

Psychic philosophy as the foundation of a religion of natural law / by V.C. Desertis ; with introductory note by Alfred Russel Wallace.

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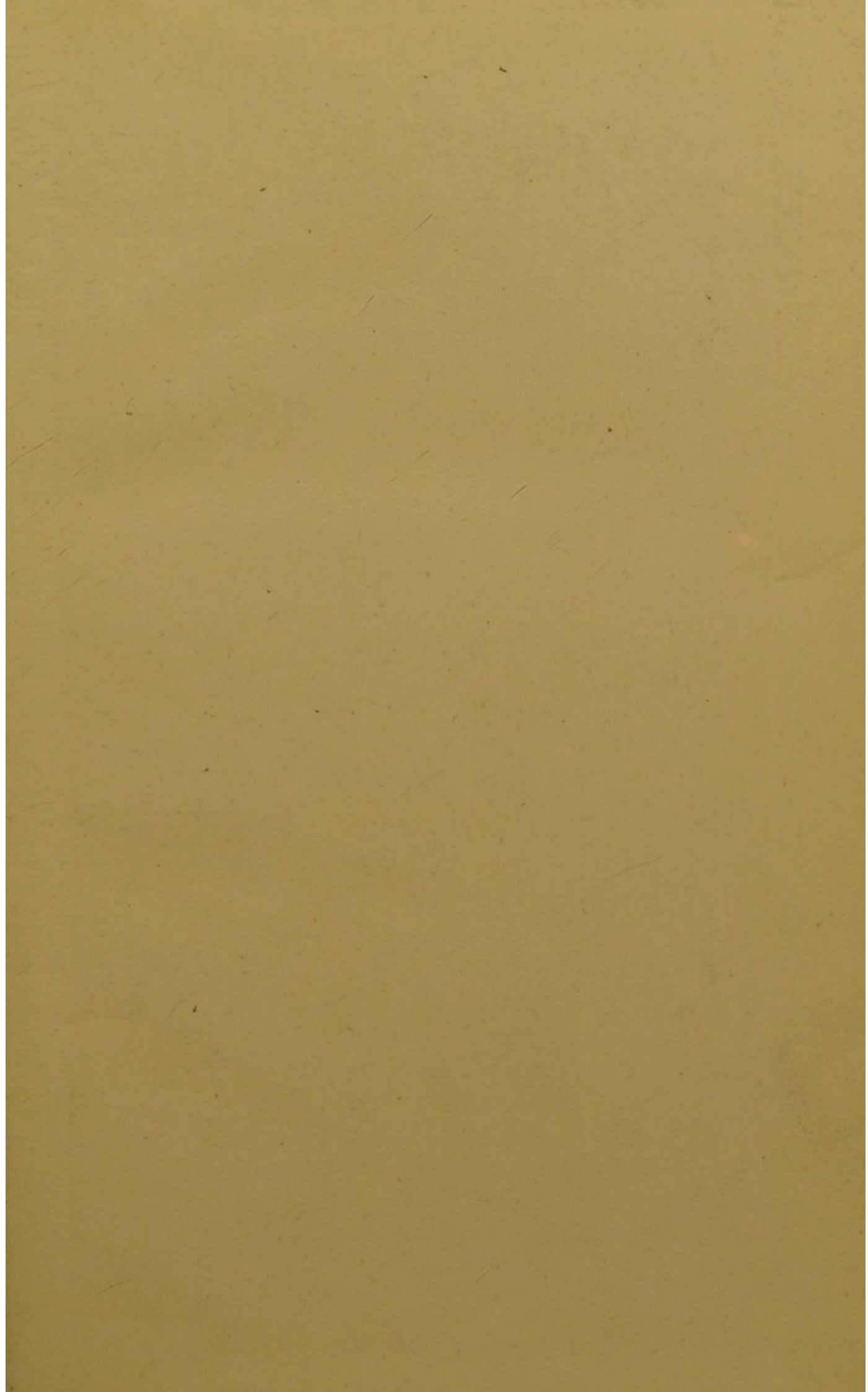


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PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY

THE UNIVERSITY OF CHICAGO

PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY

AS THE FOUNDATION OF A
RELIGION OF NATURAL LAW

BY

V. C. DESERTIS

WITH INTRODUCTORY NOTE BY

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE
D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S.

SECOND EDITION

LONDON
PHILIP WELLBY
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PSYCHIC PHILOSOPHY

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INTRODUCTORY NOTE TO FIRST EDITION

HAVING had the opportunity of reading the proofs of the present volume (the author of which is unknown to me), I have been asked by the publisher to say a few words by way of introduction.

It was well observed by the late Dr. W. B. Carpenter that new and startling facts, however well attested, are often rejected because they are held to be opposed to the indisputable conclusions of science; hence people find that "there is no place in the fabric of their thought into which such facts can be fitted," and until such a place is made for them further evidence of the same nature is useless. One great merit of the present work is, that it overcomes this initial difficulty by showing that the facts of psychical research and modern spiritualism are really in harmony with the most advanced conclusions of science, and especially with modern conceptions as to the constitution of matter and of ether.

Taking these facts and conclusions as starting-points, the author develops, with great lucidity, a

philosophy of the universe and of human nature in its threefold aspect of body, soul, and spirit. He shows how we are thus led to a Religion of Natural Law, which, when thoroughly realised, becomes a sure guide to right action both for individuals and communities, and often affords a clue to the solution of the most vital political and social problems.

The tone of the work is throughout sympathetic and elevated. It is full of suggestive ideas and high moral teachings; and it is well calculated to raise the ethical standard of public life, and thus assist in the development of a higher civilisation.

ALFRED R. WALLACE.

October 1895.

P R E F A C E
TO THE SECOND EDITION

IT has been alleged against this book that it passes by Christianity with brusque indifference. This is so foreign to my thought, that I have looked through it carefully (but in vain) for any words whose sense, apart from a supposed bias, would warrant such a conclusion.

In saying that it did not enter into my plan to touch the vast subject of the relation of the psychic facts to modern Christianity, I may perhaps partially disarm this class of my critics. But I wish to summarise my position in the matter, for the difficulty is one which is widely felt.

“Truths,” I apprehend, are verbal statements of facts, material or spiritual, experienced or inferred. Whether inspired or not, those statements can only (apart from telepathic possibilities) be rendered in words. Spiritual facts, so far as I have been able to understand, are of the nature of force, and are therefore to the human intelligence starting-points, or principles, of understanding and of action. As they are not perceptible to us except by their phenomena, they must, whether by these or by words, necessarily be expressed symbolically, though they may be experienced actually as the illumination of the Divine Spirit in the soul.

On this definition it follows that though principles exist apart from the minds which formulate them, truths do not. They are products of the formulating mind: if it is discerning and noble, they will be varied and exalted; if otherwise, they will be material and limited, only ceasing to deserve their name when the mind is actually vitiated in its function by indifference or bias.

It is, therefore, perfectly natural that Christianity, according to our Lord, should be a life in daily personal touch with "the Father" and Him; that St. John should represent it as pre-eminently love, and St. Paul as pre-eminently faith, and some modern churches as pre-eminently tenets. Minds who look on body as a reality, and soul as a quality thereof, naturally express spiritual things by words used in their material limitations of physical fact. When they come to handle the fiery words of those who employed glowing metaphor, white-hot from transcendental experience, they are soon involved in endless contradictions between the inner meaning and the outward form, between one metaphor and another, between the two poles of the same principle, between the facts of evolution and those of inspired insight. The contradictions of this type of mind are so perplexed, its literalisms so mutually destructive, that its only possible reply to those who point them out is by anathema.

This book claims recognition for facts till now generally ignored, and still often denied, though signs are not wanting that they will soon come into remarkable prominence. These facts lead up to the inference that soul is a living ethereal organism which survives

the change called death. This inference, combined with the fact that all our formulations of spiritual principle must be by words necessarily symbolical, harmonises the agnostic position that we can have no knowledge of the absolute, with the Christian conception of one Church of quick and dead, and with the moral imperative.

This inference, if experimentally supported, cannot fail to elucidate the writings of those who, as I have noted on pp. 100, 210, 211, and elsewhere, were profoundly penetrated by this conviction and all that it implies. The claim is that this inference is borne out by evidence, by transcendental physical experiences, by the testimony of those who have crossed over the river of death, and that this evidence agrees with historical, biblical, exegetical, and scientific evidence. If this claim be contrary to essential Christianity it must fail, for it would then be at issue with human capacity for truth. For it has been well said, that if a mere falsehood could make its way out of a remote Galilean village; could reform the hideous corruption of Rome, corruption so foul that historians dare not give in all their naked horror the pictures of society drawn by Ovid, Juvenal, and Martial; if it could command the allegiance of the hardy warriors of the North, whose swords had won for them the empire of the world; could become the belief of the bravest, truest, and most honourable among the nations; could foster these virtues as the highest in man; and after inspiring the evangelist, nerving the martyr, guiding priest and warrior, king and saint, through the ages that are gone; if, after purifying the lives and com-

forting the deaths of millions, this belief could yet turn out but a lie in the end, then indeed our best criteria of truth and falsehood are lost, and we can only turn in disdainful Pyrrhonism from a record which would revolt every instinct of the human heart.

But this is not so. Creeds are but the vehicles of principles. The various, but still effective, consolations of many religions prove that it is not the form of dogma that strengthens and consoles, but the principle that is enshrined therein. It is not the theological definition of a remote Christ that has uplifted the hearts of men, but the contact with a living Power. It is not the particular presentment under which a future life is given, but the conviction of the reality of that life which is a check on misdirection of effort in this present one. Any forms under which principles can be realised by different minds are co-operant to one end, and difference in form is not necessarily falsehood in idea, though it must imply insight limited in different directions. Even the rewards of a sensuous heaven and the tortures of Tophet, common to certain phases of Jewish, Moslem, and Christian beliefs, are substantially true in so far as they convey to some minds the idea of presiding justice, however low such an idea of that justice may be.

But forms of teaching inconsistent with real discoveries in other fields do not convey principles. Knowledge progresses, and fresh adjustments are from time to time needful. These are, unfortunately, always acrimonious, because men neglect the kernel to fight over the shell. Inferring that every positive perception of mankind corresponds to some real

principle, I neither would, nor can, avoid the conclusion that the dogmas which have appealed, and do appeal, to so many as soul-satisfying statements, enshrine eternal verities. But I am unable to treat the current literalist presentment of these with the reverence and sympathy which they themselves inspire.

It seems to me that as objects differ by their reactions, so spirits differ by their character; and that as a metal which should put on the properties of gold one after another—its colour, its weight, its malleability, its chemical affinities, and so forth—would be in each degree liker to gold, but in the end would be not merely like gold but the metal itself, so the spirit which puts on the character of Christ has Him born within it, and becomes, like Him, a true son of God, an enlightened spirit. That the one process is impossible, and that the other may be age-long, does not affect the simile. This conclusion strikes at the root of all vicariousness, and is, of course, incompatible with a past and gone atonement by blood; but it is consistent with the scientific teaching, that to produce results their causes must be set to work. This, however, is not to deny the Atonement, but to indicate a mode of its restatement—a mode, moreover, which finds ample support in the Epistles of St. Paul.

The psychic facts, apart from the experimental basis they furnish, are of no more value than the facts of the laboratory. The use of them is to show that soul is a real substance, amenable to its own laws; and that as long as men are taught to believe that evil comes from a "devil" and not from themselves, that God will at some calendar date set all wrong right, and

that entreaty (often the outcome of cowardly fear of punishment) will avail to reverse unalterable conditions. As long as they imagine that "salvation" is a matter of individual selfish beatitude, and not the co-operant effort of men who welcome all truth and act on it, as long as they think that at death they will be invested without effort with knowledge, and purity, and all the virtues they have neglected to acquire in this life, so long will they make no serious effort to amend the wrong in the world.

These beliefs have lost their actuality. The free teaching of Christ has been crystallised into tenets held as final statements of material fact, and for this reason (and only for this reason) it is supposed to be at issue with physical and psychic science. These tenets are no longer credible, and the light of new knowledge rises to show—not new principles, for these cannot change—but the re-formulation which is in line with other truths.

New truths grow strong amid the rough winds of scorn, opposition, and contumely; it is thus that their vitality is tested. All must be cast into the furnace, and if the fire of trial burns up the hay and the stubble, we have at least the consolation that the gold and the stone shall remain.*

* I Cor. iii. 12.

V. C. D.

December 1900.

CONTENTS

	PAGE
INTRODUCTORY NOTE	v
PREFACE	vii
INTRODUCTION	3

PART I

THE BASIS OF EXPERIMENTAL FACT

CHAPTER I

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA, OR OUTWARD FACTS, THE EVIDENCE OF THE SENSES	31
---	----

CHAPTER II

THE INNER OR SUBJECTIVE FACTS—MEDIUMSHIP	65
--	----

CHAPTER III

THE MORALITY OF "SPIRITUALISM"	97
--	----

PART II

THEORY AND INFERENCES

CHAPTER I

	PAGE
MATTER AND ETHER	137

CHAPTER II

THE ORDERS OF EXISTENCE	179
-----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER III

THE GATE OF DEATH	207
-----------------------------	-----

CHAPTER IV

BODY—THE MEANS OF ACTION	229
------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER V

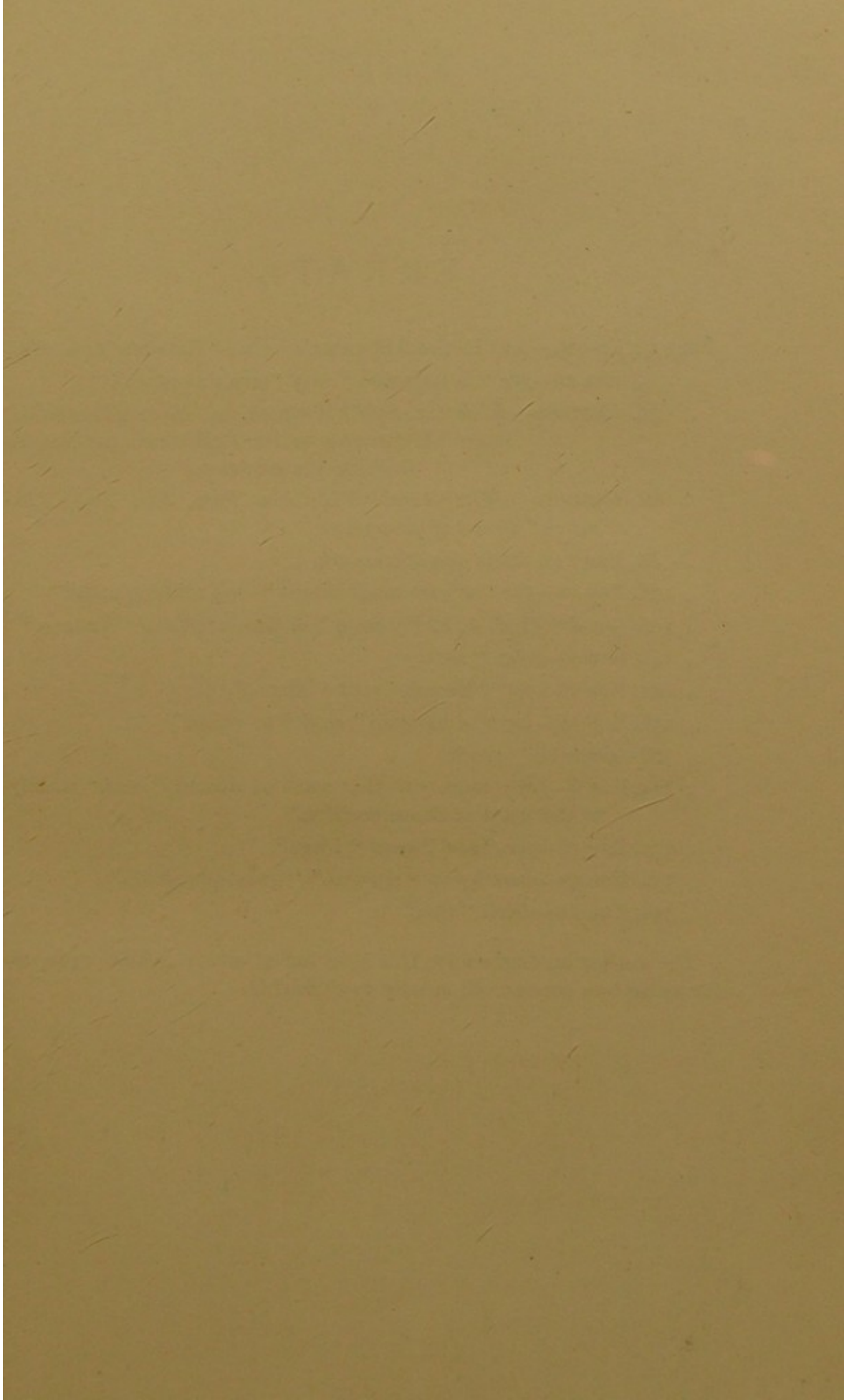
SOUL—THE FORMING POWER	241
----------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VI

SPIRIT—THE DIRECTING WILL	267
-------------------------------------	-----

CHAPTER VII

THE HUMAN FAMILY	303
----------------------------	-----



ERRATA

- Page 13, line 29—*for* “Herbert Spencer’s” *read* “Matthew Arnold’s.”
- „ 15, line 21—*for* “is recorded” *read* “are recorded.”
- „ 35, footnote—*delete* “12. Spirit Workers, &c. Morell Theobald.”
insert “L’Inconnu et les Problemes psychiques
Camille Flammarion.”
- „ 61, footnote—*delete from* “*Vide also Proc. Soc. Psych. Research*” *to end of paragraph.*
- „ 89, line 21—*delete quotation mark.*
- „ 128, line 11—*for* “whose magnificent” *read* “the grand.”
- „ 136—*read* “Prof. A. R. Wallace” *in place of* “A. J. Wallace.”
- „ 141, line 9—*delete* “as.”
- „ 221, line 28—*for* “Menon” *read* “Meno.”
- „ 256, line 16—*for* “to express” *read* “to voice.”
- „ 328—*delete the footnote.*
- „ 334, line 6—*for* “mainly to that want of worthy” *read* “mainly
to the want of those worthy.”
- „ 335, line 13—*for* “and” *read* “from.”
- „ 336, line 3—*insert before* “crowns” “quasi-physical.”
- „ 342, line 11—*delete* “the.”

The author apologises for this long list of errata, which were, as far as he was concerned, mostly unavoidable.

INTRODUCTION

“Wheresoever the carcase is, there will the eagles be gathered together.”—JESUS CHRIST.

“The world would be astonished if it knew how great a proportion of its brightest ornaments—of those most distinguished even in popular estimation for wisdom and virtue—are complete sceptics on religion, many of them refraining from avowal, less from personal considerations, than from a conscientious, though in my opinion most mistaken apprehension, lest by speaking out what may tend to weaken existing beliefs, and by consequence, as they suppose, existing restraints, they should do harm rather than good.”—J. S. MILL, *Autobiography*.

A RELIGION OF LAW

INTRODUCTION

“Yet once more will I shake not the earth only, but also the heavens.”—JOEL.

1. ON all sides it is forced upon us that the present is a time pregnant with great events and unparalleled social and political changes. Standing armies unexampled in numbers and efficiency, a progress in physical science unknown to previous time, a colossal wealth, and an activity in commerce which penetrates to every corner of the globe, all contribute to make this age full of the grandest possibilities; and, if man can rise to the height of his trust, and by inspiring all this material civilisation with spiritual life, can use it as a means of moral progress and not as an end in itself, it will be one which will live in history as the greatest and most momentous of any. At no period since the rise of Christianity and the fall of the mighty empire of the Cæsars have the signs of the times been so significant of transition to a new order of things.

This seems a bold statement, but consideration will show its accuracy. There is no question of order menaced as in the fifth century by the barbarous hordes of an Attila, nor of a new creed enforced by the sword of a new Islam to be beaten back by another Charles Martel, still less of contest between rival conquerors, though it may well be that the

Powers of Europe will be drawn into the struggle now preparing between the ideas they more or less consciously represent. But the problems to be presented to the twentieth century are social and religious rather than external and political, and resemble none of the great changes that have gone before. Though mediæval Europe might be rent with the quarrels of princes, a Cressy or an Agincourt left the regal and sacerdotal principles untouched, and even the death-grip of Catholic and Protestant which for thirty years devastated Central Europe left the mainsprings of religious life much as before; still men lived and died in serene devotion to Church and king alike in Protestant England and in Catholic Spain, the utmost freedom of speculation extending only to the question which Church might hold **THE TRUTH**, which king might own the **RIGHT DIVINE**.

With the middle of the eighteenth century the change began, and now, after a hundred and fifty years, it is apparent whither it is tending. The revolt led by Voltaire and the Encyclopædists against the childish literalisms put forward as Christianity and the shameless abuse of the aristocratic power was carried in the Reign of Terror to an extreme which filled the rest of Europe with horror and dismay, caused the whole Revolution to be branded as an uprising against all law human and divine, and banded together the kings of Europe for the restoration of their dethroned brother. Nevertheless, in spite of denunciations in forum and pulpit, it is now admitted that the Revolution, once thought the very spawn of hell, was on the whole more righteous than the old régime, and that even the noyades and the guillotine inflicted but a tithe of the suffering which had been incurred in building the stately pile of Versailles alone, and converting its sandy waste into a garden.

The proposition of Mirabeau, that "kings exist for the good of the people, and not the people for the good of kings,"

which seemed to the courtly abbés of Versailles an ingenious paradox, is now a truism, and the maxims of the Revolution are the commonplaces of America and the tacit practice of Europe. No doubt the travesty of religion which Robespierre sought to set up on the ruins of Catholicism, and the violence of the Revolutionary leaders, brought reaction, and five years after Waterloo, both in France and England the old system might, to the superficial observer, have seemed as firmly seated as ever, though signs of the leaven at work were not wanting. The bread-riots and the machine-riots, the now-forgotten episodes of Chartism, the Jacobin clubs in France and the mutterings of discontent which exploded in the Revolution of 1848, were abundant proof to an observant eye that the principles which for nearly a thousand years had swayed the minds of men had lost or were fast losing their power. The old was passing away and the new was not yet born. But the test of time has proved that the general revolt against "Authority" in Church and State was not (as was freely represented by those whose satisfaction with the present naturally caused them to dislike and dread change) the upheaval of anarchy and licence against law and order, of hell against God; but rather the protest against an obsolete order of things, the quickening of a divine life in the nations, compelling all true men of whatever class to arise, to put away forms from which the meaning had died, to stand on their own feet and see with their own eyes, not through those of a sacerdotal class, and perceive that God has one law and one order for all His children, that His Church is simply Humanity, and that no king, no family, no class, no hierarchy, no race, country, or colour, has any monopoly of His bounty, or any special providence other than its use of the environment common to all. Even yet the new order is not fully understood. It is felt that to the regal or executive authority belongs the maintenance of law but not legislation; that its function is

to enforce the collective will of the nation but not to impose its own commands, and that this duty can only be limited by the higher duty not to enforce that which is clearly wrong. But it still needs a Herbert Spencer to bring home to us the logical result of the democratic idea—that all durable progress can only be by more persons in the nation thinking rightly, and cannot be conferred from without, by mere obedience to kings, or to parliaments, or to churches, or to creeds.

2. In no respect is the coming change more apparent than in the attitude of women towards social problems. Till very recent years the superiority of the male to the female sex was no more questioned by women than the authority of the king by his subjects. God was held to be a male, and man the image of God, and the head of the woman, who also was taken out of man's body, and having caused his fall, was naturally placed under him by divine decree. This view was not only reflected in woman's legal status, but seemed to be bound up with the physiology of generation and the seclusion of the home. Till very lately the *femme couverte* was the absolute property of her husband, his rights covering all but life and death, and even extending to the power of sale. These rights were indefeasible and divine, like those of the king; even if deserted by her husband, the wife's earnings and property became his on his return; and even yet the award of a money compensation for an abducted wife shows plainly that she is, in a modified sense, still regarded as the husband's property. Socially, though woman might adorn the house, she was the slave of its master, better or worse treated according to his lights, and little was done by the Church to redress the inherent inequality.

While inculcating the duty of kindness, she left no sort of doubt that the position of the woman should be one of inferiority and obedience, and her favourite simile for her

own relation to Christ, as Bride to Bridegroom, implies the similar relationship between the man and the woman, which still survives in the vow of obedience which the Church still imposes on every bride, who thus, in many cases, begins her married life with an entirely gratuitous perjury. The verdict of the philosophers, absorbed in a one-sided intellectual life, is even more pronounced, and philosophy can claim no honour where the Church has fallen short ;* and

* Most systems of philosophy ignore the woman altogether, or by tacit consent treat her as a satellite to the male planet. Schopenhauer is an exception in openly stating his tenets. His views are instructive as showing the results naturally evolved by a logical mind from the standpoint of the present life only. Large numbers of persons who, unknown to themselves, start from the same premiss come naturally (for man is, in spite of himself, a logical animal) to the same conclusion in practice, though here either some relic of the instinct of truth or habitual hypocrisy forbids the overt utterance that woman is a nurse, a toy, or a physical necessity, but not an equal friend. Those who are inclined to disbelieve what has been said above concerning the "philosophical" mind may perhaps be convinced by the following :—

"You need only look at the way in which she is formed, to see that woman is not meant to undergo great labour, whether of body or mind. She pays the debt of life not by what she does but by what she suffers ; by the pains of child-bearing and care for the child, and by submission to her husband, to whom she should be a patient and cheering companion ; the keenest sorrows and joys are not for her, nor is she called upon to display a great deal of strength. . . .

"Neither for music nor for poetry nor for fine art have they really and truly any sense or susceptibility ; it is a mere mockery if they make a pretence of it in order to assist their endeavours to please. Hence, as a result of this, they are incapable of taking a purely objective interest in anything ; and the reason of it seems to be as follows : A man tries to acquire direct mastery over things either by understanding them or by forcing them to do his will. But a woman is always and everywhere reduced to obtaining the same results indirectly, namely, through a man. And so it lies in woman's nature to look upon everything only as a means for conquering man ; and if she takes an interest in anything else, it is simulated—a mere roundabout way of gaining her ends by coquetry, and feigning what she does not feel. Hence even Rousseau declared : ' Women have, in general, no love of

the very faculties which do woman most credit, her intuitive perception and her affectionate nature, resulting in spontaneous religious feeling and unselfish love, have been almost despised as superstition and weakness by her partner, whose intellectual and combative development need these correctives the more that his need was unfelt by himself. The sex-problem * is one of the twin difficulties which are pre-

art; they have no proper understanding of any; and they have no genius' (*Lettre à d'Alembert*). No one who sees at all below the surface can have failed to remark the same thing. You need only observe the kind of attention women bestow upon a concert, an opera, or a play—the childish simplicity, for example, with which they keep on chattering during the finest parts of the greatest masterpieces.

“The case is not altered by particular and partial exceptions; taken as a whole, women are, and remain, thorough-going philistines, and quite incurable. Hence, with that absurd arrangement which allows them to share the rank and title of their husbands, they are a constant stimulus to his ignoble ambitions. This is the view which the ancients took of woman, and the view which people in the East take now; and their judgment as to her proper position is much more correct than ours, with our old French notions of gallantry and our preposterous system of reverence—that highest product of Teutonico-Christian stupidity. These notions have served only to make women more arrogant and overbearing; so that one is occasionally reminded of the holy apes of Benares, who, in the consciousness of their sanctity and inviolable position, think they can do exactly as they please.”

“That woman is by nature meant to obey may be seen from the fact that every woman who is placed in the unnatural position of complete independence immediately attaches herself to some man by whom she allows herself to be guided and ruled. If she is young it will be a lover; if she is old, a priest.”—*Schopenhauer*.

* The sex problem is a chief theme of three very remarkable writers—Zola, Ibsen, and Tolstoi. The first shows the disgusting realism of things as they are. His books are a vigorous protest against the cry of “Peace, peace,” when there is no peace, and he lifts up the mirror to the corruption that pervades modern society, the festering sores of avarice and impurity which are veiled by religion and refinement. In his books on the Paris of the Empire (which are applicable, with variations, to every European capital) he shows the greed, the luxury, the intense devotion to gain and to pleasure alone, covered by the mask

sented to this age. The Church and the philosophers here strangely allied, solve it by tacitly assuming or openly affirming the permanent inferiority of the female; developing woman solves it otherwise, by proclaiming in university class-lists and elsewhere her intrinsic equiva-

of respectability which calls frauds in commerce sharpness, glosses over bribery in politics, excuses adulteries as pardonable escapades, and scarcely troubles to conceal promiscuity, and he shows that the lives of large numbers of the *bourgeoisie* who thus idolise appearances are neither more nor less than one long LIE.

He is one of the leaders of the new Reformation, whose motto is "Esse quam videri." Be what it is in you to be, be whatever you will, but be yourself and wear no mask; and if this be loyally carried out society will be reformed thereby, for men as a whole will not tolerate open vice; it can only flourish in concealment. The practical lesson of his books is: Let us, each of us, think what would be the result to ourselves if every action of ours in trade, in marriage, and in pleasure were known to all our nearest and dearest. Why should it not be?

Ibsen is another who aims at showing middle-class men and women as they are with the view of his audience seeing for themselves what they might be. Vain, small-minded, silly, mean, and false, there are yet possibilities in his women which would make them noble and strong could they be freed from the idea that man is, by the ordinance of GOD, law, conscience, and head to the woman. Because of this fear of woman to think for herself, to stand on her own feet and use her own brains, she turns into a doll and is only fit to serve as a toy to her husband, and to bring forth dolls like herself or petty sultans like him; she is unfit to train a son to be a man in any worthy sense, and is made up of such tricks, shams, well-meant but absurd concealments and evasions, as make up the character of "Nora."

Tolstoi, in such books as the "Kreutzer Sonata," is a more didactic writer, and while the public is so foolish as to see in such a character as "Nora" the representation of an individual and not the type of a class, such didactic writing is necessary. He aims at showing how the poison of sensuality works in the veins of humanity, filling our asylums and our prisons; and that it, and avarice, are the mainsprings of so many social actions. He shows how this may end in bringing the soul down to mere vulgar brutal crime, and his books are satires on the excesses and outrages on womanhood which are daily perpetrated and thought harmless because within the marriage bond.

lence. Which is the nearer to the true law of human nature?

3. Another shadow which the New Reformation casts before it is the conflict between Capital and Labour. Here again there are two solutions, each of which is bound up with a whole theology and philosophy of life; and here again we halt without a guide between two opinions, unable to resist the spiritual pressure of our time, but unwilling, or as yet unable, to give it practical effect. The modern labour-problem, like the sex-problem it involves, may be stated as a collision between the monarchical and the democratic philosophy. The first of these enunciates: That God who sits enthroned in "Heaven" has committed spiritual government over the minds of men to the Church, and physical or secular government to appointed rulers class above class; that each of these should order itself lowly and reverently to those set in authority over it; that it is the duty of those who have been called to such a station in life as gives them the command of wealth to succour their poorer brethren, to cover them with the mantle of charity, protecting and helping them in return for willing respect and service; that a certain amount of misery is inevitable, not only practically, but in the very nature of things, but that those who are poor in this world and bear their troubles uncomplainingly will be rewarded in the life to come, when God Himself shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.* On this view

* The Church here again shows her essentially human character by following in the wake of public opinion instead of leading it. This is especially observable in the encyclicals of the present Pope, which are admirable homilies to charity, but supply no manner of solution to current questions. Few of the modern victories of Humanity adorn the banner of orthodoxy. We owe the amendment of our prisons to Mrs. Fry, of our hospitals to Florence Nightingale, sanitation to our doctors, the opening of our minds to our men of science. Individual priests protested nobly, as the honest men they were, against the hideous cruelties in the Spanish Indies; but had the chair of Peter, with its

strikes and labour combinations are rebellions against the order of society, and are as suicidal as they are foolish.* This order of society is modelled on the heavenly pattern, and is in theory perfect; the faults in it are due to human original sin and perverted will. The second and antagonistic theory is, that every man and woman is a spirit coming into earth-life for the utmost possible development and progress. For the healthy development of bodily, mental, and moral nature a fair share of the gifts of God that minister thereto are required, so that life should neither be spent in one long struggle for mere bread, without leisure or opportunity for social life and intellectual advance, nor in indolence, which contributes nothing to the weal of others and paralyses the spirit itself. Each unit in the community who does not forfeit the right by indolence or vice has an inherent right to such a share, and no state of society in

vast power, raised its thunder in defence of the oppressed, slavery in South America could not have lasted ten years; and if the English priesthood had as one man condemned the Guinea trade instead of buttressing it up by such texts as "Cursed is Canaan, a servant of servants shall he be," &c., the Church might in the days of her power have roused the nation far more rapidly and effectually than did Samuel Wilberforce. But she would not, and her work is done for her by true leaders of men, by philanthropists and by "Socialists," who seek to make Christ's teaching a living reality and not the shadow of a dogma.

* The view that they are rebellion against inevitable economic laws is at once more common and less logical. For the so-called "laws" of supply and demand are merely the outcome of certain habits and temper of society, and change with it; they are no more laws in the cosmic (and only true) sense than it is a law that men should put on more clothing in certain months of the year. Nothing can be more illogical than to separate the phenomenon from its cause in this way, and to erect the temporary and local product of given conditions into a universal law. All real laws are a part of the irreversible order of Nature. The economic "laws" are not laws at all; they are facts which any day may change with the social conditions which produce them.

which this cannot be obtained by all can be considered be on a sound basis; while the present condition, under which many are condemned to hard labour all their days for mere bread, and are sometimes unable to gain even that, is quite intolerable and stands self-condemned. In this view justice comes before almsgiving, and charity means mutual love and unselfish service in the inevitable sorrows and misfortunes of earth, not the surrender of a small portion of an unearned increment which should never have been diverted into private channels. The opportunities for healthy, intelligent growth and simple refinement of life should be open to all, for we each in our own case feel these are the means of progress. This sociology proclaims that heaven and earth are under one law indeed, that of mutual love and co-operation, the only superiorities being those that arise from larger powers, greater love, higher purity, involving greater and nobler service. Through these lies the progress of the spirit from strength to strength up to the very throne of God, who is known to man not as a conceivable Being, an arbitrary though just King—in other words, a just man with human faculties made infinitely great,—but as the moving and sustaining Power of all good in man and Nature, where He is dimly seen and reflected as Wisdom and as Power, but in His Personality, in the infinity of His Self-hood, not even to be apprehended by man's finite faculties and feeble powers. Which philosophy is the truer? The practical solution must depend on many conditions, but the ideas in conflict are those of spiritual evolution under Law and miraculous after-death reward.

4. Another sign of the times is the decline of religious belief, in the sense of creedalism. "Our age," it has been said, "longs to be religious." But the claims of the creeds are so entirely out of line with Nature's lessons that they are felt to be impossible; men have well-nigh given up trying to reconcile Religion and Science, and in spite of

their sure instinct that neither can stand alone and independent, they tacitly or openly abandon the solution by referring them to different departments of the mind. Alike in its history, its physico-spiritual theories, and its Scriptures, the popular Christianity is only believed in by means of alterations in the plain sense of words by which they are made to carry quite other meanings than those in common use. It thus becomes, as Mr. Frederick Harrison says, "disparate to that world of sequence and sensation which is the base of our knowledge." The physical blood-atonement, the resurrection, the personal devil as the source of death and evil, the local heaven and flaming hell, the eternal punishment of the wicked and the monotonous beatitude of the righteous, when translated into daily life and real language, are rejected at once as incredible. So a special terminology is invented for application to "sacred subjects," as if the whole range of God's action were not equally sacred, and special senses grow up for such words as Son, Spirit, atonement,* grace, sanctification, redemption, and so forth, till the whole broad and grand treatment of God and human life which characterises the teaching of Jesus, degenerates into formula and becomes no longer truth to be known, but dogma to be assented to. That religion is really insight into eternal truth as well as practice is felt by the large majority of mankind, who are only too ready to follow those who claim to possess this insight, with the view of obtaining the pearl of great price gratis, and without the indispensable preliminary of earning it; and although there are some who may prefer Herbert Spencer's somewhat poetic definition, that it is morality touched by emotion, it is generally felt that religion must be based on external (though unseen)

* Atonement simply means at-one-ment. Compare Shakespeare—

"He and Aufidius can no more atone
Than direst contraries."

actualities, and that no morality, with or without emotion, could stand long if it were without a basis of external sanction. This basis of external sanction, even if not actually necessary to morality in the mass of mankind, would, if discoverable, be its strongest reinforcement; as it would be also the greatest solace to those whose ethical and intellectual conclusions are as yet out of harmony.

Here again, amid the almost hopeless confusion of contending sects, philosophies, and schools, may be seen the dividing line running deep through them all. Each of the current forms of thought is a variant from one of two great types, and represents, more or less logically, one of two leading ideas. Omitting the few agnostics who can take a purely judicial attitude on all hyper-physical questions and are ready to accept any view on sufficient evidence, the world is divided on religious matters between those who acknowledge a teaching authority and those who see only the operation of Law; between those who acknowledge an ecclesiastical Church and those who do not; for this, slight as it may seem, is the radical difference between Faith and Reason, using each of these words in the popular sense.

In the present day Cardinal John Henry Newman has done splendid service in the cause of truth by demonstrating the hopelessness of any *via media* and the intellectual baselessness of popular Anglicanism, which is largely maintained by its benefices and its tithes. His masterly reasoning, no less than the resolute endeavour chronicled in the "Apologia" of a singularly logical mind to find such a tenable middle course, proves conclusively that, granted the institution by Christ of a Church in the ecclesiastical sense, that Church is the one enthroned on the seven hills of the Eternal City, a queen for ever over the souls of men. It is unnecessary in weaker words to re-establish his conclusion, or to damage his argument by condensing it; those

who are fond of controversial reading may turn to his books, where moderation and charity are generally as prominent as strict logical accuracy. His conclusion can be avoided only by denying his premise, and asserting that Christ founded no ecclesiasticism, but a gathering of all mankind into a fold made not by barriers of creed, but by the practice of love to man and faith towards the All-Father. Some of the English clergy are clear-sighted enough to see this and honest enough to proclaim it, to recognise that the mission of the Church is now to lose herself that she may save mankind, and to descend from the pedestal of authority, to disclaim any knowledge other than is the result of special study, special endeavour, and special prayer, and to be simply men and not priests, and find in the exchange an immensely increased hold on their hearers.* If, while admitting a Church, the right of private judgment be conceded (and no Protestant can deny it), it is clear that right reason is the only criterion of truth, and that no dogma whatever can logically be insisted on as "necessary to salvation." For an appeal to Scripture cannot properly ignore the fact that the Greek text wherein is recorded the sayings of Jesus, spoken in the Aramaic tongue, was both compiled and inter-

* Dean of Bristol, "Sermons on some Subjects of the Day." So also the Rev. Canon Fremantle in "The New Reformation," *Fortnightly Review*, March 1887:—"The early history of the Church has been likewise subjected to a minute criticism which has been stimulated of late by the discovery of 'The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles.' The result has been to give us a simple view of the organisation of the Christian societies, and of their life and thoughts, to show the influence of various social circumstances working naturally upon them, and forming their institutions and their theology. It becomes less and less possible to attribute to the earliest period of the Church, as having been formally imposed or exclusively admitted, any of the theories of Church government which we now know, whether Episcopal, Presbyterian, or Independent, or the formed doctrines of later times, whether relating to the plan of redemption, or the Incarnation, or the Trinity."

preted by the Church from the very earliest times. The authenticity and inspiration of the text of Scripture next follow, and the process ends in pure Rationalism, which the see of St. Peter recognises as the inveterate foe with whom it wisely declines useless parley by admitting any discussion on articles of faith.

Anglicanism has taken the step of separation from the one Catholic and Apostolic Church ; it cannot go back, while it is afraid to go forward and acknowledge that it is the religious expression of the English mind, that its orders are a form, and its authority a commission from the nation. The large majority of the laymen within its pale really are Rationalists, for in practice, whatever their theories, they acknowledge no hierarchy or apostolical succession, regard no sacraments as necessary to salvation and no creed as of binding force, but look on Christianity as being the simple teaching of Christ Himself, of which the meaning, though perhaps not the exact form, is to be found in the gospels. This "Broad Church" is the strength of Anglicanism, for it gives free play to devotion while not restricting inquiry. The few English Churchmen who in their hearts think differently should logically place themselves under the Roman Pontiff. All deplore the conflict between what they term Faith and Reason, but Catholics only can consider the solution to lie in the frank acceptance of the teaching Authority of the Church, for no others can point to any teaching Authority at unity with itself. Faith, according to these, is a supernatural gift of God which enables us to receive without doubting whatever God has revealed, which is known by the teaching and authority of the Catholic Church. According to this, God, of one and the same nature with the Father, became a man, atoned for Adam's transmitted sin, purchased for us eternal life, reascended into heaven with His body, whose wounds He shows as memorials of His Passion, will return to judge the world at the Last Day, when all

men shall rise again with the same flesh which they now wear,* and will then award to the good unending rest and adoration in heaven, and to the evil eternal punishment in hell. "This is the Catholic Faith, which except a man believe faithfully, he cannot be saved," and no amount of metaphysical subtlety or special theological senses for words can make them carry other than their plain meaning. It is useless blinking these things or seeking for an impossible middle course. There is none. One premise or the other must be logically followed, and either will infallibly bear its appropriate fruit. It is the new form of the continual conflict between Rationalism and Sacerdotalism. Those who maintain Authority insist that GOD will rectify all things; will warm the cold-hearted, purify the unclean, pardon and cleanse the sinner; will remove the blemishes which conditions of time and sense have caused in His Church; will redeem and glorify and vindicate her, and that the future of all who sincerely receive her teaching is thereby assured. Their opponents declare that the only basis of belief is evidence, and that a traceable relation between cause and effect must be established before any such Divine "government of the world" can be admitted, and they find that relation in the Sovereignty of Ethics, which, by immutable law withdrawing that co-ordinating power which is life, casts out from existence all that offends, and brings men, nations, churches, and systems to ruin, as they fall short of the ethical standard, quite irrespective of any dogmatic one. These recognise that all truth can only be expressed by figures of speech, which never are or can be absolute, and that the general meaning of any teacher soever, and not his particular forms of expression, must be looked to. They further allege that the devotion of mankind to material comfort is largely encouraged by the system of

* Order of the Latin rite for the consecration of Bishops.

arbitrary* rewards and punishments which (inasmuch as contrition can always secure forgiveness at death) makes the future condition to depend on an uncertain decision of the Deity, and not upon His unchanging law of ethics, and they maintain that dogma is intelligently apprehended not as historical fact, but as the allegorical expression of spiritual law.

The Churches have lost their hold on the intellect of Europe because they start with a theory of perfect Creation and Fall followed by Redemption, as historical fact to be held *de fide*, a postulate which is opposed to all the lessons of Evolution as seen in Nature; and, further, they have insisted on the literal truth of these allegories till absolutely compelled to give up statements which only showed their utter lack of insight. They have severed cause and effect by continually proclaiming the Will of God and the insufficiency of reason as the ready explanation of every discrepancy between the conclusions of Science and their own theory, till that "faith" which really expresses man's natural confidence in the Being and Goodness of God has actually become a synonym for an extra vigorous effort of childish make-believe, and has justified the sarcasm that "Faith is the believing what a man knows cannot possibly be true."

* "Arbitrary." Lest this word should be misunderstood, it may be well to explain that it is used only in the sense of dependent on the will of another as opposed to consequence following on a cause. For instance, that a deliberate and confirmed sensualist should be punished by being cast into a "hell" or "purgatory" of fire for any period long or short, is an arbitrary punishment, because there is no organic connection between the crime and the penalty, which might with equal justice have taken such form as Dante's terrible imagery of the icy sea. But that he should be tormented in an incorporeal life by the fire of impotent desire resulting from the state to which he has brought himself, by hate of others, by remorse and self-loathing, is both justice and also a punishment the more real that it lasts just as long as, and no longer than, the mental state of which it is the penalty and the consequence.

5. The sacred records afford no surer standing-ground, used as they have been with the foregone conclusion that they are the Word of God, rather than that they contain it mixed with much of the human element. Isolated portions of them are cited to confute or maintain opinions of which the writers had never heard, and hence they have been the battle-ground of sects, each seeking to find therein a whole system; not Truth, but THE Truth, and presupposing an inspiration which makes the record infallible. Meanwhile the very ground is cut from under the feet of the disputants by the higher criticism, till at the present day the whole of the Mosaic cosmogony is abandoned, unless as an allegory of uncertain meaning, and the authenticity of canonical books is freely canvassed by men, who, three centuries ago, would have been sent to expiate their impiety by fire and faggot. Traits and expressions, such as the Sabbath observance and the Decalogue, are found also in religions long prior to the exodus from Egypt and the giving of the Law on Sinai. Not only so, but some of the very incidents of Redemption history, the miraculous birth, the painless parturition, the baptism, and descent of the Dove, the sojourn in the wilderness, and others, are found to be pre-existent in the history of Buddha or Krishna, or pictured in the temples of ancient Egypt; and, far more important, the sublime precepts and morality which, it is said, God became incarnate in order to reveal to men were not new to the world at all, but are found in other philosophies and religions.

Now at last giving up the surface meaning of Genesis, the Church, the infallible guardian and interpreter of Scripture, has proved unable to decide what the hidden meaning may be, what is the real value of the record, or what is its relation to historical fact, or if it has any such relation to fact at all. While affirming the undeviating justice of God, the clergy are, as a rule, unable to say wherein penalty

really consists, for they have given up the "gospel of hell-fire," and have put nothing else in its place.

Thus all seems shifting, all seems changing, and to many there appears no solid foothold anywhere, no certainty for any belief, and many are tempted to think chaos is coming on society. But the change is for the better and not for the worse. Not until men can realise that there is no creed which is "THE Truth" complete and unadulterate, will they seek Truth for themselves; not until they feel the pain of thirst will they come to the living waters and drink. As long as the old ideas supplied a real basis for life and conduct—in a word, as long as they were truly believed, so long had they an organic connection with human spirits, but their principles and not their forms were the vital powers that moulded the lives of saints and heroes in the days that are gone. In the world of to-day the new wine has burst the old wine-skins, the forms are unbelievable, and a closer approximation between intellectual form and ethical principle must be found.

6. Amid all the ideas which succeed one another like dissolving views, two truths endure, and sustain the hearts of men: the necessity for right-doing, and the confidence in the honest and unbiassed testimony of our healthy senses—in two words, in Morality and in Science. The first is the verdict of history and conscience, the second of experiment and intellect. If there is one lesson undoubtedly to be learned from the story of the nations, it is this: that evil-doing brings its own punishment; that luxury and licentiousness breed weakness; that isolation and hatred follow in the train of greed; that the incessant strife for wealth and the exaltation of the material life lead by sure consequence, first to the loss of simple hardihood, and next to the want of valour. To cast our eyes back over the centuries to any profit is to see that neither civilisation, intellectual and artistic ability, nor even military skill, can ever avert the

ruin which follows on the transgression of the laws under which alone human nature can rise. Babylon, Greece, Rome, Arabia, and Spain all point the moral, and the testimony of history is not less conclusive than that of conscience. No modern teacher denies the necessity for morality; Comte, Huxley, and Herbert Spencer are all agreed in laying down in the clearest terms the necessity for a moral life. But at the present time Science can give but little help to morality except the observed fact that immorality actually does enfeeble and degrade both individuals and nations, and how frail is this intellectual conviction in the presence of personal temptation we each of us know only too well. Morality and Science stand apart on separate ground. The attempt to bring the two into harmony, however, is perennial, and is really nothing more nor less than the inextinguishable faith in God that He will not leave us in permanent intellectual confusion, but will enlighten us through that faculty of understanding whereby all truth is grasped, alike in the domain of morality and in that of physics. And the attempt is not hopeless; the only condition is, that no phenomena be ignored. It will not do to look for the solution of the difficulty through physical science alone. Nothing is more striking than the helplessness of physiology when confronted with psychic problems; and men of science, being, like theologians, simply men with a special training and bias, are frequently as contemptuous of all that will not square with their theories as divines. But the solution will not be found by mere theorising and building of systems. The world has seen too much of that, and fact alone, that is, phenomena cognisable by the senses, can afford a sound basis, with the proviso that the whole range of fact be appealed to, not such a selection as will sustain a theory made beforehand.

7. To find the connection between the facts of life and the laws of morality, that men may believe in right-doing

as they believe in sanitation, is what is now required, that the instincts of the understanding and of the heart, no longer disparate to one another, should co-operate. It is no longer accurate to state the case as an issue between faith and unbelief:—

“There lives more faith in honest doubt,
Believe me, than in half the creeds.”

The need of the day is a belief that shall rest neither on dogma nor on instinct, but on insight which justifies religion in history, and so far from leading us to condemn the old forms or abjure any creed, leaves us in harmony with the past stages of evolution, gives a logical standing-ground for morality in the present, and some clue to both the practical problems and the intellectual needs of modern life; a belief which, without imposing a creed, shall lighten the eyes and purify the hearts of those who hold it, and be to them a guiding star through the difficulties and dangers which beset the age. But any such belief must, as Mr. Frederic Harrison says, be capable of statement in terms of the rest of our experience, and not “disparate to that world of sequence and sensation which is to us the ultimate base of all our real knowledge.” No hypothesis, however dear to our hopes, however sublime, however plausible in its solution of human wants, can claim a hearing unless it can show relation of cause and effect. The age is weary of plausibilities, of solutions based on the pardon of an anthropomorphic God, of ceremonial law, canon, and rubric, of sacrifice, of creed, and of sacramental grace: it cannot believe in schemes of salvation cognisable by man, whether Buddhist, theosophist, or so-called Christian. We are drugged with nostrums and befogged in books, and will fall back on the evidence of the senses, reviewed and ordered indeed by reason, chastened and corrected and subordinate; but still on the evidence of the senses, for this is all that we

can certainly know, and this, even when the race gains larger faculties and the problems presented to it are no longer the same, must always be the ultimate court of appeal.

Such a belief need not by any means be a complete or final solution of our difficulties, though it must end our doubts. The analogy with physics is perfect: "Every addition to the sphere of our knowledge does but enlarge that of surrounding nescience;"* but new discoveries are hailed and not feared, because they are continuous with preceding knowledge. In science who ever heard of *Quieta non movere*? So it should be in spiritual science, which "binds together" the things of earth and heaven. Religion is the uniting bond, and is but a name for the perception of spiritual realities. For the attainment of such knowledge we are naturally equipped, and our troubles begin when we try to go behind our own faculties, and to ascertain by reasoning, not what may justly be inferred from their testimony, but on what they rest and how far they are reliable. The most agile intellectual acrobat, however, cannot get outside himself, and must sooner or later give up the task, and if we simply accept our position and work from that, we shall make more progress. We have, perhaps it would be more correct to say we are, the organon for correlating the material and the spiritual; we have but to use our own powers and direct them rightly.

8. The overwhelming consensus of humanity has decided on the validity of three great groups of faculty, known as the senses, the intellect, and the conscience, and this book assumes as axiomatic that, whencesoever derived or howsoever correlated, whatever the constitution of man may prove to be, they really exist; and, further, that whatsoever ministers to perfection and development on any plane of being is

* Herbert Spencer, "First Principles."

“good.” There can be no real antagonism between body and mind. One-sided development there may be ; an athlete is not necessarily an intellectual or moral man, but it is noticeable that those who do best in the university lists are not, as a rule, those who neglect athletics, and those who combine athletics and study are almost necessarily pure in life. That the flesh warreth against the spirit is a truth, but elliptically and dramatically expressed ; it is said not of the development of the body but of sensual desire, and it is notorious that such leads not to growth but to decay of faculty.

It is no invalidation of the positive nature of these three groups that they interact one on another, or that, besides being imperfect, they are frequently warped. Disease, accident, misuse or want of use, may derange the senses, but they are still appealed to by every healthy person. So long as the brain is the instrument of intellect, that instrument likewise may be weakened or impaired ; or again, pleasure, abuse, or mere sloth may paralyse activity of mind quite independently of the cerebral condition, till mental indolence becomes intellectual disability. These two, again, sense and intellect, may by imperfection or casuistry pervert conscience till its standard is made intellectual instead of ethical, a matter of argument and not of perception ; and, finally, all of these may be abused and misdirected by the sovereign will. But nevertheless, in spite of failures, it remains true that all knowledge rests on these faculties, and when swayed by a will whose chief desire is to prove all things and to hold fast to that which is good, they are felt by each man to be his real guide.*

These are the axioms which this book brings to the

* At once the most daring and the most suicidal use of faculty is the decision to surrender to the claims of any Church or creed, for the neophyte makes himself the judge of the claims of his Church on his obedience.

examination of the psychic facts ; that the evidence of sense, the co-ordinating power of reason, and the moral instinct of conscience can be relied on, and must be equally satisfied. Do these give any positive evidence of continuance after death ? And if there is such evidence, does it fall into line with the great groups of facts which are called by the names of anthropology, geology, physics, and comparative religion ? If so, then the conviction of the truth of this evidence cannot fail to be immensely strengthened. From the beginning of history it has been asserted that immortality is a fact. Great examples have held it up as demonstrable by reason, the general instinct of humanity has everywhere assumed it under some form or other, yet, nevertheless, while no fact of anything like the same importance is before all of us in our daily lives, none obtains such scanty and slight attention.

