He is the "Promise

³⁸ To sin against the Holy Spirit is to sin against a *person*, not a "manifestation" or an "attribute." We may be in danger of committing this sin. We should carefully avoid misunderstanding and conscious or unconscious *misrepresentation*. Christ noticed the difference between himself and the Spirit when he referred to this sin.—Matt. xii. 32.

³⁹ Gen. i.

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of the Father" sent in answer to the Saviour's prayer.

That which is most wonderful in God is His *comprehension*.

His environment is the Universe; and His general knowledge and control of the whole is connected with a grasp of the most minute details that is absolutely overwhelming for us to contemplate.

Some think that the Universe is unlimited, and undoubtedly it is in one respect, for it has no definite boundaries. Space is indefinite and infinite in its extent; but the numerous creations within it occupy but little territory when compared with that which is available. There is, therefore, an opportunity for God to extend His dominions, which is commensurate with His power and wisdom, and **ever will be.**



SIR OLIVER LODGE, F.R.S.

Member of the English Society for Psychical Research.—Chap. XII

"I am as convinced of continued existence on the other side of death as I am of existence here. It may be said, 'You can not be as sure as you are of sensory experience.' I say I can."

—*Sir Oliver Lodge, "Life and Death." Page 375.*

XII

PSYCHIC PHENOMENA AND THE OTHER WORLD

SPIRITUALISM attracts the attention of millions. To some it is amusing; others are alarmed, and not a few who are susceptible to psychic influences find in it gratification for their love of the marvelous, and sincerely believe that it enables them to demonstrate immortality.

Whatever it may be, it is not a recent discovery or revelation, although it has been known as "spiritualism" for a comparatively short time. Astrologers and magicians were common in ancient times, and had greater ability to open what *seemed* to be the other world to those who consulted them than any "medium" of this age. They controlled empires and moved armies by oracular predictions. The belief that they were inspired by invisible

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beings, and were familiar with the dead, was illustrated by phenomena, apparently miraculous.

Spiritualism was the religious belief of many civilized nations. It is something that can adapt itself to any age, and to any people, irrespective of their morals or intelligence. It seems to cater to the tastes, tendencies, and peculiarities of those who favor it. It is one of the most accommodating beliefs known to the world. It flourished in mythological times. The gods, as "spirits," were very responsive, but not always reliable, and often notorious for their vices.

People who are sincere, not very suspicious, and have the right "medium" can notice manifestations, and get responses to inquiries that do not interfere with their religious convictions, and in fact seem to favor them. The *same* "medium" can entertain others who have no principles that are worthy, and furnish them with something that is in harmony with their views.

The "medium" is not restricted in his vocation. He can be "all things to all men." If the conditions are unfavorable, and he is unable in some instances to produce the results anticipated by his audience, he can substitute something fraudulent, or spurious,

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hoping that it will not be detected; and the "spirits" will not condemn his methods. They will still cling to him in his perplexity. Even "good spirits"¹ can be induced to work and furnish "communications" in spite of these questionable expedients. The unscrupulous "medium" need not feel that his mixed motives are against him, if only he can conceal the facts; for he can depend upon the "spirits," no matter what *he* may be, if the psychic environment is suitable.

After making ample allowance for fraud, legerdemain, unconscious cerebration, imperceptible muscular action, and various optical illusions, and mental delusions that are sometimes associated with the efforts of those who are called "mediums," it is evident, to the careful observer, that a *force* apparently more or less intelligent and different from other known forces acts and seems to have personality and human characteristics.

There are forces in nature such as growth, or electricity, that exhibit wonderful power. They are governed by laws from which there is not much deviation, and conditions, that are quite well known. But when mind or personality is found, apparently

¹ So-called.

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of a supernormal kind, and having a strange power which seems to come from the other world, there is something deeply interesting to the psychologist. There are many who believe that God can and does reveal Himself in response to prayer. To them such revelations are often so clear and satisfactory that they amount to actual demonstration. But they know that they cannot have these manifestations of divine approval, unless they are sincere and right, at least, according to their own judgment of themselves. Such conditions are not essential to the success of a spiritual seance. The "medium" can act in almost every instance, if there is some confidence in him, and a degree of respect for the "spirits" he may introduce.

Under such circumstances it would be very difficult for a "spirit" to simulate God, or claim to be Christ, or the Holy Spirit. If he should say or do anything that was not appropriate in a divine Being, he could not sustain himself. And if intelligent believers in Deity should look for evidences of divine approval and favor in the average seance, they would not be satisfied; for such methods of communication and manifestation would not be in harmony with credible revelation concerning the

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divine character and work, or the ministry of angels.

There are those who are not unwilling to abandon themselves without much reserve to whatever may come from an unearthly source. Mixed in their motives and curious, they are attracted by spiritualism. This class is large. They are not very anxious to investigate carefully. They want to find something strange and "supernatural." They go, and look, and listen, and believe. They are surprised, for they find "something." They are startled, and sometimes infatuated, and eagerly look for more, not knowing what may happen.

Heavy pieces of furniture are moved by a power that seems to be superhuman. Messages from those who claim to be deceased friends, or relatives, come written in mysterious and apparently miraculous ways, and sometimes in languages unknown to any one present. Remarkable appearances and unaccountable sounds are noticed.

These things are bewildering and astonishing to many, for they can see no reason why the phenomena, at least, are not genuine.