It needs no proof that, having no basis in the evidence of the senses for such a belief (all obvious experience pointing in quite the opposite direction), immortality is rather assented to as a theorem than believed as a fact, and is referred to a future time and an arbitrary award, rather than to the present and to existing law. But if man survives death, it is clear that he is now as immortal as he ever will be, for immortality does not mean changelessness, but rather the exact reverse. The conviction of this persistence after "death" is the intellectual warrant for all morality and all altruism. For it is clear that, if death ends the human existence, there is no wrong done by allowing the surplus population to be swept off by the operation of economic laws, as we euphemise the diseases due to overcrowding and underpayment ; nay, the logical course and the soundest morality would be to aid the survival of the fittest by active methods ; to check "overpopulation" by devices for gratifying animal passion, by lead and steel, and to make personal comfort the sole aim in life. There are a few who see that if the human personality did not survive the grave, this would in fact be the

order of society, the unrelieved struggle for existence which actually prevails in the brute creation, without even the faith and love which now brighten the dark scenes of this sad star. But for the vast number to whom this is not in itself sufficient evidence of immortality some sense-evidence is urgently required, for before there can be any general change in public opinion and public morality, it is absolutely necessary that there be no more doubt of the real existence of intelligence entirely separate from matter as we know it, of personality which the instinct of man has called spirit,* than of the existence of magnetism, equally known only by its effects on matter. Till such is the case spiritual science can never be "stated in terms of the rest of our knowledge."

9. In other words, miracle and persistence after death must be matters of experience. To some persons a claim so

* "Spirit." In using this term it must be understood that no definition is intended of what spirit essentially may be, or that it is an indestructible essence, or in any sense indivisible. The word is used in its general human meaning of unembodied personality. Derivatively it is, of course, from *spiro*, I breathe, and simply means the breath. A natural simile derived from obvious experience has connected breath and life, and among all people the breath has been taken to signify the inner principle: the Sanscrit *Atma*, the Greek *Pneuma*, and the Latin *Spiritus* are instances in point. The word speedily put on derived meanings, such as spirit of wine, spirit of lavender, meaning that internal principle which gives the distinctive properties; and this again was applied to abstract conceptions, spirit of laws, spirit of freedom, the inner principle producing the form of laws and pervading a free people. Similar pictorial and dramatic use of the word gives spirit of harmony, spirit of contention, &c., meaning a pervading temper. From the sense of "spirit" as synonymous with a wraith or spectre, the term has too frequently been used in the sense of "unsubstantial," and in place of connoting the formative power by which all matter is moulded, it too often conveys the idea of matter too thin for reality. Hence the term "spiritual" is too often held to mean "unreal" or "imaginary," instead of the transcendently real and operant living cause which works in protoplasm as a sculptor works in clay, and whose energy cannot die.

tremendous will seem like a contradiction in terms, for the definition of miracle as infraction of law adopted by Hume's school in the last century was accepted by the Church, and has now filtered down to the general public, by whom it is believed to be correct, and who, therefore, are unable to believe in miracle at all, or even to assent to it, save by referring it to distant time and making Divine "interference" an article of faith.

It is indisputable that the great difficulty of the present century is that of recognising the possibility of what is known as "miracle." It is the miraculous element in Christianity which causes most of the revolts against it. Historically this has been because an explanation once optional or tentative of an alleged wonder has subsequently crystallised by teaching and been superadded to the original miracle, thus doubling the difficulty of belief by insistence both on the fact and on the explanation; but even independently of this, all feel the intense difficulty of accepting the miraculous with as entire a conviction as ordinary matter of experience. This difficulty must be overcome before any real progress can be made, and it must be distinctly stated before it can be overcome. What, then, is miracle? It is the physical action of an unseen intelligent agent producing results to which known laws are inadequate. If such can be established by the testimony of healthy and unbiassed sense and reason, the foundation for a science of spirit will have been laid. "Miracle" will have entered into terms not disparate to the world of sequence and sensation, which is to us the ultimate base of all our real knowledge, and metaphysics will have become an experimental science; while, if the unseen intelligent agents show irrefutable evidence of identity, the persistence of man after death enters into the region of sensible fact. Whether he is there as foolish, as frivolous, as dense, as selfish, as set on personal gratification there as he is here—in a word, what his state

may be, is not the present question. It is the fact alone, if it be a fact, that now concerns us, and whatever the conditions, the fact is of primary importance, as affording the necessary basis of experimental knowledge for a religion which shall be as entire a conviction as the belief in sanitation.

PART I

THE BASIS OF EXPERIMENTAL FACT

“Every fact is a solemn thing; it is the voice of Truth in Nature.”—EMERSON.

“A presumptuous scepticism that rejects facts without examination of their truth is in some respects more injurious than unquestioning credulity.”—HUMBOLDT.

“Before experience itself can be used with advantage there is one preliminary step to make, which depends wholly on ourselves: it is, the absolute dismissal and clearing the mind of all prejudice, and the determination to stand or fall by the result of a direct appeal to facts in the first instance, and of strict logical deduction from them afterwards.”—Sir JOHN HERSCHELL.

“The spiritualists, beyond a doubt, are in the track that has led to advancement in physical science: their opponents are the representatives of those who have striven against progress. I take for granted that there is a large body of unexplained phenomena. Imposture men and coincidence men I leave to see their king anointed, and to rejoice and say, Long live the king! . . . What a grand resource is belief in imposture! There are savages, we are told, who fill their stomachs with clay when food is scarce. . . . In like manner the civilised man of *non-nescience*—a word I take the liberty of using for science, since two negatives make an affirmative—distends his theory-bag with belief in imposture till he can find something to satisfy his appetite. Self-knowledge would do better; this valuable commodity would not only keep the wind out of the receptacle, but need not be displaced to make room when wholesome aliment comes to hand.”—Professor DE MORGAN.

CHAPTER I

THE PHYSICAL PHENOMENA, OR OUTWARD FACTS, THE EVIDENCE OF THE SENSES.

“Verily, verily, I say unto thee, We speak that we do know, and testify that we have seen ; and ye receive not our witness.”

1. WITHIN the last fifty years there has arisen in all countries a claim to hold direct and intelligent communication with the unseen. This claim is not a new one in the history of the world : in classic times it was regarded as magical and terrifying, limited to a few who, alike by nature and mode of life, were cut off from their fellow-men, and received honours semi-divine, such as were paid to the Pythonesses at Delphi.* In the Middle Ages such claims were both sincerely believed in and severely punished, “sorcerers” being burned alive. In later times the claim has been treated as proof positive of insanity, and this is the view which is still taken of it by many who have little or no knowledge of its phenomena. But the spread of what is known as “Spiritualism,” often unfortunately a very low and grotesque variety, is, at the present day, too wide to allow of its being treated either with the indiscriminating reverence or the wholesale condemnation of the past. Like

* It is interesting to note the estimate of the clear-headed lawyer who wrote the essay “*De Natura Deorum*” on this oracle. He says, “*Manet id quod negari non potest, multis sæculis verax fuisse id oraculum.*”—*Cicero*.

every other fact, it deserves inquiry, and the verdict should go by the evidence.

The facts to which large numbers of highly intelligent persons, including names well known in the scientific and literary world, are now bearing witness are of the first importance. The existence of spirit, long proclaimed by the reason no less than by the superstition of man, is now said to be verifiable experimentally, and many who have been repelled by the narrowness of dogmatic teaching claim to have found light and life and rest for heart and mind in the conclusions which logically result from the things which their senses have certified. Against this positive testimony the decision of such persons as, not having examined the facts, deny them on preconceived grounds of the possible and impossible, is as valueless as that of those who, in 1825, told Stephenson that to travel at thirty miles an hour was contrary to nature. Those who prejudge the case, and, on the ground of first principles, decide that sane and competent witnesses, starting with a contrary bias, have not seen what they depose they have seen, must be left to their prejudices. Only those who know the facts already, or approach them with really open minds, are competent to decide on the issues.

2. Those persons who have had their notice drawn to the phenomena in question, and have been compelled to admit the undeniable "intelligence" necessary to their production, offer different solutions for them according to the previous bent of their minds. There are two principal groups observable. One is mainly composed of those who hold strongly to the ecclesiastical and dogmatic form of popular Christianity, and find it easier to believe in a local and personal election, resurrection, judgment, heaven and hell, than in ever-present spiritual laws for which these are figures of speech. These generally know the subject only at second or third hand, and consider it a medley of inane and super-

stitious practices, moving furniture, messages of very doubtful authenticity, and alleged glimpses of the dead, and decide that, as the phenomena are too trivial, foolish, and undignified to be from God, they must be the work of "evil spirits," otherwise "the devil." They point triumphantly in proof of this position to the frequent abandonment of dogmatic Christianity and the denial that Christ was born to complete a vicarious atonement, as the insignia of apostasy and the very brand of Satan.

The other class, which mainly consists of those who have been brought into personal contact with the phenomena themselves, or who, perceiving the great importance of the facts, if true, have really studied, thought, and prayed over the subject, refer them to agency only differing from incarnate human agency in that it is disembodied, as we understand the word. They assert that the insight thus obtained into the unseen, so far from being superstitious, only emphasises the absolute necessity for personal effort; that it is the deadly enemy of superstition, priestcraft, and vicariousness of all kinds; that, so far from being immoral or devilish, it insists on purity of heart, and on the putting away of sensuality and covetousness, as the only path of progress; that it sheds a light on all creeds alike of the present and of the remote past, and leads from human dogmas and theologies to the simple life, the pure practice, the confidence in unseen aid, and the real faith in the Father of all spirits which was inculcated by Jesus; from a blind hope in the indulgence of an anthropomorphic God, to trust in the uncreated Love acting by law; rewarding indeed, but by consequence; punishing indeed, but by results; not merciful, for mercy is the remission of penalty, but supremely pitiful because supremely wise. They say that this insight has led them from a belief in an absolute and infallible Bible, whose contradictions must be accepted with blind faith, to a knowledge of various inspirations received in various degrees by fallible

and imperfect men, written down by them or by their hearers, containing, indeed, Divine truth, but not THE Truth itself.

There are also those who think the whole of the phenomena to be the result of trickery and fraud, or (more charitably, but less logically) as being due to "unconscious cerebration," or some other unknown quantity or entity which may be allowed to be anything except an unseen intelligence external to man. This class must diminish daily under the impact of facts as these become better known, and must ultimately disappear as the disbelievers in mesmerism have disappeared; but as many of these objectors are honestly unable to receive all at once so large a dose of truth as the existence of an unseen world in real and organic contact with this, two considerations may be commended to their careful study. The first is, that, of all the able scientific and literary men who have really gone into these alleged facts with care and patience, the large majority have been completely convinced that they must be referred to living souls gone into the Unseen, whither we are all hastening. The other is, that there never has been in any country a new proclamation of any great truth or principle but it has been derided and decried as puerile, subversive, contrary to religion, ridiculous, blasphemous, and absurd. Galileo, Copernicus, Galvani, Luther, Buddha, Mahomet, Wesley, Socrates, Harvey, Newton, Columbus, Franklin, Young, Watt, and Stephenson, with many another of whom the world was unworthy, were all variously called visionaries, or blasphemers, or dreamers, or deluded, or subverters of established order, or enemies of God; and at the head of the list should stand the greatest of all names, that of One who was condemned to a felon's death by a fanatical priesthood, because He had affronted the orthodoxy of the day by placing himself in opposition to its forms and observances.

No attempt is made in this book to prove the psychic phenomena, not because this is difficult, but because it has

so often been done already as far as evidence can prove anything, and to begin the task would be to rewrite a library. Any one who may be seeking for valid evidence as to the facts can obtain it from the books noted below, whose writers have put forward their testimony often at great inconvenience and loss, and have mostly published in the interests of truth only.*

In considering certain phenomena as proven we are by

* List of books for elementary psychic study :—

Introductory.

1. Miracles and Modern Spiritualism. A. R. Wallace, LL.D., F.G.S., &c.
2. From Matter to Spirit. Prof. and Mrs. De Morgan.
3. Footfalls on the Boundary of another World. R. D. Owen.
4. Psychic Facts. A Summary of Scientific Evidence. W. H. Harrison.
5. Psychic Facts and Theories. Arena Press.

Experimental and Philosophic.

6. Researches in the Physical Phenomena of Spiritualism. Prof. Wm. Crookes, F.R.S.
7. Transcendental Physics. Prof. Zöllner. Trans. C. C. Massey.
8. Livre des Esprits. "Allan Kardec."
9. Spirit Teachings. W. Stainton Moses.
10. Higher Aspects of Spiritualism. W. Stainton Moses.

Historical.

11. History of the Supernatural in all Ages and Nations. Howitt.
12. Spirit Workers in the Home Circle. Morell Theobald.
13. Incidents in my Life. D. D. Home.
14. Report on Spiritualism. London Dialectical Society.

These are a few of the works that can be recommended on the subject; there are many more, but there is perhaps no department of human knowledge on which a greater flood of nonsense has been poured out than on this. Excited by the vast possibilities opened out by the fact of conscious communication between the two worlds, hoping thereby to solve all their problems without further trouble, delighted at messages which seem to mark out the recipients as specially privileged among men, many of the writers of such books have accepted their uncorroborated messages and their own wild theories as proven facts, and have exalted their own pet "medium" into a prophet.

no means begging the question at issue, but are merely accepting a great mass of singularly unanimous and concurrent human testimony, which, moreover, is open to experimental verification.

3. Here, then, we have a basis of fact, evidence of the senses. If the phenomena are true, and if any of them are produced by unseen beings, they are neither more nor less than "miracle." Whether they are trivial or not matters little. Phenomena are principles in action, realities becoming apparent; and little phenomena do not mark a principle as unimportant. Every fact, even the most trivial, is the voice of God speaking in actualities, the only way God ever speaks, the only way man can ever hear. It is the same power which determined the twitch of Galvani's dead frog's leg as that which carries the messages of empires across the world; it is the same principle which gives its form and course to a dewdrop as its orbit to a planet. Nothing is small and nothing is great in the calm view of Wisdom, for the small and the great are alike passing expressions of the eternal laws which are the Will of God in action, and for this reason are never spasmodic, never suspended, never reversed.

What, then, are the phenomena? They may be divided into two great groups for purposes of investigation—the physical, where movement of matter in some form takes place with no immediately apparent cause; and the properly so-called psychic, where information is communicated from mind to mind. Practically the two are generally combined, as when answers are given by the tilts of an article of furniture (generally, for obvious reasons of convenience and readiness, a table) and replies to questions are thus spelt out. Here are obviously two matters for thought: first, the movement of the inanimate object without muscular effort: and second, the nature of the message, whether stupid, frivolous, serious, or wise; and hence the classification adopted above. A

further analysis will lead to the question of the power possessed by the sender of the message and his moral nature, but this must be deferred for the present.

4. The events which have drawn attention to the possibility of physical phenomena being produced by unseen personalities were historically those occurring in what have always been popularly known as "haunted houses," in which visible apparitions, with or without unusual sounds, have been seen, or in which there have been great disturbances of furniture, and various articles of greater or less weight have been violently thrown or carried from place to place. Narratives of these have been verified and collected with great care, and by many competent and critical observers, both at first and at second hand, and established by evidence which in a court of law would amply suffice to procure conviction on the gravest charges. That this evidence is not thought final on the present subject is due to the disproportionate importance with which all men regard their own personal experience, to the power of the mind to expel unwelcome truths, and to an assumed knowledge of first principles, regardless of the checks and rebuffs which this last must receive from a review of the scientific progress of the last fifty years. Within the domain of material Nature alone, those are now every-day occurrences which our fathers would have scouted, and did scout, as contrary to Nature; but while all persons would recoil from the assertion of infallibility in physics as from madness, there are, nevertheless, many who take precisely that attitude with regard to the matter in hand, and discredit the most intelligent witnesses notwithstanding that they are, as a rule, directly interested in the suppression rather than in the publication of facts damaging to their credibility, and from which they receive annoyance rather than advantage.

Mr. Robert Dale Owen, who has given most careful study to the matter, and whose books contain the best

authenticated collection of these stories which has yet been published, writes :—

“In winnowing, from out a large apocryphal mass, the comparatively few stories of this class which come down to us in authentic form vouched for by respectable contemporary authority, sustained by specifications of time and place and person, backed sometimes by judicial oaths, one is forcibly struck by the observation that, in thus making the selection, we find thrown out all stories of the ghostly school of horror, skeleton spectres, demons with the orthodox horns and tail . . . and there remain a comparatively sober and prosaic set of wonders, inexplicable indeed by any known physical agency, but shorn of that gaudy supernaturalism in which Anne Radcliffe delighted, and which Horace Walpole scorned not to employ.

“In its place, however, we find an element which by some may be considered quite as startling and improbable—I allude to the mischievous, boisterous, and freakish aspects which these disturbances occasionally assume. So accustomed are we to regard all spiritual visitations, if such there be, as not serious and important only, but of a solemn and reverential character, that our natural or acquired repugnance to admit the reality of any phenomenon not explicable by mundane agency is greatly increased when we discover in them mere whim and triviality. This non-compliance alike with the demands of a credulous superstition and of supernatural awe is the first indication of some kind of order or law running through the phenomena which may possibly throw some light on their cause.”

5. Our business, however, is now with the facts and not with their explanation ; we must at present confine ourselves to an examination of what they really are. Without going into the oracles and the apparitions of the remote past—for in our absurd conceit we credit those ages with a superstition which their splendid monuments of literature and

art and civilisation utterly belie—and referring only to well-attested events of comparatively recent occurrence dealing with the so-called spiritualistic phenomena as an introduction to the experimental side of the question, Glanvil's narrative of the disturbances at Tedworth may be selected as one of the best authenticated.

The Rev. Joseph Glanvil was a member of the Royal Society, the author of various works of theology and of a defence of the Baconian philosophy, and was chaplain to Charles II. The events were testified to by Mr. John Mompesson, a magistrate of Tedworth, in Wilts, and were partly witnessed by Mr. Glanvil himself. These events were knocking or drumming all over the house; strokes were given on the beds and on various articles of furniture; shoes and such-like small objects were flung all over the rooms; and these disturbances went on for two entire years, namely, from April 1661 till April 1663, in spite of all endeavours to trace their cause, taking place often in the very room where Mr. Mompesson was watching for the supposed trickster with his little daughter, in whose presence the disturbances most frequently occurred. This, it may be observed, is the first hint that the phenomena are found (as a rule) to attend on certain persons young or old, known as "mediums," who, by some peculiarity of mental or physical constitution, are specially apt for their production. The facts were witnessed to by numbers of persons and sworn to in a court of justice. Ten years later it was reported that Mr. Glanvil had been the victim of a trick; when he wrote:—"That I must belie myself, and perjure myself also, to acknowledge a cheat in a thing where I am sure there neither was nor could be any, as I, the minister of the place, and two other honest gentlemen deposed at the assizes upon my impleading the drummer. If the world will not believe it, it shall be indifferent to me, praying God to keep me from the same or the like affliction." Those who are

curious to learn the full details of the story, which is a very characteristic one, must be referred to Mr. R. D. Owen's "Footfalls on the Boundary of another World," pp. 149-157, third English edition; or, if this is not sufficient, to Glanvil's "Sadducismus Triumphatus," published in 1666, and recently reprinted, where the whole case is given at length.

Glanvil's final remarks on the matter run thus:—

"Mr. Mompesson is a gentleman of whose truth in this account I have not the least ground of suspicion, he being neither vain nor credulous, but a discreet, sagacious, and manly person. Now the credit of matters of fact depends much upon the relaters, who, if they cannot be deceived themselves, nor supposed any ways interested to impose on others, ought to be credited. For upon these circumstances all human faith is grounded, and matter of fact is not capable of any proof besides but that of immediate sensible evidence. Now this gentleman cannot be thought ignorant whether that he relates be true or not—the scene of all being his own house, himself the witness, and that not of a circumstance or two, but of an hundred; nor of once or twice only, but for the space of some years, during which he was a concerned and inquisitive observer. So that it cannot, with any show of reason, be supposed that any of his servants abused him, since in all that time he must needs have detected the deceit. . . . He suffered by it in his name, in his estate, in all his affairs, and in the general peace of his family. The unbelievers in the matter of spirits and witches took him for an impostor. Many others judged the permission of such an extraordinary evil to be the judgment of God upon him for some notorious wickedness or impiety. Thus his name was exposed to censure, and his estate suffered by the concourse of people from all parts to his house; by the diversion it gave him from his affairs; by the discouragement of his servants, by reason of which he could hardly get any to live with him. To which

I add the continual hurry that his family was in, the affrights and the watchings and disturbance of his whole house. I say, if these things are considered, there will be little reason to think he would have any interest to put a cheat upon the world in which he would most of all have injured and abused himself" ("Sadducismus Triumphatus," pp. 334-6).

6. In the memoirs of the Wesley family published from original documents by Adam Clarke, LL.D., F.A.S., London, 1843, may be found a narrative of a very similar description extending over a year. In the rectory of the Rev. Samuel Wesley (father of John Wesley), at Epworth, manifestations occurred; drumming, moving of chairs and tables, opening doors, &c., &c., not traceable to any ordinary causes in spite of the most careful investigations. Emily Wesley shall tell her own tale in a letter to her brother Samuel. She says:—

"I thank you for your last, and shall give you . . . what has happened in our family. I am so far from being superstitious that I was too much inclined to infidelity; so that I heartily rejoice at having such an opportunity of convincing myself, past doubt or scruple, of the existence of some beings besides those we see. A whole month was sufficient to convince anybody of the reality of the thing, and to try all ways of discovering any trick. . . . I shall only tell you what I myself heard, and leave the rest to others.

"My sisters in the paper-chamber had heard noises, . . . but I did not much believe till one night, . . . just after the clock had struck ten, I went downstairs to lock the doors, which I always do. Scarce had I got up the best stairs, when I heard a noise like a person throwing down a vast coal in the middle of the fore kitchen, and all the splinters seemed to fly about from it. I was not much frightened, but went to my sister Sukey, and we together went

all over the low rooms ; but there was nothing out of order. Our dog was fast asleep and our only cat in the other end of the house. . . . All this time we never told my father of it ; but soon we did. He smiled, and gave no answer, but was more careful than usual from that time to see us in bed, imagining it to be some of us young women who sat up late and made a noise. As for my mother, she firmly believed it to be rats, and sent for a horn to blow them away. I laughed to think how wisely they were employed who were striving half a day to fright away Jeffrey (for that name I gave it) with a horn. But, whatever it was, I perceived it could be made angry, for from that time it was so outrageous there was no quiet for us after ten at night. I heard frequently, between ten and eleven, something like the quick winding up of a jack at the corner of the room by my bed-head, just like the running of the wheels and the creaking of the ironwork. This was the common signal of its coming. Then it would knock on the floor three times, then at my sister's bed's-head in the same room almost always three together, and there stay ; the sound as hollow and loud so as none of us could ever imitate. It would answer to my mother if she stamped on the floor and bid it. It would knock when I was putting the children to bed, just under me where I sat. . . . It was more loud and fierce if any one said it was rats or anything natural. I could tell you abundance more of it, but the rest will write, and therefore it will be needless."

Mr. Wesley's journal says :—

"I have been thrice pushed by an invisible power, once against the corner of my desk in the study, a second time against the door of the matted chamber, a third time against the right side of the frame of my study-door as I was going in.

"Our mastiff came whining to us as he always did after the first night of its coming ; for then he barked violently

at it, but was silent afterwards, and seemed more afraid than any of the children."

John Wesley deposes:—

"Before it came into any room, the latches were frequently lifted up, the windows clattered, and whatever iron or brass was about the chamber rang and jarred exceedingly. . . . When it was in any room, let them make what noise they would, as they sometimes did on purpose, its dead hollow note would be clearly heard above them all. The sound very often seemed in the air in the middle of a room, nor could they ever make any such themselves by any contrivance. It never came by day till my mother ordered the horn to be blown; after that scarce any one could go from one room to another but the latch of the room they went to was lifted up before they touched it."

Space forbids more than a mention of other cases which have been selected by Mr. Owen as sufficiently proved, from among a vast number of others perhaps equally true, but not equally well supported. Such are the cases of Councillor Hahn and Count Kern at Slawensik, Upper Silesia, in 1807; of Madame Hauffe's experiences at Oberstenfeld, Wurtemberg, in 1826; of Captain Molesworth's house at Trinity, two miles from Edinburgh, in 1835; of the farmhouse at Baldarroch, Aberdeenshire, in 1838; of the chapel of Oesel, Livonia; of M. Tinel at Cideville, Seine, in 1851; at the Rue des Noyers, Paris, in 1860; of the Fox family at Hydesville, New York, in the year 1848; and of many others recently collected by the industry of the Society for Psychical Research. Several traits are common to all these tales:—

- (1.) That in nearly every case they were the source of great annoyance to the persons concerned.
- (2.) That no physical injury was done to any one; the agency seeming as powerless for real harm as it was potent for annoyance.

- (3.) That, though the sounds often gave evidence of an intelligent origin, no regular attempt was made by the investigators to enter into relations.
- (4.) That animals were frequently more powerfully affected than human beings, which seems conclusive as to the objectivity of the occurrences.
- (5.) That the phenomena attached themselves, as a general rule, to persons rather than to places.

These observations will be seen in the sequel to contain the key to the mystery.

7. It was the case of the Fox family living at Hydesville, in the county of New York, which first demonstrated that phenomena of this class may have the object of attracting attention, and the opening up of relations between the unseen operator and the visible world. In this instance the same kind of raps, movement of furniture, noises and touches, were heard, seen, and felt, and the noises occurring first were put down to natural causes by the family, who were well-to-do farmers of good standing and repute.

After many endeavours by men devoid alike of fear and superstition, by sceptics and by clergy, to find the nature and origin of such-like troubles, after fruitless watchings, traps, and exorcisms, after many had stood on the brink of the discovery that these things were due neither to a Satan nor to trickery, but simply to human agency in the unseen desiring to open communication or to be revenged for wrongs real or supposed, the discovery itself was made by the simple sense of a girl of nine, who treated the rapping power as an intelligence to be regarded neither with awe nor with reverence, nor with hatred. "Here, old Splitfoot, do as I do," called out Kate Fox, snapping her fingers. The knocking responded: it could hear and answer. Soon it was clear that it could see likewise, for it replied to silent signs. It spelt names and dates by a rap at the correct letter when

the alphabet was recited, and "modern spiritualism"—the communication between embodied and disembodied intelligences—began.

8. Soon it was found that these raps attached rather to persons than to places, and that if such persons sat quietly awaiting the phenomena they would present themselves, generally under one of two forms, either rapping sounds produced in any designated place, floor, walls, ceiling, table, or even on a glass held in the hand; or movements of furniture rising more or less in apparent defiance of gravity, and answering questions by tilts or other movements. The next step naturally proceeded from the inference that if the unknown power could express itself intelligently, and could also move ordinary matter, it must be able to move a pencil and write. The experiment of attaching a pencil to a basket or other light object was tried, and, after irregular efforts, succeeded. More convenient devices followed, ending with the now well-known little tripod on two castors, and a pencil or pointer called a planchette or Ouija. Continued experiment produced many wholly unexpected results. It was found that not only is such power given through certain persons, but that each "medium" has his or her own particular idiosyncrasy; that in the presence of one, raps would be heard; in that of another, a table would tilt or musical instruments would sound; with a third, light objects could be carried in the air; with another, apparitions might become visible or even tangible; another could write mechanically with a planchette; another could perceive the nature of objects invisible to ordinary sight, such as writing sealed in an envelope, and so on through all the varieties of what is technically termed "mediumship." These effects were produced in experimenters' own rooms which the medium had never seen, and where no possibility of fraud or collusion could remain open, and numbers of persons whose desire for truth was stronger than their fear of

ridicule or their attachment to preconceived opinions, began to form societies and circles for the investigation of these things. Undeterred by the sneers of the pseudo-scientific, who, strong in their preconceived notions of the possible, deny the evidence of the senses, or by the anathemas freely bestowed by a clergy who consider themselves the monopolists of spiritual knowledge, they pursued their own course, the interrogation of Nature which is called experiment, that observation of results on which all true science rests. They questioned the "spirits" themselves on their nature, past lives, methods of action, and present state, compared their replies, observed certain remarkable dissimilarities and a still more remarkable vein of agreement running through communications given at widely different times and places. They found with surprise how completely these communications were at variance with the personal ideas of the recipients, and countenanced neither a heaven of bliss, a hell of torment, an idle repose, nor annihilation. Lastly, they have found that many of the so-called "messages" proceed indubitably from no external source at all, but from an unexplored stratum of the writer's own consciousness. They tabulated the manner of occurrence and nature of the phenomena of all kinds, and collected at last a sufficient mass of evidence on which to hazard some generalisation; in other words, to perceive a glimmering of law governing these as all other natural facts.

The whole subject, then, rests on experiment. It is the objective proof that the living soul is the real man, and of the powers possessed by this soul both in the embodied and in the disembodied state. The use of these things is that all of us may obtain clearer insight into the laws which govern the development of our own souls and strengthen our own spirits by contact with truth. It is a means of learning only, not a revelation, and no greater mistake can be made than to construct a creed out of it. If spirit utterances are

to be blindly accepted as infallible guides, it is far better to stick to the old forms, which, imperfect as they are, have been the ark of truth to the race. The study needs a cool head and no little courage to investigate some things which the Churches declare to be sacred mysteries, and others which are deemed to be too trivial or too superstitious for inquiry. There is only one safe temper, the perfect purity of life and conduct which has nothing to conceal, the love of truth which will twist neither facts nor conscience one iota to suit preconceived opinions, the set will to know truth at all costs though it lead through obloquy or contempt, and firm faith in the Father of Light, whose love extends to all His creatures, and who, in response to the cry for wisdom, "giveth to all men freely and upbraideth not."

9. In this temper only experiment is safe; in any other it is fraught with perils unknown and undreamed of by those who, in trials of planchette writing, mesmerism, thought-reading, and the like, make themselves the playthings of frivolous or malevolent beings, seen and unseen, who may infuse into their subjects a subtle soul-poison whose effects may be as lasting as they seem unaccountable. Mediumship which comes naturally and is pursued in a wise temper can (like all other natural powers) be productive only of good; but its forced activity, and the constant opening of the organism out of mere frivolity, desire of gain, or still baser motives, to unknown influences, and to the various conditions which paid mediumship involves, paralyses the will, enervates the body, and (if not counteracted by purer agencies opening his eyes to the danger) may end by reducing the unhappy somnambule to the invertebrate passivity of a jelly-fish, or, by filling him with a self-conceit which blinds him to the obvious folly of the unpractical course he is pursuing, may leave him morally if not mentally insane. In endeavouring to popularise this great and comparatively unknown subject, which has been of such incalculable value to so

many minds by showing them the law of growth of soul and spirit, I wish to call particular attention to the literal and exact truth of what I am about to state. It is as dangerous for the unprepared experimenter rashly and in a light or frivolous temper to undertake personal investigation in this matter as for one knowing nothing of chemistry to enter a laboratory and begin unguided experiments on nitro-glycerine and the fulminates. He is dealing with real, though mental, forces of great potency, and may in sober truth attach to himself influences whose power he will feel in ways little suspected by him, and he may realise the meaning of the mediæval fable of the student who, by repeating his master's invocation, called up the devil, but could not dismiss the inconvenient attendant when no longer required. It may well be that the powers in question are destined to play a greater part in the development of man than those chemical combinations which, as gunpowder and dynamite, so largely enter into the uses of peace and war, and, like them, may be as powerful for good as for evil, in the destruction of the barriers between the known and the unknown, between mind and mind, as in the removal of rocks in our harbours and in the making of those iron ways which, opening up continents and bringing nations together, distribute the riches of the world. Like them, too, they may be abused to the destruction of our brethren and ourselves, and are not to be played with, but to be used for wise ends. They are most safely studied at second hand, in such works as have been indicated on page 35 *ante*, which contain the experience and inferences of exact and careful observers on the subject; but as it is the experience of all who have investigated their mysteries that no amount of testimony short of that of our own senses produces an adequate conviction, the truthseeker may do well to obtain admission to some circle where all suspicion of trickery is removed by the known good faith, the perfect openness, and the absolute

disinterestedness of the sitters, where no money passes under any pretence soever, and having satisfied himself of the complete absence of any preparation or means of mechanically producing the results (a concession which every wise circle will readily grant to an honest inquirer), to accept the evidence of his own senses as to the genuineness of the phenomena he does see, and then meddle no more with them till he has fully mastered their bearings and the results which naturally flow therefrom, by which time he will probably have ceased to care for them unless he should have some definite experiments to try.

10. With this caution, the classification of the physical phenomena which establish the existence of an unknown power may be proceeded with, leaving for later consideration the instances in which that power manifests also the characteristics of will—high-mindedness, frivolity, dislike, or affection, and the like; in two words, of intelligent personality. These phenomena, with the exception of the luminous and non-luminous apparitions of forms and faces, are equally well observed in light as in darkness. Some of them are almost necessarily done in the light; while as for others which demand darkness, the experiments of Professor Crookes, F.R.S., and others, have demonstrated that, though a powerful light certainly has some dispersive effect on the force at work, the experiments can be perfectly well carried out in a weak light, such as the electric glow in a vacuum tube or in the non-actinic red light used by photographers. Mr. Crookes adds that “the interfering rays seem to be those at the extreme end of the spectrum,” a particularly interesting observation, the interference being possibly due to the quicker vibration of those rays.

CLASS I. The first class in order, both of facility and simplicity, is that of sound, taps or raps occurring in different places. They are produced in full light or in darkness, with the medium awake or in trance, sewn into a chair, suspended

in a swing, surrounded by a wire cage, or even in another room. They vary in intensity from faint raps such as might be produced with the end of a knitting-needle to blows which shake the room, and are as readily produced on a tumbler held in the hand of the experimenter, on distant corners of the floor or ceiling, on a sheet of glass, on a stretched wire, on a tambourine, or in a living tree (Crookes), as on a chair or a table. They seem to be produced in rather than on the surface of the object by means of which they are heard, and they will follow a code such as is used by telegraphists, or indicate a letter of the alphabet pointed to or pronounced, and are to a certain extent under the control of the medium. It is as rational to ridicule this method of communication as the raps of the telegraphic-sounder, which they much resemble.

CLASS 2. The second class consists of those phenomena which demonstrate the application of a distinct physical force to inanimate bodies without contact of any person. This is particularly interesting notwithstanding the slight nature of the effects, for it is actually a transference of energy by means at present entirely unknown. The frequent exhaustion of the medium would seem to point to him as the source of power; but if so, what is its channel? Be that as it may, the fact remains; a pendulum enclosed in a glass case cemented to the wall, can be set in motion, articles may be raised in the air without contact of any person, and a self-registering spring-balance may be depressed from a degree varying from a few grains to several pounds.

When these experiments are performed, as they usually are, in an ordinary sitting-room, it is natural that a musical-box, a book, hand-screen, or other such light movable object should be selected, as that a table or an arm-chair should be chosen when a heavier article is required. These things impart an air of puerility to the record of such ex-

periments, but are really quite as convincing as trials with the dynamometer or the friction-brake, with which most persons omit to furnish their houses, and which, moreover, would rather create than remove suspicion in the unscientific mind. The phenomenon is one of the most common at séances, and establishes the fact that a transference of energy from the unseen to ordinary matter is possible; and as it is certain that, if energy so passes, there must be a means or channel for the transfer, and whereas no application of gravity, cohesion, muscular power, chemical affinity, electric or magnetic force as now understood, can account for the phenomenon, it behoves us to look for another means of transference. The only analogy in ordinary life to this movement of matter by unknown energy is a very familiar one; to wit, the movement of muscle by voluntary action in intelligent beings, and this may perhaps suggest a probable explanation. An account of some of these experiments may be found in the Report of the London Dialectical Society.

CLASS 3. *Movements of heavy bodies in contact with the medium.*—This class is actually no different from the last, but is due to the same power similarly applied. It is here made a distinct class, because many observers consider that effects produced in contact with the medium, even though in such a manner as to make the transmission of muscular power an impossibility, are necessarily different from those where there is no such contact. Experimentally, as to manner, it is distinct from the preceding; essentially, as to the application of power, it is the same.

Mr. Crookes records a very remarkable concomitant of these forces:—"These movements, and indeed I may say the same of every kind of phenomenon, are generally preceded by a kind of cold air, sometimes amounting to a decided wind. On some occasions the cold has been so intense that I could only compare it to that felt when the hand has been within a few inches of frozen mercury."

CLASS 4. *Levitation*.—This is a rare occurrence, and consists in the medium rising into the air while standing or sitting, and in certain cases the chair may also be raised. The elevation may be only a few inches, or may be the full height of a room, and may last from a few seconds to ten minutes or more. Such things have been recorded of Catholic saints in mediæval as well as in modern times, and have been received by Catholics as proofs of peculiar sanctity, and by Protestants with utter disbelief, but testimony is concurrent from many quarters. I have never seen it, but instances under the respectable guarantees of the Master of Lindsay and Lord Adare are to be found in the Report of the London Dialectical Society.

CLASS 5. *Insensibility to heat*.—This also is a rare phenomenon. It consists in the apparent withdrawal from a glowing hot body of its power to burn, while leaving its luminosity. Whether the temporary change is in the hot object itself, or in the hand of the holder, or is due to the interposition of some invisible non-conductor, is not clear. When it occurs, not only can the medium handle red-hot glass or metal with impunity, but the persons to whom he gives it or the fabrics whereon it may be put are uninjured. This is stated on the authority of evidence given at the investigation by the committee of the London Dialectical Society above quoted.

CLASS 6.—Writing, either through a planchette, or by a pencil laid on paper and left there, or on paper without any visible pencil, or variations of these. None of the phenomena hitherto catalogued are necessarily intelligent effects; that is, they may have an intelligent cause (inferable from the movement of a heavy body among a crowd of sitters without touching any), but they convey no message from mind to mind. The class now under discussion is necessarily intelligent, however foolish or vapid be the matter written, for no blind force can produce words and sentences.

Writing may take place in various ways :—

(*a.*) With the planchette : a small movable board on two castors, having a pencil-point as a third support. This board is used as a rest for the hands of one or two persons. Without conscious effort on their part it will presently move over the paper and trace out characters. This ability to write with a planchette is a very common form of mediumship.

(*b.*) A fragment of slate-pencil is placed between two slates fitting one over the other. After an interval of a few seconds from the time when the first scratching sound is heard, a message is found on the slate. I know of one case where the message was signed by the usual autograph of the recipient's dead husband, and it is not uncommon that handwriting is recognised in these messages.

(*c.*) A pencil and paper are laid on a table or are placed in a drawer, and after a short time the message is found thereon. This is much rarer than the preceding ; and still more uncommon is the case of messages traced on the paper without any pencil, but possibly by some chemical alteration in the substance of the paper along the lines of the letters. Instances of both are well authenticated.

(*d.*) A much more common mode of writing is for the medium to remain entirely passive, holding a pencil, and to receive an impulse which writes independently of any volition on his part. This is generally accompanied by a tingling sensation in the arm or hand. Here the nature of the matter written must obviously be the test of genuineness, and this alone can give ground for concluding that the information received comes from an external source, or from the writer's subliminal consciousness. No doubt in many cases the "message" is distinctly the result of information acquired by the writer himself by processes of which he may or may not be conscious, and no sort of control by any other spirit than his own need be invoked in order to account for many of the facts ; but there are, on the other hand, many

instances in which this explanation does not anything like cover the ground. Books claiming to be written in this manner are not wanting. That entitled "Scientific Religion," by, or through, the late Laurence Oliphant, and that called "Spirit Teachings," published by the late Mr. Stainton Moses, are perhaps two of the best extant, dealing with those higher possibilities of life and practice which are essential to the solution of the problems of the age, especially the economic and sexual aspects of the social question. Both indicate a rational basis for life ; namely, that man is spirit rather than body, and that spiritual progress is not to be sought in barren contemplation apart from the active life of the world, but by foregoing all useless and enervating luxuries, and by a graceful simplicity wherein rich and poor might readily meet. They indicate mental riches and greater powers of soul as the object of life, rather than more of material wealth than strictly subserves a healthy development—powers not to be gained by an isolated mysticism, but by kindly co-operation, men and women working together for higher ideals than the petty vanities which make up so much of our present lives.

The moral tendency of these writings falls, however, more appropriately into a later chapter, the present one dealing with the actual facts themselves. The teaching is alluded to because, when opposed to the conscious tenets of the writer, it is a strong argument for an independent source ; and setting aside the easily disproved hypothesis of stupid and deliberate fraud, it supplies at once the dilemma that either the conscious personality is but a small part of the range of action of the Ego, which must have access to sources of information quite other than those of his material experiences, or that the physical organism can be controlled by intelligent beings from an invisible world. Either of these two positions rests on the existence of soul as a separate entity.

CLASS 7. *Visual phenomena—Apparitions.*—These, though

not so common as the last, are not infrequent manifestations with certain mediums, and must as a rule be observed in the dark or in a very faint light, for a strong light not only overpowers the phosphorescence by which the appearances generally shine, as daylight overpowers the glow-worm's light, but it also seems to have a certain dissolving effect on the apparition itself, possibly connected with the nature of the ethereal body in a manner analogous to the resistance of selenium to the electric current, which is much lower in the light than in the darkness.

Sometimes the appearances take the form of small luminous spheres from the size of a pea to that of a tennis-ball, which float about in the room or round the heads of the sitters; or they may be pointed flames or pale luminous clouds, which may or may not develop into faces or hands, or even into whole figures. In such cases the apparition seldom lasts more than a few minutes, and fades away as it came. Or a form, generally a head and shoulders only, may suddenly present itself with every appearance of life, except that below the shoulders it fades into mistiness. These developed forms are not generally self-luminous, but may require to be lit in order to be seen. A faint light such as that given by a vacuum tube, a phosphorescent lamp, or a board covered with luminous paint, is generally employed to render these visible. They may last from a few seconds to half-an-hour, and may in certain cases be photographed (Crookes). Sometimes they can speak, but generally the power is insufficient to admit of this, and it may be taken as an invariable rule (so far as my experience goes) that the more perfect and complex the presentment, the greater the exhaustion of the medium, who, being in a lethargic sleep while they are in progress, frequently shows the utmost prostration on being awakened at their close.

CLASS 8. *Chemical changes.* — The change of the colour of water in sealed bottles has been alleged in signed and

witnessed documents. The writer has never seen any such phenomenon, and it is given only to complete the classification.

CLASS 9. *Apparent penetration of matter by matter.*— This is perhaps, without exception, the most difficult phenomenon of all to account for in the present state of knowledge. Instances of such apparent penetration are not uncommon, and experiments such as sewing up a ring in cloth from which it is at once released without the cloth being cut or the stitches opened, the apparent passage of a musical instrument or other solid body through the door or walls of a room, the unknotting of ropes confining an object, and such-like, are not very rare at séances, where the spectators' ignorance of physics and their knowledge of the possibilities of sleight-of-hand blind them to the true significance of the things they see. But as a rule these phenomena occur unexpectedly, and are not preceded by sufficient precaution against illusion, nor registered with sufficient care to convince any others than the eye-witnesses. Such objections cannot, however, be urged against the carefully planned experiments carried out by Professor C. F. Zöllner, and witnessed by Professors Fechner, Weber, and Scheibner, of the University of Leipsic,* who have braved the odium which, now as in

* Professor Johann Carl Friedrich Zöllner was born in 1834, was professor of physical astronomy at Leipsic, member of the Saxon Society of Sciences, of the Royal Astronomical Society of London, of the Imperial Academy of Moscow, and has published many works. He takes rank with the foremost scientific men of Europe.

William Edward Weber, born 1804, is the author of "Electro-Dynamic Measurement," and, along with Faraday and Ampere, has had an electrical unit called by his name as an acknowledgment of his services to electrical science.

Professor Scheibner, also of Leipsic University, is a well-known and esteemed mathematician.

Part of Professor Zöllner's "Transcendental Physics" has been translated into English by Mr. C. C. Massey, Barrister-at-Law, published by W. H. Harris of 33 Museum Street, London, 1882, from which the above particulars are mainly transcribed.

the days of Galileo and Copernicus, awaits those who announce facts which compel a change in accustomed habits of thought. Professor Zöllner, following on the lead of the celebrated mathematicians, Gauss and Riemann, and also on hints furnished by such masters of the art of reasoning as Kant and Leibnitz, conceived it possible that experimental verification might be found for the existence of substance having interpenetrability, otherwise expressed as a fourth dimension in space.

Gauss had long before pointed out that the first theorem to be established elucidatory of this fourth dimension would be the tying of knots in an endless cord, and that this might be the foundation of a geometry of locality distinguished from the ordinary geometry of magnitude, or Euclidean plane, and solid geometry. Professor Zöllner had been attracted by the courage of Crookes and Wallace in boldly taking up the problem of modern spiritualism, and, being aware of the facts, availed himself of the presence in Leipsic of Mr. Henry Slade to experiment in the direction which seemed to him the most promising of results.

Reasoning from mathematical analogies which cannot for want of space be reproduced here, Professor Zöllner concluded that if the phenomena in question were produced by beings belonging to a world of substance whose properties are those of another grade of matter than ours, they should be able—

- (a) To tie simple knots in an endless cord.
- (b) To influence the other powers which pertain to orders of substance interior to matter, such as the electric and magnetic energies.
- (c) To show proof of access to spaces to us apparently quite closed, such as the interior of a sealed box.

These experiments were all successfully performed. It does not fall within the prescribed plan of this work to repeat the details. They may be found in the translation above alluded to. Mr. Slade by simple contact of his

hands magnetised a steel wire, and in his presence the knots were tied in a cord whose ends had been previously sealed by the witnesses. Professor Zöllner thus concludes:—

“The four knots in the above-mentioned cord, with the seal unbroken, this day still lie before me. I can send this cord to any man for examination. I might send it by turns to all the learned societies of the world, so as to convince them that . . . not a subjective phantasma is here in question, but an objective and lasting effect produced in the material world, which no human intelligence with the conceptions of space so far current is able to explain. If, nevertheless, the foundation of this fact . . . should be denied, only one other kind of explanation would remain, . . . the presumption that I myself and the honourable men and citizens of Leipsic in whose presence these cords were sealed were either common impostors or were not in possession of our sound senses sufficiently to perceive if Mr. Slade himself, before the cords were sealed, had tied them in knots. The discussion, however, of such an hypothesis would no longer belong to the dominion of science, but would fall under the category of social decency.”

Finally, as materialised hands with all the apparent solidity of life had previously left their impress upon smoked paper in the manner usually employed for identification (these sheets being afterwards passed through alcoholic solution of shellac to fix them), Professor Zöllner concluded that they should be able to do this when the sheets were enclosed between two hinged slates, shut together and sealed, and this was accordingly done. The conclusion seems irresistible that such phenomena are in very fact produced by beings existing in another order of substance than falls within the definitions of matter which has length, breadth, and thickness only.

11. These are the main groups of phenomena that are to be witnessed at “spiritualist” circles. To the ordinary

observer, who tacitly assumes that mechanical causes are the only real ones, even the evidence of his own senses under strict test conditions will need repetition before commanding belief and convincing him of the fallacy in his premise. However, nothing is more certain than that these things are, unless it be that those who do not wish to believe them will not believe them, and will re-insist on every variety of proof. It is a painful experience for those who would fain leave the phenomena, and go on to what the phenomena should teach, to the great lessons of the constitution and course of nature, and to the still higher problems of human life, to be arrested on the threshold by demands for test after test.* Each test once stated as decisive is given, and yet on the part of the general public and from each novice is there a fresh demand for more evidence. "Tables do not move without muscular effort, conscious or unconscious; it is contrary to nature." In vain sitters declare that they do, and that in an upward direction, against all muscular effort, conscious or otherwise. The demand is made that the phenomenon shall be repeated before a critical audience and without any contact whatsoever. It is done; every test which ingenuity can devise is applied, and still from indifference, frivolity, or superstition, or from the materialism that disbelieves, not because of intellectual inability, but from aversion to a changed basis of life, comes always the same cry for more proof. Proof is easily obtained by those who will take it when it comes; and though the necessary conditions must be observed, and cannot be reproduced at any time and place like those of a chemical experiment, the

* This is healthy up to a certain point. It is the argument that the whole subject is experimental. But the experimenter must enter on the subject with an open mind; it is the foregone conclusion not to be convinced that is to be deprecated. When the Report of the London Dialectical Society and Professor Crookes' researches were found to be in favour of the phenomena, quite apart from their cause, the press, with one honourable exception, stopped its ears.

phenomena can be, and are, repeated, quite without antecedent preparation, again and again. Those who are anxious to know first of all whether they are true, leaving the question of their character to be determined later, can see for themselves; circles are common enough now, and all who will give the subject careful attention and study, avoiding paid mediumship* as much as possible, and mercenary dealings of all kinds, will come to the conclusion of their genuineness.

The list of well-known persons who have been convinced would be a long one, and includes names on whose sanity the most determined sceptic will hesitate to reflect. Below are given the names of a few † who have testified to the truth

* This is a necessary caution. Spiritual truth should not be bought and sold like presentations and advowsons. "Freely ye have received, freely give," should be the watchword of all who have received gifts for the service of man. Not that all paid mediums are fraudulent, any more than all the clergy enter the ministry for its loaves and fishes. In at least three cases out of five they are genuine, and no fraudulent medium could long impose upon any one who knew the real phenomena; but test conditions are not always observed, and the mere fact of money-taking creates suspicion that when phenomena do not spontaneously occur, some one or other of the more easily imitable may be counterfeited rather than send empty away those that have paid for their show.

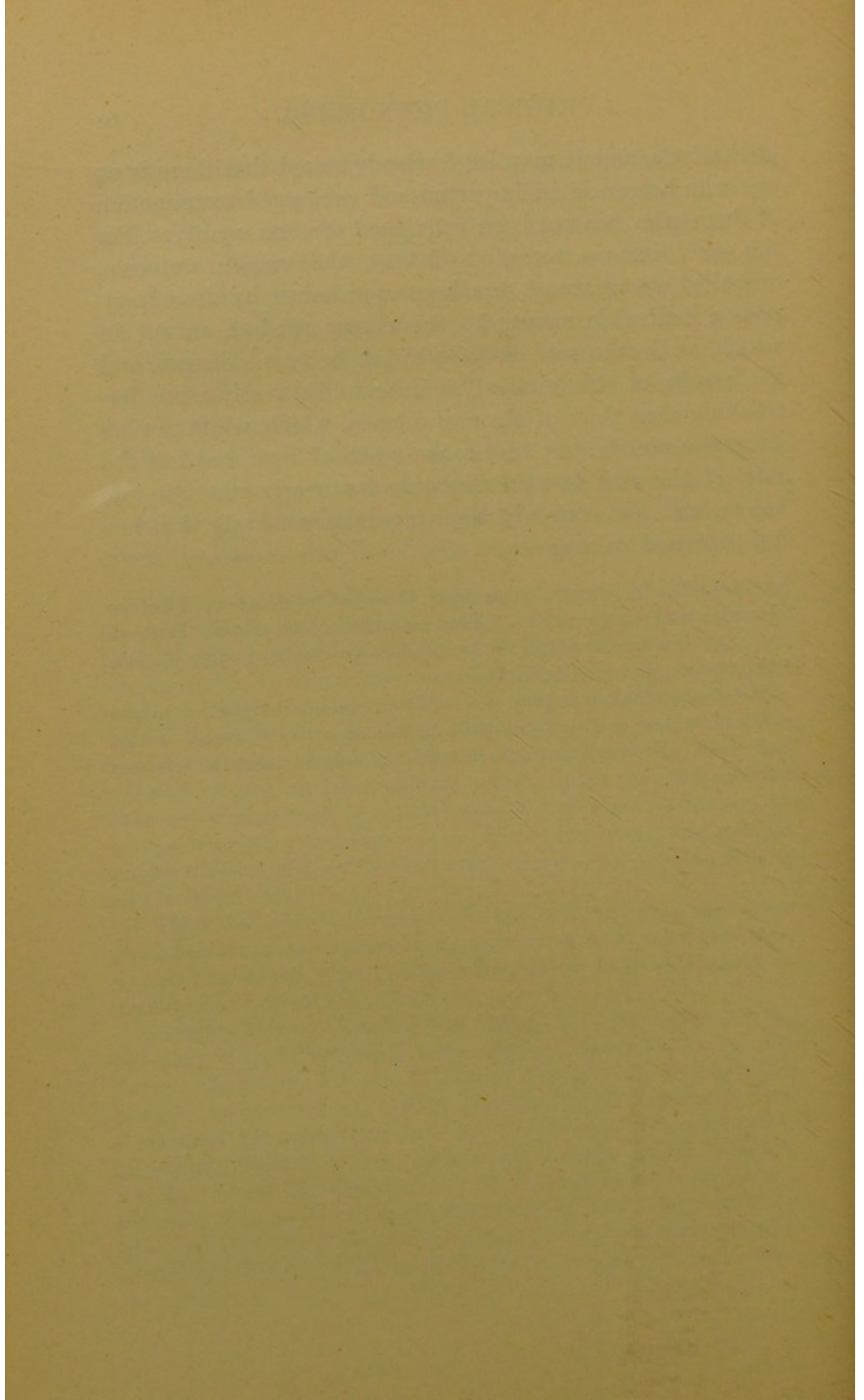
† The following list of witnesses for the facts will show that those who admit them can neither be slighted as of scant intelligence nor suspected as cheats. The persons named below have all testified to the objective truth of the phenomena:—

The late President Lincoln, Longfellow, Mrs. Harriet B. Stowe, Dr. Kane (Arctic explorer), Lord Lindsay, Lord Dunraven, Dr. Robert Chambers, Mr. C. F. Varley (electrician), Professor De Morgan (mathematician), Gerald Massey, W. M. Thackeray, Mrs. E. Barrett Browning, Serjeant Cox (barrister), Professor Crookes (physicist), William Weber (electrician), Professor A. R. Wallace, F.G.S., Professor Zöllner (physicist), M. C. Flammarion (astronomer), Professor Challis (astronomer), Professor William Gregory, M.D. (chemist), Professor Herbert Mayo, M.D., Lord Lyndhurst (lawyer), Archbishop Whately, Captain R. E. Burton (explorer), T. A. Trollope

of the facts, and it may be fearlessly stated that there is no one who has made an impartial and prolonged examination of them who has not been convinced of their reality. For the first time in recorded history, the unseen universe, miscalled supernatural, has been approached by the experimental method in answer to the crying need of an age in which, as Goethe said, scepticism has become a disease, and the results of this method promise to be vastly more far-reaching than those of physical science, which, while placing enormous possibilities within the reach of man, has left the ratio of the rich and the destitute too nearly where it was before, and has certainly aggravated its contrasts if it has not increased its magnitude.