Sometimes a "medium" who is a friend and has been known for years, in whom a family has con-

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fidence, is invited to come into a home, and entertain a select company in the evening. Remarkable manifestations occur. All are convinced that there is *something* in spiritualism. Many experiments are tried, and the interest increases; but they find much about it that is unreliable and unsatisfactory. Thoughtful ones may feel that it is dangerous and misleading, and should be banished from the home; but they will concede that it is a great mystery, very fascinating, and stimulating to the curiosity.

When invited to try their ability and see what they can do, some will consent, admitting that they know nothing about spiritualism, and that it is their first effort of the kind. They fail. Others are surprised to find that they have "mediumistic power." Furniture will move when lightly touched, and express intelligence. Planchette, or the "Talking Board," is very responsive, and will answer inquiries. "Spirit Writing" is tried. The hand of the new medium is "under control," and moves mysteriously. The company is interested in a "communication," apparently from the spiritual world, for it is signed with the name of a deceased person, who is known to some one present.

Spiritualism created great excitement in Western

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New York, about the middle of the nineteenth century. It seemed to be something new. It spread rapidly, and in a few years reached nearly every part of the civilized world. Within the past few years it has been associated to a greater extent with psychic phenomena of many kinds, such as hypnotism, clairvoyance, mental healing, and many psychological and scientific problems.

A flood of light has been thrown upon psychic phenomena, but "spiritualism" so-called is still a dark mystery to many. Men of acknowledged ability in the scientific world have attempted to fathom its depths, and analyze its sources, but they have not accomplished much in proportion to the effort made.² Error and fraud have been exposed, but there is an "unexplored remainder" perplexing to the astute psychologist.

Many people have accepted spiritualism as a religious belief, and there is no reason for impeaching their motives, or regarding them as insincere, or lacking in intelligence and discrimination, unless it can be shown that they are not willing to receive light, knowing that it is available.

² See *Transcendental Physics*, by Zollner. (Colby & Rich, Boston.)

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A "medium" who accepts the *Divine* Spirit as a guide, and will not entertain any other spirit without His consent and approval, will begin to know what he is about without much delay. There is danger in attempting to look into the spirit world, without the protection and guidance of Almighty God.

To sympathize with those who are longing for clearer light on the burning question, "Does death end all?" is appropriate. We are to "prove all things and hold fast that which is good." But first, it is best to know whether one is qualified for such work. Not until there has been a careful consideration of the subject, and an assurance has come, which amounts to a divine evidence and conviction that we are right, should we accept any statements from this source; or look with favor upon "communications" supposed to have come from persons in the other world.

Let scientists do what they can with psychic phenomena. The spiritual realm is outside of their domain. Neither heaven nor hell can be unveiled by experiments.

Spiritualism is regarded by many as purely *subjective*. "Spirits" are the fanciful creations of the

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“medium.” The genii invoked at his suggestion, who add to the interest of the occasion. The phenomena, if genuine, they think, are produced by “human magnetism.” And there are reasons for believing that this is the psychic force that enables a person to move a table or a heavy material body by lightly resting the hand upon it, thus, apparently, overcoming gravitation; and that audible sounds, and other phenomena sometimes associated with such action may have the same cause. But what is “magnetism” of *this kind*, and why should the spirits of deceased persons be connected with its use in this way, if such is the fact?

The power exerted by a “medium,” or a hypnotist, is *mental*, and when used may enable him to operate upon and control material things, or mind and matter combined as in a human being. This psycho-physical force has not been clearly defined, because so little is known about it.³

There is a hidden connection between mind and

³ Psychic ability to move or control material objects has been limited by unknown conditions to such an extent that it has seemed to be of no consequence to the casual observer. In fact, very few believe that such a force exists, or can be used; but it is susceptible to demonstration.

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matter, which has been overlooked by many eminent philosophers. It is beginning to attract attention. It has been unwisely condemned by the ignorant and superstitious. Those who have mysterious psychic ability are not always conscious of its value, or utility. They have generally used it for unworthy purposes, or neglected it.

The ability to act upon and control matter, by mental exertion only, is something that has come to us from a divine source by inheritance. If it were rescued from the mire into which it has fallen, and cultivated wisely, it would become an attribute of great value, for it is powerful.

Divine energy is very effective. It reaches mind and body. This can be demonstrated by any intelligent person who is willing to meet the necessary conditions.⁴

It is not difficult to see how "spirits" came to be associated with psychic phenomena of this kind, and regarded by many as the *cause* of it. Persons who were capable of producing these strange effects did not understand what was in themselves. Not

⁴ As God is a *spirit*, he must use spiritual or psychic forces when acting upon insensate material or the forces of nature.

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being able to account for what they saw and heard. they concluded that it must have a supernatural origin. They ascribed it to beings in the other world, and supposed that spirits were acting in and through them, hence they called themselves "mediums"; and those who advocated their views were called "spiritualists."*

Apparently there were reasons for this theory, for they could get the names of those who were dead by this process, and some ideas concerning another life; but these ideas were, in many instances, vague, contradictory, and unreliable.

The theology of spiritualism (if it has a theology) is so voluminous and varied that it comprehends every shade of opinion conceivable. It has to do with temperament, character, nationality, inclinations, fancies, special revelations, and many other things. Its creed is *broad* enough for anybody, and conformity to its requirements is not difficult.

It is certain that the *same phenomena* can be exhibited by those who have no faith in spiritualism, and who depend upon themselves for success. This fact is now quite generally understood. We may, therefore, safely conclude that what is known

*NOTE.—When "spiritualism" was first known in Western New York in 1848, science knew little or nothing about telepathy or the subconscious mind.