(author), R. D. Owens (American Minister at Naples), Florence Marryat, and many others. *Vide* also *Proc. Soc. Psych. Research for 1895* for an investigation by Professors Oliver Lodge, Richet, Ockhorowicz, and Mr. F. W. Myers.

Those who think that they are, without examination, better judges of the facts than such persons with examination had better close this book here. Nothing that can be said is likely to move so robust a self-conceit.



CHAPTER II

*THE INNER OR SUBJECTIVE FACTS—
MEDIUMSHIP*

Fear came upon me and trembling,
Which made all my bones to shake.
Then a spirit passed before my face ;
The hair of my flesh stood up.
It stood still, but I could not discern the appearance thereof ;
A form was before mine eyes :
And I heard a still (silent) voice :
“ Shall mortal man be more just than GOD ? ”

—JOB.

“ And I Daniel alone saw the vision : for the men that were with me saw not the vision ; but a great quaking fell upon them, and they fled to hide themselves. So I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me : for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength. Yet heard I the voice of his words : and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I fallen into a deep sleep on my face, with my face toward the ground.”—DANIEL.

“ Millions of spiritual creatures walk the earth, unseen,
Both when we wake and when we sleep.”

—MILTON, *Paradise Lost*.

CHAPTER II

THE INNER OR SUBJECTIVE FACTS— MEDIUMSHIP

“And they were all amazed and marvelled, saying to one another, Behold, are not all these which speak Galilæans? Others mocking said, These men are full of new wine.”

1. THAT the occurrences which have been enumerated in the preceding chapter are believed in by thousands as objective facts on the evidence of their own senses is undeniable, and inasmuch as experimental verification is possible, and testimony both reliable and abundant, if we take it as proved that the phenomena actually do occur, the strange nature of the power in play is not less remarkable than the utter trivialities of its manifestations. Whether these are unexpected, and a whole household is thrown into confusion by noises and thumpings, or whether they are awaited in séance and a number of persons witness the raising of a table or the flight of a musical-box, nothing is more obvious than the foolish and inconsequent nature of most of these events. A passing glimpse of a once well-known face, seen it may be for a few brief seconds from the surrounding darkness; an assurance of continued love, interest, and presence which serve only a personal end—these are, *as a rule*, the highest types of phenomena which come to us from the unseen.

No light on the shadows of creed, no solution to the problems of earth, no nobler conceptions of God and Nature

to lift up the dull hearts of men, are generally given at "spirit-circles"; and though such messages, instinct with wisdom and calm power, are by no means unknown to the few whose hearts would fain rise above the petty personal detail of individual interests, whose perceptions have been cleared by a purity of life, they have no place at the average séance, where flying tambourines, "spirit-hands," musical performances by no means up to fair concert level, trivial talk, and thin jests form the staple of the evening. So much is this the case that many sensible men are repelled at the outset by the fantastic nature of these occurrences, and the more earnest truth-seekers, who resolve, undeterred by seeming futility, to investigate to the end, can set on them no value whatever except as clues to an underlying cause.

When, however, it is found that this complaint of triviality is most strongly urged by those whose notions of usefulness go no higher than the nomination of a winner in a horse-race, a forecast of the price of stocks, the cure of their own ailments, or their own personal advantage in some other form, or is heard from those who resent as impiety any attempt to remove the limitations of their pet creed, it may be suspected that this very triviality has a definite cause, and is perhaps less inherent in the phenomena than referable to the mental tone of the sitters. Under the present social system the gain of one is too often the loss of another, and the very suggestions made above effectually show the noble uses to which some minds would put foreknowledge. Two considerations (both of which will in the sequel be found to be at least partially true) may throw a little light on the difficulty for the present. The one is, that were the phenomena of use for direct material benefit they would lose their whole value, which is, not to give to a few an unearned advantage over their fellows, but to turn all from the material to the spiritual and to awaken attention through curiosity. The other is, that it is found that the phenomena

very noticeably follow the tone of the circle in which they occur. Frivolous and foolish sitters seem to give rise to frivolous and foolish phenomena, and those who do not desire above all things to know the glories of truth, who care not for the sorrows of earth, who are not oppressed by the discord, the confusion, and the strife in the world and in their own souls; those who are idly curious or selfishly indifferent, or who set the solace of their own sufferings and their own petty interests above all things—nay, even those who desire first of all their own intellectual advancement or aim at an individual salvation, and cannot be nobly self-forgetful, all such shall in vain seek for exalted communications, or think to hear a clarion voice calling them from their lethargy to truths they have neither sought nor desired.

In the previous chapter an endeavour has been made to show the nature of the phenomena and to group them, with the object of bringing out how little they answer to the effects of any inanimate force, or to those of any fortuitous mental causes. Their trivial and mundane character is admitted. But, as has been said before, little phenomena do not render a principle unimportant, and it is in the discovery of the directing power, and in the proof of the existence of mind independently of matter as we know it, that the value of these things entirely consists.

2. Two leading features in these phenomena at once attract attention, and both point to the connection with mind: the one is the necessity for the presence of a peculiar organism known as the "medium," a person in an exceptional, though not necessarily an unhealthy, state; and the other is the distinct evidence of external mind, whereby information foreign alike to the medium and the experimenter is conveyed. It is remarkable that the facts point almost as strongly to the connection between the message and the medium's mind as to the existence of the external power. While the subject-matter of the messages is, as has been said,

seldom much above the intellectual level of the medium and sitters, especially of the former, the information given is frequently a cause of surprise to all present. The spelling (in the case of an uneducated medium) and the diction may be the medium's own, at the same time that the evidence of external personality is overwhelming.

*probably
it was
suggested*

Thus in the case of the Fox family: Before any set system of communication had been devised, when one rap was taken for assent and silence for negation, the sounds alleged that they were produced by a spirit; by an injured spirit; by a spirit who had been injured in that house between four and five years before; not by any one of the neighbours whose names were called over, but by a former occupant, one John C. Bell; that the spirit was of a man thirty-one years of age; that he had been murdered in the bedroom, for money, on a Tuesday night at twelve o'clock; that no one but the murdered man and Bell were in the house at the time, Mrs. Bell and a girl named Lucretia Pulver, who worked for them, being both absent; that the body was buried in the cellar on the night after the murder. All these particulars are duly attested in written depositions under oath, and were largely confirmed by circumstantial evidence, including the finding of human bones in the cellar buried in quick-lime. It is difficult to resist the evidence of external personality here. Many others equally strong might be given; those who wish to know them are referred to the books of which a list is given in the footnote to page 35.

It now remains to consider how the external mind shows itself in the person who is the channel of the power. Phenomena of this order are not less real than the preceding because they are internal, subjective, and psychic rather than external, objective, and material; they are simply different in kind and demand a wholly different class of tests, the principal of these being consistency. By consistency is meant harmony of character, or some kind of

sequence and regularity running through entirely independent communications, through the words and acts of different mediums in different times, places, and nations. If this consistency is found, if medial phenomena occurring under such widely diverse conditions present similar features, the evidence against simulation is irresistible, for it is all but mathematically impossible that frauds should be so frequently alike as to simulate laws. This consistency actually exists. A study of the subject will show that American, German, English, Italian, and French mediums display markedly the same characteristics, which do not obscure their own peculiar and national traits, but are superinduced on these latter. Their methods are everywhere the same; they are limited by the same conditions and develop in the same way. The gradual development of the phenomena from simple raps to more intelligent methods of communication, and of the medium from unconscious passivity to new and active perception (clairvoyance, &c.), is everywhere similar; it is always progressive if not abused, beginning in simple manifestations and going on to true spiritual growth. Thus the description of "spirits" given by the clairvoyants of any nation is substantially identical and in striking contrast with current notions. Neither white enshrouded figures nor diaphanous forms with wings and aureoles, neither imps nor cherubs, are described, but (so far as I know) always forms corresponding to the living person,* whose description

* "*Exempli gratia* : Mrs. Chase, wife of Dr. Chase of Philadelphia, a clairvoyante who could 'see spirits' in her normal state, described one near a gentleman (who afterwards gave evidence before the Dialectical Society) as a tall, thin young man with brown hair, slight whiskers by the ears, with a stoop and a cough, and as stating that he had died of consumption. The witness recognised the description as fitting one Michael C——, an intimate friend of his, and added that he had only just landed in America, and that both he and his friend's existence were entirely unknown to Mrs. Chase" (*Report of the London Dialectical Society*, p. 130).

could be recognised by his friends. So with regard to the future state. Neither the Protestant heaven with harp and crown, nor the Catholic ecstasy of the Beatific Vision, nor the penal fires of hell, nor the sufferings of purgatory are represented. As an image and figure of speech the latter comes nearest to the ideas given, but the descriptions differ widely from the doctrinal presentment usual among Catholics. It is incredible that mere imagination should reflect neither the subject's own training nor the current opinions of his day. At the same time the evidence of the part played by the medium is also strong; the language in which the description is given is the medium's own, and seldom rises to flights of style and diction much above his normal capabilities.

It is the object of the ensuing paragraphs to discuss the intellectual characteristics with the view of reaching some conclusion as to the nature of the power in action. At this stage the trustworthiness of the communicating intelligence is not touched upon. Moral truth belongs to a higher order than the psychic, and as the preceding chapter was not concerned with the nature of the intelligences, but only with the physical manner of their manifestation, so this deals with their psychic features and not with their truth or untruth, and leaves it for the present an open question whether they can be referred to either evil or good agencies or divided between the two with every shade of variation and degree.

3. These subjective and internal phenomena known as mediumship are in some persons so intermingled that it may be difficult to refer each case to its definite class, but the powers themselves fall naturally into four very marked orders.

CLASS I.—Includes all varieties of physical effects as have been detailed in the last chapter. Such mediumship, from its passive attitude, is perhaps best summed up by the term, Subjectivity.

CLASS 2.—To this belong the healing and the mesmeric powers, and generally all effects which imply direct action by one organism on another and the transfer of thought and influence without visible channel. The theory of hypnotism which finds most favour at present is, that no such transfer of influence takes place. This is notably due to the fact that mechanical methods of hypnotisation are perfectly successful, and that many of the phenomena are demonstrably due to forces latent in the organism and not transferred to it. But it seems hasty to conclude that, because there resides in a person the power that stills his own normal activities, this power cannot be transferred, and the phenomena of “thought-reading” and telepathy seem to show pretty conclusively that some influence is communicated. All such influence, involves, of course, the transfer of energy, which is a direct action of mind on mind. The view that there is a real force, which, by analogy to steel-magnetism, has been called animal magnetism, has been favoured (since Mesmer) by Chazarain, Deloncle, Durville, De Rochas, and Barety; also so distinguished a physiologist as Reil took the same view; so does Ed. von Hartmann and Liebeault. The matter must be considered as being still *sub judice*, but there seems ample justification for the present classification. The effects produced under this class are entirely, or almost entirely, under the control of the will.

CLASS 3.—Covers the faculty of seeing, hearing, or being influenced by forces invisible, inaudible, and intangible to humanity at large, faculties which are known as clairvoyance, clairaudience, somnambulism, and automatic and impressional writing or speaking. A very strong distinction is observable between automatic and impressional writing; in the former absolute passivity on the part of the medium is essential, and trains of thought may be expressed in a diction entirely foreign to him, or even in a tongue with which he is unacquainted; but in the latter the language is

always much more strongly tinged with the medium's own personality and the diction is invariably his own, though the specific ideas may be inspired to him when he begins to write or speak, and are often forgotten soon after. It frequently happens that Sensitives (as this class of mediums may be called) are so entirely dominated by the influence as to fall into trance. They then speak or write more in the manner of the controlling power and less in their own. It is noticeable that there is a tendency of this phase to pass into the next if assisted by an unselfish and well-balanced mind.

CLASS 4. *The Enlightened.* — This highest class of all mediumship comprehends those whose spiritual faculties are open, and who are in more or less conscious communication with the unseen world, and draw thence the wisdom that is called enlightenment or the gift of prophecy, a word which is usually misunderstood to mean the faculty of foreknowledge, but is really the perception of the principles whereby events come about. These neither speak nor write in a personality other than their own; nor do they forget what they have said from time to time, for they speak from their own knowledge. They may indeed be helped and guided, as a child is helped and guided, and this help may be by suggested thought, or by conscious communication either sleeping or waking, but however it is given, it is that perception of truth which is also called inspiration. The medium of this class may have the other faculties in addition; he may have reached this stage by development through the lower phases, or he may attain it quite otherwise, but its continuance seems very much more dependent upon sincerity and purity of life than is the case with lower forms.

These four classes will now be considered in rather fuller detail. To treat of them adequately would demand not less than a volume apiece.

4. Physical mediumship. Subjectivity.

It has been already mentioned that this form is but little

under the direct control of the will. Though the physical phenomena occur only in the presence of certain persons, these cannot produce them at will. Fixed hours and quiet attention (which is preferably not "expectant") assist in their production, and scepticism in the onlookers is no hindrance provided it be open-minded scepticism and not mental opposition.

There is apparently no index whatever to the peculiar constitution that favours this class of mediumship. Old men and children, men and women, the robust and the delicate, sanguine and nervous, fair and dark, may any or all exhibit the power. It is sometimes involuntary and quite unsuspected by its possessor, as in the case of the Wesleys and of the Fox family. It is variable in degree, increasing with the general health and vigour of the subject, by no means augmented by a hyperexcited condition of the nervous system, but rather the contrary. Overstrained attention or too great anxiety will often stop the phenomena altogether.

The usual procedure of such persons about to exercise their powers is, on entering the room where the sitters are gathered, simply to sit down and silently to await effects, endeavouring also to bring about a harmony of feeling by singing or sometimes by prayer. Mediums of this class can hardly be said to show much personal effect till the phenomena are over. Sometimes none is apparent, the medium sitting at the table in full light and putting questions which are replied to by raps, by writing, or otherwise. But as a rule, when the effects are at all powerful, and especially when they consist of visible forms, the medium sinks back in a deep lethargic slumber or trance, and on recovery has no knowledge of what has taken place, but shows signs of severe nervous strain by extreme pallor, cold sweat, and sometimes by fainting; the exhaustion being greater with the duration and success of the séance. These facts seem

to indicate that his function is to supply somewhat, either substance or power, involving the expenditure of energy. Mathematically speaking he "does work," the results of which may vary from slight weariness to the severe exhaustion above described, and it is remarkable that the visual effects cause greater fatigue than others which would seem to involve more exertion. When these semi-material forms are produced in rapid succession the exhaustion of the medium is generally very marked indeed.

These phenomena assume very varied forms, as has already been described, and regarded as ends in themselves are freakish in the extreme, not to say contemptible; their use is entirely the experimental one. When conducted as a regular scientific experiment is conducted, in an orderly and regular manner, so as to close every loophole for doubt and to lead to well-defined results, they supply the basis of sense-evidence whereon all conclusion must ultimately rest.

5. Magnetic and mesmeric phenomena. The prevailing theory tends to refer these phenomena to a particular mental state of the subject rather than to any action of the mesmerist, whose function no doubt is often little more than that of applying the external stimulus and suggestion. There is, however, a residuum of unexplained facts where power seems definitely transferred from the operator to the subject, and for the present the classification of these phenomena as a separate kind may be maintained. That certain persons have the faculty of producing results which cannot be referred to conscious "faith" in the patient or to "imagination" in the spectators is very well supported.*

* One instance may be cited from "Matter to Spirit" (De Morgan):—
"A baby ten weeks old, which from its birth had been unable to hold up the feet in their natural position at right angles to the legs, was brought to me by its mother, who wished to be taught how to bandage the legs. . . . The feet were quite powerless in a line with the legs.

Studied under the name of Hypnotism, its true nature will daily become more apparent, and it will probably become more and more apparent that the hypnotic facts

While I was considering the best way of bandaging such very small limbs it occurred to me to show the mother how to mesmerise them. A few passes were made, perhaps twelve, at most twenty in all, from the knees to the end of the little feet. After about six passes the feet began to rise, and immediately gained their natural position. I went on; the muscles gained a power which they never had before: the bandages were returned to the hospital, and the cure was complete."

Cures of children too young to receive suggestion, as in this case, were the grounds on which Liébeault founded his belief in the existence of a real influence proceeding from the operator to the patient.

The following from Sir Charles Isham, Bart., appeared in the *Echo*, November 19, 1891:—

"SIR,—In a *Times* leader of last week, in a reference to the earlier days of mesmerism, the following paragraphs occur:—'No patient was cured of any disease;' 'The utter fruitlessness and barrenness of mesmerism.' May I, in admiration of that maligned power, be allowed to describe an unpublished case of forty years' standing cured by my brother-in-law, the Rev. John Vaughan, cousin of the Dean of Llandaff and rector of Gotham? I can testify to this gentleman having cured his parishioner, Mary Holland, of a diseased knee by non-contact passes alone. The young woman, after having for many weeks suffered intense agony in the Nottingham Infirmary, was condemned to have the leg amputated. For this she was most anxious. Holland, as was the usual custom, was sent into the country to regain strength previous to the operation. Mr. Vaughan, who had but recently discovered his power, commenced making passes down the leg, in hopes of mitigating the pain in some degree, when, to his astonishment, the girl immediately felt the greatest relief, and in the course of two or three months she was perfectly recovered. Holland remained in the family twenty years as housemaid. She eventually married, and when recently heard of was well. This was one out of many of Mr. Vaughan's cures; he seldom failed. Health caused him to relinquish the exercise of his gift, which might have remained undeveloped had not attention been called to it a short time previously by a visit to Dr. Elliotson's Mesmeric Infirmary, at the instigation of,—Yours faithfully,

CHARLES ISHAM.

point less to a particular state of the nervous system than to the influence of mind on mind in the eclipse of the external senses, and to the influence of mind on organised matter whereby physical changes are effected rapidly instead of in the slow manner which is called normal, the agent in either case being the same, the vital (*i.e.*, psychic) power.

Unconsciousness in the subject is not required, but rather lively and intelligent co-operation with the magnetiser, who concentrates his attention by passes or otherwise on the seat of the disease. The effect produced seems directly proportional to the operator's will-power and general health, and to the patient's receptivity. Faith (*i.e.*, sincere belief by the patient) undoubtedly plays a very large part in such cases, though it is rash to affirm that this is the sole agent in the cure. Muscular energy in the operator seems to have little or nothing to do with the matter, but anything that lowers or tends to lower the standard of his health is injurious. This statement is made in the widest sense : methods of life which encourage a coarse, gross bodily condition, habits of self-indulgence which involve a slothful and selfish spiritual state, indifference to the wants of others, and, in short, anything which militates against perfect health, energy, and activity of the body, against vigour and clearness of the intellect, and against the glow of human love and devotion to the Father of all, each in its degree impairs the healing "magnetism" which, all its conditions being complied with, found its full realisation in the person of Jesus, whom Christians profess to imitate, and whose promise that they should do greater works than He* they profess to believe.

* John xiv. 12. This is an excellent instance how the Church has hidden Christ by lifting Him above the clouds, and relieved man from the full force of His example by asserting Him to be the Creator come down to earth. We are told that His works of power

6. Sensitiveness, or Receptivity. This class of mediumship is by far the commonest, if indeed it does not ultimately prove to be a condition of mind in which all persons share to a greater or less extent. When developed it consists in being open to impressions from sources which produce no visible effect upon the average of mankind, or whose effects are spoken of only as premonitions and inexplicable feelings at certain crises or on certain occasions. The sensitive can sometimes perceive from the touch of an article which has been long in contact with any given person that person's nature and some of his habits, or he may even be able to visualise or describe him; or he may be receptive to thought, and be able to receive the unspoken thoughts of others with or without physical contact; or, again, he may show the effect of the power behind his conscious personality by automatic writing, or by the faculties termed clairvoyance, or the like.

A clairvoyant can see with bandaged eyes not only the things around him, but those far removed from ordinary vision, and can describe events occurring at a distance or

were due, not to the pre-eminent way in which He was permeated through and through by Divine power, acting in a thoroughly purified human will, the Father working in Him, as He said, but to His being Jehovah in person, and that the age of miracle is now past, withdrawn by the mysterious dispensation of GOD. It is past, doubtless; but it is ready to return when we comply with the laws of purity and self-denial and high knowledge under which miracle is always possible, and will vanish again with the loss of these qualities. Jesus' words are simple and human, and are not blasphemed by the method of His operation being known. They are true, not that His brethren should have individually greater powers than He, but that they might by co-operation form a more suitable environment in a purified world and should be aided by increasing power from the Unseen. No one need call Christ's power "magnetic" unless the term pleases him; all that is meant is, that there was a real power which he could feel, a real somewhat in contact with those who felt its effects; the name given to it matters but little.

hidden by natural barriers. A noted clairvoyant thus describes the process :—“The sphere of my vision now began to widen. . . . Next I could distinctly perceive the walls of the house. At first they seemed very dark and opaque, but soon became brighter, and then transparent ; and presently I could see the walls of the adjoining dwelling. These also immediately became light, and vanished—melting like clouds before my advancing vision. I could now see the objects, the furniture, and the persons in the adjoining house as easily as those in the room where I was situated. At this moment I heard the voice of the operator. He inquired ‘if I could hear him speak plainly.’ . . . He desired me to convince some persons who were present by reading the title of a book with the lids closed behind three or four other books ; tightly securing my bodily eyes with handkerchiefs, he then placed the books in a horizontal line with my forehead. I then saw and read the title. . . .”

The phenomenon of crystal seeing is a kindred one. The sensitive looks into a transparent globe or ovoid of glass or other substance, and sees therein images of past and present events which succeed one another in living action. Probably the only use of the crystal, silvered globe, drop of mercury, or other reflector is to concentrate the mind, and to produce a kind of self-hypnotisation, in which state the visions are seen. But whatever the condition of the sensitive, the impression must be the effect of some stimulus which, when it deals with things unknown to the ordinary consciousness, must needs be external. The degree of objective reality of these visions is, it must be remembered, a matter of experiment, as with all the phenomena hitherto described, and abundant testimony of its reality may be found by those who care to examine all things before rejecting any.

Clairaudience is analogous to clairvoyance, the sensitive declaring that sounds and voices inaudible to others are

clearly perceived by him. He states what "spirits" say, that he hears music, and so forth, reminding the observer strongly of certain deathbed scenes where similar hallucinations (as they are termed) have occurred.

A very interesting instance of similar development of another sense has been told me by a person of great truthfulness, who did not profess to explain it, and considered the case at once inexplicable and ludicrous. A young girl in a school at W — G —, North London, then aged about seventeen years, had the extraordinary faculty of foretelling the approach of death in a manner which she referred to the sense of smell. This faculty, which she could not further describe, was discovered as follows: A child belonging to the principal of her last school was taken ill, but no anxiety was felt on its account, the ailment being apparently trifling. As Miss — passed the door of the child's room with one of the governesses she looked frightened, and said, "Oh, I smell death!" The governess was much surprised, and questioned her, but as she could not in any way explain herself, she was sharply reproved for talking nonsense on serious subjects! The child died quite unexpectedly at 5 P.M. of the same day. This young lady could also tell the approach of a funeral when quite out of sight, she being in an upstairs room whence the road could not be seen, and this fact was verified more than once by my informant.

Clairvoyance and these kindred faculties can be exercised to a certain degree in the normal state,* over and above the bodily senses, with which they in no way interfere, and, little as it may be believed, are, as a matter of fact, so exercised by some persons who see and can describe "spirits"

* *Vide p. 69 supra*, Mrs. Chase. The faculty is far more common than is supposed. The standard case for hallucination, that of the German bookseller Nicolai, was quite possibly one of objective perception. It is paralleled by many others.

quite recognisably to their friends, a certain air of abstraction being the only sign of the exercise of the abnormal faculty. But frequently the sensitive or psychometrist, being absorbed (like the passive thought-reader) by the effort to make the mind a blank, and by means of the nascent faculty to receive impressions, loses sight and sound of the external world to a greater or less degree. Recovery of normal consciousness is immediate, and but little exhaustion seems to follow. In such trances the sensitive often speaks in a personality not his own, reminding the observer strongly of the hypnotic sleep. These are called "controls," and seem remarkably like action under suggestion from another mind. That on waking from these trances the subject remembers nothing that has taken place, and can stand the most searching cross-examination without a doubt being raised; that while entranced he can describe persons, places, and events with which he is acquainted, but which pertain to the personality in which he is speaking, are facts which admit of no denial by those who have studied the subject experimentally.

Some of the trance communications received are extremely coherent, and quite bear out the claims they make on belief so far as internal evidence goes, being in style and matter just what might be expected from the character of the alleged source. This is especially noticeable in the case where the sensitive speaks in the name of deceased friends of the inquirer, whose relations, friends, and history are accurately specified, the controlling power making no mistake among the names and relationships of persons of whom the medium has never heard; but those who give speeches purporting to come from men distinguished in science and letters by no means come up to the level of the authentic writings of these last. Some characteristics of style are sometimes preserved in these messages given by sensitives who have no literary knowledge, but poor Emerson must have

deteriorated sadly in the next world if the following sentence is an unadulterate message from him :—

“The thinkers who existed before the Christian era have been resurrected in this age, reincarnated in certain individuals ; and what I taught of truth was not the truth of to-day, but the truth that sprang into existence thousands of years ago ; which, like corn buried with the Egyptian mummies—lying dormant two thousand years, yet retaining its life-principle—finding in the nineteenth century a suitable soil, on being planted after its long sleep in the catacombs, springs up and flowers ; and thus again is the food that germinated before the Christian era given to the world.”

Charles Darwin, too, must be suffering from great mental weakness for him to state as a known fact, that “the invisible formless atom, subjected to the magnifying lens, is found to possess a shape of wondrous mechanism, and to move instinct with life.” *

When has an atom been seen under any lens ? And if formless, how can it possess a shape ? It may possibly be true that, under the conditions governing disembodied life, the atoms invisible to us may there be visible, and though the atom is by us not generally associated with the idea of form, but rather with that of substance, it may be found

* “The Next World” (“Communications through Mrs. Susan G. Horn. Burns”), 1890, p. 147 ; also pp. 164 and 223.

Such have given rise to epigrams like Saxe’s witty squib :—

“If in your new estate you cannot rest,
But must return, oh ! grant us this request :
Come with a noble and celestial air,
And prove your titles to the names you bear ;
Give some clear token of your heavenly birth ;
Write as good English as you wrote on earth ;
And, what were once superfluous to advise,
Don’t tell, I beg you, such egregious lies !”

that the "mass" which seems to us the essence of matter is but its attribute, and that all motion is essentially the same as that aggregate of motions which we call life; but if so, the idea is very ill expressed, and does not at all answer to Charles Darwin's well-known accuracy of thought.

It is not to be hastily assumed that these communications are frauds of the medium, or even entirely self-deceptions, or that there is not a perfectly adequate explanation of the facts; but it is most important not to slur over this phase of the subject. Those who, from the usual practical materialism of this life come to the certain knowledge of unseen powers around them, very frequently rush to the other extreme of blind confidence, and receive as heaven-sent, messages which when stripped of their turgid language, contain no thought of any value, and are certainly not such as to inspire a cool judgment with confidence in their alleged origin. Thus it is that the numerous claims to inspiration that have been made in modern days have originated. Muhammad, Jacob Boehmen, George Fox, and Swedenborg are instances in point. They were neither impostors nor insane, but were simply mediums of various degrees of enlightenment. In later times, Thomas Lake Harris, Andrew J. Davis, Eliphaz Levi, Mrs. Anna Kingsford, and Madame Blavatsky will occur as instances which incontestably prove how various may be the moral level of mediums, and that the possession of occult powers is no proof whatever of sanctity or guarantee of correct insight. Ignorance of this fact among the general public is the cause of the great influence such persons possess. That influence may be wisely used and the knowledge may be pure and true, but the occult powers neither make it so nor prove it so, for these powers are not miraculously conferred, but are inherent in every human soul, and are, in fact, its latent senses, which can be brought out, if thought desirable, by appropriate means.

Exalted pretensions, if untrue, can end only in disillusion and disgust. "Revelation" is less *to* a man than *in* a man, by the growth of perception, and it may safely be laid down that "controls" are mainly of value as evidence and not as teaching, and that the natural process of slow development of human faculties by use directed to wise ends is far healthier than any swamping of the sensitive's own personality by an unknown power. This gradual unfolding of the spiritual faculties from within as opposed to domination by some will-power from without is one mode at least of arriving at the fourth class of mediumship, which I have called Enlightenment.

7. Enlightenment. The difference between this and other forms of mediumship has already been briefly explained. It, like the others, exists in various degrees and comes by different methods, but, however developed, it seems always to be gradual. The history of all true prophets, from Ezekiel to Jeanne d'Arc and Wesley, who are far above mere "controlling" influence, shows that scorn of creature comforts, indifference to personal suffering, intense prayer, earnest will, simplicity of life, and self-discipline are the preliminaries to heavenly aid. No breach of continuity, no violation of law, no work done by an external agency independently of interior process, confers on any child of man powers, perception, or knowledge from without. These are developed from within, and partaking largely of the natural qualities of the mind, are a part of the history of its growth. Natural traits and the images with which the mind is stored are not effaced, nor is acquired knowledge immediately superseded, but these are worked up into new forms, and there is frequently contradiction between the idea and the images by which it is expressed.

Poor human minds look to the language rather than to the idea; they cling to the notion of a full revelation of truth *ab extra*; they fix their eyes on the image while over-

looking the thing signified, and disregard the meaning while disputing over the words. But those who have, by whatever path, developed their faculty of perceiving principles under phenomena can see the folly, the insanity, of these disputes over the letter of any revelations, disputes which really turn on the particular degree of insight possessed by the writer in the first place, and by the commentator in the second. They know that all knowledge on earth—ay, and in the after-life—however seemingly full, must be but partial, for final truth is no more possible to a man than for him to hold the sea in his palm; that mortal language is inadequate to express at all the order of things above its own, all its images being drawn from time and sense, and they would not, if they could, impose their forms of thought on others, as in any sense final. To do this is to blaspheme, by arrogating to a few poor units of weak humanity the attributes of the Absolute.

One thing, however, is clear to them: that enlightenment must ever be that union of knowledge and love which together are called wisdom; that it is the denial of the lower nature for the higher, the renunciation of the things of sense for the things of spirit, that leads to the perception that the things that are seen are but the expression of the fashioning power which is unseen, that phenomena change but laws are immutable, for they are the sequences which express the method of God's working in the universe and in man. Enlightenment is the perception of principle, not given *to* the soul, but revealed *in* it. As the eye is related to external colour, so is the mind related to external truth; it learns indeed, but it learns concerning what it first perceives. It is conscious of weakness and ignorance, but is troubled by no doubts, for it knows itself on the upward path and feels its daily growth. It presumes not to declare any knowledge of God as He is in Himself; such knowledge is too excellent for it; but it sees the work of His messengers

and rejoices therein; it views the fair face of earth, the wonders of the humblest flower, the changing seasons, the panorama of nature, the abyss of space with its circling suns and planets, the cycles of history, and the depths of love and emotion in the human heart, and it recognises the organic evolution as the manifestation of the psychic, and the psychic or intellectual evolution as the necessary preliminary to that moral development which is the special manifestation of God in the world of time and sense. Thus it is that this enlightenment, in whatever degree, leads to a fixed mind which rises above the changes and chances of this mortal life, because it knows spirit as the forming reality and matter as the plastic material, and though conscious of weakness, it also feels its own strength and knows that its foot is on "the world's great altar-stairs, that slope through darkness up to God."

When this perception of cause underlying phenomena has been attained, the aspirant begins to realise with terror and dismay his true place in the scale of existence. Not the monarch of the universe, the specially beloved of Heaven, whose thought carries to the confines of space and whose powers extend to the analysis and definition of the Divine, but a literal crawler on the earth, seeing but a few yards around him, open only to the succession of phenomena, painfully inferring their causes; hearing the vibration of matter only; deaf to the voice of angels; doubly, trebly deaf to the Voice Divine; speaking the imperfect and mandividing language of symbols; dumb in that powerful speech that is the projection of thought itself; clutching at the vanities and illusions of the senses, soiled by the impurities of the body, by the lust of the flesh, and by the desire of dominion and giving to "dust that is a little gilt more laud than gold o'er dusted." But they know also that, in spite of his folly, his conceit, and his imperfections, he is loved as well as pitied by those who have risen into purer

conditions than those of earth-life, for they who are the ministrants in nature of the Eternal Will see in him a being whose development is progressing, and who, sooner or later, his school-time ended, will pass into new life. They see the chrysalis whence shall break the true Psyche, leaving the husk of dead matter behind, though knowing also that death brings no change to the nature of the spirit, but only of its surroundings, and is but the revealing of its true self. They see clearly the dangers around this spirit maturing under the veil of matter, that it may prove to be evil and not good, foul with the stains of sensual desire and not bright with the sunshine of wisdom and love, tending to earth and matter, forsaking spirit and God, leaving its Father's house for the far country of wilful self-indulgence and feeding on the husks of sense.

Enlightenment implies the highest toleration, and denounces the severest penalty of outer darkness and inward fire against those who brand their brethren as "heretics,"* for it knows that, absolute truth not being within the reach of man even in the simplest matters, it is sheer insanity to insist on the literal exactitude of any intellectual definitions of the Divine action. It knows that no knowledge rightly so called is opposed to any other, that seeming contradictions merely imply partial insight, and that each one standing before the sun of truth can see just so much as corresponds with his own faculty and no more; that the aim of man should be the development of power, and not wrangling as to its origin. "Leave disputing in the darkness; come forth into the light and see!" cries Wisdom to her children. Drink of the living water, and find abounding knowledge springing up from within to everlasting life! Awake, thou that sleepest in matter and sense, and live to the spirit in deed and in truth! All theories are temporary, all systems

* Matt. v. 27, Moreh, the word used by Moses at the waters of strife, means a rebel against God, a heretic.

are provisional, myth or dogma is eternal truth manifested under images and figures ; they change and perish all ; but He remains, the Pure Spirit, the all-embracing Love, "glorious, incorruptible, bodiless, omnipresent, untouched by evil, who has disposed all things rightly for eternal years."* Creeds and religions are steps on the path upwards, and the crown of all is the ineffable love whose human reflection is the love that suffereth long and is kind, envieth not, seeketh not her own, rejoiceth not in the faults of others, but rejoiceth in the truth, beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things, that love that never faileth, but goes with the growing spirit up the paths of light, from strength to strength, and is found at last to be the very smile of God.

8. Far, far different to this temper of love and aspiration is that of the ordinary "spirit-circle," and inasmuch as it is natural that mental phenomena should be governed by the condition of the mental instrument, as physical phenomena by those of material ones, there is little cause for surprise at the low intellectual tone of the occurrences which are seen at most circles. By these, however, looked at with discrimination, the nature of the power in play must be judged, and so far, though the effects have been classified, no answer has been given to the question: What is the intelligence behind such phenomena as are not explicable by any consciousness (sub-liminal or other) of the operator? Is it sub-human, super-human, or akin to our own? Seeing that this intelligence claims to be a real personality, it may be as well to ask it concerning itself, not to the end of blind belief, but to obtain fresh material for reasoning. The answer is plain and categorical ; whether it is credible must be decided on a review of the phenomena. When questioned, the "spirits" say that they are men and women who have

* "Vagasaneyi Upanishad ; Sacred Books of the East," vol. i. p. 312.

passed through earth-life into the unseen.* As proof of their identity, they give their names, state when they passed away, specify correctly the relationships of those with whom they claim affinity, throughout long communications alluding to relations of all degrees without error or slip; they recall the persons, places, and events of earth-life, and give every proof that can be demanded, extending in certain cases where the conditions are suitable to the visible face and form and the manual impress † and autograph, evidences of identity which seem absolutely overwhelming.

54 | These facts seem to leave us in face of two suppositions only. Either the "spirits" are what they say they are, and the future life testified to by human consciousness throughout the ages is now a widely known fact within the realm of sense, or there must exist unseen personalities whose knowledge of our lives is so intimate as to enable them successfully to impose themselves as relations, and whose intellect is so powerful as to enable them to perceive or recollect past events in minutest detail, while at the same time their mental attainments are so slight as to move educated minds to contempt. At the same time these impostors must be admitted to have such powers that they can present to us not only the living lineaments of a dearly beloved face, but the very folds of skin in the hands and

* A very curious circumstance which may really be considered too strange not to be true is not infrequently observable. Conscious of itself and unable to realise any life apart from matter, the "spirit" finds a difficulty in comprehending the change that has passed on it, and looks on those in bodily life as the only real existences, and those others who are, like itself, in the disembodied state as hallucinations, speaking of them with fear and dislike. Having during earth-life regarded death as cessation, or at any rate as quiescence, they find it impossible at once to readjust their ideas, and, ghosts themselves, they cannot believe in the ghostly!

† "Transcendental Physics," p. 132. The phenomenon has been spoken of in Chapter I.

the facsimile of the autograph which expressed the character in earth-life.

Between these theories it is not hard to say to which side the weight of evidence inclines an unbiassed mind. That we should expect noble, holy, and elevated communications from the spirit-world is simply due to theological teaching influencing our minds even when it has ceased to command assent, a teaching that tacitly assumes a miracle worked on us at death, transforming our tastes, desires, and aspirations, and our very inmost selves, making the sensual, pure; the covetous, unselfish; the hard-hearted, loving; the indifferent, aspiring; and generally to raise us to the celestial level, to fit us for heaven and "the presence of God," an expression which would be atheistic as far as this world is concerned if it were not so unmeaning. Hard facts show that this is a baseless dream. These communications are the proof that there is no breach of continuity between the hither and the farther side of the grave, and we shall, if we are wise, remodel our theories to fit the facts, and not clip the facts to fit our theories. It need cause us no surprise, but rather the reverse, that so many communications should be frivolous and empty. "Let us look round about us. Without passing judgment on any individual except ourselves, it is impossible not to see that the great majority of men and women are almost entirely absorbed in their bodily life, and completely indifferent to all things not convertible into worldly advantage for themselves or their children. Our lamentable lack of conversation is the symptom of our empty-headedness. Amid the treasures of ancient art, the priceless lessons of history, the splendour of modern science, the wide conquests of man in the domain of nature, in spite of the material for knowledge brought up to our very doors and accessible for a few shillings, it is comparatively rare to find any person who has reasoned opinions on education, architecture, painting, music, history, physics, or any consistent view of the purpose

of his own life. The average man adores the idol of the market-place. Whatever he cannot turn to trade, to use, as he calls it, he despises and neglects ; out of the shop or the office his pleasures are almost entirely of the body. A tenth of the money many of us spend on wine would store our minds with knowledge from the finest literature of modern times.

And our religion ! How far is it anything more than a reaching up after a personal blessing ? What do we know or wish to know of the spiritual powers in the human mind, of the false and the true aims of life, of the struggles and growth of the Church, of her conflict with heathenism and with the vice of decadent Rome, of the bitter faction of the Arian times, the savage persecutions over almost imperceptible differences of dogma, of the strife for place and power among Constantine's worldly prelates, of the stand made against the growing corruption by the saints of the Church, the increasing decadence, the mediæval revival by men like St. Bernard and St. Francis d'Assisi, of the revolt of intellect against the Roman ecclesiastical system ; in fine, of that whole splendid panorama of human history which Goethe calls the conflict of Faith and Unbelief, which should, on the popular theory of Providence, be especially the record of God's dealings with man ? Are we interested in it ? Do we care to draw thence the living truth which must by some means or other be laid hold of before we can ascend into higher intellectual life ? Do we see in each epoch its lesson ; the re-birth of eternal truth from the dead forms of the old myths, the futility of dogmatism, the very truth itself becoming a lie in the furious passions of the sectaries, and when crystallised into definitions ; the canker of worldliness when spiritual truth is bought and sold ; the irreconcilability of monasticism with the healthy growth of man in spirit, soul, and body ; the power of real belief, the impotence of mere dogma, the inevitable results of a sacerdotal

system, and all the wonderful lessons which are enshrined in these archives of man? Do we aim at keeping our own hearts free from error by the warnings of the past?

What wonder, then, if the "spirits" be indeed those who have gone from earth-life, that the conversation of most is vapid? What have we, spirits incarnate as we are, to speak of or think of were sport, our neighbours' faults, our own doings, dress, money, houses, lands, party strife (which is not politics), trade, and social show struck clean out of our lives? What interests have we beyond the day? What lasting truth do we love? "Out of the fulness of the heart the mouth speaketh": what is our conversation? Truly the stupidity of the "spirits" should be no bar to our recognising them to be—ourselves! The identity with those spirits who still walk the earth clothed in flesh and blood is still more marked when "religious" points are raised; they still, many of them, confound religion and creed, and actually claim to be of the same denominations as they did in earth-life. The darkness of sectarianism is still found in but too many disembodied minds; but though the Roman Catholic spirit does not describe himself as being in the orthodox purgatory, in heaven nor in hell; though the evangelical dissenter who died in the firm conviction that he should certainly "go to Jesus" never describes himself as being with Christ, or rarely, if ever, as having seen Him, yet on all points which are not touched by their actual experiences they still maintain the old doctrines, and often give the same explanations concerning God and Christ as they might have given in the flesh. On all matters of fact regarding their actual state on which alone they can give what may be called legal evidence, they unconsciously corroborate the statements of the old seers, whose intuition showed them but one resting-place for all the earth, where the small and the great, the orthodox and unorthodox, should meet together, and the slave be freed

from his master ; * where the proud ruler of Babylon should be looked upon by his erst despised subjects with scornful wonder that he who made the earth to tremble should be in truth so weak and so worthless. † The whole tenor of their communications answers fully to the idea of a mind placed in new surroundings, but itself unchanged, and, save by its own thought and labour, unchangeable.

9. Whether this will be accepted or not will turn on each reader's receptivity to evidence. It has been objected : Would God permit spirits to deceive and to play pranks with furniture ? The answer is simply : Would He permit men to do so in this life ? ‡ If this and much worse is permitted in this life, then why not in that ? The fault is in our point of view, in our habit of subordinating all things in heaven and earth to our temporal and personal desires. We look at life as the Ptolemaic philosophers looked at the sky, from a supposed fixed standpoint, and imagine all creation to centre round ourselves. The whole subject is experimental. It matters not whether we think it reasonable for spirits out of the body to be as idle and frivolous and false as some of those in it ; the facts prove that they often are so. Week by week hundreds of men and women pass into the unseen from all over the earth. There are all possible combinations among them ; not only the strong, the brave, and the pure, the men who have dared for truth and the women who have endured for love, but also many whose lives have been made up of self-seeking in one form or another. There are the loving but foolish, the strong but selfish, the able but cruel, the honest but sensual, as well as the frivolous, the heartless, the thoughtless, tricksters and cheats, liars and hypocrites, the earthy and the aspiring, the noble and the base. So among the

* Job iii. 19.

† Isa. xiv. 9-20.

‡ Wallace, "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," p. 219.

spirits are found the same; very few utterly bad, but also, alas! few who show the sorrow for the world-sickness, the horror of evil, the abounding desire to help, and that resolute will to stand for truth which shows the dawn of the Christ-life, brave, strong, pure, and true to the death, which is the goal of upward development for us all.

The fact is a tremendous warning, the taunt that "spiritualism" is unspiritual is but too well-deserved, but it is ourselves that make it trivial and foolish by supplying crowds of trivial and foolish spirits; it is just what we are.

This, however, does not touch the main fact that intelligences of a human type can and do communicate with us here. Minds which are open to evidence can no longer deny that there are unseen agents around us who can and do influence mind and matter. In other words, miracle has entered into the region of experience and the foundations of a truly imperial science have been laid, a metaphysic which is above and beyond physics, transcendental indeed, but, like her younger sister, the fruit of reason and experiment. Those who cannot but see that there are only two intelligible positions in face of the phenomena, either to deny the evidence of the senses as a safe guide or to admit the action of unseen intelligences (which may well be called spirits according to ordinary parlance), will have no great difficulty in choosing between the alternatives, and will probably accept the account which spirits give of themselves as well borne out by facts. To these our thesis is established; there actually is in the world of to-day an experimental basis for religious belief; "miracle" is an established fact, not as a violation of law, but as demonstration that the action of unseen intelligences falls within it; and survival of the change called death is a matter of experience. The time for dogmatism is over, the day of knowledge is begun, and our life and conduct can stand on the basis of law, in a region of science where we are free to use our

intelligence in the methods which regulate all other departments of human thought. Our future life can be stated in terms of the rest of our knowledge belonging to that world of sequence and sensation which is the ultimate base of all science.*

* Frederic Harrison, see p. 22.

CHAPTER III

THE MORALITY OF "SPIRITUALISM"

“ How pure at heart and sound in head,
With what divine affections bold,
Should be the man whose thought would hold
An hour's communion with the dead !

In vain shalt thou or any call
The spirits from their golden day,
Except like them thou too canst say,
' My spirit is at peace with all.' ”

—*In Memoriam.*

“ To-day abhorred, to-morrow adored,
So ever the round we run ;
And ever the truth comes uppermost,
And ever is Justice done.”

“ Love me, beloved ! for both must tread
The threshold of Hades, the home of the dead.
Where now but in musings strange we roam
We shall live and think, and shall be at home,
The sights and the sounds of the spirit-land
No stranger to us than the white sea-sand,
Than the dawn of the day, or the eye of the moon,
Than the crowded street in the sunlit noon.
I pray thee to love me, beloved of my heart !
If we love not truly, at death we part,
And how would it be with our souls to find
That love with the body were left behind ? ”

—GEO. MACDONALD.

CHAPTER III

THE MORALITY OF "SPIRITUALISM"

"Are all apostles? are all prophets? Are all workers of powers? Have all gifts of healing? Do all speak with tongues? Do all interpret? But desire earnestly the greater gifts, and a still more excellent way show I unto you."—ST. PAUL.

1. IN the last two chapters the leading phenomena, objective and subjective, have been summed up and classified. It can hardly be too often repeated that no claim is made on the faith of the reader. That these things have occurred is matter for evidence in the strictly legal sense of the word; that they can be repeated is matter for experiment in the strictly scientific sense. None are to blame for scepticism, but wilful disbelief brings its own penalty, the penalty of losing truth it might have made its own—a heavier penalty than some will even imagine. But whoever believes or disbelieves, the logical deduction from the facts is unshaken that the action of unseen intelligences is proved, and that in this sense miracle is an experimental fact. But this miracle, be it noted, is not an invasion but a revelation of Law. It opens up a new domain in the interaction of mind and matter, of which one instance is familiar to us all in the movement of muscle under the influence of will. The whole subject is in reality neither more nor less wonderful than the everyday manifestation of the effect of soul-power in the binding of inert carbon, water, and lime into a living body; no more a violation of natural sequence than the hatching of an egg.

Some persons will concede thus much, but a more important question then rises before them and demands an answer. The unseen powers, they will say, may be considered proved, their faculty of reading our thoughts may fill us with comfort or dismay as the case may be, their subtle influence may pervade our whole lives, but the most important question still remains: Are they good or bad, helpful or noxious? Can we learn from them anything of permanent value? In a word, what is their morality? Is this thing one more creed veiling the unknown Reality, one more quicksand by the narrow road of life, one more snare, one more delusion, one more marsh-light from the slough of ignorance; or is this knowledge such as to turn men from the false fairy gold which, if it do not wither in our grasp, must surely be forsaken, to the true riches of knowledge and love; to awaken us from the lethargy of sensuous enjoyment to the life of inward growth; to guide, to purify, and to make the one communion of quick and dead an actual, present, and living reality?

2. A very common objection of religious people is, that it is not right to pry into what GOD has hidden, and, moreover, that this matter is expressly forbidden in Scripture by such texts as Deut. xviii. 10 and Isa. vii. 19. Now it is very difficult to answer effectively any one who thinks a text any argument at all, for such persons forget that injunctions are not right because they are in the Bible, but are in the Bible because the authors of the books thought them right. Every sect supports its tenets by texts, and there is neither end nor profit in the picking out of passages to suit a special purpose. Nevertheless such objectors are almost unapproachable except from this side, and as they are in earnest, some answer must be made.

In the first place, the objection begs the whole question by assuming that GOD has "hidden" anything; and, in the second, it is not permissible to select one text and to ignore

others on the same subject. If the Mosaic injunctions on this head are valid, and "spiritualism" is witchcraft, then mediums are sorcerers, and should be publicly stoned in accordance with Exod. xxii. 18 and Deut. xiii. This was seen and acted on in the Middle Ages, which treated the Church as absolutely inspired by God, and were not afraid to be logical by persecuting all who presumed to set themselves up against her teaching. Further, if the Mosaic law is binding on us in this respect, so it is in every other which is not purely ceremonial; for morality does not alter, and what was right then is right now, and we are equally bound to permit polygamy and to stone to death every woman who does not come up to the bridal standard of Deut. xxii. 14-23; and it will here be observed that the offence is not against chastity, but against the supremacy of the male.

But the whole objection rests on fallacy, a fallacy that has been advanced again and again on the physical plane; there at last given up only to reappear here in psychic matters. If the Divine Power had hidden anything, it is safe to assume that the veil would have been far too effective for our scrutiny. But God has concealed nothing, and His works are no more secrets from us than our politics are secrets from the nearest ant-hill; the whole question is one of faculty, and every conception of God as "hiding" and "revealing," and choosing times and persons, is unworthy and degrading unless it be at the same time clearly understood that human or anthropomorphic imagery is used to make clear to simple minds the process of Law. The history of the growth of the Jewish religion (mainly by the strife of the prophet against the priest), from human sacrifice to the Golden Rule, is a most valuable and interesting source of knowledge, but that knowledge consists in the view of human character and development in the nation whose sacred books have been adopted by Europe as shown in and

by their Scriptures, but not in certain infallible dicta of Jehovah preserved on parchment. Those who find Scriptural references indispensable, may consider Paul's instructions for dealing with the noisy and disorderly form of mediumship which grew up among the speculative and licentious Corinthians, or John's instructions in his first epistle to "try the spirits" and not to believe in all, which plainly shows that mediumship was then habitually practised. They may also look up the records of the Old Testament as to the sanctioned modes of divination in Israel, by dreams, by Urim and Thummim, and by "prophets of the Lord," who, we are expressly told, were simply "seers," or mediums of clairvoyant powers, who were consulted on such mundane matters as strayed asses, and were paid mediums to boot, for Saul objected to his servant that "the man of God" would not supply his clairvoyance gratis. The constant allusions of the Bible to intercourse with "spirits" are too frequent to be overlooked, and it seems strange to have to insist on the fact that the present existence of another, and to us invisible, world is the main theme alike of the New Testament and of the Old.* In truth, the difficulty

* Those who disbelieve the facts of spiritualism and profess to believe the Bible are in a curious mental attitude. To quote Mr. S. C. Hall on "The Use of Spiritualism:" "They refuse to believe that Mr. Home and others have been raised without hands and floated about a room; but they say they believe that Philip was taken up and conveyed from Gaza to Azotus, and they credit Ezekiel when he says, 'He put forth the form of a hand, and took me by a lock of my head; and the spirit lifted me up between the heaven and the earth.' They will not believe that a simple, uneducated peasant girl has written Greek sentences, and a man from the plough delivered a Latin oration; but they say they believe that on the day of Pentecost apostles and disciples spoke with other tongues as the Spirit gave them utterance. They will not credit the healing powers of the Zouave Jacob, of Dr. Newton, and others; but they say they believe that at the gate of the Temple, called Beautiful, a man was made to walk who was impotent from his mother's womb. They will not believe that a heavy table

is not to find Scriptural answers to the objection, but to choose between the wealth of them, and nothing is easier than to reply out of the Bible. For to take the Transfiguration: If this was real, it was a case of communing with "the dead" on the part of our Exemplar and Pattern; if

has been raised from floor to ceiling without touch of human hand; but they say they believe that the stone was rolled from the door of the sepulchre. They will not believe that voice-music has been heard continuously when no living lips were moved; but they say they believe that shepherds heard voices praising GOD in the highest. They will not believe in modern trance mediumship; but they say they believe Ezekiel when he wrote, 'And the Spirit entered with me when He spake unto me, and set me on my feet that I heard Him that spake unto me.' They will not believe in the cold breeze and violent shaking of rooms that frequently precede communications when spiritualists are 'with one accord in one place'; but they say they believe in the rushing mighty wind that shook the house wherein the apostles were assembled. They will not believe in the direct voice, . . . though they say they believe in the voice heard by Paul on the way to Damascus, which some of the attendants 'heard not,' and in the voice that hailed our Lord, heard by some, though others said it thundered. They will not believe in the direct spirit-writing, although the Bible states that Jehoram received a written communication from Elijah four years after he had been taken from the earth. They will not believe that writings and drawings are now produced without draft, design, or will; but they say they believe that David thus received instructions how to build the Temple. They will not believe that in our day hands have been known to write what has been afterwards read, but they say they believe in the handwriting on the wall at the feast of King Belshazzar. They will not believe that a coal of fire has been placed on the head of a white-haired man without singeing a hair; but they say they believe that three men were thrown into a fiery furnace from which they issued unscathed."

In short, so long as these things are thrust far away into the recesses of history, and made out to be sporadic and isolated actions of GOD given by Him at special times and for special purposes, they will assent to them, forgetting that, if these things ever happened at all, they must have been under definite law, and that the justification of extraordinary revelation which seems at this distance so adequate was often derided at the time.

not real, what are we to call real and what figurative? The prohibition in Deuteronomy has a meaning, and a very clear one. In the first place, the Jewish idea of the jealous God forbade the consultation of oracles (then considered divine) after the manner of other nations; and, secondly, it is to-day as true as ever that reason and conscience are our guides in life, that their growth to fuller power is the only method of progress for man, and to abandon them to outside personalities, whether in or out of the body, is the most fatal intellectual mistake a human being can commit. It was a real danger to the Jews, it may be a real danger to us; and those who cannot draw the line between intelligent intercourse and giving their lives into the hands of "the spirits" will do well to follow Moses' injunction. It will, however, be only common charity in them to admit with Paul that all things are lawful, and that others are as good judges as they of what is expedient.*

But Scripture arguments may be bandied to and fro to everlasting; they generally fail to convince, for so few look to Scripture with open minds, forgetting that the books of the Bible were written by idealists for idealists, using every bold paradox and glowing metaphor to present the many-sided phases of meaning by which spiritual truth must always be taught, and not by externalists to express literal facts in one only way. It is useless to pursue the argument further.

3. The answer is almost a foregone conclusion to those who receive as final the evidence of identity recorded in Chapter I., for it can hardly be seriously maintained that intercourse with them in the body is necessary and rational, but becomes wicked and insane as soon as they have passed from the body.

* I am indebted for some of this argument to an excellent little book called "Higher Aspects of Spiritualism," by M.A., Oxon. (H. W. Allen & Co.).

A better guide, however, is the objective nature of the phenomena and teaching, looked at by the ordinary lights of every man who can examine without prejudging in any way, and can consider simply what they are in themselves without being led off into any side-issues respecting the use made of these things by advocates and special pleaders either for or against them. The physical phenomena, in so far as they are independent of volition, are not properly moral or immoral, but, except for the strange and unknown forces involved, merely trivial. In themselves they are valueless except to give ground for experiment. If sitters go to them as somewhat more amusing than conjuring tricks, they fail of their true use; but if those who see them are led from the effects to their causes, and from the causes to the altered view of life and consequent change of conduct which are logically involved in the idea of the future life organically continuous with this, the phenomena are pure good.

In any case they supply a basis for inference, the undeniable evidence of the senses; and it is a fact that they have been the means of turning thousands from whom the creeds gained but a languid assent or a scornful indifference to the perception of the intense reality of the unseen, thus opening their eyes to the dominant fact of human life, that man is in his inmost being a spirit, the child of one Father in heaven, the member of one family, the citizen of one country, and his healthy life one continual progress from material phenomena to their causes, from Manifestation to God. That there are some who get no further than the phenomena is undeniably true; but even these, who have their own indolence to thank for the fact, are to this extent benefited, that they know for certain that a future awaits them in which they will be just themselves and not beings re-created by vicarious suffering, than which there is no teaching better fitted to encourage spiritual sloth in the unloving.

But it is the oral and written communications rather than the physical that are the special subjects of this section, for to them the term morality is more strictly applicable. These fall naturally into four classes—(a) the bad, (b) the trivial, (c) the personal, (d) the didactic; the first being comparatively rare, the second and third forming the great mass of the communications, and the fourth on the whole as yet the rarest of all, but perceptibly more common now that so many persons are coming to perceive that no religion can be learned through mere teaching, but consists of a personal insight which none, whether man or spirit, can give. The teacher may point out the beauties of a flower or demonstrate a mathematical problem, but he cannot force his pupil to see or understand. Tales of gross obscenity or blasphemy occurring at spirit-circles are occasionally told, and these may in some instances be true;* but if so they are rare, and in a somewhat extended experience none such has ever come under my notice. They could only occur with a medium or a whole circle of very low moral tone.

4. Deception is, however, common enough, and how it may play on the tenderest feelings is shown by the follow-

* A case was stated to me by a medical man, Dr. F. R. of Fakenham, Norfolk, in 1890. A party of medical students were engaged in rapping or planchette-writing; I forget the exact method used. A spirit announced itself as Nurse N——, a young woman recently deceased, who, while outwardly decent and reserved, had had immoral relations with several of the students, one at least of whom was then present. She gave, my informant told me, a communication so filthy as to shock the not very delicate susceptibilities of the circle, which broke up in fear and awe. The explanation is clear. Though momentarily under the spell of a new sentiment, the prevailing nature of the circle was gross; the woman had been of strong passions, restrained outwardly by hypocrisy or fear; that removed, there was nothing to mask her indecency, which was to some extent favoured by the tone of the circle.

ing story which happened to myself, and is given exactly except as to names :—

While living at Vizagapatam my wife and myself were brought into contact with a young native gentleman, also deeply interested in the subject. Explaining to him the method of planchette-writing, he expressed a desire to try, and, in conjunction with me, placed both his hands on the instrument. He was certainly quite unaware of how many children we had in England, and had never heard their names, or those of any other of our relations. The following questions and answers were given :—

Q. Who has a message to give ?

A. Alfred (naming a recently deceased brother-in-law of my own).

Q. To whom ?

A. Alice (his sister's name).

Q. What is it ?

A. Go to England.

Q. Why ?

A. Gladys is sick (a little daughter at home).

Q. How ?

A. Enteric fever.

Q. Since when ?

A. June 30th (the day on which the message was given was July 14th).

Q. Is there anything more ?

A. Trust in God ; all will be well.

Q. What, then, can Alice do ?

A. She can nurse.

The news went to the hearts of father and mother ; but knowing how frequently false messages were given, they telegraphed to England, and received a satisfactory reply to the effect that the child was quite well. Mrs. D., who could write automatically, took the pencil. I questioned.

Q. Who are you ?

A. Alfred.

Q. I do not believe you. Why did you write that?

A. Alfred is sorry.

Q. In the name of the most merciful God, speak truly. Who are you?

A. It is the same person writing.

Q. In the name of the most merciful God, speak truly. What is your name?

A. My name is Wali Mahomed.

Q. Who are you? I never knew you?

A. I was your servant.

Q. Why did you deceive us?

A. I wanted to beguile you.

Q. But why?

A. You wronged me.

Q. If I did, I am sorry. But how?

A. You struck me.

Q. If I did, you probably deserved it. But if I wronged you I am sorry. I forgive you. Do you forgive me. Where did you die?

A. At Sharigh.

Q. What of?

Answer illegible.

Trivial and tricky communications such as the foregoing abound, and here again, as under the intellectual aspects of the phenomena, it is very noticeable how the general morality of the circle tinges that of the utterances. While the average communications are rarely bad, they are very frequently empty, inflated in language, and pretentious in style. An instance will show what is meant, and will serve as a warning to those who, treading in this path without the staff of humility, think that special revelations are accorded to them to save them the trouble of using and educating their own reason and judgment. A Swedish-American family in frequent communication with

the unseen is said to have received the following, among many others of the same kind, by the method of slate-writing, through the mediumship of Mrs. Lizzie S. Green :—

" October 17, 1881.

"The blessings of the Most High God and the benedictions of His holy angels and spirits on you and yours. What I most desire to say to you to-day is, that since our last interview here I have participated with others in a discussion relative to a recent scientific discovery in the spirit-world, which, when imparted to the world of embodied man, will strike the learned *savants* of your life with mingled feelings of awe and consternation. Our recent experiments were exceedingly satisfactory, and the questions that remain open are, when, to who (*sic*), and through whom it shall be given to the children of earth. The general expression of our society favoured some time towards the close of the coming year as best adapted. In this view I concurred for many reasons. My revered friend, let me say to you to-day, with great and positive emphasis, that the year 1882, earth-time, will be the most marvellous year of the world's history, and will be characterised by the most stupendous events in all the circling centuries of past time (*sic*). In that year, and in the succeeding one, astounding spiritual revelations will be made to the denizens of this earth, utterly upsetting old effete theological doctrines and mercilessly demolishing now considered well-established scientific conclusions, and your scientists' tests, self-complacent and arrogant in their pretensions and possessed most fully of the spirit of vaulted (*sic*) ambition, the creation of their self-conceit, will awake to the consciousness that they have been mere pigmies in scientific research, and that on many subjects may have been so superficial as not to penetrate beyond the shadows and surface of things. I promise you that when the proper time arrives

for this disclosure you shall not be overlooked or neglected. Bound to you in fraternal relation of a common brotherhood embracing in grand reciprocation the inhabitants of both the mundane and supermundane worlds,—I am yours, devoted for the truth,
EMANUEL SWEDENBORG.”

Now this contains little but what is false and foolish. The sum and substance is, that there is to be a revelation of a scientific principle in a given year, and the hearers' interests shall not be lost sight of, but they shall obtain, without trouble, a share in the credit or profit, or both. This message, the words bigger than the thoughts, turgid in style, involved in structure, with its misquoted similes, its ungrammatical sentences, its reckless prophecy, and its bombastic close, is a fair sample of what is produced under imperfect conditions and blindly accepted by some deluded hearers as really coming from a high source. The good faith of the medium is, I assume, unimpeachable; and the circle is not deceiving, but deceived. The whole tone of the message shows, by its promise of special revelation, by its poverty of thought, and by the Americanisms of its style, that it is the work of some personating influence anxious to swell his own importance by assuming a great name, and probably favoured by that desire (in the circle) for a special and exclusive revelation, which is one of the most serious difficulties in the way of a true spiritualism. Such communications as the above undoubtedly indicate a low tone of morality in the spirit, and tend to encourage a similar one in the circle, *unless checked*. Such should be questioned kindly but firmly, the fault of personation pointed out, and a confession elicited; or, failing that, intercourse forbidden. It would then benefit the circle by enlarging experience, judgment, and resolution.

With regard to these false and mixed communications, and to personating spirits, it has been remarked by one who had great experience of these spirit-messages:—

"Among the means which such spirits employ, the most prominent, as well as the most frequent, are those which have the aim of arousing cupidity, such as the pretended indication of hidden treasures, the announcement of inheritances, or other sources of wealth. All predictions giving fixed dates and all precise announcements relative to material interests should be very strongly suspected, and any action prescribed or advised by the spirits, unless its object be eminently rational, should be avoided. So, also, no one should be dazzled by the names which such spirits take on to give an appearance of truth to their words; no one should place trust in the scientific theories and systems that are put forward, or, in fine, should trust any that are outside the moral purpose of the manifestations." *

The communications, in short, are to be received as evidence, not as authority, just as we receive the communications of the embodied spirits around us, believing those who seem to be truthful on matters that are within the scope of their own experience, and allowing due weight to their reasoning, but not giving ourselves into the hands of any. Sometimes messages trivial in themselves are inferentially very terrible. I heard a new spirit speaking at a séance to which he had been brought by his friends, and the question was asked him what those present could do for him. In a weak, quavering voice he poured forth an unheeding complaint of the newness and strangeness of his surroundings, ending with a request for drink. The more thoughtless of the sitters, of whom I myself was one, laughed at the absurdity; and it was not till afterwards that the horror of a spirit new-born to the life beyond, but still tormented by the desire for stupefying alcohol, struck me with the ghastliness of retribution under Law. Indirectly this brought a great lesson, but as a rule little good can come of intercourse with spirits of a low type unless efforts are made to

* A. Kardec, "Livre des Mediums," Paris, 1869, 11th edit., p. 419.

raise them. Those only can effectually do this who are so genuinely unselfish as to be unaffected by the ideas of worldly advantage which obviously still dominate the ideas of those whom they would help. Persons who can be tempted by the hope of acquiring advantages that they have not earned, run the very greatest risk of being befooled by spirits who, reading the thoughts of all, can see plainly enough that such have not acquired the right to teach them.

It may be stated broadly that all communications which deal with the recipient in a manner calculated to flatter vanity, to imply a special privilege, or to recommend any creed or system; or which profess to give special and reserved truths not for the mass of mankind, are at best of very doubtful value.

5. It is scarcely necessary to touch on the messages of love which come to the bereaved or doubtful from the unseen, and still less to give instances which can so very easily be imagined. The assurances of happiness, of the intense reality of the spirit-life, and the exhortations to belief and cheerfulness are generally just what might be expected.

But a very strange and earthly element runs through many of these communications, so strange that it produces a kind of mental vertigo and throws all our ideas into confusion. They actually speak of that world as being a kind of prototype of this; of houses and gardens, flowers and fields, fruit and food, in so graphic a manner that it is by no means clear whether these words are used as symbols for real things of which our language supplies only these analogies, whether it is intended to imply all the functions which the existence of these things would seem to involve, or, lastly, whether the language and the thoughts are due to the imperfection of the medium. A little help to the understanding of this will be found in the experiences of Mrs. De Morgan, who writes the follow-

ing account of the explanation given to her through a well-educated medium after fruitless endeavours through others less trained :—

Q. Are the house and the fountain and other beautiful objects real and palpable to you as the objects on earth are to us ?

A. Yes, yes.

Q. Are there really pictures of your family in your house ?

A. They are pictures on the walls of memory.

Q. Is the whole symbolical, and drawn in this way merely from the impossibility of expressing it otherwise through the medium ?

A. All in my soul ; that is the house. And they are internal, as they project themselves from the inner. As I gain knowledge one representation after another takes the form of the beautiful things I draw.

Q. Do you mean that things in your degree are as real to you as the outward objects in our state are to us ?

A. Can you not see that as soon as the life-principle in trees and flowers becomes external it is real to you, but is in fact no new creation. The painter, the sculptor, and the poet, as rapidly as they embody their ideal on canvas or in marble . . . I cannot express all I would, but the fact of their embodying any existing ideal, however high or low, awakens a more perfect life of conception deeper in the soul ; thus here as well as there the arts are living and eternal progressive realities."

The clue to this may be found in the writings of more than one metaphysician, notably in Plato, Berkeley, and Kant, who treat the "noumenon," or unseen cause, as the permanent reality, and the "phenomenon," or material effect, as the transitory appearance ; but it does not fall within our plan to enlarge upon it here. A further elucidation may, however, be taken from the book above quoted

("Matter to Spirit"), which will throw some light on the problem if only the reader will forbear to think of reality and materiality as interchangeable terms. In answer to a question as to how such descriptions of spirit-life are to be understood, it was written :—

"I say that what such spirits write and reveal is what can only be compared to looking through glasses that distort. They think they see, and when they are unable to find suitable words, they use what they think most analogous. Even on the lower regions of heaven there is no distress to the bodies of spirits. All their wants are spiritually supplied ;* there are no chairs, no sofas, no temples, no canopies ; nothing, in short, that your limited language can describe ; and it is only a vain attempt to comfort the left-behind relations to write such things. I can give you no better idea of the state of the part of heaven where I am staying than to ask you to shut your eyes and think of the glowing colours of the sunset which have remained in your recollection. There was red, and blue, rather purple perhaps, almost green where the gold tinged the blue . . . all these things have names on earth as colours ; but the colours themselves, where wilt thou find them ? Not in your tin boxes. . . . Thus heaven has its couches, its rests, its coverings, its comforts ; none need mourn for those of earth ; but attempt to name them with the equivalent of earth and the resemblance dies away . . . the words fail us as well as the ideas. A belief in the power of writing by spirits will increase as the world grows older ; and when once that has become more general, the spirits will be less afraid to say the truth, that of all heavenly things granted to spirit-life, none can be revealed.

"I said that spirits far advanced in heaven were shy of beginning relations with those on earth, and that numbers were waiting on the confines of the land they had left with

* In the same sense that our wants are materially supplied.

regret, ready to communicate under any name they could take to ensure attention. I also said that numbers were occupied with watching the entrance on to heaven of spirits released from earthly bodies. You are right in believing that the spirits have their bodies, and they spend ages, according to earthly calculation, in this frivolous, though to a certain extent interesting, occupation before they attempt their own road upwards. For I must compare the ascent into the higher heaven . . . to a succession of hills, each summit revealing a higher grade of ascent. This is, so far as I know, for I have only overlooked the beginning of the ascent myself. . . . Only those who learn content amid life's hardest lessons, or are constitutionally contented, begin spirit-life with any amount of life-happiness . . . Not idle content, however. . . . Spirits are always sure of being together when love has united them on earth; and when spirits are awfully distant from one another it is the fault of one or other of them. God permits union, but He does not compel it; and the good, or the better—for many are better who cannot justly be called good—are able to go to the less good. . . . There are occupations and amusements in heaven suited to every spirit for their recreation, and a great many spirits do nothing at all for a long time after they come through death to heaven; and if you wonder at this, I think you will be still more surprised to learn that one of the most idle spirits of heaven is the one who writes by your hand; and the cause is that the dissatisfaction of spirit-life is so great that there is a feeling of utter despair at the impossibility of working into better life. But this diminishes slowly, very slowly. . . . Then comes the wish to be better; it comes quicker to some than to others; . . . and the companionship of others is instrumental in awakening the wish, without which heaven is as the slumber of the grave. And there is not so much inaccuracy as some think in speaking of the sleep of death; but it is not a

necessary condition of spirit-life, and there are some who pass at once into enjoyment ; for it is not enjoyment to be doing nothing, while the better are at once employed, and progressing into higher states of spiritual happiness."

This, it must be remembered, is from one unprogressed spirit speaking from his own experience only. He calls his own objectless existence "heaven" because this is more pleasing to him than any other term, and if he does not keep back anything (which may be doubted), he is describing so many of mankind, natures weak and colourless except in pursuit of personal gratification, of no wilfully evil proclivities, but as yet ignorant and ignoble. To understand the description fully it would be necessary to know the kind of thoughts in the questioner's mind to which it is a reply, as well as the force which the writer attaches to the words he uses ; for this is not a didactic message in which an effort is made to present the future life systematically, but a personal reply to a personal question, and cannot be taken as a full description even of the spirit's own case. It would be as rational to conclude that what he says is applicable universally as to obtain a letter of the same length from a Frenchman of unknown parentage and education, and thence to assume a particular knowledge of life in France. Nay, the latter would be safer ; for we know that in its main outlines human bodily life is the same in all lands, while as to the spirit-world we know nothing *a priori*, and it is only by the comparison of many reports given through truthful mediums that any ideas of it can be formed.

Messages of personal affection are so common and so dear to the recipients that it is unadvisable to reproduce them. But they mostly dwell so much on the value of this present time for soul-training and on the evils of disputes and dogmatism that it is necessary to mention the fact in the present connection. Whether their insistence on the superfluity of any "creed" other than the

Fatherhood of God and the necessity of love to man and of constant effort to see truth on all matters, will be considered moral or immoral, will depend on the standpoint of the reader! Whatever may be thought of it, the fact is so.*

6. With regard to the messages which have been called didactic, as dealing generally with life and morals, it is, so far as my experience goes, observable that in any circle that is not entirely frivolous or wonder-hunting they are always somewhat above the general level, though sufficiently near it to show strong similarity. This, if we accept the statement that the spirits are but men and women not highly removed above their past lives, is intelligible enough. No sensible man speaks above the heads of his audience in this life, nor addresses them on subjects which they do not care for, but continues the conversation they may originate.

The preceding paragraphs will have shown some of the many varied characteristics of the communications received, and the risks to which blind credulity is exposed. A more pleasing task remains — to give the general tenor of the advice and instructions which have been deduced from the comparison of many communications. It is not intended here to touch more than absolutely necessary on what spirits say of the future life, of the mode of inspiration, or of their methods of action, but rather on such parts of their teaching as strictly affect the conduct of the hearer and bear upon practical life, for this only properly comes under the head of morality. It is difficult to give this at all fully and at the same time in reasonable compass, but the general view given of life and nature may be fairly stated as follows—

All life is progressive and involves development, and is

* *E.g.*, "Soul to Soul" and "From Over the Tomb, being Personal Messages from a Husband in the Spirit to a Wife on Earth." J. Burns. 18.

therefore imperfect, for development proceeds from lower to higher forms of expression under impulse from the power which expresses itself in and by matter. The purpose of the inanimate world is to subserve life, and the purpose of all physical life is to subserve character. Greater adaptation secures survival, and it is the business of each individual man to develop his powers here in healthy simplicity and to do his part in bettering the world so far as lies in him, physically, intellectually, or morally. This can only be done by the improvement of the individual character, for a man's work is necessarily the presentment of himself; and therefore, though personal advance is at once the means of the general development and the salvation of the individual, it must be sought, not as an end, but for the sake of the development of moral and mental faculty wherein it consists, for the purpose of doing better and more effective work in the world.

There is no reward reserved for the righteous after death. This is but a figure of speech, for heaven and hell are states of mind, and are, on the one hand, the perception of God in and by His works, the deep joy of love and wisdom, strength, energy, and high purpose; and, on the other, the exaltation of the lower nature to the exclusion of duty and helpfulness; the Dead Sea fruit of animal desire.

Evil is negation, limitation, perversion. It is the misdirection of energy to ignoble uses of selfish impulse, and therefore it is the ignorance that misdirects and the limitation that is unable to perceive. So body is inferior to soul because more limited in all its faculties and perceptions; and soul to spirit, for soul (or mind) is the guiding principle of the brute creation, whose law is the internecine struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest, a law which is carried out without compunction or remorse. Soul, as such, is not capable of unselfish devotion; its perceptions are essentially egoistic.

The entering into conditions is the imposing of limitations on life ; this is the meaning of conditioned existence. Heredity and environment are the limitations placed on the growing soul by the consequences of remote and recent acts, and each act of ours goes to form a part of the environment that we make for ourselves and for those about us, and of the heredity we transmit to our children.

Man is a triune being, body, soul, and spirit, each connected with the other by the laws of causation, for all "body" is the expression of spirit through the agency of the animal life-power which is called soul, which is the expression in its turn of the inmost spirit which loves and wills. For this reason the perception of spiritual truth pertains to the moral rather than to the mental nature. A man attached to sensuality or pride, and resolved to justify his ways, will in vain seek to grasp the purpose of life by his intellect alone. The analogy with sight is perfect ; he who is determined not to change his attitude cannot see all round. To quote from one who sends his experience back to us from the farther side :—

"As we observe the conditions of the body we have Nature on our side ; so if we observe the law of the soul we have God on our side. He imparts truth to all men who observe these conditions ; we have direct access to Him through reason and conscience. Through these channels and by means of a law, certain, regular, and universal as gravitation, God inspires men, makes revelations of truth ; for is not truth as much a phenomenon of God as motion is of matter ? Therefore, if God be omnipresent and omnipotent, this inspiration is no miracle, but a regular mode of God's action on conscious spirit, as gravitation on unconscious matter. It is not a rare condescension of God, but a universal uplifting of man. To obtain a knowledge of duty a man is not sent away outside of himself to ancient documents for the only rule of faith and practice ; the word

is very nigh him, even in his heart, and by this word he is to try all documents whatever." * Death is the casting off of the outer envelope, and to the healthily developing personality the soul then becomes the outermost with all its appropriate faculties, of which the bodily senses are now the expression on the material plane, and spirit falls into the place formerly held by soul, while eventually a new principle nearer to the divine is developed in its inmost recesses, and takes the place which spirit proper now holds, the highest reflection of God. †

For healthy development here the culture of spirit, soul, and body is requisite, each in its appropriate place and degree. A strong and healthy body is required because a frame enervated, worn, or diseased is not a fit instrument for mind, on which it reacts; a trained and intelligent mind is needful because an ignorant soul can see the operation of the eternal love only in the distorting mirror of anthropomorphism; and these both minister to the advance of the spirit, the real Ego which is to grow to the likeness of the Christ, the Archetypal Man. Self-indulgence tends to degradation, for it swamps the higher faculties in the lower, and imprints on the soul passions and desires which after death chain it to earth and involve more suffering and sorrow by enfeebling its powers.

Forms of creed are of little moment, and are often, even when most seemingly diverse, the same truth as seen in different minds through the imagery due to national characteristics or individual history; but the key to life is right action, which develops in man the faculties whereby

* Message from Theodore Parker, "Events in the Life of a Seer." Boston, U.S., 1887.

† This is rather an inference from certain teachings than a proposition put forward as quite correct in its mode of expression. I believe it to be so best expressed and to correspond with a real fact, but I have not heard or seen it quite so expressed by any spirit, and am myself responsible for the form of the statement.

he becomes nobly self-forgetful, and so expands his mind to embrace larger interests than make up the little selfish lives of the majority. The sympathy with others and the love of truth are the great safeguards, but to be of any personal value truth must be known and really perceived. It is better to see but a little, to know one-sidedly and imperfectly, than to profess the most perfect creed without understanding it and realising it. Till the man understands that which he professes, truth is external to him and is not in his heart.

7. Such, in briefest outline, is the substance of "spirit" teaching as gathered from a large comparison of such writings, but it is not given as of authority, but commended to reason. Some, given through mediums who are also devout church people, are more Christian in form and less iconoclastic than the foregoing, but the form is never insisted on in either case, but the truth which the form enshrines, and this is always taught under the images which most appeal to the recipient. Many of these teachings are published, and a quotation from one of the best known is here added. It will bear out what is stated above:—

"Religion, the spirit's healthful life, has two aspects—the one pointing to God, the other to man. What says the spirit-creed of God? . . . It does not recognise any need of propitiation towards this God. It rejects, as false, any notion of the Divine Being vindictively punishing a transgressor or requiring a vicarious sacrifice for sin. Still less does it teach that this omnipotent Being is enthroned in a heaven where His pleasure consists in the homage of the elect, and in view of the tortures of the lost, who are for ever excluded in quenchless misery from light and hope. No such anthropomorphism finds any place in our creed. God, as we know Him in the operation of His laws, is perfect, pure, loving, and holy, . . . the centre of

light and love, . . . the object of our adoration, never of our dread. We know of Him as you cannot even picture in imagination; yet none has seen Him, nor are we content with the metaphysical sophistries with which prying curiosity and subtle speculation have obscured the primary conception of God among men. We pry not. The first conception with you even is grander, nobler, more sublime. We wait for higher knowledge. You must wait too.

“On the relations between God and His creatures we speak at large. Yet here too we clear off many of the minute points of human invention which have been from age to age accumulated round and over a few central truths. We know nothing of the election of a favoured few. The elect are they who work out for themselves a salvation according to the laws which regulate their being.

“We know nothing of the potency of blind faith or credulity. We know, indeed, the value of a trustful receptive spirit, free from the littleness of perpetual suspicion. Such is God-like and draws down angel guidance. But we abjure and denounce that most destructive belief, that faith, assent to dogmatic statements, have power to erase the traces of transgression; that an earthly lifetime of vice and sloth and sin can be wiped away and the spirit stand purified by a blind acceptance of a belief, of an idea, of a fancy, of a creed. Such teaching has debased more souls than anything else to which we can point.

“Nor do we teach that there is a special and potent efficacy in any one belief to the exclusion of others. We do not believe that truth is the perquisite of any creed. We know, as you do not, the circumstances which decide to what special form of faith a mortal shall give in his adherence; . . . we deal with religion as it affects us and you in simpler sort. Man—an immortal spirit, so we believe—placed in earth-life as a school of training, has

simple duties to perform, and in performing them is prepared for more advanced and progressive work. He is governed by inevitable laws, which, if he transgresses them, work for him misery and loss; which also, if respected, secure for him advancement and satisfaction. He is the recipient of guidance from spirits who have trod the path before him, and who are commissioned to guide him if he will avail himself to their guidance.

"He has within him a standard of right which will direct him to the truth if he will allow himself to be guided to keep it and to protect it from injury. If he refuse these helps he falls into transgression. . . . This mortal existence is but a fragment of life. Its deeds and their results remain when the body is dead. The ramifications of wilful sin have to be followed out, and its results remedied in sorrow and shame. The consequences of deeds of good are similarly permanent and precede the pure soul, and draw around it influences which welcome and aid it in the spheres.

"Life, we teach you, is one and indivisible; one in its progressive development, and one in the effect on all alike of the eternal and immutable laws by which it is regulated. None are excused as favourites; none are punished mercilessly for errors they were unable to avoid. Eternal Justice is the correlative of eternal Love. Mercy is no divine attribute. It is needless; for mercy involves the remission of a penalty inflicted, and no such remission can be made save when the results have been purged away.

"Pity is God-like. Mercy is human. We know nought of that sensational piety which is wrapped up in contemplation to the neglect of duty. We know that God is not so glorified. We preach the religion of work, of prayer, of adoration. We tell you of your duty to God, to your brother, and to yourself—soul and body alike. We leave to foolish men, groping blindly in the dark, their curious

quibbles about theological figments. We deal with practical life, and our creed may be briefly written:—

“ Honour and love your Father, GOD (worship)	} Duty to God.
Help your brother onward in the path of progress (brotherly love) . .	
Tend and guard your own body (bodily culture)	} Duty to neighbour.
Cultivate every means of extending knowledge (mental progress)	
Seek for fuller views of progressive truth (spiritual growth)	} Duty to self.
Do ever the right in accordance with your knowledge (integrity)	
Cultivate communion with the spirit- land by prayer and frequent inter- course (spiritual nurture)	

“ Within these rules are roughly indicated most that concerns you here. Yield no obedience to any sectarian dogmas. . . . God reveals Himself as truly now as He was revealed on Sinai. . . .

“ You will learn also that all revelation is made through a human channel, and consequently cannot but be tinctured in some measure with human error. No revelation is of plenary inspiration. None can demand credence on any other than rational grounds. Therefore to say of a statement that it is not in accord with what was given through a human medium at any stated time is no derogation, necessarily, from the truth of that statement. Both may in their kind be true, yet each of different application. Set up no human standard of judgment other than right reason. Weigh what is said. If it be commended by reason, receive it; if not, reject it. If what is put before you be prematurely said, and you are unable to accept it, then in the name of God put it aside, and cling to aught

that satisfies your soul and helps its onward progress. The time will come when what we lay before you of divine truth will be valued among men. We are content to wait, and our prayers shall join with yours to the supreme and all-wise God that He will guide the seekers after truth, wherever they may be, to higher and more progressive knowledge, to richer and fuller insight into truth. May His blessing rest on you!"*

8. In this teaching the militant aspect of Spiritualism is forced on us. One and all they deny any sacrificial atonement. Not that it is necessary to shake the faith of those who have no doubts. If they in very truth have no misgivings as to ecclesiastical dogma; if the perfect creation by an omnipotent but defeated Deity, the Fall, the institution of blood-sacrifice till the coming in the fulness of time of a perfectly innocent Victim and His immolation to satisfy the justice of an offended God, seems to them a satisfactory solution to the world-problem, and if they can simply regard all adverse human discovery as antagonistic to absolute truth finally revealed by God, that is almost a proof that their knowledge must be gained in another sphere of existence. If they truly believe that evil is so abhorrent to the Deity as to need the greatest of sacrifice on His part to annul it and to raise man out of it, their lives will be right, they will feel acutely the sins and evil of the world, they will love those who differ from them, and will do all that in them lies to help their brethren. There is no need to disturb such. But the message is to the doubters and to the apathetic; to the

* This, and much more automatically written, will be found, together with the history of the method of its production, in "Spirit Teachings," by the hand of the late Mr. Stainton Moses ("M. A., Oxon"), published by E. W. Allen, 1883. This book shows in the plainest manner the conflict between the ideas of the medium in his normal state and those of the communicating spirit.

one it brings solution, to the other awakening. There must be no cowardly shirking of difficulties by those who have received new light. It may be in the highest degree repugnant to stigmatise as formally untrue the anthropomorphic forms which are the only garb in which many minds seem able to realise religion at all, but there must be no disguising of what the spirits' evidence affirms and what it denies, no weak pretence that it does not differ much from the popular forms after all, because it is quite compatible with a view of them as images built up by generations of men to realise the eternal verities in intelligible form. It is for hearers to weigh the whole evidence, scientific, antiquarian, and exegetical; to look round on the warring sects which each claim to be in sole possession of THE TRUTH; to decide on the course that commends itself to their own reason, and to follow that without bitterness or fanaticism. It takes two sides to make any quarrel, and students of these things, whose watchword should be, before all others, Milton's maxim of free thought and free speech, need never allow themselves to be drawn into polemics.

Nevertheless, the denial of the Atonement of Christ as a past event distinct from the birth of the Christ-life in each soul making at-one-ment between it and God, and of the identity of Jesus with the Creator of the universe in any definable sense other than that He was filled with the spiritual power of God, that moral glory which encompassed nearly all His acts, and the psychic power which manifested the creative energy working in Him, will be the theme round which the bitterest disputes will rage in the near future, when it shall be realised by the Churches whereunto this new doctrine tends. Again will be seen the spectacle of men contemning and anathematising in the name of the Lord of Love; and, curiously enough, those who pay the least attention to the practical precepts of the Sermon on

the Mount will be among the loudest in crying "Blasphemy" on those who assert that the altruism that is the foundation of that teaching is the only remedy for the evils of competition under which the world is now groaning, and who attempt to put that altruism into practical shape.

9. That the idea of the vicarious sacrifice of the God-man is really made the keystone of English popular Christianity (though, except by a straining of the plain sense of words that puts them at variance with His whole life, it finds no place in the teaching of Jesus) is abundantly evident. Certain schools put, it may be sacramental grace, it may be the intercession of Mary, it may be innocence of life, it may even be personal effort, more in the foreground, but all agree in asserting that the Atonement was the purpose of Christ's life and mission. Take, for instance, the form in which our missionaries place Christianity before the natives of India, whose intellectual attainments compare favourably with those of our own young men, and who, if less practical, are certainly more metaphysically acute. That it may not be thought that the case has been overstated, I extract the following from a tract which fell casually into my hands, entitled "Short Papers for Educated Hindus," published by the Madras Press of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge :—

"IV. The Results of the Examination. How anxious young men are to pass the university examination! And yet it is not so very important a matter after all. A man may be M.A. and yet a poor man, or in ill-health; he may lose his dearest relations, and live a disappointed and miserable life. On the other hand, many men who have failed in their examination have led very happy and useful lives. Yet, in spite of this, how eager men are to pass! What would it be, then, if the results of the examination were more marked? If, for instance, every successful candidate received 100,000 rupees, and every unsuccessful

candidate were sent to the Andaman Islands,*—if this were the case, with what intense anxiety would the students wait for the appearance of the lists, and with what eagerness would they strain their eyes to see if they were to be rich men or transported criminals for life!

“What, then, shall we say as to the issues of the GREAT EXAMINATION? Those who pass it shall receive, not a lakh of rupees, which must be parted with in any case at death, if not before, and which even when possessed cannot make a man happy, but they shall receive ETERNAL LIFE.

“Such will be the blessedness of those who pass the Great Examination—and what of those who fail? Here again let us listen, not to man’s word, but to GOD’S. Hear what Jesus Christ says—the meek and loving Jesus: ‘Then shall the King say to them on the left hand, Depart from Me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels. . . . And these shall go away into EVERLASTING PUNISHMENT, but the righteous into LIFE ETERNAL.’

“Such are the solemn and momentous issues of the Great Examination—eternal life or everlasting punishment, endless happiness or endless woe. Since, then, this great examination is before us, the time for which has been fixed by GOD, and which may take place any day—at which we must every one of us be present, and give an account of all that we have done and said and thought and felt; at which GOD Himself will be the Examiner, and the issues of which will be everlasting punishment or eternal life—surely it is of the utmost importance that we should all most earnestly consider the all-important question—

* The Indian penal settlement: an amusing comment on the writer’s idea of the justice of GOD. The blasphemy of imputing such an intention to the Creator would not seem to have occurred to the worthy writer of the tract, nor to the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge which published it.

"V. How to pass the Examination.

"At the university examinations there is only one way of passing, namely, learning properly the appointed subjects.* But if there be the same inflexible rule at the Great Examination, no man, woman, or child on the face of the earth could hope to pass it, because we are all sinners. When, therefore, the infinitely holy and just GOD examines our actions, He will find that we have committed sins without number; when He examines our thoughts and feelings, He will find them even worse than our actions, for we often purpose evil we cannot carry out. . . . How, then, can any one hope to pass? Blessed be GOD's name, He has devised a way by which even the sinner may be accepted as righteous. He sent his own Son Jesus Christ into this world to live and die for sinners. Jesus took the sinner's place. He lived a perfectly holy and righteous life, and then, though sinless, and therefore not deserving death, He suffered death on our behalf and in our stead.

"Now this glorious doctrine of substitution is GOD's plan whereby sinful man can pass the Great Examination of which we have been speaking. At that great day it will be vain to plead innocence, for we are all guilty. It will be vain to say that we are better than others, because the question is whether we are as good as GOD requires us to be. There is only one thing we can do. We must in this present life accept GOD's invitation and obey His command, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.' We must cast ourselves entirely on GOD's mercy through Christ, and trust in Him to save us."

It is true that a short paragraph is added, probably by

* How terrible an irony on the blindness to which a system can reduce minds! Men can perceive that on earth to learn the appointed subjects is only just, but to support the dogma of the Atonement they will set at naught the primary ideas of morality, which are more stable than the heavens themselves!

a kind of instinct for truth, to the effect that true faith leads to holiness of life; but its logic is quite at variance with the main argument, for how holy must a man be before the Great Examiner will consent to close His eyes?

Could there be a much lower presentment of the Father of Love than this of the Great Pedagogue conniving at "cribbing" on a grand scale in the case of all who, for various reasons, could not, or would not, learn the lesson of life? How can we wonder that the educated (or uneducated) Hindus decline to forsake a religion which traces its history for four thousand years, and whose magnificent philosophy, which enthralled one of the greatest of modern thinkers, a philosophy which presents an abundance wherewith to satisfy the aspiring mind, for a theory so ludicrous as that of the All-Mighty and All-Merciful practising a trick on His own nature.

10. This aspect of popular Christianity will be so strenuously denied by those who nevertheless assume it tacitly as the whole basis of their practical belief, that I cannot resist quoting from one who, himself an inspirational medium, came through death to life, and whose works now follow him—the cutting words in which he declared this same fact, that Christians, generally, give no thought to that life of the soul which is really all-important, but trust to vicarious sacrifice to make them other than they have made themselves:—

“‘But the object of the last revelation was not to reform the world, but to save it,’ he replied. ‘Thanks, B——, for having put in rather too epigrammatic a form, perhaps to please those who believe it, the most diabolical sophism that was ever invented to beguile a Church—the doctrine that a man can be saved by opinion without practice; that a man’s practice may be bad, and yet, because his faith is good, his salvation is sure; that he can, by such a miserable philosophy as would disgrace the justice of the earth,

escape the just sentence to be passed upon all his deeds. The result of so fatal a dogma must be a Church that tends to atheism and that loves corruption. . . . If these ideas are not correct, Christianity will soon cease to exist even in name; but if they are, then it contains within it a regenerating power hitherto undeveloped whereby the world may absolutely be reformed. I will venture to assert that the Christian nations will make no moral progress so long as they cherish the pagan superstition that religion consists in trying to save themselves by virtue of a creed, rather than to save others by the virtues of a life. . . . There is a promise that greater works than these shall they do who believe. Why . . . have these works . . . never been attempted? Because people don't believe in the tremendous power of disinterestedness, and they can't face the severe training which the perfection of self-sacrifice involves. So one set of 'worldly holies' regard all personal discipline as a tempting snare to be avoided. . . . Another set delight in a mild æsthetic sort of training, to be performed in a peculiar costume according to the obsolete ceremonial rules of a Church which is divided against itself, and their works take the fatuous form of ecclesiastical high art. . . . And then in strong contrast are those who train enough in all conscience with gloves, single-sticks, sculls, and such-like appliances, and whose works take the form of . . . a general jovial philanthropy. I am not sure that they are not the most hopeful set after all; they believe in severe muscular training as necessary to produce great physical results, . . . and they might be shown that the real place for a biceps is the will and not the arms; and instead of a body 'as hard as nails,' the chief aim of one's life should be to bring one's spirit to that condition—hard, be it understood, in the sense of being impervious to the influences which weaken and demoralise it—hard in its resistance to the tyranny of society. . . . It is only thus by remaining

in the world and yet resolutely refusing to concede a jot to it that . . . it is possible to acquire the internal isolation and strength of will necessary for the achievement of these 'greater works.' Depend upon it, the task of performing them is not hopeless because it seems stupendous. There are spiritual forces now latent in humanity powerful enough to restore a fallen universe ; but they want to be called into action by fire."

Thus wrote Laurence Oliphant at a time when he was first brought into contact with the transcendent reality of the psychic power as exemplified in Thomas Lake Harris, and before he had learned by painful experience that the possession of spiritual gifts does not confer on any man the right to dominate the reason and conscience of another, nor to command his actions ; and that a medium may speak with the tongues of men and of angels, and have all faith so as to "remove mountains," and yet be under the dominion of spiritual pride ; may do mighty works and have the name of Christ always in his mouth, and yet be none of His, and be utterly unreliable as a guide of life and practice. He had not then learned the lesson which he afterwards declared well worth the cost to him of career, family, and worldly esteem—that there is not, and never can be, any pivotal individual on whom turns the salvation of man, or through whom final revelation can be made, but that to LIVE THE LIFE of true disinterestedness is the only means of securing that revelation in the soul which is enlightenment. In other words, though the perception of the supreme importance of the soul-life over bodily comforts and prosperity may come through the intellect, the putting this conclusion into practice can only result from the strength of will that turns from the selfish enjoyment of the things of time and sense to a readiness to be utilised in the service of our brothers and sisters, in whatever form that service can be given.

11. It must now be left to the reader's judgment whether of these two systems is the likelier to exert a moral force on covetous and sensual men and on frivolous indolent women ; the idea that an appeal to Christ at the last, when the body is racked with suffering or torpid from weakness, can avail to save from the natural effects of the sins of a lifetime, or the sure knowledge that the consequence of sin is decadence of soul ; that as in this life we see the drunkard's habit written on his face, so in that life every soul shall carry the open blazon of its erewhile secret sins, and that, under pain of sinking lower and lower, it must sooner or later, even with enfeebled powers, retrace its steps ; must in the life beyond see the terrible widening circles of sorrow and suffering which its own acts have set in motion, and must labour at the undoing of the harm it has done.

Which is the stronger incentive to effort, the idea that at our entrance to the next life we are to be decreed ecstatic beatitude or Titanic suffering, and regarded as protagonists in the world's drama, enduring the vengeance or tasting the joys of the Almighty, or that we are simply seen as we ARE, all our squalid ambitions, self-seeking meanness, indolent selfishness, or swinish sensuality bare and open to the pitying disgust of the noble and the brave ? Whether is more calculated to give pause to the selfish, the theory that those whom we have wronged, engrossed in praise or pain, have forgotten us and our doings, or the knowledge bred of observation that the girl we have betrayed, the family we have ruined by our skilfully floated bubble company, the companions we have enticed to excess, the men whose lives we have dragged into the mire by vanity and unfaith and ill-temper, are waiting with hearts corroded with hatred to pursue us there till they too have learned that lesson of love to enemies which we have done our best to render harder ? Whether is more deterrent, a hell in which no

one outside the nursery believes,* or the knowledge that the bodily desires cultivated in this life are a fire in the disembodied spirit, unquenchable save by an effort for which it has no inclination and barely enough power; that the empty head and vacant heart can never be filled save by personal effort, by knowledge of the laws of growth, and by love for others; and that paltering with the laws of God is impossible, for no refined and calculating selfishness, no doing good in order to save one's soul, can ever take the place of the sublime charity which suffereth long, seeketh not her own, and rejoiceth in the truth?

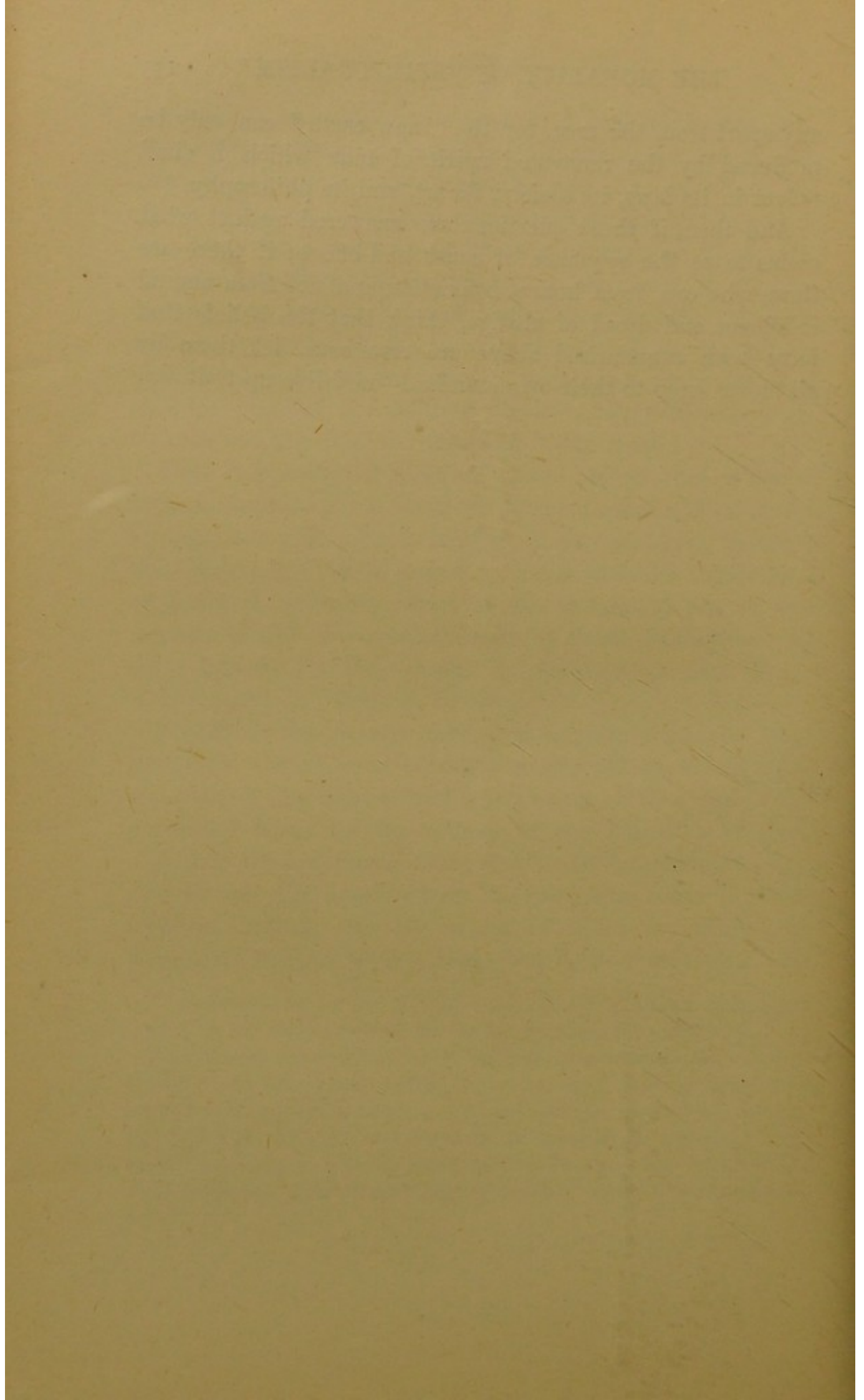
Does it not appeal most effectively to all that is noble in man, urging him to leave his selfish terrors and manfully to begin the work of reformation in his own heart, to know that Hate can only be ended by Love, that the injunctions of Jesus to feel only regret at the misguided acts of our enemies is the only method whereby these enemies can be made friends, for they cannot be destroyed in this life or in any other, as "there is no death"?

Which is the greater encouragement to effort, the idea that God will at some cataclysmal day set all wrong right and make a new heaven and a new earth, or that man is the appointed agent for the coming of the Kingdom of God, and that by his efforts alone can it be established? His soul is now the arena where the good and the evil strive together, and is also the realm of spirit in which that Kingdom consists, so that there can be no "salvation" for

* And few in it. I was told an amusing tale of a little child being taught by her elder sister of the awful penalty of "naughtiness":—"What! burn for ever—always?" said the innocent sceptic. "Yes, always; one year after another, never ending," was the answer in hushed and impressive tones. "What! *always*, and never be burnt up?" "Yes, dear;"—and then in an awe-struck whisper, "God keeps them from ever being burnt up!" To which the Voltairian in short frock and sash triumphantly rejoined, "THEN I DON'T BELIEVE IT!!"

any apart from the race, for the "new earth" can only be produced by the renovated spirit of man which it shall reflect in its laws, its society, its art, and its philosophy.

And then, if these questions are answered against what seems to us the sequence of cause and effect; if there are those who can, from honest conviction and not from mental indolence and dread of change, think that the beliefs that have been summarised above are erroneous, let them by all means keep to their own standard—and live up to it.



PART II

THEORY AND INFERENCES

“Science is simply a higher development of common knowledge, and if science is repudiated, all knowledge must be repudiated with it. . . . Men of science throughout the world subject each other’s results to the most searching examination, and error is mercilessly exposed and rejected as soon as discovered. . . . And still more conclusive testimony is to be found in the daily verification of scientific predictions, and in the never-ceasing triumphs of those arts which science guides.”—HERBERT SPENCER.

“About twenty years ago, the fact that surgical operations could be performed on patients in the mesmeric trance without their being conscious of pain was strenuously denied by most scientific and medical men in this country, and the patients, and sometimes the operators, were denounced as impostors; the asserted phenomenon was believed to be contrary to the laws of nature. Now, probably every man of intelligence believes the facts, and it is seen that there must be some as yet unknown law of which they are a consequence. When Castellet informed Reaumur that he had reared perfect silkworms from the eggs laid by a virgin moth, the answer was, *Ex nihilo nihil fit*, and the fact was disbelieved. It was contrary to one of the widest and best established laws of nature; yet it is now universally admitted to be true, and the supposed law ceases to be universal.”—Professor A. J. WALLACE.

“For he should persevere until he has attained one of two things; either he should discover or learn the truth about them (phenomena), or, if this is impossible, I would have him take the best and most irrefragable of human notions, and let this be the raft upon which he sails through life.”—PLATO’S *Phædo*.

“Happy the man whose lot it is to know
The secrets of the earth. He hastens not
To work his fellows, hurt by unjust deeds,
But with rapt admiration contemplates
Immortal Nature’s ageless harmony,
And how and when her order came to be.
Such spirits have no place for thoughts of shame.”