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as "spiritualism" originated in living persons endowed by nature with uncommon psychic ability, and that it does not necessarily have any connection with the other world.

Whether spiritual beings ever co-operate with those in our world, who are using occult mental forces, and assist them by suggestions, influence, or power of any kind, is an important question, and one that cannot be easily answered. Undoubtedly we are open to suggestions, that may come from the spiritual states both good and evil. The possibility of impressions reaching us from this source is understood by those who believe that there is an invisible world; and they include nearly all mankind, both civilized and savage. But in what ways can they act, in and through us? What are the limitations and possibilities? And may not thoughts from *ourselves*, or *others*, in this life, flow in, or spring up within us, and seem to come from the ultramundane realm? The ability to discriminate, analyze, and identify, what may come into the mind, under varied circumstances, and be able to demonstrate the fact to others, is not easy to find.

An attempt to *communicate with God* implies

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some knowledge of our relation to Him, and a belief that we can be kept from interference by other spirits who may be opposed to our design, and respond for him, or intercept the communication. Some care, and intelligence, and a consideration of our moral attitude from his point of view is known to be essential to success. But when a person throws himself open to influences from other sources in the spiritual world, and is not careful to notice whether his life is right in all respects or not, and cordially invites "spirits" to take possession of his faculties, and control and impress him, and suggest what they choose, and faith in their ability is expressed, he need not be surprised to find that he can get what seems to be a response. How reliable it is, or how much it is worth to him, or any one else, or who is the author of it, are important questions. The conditions are such that its genuineness is very doubtful.

The psychic phenomena associated with such a response may be wonderful; and the "medium" who acts for himself, or for others, may have some ability as a clairvoyant, or mind-reader; but this would not indicate that anything of importance had

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come from the spiritual world, even if the name of a deceased person were connected with it, because the conditions are such that no adequate protection against misrepresentation and mistakes is afforded.

To clear the mental environment, and find the truth, if any truth can be found in this way, is difficult work.

We are susceptible to impressions that emanate from *ourselves*. They may seem to have *another* source. There are subconscious depths in our nature from which suggestions may come, and if one has a tendency to jump at conclusions, such suggestions might be taken for revelations from the spiritual world. Thus, a man may become a hot-bed of fanaticism and cultivate a rank growth of delusions, which he may publish as inspired communications and obtain a large following. In this way many of the weak and erroneous religious beliefs of the world originated.

A psychologist, or "medium," who is able to produce impressions upon the mind of another, may succeed in fastening a thought in the mind of a susceptible person in the audience which will be taken for a message from the other world, and the "medium" may think that it is, not knowing that

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it emanated from his own brain. But he can “*prove*” to the satisfaction of many who are present that it came from a dead relative, or friend, for says he: “Do we not have the name of our deceased friend, and notice these remarkable manifestations? Are they not miraculous? Are they not the work of spirits?” It is the strange *phenomena* that attract attention and seem to demonstrate the genuineness of the message; but therein lies a fallacy.

The mental atmosphere of a seance, or company, who are looking for communications, or manifestations, from “spirits” is very complex, when it is understood that something is expected from human beings in the other world.

The “spirits” may entertain and even amuse the audience. They may be able to locate a lost article, or prescribe for the sick, and show that their counsel is valuable, by reminding the inquirer of some things in his history that were unknown to any one but himself. This could be accomplished by one who has some ability as a clairvoyant, or mind-reader, without any assistance from spirits.

Hopeful predictions and some worthy sentences may come as communications. Very little is said

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about hell that would make it look dark, and dreadful, or have a tendency to trouble the conscience of any one present. Sentimental views of heaven are common. The "spirits" are fond of music, and can do better sometimes if it is introduced. There is something very human and earthly about such efforts; and it will be found by the acute and discriminating observer that their quality can generally be gauged by the kind of audience present on such occasions. The mentality of the entire company is represented when it is "en rapport," or in relation to the object before them in such a way that their faculties are combined and concentrated, and results of a certain kind are expected. What comes may be nothing more than a vague expression of their combined sentiments and desires. This may be accompanied by peculiar manifestations that are supposed to be the work of spirits, but really are produced by persons present who have psychic forces in themselves that make such phenomena possible, when the conditions are suitable, whether they are conscious or unconscious of such power.

An interesting experiment is often tried with success. An article is hidden in a room where a

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company is sitting. Some one is brought in who does not know where it is, or what it is. He is blindfolded and asked to find it. As the attention of the entire company is concentrated upon him, he will begin to move toward the hidden object, and if he is somewhat susceptible to psychic influences, will find it without difficulty. While moving it is noticed that he is controlled by "something," and it is understood that he is really moved by the company, as he co-operates with them in the effort.⁶

Communications from "spirits" can be obtained in this way, and they may proceed from the same source, viz.: the spirits in *earthly forms* that constitute the audience. No others are necessarily involved.

That discarnate spirits may be present and able to make impressions and suggestions cannot be denied; for we are all open, more or less, to the spiritual world on all occasions, and under all circumstances; but it is folly to suppose that they are responsible for the psychic phenomena developed, or any ideas that are worthy of consideration, especially if they seem to be *heavenly* in their origin. These

⁶ A mind-reader or clairvoyant may succeed without the co-operation of the company.

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things come from the "medium" or the company present, whether they are conscious of it or not.