—EURIPIDES.

CHAPTER I

MATTER AND ETHER

“Felix qui potuit rerum cognoscere causas
Atque metus omnis et inexorabile fatum
Subjecit pedibus, strepitumque Acherontis avari.”

—VERGIL.

1. It is not strictly within the province of the narrator of fresh facts to form them into a connected theory. He bears his witness to them irrespective of their credibility, which depends on the temper and knowledge of his hearers. But to be in possession of a large mass of unsorted facts lying loose in the mind, and to form no theory about them is very difficult, and complete suspense of judgment is well-nigh impossible. Any person who is convinced of the existence of unseen personalities, and of the high probability that these are merely our forerunners across the border, cannot but feel much curiosity to discover some kind of explanation of facts which are our only clue to the conditions under which they live.

But to form any sort of theory worthy of the name by indicating the method of action of these strange manifestations of power is exceedingly difficult. All that can be done as yet is to connect them with the normal experience of life by suppositions which are supported by evidence and in harmony with physical laws. The subject bristles with perplexities; it is not half explored; and not only so, but another great obstacle to clear understanding is to be found

in the usual careless use of language. Thus if it is said that two masses attract each other with a force varying inversely as the square of the distance between them, this may be understood either as a statement that a certain effect is perceptible, or as a theory that the force is resident in and inherent to the said masses. It is often, nay usually, impossible to find out what minds who have never trained themselves to accuracy of thought and diction really do mean, and when dealing with disembodied minds equally untrained, acting through it may be still more ignorant mediums, it is yet more difficult to get at the idea under the forms in which it is cloaked. The same difficulty obscures the speculations of antiquity. Thus when Thales asserts that all bodies are compounded of earth, water, and air, the ideas present to his mind were probably not of chemical composition, of which he knew nothing, but of the solid, liquid, and gaseous states for which he uses these words as ideograms, and he probably meant that all matter could exist under these forms.

In dealing with transcendental subjects it is most important to use words in their strict sense only, and some education in exact physics is essential to any comprehension of that which lies beyond. We must proceed from the known to the unknown, from the physical to the psychic, and too much care cannot be taken to discriminate between facts and inferences. The general reader may at once abandon any hope of being able to apprehend the true nature of the phenomena so long as he is unable to realise that, by whatsoever chemical or mechanical devices, it is entirely beyond human power to call into existence the smallest particle of matter or the minutest amount of force. All that man can do is to change the form in which either is manifest, and though this may involve the one becoming impalpable and invisible and the other quiescent, neither can be created or destroyed. For instance, when a paper is burned, all that

is really destroyed is the visible material form. The substance of the paper may, if the heat is sufficient, be entirely converted into invisible vapour and gas: its constituent elements having passed into the gaseous state, their form is changed. But they are not destroyed. Similarly with the forces of cohesion and chemical affinity which held the paper together; they have been converted into heat or are still resident in the products of combustion, but they have not been annihilated any more than the matter has been annihilated.

So when motion is arrested that motion is converted into heat, whether it be the motion of a railway-train, where the quantity of motion is so large as to show visible sparks under the braked wheels, or that of a fly impinging on the window-pane—the amount of heat generated is exactly equivalent to the amount of motion arrested.

This fact is called the Law of the Conservation of Energy. Energy is the power of doing work, of altering the state of anything in nature. A weight raised has work stored up in it; so has a heated object, or one charged with electricity or magnetism. Force, in its relation to external matter, is energy in process of transfer; it is that which does work, and the measure of any force is the rate at which the work is done or tends to be done, the rate at which the weight is lifted, the boiler heated, or the electricity produced. The Law of the Conservation of Energy declares that no force is ever destroyed; it is merely transformed into another kind. Thus water in a reservoir may turn a wheel, which may run a dynamo furnishing electricity, which may be put to various uses to supply light, heat, power to run machinery, chemical force for electro-plating, and so on, but there will always be a quite definite amount of electricity consumed corresponding to the definite amount of heat, light, magnetism, or chemical energy produced. This truth of the Conservation of Energy must be thoroughly understood before any intelli-

gent view of psychic or of physical phenomena can be gained.

When a well-known face appears in the air and vanishes, this looks like a creation and disappearance of matter, but is not necessarily so any more than the formation of rain and snow from invisible water vapour. When a heavy object is raised or some other phenomenon occurs involving motion without any apparent means of its communication to the thing moved, energy is expended which must come from somewhere.* But there is no ground to assume that, because the source of the energy is unknown, it is contrary to nature or that it is unknowable. Here, as always, the method of knowledge is experiment, and the patient examination of the phenomena will assuredly put the clue in our hands.

2. There is one preliminary generalisation which can be accepted as a guide with a high degree of certitude. It is called the Principle of Continuity. This is not easy to explain, for it is not, like the Law of the Conservation of Energy, one that can be proved experimentally, but is rather that universal experience of mankind upon which the value of all experiment depends, the constant fact that precisely similar effects follow precisely similar causes, and that each effect has a necessary and proximate cause in actual contact with the result.

The whole of human knowledge, both exact and practical, depends on this being true. If, for instance, any possible reaction of the hydro-carbons which form the bulk of our food could produce arsenic, no case of poisoning could ever

* The profound exhaustion of the medium after many physical phenomena certainly seems to point to him as the source of much, if not all, of the energy expended. Where the matter of "materialisation" comes from it is less easy to infer. For some astounding descriptions, and the obvious inference from them, the curious reader may refer to "There is no Death," by Florence Marryat (Mrs. Ross-Church), p. 112, 5th edit. ; Griffith, Farran, & Co.

be proved. If metals prepared from the same ore with equal care by the same process turned out sometimes pure and sometimes alloyed, commerce and engineering would be hardly possible.

The principle that the same causes always produce and are necessary to the same effects is one which, though the vast sweep of its general application is not easy to grasp, is nevertheless so fundamental to human intuition as to be universally believed, and as (unlike other "beliefs") it fulfils the only criterion of genuineness, it is universally acted upon.

The Principle of Continuity may be illustrated by any phenomenon soever. Thus, to take the instance of a town lit by the little glow-lamps now coming into general use. The filament of carbon in the lamps is raised to a high temperature by reason of its resistance to the passage of the electric "current," resistance always causing the arrested electricity to be converted into heat. The electricity comes from the motion of a steam-engine; the steam-engine derives its motion from the expansion of water into steam by heat; this heat is transformed chemical energy due to the combination of the carbon and gases of the coal with air; the coal derived this locked-up store of chemical energy from the sun which shone on the forests in the morning of the world; and the sun derived its energy from, let us say, the falling together of cosmic masses of whose previous history practically nothing is known. But a history it is certain there is, and each event in the chain is strictly continuous to and dependent on those that precede it, both as to quantity and nature of the effect produced.

Now it will be seen how this generalisation underlies the Law of the Conservation of Energy. It is the statement of energy as a real thing flowing through the universe of matter. For every step can be traced by which the solar heat and light reappear in the lamps. It is true that not all

of it so reappears. If the coal could have the whole of its heat applied to the water in the boiler, none being lost in hot smoke and radiation ; if the steam could be reconverted into cold water by giving up all its motion to the engine ; if the engine and dynamo had no friction ; and if the wires had no resistance to the electric current, then the whole of the solar energy stored up thousands of years ago would be converted into light and heat in the electric lamps. As it is, most of the energy is wasted at each step, but this waste in no way affects the principle that each event in the chain of production is exactly referable, both as to kind and quantity, to that which went before. This includes the losses ; for at each step the amount of loss can be accurately measured, and the sum makes up the exact equivalent of the chemical energy of the coal. In each of the phenomena the proximate cause can be stated both quantitatively and qualitatively.*

3. A study of physics, however, soon reveals the fact that it is not among visible effects that continuity is to be looked for, but only among causes. When limpid solutions of, say, chloride of sodium and nitrate of silver are mixed, and a heavy white solid is produced from the two clear liquids, this is an event which to sense is not continuous to the pre-existing forms ; or when a large sun-spot is reported from the observatory, whose instruments show it as an outburst of glowing gas compared to which earth's wildest cyclones are gentle zephyrs, and all the telegraphic instruments of three continents are convulsed

* It may here be observed how crude are the physical methods on which the nineteenth century plumes itself—that our best engines can only convert into motion about 27 per cent. of the energy of their fuel, and of this motion about 70 per cent. is wasted in the coils of the dynamo, in friction, as well as in heating the leads and the lamps themselves, the light-vibrations being a bare 3 per cent. of the total power.

in magnetic sympathy, these look much like breaches of continuity and actions at a distance. But the chemist knows that the appearance of the precipitate is strictly continuous to the two facts, that silver has a stronger affinity for chlorine than for nitric acid, and that chloride of silver is insoluble; and in the light of the physical discoveries of the last thirty years, anticipated by the insight of the despised mystics from the earliest times,* there can be no doubt in any trained mind that if the ether were absent which places sun and planets in contact as surely as by an iron bar, no effect would be produced on earth by any solar changes.

Care is also necessary to avoid associating continuity with duration. The explosion of the charge in a cannon and the flash of light when the shot strikes an armour-plate are brief experiences, but the one is strictly continuous to the chemical affinities locked up in the powder, and the other to the energy of motion arrested. Mere duration has nothing to do with continuity or discontinuity, which deals with the chain of causes alone, and the suddenness or unexpectedness of any appearance, whether of a precipitate, of a magnetic storm, or of a visitant from the unseen, is no evidence of a breach of continuity.

The overwhelming weight of evidence leads to the conclusion that action at a distance without a transmitting medium is impossible. All the positive testimony of the

* "Khandogya Upanishad," vi. 2, 3: "That which is the beginning, one only without a second, thought—May I be many, may I grow forth. It sent forth Fire (Tegas), elsewhere explained as Ether (*ākāśa*), of which fire is the manifestation." There are many such allusions. Jung Stilling, half a century before Reichenbach and Rumford, and a hundred years before Grove and Thomson, says:—"Light, electricity, magnetism, galvanic matter, and ether appear to be all one and the same body under different modifications. This light or ether is the element which connects soul (spirit) and body, and the spiritual and material worlds, together." So also Böhme.

centuries points one way, and if we consider the general human inability to conceive of the transmission of motion from one body to another * without a transmitting medium in contact with both, and are firmly resolved that belief shall follow evidence, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that in all cases of seeming action at a distance, whether of gravity, electricity, magnetism, mesmerism, or will-power, the medium for the transmission of the energy will sooner or later be found, and with it the proximate cause of the phenomena.†

The converse of this view is magic, which involves the paralysis of reason by shutting the door on any attempt to explain either method or purpose of action. This is the ready explanation of the savage (both primitive and civilised) for every effect whose cause is to him inconceivable, and the "explanation" is always announced as final; the thing is either the fiat of God or the machination of the devil, as suits best with the prejudice of the speaker. This "explanation" is beyond reasoning with; it does not deal in causes; and the idea that charms and incantations can find gold, confer health, foretell the future, and blast enemies; or that rites, observances, and beliefs can remove

* It should be borne in mind that all influence is motion, whether of the molecules or of the mass.

† It is not to be forgotten that the whole of this argument rests on the assumption that there is no interruption in that orderly succession of phenomena or their causes which are termed laws of nature. This position has been attacked by demonstrating the fallibility of induction, and Babbage's machine has been brought in to show a change of law after a vast cycle of phenomena. But the conclusion reached cannot be upset by any proof that the law may change for aught we know to the contrary, but only by the clearest proof that it does change. The conclusion can only be defeated by showing one undoubted fact necessarily involving a suspension of law; but this demonstration has never been given. We seem here perilously near the old abyss of miracle as infraction of law instead of miracle as fact due to unknown or spiritual causes; but the difference between the two is just this, that the one gives a foothold to reason and the other does not.

sins and dispel evils, or, in a word, can produce results without strictly causing them, belong one and all to the magical category, and denote that temper which, having parted with the criterion of truth, can no longer tell what to believe or to disbelieve, and actually fears the infliction of the most terrible penalties by the Divine Father for the use of man's honest reason. Even here, however, human nature has asserted itself, and given an explanation of magic by the intervention of "genii," "devils," "fairies," or such-like, a hypothesis that mixes up true and false and makes confusion worse confounded.

Rejecting, then, the no-reason involved in the supposition of final action without a means of transmission of power, and that of energy created for the occasion, and holding to the evidence of the senses that the phenomena detailed in Part I. actually do occur, we must look for the channel of the power displayed, not merely for the intelligent cause one step removed, but for the method whereby these act on our senses.

No one can be long in contact with these things without perceiving the close analogy that exists between many of them and the hypnotic facts recently established, as well as between these latter and electric and magnetic effects; while the intimate part played by heat and light in some of the manifestations has already been glanced at. This suggests the possibility at least that all these things are connected by some common mode or modes of action, and also makes it clear why any attempt to understand the problems involved must be preceded by some knowledge of the four great forms of energy known as heat, light, electricity, and magnetism, and of the medium by which they act. What this medium is we shall now endeavour to show.

4. To begin with, it is not matter, if this be defined as that which is separable into the ordinary chemical elements. Experiment shows that all objects in nature, except metals and such others as are already elements, can be split up

into other constituents, known as elements, which are thirteen in number.* All these, besides the properties that distinguish one from another, have certain properties in common—extension (or mass), viscosity, colour, chemical combining power, and atomicity, irrespective of whether they be solids, liquids, or gases at ordinary temperatures and pressures.

The common properties above named are distinctive of the elements as being matter, and are therefore shared by their compounds also. Some, such as certain gases, are spoken of as being colourless, but this only means in small quantities; all matter has some colour, though it may be very little, just as the thinnest hydrogen has some viscosity. Every one of the elements and every compound, that is to say, all matter, has these properties.

But with heat, light, electricity, and magnetism we enter on quite a new order of things. These are unmistakably real, but they have none of the properties by which matter is defined, except perhaps extension. They are not, like the elements, inconvertible, but can readily be changed into one another. They cannot be isolated; heat without any hot object or magnetism without any magnetic one are unknown. They have therefore been thought of as mere properties of matter, but this will not quite do, for they come through interplanetary space, where no matter is. They permeate matter freely in most cases, but when they

* Edward Frankland, D.C.L., F.R.S., "Lecture Notes for Chemical Students." Weight is not included, because, though it appears to be inherent in the masses weighed, this is by no means necessarily the case. Weight is the force with which a given mass is attracted earthwards. In the complete absence of any other matter in the universe one body would have no weight, but it would still have mass; so that weight is a relation between two or more bodies, not a property of one alone. It is the measure of mass at the surface of the earth, and is hence commonly used as the equivalent of mass, but when we buy a pound of butter we don't want as much as will exert a certain attraction, but a given mass or quantity thereof.

do (and all matter is transparent to one or other of them) * its mass and weight are unaffected ; a hot pound of iron weighs neither more nor less than the same mass cold, and the same is true if it be charged with magnetism or electricity. They can and do occupy the same space at the same time, and are not excluded by the densest substances. The influence of matter extends only as far as its own boundary planes, but heat and its cognates radiate in all directions. Neither are they stopped by the most perfect vacua, which some of them pervade as freely as they do ordinary matter, a fact which can be proved either in the laboratory in miniature or seen in nature on the grandest scale, for it is well known that at quite a small distance from the earth there is less air than in the most perfect vacuum that can be made ; and heat, light, magnetism, and perhaps electricity pass freely from the sun to the earth.†

* Thus glass is opaque to electricity, transparent to light and heat ; all metals are opaque to light and transparent to electricity ; almost all substances are transparent to magnetism ; while others, such as rock-salt, are almost opaque to heat while transparent to light. Tourmaline is the oddest of all, for it allows only half the light to pass, those vibrations which are in one plane only, stopping all the transverse waves.

† This is not to say that these agents pass from the sun to the earth *as such*. Light is invisible except in conjunction with matter, perhaps except with solid matter. If any one doubts this, let him bore a hole in the shutter of a darkened room, so that a beam of sunlight may stream through. The light will then be seen by the dust in the ray. Now hold the smokeless flame of a spirit-lamp in the ray, and dense clouds of apparently black smoke will be seen. These are due to the burning up of the motes in the beam, leaving nothing to reflect the light, and therefore producing Nature's deepest black. So "spirits" tell us that the interstellar spaces would be to our senses cold and dark. It is quite possible that the energy streaming from the sun may be converted into the forms under which we know it at contact with the surroundings of earth, and that every one of these forms of energy is, like gravity, of the nature of an interaction.

As the first two certainly, and the second two probably, are vibratory in their nature, and as action at a distance without a connecting medium has been ruled out of court as magical, it must be inferred that all space is filled by some medium closely related to these four forms of energy. This hypothetical substance is called the Ether. That it is frictionless is evident from the unretarded motion of the planets in it, but it has inertia or something like it, because, among other reasons, to start a current of electricity requires some (though a very little) time.

The same conclusion, that there exists an ethereal medium which transmits heat and light is arrived at by another series of facts. Light is a vibration in two planes, as is revealed by the polariscope, and a ray may be represented in section by a Greek cross +, of which the horizontal and vertical lines are each one plane of vibration. This double vibration is transmitted through the atmosphere and through interplanetary space alike at the unrealisable speed of 185,000 miles per second. No material substance is found able to transmit vibration at anything like this speed, and there are absolute mathematical reasons why it is impossible that it should do so. Also, no fluid can transmit cross vibrations at all; it can transmit motion in parallel planes, but not in two planes at right angles. To do this a substance having a certain rigidity is required. There must therefore be something other than matter which brings the solar and stellar light; and the existence of transparent matter of all kinds, solid and gaseous, in which light travels at near the normal speed, shows (1) that all transparent substances must be freely interpenetrated by the ether, for this ether within them is alone capable of carrying the

* 3×10^{10} centimetres per second, as accurately as can be measured (Fizeau, Michelson). These experiments were in air; that the same speed prevails in space is known from the observations on Jupiter's satellites, by comparing the real and the visible times of occultation.

light, and not the glass or other substance within which the light is carried; and (2) that the ether must possess a certain rigidity. This rigidity has been calculated by Lord Kelvin as about 19,000,000,000th part of the rigidity of hard steel. We are forced therefore to the conclusion that to be transparent to light a substance must be interpenetrated by the light-carrying agent, and as light is convertible into heat, magnetism, &c., this applies equally to substances called opaque.

Let us then think of the ether as "of a continuous frictionless medium possessing both inertia and rigidity." "We have to try and realise the idea of a perfectly continuous, subtle, incompressible substance pervading all space and penetrating between the molecules of ordinary matter, which are embedded in it and connected to one another by its means. And we must regard it as the one universal medium by which all actions between bodies are carried on. This then is its function—to act as the transmitter of motion and energy."*

5. Yet another chain of experiment and reasoning leads to a similar result. Speculation has from a very early time been busy with the constitution of matter. That matter has a grained structure of not infinitely small dimensions is proved by the separation of white light into its constituent colours when refracted through a prism (for if homogeneous all wave-lengths would be equally affected), by the phenomena of capillarity, and by those of contact electricity.† The atom is a logical necessity, for finding experimentally that water, for instance, consists of oxygen and hydrogen, if we could take a drop of water and continuously halve it, a limit must be reached (grained structure being proved), when the next division would separate it into its component

* Professor Oliver Lodge, "Modern Views of Electricity," p. 339; London, 1889.

† Professor P. G. Tait, "Unseen Universe," p. 138; London, 1884.

parts ; that is, when the smallest possible mass which is yet water has been reached ; and there is ample experimental proof that the elements have a definite though very small unit of chemical combination, which is called the atomic weight.

The early conception of the atom (Democritus, circ. B.C. 400, and Lucretius, B.C. 99-55) was that of a hard grain, round or variously shaped, and this has more or less kept its ground in spite of the obvious difficulty that the only limit to the possible division of such atoms must be the theoretical delicacy and power of the supposed dividing instrument, for there can be nothing so hard or so small as not to be divisible by suitable means. In other words, the hard atom of finite size yet indivisible is a breach of continuity. It was reserved for the genius of Sir William Thomson (now Lord Kelvin) and James Clerk Maxwell, aided by the researches of Helmholtz into the kinetics of vortex motion in an incompressible frictionless fluid, to perceive that the atomic facts may be explained by frictionless incompressible substance and by vortex motion in it. He showed that all the properties of the atom except gravitation (which may very likely prove to be rather a property of the surrounding medium) may be represented by the vortex ring.

A vortex ring as it is known in ordinary fluid, such as air, is a portion of the fluid separated from the rest by having a rotational movement impressed upon it. Of course such a ring is invisible, for it differs from the surrounding air in nothing but its rotation. It can, however, be made visible by adding smoke to it, and it is then seen to be revolving rapidly on its circular core as an axis, as well as being in direct forward motion as a whole.

Such a ring, of whatever size, is a true atom (α , privative particle, $\tau\epsilon\mu\nu\omega$, I cut) ; it cannot be cut, for the knife passes through it without dividing it, the ring wriggles past the

blade. Nevertheless it behaves like a solid body, and striking against a wall, will rebound and oscillate. Such smoke-rings can be readily made by friction between the air and the sides of a passage through which it is driven, and are often seen shot out from the funnel of a locomotive or the bore of a cannon. Produced by gaseous friction, such rings are rapidly brought to rest by the same cause, going slower and slower till all their energy is rubbed down into heat by the surrounding air. In a frictionless medium a vortex ring could not be started by any method known to man, but once started, it could not be stopped except by an act similar to that which called it into being. It need not be a simple circle; it may be elliptic, wavy, like a figure 8, or even knotted, though it is impossible to make most of these forms experimentally.

That motion may be made to convey the sense of solidity is easily shown; for a moving belt driving machinery is rigid, while the same belt at rest is not, or a flexible circular tube full of water becomes stiff while the water is in motion. Further, the vortex ring may shake or vibrate as a whole; or it may change its size by contracting and dilating; or it may change its form, as from the ellipse to the circle and back again; thus giving examples of four different co-existent methods of vibration — (1) as a whole when it rebounds from a wall and shakes, (2) perpendicularly to its axis of translation, contracting and expanding; (3) from a close or knotted form to an open one and back; (4) about its circular axis or core.* It is evident that these motions

* Until this theory has been further tested and it can be confidently affirmed that atoms are vortex rings, and not merely that they probably may be, it will be premature to say what these different motions may represent. But as an illustration only, it may be said that the rotation which makes the ring would represent solidity; its size the physical state of the body (solid, liquid, or gaseous); the form of the ring (open, knotted, &c.) its chemical properties; the contraction or

may have others superimposed upon them, and such motions may possibly connect the vortex atom with all those properties which are known to be modes or varieties of vibration. In short, the modern theory of the elementary atom put forward by high authority in the scientific world as the most probable one is of a ring of impalpable ether which becomes perceptible to the senses by its motion; in other words, that matter is a union of substance and force mutually interacting, and therefore that the withdrawal of motion from so-called solid matter would mean the withdrawal of its properties, and its consequent lapse into the impalpable unseen.

6. But strange and fantastic as these explorations of science will seem to those who are accustomed to regard matter as a final fact and its properties as inherent, still more remains behind. Light is found to travel more slowly in denser substances than in less dense. It travels slower in water than in air, and slower in glass than in water, though its speed in glass is far in excess of anything the glass itself could transmit. Not only so, but whereas light of different colours (*i.e.*, different wave-lengths) seems to be transmitted through the free ether of space at the same speed, this is not the case with regard to its travel in dense bodies like glass or water. It has already been shown that it cannot be the glass or water that transmits light, but the ether within them, so that the facts above noted show that the ether within these bodies is somehow in a different state to that outside. It must certainly be less rigid than free ether or more dense. Fresnel thinks the latter, and that distinguished physicist has put forward

expansion, its heat; its to and fro motion, colour; rotation about its core, magnetism; while electricity and gravitation would be phenomena of the surrounding medium, the one sheared into plus and minus electricity (to follow Professor Lodge's suggestion), and the other due to diminished ethereal density in the neighbourhood of matter.

the hypothesis that some of this ether is entangled as it were in the atoms of matter, and is, so to speak, "bound" up with them.

That something of the sort is the case is proved by another experiment. If there is actually ether bound up with matter, of course when the latter is moved its "bound" ether must move with it, and the light should be transmitted through the moving matter faster or slower as the mass is receding from or approaching the source of light; in fact, light, like sound, should move faster with a stream than against it. With water Fizeau proved experimentally that this is, in fact, the case; light does, in fact, travel faster with a stream than against it. This experiment has been repeated by Michelson with the same result, proving that the ether inside matter is actually in a different state to that outside.*

The phenomena of colour, otherwise inexplicable, are elucidated in the same way, and tend to prove the existence of bound ether. Coloured light, as is well known, consists of vibrations or waves ranging from 4×10^{14} vibrations per second (red) to 7×10^{14} vibrations per second (violet). There are others both faster and slower, which the photographic plate can register but not the eye, and as these colour-waves travel faster or slower through bound ether according as they are short or long (*i.e.*, more or less of them per inch), they can be sorted out by this property. A prism of glass is in effect a prism of bound ether, which, retarding the short waves more than the long ones, and therefore bending them more out of their course, separates the colours. When a ray of light falls on such a prism, its different wave-lengths are sorted out as shown in the rainbow. What is it that causes these differences of wave-

* Professor Lodge, "Modern Views of Electricity," to which the reader is referred for very interesting details on this most interesting subject, and to which the above paragraphs are largely indebted.

length in the ether? Simply this, that every elementary atom has its own particular period or frequency of vibration, just as each tuning-fork has its own tone. The vibrating atom communicates its vibrations to the free ether outside, and a minute ray of coloured light is the result. The more of the substance the greater the amount of colour. From the sun all wave-lengths arrive together, producing the sensation of white light. Colour in external objects is simply their power of reflecting the particular rays to which they are attuned, so to speak, just as out of an octave of tuning-forks each will take up its own note out of a chord sounded on an organ. All these phenomena tend to show the existence of a universal ethereal substance, which under one permanent modification is the cause of matter itself, and under transient modifications, of its accidental properties.

7. The view that is gaining ground among scientific men is, then, somewhat as follows:—The origin of matter is not by creation *ex nihilo*, but by evolution; by the action of unknown force on pre-existing substance. This substance is not broken or interrupted by masses of matter, but pervades them, and is, compared to matter, homogeneous, or at all events vastly more fine-grained, and is not a fluid properly so called, because it has rigidity. It is like a perfect fluid in being frictionless, like a solid in being somewhat rigid, like a gas in being exceedingly penetrable. Thus it combines some of the properties of solid, liquid, and gaseous substances. It has been compared to an elastic jelly devoid of friction, and this perhaps conveys as fair an idea as possible, but no analogy can be at all complete, for until impressed with vortex motion, it differs from matter *suo genere* and belongs to quite another order of existence.

Portions of this ether have, it is not known how, been impressed with vortex motion, and are now atoms of diverse sorts and sizes which could only be destroyed by an applica-

tion of the force that called them into being, and of these all material objects are built up. In them are entangled other portions of ether, to which other observed properties of masses of matter are due, and by means of all these properties the universe becomes perceptible to human senses. Yet other portions of this substance round about the earth and planets are in simple vibratory motion carrying energy radiated from the sun, which energy is manifested as heat, light, electricity, and magnetism. Ether is the medium or carrier of all energy in and to matter. There can be no doubt that the properties of the ether are of a very high order, and comprehend much for which matter has no analogues; and as we are now in face of a new order of existence, there can be no reason to suppose that as a whole it must be less complex and its variations fewer than those of the small part of it that is differentiated from the rest by vortex motion and by us called "matter."

It is impossible to do justice to the whole weight of evidence for the existence of the ether in the very brief sketch here given. The nature of proof for an alleged unseen entity must always be cumulative, and a theory must be tested by the number of facts which it sets in order and explains. Suffice it to say that the foremost minds in the ranks of science perceive that this theory introduces order and method among very diverse phenomena; that there is every reason to believe that the electric fluid is but one mode or vibration of the ether; that light is the same vibration but of a different wave-length, heat another, and magnetism yet another; that the only hopeful attempt at an explanation of gravity runs on the same lines, and that the hypothesis perceived as necessary by Newton,* that master-mind, whose insight almost

* Newton, in his *Queries* appended to the "Opticks," says:—

"*Qu.* 18. If in two tall cylindrical vessels of glass inverted, two little thermometers be suspended so as not to touch the vessels, and

amounted to revelation, has justified itself more and more, standing the tests of two centuries of unparalleled progress in physical science, till it is now the received solution of many problems, and, like the Copernican theory in the past, it is daily receiving confirmation from fresh facts unknown at the time of its inception, and is more and more seen to be a necessary consequence of the principle of continuity.

the air be drawn out of one of these vessels, and these vessels be carried out of a cold place into a warm one, the thermometer *in vacuo* will grow warm as much and almost as soon as the thermometer that is not *in vacuo*. Is not the heat of the warm room conveyed through the vacuum by the vibrations of a much subtler medium than air, which, after the air was drawn out, remained in the vacuum? And is not this medium the same with that medium by which light is refracted and reflected, and by whose vibrations light communicates heat to bodies . . . ? . . . And is not this medium exceedingly more rare and subtile than air, and exceedingly more elastick and active? And doth it not readily pervade all bodies? And is it not (by its elastick force) expanded through all the heavens?

“*Qu. 21.* And in passing from them (the planetary bodies) to great distances doth it not grow denser and denser perpetually, and thereby cause the gravity of those great bodies towards one another, and of the parts towards the bodies; every body endeavouring to go from the denser parts of the medium towards the rarer? And though the increase of density may at great distances be exceeding slow, yet if the elastick force (pressure) of the medium be exceeding great, it may suffice to impel bodies from the denser parts of the medium towards the rarer with all the power which we call gravity.

“*Qu. 22.* May not planets and comets and all gross bodies perform their motions more freely and with less resistance in this æthereal medium than in any fluid . . . ? . . . And may not its resistance be so small as to be inconsiderable? For instance, if this Æther, for so I will call it, should be supposed 700,000 times more elastick than our air, and above 700,000 times more rare, its resistance would be 600,000,000 times less than that of water. And so small a resistance would scarce make a sensible alteration in the motions of the planets in ten thousand years.”

Latin edition of the “*Opticks.*” Abridged from the quotations of Professor Lodge.

We stand to-day in this position:—That Science, though not as yet fully and unreservedly accepting the views of the constitution of matter above set forth, has nevertheless passed the boundaries of materialism and admitted the high probability that matter is a dual entity compact of invisible intangible substance and differentiating force, and that to this latter it owes all the properties whereby it is apparent to the senses.*

This amounts to no less than an admission of the soul of matter, for it means that the whole physical universe is conditioned by, and draws its laws from, an unseen universe which is not matter, nor evident to the senses of the material body. If this can be soberly claimed for inanimate things, is it an absurd demand for the animate?

8. Simultaneously with the advances on the physical side above glanced at, a great series of experiments have been made from the psychologic or biologic side; and after being ridiculed for half a century, mesmerism has, under the new name of hypnotism, passed into the region of accepted fact. As yet, indeed, medical men hesitate to do more than classify

* The net result of seemingly conclusive experiments is that to ethereal vibrations or wave-lengths of

.000,012 to .000,016 inches	are due	chemical energy.
.000,016 to .000,030	„ „	light.
? to .000,120	„ „	radiant heat.
? to yards and miles	„	electricity.

If these results are correct, the whole problem of the transformation of energy works down to this:—Given ethereal wave-lengths of one kind, to transform them without loss into another kind, and when that problem is completely solved energy will be convertible into dark heat, cold light, electricity, or motion, without any portion being simultaneously converted into any of these but the one which it is desired to produce.

In the living organism these transformations do actually occur; cold light, for instance, is produced by many insects, and is suppressed at will, and in the electric eel electricity is similarly produced directly. This would explain, too, why all energy is necessarily interconvertible

their observations in this new field, partly from laudable scientific caution, partly from inbred materialism and reluctance to admit soul (mind) as a real substance and as the source of both growth and healing. This seems to arise in great part from a misconception similar to that of the Ptolemaic days. As it was then assumed that the earth and the heavens were in some way antithetical and not part of one great universe of matter, so it is now assumed that mind and matter are in some way antithetical and not parts of one great universe of substance.

The phenomena of hypnotism have been studied with every scientific care to secure reliable results, and all the particulars which follow may be taken as thoroughly substantiated.

The hypnotic states, their causes and symptoms, are classified by medical men as follows* :—

1. The first stage, the Lethargic. Under sensorial excitement, fixed attention and gaze at one object, by heat, by a steel magnet, or by the mesmeric pass, there is produced a series of symptoms of which the lethargic is ordinarily the first. The eyes of the patient are closed, the face is expressionless, the body relaxed, the limbs flaccid. The mind is dormant, the patient in no way responds to spoken suggestion, the blood-vessels are dilated, and the apparent volume of the body increases. A steel magnet held a little way from a nerve or muscle excites it locally, so also does friction or heat.

2. The second stage is the Cataleptic. This may be produced by continuing the mesmeric pass, by opening the eyes of the lethargic subject to the light, or by the application of a steel magnet to the epigastric region. The subject is now open to "suggestion" by the magnetiser, the brain is partially awake, but the personality is in abeyance,

* "Animal Magnetism," Drs. Binet and Féré, Trübner's Sc. Series.

ne thinks and acts at the will of the operator, he is insensible to pain, so that a surgical operation can be performed on him unfelt. His limbs will remain for a long time rigid in any position in which they may be placed, the extended arm taking a quarter of an hour or so to drop to the side.* This rigidity may be ended by verbal suggestion, or by a gentle electric current applied to the limb. Catalepsy may be limited to the right or the left half of the body, and in such cases the application of a steel magnet transfers the catalepsy from the right to the left half or *vice versâ*. Cataleptic patients are exceedingly open to suggestion; not only will they then and there obey the mesmeriser, but an action can be suggested to them to be done after awakening, in some cases as much as six months after: though unconscious of the suggestion, they will, when the time comes, perform the act. Not only mental but physical effects can be produced by suggestion, stigmata, a blister, cutaneous eruptions, &c., being produced under the hallucination and by the simple conviction of the patient. If the cataleptic patient is left alone the phase passes off in sleep.

3. Somnambulism is the name given to the third stage. It is not readily producible in all subjects. In those who are susceptible it is produced by continuing the passes, rubbing the scalp, or breathing on the cataleptic subject. He becomes exceedingly sensitive to impressions of all kinds except those of colour. Sight, hearing, and touch are greatly quickened, and he may continue either quietly sitting with closed eyes, or arise and walk about showing

* It is sometimes asserted by those who have never performed these experiments that simulation plays a considerable part in them. Those who think this explanation of the cataleptic state a plausible one may be invited to stand with an extended arm for a quarter of an hour. Two sets of sphygmographic tracings taken by Drs. Binet and Féré of a true and a simulated cataleptic may be compared.

no outward symptoms of hypnosis, but in either case still under the power of the operator. He can, however, resist suggestion to a certain extent (which varies with different subjects), and can justify and invent reasons for an action, criminal or otherwise, done under suggestion. Memory is greatly quickened, the patient remembering not only his past life, but also previous mesmeric sleeps and their events, but on awakening he is entirely oblivious of all that took place while under influence.

Occasionally the mind of the somnambule escapes from the control of the mesmerist, and passes into conditions which the Paris school regards as abnormal to the hypnotic state, but which appear to be simply clairvoyance, when the bodily senses are in abeyance and are superseded by the soul-senses for a while. The doctors, while setting aside this latter condition for further study, freely admit that the three states above described cover only a part of the phenomena observable. Hypnosis in all grades is facilitated by repetition, and a peculiar attraction to the magnetiser is a frequent accompaniment of repeated mesmerising.*

9. These are well-established facts. It will have been noticed that electricity, heat, magnetism, and light are all

* Enough has been said to show any intelligent person the danger of submitting to casual experiments in willing and hypnotism. If all persons were healthy and strong-willed this danger would perhaps be but slight, for resolution, a mental refusal to surrender the will, or the entering upon a train of thought, can, so far as I am aware always, prevent the influence being established. But weakness of will and want of principle are themselves diseases of the present time shown by the prevalence of neurosis and hysteria, and in the case of the sensitive organism of even a healthy woman the harm done may be incalculable, for it is quite unknown to what extent suggestion may be transmitted or how long it may last. The irregular practice of hypnotism has already been made penal in France and Belgium. Enlightened public opinion and a knowledge of the possibilities of its misuse must be our safeguard in England for the present.

definitely connected with the production, change, and removal of the states, and remembering that these are now demonstrated to be forms of the ether, there is every reason to think that the mechanism of these so-called occult phenomena will be revealed when the nature of that substance is better understood. To say that hypnosis is merely a state of torpor induced by fatigue of a nerve-centre does not cover enough of the facts to warrant its being called a theory.

The magnetic action of one person on another may be illustrated as follows:—An ordinary unmagnetised steel bar can be shown (as may be seen in any text-book on magnetism) as consisting of infinitesimal particles which are already magnets. In the unmagnetised bar all these molecules face at random and very little or no magnetic effect is apparent. But by stroking the bar with an already formed magnet it becomes magnetised (more or less according to its constitution) and the magnetic particles now face round one way, and if the bar is perfectly magnetised all contribute to the same result. Nothing, however, has left the stroking magnet, nor has anything been added to the new magnet, only the forces resident in the latter have been directed. A certain amount of energy has been expended by the operator, but after the experiment the stroking magnet is not weakened.

The healing and mesmeric power may be similarly illustrated. It is not intended to assert that the human body is composed of magnetic molecules of the same quality as those of the iron bar, but that the regular polarity of the living body may be shown in the same way. The idea it is intended to express is, that in illness the animal magnetism is irregular and self-destructive, whereas in health it is regular and co-operant; and just as the degree of magnetism communicated to the steel bar depended both on its quality and on the power of the stroking magnet, so the human

subject whose magnetism is ill distributed will be more or less affected by the healing power of the mesmerist according to his own receptivity and to the energy of the operator. It must be once more repeated that this is but an analogy drawn in order to show that mesmeric healing may be as strictly a natural process as the magnetisation of a steel bar: it is not meant to assert that the two processes are identical or that the illustration is an exact representation of the facts, though it is strikingly borne out by the healing effects; and it is noteworthy that sickness in the operator renders him a useless instrument, just as no magnetism can be regularised by steel which is not already itself magnetically regular.

That the analogy, however, is well founded, and that there is some very close connection between animal and steel magnetism, is shown by such experiments as those of Reichenbach, in which the sensitive was able not only to draw aside the compass needle, but also to magnetise a steel bar.*

The same analogy will help towards the understanding of hypnotic control. For consider a steel magnet and a simple piece of soft iron in contact. The magnet has, strictly speaking, no attraction for the iron itself, but only for the contained magnetism,† which it faces round all one way or polarises, thereby turning it for the time

* *Vide* "Transcendental Physics," transl. C. C. Massey, p. 25. It will be considered retrograde by some to quote Reichenbach, but even at this risk I would be permitted to observe that though conclusions may, at any time, be superseded by fuller knowledge, experiments are not. An effective experiment can never be out of date.

† That this is so may readily be proved by the fact that one piece of iron of given size may be much more attracted than another of the same bulk. If the attraction were simply proportioned to the masses, as in the case of gravity, there would be no reason for this variation, nor for the fact that there is a magnetic saturation point beyond which a piece of steel cannot be magnetised.

into a magnet. It "controls," in fact, the magnetism or soul in the iron, and every variation in the strength and quality of the polarising magnet is faithfully reproduced in the secondary iron. Now if thought be an ethereal disturbance propagated in or by the animal magnetism, the similar polarisation of two organisms might go far to explain the transfer of thought between them; though, again, it is not to be imagined that any simple inorganic material like iron or steel can reproduce the complex conditions of an animate body. As an illustration it will serve, though the actual detail of what does occur can only be reached by long and careful experiment and much sifting of results, and, as has been mentioned before, there is no reason to suppose that the modifications of ether are fewer or simpler than those of matter which make up the varied world presented to our senses. This possibility becomes highly probable when we remember that what we call our senses are simply the report of nerves correlated to certain vibrations, and that many vibrations are known to exist of which our senses give no report.

Not less striking than the analogy between organic and inorganic magnetism is the resemblance of automatic writing and speaking to the hypnotic facts. This suggests the explanation that both are really similar phenomena, only that, instead of the operator being visible, he is (at least sometimes) in the unseen, and that in all such cases the sensitive is mesmerised, either in part, as when the arm writes automatically independently of the brain, or wholly, as in trance and personating controls, when the medium speaks in the personality of the controlling spirit, whose "magnetism" causes the changes which the acts and words of the medium involuntarily follow.

Similarly, in the cases where phenomena purely automatic are presented and perceptions of the "sub-liminal

consciousness" are brought to the surface, it is not unreasonable to infer that the power displayed is simply that receptive faculty of the soul by which, like the receiving instrument in the wireless telegraph, it gathers up vibrations unperceived by the normal consciousness; and that these soul-senses may be dimly felt by the outer personality when it gives itself time, amid the whirl of outer life, to pause for intro-cognition.

10. Let us now turn to "the spirits" themselves for evidence as to their methods of operation, and compare their statements with the results and analogies of experimental science. This has been fully done by "Allan Kardec" in France about 1860, by the method of automatic writing. Many other observers in other countries have obtained similar replies on this head, and it is remarkable, to say the least of it, that explanations widely separated by time and place should be in such close agreement with each other and with physical discoveries then not yet made, and some very little known. The statements may be summarised as follows:—

The spirits declare that they themselves and all that exists, including soul, spirit, thought, and even emotion, is substantial (in the sense that all that is consists necessarily of substance), for substance only can have any attribute or can change its state; that there is an all-pervading fluid which they liken to electricity; that this is capable of great variations, and may be more or less akin to material things. It is, they say, the pre-existing substance out of which all matter is formed, and in its normal state it bears the same relation to their present invisible bodies (that is, to soul) as matter does to the animal body, and is one form of that of which animal magnetism is another. It has much higher properties than matter, and, being all-pervading, is used by spirits to move material objects whose "pores" it

fills. It can be perceived by faculties which are of the same order as itself, but not by any faculties which belong to the material order, such as bodily sight, hearing, and touch. When a table moves it is not raised by invisible hands, but being permeated by the magnetic influence, is acted upon by a means of which our only physical analogue is electrical or magnetic attraction. Nevertheless, the disembodied cannot, as a rule, act directly on the fluid in the material object without the addition of an animalised or vitalised variety of the same fluid, drawn from a peculiar organism which can serve as a link between the ethereal operator and the gross matter: this organism is called the medium.

This is, no doubt, somewhat obscure. Perhaps what is meant is something of this kind: that the liberated soul can act directly only on another soul, but not on matter, or even on the bound ether within matter, without employing "animal magnetism" evolved by human bodies, and it is this which the intermediary or medium supplies. The animal magnetism polarises the ether in the inert matter to be moved, causing attractions and repulsions, and all three, the unseen power, the medium, and the bound ether in the inert body, act together under the impulse of the first named.

The explanation of materialisation or visible phenomena of the 7th class (Chapter I.) is rather more difficult, and has given rise to all kinds of curious speculations, such as "psychoplasm," "nerve-spirit," &c. ; that the medium throws off a highly material form of effluvium which is worked up by the "spirits" present into a condition such that they can enter into and animate it for the time being. Various considerations, such as the extreme solidity which some materialisations can, it seems, assume, tell strongly against this notion, but it is noteworthy that the intelligences do speak of drawing somewhat from the medium for such

manifestations, that they say that the co-operation of several spirits is generally required, and that they hand on the material whereby they manifest from one to another in order successively to appear under forms visible to ordinary sight.

But several experiences are decidedly against this as a final solution. The reader may consult the experiments of Professor Crookes, F.R.S., and the very solid materialisations there chronicled, with the precautions taken by the writer to assure himself of the validity of the results. In one case (reported in "The Medium and Daybreak," December 16, 1892) some sitters cut off and retained a piece of the drapery in which one of the forms at the séance were visibly presented. At the conclusion of the sitting a small piece of woollen material was found to be missing from the medium's petticoat! Stay a moment, all scoffers who are about to cry out that here is proof positive of imposture! The garment was of thick striped material, the abstracted portion of the veil was much larger and of thinnest woollen gauze, so that the quantity of stuff in the missing piece and that of the portion cut off from the veil seemed about the same, which, if the account given is trustworthy (and names, place, and date are fully stated), would seem to show that the material had been actually removed from a very ordinary source and worked up into new form. The remarkable evidence of Mrs. Ross-Church (Florence Marryat) at p. 112 of her book, "There is no Death," as to the actual shrinkage and coma of the medium while materialisations were in progress, would, if substantiated, leave no doubt that in some cases at least matter is actually taken from the medium's body, impossible as this may seem. But this matter is far too important for the evidence of any one witness or of any dozen of witnesses to be considered entirely con-

clusive, notwithstanding any conviction of their truthfulness, and much more verification is here required.*

Quite as astounding to our present conceptions of the possibilities of matter are the occurrences which have been placed in classes 5, 7, and 9 of Chapter I., and the attempt to explain them at all seems almost hopeless. The only hints of a solution are—(1) that the tying of a knot in an open cord would be as impossible to beings living in two dimensions of space only † as the tying of a knot in an endless cord seems to us who live in three dimensions; and

* Surprise is often expressed that the spirits' explanation of their methods is so loose and unscientific; and this is natural till it is remembered that they can generally only use for expression the words and ideas wherewith the medium's brain is stored. Now supposing that there are a hundred well-developed mediums in England in a population of forty million, and say two thousand persons well versed in physics; then there would be one medium to four hundred thousand persons, and the probability of his being also a scientific man, already infinitesimally small, is still further reduced by the fact that the large majority of mediums are women. When education deals less with dead languages and more with things as they are, and the laws of nature and habits of observation and inference are taught to every boy and girl in the land, temperate reasoning on these matters will be more possible than it is now. There is, moreover, no reason at all to assume that spirits have a greater acquaintance with their physics than we have with ours. All experience goes to prove that the change called death confers no scientific knowledge on those that undergo it, but of course this does not invalidate their evidence, which is governed by the same principles as in life, that are reliable witnesses as to their own sense-perceptions though not as to inferences. Therefore their answers may well be as loose and inaccurate as our own. Ask the average man or woman for an explanation of the simplest physical phenomenon, such as rain, and see if the reply is more correct than those of the spirits. Let it be remembered, too, that the one speaks of well-known things, whereas the other speaks of things for which the very words are often wanting in the language of his hearers.

† See an excellent little book, "Another World," by A. J. Schofield; Swan, Sonnenschein, & Co., 1888. Also "Throughth," by Mr. W. T. Stead.

(2) that in purely chemical experiments matter does seem to penetrate other matter, and even to disappear in it.* As a circle would appear a perfectly closed space to a being conditioned by two dimensions of space, but seems to us an open one, it is just possible that access to the interior of spaces which seem to us absolutely closed may be due to fourth dimensional powers, which are no more really mysterious than the three dimensional, and do not involve any real interpenetration of matter by matter. It will be subsequently shown that the fourth dimension may possibly be more accurately referred to substance than considered as an axis of measurement in space. Two things are remarkable in Zöllner's experiments—(1) that the substance apparently passed through another is heated in the process (which seems to point to arrest of motion of some kind or the breaking down of some resistance), and (2) that the concealment from sight cannot apparently last very long. Whether the converse is also true seems more doubtful. In any case, the statement that matter can be created or destroyed, whether for a few seconds or permanently, must not be received without absolute mathematical proof, all possibility of collection of previously existing matter being rigidly excluded.

11. The mental and subjective phenomena are, how-

* "Thus the metal sodium is of such a density that 1 gram occupies 1.015 cubic centimetres at ordinary temperature; the element oxygen at -200° C. is of such a density that 1 gram occupies 0.807 c.c. Now these two elements combine in such proportion that 46 grams of sodium occupying 46.7 c.c. unites with 16 grams of oxygen occupying 12.9 c.c. The sum is 59.6 c.c. But 62 grams of the compound occupies only 21.7 c.c. Is not this interpenetration of matter? No less than 37.9 cubic centimetres seem to have disappeared. Pressure will not solve the difficulty, for both the sodium and the liquid oxygen are practically incompressible. So also the phenomena of solubility where both the solvent and the body dissolved are incompressible" (*Proc. S.P.R.*, 1894).

ever, much more intelligible. The great difficulty is the function of the medium, and it is upon this point that light is most required. The first necessity is complete passivity; that the suggestion of the unseen will be reflected as in a mirror. Obedience to the guidance is not by any means a condition. The moment a message has been received it is open to the recipient to exercise his reason upon it, but in order to receive it passivity is a *sine quâ non*. So far from "expectant attention" giving rise to messages, it is often a decided bar to their reception. A better explanation can hardly be given than the following conversation given by a spirit through a writing medium. It is translated from Kardec's second volume ("Livre des Mediums")* :—

"Whatever be the nature of a writing medium, whether automatic, semi-automatic, or simply intuitive, our method of communication does not essentially vary. In fact, we communicate with spirits incarnate as well as with those properly so called alike, by the radiation of our thought.

"Our thoughts do not need the garment of words in order to be understood by spirits, and all souls can perceive the thought which we desire to impress by the mere fact that we are directing that thought towards them, and thus perception is in the direct ratio of their intellectual faculties; that is to say, that a given thought can be understood by such-and-such according to their degree of advancement, while to others the thought, awakening no remembrance, no corresponding knowledge in heart or brain, is not perceivable by them. In the present case (that of the part played by the medium) the embodied soul who serves as a medium is more fitted to interpret

* All Allan Kardec's controls teach or imply reincarnation, of which he makes a special point. This, it need hardly be said, must receive much independent corroboration before it should be accepted.

our thought to other embodied souls than could be any soul disembodied and nearer the earth-plane than we are, for the earthly being places his body at our disposal as an instrument, which the wandering soul cannot do.

“So, when we find a medium whose brain is furnished with knowledge acquired in his present life, and whose soul is rich with anterior knowledge now latent, suitable to facilitate our communications, we make use of such an one by preference, for with him communication is much more easy than with a medium of more limited intelligence whose previous knowledge is more imperfect. . . . With a medium whose active or latent intelligence is well-developed, our thought is communicated in an instant from soul to soul by a faculty proper to the essence of soul itself. In such case we find in the brain of the medium the elements suitable to the clothing of our thought in words, and that is so whether the medium be intuitional, semi-automatic, or automatic. For this reason, whatever be the diversity of the spirits who communicate through a given medium, the matter dictated through him will always bear the stamp and tinge of his personality although proceeding from different spirits. Even though the thought may be strange to him, though the subject treated of may be outside the usual range of his thoughts, although what we have to say is in no sense originated by him, nevertheless he still influences the form by the qualities and properties which are appropriate to his individuality. . . . We are in the position of a composer who, having written or wishing to improvise a melody, has, it may be, a piano, a violin, a flute, a bassoon, or a penny whistle. It is clear that with any of the first three our piece might be executed in a manner comprehensible to the audience; although the sounds would be different in each case, . . . the composition would be essentially the same

“In point of fact, when we have to make use of ignorant mediums our work becomes much longer and harder, because we must have recourse to incomplete forms, must decompose our thoughts, and proceed word by word and letter by letter, which is both wearisome to us and a real obstacle to the rapidity and development of our manifestations. . . . When we wish to proceed automatically we act on the brain, on the unconscious memory of the medium, and collect our materials from those he can furnish us with, and this is done unconsciously to him. . . . But when he himself wishes to interrogate us in a given manner, it is well that he should reflect beforehand in order that he may put his questions methodically and facilitate our replies. For, as you have already been told in a preceding discourse, your brain is often in an inextricable disorder, and it is as painful to us as it is difficult to move in the labyrinth of your thoughts. Certainly we could speak mathematically through a medium who seems entirely a stranger to that science; but often the medium possesses the knowledge in a latent form—that is to say, personally to the ethereal being and not to the material one, because his material body is a refractory or insufficient instrument. It is the same with astronomy, poetry, medicine, and foreign languages, and with all knowledge peculiar to humanity. Finally, we can at need use the troublesome method of selection of letters and words as type is set up for printing.”

12. There is therefore, according to this, a satisfactory reason why no final truths can be communicated by spirit-intelligence. However exalted the knowledge of those who originate the message, it can only be received according to the capacity of the instrument, and in language which is at best figurative, for all language is based on the metaphors of matter and sense, and also corresponds to the intellectual level of the persons who use it. Revela-

tions, therefore, are conditioned not only by the communicating spirit, but also by the receiving medium, by the tongue wherein they are written, and by the intellectual level of the nation in which they are given. It is never absolute, and is necessarily complicated by imperfection and error. The meaning is conveyed as our human meanings are conveyed, by word-painting and parable, by metaphor and illustration; words are used according to their temporary and local value and in such senses as will best convey the idea to the mind of the recipient, and not absolutely, with fixed scientific meanings. This is presumably the general law for all revelations, whose imperfections manifestly bear it out, and it shows at once that none can ever be plenary or final, it allows for contradictions and errors, and at the same time emphasises the value of the meaning rather than the letter, and preserves the just mean between superstitious reverence on the one hand because of its supramundane origin, and slighting indifference on the other because such revelations do not tell men all they would wish to know. This shows also why all revelations require not only care and trouble for their comprehension, but yet more an intelligent sympathy with the position and surroundings of those who received them.