Holy angels act in God, in an exclusive and absolute sense. They do not appear, or communicate, unless they have important messages to be delivered to chosen persons, whose devotion and loyalty to God are well understood, and whose intelligence, and discrimination in such matters, cannot be doubted by the most judicious people. They have no messages of their own; everything they have to offer is from a divine source. Such messengers have always been able to identify themselves, and prove the genuineness of their revelations to the entire satisfaction of the chosen witnesses to whom they have come.

How ridiculous to suppose that they would entertain or amuse a promiscuous audience, or accompany a medium in his travels, and assist him in the production of mysterious psychic phenomena, or prescribe for his patients as he fell into a trance, and uttered or wrote automatically some things for their benefit. Nor should we believe that benevolent devils, or semi-religious and charitable spirits are engaged in such work, because of their interest in humanity, or the medium, or for any other reason.

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Let healers and psychologists and clairvoyants, and mediums of all kinds, have credit for what they do. If, in some instances, they have helped people, it should be acknowledged and their work appreciated; but these things should not be associated in an obscure and mysterious way with persons in the spiritual states.

People who enter the other world are examined and judged. They must know what they are about without unnecessary delay. Decisions are rendered as clear light comes. All find that they are either good or bad in character or tendencies. If they are right, they use their opportunities. If they are bad, they sink rapidly into weakness and contempt. They have no interest in people in this life that is worthy, and no desire to help or bless humanity. They grow worse, and may become confirmed and unmitigated fiends, who do nothing but suggest evil thought, tempting and ruining those who are susceptible to such influences.⁶

The psychic phenomena associated with what is called "spiritualism," and supposed by some to be a part of it, are worthy of attention. It is an inter-

⁶ See Ch. x.

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esting study, and has possibilities that will make it valuable when it is more perfectly understood. It should not be mixed with anything that has to do with the other world. If it is, then responses will come, *apparently* from the other world; because it is, in a degree, an echo of the mentality of those who are experimenting with it. It should, therefore, be carefully separated from everything that would create misunderstanding.

Spiritualism, as a *religious belief*, is exceedingly delusive. It may represent almost anything good, bad, or indifferent. We need not be surprised to find many sincere and intelligent spiritualists whose lives are worthy; but there may be a mistake about the *source* of their inspiration and goodness.

For those who are anxious to know more about the spiritual world there is great encouragement. The keys can be found. Thirst for such knowledge is legitimate and there is unbounded gratification for the sincere student who takes the right course; but it is not found by those who regard spiritualism as a good opening.

To some it is really dangerous, for in addition to the mysterious human elements, which *seem*, to the unsophisticated, to be supernatural, there is a

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chance for infernal spirits to make impressions and suggestions that are misleading, knowing that identification is very difficult, and that they may be credited with some things for which they are not responsible, and are incapable of doing. Simulation is common. Fictitious names may be given. There is often a tendency to conceal or misrepresent; therefore, very little reliance should be placed upon such communications, for their source is indefinite.

There is moral danger for the weak and credulous. Many good people are deluded and wrecked by spiritualism. They feel at first that its methods are suspicious and questionable; but they are curious and become infatuated by it, and fall into grievous errors, because they try to build upon something that has no solid foundation.

The gold-hunter who works in the dark is unfortunate. He cannot know what he is doing. He may hear that he is rich, but he is poor indeed if he cannot verify such rumors. As the mariner approaches an unknown country, dim outlines enveloped in mist may be seen. Suddenly the ship is in midst of a dense fog, and the chilly atmosphere indicates ice and a perilous region. Sound-

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ings are taken rapidly, and the dismal wail of the danger signal is heard. Nothing but the utmost caution can prevent disaster, and if anchorage can be found the captain waits for *clearer* weather.

All Christendom believes that legions of spiritual beings inhabit the earth; yet very few have an intelligent and realistic conception of the fact. Light comes to those who ask for it, and are willing to meet the conditions that will enable them to receive it, but it must come from a *divine Source*, or evidences of its genuineness and authenticity, that are worthy of belief, cannot be found.

The propinquity of the inconceivable multitudes, who have lived and died, whose number, when compared with earth's swarming millions, is as the unbounded ocean to a drop, is the more easily discerned when trial, cruel as the grave, associated with a sublime purpose, has clarified and exalted the perceptions.

Bunyan's spiritual conflicts, and unjust imprisonment, prepared him for his immortal work in which there are so many vivid conceptions of things invisible and eternal. Dante's early disappointment and banishment opened the door of hell, and carried

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him, in vision, to the sublime heights of paradise. His ideas have interested the world, because he put his life into them. They were a *poet's* conceptions. What he has *said* concerning the other world is not so important as what he was as a man and a genius; for what he has written enables us to look into his mind and feel the influence of his intense and exalted nature.

There are reasons for believing that Joan of Arc, the maid of Orleans, was remarkable for her openness to the spiritual world, even in childhood. In a vision she saw herself at the head of the armies of France, leading them triumphantly to battle. Then came years of struggle and suffering. Could she tell the vision to the King? How would he receive it? What could a girl do on the battlefield after brave men had failed? At length, as she reached womanhood, courage came and an unflinching trust. She explained her mission at Court, and was received with favor. She inspired confidence. The enemy fled in dismay before her furious charge, and were afraid to meet her in deadly encounter. The nation rejoiced in her success. Intrepid maiden! Foul suspicion, ingrat-

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itude and cruel martyrdom could not shake her constancy. "We are lost," said the secretary of Henry VI., as her life went out. "We have burnt a saint."