Revelation is a great fact, but it is the result of a trained spiritual perception, not a body of unalterable truth once for all given to the world, and this clue will be found to make plain and easy the use of the revelations which are recorded in the sacred books of all nations, and to assist in forming a just estimate of their value. No higher inspiration exists than that which is to be found in the writings of prophets and apostles, for in them the dominant note is not the mystical philosophy which loses itself in speculation, nor the hard-and-fast legality which lays down dogma as final truth, but the

spiritual insight which perceives practical righteousness and universal love as the one great purpose for mankind.

But men think lightly of this. It does not suffice to let them to enter into the fruits of the labour of their fellows who have striven and suffered and prayed. Human effort raising itself towards the Eternal Love and Wisdom, aided by spirit-messengers and perfected through error and pain, they will have none of. They must, forsooth, have a plenary revelation direct from God Himself, absolute truth on the phenomenal plane of Time and Sense, comprehension of the scheme of heaven and earth for those who are ignorant how a drop of rain is formed and why it falls; and anything less they will scorn—and contemn. But assure them that they have this in a cult, in sacrificial rites, in a system, in a book; teach them from early youth that their religion is absolutely true, and they will bow before their idol, quarrel with those who own another “absolute truth,” and think too often that they are loving God when they are only hating their fellows.

Enlightenment may truly rise to any height; not only so, but it is the hope of mankind; but not till a man can stand up and utter the tremendous challenge “Which of you convinceth me of sin?” may he dare to believe himself charged with a divine mediumship. For the Beloved, the true Son of God, there are no rules; but He is not perfect because He is Christ, but, being made perfect through suffering, becomes Christ by being perfected; His perfection is the measure of His Sonship: He is begotten of God, regenerate, born anew to life for evermore.

A review of the evidence establishes:—

That scientific men are agreed in admitting the existence of a whole realm of nature which is not matter, whose manifestations are electricity, magnetism, light, heat, chemical affinity, and probably also cohesion, and gravitation.

That these forces are conveyed by the Ether, which interpenetrates ordinary matter, in a way which may be likened to the interpenetration of the body by the soul.

That the properties of matter are due to this unconscious "soul" (much as character is due to conscious soul).

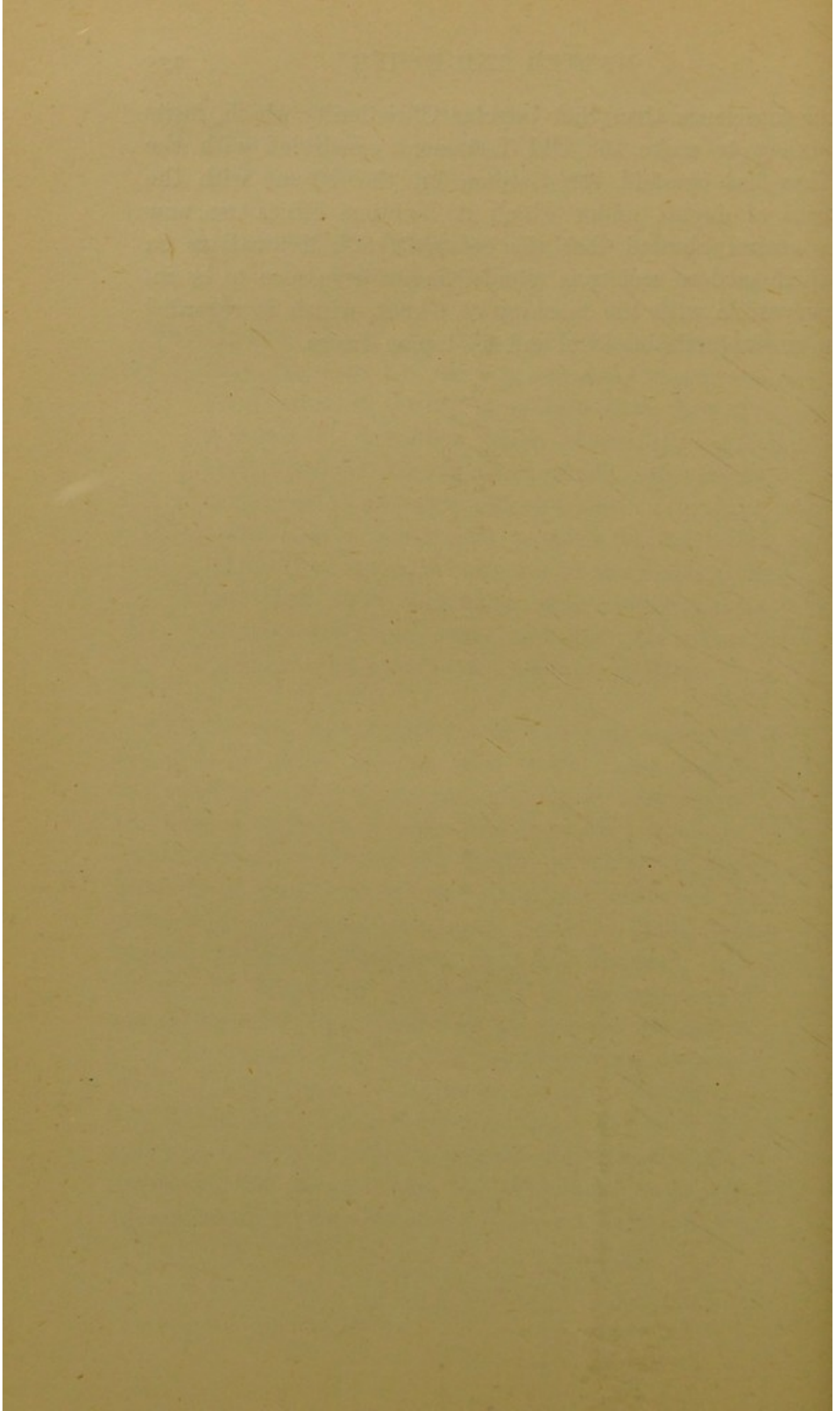
That spirits, who, if the strong proofs of identity which they give can be believed, certainly knew nothing of physics in earth-life, declare that they live in a world of substance "like electricity," and that their "bodies" are organised of that same substance, as our bodies are organised of matter.

That their whole senses are adapted to the world in which they move, as ours are to the material world, and that with them the same distinction exists between bodies of ether and their animating principle or spirit properly so called, as with us.

This is not unreasonable, and can only be considered strained by those persons who would have matter the sole existing entity, a position which has very few notable thinkers to support it since the days of Lucretius. The opposite view, referring the origin of matter to spirit on grounds of pure reason, can quote not only the general consent of all religions, but such names as Plato, Aristotle, Bruno, Averroes, Descartes, Spinoza, Berkeley, Leibnitz, Kant, and Hegel, to say nothing of the entire body of Oriental philosophy, which rests on no other ground.

It can hardly, therefore, be considered an unwarrantable working hypothesis to accept the theory outlined above, and it remains to be seen whether this will justify itself by bringing a solution to the mental difficulties which have arisen in the present day by affording a more effective reconciliation of the demands of the intellect with those of

the conscience than that popular Christianity which, in its anxiety to make the Old Testament consistent with the New, has overlaid the Sermon on the Mount with the mass of dogma under which its sublime ethics are now so entirely buried that the competitive individualism on which modern society is founded is not even seen to be incompatible with the teaching of Christ, which is regarded as an impracticable ideal and a Utopian dream.



CHAPTER II

THE ORDERS OF EXISTENCE

“There are four universes, or orders of existence, cognisable by man ; the Divine or Archetypal, which is the origin of all—Atziloth. Thence proceeds the world of creation, the celestial world of heaven, also called The Throne, or Briah : its powers are more limited than those of the Divine Archetype, but are of purest nature, without admixture of matter. This world gives rise to the world of formation, the ethereal universe, Jetzirah, the abode of angels of less pure substance, but still devoid of matter. Finally, from Jetzirah emanates Asiah, the material universe, limited by space and form. Man belongs to each of these worlds, by his body and its animal life (Nepesch), by his soul or mind (Ruach), by his spirit (Neschamah), and by the Idea of GOD in his spirit (Chiah). The Nepesch is immortal by the renewal of itself through the destruction of forms ; the Ruach is progressive through the evolution of ideas ; the Neschamah is progressive, without forgetfulness and without destruction. The soul is a veiled light. Light personifies itself by veiling itself in a body, and the personification is stable only when the veil (the body or realisation) is perfect. The Image, which is the person, is a sphinx which propounds the riddle of life.”—*Philosophy of the Kabbalah*.

“The intelligent being in man . . . whose form is light, whose thoughts are true, whose nature is like ether, and from whom all works, all desires, all sweet odours and tastes, proceed, who never speaks and is never surprised, he is my Self within the heart, smaller than a corn of rice . . . smaller than a mustard-seed. He also is my Self within the heart, greater than the earth, greater than heaven, greater than all these worlds.”—*Khandogya Upanishad*, iii. 14, 2 ; *Sacred Books of the East*, vol. i.

“For the Word of GOD is living, and active, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and piercing even to the dividing of soul and spirit.”—S. PAUL.

CHAPTER II

THE ORDERS OF EXISTENCE

“For the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being perceived through the things which are made. . . . For the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal.”—S. PAUL.

i. THE evidence of the maligned “spirits,” then, agrees with physicists and philosophers in presenting matter as a dual entity composed of substance and force, and in referring all properties whereby it is manifest to variety of motion in the invisible impalpable ether whereof it is composed and wherewith it is associated. “Body” in its widest sense, is actually caused by forces that pertain to the invisible and supersensuous world, without which it would have no properties whatever, neither colour, solidity, form, nor weight, and this view of all matter as the union of substance and force may be said to refer all its distinctive properties to the ether or soul resident in it.

“Law” is a metaphor for the order or sequence which a study of phenomena reveals, but the law is not the cause of the phenomena; that cause is force or energy; the “law” is merely the human perception of effects invariably following on appropriate causes.*

* This is the difference between the clerical and the scientific use of the word. To the clerical mind “law” is a figure of speech for the will of a law-giver; to the scientific mind it is merely an observed

That there is a sequence, and an unbroken sequence of cause and effect few persons will now care to deny after the past history of the successive conflicts between creed and discovery which have "strewn the path of science with the corpses of dead theologians;" and whichever meaning be assigned to Natural Law, it will be only logical to admit that the First Cause invariably works through secondary causes. But this unbroken sequence of cause and effect must itself be due to the very constitution and nature of things. The key to it is given in the observed interdependence of matter and ether, the higher invisible energy conditioning the lower visible substance, and making it more and more complex as we rise from the inorganic to the vegetable, to the animal, and to the human. Each step of the integration of matter which is Evolution, is the manifestation of a higher form of psychic energy. It is the inner life which enables each to mould matter to its own presentment and to image forth the soul whereby it grows, for this soul is the integrating and evolving power.

This involves the conclusion that teleologically matter exists for the purpose of manifesting order and beauty, that is, mind; and this again implies a close correspondence between the material and the psychic orders of Being, the former being the presentment of the latter. It need therefore cause no surprise to find that spirits declare that their world, or order of existence, is fashioned on the same pattern, and that one law runs through all, that spirit is to soul what soul is to body, the bringer of life and energy from a

sequence whose cause must be sought elsewhere. All arguments must necessarily fail to convince when the disputants are not agreed on the meaning of their primary terms. But, as all human minds really work alike, these are fundamentally the same perceptions, though seemingly different. For, as Faraday says, all force is essentially will-force as to its nature and origin; the two ideas meet on the spiritual plane.

higher order, and that the world of mind exists in its turn to manifest the moral order which pertains to spirit. Each order of existence is therefore naturally a reflection of higher orders, and as it is clearly impossible to assign any limit at which force originates, or any intelligible sense in which it could do so, it is hardly possible to avoid the conclusion that the philosophy of the spirits is logical, and that eternal progress necessitates a succession of interdependent universes, or orders of Being, which draw their life through each other from the Source and Father of all.

The psychic facts are objective proofs of intelligence and power in the disembodied state, and support the inference that this physical universe, with all its complex phenomena, is but one link in a chain of causation, necessarily implying another universe (unseen only because not correlated to man's present faculties) out of which it was developed, and this again another, till the chain passes beyond the range of the intellect (which fails at the very first step, the conditions of the experimentally demonstrable psychic world), but also of the imagination, which speedily flags in its attempt to explore the depths of Being and to stand face to face with eternal causes whither the principle of Continuity must ultimately lead us both in theory now and in sober fact hereafter.

Under such an aspect it is but natural that there should be correspondence between the ethereal and the material orders of existence, and that the same laws should characterise both. It is not merely that there would naturally be found points of resemblance, but that the lower must in all cases be the reflection of the higher, with definite limitations, due to the different nature of the material worked upon. So, when imagination endeavours to rise one step higher, however difficult it may be to form any concept of a spiritual which stands in the same relation to the ethereal or psychic as does this latter to the visible

universe, it is nevertheless not hard to perceive that spirit may well find in the degree below it a far more docile material for its presentment than it can in gross and intractable matter.

That there actually is correspondence between the psychic and the material order is readily observable. Not only are the faculties of disembodied souls obviously similar in kind to those of the embodied state, though their scope greatly transcends these latter, but their other perceptions are, as it were, exaltations of other human faculties. Thus: they hear ideas in the mind where we need spoken words, for as with us language is a disturbance of the air whereby communication is possible between individuals at some distance, so with them thought seems to be a disturbance of the ether round them to which their senses are attuned (precisely analogous to telegraphy without wires), and that "attuning" is vastly more far-reaching than our fleshly sense of hearing.

This "correspondence" throws a little light on the bewildering fact that they speak of spirit-gold, spirit-marble, spirit-houses, spirit-pictures, and so forth as if these were tangible realities. Not, of course, that these are sublimations of corresponding objects on earth or were ever existent thereon, but different as to material, and yet sufficiently like to be called by the same name. In other words, these spirit-objects are expressions in a different vehicle of the nature which is to us externalised as gold, marble, &c.

2. This fact, of the realisation of the same "noumenon" or originating power in different ways, is at the root of all symbolism. It is impossible to express psychic things adequately in direct language, for the simple reason that our words are images drawn from material things and their correlated effects. Immaterial things and the life beyond must therefore generally be described by symbols rather than by words, and these symbols, whether seen in vision or presenting themselves to the mind in the normal state,

partake less of the seer's idiosyncrasies than any direct language would do; for exterior facts are seen and known of all men, but each man's vocabulary, diction, and power of collocating words depends on his education, heredity, and mental conditions.* A symbol of a thing is not the thing itself seen in vision, but an image whereby the thing signified may best be understood. All high spirits seem to communicate in this manner, the ideas being suggested to the mind of the seer by means of familiar images. John, who was "in the spirit," *i.e.*, in trance, was under "control," probably by Jesus Himself, who showed to him, under the images appropriate to his mind, the heavenly state. What more beautiful symbol of worship and adoration could be presented than that of the bending angels with wing-veiled faces and the company of those who had come through the tribulation of life casting their honour and glory in fealty before the throne of God? What more sublime image for the fact of severance between the good and the bad than the terrible picture of the Assize of the Nations standing before the Ancient of Days? How poor and tame if considered as literal elders ceaselessly casting down metal crowns! how commonplace the interminable procession of sentence on millions of individuals from bulky books of record! These are the images and the symbols of causes. There are no harps, nor crowns, nor wings, nor glassy sea; no visible fiery

* All language is pictorial and materialistic to a high degree; *e.g.*, this last sentence. "All" refers to summation; "language," that which comes from the tongue, *langue*; "pictorial," like a painting; "high" involves the analogy of place, and "degree" means simply a step. In no such terms can psychic verities be expressed at all adequately, and when, ascending to the spiritual, the endeavour is made to explain principles in direct language, as by the statement that GOD is, not a true, loving, and pure Being, but Truth, Love, and Purity themselves, few persons can form any clear idea of what is meant. The idea, in fact, transcends the power of the vehicle of expression, just as a painting can express a solitary action but not an epic.

form of God, no great white throne, no books of record, nor gathering for judgment; one part of the description is no more material than another. The whole is given to convey verities for which words do not exist by means of symbolism; and when we take the symbols for actualities we falsify the meaning.

In the prophetic writings of Daniel and John the state of blessedness is symbolised by a polity, a united and co-operant society in a beautiful and harmoniously ordered city wherein is nought to offend; its duration, by the symbols of incorruptible gold and gems; a conquering terrestrial empire, built on rapine and cemented by blood, is typified by a wild beast; its power, by a beast's natural weapon, a horn; a ruler of the celestial order or a beneficent earthly king, by a star or heavenly light, the allusion being an astrological one—to a guiding destiny; the conflict between the Logos, the efflux from God which is light and life to the spirit-world, and the darkness of materialism is given under the likeness of a war in heaven, the leader of the armies of the living God in conflict with the Dragon and his angels, which is in its turn a symbolism derived from another now-forgotten symbolism, the dragon of the constellations, which rises on the decadent year, presiding over the reign of darkness and death.

The imagery which makes the lion the type of strength; the lamb, of purity; the dove, of swift rushing flight; the earthquake, of cataclysmal change; hail, of widespread desolation; and drunkenness, of that perversion of sense which puts the image and material form for the living power which made them, are all too obvious to need more than passing allusion. There is also a more recondite symbolism which is common to all speculative religions, which puts Water for the primal substance and Light for celestial force. Limpidity and homogeneity seem to be that which it is desired to express by the former, and an attempt to be more

explicit is seen in some references to Fire as primal matter, which seems contradictory, but is not so ; for the latter wording is an attempt to express, not a symbol, but an actuality, the ether, to wit ; and this is attempted by one of its modifications, whereas water is used only as a symbol. So also "light" is used as a symbol of Truth, Righteousness, and clear knowledge, a symbol drawn from the psychic realm to convey the idea of spiritual reality, the manifestation of the Divine Power. The symbol of effulgence or "glory" as moral beauty and intellectual power is in constant use ; that it is allegorical is evident, for the Deity can have no more to do with physical light than with physical form. So also heat stands for love, a fire burning up the dross of life, and the God who is Love is also a consuming Fire.

All myth is symbolism, an attempt to express psychic and spiritual causes as simple phenomena, stripped of the complex and adventitious concomitants which disguise them in this world. Therefore all religions are necessarily symbolical and anthropomorphic, for man cannot go outside his own faculties, and must express his sense of all higher than himself by known forms. He naturally turns to the two sublimest phenomena human consciousness bears witness to, the boundless expanse of the heavens with their myriad worlds, and the ideal humanity, and uses both as symbolism of the higher he still reaches after. Hence it is that the solar mythos underlies the religious symbolism of all lands, and its true origin was the perception that the renewal of man could be well imaged forth by the annual renewal of the earth by the solar light and heat, and not the fantasy of assigning personality to the orb of day and feigning it to be a celestial charioteer. The desire for finality which is a failing of all human minds speedily literalises all myths and all symbolism. Feigning it to be historical, man makes it ridiculous, and turning the sun into Apollo, the New Jerusalem to an actual gold-paved town, heaven into a

place, and God into a vast man, angry, chiding, hating and loving, loses sight of the meaning, and so changes the truth of heaven, hard-won by prophet and seer, into literalism, idolatry, and falsehood.

The successive orders, material, psychic, and spiritual, are hard to understand because, living on the material or phenomenal plane, we cannot readily apprehend reality apart from matter. They are frequently illustrated by the ascending scale of mineral, vegetable, and animal apparent to earthly experience; but these being all of this material order, such an illustration must be very partial at best. It may, however, help to bring home how each must be to the one below it miraculous while it is causative also. For though the illustration fails at the point where organic life should be the determinant of inorganic properties if the analogy were perfect, yet an analogy exists, and the vegetable world does show itself as an active operating cause of events and changes in the inorganic sphere by processes quite miraculous to the latter, treating it as its absolute slave, using, assimilating, and rejecting, with all the supremacy of a dominant will acting on passive matter; * a process which is repeated on a more extensive scale by the animal to the vegetable, and each is to the class below it in some degree both an external providence and a miraculous cause of phenomena, often causing the disappearance or the survival of entire races.† It must be noticed, however, that though the lower forms the basis of existence to the higher (for no vegetable can exist without

* Thus the vegetable root acts on the solids and gases dissolved in the water; the leaf takes from the air the carbonic acid it contains, appropriates and rejects with absolute dominion, and is to the inorganic world a miraculous cause quite outside its laws. So the animal to the vegetable. It is to be noticed that the power which enables the vegetable to do this comes to it "from above," from the ethereal world, for it is the sunlight which is to it the highest realisation of the divine.

† As in the fertilisation of certain plants by the agency of insects.

carbonic acid, and no animal without vegetable food directly or indirectly), yet the higher is not a source of force to the lower, and here the analogy fails, as all analogies between things of the same order must fail when applied to illustrate the facts of different orders.

A better illustration, which is more than a mere analogy, can be drawn from mathematical ideas, and may assist in presenting the orders of existence comprehensibly. By referring the mathematical dimensions to substance, the idea is immensely simplified and becomes comparatively easy. To remain faithful to the postulate with which this book began, and not to attempt to go behind the evidence of the senses, it is clear that the dimensions of length, breadth, and height must be considered as dimensions of something, and the fourth and higher dimensions which mathematical science hints at should have more or less comprehensible physical analogues. Let us see whether this is so, and if the mathematical analogy will make clearer the constitution of successive orders of being, and the relation between them.

A point self-centred, having no dimension, neither length, breadth, nor thickness, when combined with motion traces a line, having one dimension, length, bounded by two points, its ends. A line of one dimension by its motion traces out a plane, having two dimensions but no thickness, bounded by lines, its sides. A plane in its turn by motion traces out a cube, a cylinder, or other "solid figure," having three dimensions, length, breadth, and thickness, bounded by planes, its walls. But it must here be observed that no reference whatever is made to the interior of this "solid," which is a mere fixed form, a figure unrealised in substance, and as imaginary as the point of no dimension and the plane of no thickness. Analogically there should be a body which is generated by the motion of a form, which body should be bounded by fixed forms

and visible by means of them only, for each dimension is made visible by means of the next lower, the line by points, the plane by lines, and the figure by planes. This body is, on our analogy, neither more nor less than Matter. All matter is, on the vortex theory, made up of solids, atoms, which are small but definite spaces, forms fixed by rapid motion, retaining their form because of their motion, and for the same reason centres of force—that is to say, having properties which react on other matter, such as mass, chemical affinity, colour, and so forth.

To go one step further, there should be also a “somewhat” which is manifest by matter in motion. This “somewhat” is energy, and this brings us at once to the ultra-material world. For, though energy is ordinarily apparent by the visible motion of matter, it is not necessary that the motion should be visible as such, any more than the motion of the atom is visible, but only that fresh motion of some kind be superadded to matter. We here touch organising “soul,” and it is noticeable that the mathematical analogy still holds, and material organisms such as nucleated cells are its boundaries, and limit soul just as forms (atoms) limit matter, planes limit forms, lines limit planes, and points limit lines; for each vegetable or animal soul is confined within the bounds of its own body, though it may radiate influence outside it. In each of these cases the addition of new motion raises the manifestation one degree, and in each instance the persistence of the form depends on the persistence of the originating motion.

3. A similar, or rather the same, analogy holds with regard to “apparitions.” Any number of lines may surround a point-world which is conscious only of that which lies within its own limits (supposing it of finite size for purposes of illustration), and not till the line enters

these limits is it in any way apparent to the point, whose consciousness is bounded by its own self. Similarly, in a line-world whose inhabitants are cognisant of north and south as the only possible directions, any number of planes may surround them, of none of which would they be aware till such should actually enter their world, that is, their range of observation, and in this world of theirs the plane would be apparent only as a succession of lines suddenly coming from free space and disappearing into it again. So in a plane-world whose denizens can understand east and west in addition to north and south, a figure of three dimensions could only be known by that portion of it within the range of their faculties. Thus a sphere passing into a plane-world would be apparent as a small circle growing till the maximum diameter were reached, diminishing in the same way and vanishing.

Similarly, any higher entity must put on the material form or "body" in a world of forms before it can be apparent to the inhabitants of a material world, who are conditioned by matter, and whose senses are the report of material nerves. Such persons can infer something of supersensuous conditions, but they cannot present them, just as the plane might reason out some of the properties of the sphere, but would be unable to realise it in substance. Such phenomena would necessarily always be "transcendental." Just as each dimension is perceptible only through the instrumentality of the next lower, so all "soul" or energy can only be expressed in and by form, *i.e.*, matter; and as the sphere appears in the plane-world as a circle (plane figure) suddenly coming from free space, so an apparition from the psychic world can appear under a material form only, of greater or less tenuity, but still material; and this is precisely what does occur, both with the living forms of men and animals, and in séance rooms, though in the one case the material

form is assumed for what we call a long period, and in the other for a short one. In either case soul is imaged forth by a body and only perceived by it; and this must be the case whether the apparition be objective or subjective—forming cause can only be presented by form.

Now it is clear that “dimensions” of length, breadth, and thickness are not entities in themselves, but simply aspects of substance. Line, plane, and solid figure are all unreal in themselves, and, except by the aid of substance, inconceivable. They are not representatives of an unseen point-world, line-world, &c., but are represented by means of matter in the only world that is known. With this restriction the analogy may be used, and it is remarkable, in the first place, that motion of the third dimension brings us to interiority in some sense—that is, to resistance caused by fixed forms which cannot be cut nor their shapes otherwise destroyed—and that this is precisely the chemical vortex atom of modern science.

All souls must take form—that is, must be clothed in matter—before they can be externalised and made apparent in a material world; and similarly the higher spiritual manifestation must in its turn be anthropomorphic, for no other would be understood. Psychic power may indeed act without the aid of matter, but if it does men must necessarily be blind to it; and when by association with matter it becomes apparent, they call it an “apparition” or “miraculous,” and are astonished that it should seemingly come from and disappear into free space, forgetting that the cause of each such apparition may all the while be just as contiguous to our world when unseen as when visible, and indeed not merely contiguous, but within and around it. For as the manifesting line was above and below the percipient point, the manifesting plane on either side of the line, and the sphere all round the portion of the plane into which it entered, so the ethereal or soul-order is around and

within the material order. But this soul-order is not referable to any place, but is manifest in any place by and in appropriate substance.

There is thus given a glimpse of the orders of existence. Men on earth know one, the material, fairly well, in the variations of inorganic and organic nature; they have some knowledge of the next superior order, the ethereal; though the investigation of this is attended with so much difficulty that the large majority of mankind does not even know of its existence. But the proofs of its nature and properties are daily accumulating, and the foregoing paragraphs will, it is hoped, have shown why the communications of the next higher to the next lower must always seem miraculous to the latter; and that a third term anywhere in the series cannot be comprehended by an undeveloped first, except by means of the intermediate one, any more than a man can reveal himself to a cabbage, not for want of will in the former, but of quality in the latter. Each, moreover, can only apprehend those above it in the scale by means of the similarity resident in itself, and at the same time under the limitations imposed by its own analogies. The point knows the line as a series of points; the line knows the plane as a series of lines; the plane perceives the solid figure as a succession of planes; the solid, or third dimension, knows matter as a variety or succession of forms; while matter knows soul as the succession of phenomena which manifest life; and the soul can apprehend GOD only as acting in Time and producing phenomena, while the spirit realises Him as pre-eminently spiritual—as POWER and LOVE. To take another simile: the plant, were it conscious, would know of animal life under vegetable analogies (and how imperfect these would be a moment's thought must show); the animal knows man under brute analogies, and man knows GOD under human analogies, and makes GOD in his own image from the Australian aborigine to the Christian arch-

bishop. Man can apprehend the Divine only by means of the God-like spark in himself, though not in its absolute nature, but under human similitudes, and as the divine germ grows in our spirits this realisation becomes truer by growth of faculty. But this is necessarily less possible to the merely intellectual or psychic nature than to the moral or spiritual one; it is not perceived by theological definitions but by moral lives, which are principles (or spirit) in action.

The idea is the same as that expressed by S. Paul in terse and lucid language, imperfectly rendered in our English version: "For what among men comprehendeth the things of a man save the spirit of the man which is in him? Even so the things of GOD none comprehendeth save the Spirit of GOD;" and, he continues, only in the measure in which we are partakers in that divine order, and have the mind of Christ, He * born in us, can we understand its conditions; which is, after all, only another way of stating Herbert Spencer's conclusions that the Absolute is unknowable, without, however, placing a barrier at the limits of the material world, as some of his followers do. The analogy is instructive at all points. Nothing lower than human nature can understand the human, nothing lower than the Divine

* "It" might be used if the pronoun were not derogatory. "Spirit of GOD" is here used in the sense of character (which we do understand) and not of personality (which we do not). Nevertheless in the spirit-world proper all entities are personal and things are attributes, though not in quite the same way as with us. It is not the man Jesus that makes atonement for man and lives in him, it is the Christ-character, begotten of GOD in us as in Him, which transforms lives to its own image and makes at-one-ment with the Divine. This character is eternally generated in men of goodwill, and is essentially one with its Archetype. This seems hard, but it is the kernel of true Christianity, and it is of the nature of things that the higher order should be mysterious to the lower. The Pauline epistles absolutely teem with allusions to this birth of the Christ-character in man as the means of renewal. Cf. Rom. vi. 11; Gal. ii. 20 and iv. 19; Eph. iii. 17; 1 Cor. ii. 16 and iii. 16; and many more.

can understand God ; the degree of participation in the nature marks the degree of comprehension. So the "natural" or "psychic" man of Pauline phraseology who chooses to live on the brute plane of self-indulgent animalism cannot know the higher things, which must be "foolishness" to him, fancies, unrealities, dreams, and follies, the vain creations of human minds and mere intellectual fashions.

While the splendour of this great truth, the Golden Chain of Being, shows us our true place in the universe and emphasises the fact that we are but just emerging from the animal ideal of competitive struggle for existence into the spiritual world of high thinking and mutual co-operation, it withers up the anthropomorphisms of all creeds, and leaves us stricken with awe and faint with adoration before Him whose ways are not as our ways nor His thoughts as our thoughts, infinitely above us not only in degree, but also in kind. This is spirit-teaching, and while it brings home to us our own gross nature and the impossibility that God should ever communicate with man directly on the phenomenal plane (were He to do so it would be physical death to the recipient), it shows also that the path wherein we must walk to attain to Him is that of developing faculty : understanding, courage, truth, and, chiefest of all, Love ; and that thus only can we grow, by the sunlight of His Love flooding our spirits, in strength and worthiness and power and beauty towards the Eternal Arché, the Type and Father of all, till His moral glory be revealed in us as it was in Jesus the Christ. It is only by the development of spiritual character, and not by any "forgiveness" or phenomenal "Redemption," neither by creed nor by ritual, but by the action of the Spirit of God moulding men's minds that they enter the Kingdom of Heaven, which is neither in the ethereal world nor in the future time, but anywhere and everywhere that the spiritual Law of Altruism moulds all things to itself unresisted by wayward wills.

4. But as the material world is dependent upon the ethereal order for its energy, so is the ethereal dependent upon the spiritual realm for its life. A dim perception of this fact is traceable in all the old cosmogonies, though not perhaps in that view of them which sees in them histories and not symbolisms. The Hebraic, though not the most distinct, is so much the most familiar that it will perhaps be best suited for exemplifying this fact, and the comparison of the two views that are given in the first and second chapters of Genesis should alone be sufficient to prove that it is not primarily a description of how a Divine Artificer made this planet, but the collated perceptions of seers expressing principles by allegorical histories. Such histories are not by any means necessarily composed by any one man, but may be the outcome of the meditations of many, as the Homeric poems are the composite production of the Greek mind.

These Hebrew allegories, however they may have been mutilated by successive externalist renderings and by their combination into one book by priests who are nearly always in strong opposition to the prophetic perception (almost necessarily unorthodox), are still substantially the same in meaning.

“In the beginning,” in Arché, as it is translated in the Septuagint, that is, in type, in principle, rather than in Time, Elohim, the origin of Force and Substance, Masculine and Feminine, creates the heavens and the earth. And the earth is formless and void, and darkness is upon the face of the Abyss, and the Spirit proceeding from the Elohim moves upon the Abyss, or, as the A.V. has further literalised the Hebrew word, “the waters.” The idea of the action of the First Cause, the birth from Water and the Spirit, is given in the fewest possible words, and by a symbol which was afterwards used to express the Divine power operating to the new birth of a human soul. The Hebrew

“Debar,” which is used throughout the Old Testament for the power emanating from God, and is translated as “the Word,” following the Greek sense of the Logos, the spirit, or active reason, is here involved by the use of the expression, “And God said.” It is curious that those who claim to expound the meaning of these scriptures should have relieved themselves of this duty by insisting on the literal sense, or no-sense, of the allegory, and thus have involved themselves in endless contradictions between the first and the second chapters of Genesis, in consequence of setting aside the symbolism and turning it into history. The “Word” in this sense is causative and not imperative, as is usually “explained,” and the meaning is that of real force operant both externally and internally to matter, which, like clay in the hands of the potter, is the plastic substance expressing ever in new forms the spiritual power without which matter, whether cosmic or organic, must always decay and disintegrate and become formless and void.

It would far exceed the limits of this book to develop the history how the Persian symbolism of a six-period creation, and its subsequent marring by the serpent of evil, was brought by the Jews from Babylon,* and woven into their

* That the Jewish canon in its present form is not anterior to the post-Captivity era, *circa* B.C. 457, is admitted by Biblical scholars mainly on the following grounds: that the Persian cosmogony has been largely worked up into the Book of Genesis; that considerable portions of the story of the wanderings of the tribes in the desert for forty years are arithmetically impossible and clearly written long after the events to which they refer; that the Hexateuch contains strong internal evidence of compilation from three distinct and sometimes incompatible sources; that the language and diction of the latter portions of the Book of Daniel are of much later date than the former and than the time when they were formerly supposed to have been written; that the account of the discovery of the Law among the Temple records is incompatible with the regular practice up to that time of the same code; and, finally, that Ezra, in the fourteenth chapter of

own sacred story, and how this symbolism (at first purely astronomical) was literalised and turned into history in precisely the same manner as was the case in Egypt with the Osirian legend. But the cosmogony is a metaphysical and not a physical history, and in a purer age, when the Jews had outgrown the childish literalisms which were the natural outcome of their degradation and materialist idolatry, as described by their own prophets, their commentary on Genesis shows that they had realised this. It is insisted on in the Kabbalah thus:—"Woe be to the son of man who says that the Law contains common sayings and ordinary narratives! For if this were the case we might in the present day compose a code of doctrines which would inspire greater respect. If the Law contains ordinary matter, then there are nobler sentiments in profane codes. But every word of the Law has a sublime sense and a heavenly mystery. . . . When it descended on earth, the Law had to put on earthly garments in order to be understood by us, and the narratives are its garments. There are some who think that this garment is the real Law. . . . The Law, too, has a body; this is the commandments, which are called the body of the Law. This body is clothed in garments, which are the ordinary narratives. The fools of the world look at nothing else but the garment, which consists of the narratives of the Law; they do not see any more, and do not see what is beneath the garment. But those who have understand-

2 Esdras, says that the Law was burnt, and that he was inspired to rewrite all that had been done since the beginning of the world, and that he did so.

Doubtless the orally transmitted legends of the Jewish nation were much older, but how much they suffered in this transcription may be inferred from the palpable contradictions with which they abound, as, for instance, in the genealogies, and in many other passages wherein deep spiritual insight alternates with obscene fables prompted by Jewish hatred of Moab and other Gentiles, such as the filthy and impossible story of Lot and his daughters.

ing look at the body beneath . . . while the wisest, the servants of the Heavenly King, look at nothing else but the soul (*i.e.*, the inspiring principle), which is the root of all the real Law" ("Kabbalah, Zohar," iii. 152*a*; Dr. Ginsburg's translation).

The Kabbalah, which is a despairing attempt to preserve the idea of a divine revelation *ab extra* when the surface deficiencies are patent, by working up into a system the spiritual truth which everywhere underlies the narratives, necessarily failed, as all partial expositions must fail, because it ignored all that it did not find to its purpose, and while insisting on the plenary inspiration of the Old Testament canon, it could only utilise small portions of this all-perfect code to build up the spiritual system, which it referred not to human insight and its own logical merits, but to the Authority of the Book whose verbal inspiration it was determined at all costs to save. As the Kabbalist philosophy supplied cogent answers to many intricate intellectual problems, and also upheld the plenary inspiration of the canon, it obtained great currency during the fourteenth century, reinforced as it was by the Christian Fathers, Clement of Alexandria and Origen, but ultimately passed into oblivion, less because of the ban of the Church than because the deductions drawn did not flow from the premises.

The Kabbalah attempts to show to man, not the Godhead, but the veils of symbolism which hide the Eternal. Firstly, as the inmost depth to which the intuition of man can pierce, Negative Existence, wherein lies all creative potency. Secondly, the Limitless, the Unconditioned, whether by Time, Space, Matter, or Attribute—Pure Being. Thirdly and lastly, the ocean of limitless glory, the streaming energy that is the life of the world, the all-embracing, all-pervading, all-sustaining, uncreated Light. These are not God, but are the cloud-veils that conceal Him. From thence emanate the living attributes of GOD, concentrated

and combined in His more comprehensible forms, as in Tetragrammaton, IHVH, Jehovah, whose name is said to be unpronounceable by man,* but whose image is reproduced in successively feebler degree in the four universes of which man is cognisant: in the celestial or divine; in the spiritual, as moral nature, love, and righteousness; in the ethereal, as Truth (or Reason, the organon of Truth); and in the material world, as Beauty; the first named being not an absolute ultimate, but ultimate to human faculty. The idea which underlies the whole is that of correspondence between the orders of existence, each being the expression of the next higher; and this is the final outcome of the theology of the most vigorous-minded people on earth, whose books, but not their understandings, have been adopted by the Christian nations.

5. The same perception of influx of power moulding matter and of efflux from the Divine is seen in the Sanscrit Kalpas, where Prajapati, the divine spirit, descended from the unconditioned existence of pure Being, into conditioned life, and, like the Mosaic "Spirit," brooded "on the waters," and thence produced all things; the generation being, as in the first example, from Spirit and Substance, here symbolised as Light and Water. Prajapati, having descended into active existence, produced Hiranyagarbha, "the golden germ" of the worlds, and the active principles which gave them birth are reflected in all their products, each being a type of some attribute, thus corresponding to its spiritual cause and imaging it. An intelligence "falls" or becomes evil by regarding life as a property of matter, impersonal, not-being (*ab-hûti*), and matter only as real; thus it cuts itself off from the communion of all with all; it thinks that it lives from itself and not in dependence on the life of the world; it

* Meaning, according to Eastern imagery, that His nature is not to be understood by man; for a name, to be rightly such, must express a nature and not be a mere label of unmeaning sound.

becomes self-centred and like to its idea, negative and emptied of life. The Gods, or superior intelligences, regard life as pre-eminently "Being," and so become like unto Him. The belief in causative spirit is the path of the Gods, of light and life; the belief in matter, regarding it as eternal and independent, is the way of the demons and of death. All rising in the scale of being is by influx, by the inbreathing of Prana, the Supreme Soul, and union with Him is the final goal of man.*

So the Platonic doctrine that God made the world by the Logos, the Divine Reason, through the Æons (*αιῶνες*), which are successive outpourings of spiritual power, each realising itself in some new law or property of matter manifest by new forms of existence. Everywhere is found the same philosophy as the result of the highest human perception, the idea of a wave or influx of power giving rise to new conditions. Inasmuch as such a process can hardly be imagined by man otherwise than as successive, each of these terms, from the Hebrew evening-morning to the Persian "day" of a thousand years and the Hindu Kalpa of many centuries, came to mean an "age," a period in which the particular influx was dominant. The notion of influence eternally acting in all spheres and stages of being according to the receptivity of the object is so much more difficult of apprehension than that of successive outpourings of spiritual power and phases of creation that it has always been preferred, and thus it has come to pass that the central idea of "influx" in the word "æon" has been almost lost in the acquired idea of "period." There are, however, some few cases in which the original meaning has been preserved, as when Horace says:—

"Crescit occulto velut arbor ævo
Fama Marcelli,"

* "Khandogya Upanishad." "Sacred Books of the East," vol. i.

comparing the growth of the renown of Marcellus to that of a tree growing by secret power. So when Jesus said that His power or presence should rest on His followers to the end of the æon, His words mean till the appointed work of His influence should be done and the world should be purified by its reception, a result as yet very far from attainment. It is easy to see how this has passed into "the end of the world" in the sense of a cataclysm, a crude rendering quite unsupported either by reason or natural law.

6. This law of influx is the meaning of Evolution, psychic power moulding matter to its expression, and it is the gradual development of more and more perfect forms, and may be seen in all things: from the upspringing of a blade of grass to the life of the world itself, growth (*i.e.*, evolution) is the note or criterion of life. In the birth of a child, in the healthy life of a man, and in the historical life of a nation the same process is manifest. The communicated life expanding from within, throwing off the casing of ante-natal life, becomes the outward man. The soul of the child, at first absorbed in the outward world, then becomes conscious of causes, and at last, after a struggle with natural materialism, looks beyond mere phenomena, perceiving last the transcendent beauty of Wisdom, which is knowledge and love combined; the fire of youth, the intellect of manhood, and the wide charity of age showing each successive influx growing fuller and higher till the worn-out body no longer serves the needs of the growing life within, and is cast aside, while the real man goes on to higher development in the life beyond.

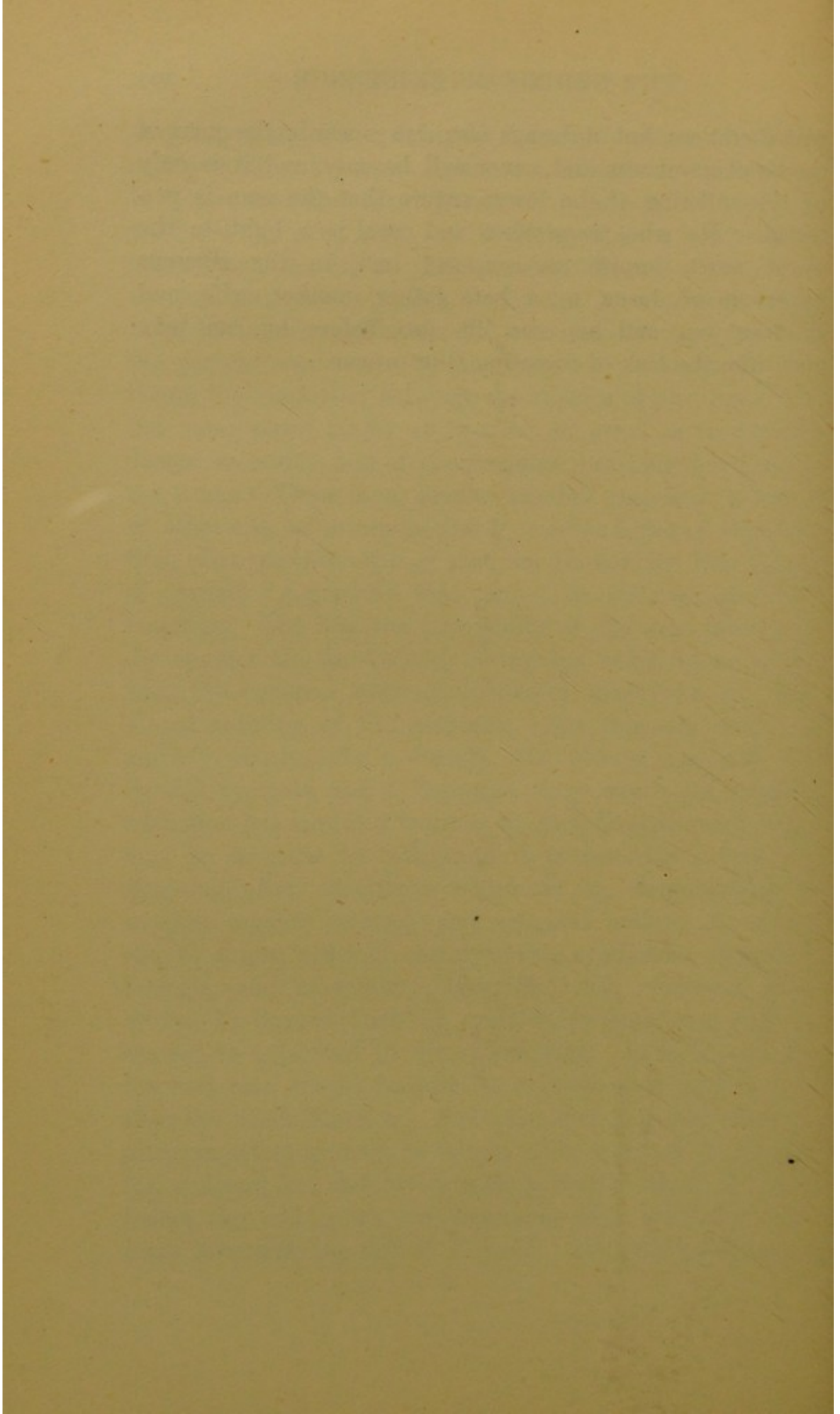
So also a religion, which, to be vital, must embody a nation's highest perceptions of spiritual truth, is also a growth by influx and stage. As each new perception dawns on the world it comes into violent conflict with much that has gone before. The imagery, bright with meaning and instinct with life, wherein the old seer set

forth the realities made known to him, becomes fixed in creeds and formularies which are claimed to be truth rather than to contain it under temporal and material symbolism, and men begin to try to see at second hand by receiving a ready-made "belief." And as this can never be, as spiritual truth disappears from any form, creed, or mythos, when the dogma is insisted on as absolute, the body or outward form of religion dies and must be cast off, while its truth not only lives on because it is causative and eternal, but rises from death to a higher embodiment than it had before. Each revelation by the power of the prophet is followed by a fall, the literalising the spiritual truths into events of sense, dragging Truth down to the coarseness of man instead of raising man to the higher level of perception. But as spiritual is above mere psychic life, in due time comes the Redeemer, the fresh influx, embodied it may be in one man or poured out on many, showing a higher, truer form than the popular creed; and so humanity progresses by its sins, its sorrows, its errors, and its sufferings towards truth and perfection. But at each era, when the old dead forms and symbolisms are attacked, all the guardians of the temples, all the priests of the mysteries whence (for the many) the meaning has died, all the devout persons who reverence the past and love the old ways, unite with the baser sort who find their profit in the old religion, and with the indolent who hate being reminded of spiritual things, and they all run together with one accord and cry, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," and the innovators are beaten, persecuted, burned alive, outlawed, despised, abused, or otherwise called on to testify to the genuineness of their inspirations and the honesty of their purpose.

So, again, in the growth of soul and spirit. Influx is of all degrees according to the order to which it pertains, from the solar radiance which is life to the plant, to the "grace" which is life to the spirit of man. There is psychic as well

as moral influx, the opening of the soul-faculties, as well as of those inmost senses which are collectively named the Intuition, and the development of a medium is a phenomenon of the same kind. It is the greater or less awakening of soul-senses in this present life as a means of development and as a sign to the age by a power coming from the unseen. That trance occasionally supervenes in the process need cause neither surprise nor alarm, for did it not, the confusion between the reports of the inner and the outer sense might at first be so great as to involve danger to sanity, and of the organism breaking down under the strain. These inner senses, whether exercised in trance or otherwise, as in crystal-vision or other forms of visualisation, often perceive things that are themselves but images of psychic "noumena" that cannot be described in direct language. The less the personality of the seer intervenes the simpler are the visions, the images being drawn rather from the common stock of humanity than from the individual training of the medium. But this can never be entirely eliminated; a Semite will always see and use Semitic symbols, and a European those which his peculiar education has rendered familiar to him, though many forms may be common to both; and it is remarkable how the straining after exactitude which is so characteristic of modern psychic research and religious seeking is giving rise to a new order of corresponding symbolism, historical, biologic, and magnetic. But the truth conveyed must always be imaged forth by symbols, because the absolute cannot be expressed in direct language. It is beyond the reach of man simply because its expression is nothing less than the whole Kosmos. And even such spiritual Truth as man can attain to must be sought after, searched for, fought for, suffered for, and loved with a heart's whole devotion before she will crown her champion with her favour and grace him with the gift of Herself. The enterprise brings

pain doubtless, but it brings also rich reward ; the quest of the Grail never was and never will be easy, and it is only by the suffering of the lower nature that the man is perfected. He who, as prophet and seer, is a light to the world must despise its comforts, and, in the vigorous hyperbole of Jesus, must hate father, mother, wife, and children, yea, and his own life also, before he can take upon him the task of revealing GOD to man.



CHAPTER III

THE GATE OF DEATH

“ There is no death—what seems so is transition.
This life of mortal breath
Is but a suburb of the Life Elysian
Whose portal we call—Death.”

—LONGFELLOW.

“ I sent my soul through the Invisible
Some letter of that After-life to spell,
And by-and-by my soul returned to me
With—‘ I myself am Heaven and Hell.’

Heaven but the vision of fulfilled desire,
And Hell the shadow of a soul on fire
Cast on the darkness into which ourselves,
So late emerged from, shall so soon expire.”

—OMAR KHAYYAM.

“ And he saw there a man which had not on a wedding garment, and he said unto him, Friend, how camest thou in hither, not having a wedding garment? And he was speechless. Then the king said to his servants, Bind him hand and foot, and cast him into the outer darkness; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”—JESUS (Matt. xxii. 13).

CHAPTER III

THE GATE OF DEATH

“ For now we see in a mirror (by reflection of spirit in matter), in a riddle ; but then face to face : now I know in part ; but then shall I know even also as I have been known.”—S. PAUL.

1. THAT this life is the seed-time of the life to come every race and religion agrees, though this truth has been obscured by being represented as an isolated interlude instead of a part of the regular order of psychic evolution, and the fact is so widely disregarded only because religions do not show the process by which it is brought about, and present the state of the soul not as the result of inevitable law, but as the award of a Judge, a figure of speech which at once opens the door to the notion of penalty, and therefore of pardon, for the misuse of opportunity.

But if the after-life involves the condition of open perception of each other's thoughts, it is easy to see why the development of the imperfect spirit can be best accomplished here ; chiefly because the material body, while it obscures the soul, also insulates and protects it from the warring influences around till its will-power is grown, and enables it to live *ex propria motu* to a greater degree than would be otherwise possible to weak wills. Moreover, the mask of the body now spares us the open shame to which we are exposed in the after-life, and allows the spiritual germ to expand in darkness and silence within the recesses of existence.

2. "Death" is, then, according to the evidence, simply a change of state, and, to use the old old simile, so beautiful and so true, is but the breaking of the chrysalis and the escape of the winged Psyche into fuller, freer life; it is the birth of the ethereal body into its proper world and fuller expression, no longer bound by matter. This is the normal path of its development—woe to it if it have not grown its wings!

This inference, which follows from the experiences of survival already alluded to, is also stated in direct terms by communicating spirits. The extract which follows is from Mrs. De Morgan's book, "From Matter to Spirit":—

"When we found that so many unexpected explanations came by the hand of the young medium (a young child) who drew the sketches of spiritual impression, I begged for as clear a description of the process of death as could be given. Having myself read some American accounts of visions, dreams, &c., referring to this subject, I had a rather vague notion of the spirit breaking away from its earthly covering and floating at once on high in a body prepared to enter into the happy spheres. Reports of visions which had reached me confirmed this belief. I was, therefore, pleased and surprised when, by the drawing, a wonderful and systematic process coherent in all its parts, and making no extravagant demand on our powers of belief, was unfolded.

"The person by whom the drawing was made was too young to have thought on the subject, and his hand moved without, as in some cases, being touched by that of another person. The pencil traced a recumbent figure evidently meant to represent a dying person. From many points of this figure the hand of the medium formed long lines which met at a point carefully placed at a short distance above the figure. As the lines were multiplied the point was also increased in size till it became a small globe or circle, and

From that circle other lines were drawn out to represent the body and limbs of another and smaller figure. The larger figure below and the smaller one above were then numbered, and notes, to correspond with the numbers, were written below. From this diagram it appeared that the process of death and the entrance into another state is as natural (in the sense of orderly) an event as the birth of a child. No more real mystery, nothing more supernatural (in the sense of miraculous) accompanies a departure from than an entrance into this world. . . . The lines drawn from the recumbent figure and meeting above represent the 'spiritual fluid.' This will be recognised as that invisible element of the body which, drawing nourishment from its surroundings, is the essential agent of vital force. . . . It will afterwards be seen that these vital forces are what constitute the soul in its most material . . . elements.

"The 'spiritual fluid,' then, was represented as coming from every portion of the frame, its streams meeting near the heart—I think at the great solar plexus—and, having passed away through the brain,* uniting again above the body, there to form the new body which is destined to form the future dwelling of the spirit. These streams appeared by the drawing to carry from the material body each its own type of life, by which I mean that each minute current was adapted to fill one place and form one specific portion only in the new combination. . . . This is the teaching given by our invisible companions, by means of the involuntary writing. The clearest explanation came by the hand of a young person who had no preconceived ideas on the subject; but similar descriptions have been given by many

* This curiously corroborates some of the ancient mysticism which was almost certainly unknown to the writer. *Vide* Khandogya Upanishad VIII., vii. 5, and Ait. Aranyaka, Commentary II., iii. 8. "Sacred Books of the East," vol. i., 1879. Also Kabala Denudata: Ha Idra Rabba Qadisha, Chap. xxvii. (Mathers, 1887), p. 177.

seers and mediums, each one ignorant of what has been said by others.

“It would serve no purpose to repeat other accounts in which the clairvoyant faculty has established the rising of the soul from the body, and the resurrection (*ἀνάστασις* = standing up) of the new man following on the death of the outer form. *Ex uno disce omnes*; they are all more or less alike, whether given by the clairvoyant perception or by automatic writing, or by any other means.”

3. Resurrection,* then, according to spirit-testimony, is immediate, and is no breach of continuity. The converse idea of a resurrection of the flesh can be traced back to the Egyptian religion, in which an ultimate resurrection of the actual corpse was a cardinal belief so firmly held as to cause the people to take the most unheard-of pains to preserve the body intact against the return of the spirit. Jesus found it already developed among the Pharisees at the time

* The word “resurrection” has unfortunately become associated with the body, because we now associate both life and personality with the body. It carries the emphasis on the rising *again* instead of on the *rising*. The Greek word used by the New Testament writers is far truer, the *ἀνάστασις*, or standing up of the dead. But no language is doctrinal, for the simple reason that soul-verities can only be expressed in language derived from our ideas of time and space, and therefore no text as such proves anything even if the Greek rendering of words spoken in Aramaic could be relied on. Still, the language used in Matt. xxiv. 31 is far more appropriate to the ethereal than to the animal frame. In the present connection see Luke xx. 34 (R. V.), where the sons of this age or æon are spoken of. This æon, as has been explained before, is the wave of spirit-power which descends into Time, and soul-development is its phenomenon. But the primary meaning has no relation to time nor even to soul-phenomena, much less to matter-phenomena or to a local heaven or material resurrection; and it may be observed, not as an argument, but as a curious fact, that in the answer to the Sadducees, while the questioners use the future tense, Jesus is stated to have replied in the present, that the dead are raised, not that they shall be. *Vide Revised Version.*

of His ministry, and agreeably to His practice of accepting and remoulding erroneous forms of belief into more adequate expressions of truth, when the Jews confronted Him with an animal resurrection with animal desires (a perfectly sound objection to the pharisaic and material theory) He lifted up their gross conception to a higher plane, and told them that they knew neither their own Scriptures nor the power of God, and that their patriarchs were even then living, and not sleeping with their fathers. If we may trust the form of the narrative, He spoke of the consummation of the present order, and of a gathering of His people from the four winds of heaven, in language far more appropriate to the call of ethereal legions from the upper air than to the gathering of corpses from the corners of the earth; and He illustrated His teaching in His own person by His immediate return and materialisation soon after the crucifixion, under conditions whose counterpart is to be found in spirit-circles where the phenomena presented depend on the nature of the spirits present and on the receptivity of the sitters who are gathered together in one place, precisely as was the case in the upper room of A.D. 29. The whole of Jesus' recorded words on this subject deal with truths which are present, not future, realities, because they belong to that which is independent of space and time, the spiritual state or æon, as He is reported to have phrased it.

S. Paul, whose flashes of inspirational insight took him far higher than the more materialist conceptions of the less trained disciples, was yet (if his writings have not been interpolated to bring them into accord with fixed tenets) not free from the bias of the pharisaic schools in the matter of a cataclysmal resurrection. He could realise that the spiritual body is a present entity,* and could accurately

* 1 Cor. xv. 44., *et. seq.*: "It is sown a psychic body (body for the soul, *σῶμα ψυχικόν*); it is raised a spirit-body (body for the spirit, *σῶμα πνευματικόν*). There is a soul-body and there is a spirit-body.

distinguish between the present outermost, the psychic body, the shrine for the soul, and the future outermost, the spiritual body, or shrine for the spirit; but if the fifty-second and following verses of the fifteenth chapter of the First Epistle to the Corinthians as they now stand express his thought, it would seem that the true idea and just imagery of a future judgment led him to refer this "standing up" of the dead to a grand day of reckoning by a visible (*i.e.*, humanly corporeal) Judge, and his pardonable error has become our unpardonable dogma. But it seems almost incredible that the same hand should have written these and the preceding verses.

4. Gradually, in the early Church, the more materialist, and, as it seemed, the more complete, view gained strength, the temper of angry dogmatism arose, and the very unreason of dogma was made the test of "faith."* Christ's resurrection form, in spite of the evidence of the senses that it was not ordinary matter, was thought to demand the reconstitution of the actual corpse, and conceptions of the Last Day as unwarranted as they are grotesque were freely imposed on the credulity of the faithful, the climax of absurdity being reached by one poet (*sic*) of the last century whose imagination led him to think of the air darkened with flying heads, arms, and legs, hastening to rejoin their trunks! In point of fact, the very word "judgment" is itself a figure of speech to imply the division of the good from the bad. Only such a figure, drawn from

So it is written, The first man Adam became a living soul, the last Adam a vivifying spirit. But not the spiritual first but the psychic, then the spiritual. The first man, from earth clayey (material): the second man from heaven (from the ether; ἐξ οὐρανοῦ, from the expanse of heaven). Like to earthy material are the earthly, and like to the heavenly are the heavenly. And as we have borne the form of the clayey (εἰκόνα τοῦ χοϊκοῦ), so shall we bear the form of that from the heavens (εἰκόνα τοῦ ἐπουρανοῦ)" (Literal translation).

* "*Credo quia impossibile*"—"I believe because it is impossible."

the pattern of a human government, would have appealed to men living under the Roman Empire, whose ignorance of physical laws must have made the ideas of inexorable process and an all-pitiful God seem even more contradictory than they do to us. It was reserved for later time to erect the figure of speech into a dogma, and to insist not only on the fact, but on the manner also.

True, appallingly true, is the fact of judgment to come, and inexorable as Fate its coming. For it is the revealing of what we ARE, that birth into spirit-life, disclosing under rigid law the qualities of the true self; it is a strictly continuous process, and he who may desire to know how he will appear in that new life has only to think whether he would be ashamed to go among the highest, noblest men and women with all his thoughts spoken aloud as each arises in his mind, for that is the state he has to enter into. Fair as a sculptor's dream, unstained by greed or malice or lust, will show the souls of some of earth's humblest, not because they are rewarded for having been poor, but because they *are* strong and pure and brave and true; while terrible will be the awakening of those who have allowed wealth to enervate their minds, who have thought that elegance can disguise greed, that marriage can sanctify lust, or devotion to a creed or a Saviour cover the want of that love for man that thinks and works for others.

5. These awful facts, that the ethereal body expresses the actual state of the spirit uncomplicated by those limitations to development which we call heredity, nurture and training, which so largely govern the earth-body, and that thought is perceptible to them as speech to us, gives the clue to much that is observed in spirit-life, notably to the existence of groups or societies there who are strongly alike and act in unison, co-operating to the end they desire. It is noteworthy that most communications that are not purely personal are said to be the work of such a group.

They speak of themselves in the plural, have common or class names which are expressive of certain attributes which all share, and generally show themselves one in state and advancement. The formation of these groups of individuals naturally follows from the "knowing as they are known." Uninsulated, bare and naked, feeling censure like a blow and esteem like the sunshine, the poor soul naturally goes to others of its own type and degree, with whom it may feel less shame than with the noble and the pure. The natural desire for sympathy and friendship which is felt on earth is felt tenfold there, and the law of joint action is a discovery of pure delight to those that have on earth perceived that active and kindly co-operation for an intelligent end is the one great source of happiness in all existence soever. These bright souls do not shrink like the sensual and the covetous from those higher spirits whose tender welcome and loving pity does not blind them to the stunted condition of well-nigh all born into spirit-life, whom they long to help and educate, to train and raise in power and beauty. Such as have begun to learn the secret of happiness here in loving work are willing to take any place however humble, any share however small, in the great work of the redemption of their kind, not from past but from future sins. Theirs is the crown of being glorious, not merely of seeming so, and theirs is the rest and peace of the Summerland to which they can and do withdraw, to obtain thence fresh power, encouragement, help, and knowledge, for the furtherance of their aim by converse, contemplation, and prayer. But there seem to be few who can welcome even the first great trial of their faith and love, which is to see how those with whom their lot on earth was cast really look upon them, and can endure calmly that first step to self-knowledge, the sight of the reflection of themselves in the minds of others.

In spirit-life all are free, yet each has his duty, which,

there as here, he may do and reap peace and joy and fresh powers, or leave undone and reap shame and sorrow and an empty life. Their work is, as ours, twofold yet one, the helping on of good among men, the establishing of the Kingdom of Heaven, and their own progress in wisdom and love thereby. A part of that work certainly lies on this planet, though how much it is for the present impossible to say. But their power of action on normal and quite healthy minds seems to be considerable, and the part played in ordinary life by their "suggestion" is perhaps larger than is generally imagined, though superior to all "suggestion" is the personal will, which, it may be noted, puts aside good suggestions quite as often as bad ones. There is also some reason to think that some who have passed over may undertake special charge of those still in earth-life whose development they think they can influence, and these get their first lesson in real disinterestedness and patience by the utter unconsciousness and the constant falls of their charges.

To judge by what the spirits say of themselves, there seem to be three principal orders in spirit-life—the pure spirits who have risen above the weaknesses of earth; those who are striving to learn and to become pure; and, lastly, the earth-bound, who may be thus chained either by weak personal loves and fears, by ties of blood, or by limited knowledge, or by longing after bodily existence and the still unforgotten indulgences of sense. These great orders consist apparently of endless classes and degrees, just as with us, and these constitute the "heavens" and the "hells." Lowest of all are the degraded spirits who, unable to continue the foul acts of their earth-lives, hover round the scenes of vice and infamy they once knew and urge others on to the horrors of drink and fevered desire they once themselves delighted in, deriving a kind of secondary pleasure in seeing others follow the same ruin as their own.

There are, awful to think, some such fiends in this life who take pleasure in introducing boys and girls to things which light up the terrible fires within the soul; and while we can read of such around us, it is needless indeed to imagine "devils" or any malignity other than man's own.

Those who materialise, speak, and cause the usual phenomena at séances are generally, though not always, the earth-bound, who are glad to while away some of the tedium of eternity (and to those whose only idea of life is personal enjoyment there is tedium, how great none can know who know nothing of the complaints of the sufferers), who return to their old haunts for conscious intercourse with men. Some few return through unselfish love, some through duty, having a mission of help and guidance to carry out, and these latter as a rule do not manifest; but generally the purpose is merely trivial, and there is usually but little elevation of thought or nobility of language. Discrimination is difficult and experience is the only guide. Those who would learn must take every opportunity of study by all means at their command, and avoid the Scylla of preconceived opinion and the Charybdis of blind trust, remembering that it is no simile but stern fact that we stand on the threshold of a new world. The career of one spirit is no more a ground on which to base a general rule than is that of one man in earth-life for the condition of this planet.

It is not the object of this chapter to attempt even a sketch of the future life, but to show the phenomena as being those of a world which is distinct and real, and governed by laws as undeviating as those of physics, for undeviating law is but another name for perfect justice.

6. The psychology implied by the spirit communications is one that is exceedingly familiar, though it is shown under quite a new aspect. Man is treated as belonging to the

material, ethereal, and spiritual realms, and reflecting the attributes of each in his body, his soul, and his spirit respectively. In other words, he is pre-eminently the microcosm, a miniature reflection of the universe.

In each of these three great departments of human nature the faculties or lights they enjoy are intuitional, that is to say, absolute each in its degree and within its own scope. The body is correlated to the material world. Its senses are absolute and require no assistance from any higher faculty. Reason indeed makes use of them, but the keenest reason cannot supply their place nor add to the information they give. Sight, smell, hearing, touch, taste, give absolute reports on the objects submitted to them without any assistance from reason. It does not, of course, follow that where they give no report there is nothing to report on. There is a range of vibration on either side of the spectrum to which no bodily sense is attuned; many material objects, such as the rarer gases, are imperceptible to any sense, as are most electrical and magnetic vibrations, and the deadliest poisons, such as cholera and typhus, are quite unapparent to unaided vision. Too much care, moreover, cannot be taken to discriminate between the perceptions of the senses and the very rapid deductions reason habitually makes from them. Thus, in taking up a leaden weight all that the muscular sense really reports is that a certain resistance is experienced; that the weight is intrinsic to the lead is an inference which may be right or wrong—in this case probably wrong. In brief, our senses are our witnesses to outward facts, and never misinform us, appearances to the contrary notwithstanding. When error results from the observations of the senses; when, as we say, our senses are deceived, a little reflection will show that the deception is due, (1) and usually, to the mind taking a negative report as conclusive, and assuming that all was seen that could have

been seen; and (2) to hasty generalisation. The senses are not responsible.

Similarly, the mind or soul intuitively perceives the elementary truths which depend on number, proportion, and relation. Its fundamental perceptions are mathematical and abstract, and on these all constructive knowledge depends. Thus the whole science of geometry rests on certain intuitively perceived axioms which are the primary perceptions of number, magnitude, and proportion. These cannot be taught to any mind in which they are not already existent. So also that which is pre-eminently the psychic science, Logic (of which all mathematics is but one department, a peculiar method of abbreviated reasoning), rests on certain intuitively perceived relations between objects and on the sense of number and proportion.

But though logic involves order, and the mental faculties of man necessarily imply intelligent purpose, neither are related to morality. Even to admire wisdom and to preach love is not to be either wise or loving, though it may be, and often is, the first step thereto; and the acutest imaginative identity with the sufferings of wronged virtue is quite compatible with extreme personal selfishness, a fact to which many a voracious novel-reader is a standing witness. Those who are living on the higher psychic levels frequently pride themselves on sensibility and refinement without in the least suspecting that their graceful lives are not one whit morally better than others which seem to them immeasurably below them in the social scale. Moral worth is quite another matter than refinement, and is only thus far related to culture that it can be best realised in those who are both refined and intelligent, because such only are imaginative enough to see beyond their actual conditions. Speaking generally, it may be said that the chief function of mind is to perceive abstrac-

tions. The senses perceive a number of things, the mind perceives number in the abstract; the senses perceive magnetic objects, mind perceives abstract magnetism; the senses perceive effects, the mind perceives causes. Briefly, while the senses perceive facts, the mind formulates truths, which are statements of the relations between facts.

The spirit differs from the soul by a discrete degree (to adopt a Swedenborgian phrase), that is to say, it belongs to an entirely fresh order, and manifests its presence by its appropriate perception, the sense of morality. This is shown by and through intellect, for non-intelligent beings cannot possibly be said to be moral or immoral; but it is not identical with it, for notoriously the most intelligent men are not always the most moral, nor conversely. Here, as in the case of body and soul, the perceptions are all intuitive, but inasmuch as the vast majority of humanity is spiritually undeveloped, the perception of morality is often not high. Nevertheless in the lowest savages its rudiment always exists, and is called the sense of justice. This by no means necessarily implies a perception of what is just as applied to others, but the idea of justice is there. In fine, while the senses perceive facts and the mind perceives truths, the spirit perceives principles.

7. All these *circuli* need to be educated both in the individual in one life and in the race from generation to generation, and even civilised men have these faculties in very various states of training. One great cause of our slow progress is our failure to perceive this in ourselves. There is no one but would disclaim the idea of needing no further advance in intellectual and moral development, but there are many who do not seem to reflect that to put aside truths new to them implies nothing less than this. The uneducated man, as he looks out on a landscape, scoffs at the notion that he does not see all that there is to be seen. Let him be trained as an artist and he is astounded at his

previous blindness. So with reasoning, in proportion as a man really begins to learn the realities of things he is appalled at the depths of his own ignorance. Most of the pre-judgment that passes for reasoning is simply pitiful, and amounts only to a declaration of more or less groundless opinion.* Thus when the sincere and devoted missionaries to Tibet found the poor heathen they came to save in full possession of the virgin-born and ascended God-man; having rites, sacraments, and worship closely resembling their own, celibate religious orders, litanies and rosaries of prayers

* Unfortunately the less the reasoning power is educated the less it distrusts itself. None is so confident as the ale-house politician, unless it be the average British middle-class "philistine," who is quite sure that the Almighty Creator watches him with peculiar satisfaction and has him in His especial care. From this absence of discrimination between logical reasoning and pious opinion results the unsettlement of beliefs which follows on the training of the reasoning faculty; for so soon as men realise that intelligent belief must follow evidence, and therefore that no beliefs as such can be either moral or the reverse, but simply more or less correct, they see that theological writers, with scarcely any exceptions, begin by tacitly assuming premises which involve the very point they set out to prove, and that declamation which appeals only to adherents is used in place of the argument that convinces adversaries.

So little is the deep distinction between truths and principles perceived that many persons will confidently assert that they feel (*i.e.*, perceive intuitively) that the Gospel narrative is historically true in all its parts, or that reincarnation is the mode of human development. Neither the Christian nor the Buddhist is at all shaken by the fact that the intuition which is so confident of itself is paralysed when called upon to explain the critical difficulties of the synoptists or the discrepant intuition of others. Both are attempting to use the intuition for purposes for which it is not designed; it is not primarily related to facts or phenomena, but only to principles, and the feeling that a history or process is true can only mean an assurance that it squares with our own view of the fitness of things. The Gospel story may be historically true, and reincarnation may be, as Plato thought, a fact, but no intuition can prove either, for proof goes by testimony, and personal certitude, apart from sense perception, is not proof, nor even legal evidence.

almost exactly like the Christian, and even a code of ethics in which detachment of the spirit from the objects of time and sense is presented as the solution of all earth's difficulties exactly as in the Sermon on the Mount, the only explanation that commended itself to them was, that "the devil" had invented a counterpart of the true salvation. So when sea-fossils were found in mountain strata, the explanation of the orthodox was, that "the devil" had put them there to discredit the Book of Genesis. These things give point to the sarcasm that some dogs seem to have more reasoning power than some theologians.

Similarly, the intuition proper needs training even more than body or mind. Conscience is variable, and is far from being an absolutely trustworthy guide. All the life of each one of us, all the history of the nations, is pre-eminently training to perceive the right and of will to do it. The harmonious development of the world depends on the direction of bodily activity by intelligence, and of intelligence by moral perception. We have to learn to distinguish evidence from opinion, principles from the forms by which they are expressed, and to lay the dearest wishes of our hearts as offerings on the altar of the God of Truth and Righteousness, who gives by this very method, to those who resign their shortsighted and wilful ways, truth in their inward nature, and makes them to understand secret wisdom by the influx of His power. This intuition which sees principles is the necessary foundation of morality, and that this faculty is inborn has long been obvious to men; in the Menon, Plato makes Socrates teach that virtue comes untaught. But that this faculty needs education is as certain as that it is innate; the pity is that the fact is not more recognised. Feeling their own perceptions of right and wrong as positive, men take their crude perceptions as ultimate truth. As with the uneducated mind, no suspicion that the faculty must be imperfect, and may only too probably be warped, seems ever

to trouble the man, and the dictates of conscience are held to be not only binding, which they are, but final, which they are not.

The conscience of the savage presents him, indeed, with the ideas of justice and injustice, but these rarely range beyond his own tribe, and even within it they are crude. Many offences are held to warrant bloodshed, and he scoffs at the idea that to kill his enemy is wrong. A stage higher he thinks that a code of honour is required to make blood-revenge reputable, and that an equal chance of plundering or being plundered justifies both. The civilised man shows higher ideas of justice under law, though he has not yet found it necessary and politic to make the administration of justice cheap, expeditious, or easy, for it is notoriously better to put up with most wrongs than to seek their redress at law. He can see that to kill another for robbery or vengeance is reprehensible, but he is not yet apparently able to perceive that to kill thousands for conquest or retribution falls into the same category of actions, partly no doubt because the self-sacrifice and frequent heroism of the soldier masks the greed and selfishness of the nation that sends him to war. Men pass widely differing judgments on the same acts accordingly as these are done by or to themselves, a sure proof of a warped moral sense.* So in private matters. To take from

* Mr. Herbert Spencer quotes ("Sociology," p. 211) from Cruikshank's "Eighteen Years on the Gold Coast," that "in February 1812 the people of Winnebah seized their commandant, Mr. Meredith," and so maltreated him that he died. Why, we are not told. The town and fort were destroyed by the English. "For many years afterwards English vessels passing Winnebah were in the habit of pouring a broadside into the town to inspire the natives with an idea of the severe vengeance that would be taken for the spilling of European blood."

Froude ("Short Studies"—"Kerry") tells that on October 28, 1730, a Danish ship containing treasure was lost on Kerry Head. The bullion

another by violence is at last, after centuries of rapine, seen to be distinctly wrong; but we have not yet come to perceive that all profit without service rendered is of the same nature as theft, and there are comparatively few men who would refuse to profit by an unjust but legal bequest. The divisions in families resulting from money differences show plainly how much more is thought of possessions than of affection and unity. The same need for clearer perception is most urgent in matters of sex. Cajolery has replaced rough constraint, and the latter is held a crime, but the former, if unaccompanied with actual fraud, such as simulated marriage, is scarcely reprobated, and the man who should refuse to profit by his "*bonnes fortunes*" would be considered simply a fool by the large majority of men. The wrong done to violated chastity is thought to be wiped out by a money payment, as if the perversion of a woman's higher nature could be remedied by a provision of material comforts. They are few indeed who perceive that the going through a certain form in church does not put the sexual relations of the man and the woman on a different footing than they were on before, and that the union of flesh must be preceded by the union of soul if it is not to be animal and degrading; that the essence of marriage is not the ceremony, but constancy of the one to the one, and that the consent of the woman, however obtained, does not allow of a negative answer to that basest of all questions—Am I my sister's keeper? There should be little need to

which had been saved by the crew was plundered by the Irish gentry and people, two sailors being killed in defence of the property of their government. No reparation was ever made, for the entire population of the locality, from the highest to the lowest, conspired to defeat justice, from the magistrates downwards. Let us imagine the Winnebago reprisals transferred to an Ireland undefended save by abstract justice, that the Danish ships, not content with burning the nearest town, had been for years in the habit of firing on the place, what would have been English opinion on the act?

prove that conscience needs educating even more than any other faculty of perception, that it may see more clearly that leading principle of ethics that is called JUSTICE.

8. The relations of these three departments of human nature and their different spheres of activity may be summarised as under :—

Matter and Energy.	Ether and Mind.	Spirit and the Logos.
Animal Nature.		Spiritual Nature.
MAN (<i>Ego</i>),		
who perceives all things around and within himself,		
By the Body :	By the Mind :	By the Spirit :
Form, colour, taste, texture, scent, &c. ; <i>i.e.</i> , facts in external nature and internal experience. This order of perception is the basis of PHYSICS, depending on pure observation.	Number, proportion, relation, abstractions ; <i>i.e.</i> , truths : such as the Euclidean axioms, &c. This order of perception is the basis of LOGIC, depending on pure reasoning.	Right and Wrong ; <i>i.e.</i> , principles which are causative of facts and of their relations. This order of perception is the basis of ETHICS, depending on pure intuition.
All knowledge of the Material World.		All knowledge of the Super-sensuous World.
RELIGION (<i>Non-Ego</i>),		

which, rightly understood, is the perception of the whole system of LAW and our relation thereto.

In each *circulus* also is observable the repetition of the archetypal duality of force and substance. Each is formed on the same plan. Soul builds up body whether in the plant, the brute, or the man, but soul itself is not in the higher sense "a living soul" till associated with the distinctively human and responsible spirit, and spirit in its turn is depen-

dependent on the Life Divine in which it lives and moves. Body without soul is dead, soul without spirit has not that which makes the higher life, intuition and will; and these last develop, just as mind and muscle do, by nourishment and exercise. The constant exercise of mind stores up impressions, which are combined by the imagination into fresh forms, which are assimilated by the spirit. To neglect any faculty is to lose it, and though no man can actually divest himself of his nature, it is but too easy to "quench the spirit" and to live on the mere animal plane, a course which, if persisted in, must apparently lead, through continuous degradation and misery, to ultimate extinction. The terrible consequences of neglected lives may be seen in many a séance-room, where nothing is more obvious than the darkened intellect, the paralysed will, and the helpless inanity of some among those who have crossed the border, spirits who appear as standing examples of nearly all that a soul should not be, purposeless, unintellectual, frivolous, and self-indulgent, even though not actively bad.

It may be remarked that the perceptions of the spirit imply and necessitate a Supreme Existence, or rather a Supreme Being; for God alone is—all else exists from Him. This intuition that God is cannot be put down by any conclusions of the intellect founded on the shifting basis of non-perception, and this is the true origin of all religion. This perception, in very various degrees it is true, is common to all men, and no more vain speculation can be indulged in than that which refers the origin of religion to the undirected working of the cerebral faculties, as in dreams. This is materialism run mad, which not only fancies that matter alone exists, but also that it can create that which does not exist—spirit, to wit. Imagination, as a recent and luminous writer defines it,* is "a new mental

* A. J. Bell, "Why does Man Exist?" (Isbister & Co., 1890).

arrangement of things already existing and known." No man can imagine that which is not except by importing that which is at other places, in other ways, and at other times; he applies images and facts which he knows already as similes for things he does not know, but he cannot invent new orders of fact,* and a "false principle" is really as much a contradiction in terms as a "dark light" or a "dead life." What are called "false principles" are fragments of truth mismatched and misapplied. No man can perceive that which is not, and falses can only be distorted truths.

The spirit-faculty explains the universally felt need of an Arché, a Source of Light and Life and Righteousness. This need not necessarily be referred to remote Time—for it would seem that no conclusive reason can be alleged why matter should not be a local and persistent phase of one eternal substance, and in fact Time is realised by means of Change, that is by motion of some kind occurring to matter, so that the two terms involve each other—but rather to constant originating power; while the knowledge that this perception may be blunted, obscured, and perverted to almost any degree affords a satisfactory explanation of the distortions which the Divine idea has suffered by transmission through all manner of media. It will be clear also why human perception of the Divine Activity has so often been Triune in form, a perception by no means limited to the Christian formulas.

* Those who are inclined to disagree should invalidate this proposition by imagining (and drawing) any embodiment of the angelic in a higher form than the human. They will fail, for every idea is the reflection of a truth. This reflection may be distorted, but there must be both something to reflect and to distort. So with sub-human forms: a "devil" is represented symbolically by combining two known forms, the brute and the human; but if we abandon the horns and tail of mediæval superstition, any attempt to imagine a novelty is a foredoomed failure; there remains just a malevolent man.

CHAPTER IV

BODY—THE MEANS OF ACTION

“Matter may be defined as a permanent possibility of sensation. If I am asked whether I believe in matter, I ask whether the questioner accepts this definition of it. If he does, I believe in matter, and so do all Berkleians. In any other sense than this I do not. But I affirm with confidence that this conception of matter includes the whole meaning attached to it by the common world, apart from philosophical, and sometimes theological, theories.”
—J. S. MILL, Examin. Sir WM. HAMILTON’S *Philosophy*.

“Matter is illusion, the Maya of the Buddhists; not that it does not exist, but that it does not exist from itself, and apart from the force that conditions it, is not. • It is the expression of the power that moulds it, and therefore has been called ‘the garment of GOD.’”

“Idolatry is the adoration of the shadow instead of the substance, the setting up of the eidolon in place of the God. It is thus no specific act, but the general tendency towards matter and sense that constitutes the Fall. And of this tendency the world is full, for it is the ‘original sin’ of every man born of the generation of ‘Adam.’ Henceforth the fruit of the divine tree is not for him; he has lost the faculty of discerning Substance and Reality; the eye of the spirit is closed and that of sense is opened; he is immersed in delusion and shadow, the glamour of Maya. He only is free who is ‘born again of the Spirit.’”
—*The Perfect Way*.

CHAPTER IV

BODY—THE MEANS OF ACTION

Πολλὰς δ' ἰφθίμους ψυχὰς Ἄϊδι προΐαψεν
Ἑρῶν, αὐτοὺς δὲ ἐλώρια τευχε κύνεσσιν.

1. THE idea conveyed in this quotation, that the souls of the heroes who fell before Troy were despatched to Hades, the dim ghostland, full of the shades of what once were men, while THEY THEMSELVES lay a prey to dogs and vultures, is one which even yet survives as the unconscious, but very real, belief of large majorities of "Christian" people, who still talk of the body as the man himself, and of the spirit as his ghost, or dim unreal reflection. Though the immortality of the soul may be universally acquiesced in as a theorem, it can scarcely be said to govern the language in which the dead are habitually spoken of, nor, inferentially, the actual beliefs of most persons, to whom "real" and "material" are interconvertible terms, and who, whatever they may verbally profess, so far from regarding body as the garment of spirit, still regard life or spirit as a property of body, and thought as a function of the brain, probably, if not necessarily, dissolved with it.

This is the root-error from which so many others spring, the cardinal mistake in whose correction lies the whole value of psychic phenomena, to see in body and matter the only Reality, and not a series of changing forms, ceaselessly modified by higher forces. Regarding the "material" as the only "real," we in fact deny the

superiority of mind by referring it to matter as its origin, and inferentially the existence of God also, by making Him an external Artificer of the universe instead of its immanent Cause, the Source of all Life and Love and Beauty, not in the legendary dawn of the world, but here and now, within and around us, the organising Spirit, who develops the living soul, of which all "body" is the outward expression in form and colour. Feeling that any such external Deity is discontinuous to this order of things, men disbelieve His existence, and instead of endeavouring to find Him through knowledge of the chain of proximate causes, they abandon the search with agnostic hopelessness or atheistic indifference, and turn to the pursuit of wealth and pleasure, of all, in fact, which, centring on the body, tends to make its comfort the sole aim of life.

The psychic facts previously described exhibit the function of body, or, to speak more generally, of matter, as the expression of energy by which it is moulded into form. By it, and through it alone, all energy is made manifest. Human creatures, who, having bodily senses, can perceive material things only, can necessarily learn by them only; and matter must, in the nature of things, be to them the foundation of all things. It is in the objects of sense that intellectual perception begins. Analogy renders it probable that this will always be the case; body, whether, as in this present world, formed of matter, or, as in the psychic, the so-called future life, formed of ether, or of any unknown "substance" in possible higher existences, must always be the plane of "phenomenon" or manifestation, and the appointed field of perception of higher powers.

Those schools which regard the body as the mere prison-house of the soul, which has "fallen" and been bound in it, have been confuted by the universal experience of mankind; for the logical result of such a tenet is that matter is intrinsically bad, and therefore that evil has a positive

existence, an error which has been laid bare by every great thinker from S. Augustine to Spinoza. But there is a frequently observable disposition to think of matter as in some sense antithetical to mind, rather than to consider it as a necessary medium for a certain phase of psychic expression, and the revulsion from the materialism which sees in the body the man himself often swings to the other extreme, ignoring the external world whereby objective truth is known, and depreciating the civilisation and science whereby progress is made. This is the usual excess of religious minds, which are disposed to look for a revelation of the Divine, not by normal process, but apart from it. Unaided introspection, however, can never furnish convincing knowledge, and thus it is that, after centuries of unproductive scholastic theology, no system has been able to hold the pre-eminence, and science and observation are now, for the first time in the history of the world, made the basis of philosophy.

2. The first truth which strikes a reflective mind taking a broad view of the processes of Nature, is the free interchange of substance that is continually going on. Plant, animal, and man are seen as a dependent series, but it is not clearly realised how great is the volume and how rapid the course of the stream of matter that passes through the animate realm. Yet a consideration of the simplest meal will show that the elements of which it is composed have been collected from the air and soil of three or four different countries at least; the water a very short time back was gathered from the heaving sea; the tea was grown in China, Ceylon, or the Himalayas; the bread very probably came from Russia, and the butter from Ireland. The particles that are ingested and formed into flesh and blood are shortly cast off by the processes of the body in the wear and tear of tissue, and return to the circulation of matter. About 30 oz. of oxygen

is daily consumed by each person, which is mainly used in keeping up the animal heat, and corresponds to about 3 lbs. of bread. Besides this, the body gives off, and must therefore take in, about 3 lbs. of water daily, so that the average human being consumes considerably more, both of solid and fluid food, than is here set down.

But taking $7\frac{1}{2}$ lbs. of matter as the total amount ingested, and assuming 1,500,000,000, the usual figure for the earth's population, to be correct, with its attendant death-rate of two per second, a simple calculation will show that the amount of matter annually passing through human organisms alone is not less than some 22,000,000 tons; and if to this is added the similar consumption of the whole animal world and the analogous nutrition of plants, some idea may be formed of the rapid flow of matter through living forms. Though man is popularly said to be made of the dust of the ground, very little of the said dust enters into the composition of the living body. A few grains of iron and phosphorus, a few ounces of lime, and mere traces of other elements are all that can be referred to earth. The rest, some 98 per cent. of his weight, is water, carbon, and nitrogen. Of these all organic bodies, vegetable as well as animal, are constituted, and it is this stock of carbon and water and air with which the ceaseless interchange goes on. Though it is poetic hyperbole to say that "the dust we tread on once hath been alive," it is nevertheless fact that, the available amount of interchangeable carbon being comparatively small, a mere film over the cultivated surface of the earth, it passes very rapidly from body to body, and the transition from dead to living, and from food to the air, the plant, and back to the living body, is far quicker than most of us at all realise.

Every race of beings, from the humblest lichens to the

oak-tree, from the insects that assist the decay of the fallen giants of the forest and bring dead matter of all kinds back into the stream of life, up to the man, all are dependent on some, and are subservient to other, existences. A great deal too much has been made of the "cruelty" which this fact is supposed to involve. The rapine of Nature, the ceaseless preying of the stronger on the weaker, the incessant war of races, is only terrible to beings that have self-consciousness. To others the pain is exceedingly brief. The chickens feed on as quietly as before when the gliding hawk has passed onwards with his prey. The cattle who flee from the tiger begin quietly to graze as soon as the brindled marauder has selected his victim, while lower forms of life do not even know that their fate is approaching, and are extinguished even before they are aware of being threatened. The dominant notes in Nature are of joy; disease among actual *feræ naturæ* is well-nigh unknown, and it is only human imagination, looking before and after, which sees misery and apprehension in this interchange of life. Conflict is shocking only among moral beings who know a higher law than the animal instinct of self-preservation, and the true aspect of Nature is one of beauty and order and mutual dependence, as well as of general movement upwards to higher and more perfect forms of life.

3. As external Nature is the sum of the actions of its units, and the expression of the solidarity of their existence, so the social order is the sum of the actions of individuals. In the latter, as in the former, the same interdependence is seen; no part of human civilisation can be detached from that which brought it about. Mr. Herbert Spencer's illustration of the Walter press is a case in point. He shows how this triumph of mechanical skill is due to a long ancestry of hand printing presses, to the invention of cylindrical printing, to that of papier-mache stereotyping,

of rollers for inking, and to the many other inventions that preceded it. He goes on to show how these are all impossible without highly elaborated machine-shops, themselves the descendants of rude hammer and anvil; he connects these with the growth of the iron industry and the mechanical skill of the engineer and artisan, and with a whole division of social phenomena, with mathematics, physics, chemistry, which give the proportion of parts, the steam-engine to drive it, the kinds of rapid-drying ink to print with, &c. Finally, the whole use and existence of the thing depends on the intellectual development of the nation which gives a reading public who demand their news in such form as the machine supplies; and, after all this, very many aspects, such as the personal development of the inventor, are not even touched upon.

Every trade presupposes all others, and is dependent on them both for its genesis and for its continuance. An individual civilisation is an impossible thing. Without the interchange of products all commerce and civilisation would stand still. This mutual exchange is the business of the world, which we are all engaged in carrying on, and this is both normal and healthy, for this is the condition of healthy development and the basis of intellectual and moral progress in the body politic. The instinct is sound that shows active life in the world as the real work of the human unit and not contemplation, though this may have its place also, even during active life, and especially as its preparation and as its sequel. But just as the higher forms of animal life tend towards self-consciousness, so the social action tends towards mental and moral development, and exists for this. It is too often thought of as if its object were greater provision of ease, comfort, and enjoyment, and not as the mere instrument for the development of intelligence and character.

This temper of mind is materialism, a word generally

understood as the intellectual proposition that nothing exists save matter, and that thought and volition are its phenomena, but far better applied to a belief as proved by actions than to a theory which is both experimentally untenable and contradicted by the whole history of human thought.

4. But Materialism is as widely prevalent in practice as it is constantly disclaimed in theory; our whole language proves that this is so. While we speak of death as the King of Terrors, and of our friends as extinct; while we use real and material as synonyms; while we devote our whole time to the acquisition or the enjoyment of mere comforts, subordinating intellectual culture to them, we are materialists, call ourselves what we may. Were it not so, if men did actually realise soul as a separate entity, there would not be the strenuous denial of well-attested facts that is so conspicuous when psychic phenomena are alluded to. It is the conviction that if these things are true they must radically change our ground of thought and action which is the chief bar to their acceptance. We love our present lives, we cling to matter and the pleasures of sense, and would on no account leave them to rise higher; it is to us the solid, the real, the near; all else is hazy and remote, and it does not occur to us that if the Beyond really is, the haziness and remoteness may be entirely in our undeveloped perceptions.

Of soul as the transforming power in matter, the equal working of the Creative Power in Nature, men have scarcely any perception, true and beautiful as the idea is. Even the teachers of Evolution, by whom this idea is only implied, are popularly decried and misunderstood. "Don't talk to me of Darwin, horrid man! Didn't he say that our forefathers were monkeys, and that we have no souls? I'm sure he did, because he is so like a monkey himself, you know," said a lady to me once, who showed her consciousness

of having a soul by spending a quarter of her income and half her available time in adorning her body. But this fair animal gave no evidence that the soul to which she laid claim served any other purpose than that of keeping her body alive. So far as concerned thought, aspiration, desire to help others, or practical use in the world, her soul might almost have been non-existent, and it had certainly never dawned on her that she was then one of those useless units that consume without end and produce nothing, for the children she could indeed bear, but had not the knowledge to train, were weaklings; and as regards the progress of the world, she would have been less missed than any Durham miner or railway navvy. She was of course, poor thing, not altogether to blame, for she was but the reflection of a temper pervading society. To obtain the maximum of comfort at the least cost, to enjoy oneself whoever else may be suffering, is an aim of life by no means confined to the butterflies of society—nay, it is, with supreme irony, actually carried into our ideas of the world beyond, and the most utterly cold-hearted indifference to the eternal sufferings of others is supposed to be compatible with a high spiritual state.

The fear and dislike which too many Churchmen show at the very name of Evolution, which seems to them to eliminate God, is another phase of the same temper, which, regarding the material substratum of civilisation as a final and individual end, fails to perceive that the only hope for the future lies in equal opportunities of development for all to the end of abolishing crime and anarchism by the growth of healthy minds and bodies, and that this can only be by putting an end alike to the superfluity of living which stifles thought, and to the deficiencies which starve it. "Confound the fellows, they will end by driving trade out of the country; they ought to be compelled to work at the usual wages," says Dives at the club, speaking of a dockers' strike,

apparently quite unable to realise the grinding misery involved in uncertain employment at sixpence an hour. Stolid lack of imagination bred of material comforts is the frame of mind in which we approach trouble bearing on others and not on ourselves. It is not bodies only that suffer from fatty degeneration, but souls also, and the intense desire for more and more money, more and more power, or more and more luxury breeds indifference to the miseries of the world, and to the causes whence they arise. This applies chiefly to those who, having all that is needed for healthy development, spend their superfluity either on an increased plethora of personal comforts or in heaping up more and more of the wealth they know not how to use except in enervating luxuries or in empty display. To follow all the idiotic changes in costume that are called fashions, to be the possessors, not of strength, health, intelligence, and artistic perception, but of a yacht, a moor, horses, equipages, and a big balance at the bank, these are the squalid ambitions that devastate our own lives and oppress the lives of others.

Perimus licitis! We perish by permitted things, and strive for wealth while the very capacity for thought is dying within us and our brothers are dying of atrophy around. Finer dresses, greater profusion of food, larger houses, more servants, heavier carpets, fantastic furniture, greater expense, such are modern desires; and while the men of old spent their wealth on models of national statuary and architecture, and produced the cities whose ruins yet preserve the memory of that old world which builded masonry of fifty-ton blocks of granite where we use bricks, and covered an Acropolis with temples which are still models of grace; while those who were united by one great idea adorned Europe with cathedrals of which we make puny and bastard copies, we spend our labour and our money on houses which are the reflection of our selfish

individualism and of our artistic imbecility, and whose chief merit is their impermanence.

The things wherein the age is great are its railways, bridges, and steamships, its machinery of all kinds, and, height of irony, its repeating firearms, and these, the former at any rate, do the great work to which this century has been called, the welding of all mankind into one unit by commercial activity and ready intercommunication. These things are also the body of a growing soul, the channels of power, and through them must come the era of co-operant civilisation as opposed to competitive individualism. But as for the units who are building up its fabric, they work unwitting of the end, and, in their ignorance, delay it by fratricidal strife for things which are for use, not for possession ; till even the very sciences, whereby these same things could be produced in such volume as to suffice for all, are regarded as useful mainly in the degree in which they add to personal riches, comfort, and dominion. Well may we, with Ruskin, be little astonished at what men suffer, while we marvel exceedingly at what they lose. For the blindness which fails to see that all these things are not valuable in themselves, but only for the end of improving human conditions so as to put wholesome lives within the reach of all, is one with the materialism which lives for the body only and with the selfishness which ignores the needs of others ; which seeks an individual as opposed to a social good, and hopes for a personal salvation which could only exist in indifference or forgetfulness of the agony of its fellows, and thus perpetuates envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness in place of kindly help and mutual love.

CHAPTER V

SOUL—THE FORMING POWER

“Soul is to body as form is to matter.”*

—ARISTOTLE.

“Stars sweep and question not. This is enough,
That life and death and joy and woe abide ;
And cause and sequence, and the course of Time
And Being’s ceaseless tide,
Which, ever changing, runs, linked like a river
By ripples following ripples, fast or slow—
The same yet not the same—from far-off fountains
To where its waters flow
Into the seas. These steaming to the sun
Give the lost wavelets back in cloudy fleece
To trickle down the hills and glide again ;
Having no pause nor peace.
This is enough to know, the phantasms are ;
The Heavens, Earths, Worlds, and changes changing them
A mighty whirling wheel of strife and stress
Which none can stay or stem.”

—SIR EDWIN ARNOLD, *The Light of Asia*.

“So every spirit as it is more pure
And hath in it the more of heavenly light,
So it the fairer body doth procure
To habit in, and it more fairly dight,
With cheerful grace and amiable sight.
For of the soul the body form doth take
For soul is form and doth the body make.”

—SPENSER, *The Faerie Queen*.

* By “form” is here to be understood that which produces form, moulding energy.

CHAPTER V

SOUL—THE FORMING POWER

“There rolls the deep where grew the tree.
O Earth! what changes thou hast seen!
There where the long street roars hath been
The stillness of the central sea.

The hills are shadows, and they flow
From form to form, and nothing stands;
They melt in mist, the solid lands,
Like clouds they shape themselves and go.”

—*In Memoriam.*

1. IN the Firth of Tay may still be seen at low tides the decayed stumps of an ancient forest, yet standing where the great trees once grew in rank luxuriance. They are now almost covered by the sandy shore, and in the course of time will no doubt entirely disappear beneath the waves. Many other such partially submerged forests are known in various parts of the world; and, not to speak of the gigantic growths of the coal-beds covered with strata containing the sea-shells and rolled pebbles of old sea-beaches, there are many similar facts which show how frequently different parts of the earth's surface have been alternately mountain ridge and sea floor. “Every fact is a solemn thing,” says Emerson, “for it is the voice of God in Nature;” and these facts are perhaps specially solemn things, for they are the record of the Power by which this world was fashioned. How frequent and widespread have been these changes of

level, and how universal has been this process of upheaval and subsidence, may be exemplified by another fact. In the heart of the Himalayas, on the very top of one of its mountains, is a cap of chalk. This self-same material, composed of minute sea-shells, was deposited on the bed of primeval oceans, was upheaved in succeeding ages to form the white cliffs of Kent, and is now accumulating on the floor of the Atlantic at about a foot in a century. It is known as Globigerina ooze.

The lines prefixed to this chapter are not poetic simile but literal fact. Time is apparent by changes of state, and, except to our perception, is neither short nor long—nay, except by changes in our own state, we are unconscious of Time at all. That geologic process is to our petty lives a slow one, and the hills the very types of everlastingness, does not alter the fact that all nature is in a state of flux and motion, baseless, impermanent, and presenting an endless succession of forms.

2. What is this which, constant in the inconstant earth, is the immediate cause of this stupendous procession of change? The answer can be given in one word. It is energy; principally in the form of heat. Yes. The power which acts simply by causing the atoms of matter to vibrate a little faster, and thus causes masses slightly to expand, ultimates in the gigantic forces which bend layers of solid rock thousands of feet thick like the rind of a shrivelling apple, and throw the earth's crust into those elevations and depressions which we call mountains and oceans.* This

* This will be easier to grasp if it is realised that, taking the highest mountains and deepest seas together, the difference of level is about ten miles, or about $\frac{1}{800}$ part of the earth's diameter. On a 25-inch globe the same fraction of the diameter would be $\frac{2.5}{800}$ of an inch, or about $\frac{1}{320}$, so that the greatest depth of the Atlantic would be represented by a wide depression of about $\frac{1}{4}$ of an inch deep, and the highest peaks of the Himalaya by small grains of sand of about the same height, the *average* height and depth being considerably less.

energy has already been demonstrated as ethereal by nature, the soul of physical things, that enduring and indestructible thing which pervades and transforms all matter. It is energy in the form of heat that gives rise to the winds, which gather and distribute water as snow and rain. It is energy, again, whereby plants grow, light and heat being assimilated by the plant-life, decomposing the gases in the air* and building them up into organic fibre, which in its turn serves men and beasts and is the basis of all animal life. Finally, it is generally admitted that life is a high form of this same energy, and it will readily be recognised that soul possesses the attributes of that ethereal world of energy to which it has been referred, its power of transforming matter from within, its penetration of and manifestation by matter, and finally its permanence.

3. Statements of fact are ultimately the material for all thought, and the special function of the soul is understanding, the process which formulates the relations existing between facts; it is therefore of the very first importance that these statements be correct if all mental labour is not to be lost.

Observation of any series of facts reveals a regular order running through them. Repetition of experiment repeats the order, and however often this process is carried on, the same results ensue. The observed sequence is then called a law of nature, from the analogy of a supreme law-giver and sovereign will, and thus is built up that accurate knowledge about common things which is called science. This may be illustrated by any well-known process, say the manufacture of iron. The savage finds a heavy red stone. He heats

* A very small portion of the fibre of plants is derived through their roots, which mainly absorb water and mineral salts. For the carbon whereof it is so largely composed the plant is indebted to the carbonic acid gas in the air, which it breathes in by its leaves, retaining the carbon and giving back the oxygen.

it strongly and hammers it. The earthy part exudes; it becomes denser and blacker. A continuation of the process results in a lump of metal, which can be forged into spear-heads. Gradually it comes to be discovered that large masses of ore can be treated by heat alone, and that the metal will flow like water. But the resulting cast iron differs from the hammered "bloom," and it is not till after laborious experiment that it is found possible to convert the former into the latter. But every process, however often repeated with the same ore, is found to give identical results, and the metal produced, whether from clay ironstone, red hæmatite, or black magnetic ore, is always iron. Careful examination shows that this metal, however produced, has certain definite and invariable properties. It forms three distinct oxides, combines with acids forming crystals of fixed shapes from which the white metal can be made to reappear by suitable treatment, assumes certain distinctive colours with certain chemical reagents, and in this way a knowledge of the chemistry of iron is built up. Similar experiment with all other known substances in this kind of relation to each other constitutes chemistry as a whole, which consists of statements of the relation subsisting between the elements and their compounds.

Here in brief is the summary of the growth of all sciences. First, the inquiring mind (subject); secondly, external phenomena (object); the comparison of results leading to general statements of relation and revealing invariable sequences which the human mind has named, by analogy, LAW. The knowledge of Law therefore necessarily depends on the collection of facts and on a vast mass of experiment.

But inasmuch as no life is long enough to verify one-hundredth part of the mass of recorded facts, and many of these, as in astronomical and historic matters, are in the nature of the case unrepeatable, knowledge must largely

depend on the testimony of those who actually observed the facts, and here it is customary (and rational) to accept all honest testimony which agrees with the known order of things. Thus observation of experimental facts and testimony regarding others forms the basis of knowledge to the present generation, and all science is but the result of reasoning on this foundation, supplemented by fresh experiment. In other words, it is the application of healthy mental process to certain statements of fact (termed the premises) leading to certain necessary conclusions.

The attitude of assurance that the conclusions reached are correct is called Belief.

It is clear, therefore, that all belief concerning the relation between external objects must depend on the experimental or recorded evidence of the senses.

4. For continuous progress in knowledge it is necessary that the collection of facts should be continuous and be freely interchanged between men. This exchange of idea stimulates to further thought, brings difficulties to light, suggests fresh experiment, and thus leads to increasing perception of truth, bracing minds by exercise and rendering them fitter instruments for new discovery.

Hence comes steady growth in scientific knowledge. Science never goes back ; insight is continuous, and no one perfectly performed experiment ever invalidates any other. Some persons may be inclined to controvert this statement, but if so, this will be from an inadequate appreciation of the distinction between facts and those inferences from facts which are called theories. Facts are the gems in the diadem of Science ; theory is the thread that holds them together. It is of little value in itself, but serves a useful purpose ; it may wear out, or, being too inelastic, it may break in the attempt to add a new jewel to the row, and must then be replaced. Fresh insight correlates facts once thought to have no connection, such as chemical affinity

and electrical attraction ; or fresh facts are discovered, such as the rate at which light travels in a dense substance ; or fresh measurements are made, such as those by Joule and Rumford which connected heat with quantity of motion arrested. In each of these cases the thread could not stretch to admit the new fact, and the former ideas of chemical affinity as a separate force, of light as corpuscles shot out from the sun, and of heat as "caloric fluid," were replaced by the notions of atomic electrical charges, of light as ethereal vibration, and of heat as a mode of molecular motion. Nothing was changed but the string.

Throughout these "revolutions" in science there was strict continuity both in discovery and insight, and the change was entirely on the surface. There might be—nay, alas for poor human nature ! there often was—nearly as much uncharity between opposing schools in science as in theology ; men are at all times ready to fight for their passing theories and to neglect Nature's eternal facts, but the strife was transient and the differences short-lived.

To take the change which most resembles a complete reversal of teaching, that from the Ptolemaic to the Copernican astronomy. All depended on one simple assumption for which ordinary human "common-sense" and not any theory of scientists was responsible. It was assumed as self-evident that the earth was at rest ; and the motions of the heavenly bodies were observed from a supposed fixed platform. The path of the stars was seen to be quite regular from east to west, except for the sun, moon, and six bright "wanderers," whose position with regard to the other stars showed them to be moving alternately slower and faster than the rest. It was apparent that these moved in epicycles, rolling on the whole celestial vault each under some peculiar law of its own, adverse to the *primum mobile*, or primal motion, given by Deity to the rest of the heavens. Each planet was hence supposed to have its own "crystal

sphere" or "heaven," and thus the seven planets involved seven heavens, the seventh or highest heaven being the vault in which moved the sun. The language of Scripture was held to warrant the truth of the theory, as indeed it does, being constructed upon it.

The theory was crude, but the observations were exact; the cycles and epicycles were the perfectly correct apparent paths. The whole error lay in the assumption that the measurements were from a fixed point of observation, an assumption that it had never occurred to the observers to doubt. In process of time (and, be it noted, on an *a priori* hypothesis suggested by discoveries in mechanics) it came to be doubted whether the apparent were also the real path. Copernicus observed that all the known facts, and some inexplicable and doubtful ones for which human ignorance took refuge "in the will of God," could be explained simply and rationally on the reverse assumption, and the change was effected. Galileo and his telescope, Tycho Brahe and his observations, and Kepler with his mathematical power followed, and the new theory gave proof of its truth as time went on by agreeing with a hundred facts unknown at the time of its conception, and by covering the whole range of planetary motion by one simple application of Law.