Trance is a mental condition arising from the suspension of some vital functions, and the exaltation of intuition. In this abnormal state one may perceive what the senses cannot apprehend. Such knowledge is not always reliable, but it affords evidence of superior powers to be developed after death.

Super-sensuous perception is not necessarily a miracle of knowledge. It is of many kinds and grades, ranging from mere impressions to perpetual open vision, from the partial closing of the senses to the most profound and death-like sleep. It may be produced by a hypnotist, or come at will, or at irregular intervals without perceptible reasons. It may be caused by disease, or weakness, or come to one in the fullness of bodily health and mental capacity.

The trance of St. Peter was regarded by him as a fortunate phenomenon, because it was associated with a vision that enabled him to open a door for the Gospel that would make it available for the

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whole world. It did not prevent his immediate journey to Cesarea, where, with words of wisdom, he settled one of the most important questions of his times.⁷

The remarkable trance of St. Paul, in which he was carried in vision to the Third Heaven, not knowing whether he was in the mortal body or out of it, and heard unspeakable words, did not affect his logic unfavorably, or impair the value of his celebrated epistles.⁸

Super-sensuous perception may be the vehicle of divine revelations, or of truth and error mixed. To know the difference between divine illumination and exalted intuition, simulations, and erroneous impressions from many sources, is not easy even for those who rank high among the world's great teachers.

Truth of this kind should be tested by a consensus of opinion, coming from the most intelligent and sincere of all classes. This should be supplemented by an evidence and conviction in those who think they are able to judge in such matters, which has divine approval. Even this sense of approval should be tested by a great variety of severe, impar-

⁷ Acts x.

⁸ Acts xxii. 17; and II. Cor. xii. 1-4.

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tial and discriminating methods, especially by facts that are self-evident to the candid and judicious observer; for error sometimes lurks under what is supposed to have *divine* support.

Then that which is called the truth, because it has been carefully examined and thoroughly sifted, should not be considered infallible, if it is found that some of it is still erroneous, and needs revision and correction.

Emanuel Swedenborg's description of a fire in Stockholm, when he was in Gottenburg, three hundred miles away, shows that he had power to discern that which is not apparent in this life unless trance, a mesmeric state, clairvoyance, or supernormal perception of some kind exists. Clairvoyance of this kind has always been rare; but in his case it was also associated with exceptional intelligence, culture, and moral greatness.

The extraordinary development of his intuitions, which he began to cultivate somewhat late in life, led him to conclude that his "spiritual senses" had been opened in a miraculous manner. He began to be more deeply interested in the Bible, and adopted new methods of interpretation.

Not clearly distinguishing between supernormal or

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exalted intuitive perception, and special revelations from God, he entertained some interesting, but erroneous, views of the spiritual world.

Some of the great underlying principles upon which he built his system of theology are worthy of attention. Those who are interested in his works need not necessarily reject that which seems to be divinely inspired, for his devotion and faith were not without their reward.

It appears that he did not make an intelligible or reasonable distinction between God the Father and His Son.⁹

Epileptic fits and spasmodic convulsions threw Mohammed into the morbid dreams from which the Koran was evolved. This unnatural excitement was followed by a fiery enthusiasm, full of fatalism and phantasy. He felt a kind of ecstasy, or *afflatus*, which *seemed* to be divine. He regarded it as such. He was a man of ideas, and remarkable ambition, and when he declared himself to be a prophet, he found followers; hence we have Mohammedanism.

Sublime faith and absolute devotion may be connected with the most rank, blind, contagious

⁹ See p. 280, Ch. xi.

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fanaticism. It is the religious element that makes it attractive, disguising the truth.

Revivals of religion have sometimes been accompanied by exhibitions of weakness and extravagance that were hard for the thoughtful and devout to understand. To distinguish between that which emanated from crude, or extremely susceptible human nature, under pressure and excitement, and that which may have had its source in mysterious divine impulses, has been difficult.

If such conspicuous demonstrations and unique phenomena proceed from a spiritual and heavenly agency, then all unfavorable comment or restraint should be avoided, and these things should be cultivated and encouraged. If it is impossible to know whether these manifestations are human or divine in their origin, and an attempt to explain them, or caution the audience, would result in misunderstanding and interfere with the interests of the work, then the less said about them the better. But why should heavenly joys and melting raptures be associated with erratic ways? Why this wild excitement and unseemly hilarity?

What is known as "the power" in religious meetings where intense interest and deep emotion

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prevails is still a mystery. Persons suddenly fall prostrate and are insensible for a while. Others jump, scream, vociferate, or laugh with reckless disregard of propriety.

People who are affected in this way are not always able to give reasons for it. The explanation made by some is not satisfactory to those who have exalted conceptions of God and His methods. "We abandon ourselves entirely to the influences of the Holy Spirit, and are not responsible for the results. These things may be unintelligible and repulsive to those who do not understand, and create much prejudice; but we believe them to be expressions of divine power."

That the manifestations of the Spirit in humanity should have the utmost latitude and freedom from resistance will be conceded by those who believe that he seeks expression through all who meet the conditions that make divine union possible. But to hold Him responsible for that which is contrary to the best ideas of propriety among intelligent and sensible people, and teach that "we should be willing to become fools for God's sake, for He may require such a sacrifice," is to make the truth abominable, and true religion ridiculous.

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The manifestations of the Divine Spirit on the Day of Pentecost were very unusual, and attracted the attention of multitudes, but there was nothing in them that would indicate recklessness or extravagance in expression. The disciples felt a powerful inspiration, which was noticed by all present, but their words were weighty and impressive, and the result of their efforts correspondingly important.

Those who were opposed tried to minify their work by claiming that they were slightly intoxicated. This, however, they did not state as a fact, but "mocking," said: "These men are full of *new* wine."¹⁰

To distinguish between divine manifestations and that which is human, but mysterious, has been difficult from the beginning. Even in the Apostolic Age there was trouble of this kind in the newly organized churches. In Corinth there was confusion and misunderstanding. Some of the Christians in their religious meetings began to speak in unknown tongues. They regarded this phenomenon as divine and miraculous. They thought they were inspired by the Holy Spirit. They were sternly

¹⁰ Acts ii.

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rebuked by St. Paul. He accused them of "talking to the air."¹¹

About A.D. 170, Montanus, of Phrygia, began to be in trances, raptures, and ecstasies, in which he uttered what were taken to be prophecies. He claimed divine inspiration. He asserted that he was nothing but a *medium*, having no *will* or *word of his own*. In the name of the Holy Spirit he said: "Behold the man as a lyre, and I sweep over him as the plectrum." Undoubtedly he was sincere, but his delusions were many. If he were living in this age he might be called a "spiritualist," or possibly a "holy crank." He certainly was an extremist of the most pronounced type.

The rise of the "Irvingites" in London about 1830 was associated with mysterious psychic phenomena, which Edward Irving, a Presbyterian minister, did not understand. He was an eloquent preacher and attracted crowds of hearers; but strange and unfortunate things happened to persons in his congregations, for which he seems to have been responsible and yet unconscious of the fact.

Mary Campbell, a young Scotch woman, who had been earnestly praying for the gift of the Holy

¹¹ I. Cor. xiv. 9.

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Ghost, began to prophesy, and speak with fervor in an "unknown tongue." The same phenomenon became manifest in other persons. Mr. Irving was at first doubtful as to the origin of these "gifts," but he soon owned them to be from God, and allowed them exercise in his church, and wrote and spoke in their favor. The prophecies (which to us, who now dispassionately read them, appear in no-wise remarkable) were in English. The "tongue" which those who uttered it, supposed, for a while, to be the living speech of some far-off country, was pronounced by philologists to be totally unlike any known language. The opinion was speedily adopted by believers that the "tongue" was a supernatural sign of divine power. Mr. Irving was tried for heresy by his church and condemned, but his followers gathered around him, and organized what, at length, became another sect, known as The Catholic Apostolic Church.

Speaking in an unknown tongue to an audience with speaker and hearers under the impression that God is trying to edify them is arrant nonsense, and worse. It is blasphemous for enlightened people to entertain such conceptions of God and His work.

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“Communications” in strange languages have been received under the auspices of skilful “mediums” when the psychic conditions were favorable. The methods by which they were produced seemed, also, to be inexplicable and miraculous. This is supposed to be proof positive that such writing was supernatural, and originated in the other world. This need not necessarily be understood, for the psychic wonder of its production may have been natural, its cause being in the “medium.” The ideas could flow in from a variety of human sources, interesting to the psychologist, but difficult to locate or analyze.

There is something very remarkable about memory and the laws of association that is revealed at critical moments in life.

A person while drowning may review his entire history, including the most minute details, covering a period of forty years or more, in less than five minutes. Many authentic instances of this kind are on record.

Coleridge, writing of the mysterious laws of memory and the association of ideas, notices a fact which he learned while traveling in Germany in 1798. In a town of Germany a young woman of

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twenty-five years, who could neither read nor write, was suffering with a fever, during which she was incessantly talking in Greek, Latin, and Hebrew. The case attracted much attention, and many sentences which she uttered were taken down by learned persons present. These sentences were found to be coherent and intelligible, but having little or no connection with each other. Of the Hebrew only a small portion could be traced to the Bible; the remainder was that form of Hebrew which is usually called "Rabbinic."

Ignorant, simple, and harmless, as this young woman was known to be, no one suspected any deception, and no explanation, for a long time, could be given, although inquiries were made in different families where she had resided as a servant. At last a clue to the mystery was discovered. When a child she had listened to a learned man, in whose home she was employed, as he read selections from his favorite authors in the original languages. It seems to have been a case of abnormal recollection.¹²

Great harm has been done by those who have tried to make the *divine Spirit responsible* for their follies and idiosyncrasies.

¹² See Upham's "Mental Philosophy" (abridged), Ch. viii.

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Some have thought that "slaying power" (so-called) was a sure evidence of His mighty work, and have devoutly prayed that the "slain" of the Lord might be many. Such prayers have been offered when special religious meetings were held and good results were expected by those who did not realize that such phenomena would be not only repulsive but alarming to many thoughtful and sincere Christians, and that it might have no special relation to the success of the work. It should not, therefore, be cultivated or regarded as a manifestation of the Spirit.

A writer on this subject mentions the following incident:¹³ "A preacher in early Methodism, while discoursing on the story of Gideon's victory, shouted, 'The sword of the Lord and of Gideon.' He then *swayed his hand* to the right and people fell by the score to the ground. He repeated the words, *swayed his hand* to the left, and they fell in like numbers in that direction." "There is such a thing (he says, referring to this occurrence) as the power of the Holy Ghost. While some of its manifestations are exceptional and phenomenal, yet, it may accompany the ordinary Christian life so

¹³ Dr. S. A. Keen, Pentacostal Papers, p. 69.

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that it shall pray, testify, exhort, teach, and live, with wonderful effectiveness." This eminent evangelist and author evidently believed that power affecting an audience in this peculiar way was an extraordinary expression of divine energy.

Whereas it is clear to the student of psychology that the swaying of the hand accompanied by words that fix, and hold the attention, is a method of throwing off psychic power known as the "mesmeric pass." The speaker, probably, possessed ability of this kind, and the audience was under his control.

A like phenomenon, but more appropriate, was noticed in the midst of a sermon by the late Bishop Matthew Simpson, when many in the audience arose unconsciously and leaned forward toward the speaker, as the interest became intense.*

*NOTE.—I was present and saw this.

Undoubtedly there was a very marvellous manifestation of the Holy Spirit on this occasion and in the above instances, but I am not sure that he was responsible for the peculiar phenomena associated with it.

The Spirit of God *must be right* in all things. He cannot interfere with personal liberty in the slightest degree, nor can He withhold the sense of His favor from one who trusts Him fully, even though such an one may not clearly understand divine methods, and claim a heavenly origin for that which is human and objectionable.

There are many things in good people that do not bring to them a sense of God's disapproval,

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because they are *not able* to discriminate wisely and avoid them. Hence, they are quite confident and feel that they are right, especially when great and wonderful revelations of divine love and glory are received. If these manifestations are mixed with strange psychic phenomena they believe that *all* is from the same source. And any attempt to convince them that a distinction should be made might result in worse error and confusion, and possibly the wreckage of faith in any *divine* manifestations that were unusual.

For this reason many eminent and judicious teachers in the churches have been silent concerning these mysterious things, or have expressed themselves indefinitely. In most instances they have confessed their inability to make distinctions that would be generally understood, and, therefore, have been careful not to condemn that which did not appear to conflict with fervent devotion and intense loyalty to God. They have been bothered with "wild fire," which they did not see how to extinguish without great danger to vital Christianity.

To know how to make a distinction under varying circumstances and conditions without doing any harm, and yet to encourage and stimulate every-

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thing in human nature that is good and heavenly, while expecting divine manifestations of a most interesting, vivid, and powerful kind, is very important. Therefore, anything that is supposed to be an expression of divine power, or favor, in devotional meetings or evangelistic services that is not in harmony with what we ought to expect from a divine Source, should not be regarded as such, or even tolerated.

Divine power is distinguished by the moral and spiritual changes it produces in character. The evidences are superhuman love, heavenly joy, knowledge of sins forgiven, soundness of mind, and strength under trial. It does not exclude rapture, ecstasy, and remarkable demonstrations of mental and physical energy. It glorifies true manhood and womanhood, and is the opposite of all that involves weakness, excess, extravagance of manner, crudity, and absurdity.

The point of danger has been connected with an important condition very essential to the seeker of divine power, known as "entire consecration." This should not be defined or understood so as to convey the impression that thoughtfulness and responsibility for himself on the **part of the seeker**

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and recipient of such gifts is not of much consequence.

The person who regards himself as simply an "instrument" in the hands of God, needs clearer light. This was the mistake of Montanus, and his adherents, and modern Montanists are not uncommon.

That which makes us desirable to God is not simply uncompromising loyalty. Certainly this should be apparent; but He would, also, notice the expression and development of freedom of thought and opinion, and all that constitutes personality and individuality. Thus a person has the honor of being a *friend* rather than a "medium" to be operated upon. He who *makes himself* a medium of this kind, and does not find success in his work as a teacher of the truth, among the intelligent and influential, should not ascribe his failure to a want of appreciation on their part.

Acting *in* God, and *with* Him, is something very different from being *acted upon* by Him, for it means *intelligent* co-operation. He who takes this course will, in time, be able to understand himself and know the difference between psychic phenomena and divine manifestations. If he has psychic ability

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that is of any value he will discover it, and learn how to use it with advantage.

“Divine healing” must also furnish evidence that it is divine; if not, it may be produced by the psychic energy of the healer only, which is not to be despised if it is effective.

The best way to test divine healing is to try it in cases that have been abandoned by competent physicians, and pronounced by them absolutely incurable, or beyond the hope of recovery. Then the healer should do nothing with the patient until he has the consent of all the friends concerned, whether they have faith in his methods or not. If he succeeds under such conditions he will command the respect and attention of good judges.

This was the method of Christ and His disciples. The fact, too, that they could raise the dead proved that their work was divine, to the satisfaction of all sensible and impartial witnesses. They were not, therefore, held responsible for the lives of those who might have been cured by medical practitioners, if they had been called in time, or given a fair opportunity.

God’s ability to cure diseases is as great as ever, but He does not act unless it is expedient, and it

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is for Him to determine the conditions that make miracles advisable. Doubtless many cases of divine and wonderful healing have been noticed in this age by unimpeachable witnesses, and greater things are to be revealed; for many are carefully looking into the conditions that make such work possible and are able to meet them.

Ignoring a disease, or calling it something else, may be helpful in some instances, but there is still a number of maladies and casualties that will not yield to such treatment.

Some say that they have found relief by touching the bones of a departed saint, or taking bread pills, which the doctor called a "valuable medicine." If they feel better why try to prove that they are deceived? There is some virtue in an idea when people *think so*.

Inexplicable forces emanating from human personality have been deified by those whose reverence would not allow a careful investigation with their utility in view.

Personality is a mental atmosphere which envelops every human being. Its strength and quality is the measure of influence. It is what is sometimes called *presence*. It may be very penetrating and pervasive.

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A person with keen intuitions and susceptible nature can detect the presence of another, without any evidences from the senses, and will turn around to see who it is.

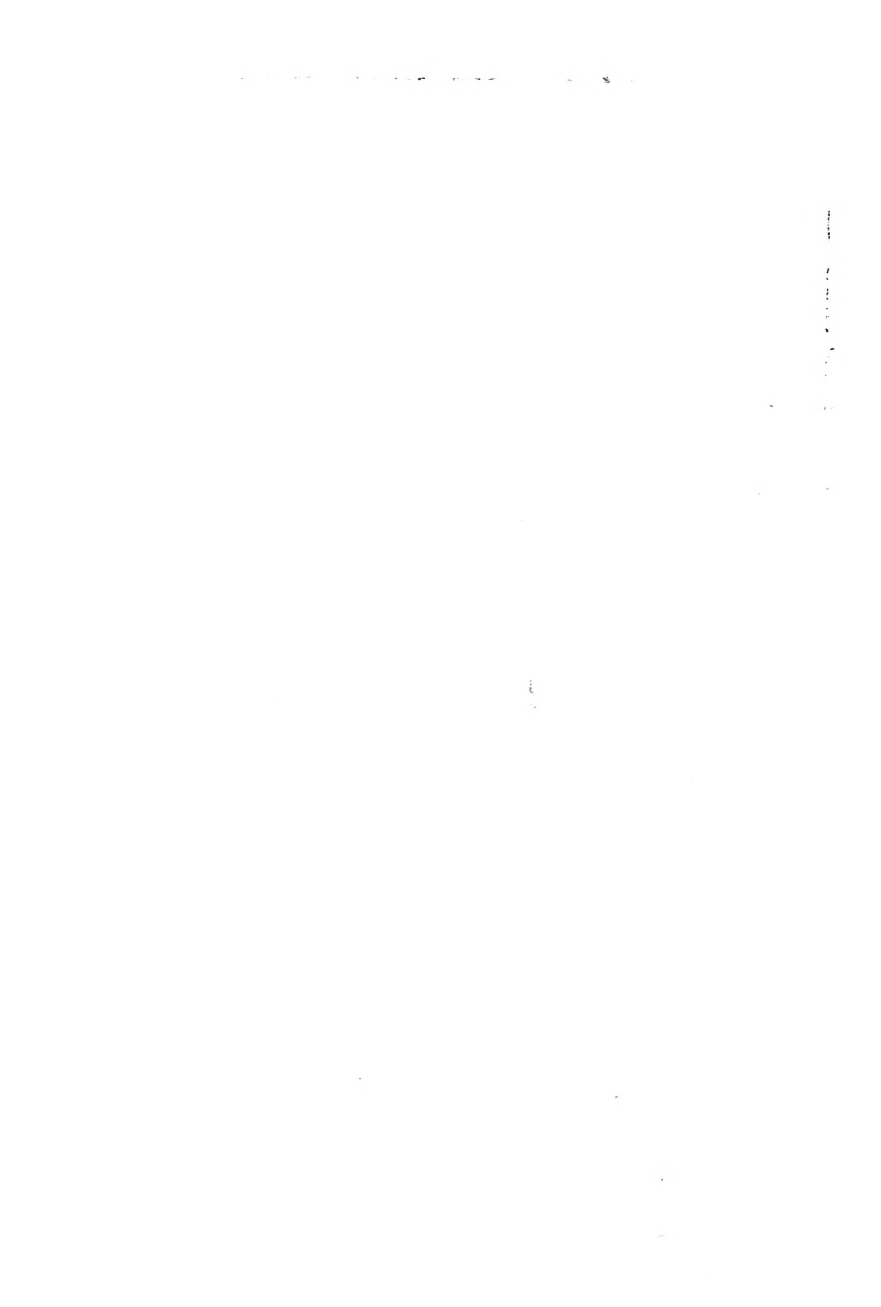
This potent energy, the very essence of being, has been strangely misunderstood. The forces of nature have been studied with astonishing success, while this has been confined to the narrow province of psychometry, or neglected as doubtful and unimportant. Its possibilities are amazing. This fact is becoming more apparent to men of science, who are now beginning to study its laws and limitations. There is an increasing demand for valuable literature on this subject. Important discoveries are soon to be made that will transcend anything that we have known.

For years men looked with eager eyes on the rushing, roaring rapids of Niagara. Could this tremendous force be harnessed to the wheels of industry? Skillful engineers found that the strongest machinery was shattered by the fury of this king of cataracts. Some thought this wonder of the world should not be used for practical purposes. At last objections were overcome. Electricity was wedded to gravitation. Immense power was made

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available without affecting the scenery unfavorably. The mighty flood, seemingly undiminished, still pours its thundering tons of water into the awful abyss, while rainbows gather in eternal beauty.

The line between the natural and the supernatural has receded. Doctrines and creeds are modified and adjusted when they are found to be unreasonable and obsolete. Superior criticism with stern hand examines the sacred records. The great journals and periodicals of the day bring their treasures of universal knowledge. The world is looking for *facts*, and will not be satisfied without them. The age is practical. Therefore, the advantages of the hour are great. Tennyson's "Fifty Years of Europe" must soon be as "a cycle of Cathay."



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