In all this, to revert to the illustration, there was steady progress; one jewel after another was added to the shining row, and ever fresh and fresh insight was gained into the beauty of that Nature which is the garment of God. As always, truth was found far to transcend man's finite and futile limitations. After each new discovery no repudiation of the old, no abjuration of dogmas, was required; the new method of explaining known facts simply showed greater power of correlating phenomena than the old, and replaced it. Discarded theories (which are not so much erroneous as imperfect) are seen to be necessary steps in the

ascent. Even by a revelation a perfect theory could not be given, for a perfect theory is the perfect insight of a perfect being, and the very words in which to give it do not as yet exist, a truth which will be made clear by comparing any modern scientific work with one written a century ago on the same subject; the new ideas are largely expressed in new words which then would have been unintelligible.

All advance comes by united effort. Genius plays a smaller part than that which is usually assigned to it, or rather its part is different. "*La génie, c'est la patience;*" it combines and utilises the labours of others in place of letting these lie unheeded, as do most minds. None of the victories of science could have been gained without those that preceded them: Laplace would have been helpless without Copernicus, and he without the mere drudging observers who collected the celestial facts, and even without Ptolemy and the Alexandrian mathematicians, who, in pursuit of mere abstract knowledge, investigated the properties of curves, knowledge which for twelve centuries lay fallow. As with material civilisation, so with the intellectual civilisation which is its cause, co-operation is the condition of progress, and the more effective the co-operation the greater the progress. Here also the essentially social nature of man is evident, and here also the labours of all are the factors of the final result. No truths are fruitless; no efforts after knowledge are really wasted. Man learns by thought and by comparison; he progresses by his errors, and that not singly, but as one great family, by means of that free interchange of facts and thoughts which expands and develops aggregate knowledge.

5. It may well be asked, however, how it is that there are such painful divergences of belief, if all men have essentially the same faculties and belief is the result of reasoning power applied to the statements of fact collected by the community. In reply, it should suffice to point to

the small and short-lived divergences in such arts and sciences as do not raise men's passions, where all differences are at once composed by an appeal to evidence. In other cases men disagree, (1) because their reasoning powers are undeveloped, (2) because by training and constitution they are unwilling to look at certain groups of facts, (3) because the facts at their disposal are insufficient, or (4, and usually) because they are too indolent to go to the facts at all. The first of these is sometimes assigned as the chief. It is, however, the least. Those who cannot reason do not dispute; like animals, they feel rather than think. They may indeed struggle together, but it will be for material things. As to truths, they seldom disagree; their interest is not sufficiently awakened.

The second cause of opposition is much more productive of strife. It is called Bias. Nationality, profession, religion, and, perhaps most of all, wealth, including the want of it, exert each its disturbing influence. Every nation sets itself up on a pinnacle of fancied perfection, and the more complete the isolation the greater its contempt for all foreigners. China terms all aliens *Fan Kwei*, "foreign devils;" the Hindu considers all other men unclean; the Englishman speaks with contempt of French physique, the Frenchman of that inconsistency between professed religion and commercial practice which he calls English hypocrisy. Among the more ignorant classes the feeling extends to the pettiest divisions of village and county; the Cornish miner looks on the Norfolk labourer as an alien and a fool. "Can any good thing come out of Nazareth?" is a sentiment still in full vigour, and perhaps its most curious application is the contempt and hatred poured out by European nations on the race which gave birth to their God, whose most emphatic teaching was the unity of all men on the earth. So with professions: the tradesman sees only what will benefit trade; the lawyer profits by the law's delay, and does

not consider cheap and speedy justice even desirable. To cite religion is to name a hotbed of bias. The Mohammedan speaks of the Muslim only as "the Faithful;" all others are Kafirs, infidels destined to hell. The Catholic is scarcely more tolerant to the Protestant, nor the Orthodox Eastern Church to either. To open a history written by the one, and to compare it with that written by the other, is to see to what an amazing extent religious bias can operate. But of all bias that of wealth is perhaps the most perverting. All men desire to gain, most desire to keep, and reason is called in to defend positions already taken up, not to judge of their soundness. On the one hand, every thief thinks himself at liberty to redress the inequalities of society in his own person, every speculator thinks it legitimate to obtain a profit for which nothing is given in return; and, on the other, the man of money thinks every device to increase his store by taking advantage of the wants of others is necessarily just because it is open to unfortunates driven to his terms by misery to take the alternative of starvation. The same political questions appear in an utterly different light to the man of property and to the artisan, and that the cause of bias is merely wealth appears from the fact that when the latter rises from the proverbial half-crown to affluence, he is generally conservative and almost always unsympathetic. Wealth makes optimists, poverty pessimists, and the bias of each is perhaps the most universal and the most difficult to eliminate of them all.

In the third place, men disagree because the data at their disposal are insufficient. It is not every one who, like Johnson, has the courage to confess that his errors are due to "ignorance, madam; pure ignorance;" but nothing can be more obvious to the thoughtful man than that his mistakes are constantly due to crass ignorance of the facts. Consider the never-ending Irish question. How many of those who are called upon to vote upon it have carefully read the facts

that bear on the case? have studied what even Froude and Justin M'Carthy alone have written on the subject? How many have compared the history of the past three centuries as written by both Protestants and Catholics, who have endeavoured to understand the principles of jurisprudence and of political economy in conformity to which alone laws can be just? In short, how many persons endeavour to find out the facts for a solution instead of engaging in an endless babel of words.*

But the capital reason of all disagreement lies in this, that, over and above the causes which have been named, men pronounce dogmatically on no basis at all but that of mere desire. What "ought to be done" means in most mouths, not the result of inferences, but of preferences. We are naturally loth to examine on what our creeds rest, and our beliefs are in consequence scarcely correlated to facts at all. We accept such dicta as please us, and take the biassed conclusions of other men, not as evidence, but as premises, whence results a complex mass of error which can hardly be disentangled.

It is thus to want of knowledge of facts, either unavoidable or wilful or indolent, that conflict of opinion is mainly due; in one word, to IGNORANCE of facts themselves, and therefore also of the sequences and relations among them which are called laws of Nature; and it follows that the acknowledgment of evidence alone as the basis of belief is the only means whereby the reconciliation of differences can be brought about.

6. As Body would degrade all things to minister to personal appetite, so the undeveloped soul would drag down all truth to the level of its own preferences. The natural

* It will frequently be urged that time does not admit of this thoroughness. Whether this plea is justified can only be determined in any given case by a strict statement of the way in which the man spends his hours. The cases are few in which duty prescribes a knowledge which time rather than pleasure forbids.

error of the human mind in which the spirit is dormant or undeveloped is Dogmatism, the setting up of its own particular forms as final truth. At the present day the solar myth which represented God to the ages of antiquity, and dwelt on the Divine power revivifying the world like the light and warmth of the summer sun, has been replaced by the human myth which considers the Divine action under the symbols of anthropomorphic government and judgment, of atonement and of forgiveness. But this, if God is infinite and incomprehensible, is necessarily as much symbolic as the other, though the symbolism be that of a higher sphere of activity.

Unfortunately this is not admitted, and the dogmatising temper, after deciding, on its own bias, that certain beliefs are meritorious in themselves, makes the criterion of truth in daily life to be evidence resting on experiment, but in religious matters a book resting on Authority. The difference between scientific and clerical authority is simply this: that the one puts forward evidence, and the other conclusions. The scientific man claims to be best able to speak authoritatively on certain questions of fact, but no truly scientific body ever decides *ex cathedra* on inferences as absolutely true and final.

But the clerical decisions even of individuals are nearly always absolute, and inasmuch as a council decided what books should be held to be canonical, and rejected others, and as it is impossible to point to any date at which the decisions of councils ceased to be valid, and, further, as the priests of all sections of Christianity differ among themselves, if the correctness of one out of all these conflicting beliefs be vitally important, a central authority is historically and logically necessary, which authority, on all historical grounds, can only be the Supreme Pontiff of the Western Church, who, quite consistently, allows of no reasoning where the Church has pronounced.

This Authority, however, rests on the premises that man is a fallen creature ; that an adverse Power introduced evil and ruined Creation ; that God devised a scheme of restoration, came to earth to give effect to it, and instituted a teaching body whose decisions rest, not on reasoning, however sound, but on Revelation, and therefore the whole position turns on whether these things are so, and whether the perfect Creation, the Tempter who could ruin God's work, the Fall, the committal of the purposes of God to one small nation, the institution of blood-sacrifice, until the culminating sacrifice which should result from the virgin birth of God Himself as the man Christ Jesus, His expiatory death, physical resurrection, and ascension to a local heaven, were historical events. The system is an organic whole, and it does not seem possible to select among its parts some for defence and some for abandonment. As a whole it is in strong antagonism to the inferences from the astronomical, geological, and physiological facts, which are concurrent in implying an evolutionary past for the planet and for man, and it ignores also the whole science of comparative religion, which shows how the ideas in question took their rise, and the parallel but dissimilar postulates of other religions which sway hundreds of millions of minds, including some of the most metaphysically acute nations of the world.*

* This is to degrade religion from the plane of Eternal Law to that of mere phenomenon, and this dwelling in the phenomena, both actual and parabolic, given in the sacred writings of all nations, and presenting these as final truth instead of perceiving in them the efforts of man to express transcendental verities, has been the bane of all priesthoods without exception, and leads to obscurantism, to love of darkness and mystery, and to hatred of scientific research, which seeks always to trace causes, and thus reveals the regular and orderly method of the Divine working by Spirit through Intelligence to manifestation under Law, and never by cataclysmal interference of the First Cause. But those who have attempted to buttress palpable fables like the Noachian deluge and Joshua's alleged miracle feel that

Thus, while all scientific authority permits mind to hold the balances, clerical authority requires it to bow. But mental processes are not altered by the order of facts submitted to them, and if evidence is the criterion of truth and facts the ground of belief for things secular, so must they likewise be for things clerical. But this view of the nature of belief is incompatible with the frame of mind which holds its own beliefs arrived at on grounds of faith to be absolute truths,* and with the clericalism which exacts from the votary not only that he does believe a creed, but that he will put away all doubt as sin.

This clericalism is not peculiar to any creed ; far less is it bound up with essential Christianity ; it is the temper which first makes creeds and then worships them, and teaches its own shibboleth in place of the certain truths of Nature.

if these are taken away inspiration is invalidated. So, regardless of the evidence that no fresh matter comes into existence, and that all motion arrested becomes heat, and therefore that had "the waters prevailed till all the high mountains under the whole heaven were covered," that would still be the sea-level ; and had the motion of the planet on its axis been stopped in order to afford Joshua a little more time for slaughter, the whole earth must have become incandescent ; they maintain that, in some unexplained way, these things are true, and invoke a *Deus ex machina* to upset the greatest and most certain laws of the universe, and to permanently stultify all reason in order to establish a few verses in a book of unknown authorship, which has passed through unknown changes, and has certainly been interpolated at different dates in parts which are essential to the doctrines built upon it.

Cf. the chapter on the "Criterion of Truth" in Draper's "Conflict of Religion and Science" (Trübner).

* *Cf.* Canon Liddon, "Some Elements of Religion," p. 33 :—"The truth (of Christianity) is absolute if it is true at all. . . . Would any sensible man die for a relatively true religion ?" Of course not ; nor is there any need that he should. The Christian martyrs suffered, not for believing in Jesus, but for denying the Gods of Rome, and gave their lives rather than lie. This is to die for GOD and Truth, but not for creed.

This is the special failing of the human intellect, and is common to all men. Spiritualists are no exception. Though there are among them many who put phenomena to their true use as the basis of fact required for reasoning, and as affording by comparison of effects the means of insight into causes, there are but too many who erect their own crude fancies, whether of Reincarnation, Summerland, guardian spirits, or what not, into absolute truths before which other minds must bow down.

7. This ignoring of the criterion of truth, and the consequent differences between the conclusions that are called religions, would be of little consequence were they merely academical questions. But as belief is always the main-spring of action, it is of all but the greatest importance:—

“If chance will have me king, why, chance may crown me
Without my stir,”

is ever but a passing thought. Even fatalism constantly urges men to action and to crime, as it did the ambitious thane. Our lives are our beliefs in practice, and the aggregate of human actions makes the social order, which is, in fact, only thought externalised; and habits, customs, and governments are but products of that subtle chemistry of mind which deals with the affinities between the souls of men.

The results of the want of common beliefs is but too painfully apparent. Religion, politics, and daily life ring with discords, and the power which should be used for advance is wasted in antagonisms. The crying need of modern society is that order and harmony which comes from the common reception of some great principle of life. It has been well observed that in the thirteenth century men so utterly different from each other as were Stephen Langton, S. Francis, Thomas Aquinas, Roger Bacon, Dante, Giotto, S. Louis, and Edward I. all profoundly accepted

one common order of ideas, and they could feel that they were together working out the same task. This cohesion has been dissolved, and a new bond of union must be found. It is in ascertainable facts and the inferences from them that there seems the only promise of agreement being reached.

This must be coextensive with humanity. Herbert Spencer has exhaustively shown that physical and mental progress alike are possible only by means of an enlightened public opinion. This is as true in absolute monarchies as in republics, for legislation, whether philosophic or Draconian, above the intellectual level of a people speedily ends in the laws being a dead letter; and in a democratic government the legislative action is obviously the collective opinion and will of an assembly which is expressly framed to express the popular mind rather than to lead it.

This general advance is the hope of democracy. Everything else has been tried. So-called theocracies, governments by priesthoods, by despots, by lawyers, by aristocracies, have all failed to impose wisdom from without. That it should grow up from within is the only hope of mankind. No form of government administered by honest men is an ill thing, but no form is or ever can be a remedy for the suffering produced by ignorance among all men and only to be remedied by the removal of its cause.

No limitation to certain classes can be admitted. Mental training has two aspects, and is widely misapprehended because one only of these is dwelt upon. The view which takes human conditions, not as the result of men's own action, but as "the ordinance of God," necessarily refers mental training to position in life and ignores half its purport and meaning. But the philosophy which regards each man, rich or poor, as a spirit developing in earth-life, while it emphatically insists on the primary

importance of the race and the secondary importance of the unit, knows nothing of the unsuitability of any real knowledge for any human soul. As the work which each has to do in the world is the primary purpose of each man and woman in it, and neither present comforts for the body nor ulterior comforts for the soul, it follows that though the education which best fits each to play his or her probable part in life is indeed the first need, yet after that, all knowledge of the facts of nature and human life that can be grasped can only operate to make the learner a worthier being. Such knowledge, however, must be sought for its own sake and not for the purpose of being coined. No man can know too much nor be educated above his position so that he understands that education has two sides, the one which fits him for his work, and the other which gives him fellowship with truth. The course indicated by the philosophy of causation as right and wise, is that every child born into the world shall receive an equal chance, and that, where all govern, in the wisdom of all lies the only hope of safety. But to gain this end education of the mind must be directed, not to furnishing a cyclopædic mental outfit, but to the drawing out of faculty, to the training which will enable a mind to go through life drawing just conclusions. Children must be taught *how* to think, not *what* to think.

This is being gradually understood. That the majorities of voters who are to hold the reins of power must be educated is admitted. It is remarkable, too, how very rapidly class distinctions are becoming obliterated, and how men are taken more and more for what they are in themselves apart from birth, training, or even profession. The pettiness which thinks a man greater for a title and the flunkeyism which bows down to wealth will take long to eradicate, but it is perceptibly lessening; and if progress is but slow towards the perception that

handicrafts are as honourable as brain-work, we have at least passed the stage when all work was thought derogatory to a "gentleman" and arms his only profession. When the second aspect of education is applied and understood, and the working man is also a cultivated man, the esteem that worth commands will not be refused, and they who profess a religion whose Founder was a carpenter may at least spare themselves the inconsistency of thinking manual labour and cultivation of mind incompatible.

While the consequence to society of want of mental training is apparent in the unhappy divisions which are so common, the consequence to individuals is much less obvious in this life than in the next stage of psychic development. Admittedly a school-time for the life to come, the true bearing of that simile is but little perceived, for God is turned into the great Examiner, and the result of the schooling is supposed to be an awarded prize. But the end of the schooling of life is the knowledge itself and not any prize; it is neither more nor less than the development of character, of which a trained intellect is a part.*

In the beyond this is clearly seen. Here body perceives facts. It is the function of mind to correlate these, and thus to acquire faculty to deal with more facts. When the man passes into the unseen the scope of his perception is greatly widened. Looking over all lands and into many hearts, seeing as in a panorama the events of the past

* This is not to say that the poor who have been deprived of opportunity are unfitted for the life beyond, though this same lack of opportunity is a grievous drawback to many. But truth is not from books alone, and comes by observation and an honest desire to learn. Many are the "mute, inglorious Miltons" whose powers, now dormant, not from want of will, but from lack of opportunity, will astonish "their betters" when their true selves are seen. Those who loved to know in this life can rapidly acquire knowledge there; it is the habit of mental indolence that is so fatal.

and the foregleams of the future, he then sees as fact much that here can only be inferred. But whether or not he can turn this to use depends entirely on his capacity. None are fit or able to use their opportunities there but such as have prepared their minds here, and have loved Truth for her own sake. The mass of undeveloped spirits who care not for anything but their own miserable selves is proof enough of the awful consequences of wilful ignorance, which, being inherent in the darkened soul, goes with it into the spirit-land, at once consequence and punishment. Let us not be deceived, for, as Paul told the Galatians, GOD is not mocked; each man shall bear the burden of his own making, and whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he surely reap.

Knowledge of the real forces of the universe, physical and spiritual, is the key to right action. It is the neglect of this truth which is one potent cause for the stream of undeveloped souls who constantly go from earth-life to the unseen and react on others here. Till it is better understood that education is the development of mental faculty by contact with real facts, not the acquisition of perhaps useless knowledge, soul-training, not mind-stuffing, the darkness in which the sects struggle and fight, ignorant that all are results of the same human desire to express principles as realities tangible by the mind, will continue. This strife can only be ended by man himself, and it is literal truth that Longfellow tells us:—

“Were half the power that fills the world with terror,
Were half the wealth bestowed on camps and courts,
Given to redeem the human mind from error
There were no need of arsenals nor forts.”

And the power and the wealth must be given, for none, whether God or angel, will do it for us; and then, seeing facts, men may perhaps agree on the conclusions which

flow from them. But meanwhile Europe stands with forty thousand regiments armed to slay and be slain, and middle-class England grumbles at its school rates and reluctantly consents to the only two things that can save it from dissolution, unsectarian education and diffused thought.

8. If belief is the result of a chain of reasoning whose ultimate premises are present or recorded sense-perceptions, it necessarily follows that no beliefs are moral or immoral. A belief may be true, in which case it subserves morality, or untrue, when it has the reverse effect. But morality has no place in the intellect, which simply compares and co-ordinates. Animals can do this, but they have no morality, which, moreover, is obviously not coextensive with mental acuteness. The cleverest men are not always devout, nor even honest. Henry VIII. was educated for the Catholic Church, and whatever were his abilities both as a theologian and as a statesman, he is scarcely a shining example of morality. A perfect knowledge, by showing the unwisdom of injustice, would no doubt lead to morality. But this is unattainable. Anything like perfect knowledge on any one subject involves the knowledge of all the correlated facts. Those which have a direct bearing on any question are very numerous, and the indirect ones are quite unrealisable in their number; while, in the maze of human affairs, it is often hard to say whether the so-called indirect causes are not much the more important factors in the given result. A man is ruined because his land is unsaleable; this state of things is due to the depression of agriculture; the depression is the result of many causes, one of the chief being the large import of wheat from Russia and India; this import is stimulated by the fall in the price of silver, so that both these countries can command a larger and larger price in roubles and rupees for the same amount of corn; this fall in

silver is due to the Latin Union ceasing to coin silver for all comers in 1871; this again was owing to the drain of gold to Germany for the reform of her coinage, France desiring to protect her reserves from her enemy; and so on. Every fact is linked to all others, and its right comprehension involves all departments of human thought; chains of direct causes run out to remote original events, and every link in its turn is the result of other causes direct and indirect to it, and such is the interdependence of human affairs that it soon becomes evident that if the intellect alone is to decide finally on courses of action, public and private, nothing less than a knowledge of all groups of fact soever is required in order to arrive at conclusions that cannot be challenged. This impossibility for the one mind is partly surmounted by the combination of minds acting in the unison which comes of mutual respect for the calm and reasoned opinions of others; but even thus the information is so scanty, bias so great, life so short, experience so difficult, that intellect is but a poor guide at best, and all truth it can show us, being necessarily expressed under images derived from our own experience, is therefore relative and not absolute even on the simplest matters.

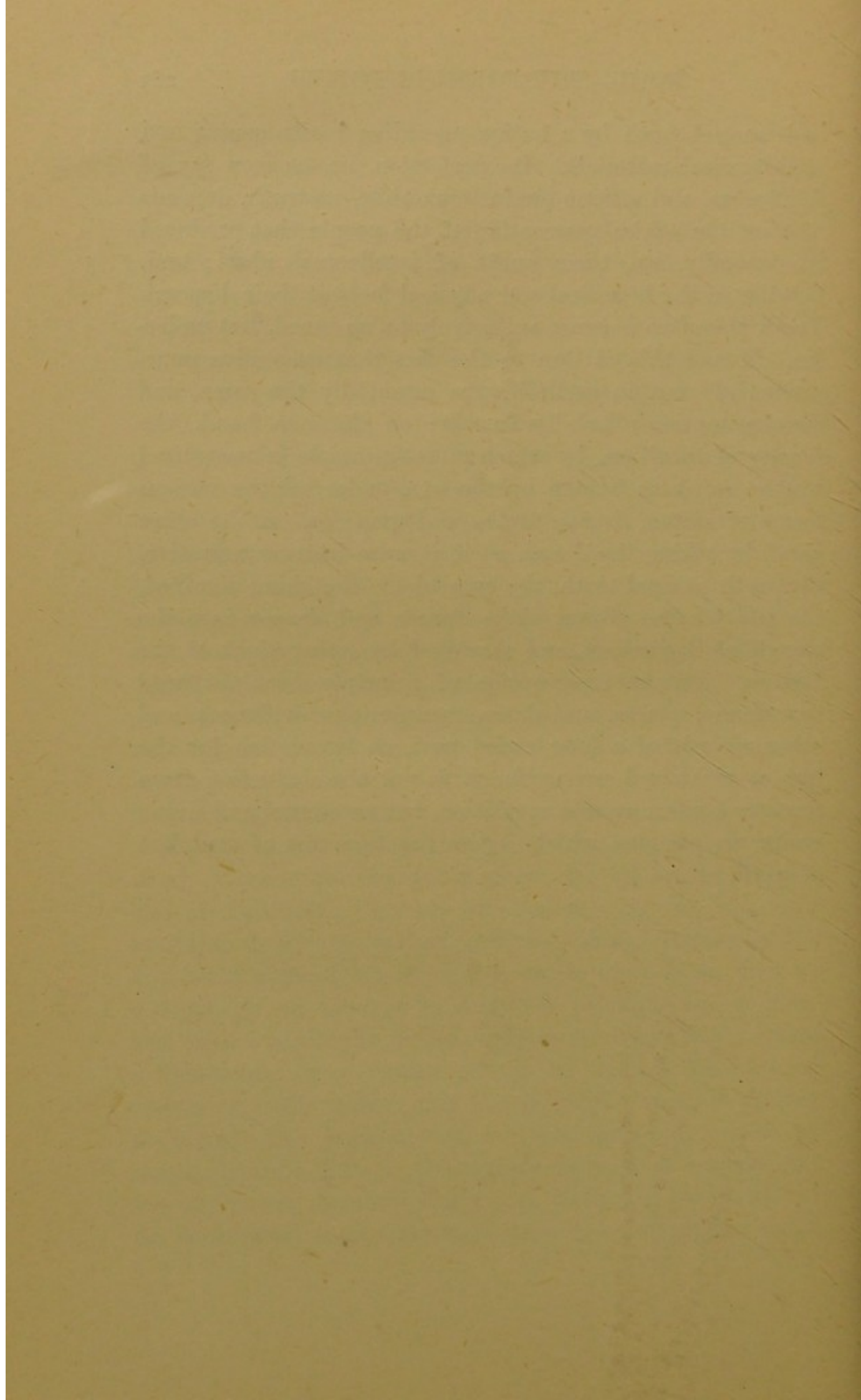
The guide here is the recognition of moral principle. As energy is to matter so is principle to thought, that which directs and conditions it. Ethic is in fact a *calculus* which will speedily solve the problems of human action correctly where the more cumbrous intellectual process fails. As the law of energy applied to mechanics gives rapid and complete solutions of many engineering problems exceedingly intricate by previous methods, so the simple question, "Is it right?" is much more easily answered than, "Is it wise?" and inasmuch as morality and wisdom always coincide, the higher answer covers both questions.

Logically the union of morality and wisdom is bound up

with the gravest and deepest questions. For if perfect honesty is not really here and now the best policy, if the world be so framed that sorrow and misery here is necessary to ultimate moral order and must continue for the present, then it is clear that the only consistent system of thought must, under one form or another, be that which seemed to the old Persian Magi the best solution of life's theorem, an eternal conflict between two equal and co-eternal principles of light and darkness, good and evil, Ormazd and Ahriman, the latter of which the Jews imported into their Scriptures after the Captivity under the name of the Serpent, a symbolism that was later turned into "the devil." But if this opposition of good and evil is but a figure of speech, and not an absolute fact; if the terrible burden of human want and misery is due simply and solely to the misdirection of energy which should benefit all men, so that the power which should be a fertilising stream is turned to a devastating torrent, then we have to seek for the cause of all suffering in the infraction of one beneficent and harmonious law, and the problems of life take on quite another aspect, leading to the principle of Ethics as the fountain of all advantage to the race through the unit.

This perception of principle has nothing to do with creed. Creeds are the words which are set to the harmonies of Principle; they are the natural growths from the constant desire to realise spiritual things intellectually. Just as a work of art is an attempt to embody an idea, so a dogma is an attempt to realise a principle by an idea. But as we habitually regard body as a reality and soul as a hypothesis, by a similar process we regard the form of dogma as truth rather than the principle which it strives to voice. The work of art, whether painting, statue, or music, depends first on the artist's capacity of conception; second, on his technical skill; and, lastly, on his materials. So each creed is the result of some principle apprehended

and imaged forth by a nation according to its genius and its historical materials. Its perfection, or, as men say of intellectual and artistic productions alike, its truth, depends first on the ethical perception of the people that produced it; secondly, on their outfit of intellectual ideas; and, thirdly, on the historical and physical facts at their disposal. Truth therefore belongs exclusively to no creed, but underlies all, and this is due to the fact that successive generations of men in earth-life are essentially the same, and develop upwards or downwards; on the one hand, the faculty of Intuition, by which moral principle is recognised by the spirit as beauty by the eye, under all the various forms of statue, drama, myth, or dogma; or, on the other hand, by taking the drama as if it were historic narrative, the myth as final truth, the symbol for the thing signified, the rite for the power, sinks deeper and deeper into the slough of dogmatism, and may end by losing sight of the Divine. But this perception of principle does not need any names, places, and dates, manuscripts, evidences, and other records of a long-buried past, as foundation for the law of right and wrong, for it is not the deduction from any creed, nor a written revelation, but an eternal and living verity, to perceive which is the function, not of soul, but of spirit.



CHAPTER VI

SPIRIT—THE DIRECTING WILL

“Knowledge of the lowest kind is un-unified knowledge ; Science is partially unified knowledge ; Philosophy is completely unified knowledge. It is the final product of that process which begins with a mere colligation of crude observations, goes on establishing propositions that are broader and more separate from particular cases, and ends with universal propositions.”—HERBERT SPENCER.

“The problem is this: What is the beginning or first principle of motion in the soul? Now it is evident that, as GOD is in the universe and the universe is in GOD, the Divinity is in us also, in a certain sort the universal mover of mind. For the principle of Reason is not reason, but something better. Now what can we say is better than science except GOD?”—ARISTOTLE, *Ethics*, lib. vii. ch. 14.

“He felt the heart of silence
Throb with a soundless word ;
And by the inward ear alone
A spirit's voice he heard.

And the spoken word seemed written
On air and wave and sod ;
And the bending walls of sapphire
Blazed with the thought of GOD.”

—WHITTIER, *The Vision of Echard*.

CHAPTER VI

SPIRIT—THE DIRECTING WILL

“It is the spirit that quickeneth ; the flesh profiteth nothing.”

—JESUS.

1. INDEPENDENTLY of the analogy which is observable between the material and ethereal orders of existence, reflection on the phenomena of motion must soon lead to the conviction that it is as impossible to refer the origin of motion to ether as to matter. Light, heat, electricity, magnetism, are, it is said, vibrations of the ether, motion in a frictionless medium. Matter, it is said, consists of ethereal atoms separated off by vortex motion. Agreeing to this as a high probability, the obvious inquiry follows—What set this frictionless medium in motion ? There must necessarily be somewhat which stands to ether in the same relation in which itself stands to that realm of matter in and by which it acts. This “somewhat” the universal consciousness of mankind has named Spirit. It is both external and internal to man, and gives proof of identity by similarity of characteristics. Its common attributes, whether in the individual man or in the external world, are Power and Orderliness.

Force is that which produces or tends to produce motion, energy in process of transfer, and a true mathematical definition is not falsified by having a different order of fact presented to it. What is it that moves minds, and thus makes the history of the world ? What is it that sets in motion that train of delicate mechanism that raises the arm

to strike and throws the energies of nations into the multifarious activities of commerce, war, and enterprise? There can be but one answer; it is the power of Will, and this is the characteristic of organised spirit.

Analysing back any phenomenon soever, we come, first to Ether, and then to Spirit. Take, for instance, the life of flowers, those beautiful bridal chambers where the dual life, male and female, meets and embraces its twin, showing to all who have eyes to see and hearts to feel, the sweetness and purity of the love-principle in its orderly manifestation. What is the force which ripens pistil and stamens and dyes the corolla with the purest tints on earth? Light: without which it droops and dies. But light is ether in motion, and, without asking whence came this motion, what is that which can lay hold of and assimilate the ethereal energy? What but the life of the plant, that soul which determines not only its form but its powers. But if in the plant, as in the man soul be organised ether, there must of necessity be that which organises, and here we enter on the realm of spirit, and may see reflected in each successive order of manifestation its primary characteristics, the Power that originates and the Orderliness which works according to Law, manifesting themselves in form and colour as Life and Beauty. So through all the descending grades of being, from the soul to the crystal, are seen these two great attributes, Force and Orderliness. These are the ultimates of all existences; without the first nothing could be; without the second all that is would be chaotic, that is, evil.

That the primal force from which all other forces proceed originates in the spiritual world and is in some sense similar to Will has been admitted by all profound thinkers without exception, no less than witnessed to by the common consent of all nations. Thus Descartes, the father of modern speculative philosophy, affirmed that God has accorded to created things no principle of subsistence in themselves, and that

the existence of everything from moment to moment is due to the constant renewal of the creative act, that is, the constant communication of power. That the figures of speech here used are not those which would be selected by a modern biologist does not invalidate the central idea. So also that greatest of modern metaphysicians, whose writings have influenced all later philosophic thought, Spinoza, is brought to the same conclusion by his purely mathematical method, "God is the immanent, not the transient Cause of the universe." So also Leibnitz, whose "monads" whence all things proceed are limited portions of spiritual substance, and therefore reflect, under limitations, the nature of God.* Similarly Kant and Fichte regard all power as essentially proceeding from and nourished by a higher spiritual power. The same idea is at the root of Sir William Hamilton's philosophy of common-sense. Herbert Spencer speaks of the certainty that we are "ever in the presence of an infinite and eternal energy from which all things proceed," "manifested within and without us," and asserts that the "inscrutable existence which science is compelled to recognise as unrealised by its deepest analysis of matter, motion, thought, and feeling, stands towards our general conception of things in substantially the same relation as does the creative power asserted by theology." "I am willing to allow that the ultimate Cause beyond all motion is immaterial, that is to say, God" (Darwin). Faraday: "All force is Will-force." The idea is throughout the same as that expressed by all the great religions, which, in so far as they deal with principles and not with creed, are the products of healthy human intuition in all ages, that in God all things live and move and have their being.

The essential unity of all these conceptions is clear in the light of one of the very few statements made by Jesus

* Letter to Bayle, p. 187; *ad Des Bosses*, p. 740, qu. by J. E. Erdmann; *Hist. Phil.*, transl. W. S. Hough, pp. 177-179; *cf.* Berkeley, p. 261.

concerning God. That great Teacher, whose words we honour with our lips and understand so little, is said to have told the woman at the well that GOD IS SPIRIT. It was reserved for modern translators and divines to degrade His definition to their own anthropomorphic level by introducing limitation and making Him say that God is *a* Spirit. "A spirit" involves locality and shape, and this idea must be unhesitatingly rejected. Not *a* spirit, local, circumscribed, and conditioned, acting on matter from outside it, but SPIRIT, the all-pervading Power that develops and sustains.

2. As matter is perceived by the material body, and energy by the ethereal soul, for all external energy is perceived by being reproduced to consciousness as internal energy,* so the external Spirit is perceived by that which is akin to it, the spirit of man. It is by this corresponding nature in ourselves that we are cognisant of the correlated external facts, and this explains both the anthropomorphism which fancies that those attributes which it perceives are the only attributes of God, and also the fact that God is not a theorem to be proved, but a Verity to be seen and felt by the highest faculties of man, that is, by his spirit. That this is the nearest approach towards absolute truth of which humanity is capable has always been the conviction of the wise. Fénelon, one of the most beautiful souls of modern times, has said :—

"It is easy to perceive that our feeble reason is continually set right by another superior Reason which we consult within ourselves and which corrects us. This Reason we cannot change because it is immutable, but it changes us because

* Thus to take the sense of sight. An object is seen by the rays of light proceeding from it and impinging on the retina, there producing certain chemical and physiological changes. That is, the external energy is reproduced as internal energy, of which alone the man can be directly cognisant, for he knows internal facts directly, but their external causes indirectly.

we have need of it. It answers in China as in France or America. It does not divide itself in communicating itself. The light it gives takes nothing from those who were before filled with it. It communicates itself at all times immeasurably and is never exhausted. It is the sun which enlightens minds as the outward sun does bodies. This light is eternal and immense; it comprehends all time as well as all space. It is not myself; it reproves and corrects me against my will. It is, then, above me, and above all weak and imperfect men as I am. This Supreme Reason which is the rule of mine, this Wisdom from which every wise man receives his, this supreme spring of light, is the God we seek."

This perception is common to all nations. The ancient Greek saw that "there is but one Being . . . author of all life . . . the energy of all things," "one universal soul pervading the universal sphere." So the Egyptian speaks of "God, the Beginning, the One Father, the Spirit who animates and perpetuates the world by blending Himself with all its parts." The ancient Hindu Scriptures direct the believer to "consider all things as existing in the Divine Spirit, the . . . supreme Omnipresent Intelligence pervading all." The Buddhist, closely paralleled by later Christian imagery, says, "All things in the universe are but the primeval heart of Buddha. This heart is universally diffused and comprehends all things within itself."

The whole universe is but the one life's varied expression, and it is only by identifying his own intellectual development with the guiding of that higher Reason within him which is the moral sense, by subordinating his selfish desires to the rule of love, that man rises from the animal plane to the conception of God. But the idea which each one forms to himself must necessarily be the projection of his own highest perceptions at the point to which they have been educated, for he can but use the faculties he has, and

in these their correlated objects alone can be mirrored. Therefore a certain anthropomorphism is quite unavoidable, and all we can do is to remember that the Absolute is beyond our keenest intuition, and limiting our anthropomorphism to the spiritual plane, to recognise in God the ideal of its two prime manifestations, POWER and LOVE.

These simple words, coupled with those other words of Jesus, as simple as they are profound, "GOD IS SPIRIT," sum up the total of human knowledge on the subject. While the ignorance on even psychic matters is so blank, how can the spiritual be understood? That this is so will be evident from two crucial facts. How many persons are in the habit of distinguishing facts (which are objective) from truths (which are subjective), or between truths and principles? And do those who join in hymns declaring that they long to stand ever in the light of Heaven, realise that they are praying for that whereof physical light is but the simile, for that piercing ray by which every shortcoming of character is revealed on the outward form, for that condition wherein thoughts are audible and every mental impulse and past remembrance of anger, deceit, greed, meanness, vanity, and lust, is naked and open to all around? This, and no physical splendour, is the light of Heaven! This, which we show our desire for by concealing every fault, by disguising our feelings, and by the vanity which can endure no criticism, is the glory in which we are to know as we are known, and we have the face to stand up and mock the God of Truth by proclaiming our longing for this!

Cultivating the mind for the sake of greater external refinement, we scarce know even truths, let alone principles. Truths are too "abstract" for us; they are "unpractical," that is to say, they cannot be turned to commercial value; we do not care for them, and when an illuminated soul like John proclaims, not that God is a true, wise, and loving Being, but Truth, Wisdom, and Love themselves (wherever

existent); that in the perfected man these find their realisation, so that the Christ is less a historical personage than a character, a phenomenon of God, so to speak, the manifestation of whom in each soul is the only condition of salvation, men cry, "Atheism! This is to deny the Personality of God."

So they make a god in their own image, and for the awful Power which surely metes to all exactly according to their deeds, which brings Churches and empires to ruin and confusion when they reject the great laws of Spirit which are not creeds, but Ethics, and by inevitable consequence casts out of existence all that offends against them, they would substitute a theatrical deity in a blaze of physical light, a human form devising schemes of salvation, thwarted by the malignity of devils and by the perversity of men, giving, withholding, revealing, governing, turned aside by entreaty, and chiefly distinguished everywhere as the head of the local clerical interest. Ignoring the patent fact that God does not bring to destruction nations which act rightly in spite of diverse creeds, they miss the lesson obvious to charity and reason alike, that all creeds are but symbols of underlying Principle. This anthropomorphism is not peculiar to any one creed, but underlies all, and satisfies every sect of Christians and Moslems alike, each of which is equally confident that the conception is a true one and that itself is the special object of providential care, especially as to temporalities.

What God is, it is utterly beyond man to know. Substance, it would seem, must have preceded force, and would therefore seem superior thereto. Force must be superior to substance, for all analogy forbids the assumption that substance can generate force or that the truly homogeneous give birth to the heterogeneous. The enigma of existence is insoluble by human faculty, which can only repeat the symbolism used by the seers of all ages, and not only by

S. John in Patmos, that He is Alpha and Omega, the First and the Last, Force and Substance, Male and Female, Power and Receptivity. So of Personality. What is it? No man knows, The source of love and power in human persons must be personal as comprehending personality, and yet the "I AM" is unlimited and unconditioned. Again we must remain in darkness except in so far as we can realise that substance is a mode of force, and that principles must necessarily act as *living* forces. In the spiritual world all realities are presented in lives, and Truth and Beauty are one. On the material plane beauty is of form and colour and sound, and truth is mere outward fact—often ugly indeed. On the intellectual or psychic level they approach closer, for beauty is of order, and truth is predicated of thought which correlates facts into sequence and meaning; but in the spiritual sphere beauty and truth unite, for no principle can exist at all except it be true, and every principle is essentially the source of beauty in all its realisations. Perfected wills make beautiful souls, and beautiful souls, give them fair play and time enough, make beautiful men and women.

3. That Ethic is the law of Spirit, and Righteousness the method of union between the human and the Divine, is of course no new thing, though it is not generally admitted that this union is by growth of character, not by any magical process. It is spiritual evolution, not reward. But though the method is obscure, the fact has always been clear to all that have striven after light. The ancient Egyptian, whose God, virgin-born, suffered on earth, died, and ascended into heaven, there to be united to Osiris, the supreme Father, pleaded in his justification at his after-death trial in Amenti (Hades), his mystic union with this ascended God-man, and alleged his obedience to the law of morality as his highest claim to acquittal: "No little child was vexed by me, no widow was ill-treated, no fisherman

disturbed, no herdsman obstructed. . . . I have shown no preference to the great above the small," and throughout the Ritual of the Book of the Dead the soul is always spoken of as "the Osirified." If this plea of the monarch Amenj Amenemha was true, we have not made any striking advance since the Middle Kingdom of B.C. 2000, and in any case our ideals are no higher.*

Ethic has always been recognised as the special province of Spirit. But while men have disputed over creeds and dogmas, while they have slaughtered and burned each other in hecatombs for almost imperceptible shades of meaning in the definition of Father and Son, regarding these words not as human illustrations of a truth transcending language, but as apprehensible phenomena, the religion of Jesus was forgotten, and the angry theologians of the fourth and fifth centuries overlooked the plain fact that, whatever inferences may be drawn from the particular phrasing presented in their Greek translation, His whole direct teaching was of the power of Spirit and its realisation by Righteousness. While the creed of the Consubstantial was being built on massacre and cemented by civil ambition, men forgot that they themselves were similarly consubstantial by their spirits, and that the one law of spirit is LOVE. So religion became narrowed down to creed, and morality to a private, nay, almost to a sexual matter, and instead of being recognised as the foundation of all law, secular and Biblical, the position has been inverted and injunctions have been upheld as right because they are in certain codes, and not as being in the codes because their authors thought them right. The ethical perceptions of the human spirit, however, are the ultimate sanction of all law, and this perception is far more than a mere guide to personal conduct;

* "Hist. Egypt. Relig.," Dr. C. P. Tiele, tr. J. Ballingal, p. 129; Trübner's Oriental Series.

it furnishes answers to the widest questions now being blindly worked out by trial and error in sociology and politics.

Love is the essence of ethics, by which alone it can be intelligently realised, but love as an active principle, not merely as a feeling. As man is essentially a spirit, he must, whether he will or no, be under spiritual conditions, and this one principle of action is common to all men. It may be directed to self or to others; the love of others being its legitimate activity, the love of self the perversion. The result of each of these two activities is seen as Altruism and Competition, which now divide men into two camps, the one as yet weak in numbers, but strong in their conviction of harmony with eternal law; the other an immense numerical majority, but divided against itself and secretly inclined to the nobler part could its realisation be made practicable. While modern lip-religion is entirely based on the former, the modern social system rests entirely on the latter.

Altruism is usually summed up and defined by the command to sell all and give to the poor. We must admire the ingenuity which has converted a distasteful truth into an unpractical theorem. The circumstances under which that advice was given were peculiar. A vain youth, with the usual idea of a selfish and personal salvation, asked, "Good Master, what shall I do that I may inherit eternal life?" His query met with a cold response—"Thou knowest the commandments; keep them." The injunction was, be it observed, "mere morality." But he, anxious to show well, declares that this he has already done, and would know if aught else be lacking. At the time the teaching that was to be diffused was the great work whereto all noble souls were called, as is the solution of the social problem nowadays. Therefore said the Teacher—"Disencumber thyself of thy earthly cares, and come

and spread this light ; this is the path of perfection which thou desirest." So it was, and so it is still ; the casting off of the hindrances of wealth for the sake of carrying the best thought to others is the highest manifestation of Altruism, but it is not Altruism itself. "Though I give all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body as a martyr, without Love it profiteth nothing." This Love is Altruism ; and there is another definition of it extant. It has been declared to mean the doing to others as men would be done by. Now no healthy-minded, or even honest, man desires anything from others but co-operation and kindness. "Owe no man anything, but to love one another," says S. Paul. Those who feel thus wish for no gifts ; and if they receive strict moral justice they will need no alms, unless in cases of crushing misfortune. The issue between love of others and love of self is no case of contrast between a sickly sentiment and a manly independence. Altruism, or, as it is better termed by its necessary result, Mutualism, is the outcome of Love as a principle in action, the co-operative and collective effort for existence whereby the interest of society as a whole is put before that of the unit. Competition reverses this order and makes the selfish preservation of the unit the law of society, and the result of this divorce of intellect and morality is the cut-throat struggle for existence, and the enormous waste of power involved in the mutual oppositions for selfish ends which is to be seen around us in the world of to-day.

Mutualism is united action for the general good ; competition is isolated action for a supposed individual good. So universally is the latter acted upon that men are blind to the huge waste involved, and we are actually invited to admire, under the name of "the survival of the fittest," the internecine strife whereby healthy able men and women, who are unfortunately also poor, are crushed out of exist-

ence, as though by reducing human society to a parallel with mere animal nature we had lighted on a remarkable ethical truth instead of demonstrating our own ignorance and brutality. The phrase is a doubtful one at best except it be strictly used in Darwin's sense of fact, that of the general observed tendency to the survival of more perfect individuals, and applied to Darwin's large view of geologic time. Reduced to the petty limits of one life's experience it means simply that they survive, even among brutes, who best adapt themselves to their surroundings, whether these be healthy or not. The surroundings which Nature provides being on the whole healthy, adaptation to them means progress; but when artificial conditions come into the problem, it is radically changed. The free eagle imprisoned by bars, or the able workman thrown out of employment, may be unable to adapt themselves to their new environment. It is not always the best and most beautiful even among beasts who individually survive, and modern society, for all its survivals, is not conspicuous as a nursery of perfect character. The phrase as applied to man and limited in scope is a fallacy; for it ignores ethics altogether, and quite passes over the fact that, though the brute must struggle with his fellows for his individual livelihood, it is the prerogative of man to co-operate with them and to bend circumstance before intellect and will.

4. The religion of Jesus is in strict harmony with the Mutualism which is the law of Spirit, and so likewise was that of the early Christians before they fell into the error of treating dogma as final truth rather than as more or less imperfect efforts to express it. Jesus dealt entirely with principles, both moral and intellectual; He laid down no creed, He founded no priesthood, He gave no rites, He wrote no pastorals. When, as at Sychar, many believed on Him, it is not related that He ever returned thither to give more perfect instruction than could be communicated

in the two days He spent there. He revealed that dominion of spirit acting on human life by the understanding, for which His favourite simile was the "Kingdom of Heaven," and His teaching on this is summed up in the Sermon on the Mount as regards its practical duties, and in the parables as regards its intellectual aspects. In these latter there is much that seems at first sight contradictory, for like all great teachers, He found it impossible to express the results of spiritual principle except by paradox and myth. That he was the founder of an ecclesiastical system can only be colourably maintained by the fable* of the forty days' post-resurrection teaching; which involves disregard of the plain evidence of the evangelists that each manifestation came to the disciples as an isolated event and a surprise. It was in fact a return of the ethereal body (soul) of Jesus, from time to time revealing Him as a living guiding power.

It must strike any student of the gospels who brings to them an unbiassed mind that the Kingdom of Heaven is proclaimed as an actual present reality. Jesus began His ministry with the same declaration as John, that the Kingdom of Heaven was come nigh, and that repentance in order to the putting away of sin (mere morality again) was the necessary preparation for entrance thereto. He tells the Jews that He, casting out evil spirits by the power of God, proves its presence; He declares that the good news of its presence is then offered for their acceptance;

* I shall here be confronted with Acts i. 3, which I may at once say that I accept. This passage lays stress on the fact that His living form appeared after the crucifixion, and the evidence for this fact is said to be that He spoke with His disciples. But to argue from this a forty days' tuition whose main object was, not to prove His objectivity, but to teach dogma and the *disciplina arcani*, is to turn plain truths into fables, unless there is distinct historical evidence for such an assertion sufficient to rebut the internal evidence of the gospels.

that the publicans and harlots receiving John's teaching are then and there actually entering into it. He said of one who had sufficient spiritual insight to perceive that love is better than ritual, not that he was nearly deserving of after-death reward, but that he was then, as he stood there, not far from the Kingdom. To the poor in spirit, that is, to those who detach their minds from earthly riches, and to those who love righteousness well enough to endure persecution for its sake, He says that theirs is, not shall be, but theirs is now, the Kingdom of Heaven, and that He does not use the present tense as a forcible figure of speech is shown by the use of the future in the other six beatitudes. He told the scribes and Pharisees that they then and there, by their formalism and their reading of their own interpretations into Scripture, were shutting up the Kingdom of Heaven against men, gaining no insight themselves, and darkening others by denying that any such insight was required. He tells His disciples that they should not taste of death till the great movement had set in with power.*

There is, He explains to His more advanced followers, a personal sense also. To the individual man who is searching, not for a mere external gift, but for perception, it is the power from God springing up in limitless energy to the life eternal, the forming, moulding, all-powerful Spirit which rises superior to those accidents of Time and Matter which oppress us here. He who has had a glimpse of this life seeks for it as for hid treasure, and counts all things as dross in comparison with that prize, the understanding of inner

* S. Mark ix. 1. Variant accounts are S. Matt. xvi. 28 and S. Luke ix. 27. All have the correct idea in the main, that the Kingdom of Heaven should be immediate, but the phenomenalist Jew clings to the personal coming of the Messiah in power; Luke, collecting his material at second hand, is ambiguous and doubtful; while history shows finally that Mark has kept nearest to the true sense.

principle, the incomparable pearl of Truth, pure, unspotted, and priceless, to obtain which a man would be wise to sacrifice all that stands between him and it—passion, wealth, ease, and even good name ; and yet this hid treasure is not a selfish possession, for whoso has it knows that to keep it to himself, to hide it in a napkin, is to lose it altogether. Again, it is external to the individual man as well as internal, and is not to be thought of under the similitude of riches alone, it is a great Power sweeping the sea of Time ; and it is intelligence which, revealing ever new aspects of truth, revivifies old forms, and, like a householder, applies them to use. It is like leaven pervading society and secretly changing its nature ; it is like a seed growing to a mighty tree.

There is, too, a future sense, but it is linked to the present by bonds of cause and effect, and is not separate or cataclysmal. It has always been the hope of enlightened minds that the causes which in Humanity are co-operant to an end shall extend their scope till the working of the Spirit shall be manifest in all flesh, “and the earth shall be filled with the knowledge of God as the waters cover the sea ;” that the Kingdom of God shall be visibly established as the result of its presence in all wills. But if this is ever to come about, it must be a development, not a cataclysm ; continuous, not detached ; the result of the cleansing of all hearts and the opening of all eyes, for the mind of man is the field wherein grows the spiritual corn, and all outward religions, governments, and social systems are but the expressions of that inward life. When characters become noble, then religions and governments will become noble also, and the Kingdom of God will have come. There is also a future sense to the individual man, when, leaving the body, his true self is manifest by his entrance on spirit-conditions. It is to this aspect that Jesus alludes when He says that the righteous shall shine

forth as the sun; shall inherit the Kingdom, prepared indeed from the foundation of the world, for it belongs to conditions where Time has no place; that they who not only teach but do shall be great therein; and that from out of it shall be gathered all things that offend, for all who have passed into that blessedness can be touched by no evil.

In the light of the philosophy that Spirit must be realised in men's lives by its great attributes, all questions whether the sorrow and misery of the world do not tell against the theory of its moral governance are seen to be beside the mark, because all such questions imply a government on the phenomenal plane of interference. This has not been, and never can be, for it would violate that continuity which is the premise of all sound reasoning. The Kingdom of Heaven is the rule of Spirit over mind, and can only come about by the operation of regular causes here and in the unseen. The parables refer to the fact and not to the method. It is not arbitrary. Its laws are the same for its minutest beginnings in the depths of the heart, and for its most glorious manifestation when it shall shine as the lightning across the expanse of heaven. The one is no more possible without the other than is the river without the spring; they are continuous manifestations of the same inner life. The conditions of entrance to the new kingdom are ever the same, the new birth by cleansing and by the Spirit, the death of the lower nature and renewed life in the higher, involving indeed much tribulation, but when patience shall have brought forth her perfect work, it shall be to that soul a crown of glory that fadeth not away, a well of water springing up to everlasting life.

But while human methods keep up an endless supply of undeveloped spirits passing from this earth to the unseen, this can never be. All fruits must grow from the

tree; they proclaim its nature; and high action can only come from high character, whether in the present or in the future life. That the mere passing through the change called death in no way alters character there is ample experimental proof. Those who were stupid are stupid still, those who were aspiring are aspiring still, even those who were filthy are filthy still, until they turn to the cleansing Power. We are apt to think that, once there, we shall surely feel the seriousness of life and love the beautiful and the true. Experience shows that it is not so. We see in any life just what we bring eyes to see. The nature around us, so full of the marvellous interactions and the beautiful adaptations which manifest the laws of God, is carelessly disregarded. Science is "dry" and history repellent, and we spend our lives over ephemeral trivialities, and struggle, not to be capable and noble, but to get wealth and praise. The spirit-world seems awful and mysterious only because it is unexplored. But when, by death to this life, the dull, the apathetic, the covetous, and the mean are brought into contact with it, that likewise seems stale, flat, and unprofitable. In every stage of existence man brings to it just his own faculties, and as the undeveloped mind here is blind to the beauty and the meaning of Nature, so there it is blind to the loveliness of spiritual unity.

5. That the mind of man is the seed-ground for the power that shall re-create the world because it is the special channel for the activities of Spirit, though a great truth specially prominent in the teaching of Jesus, is by no means peculiar to Him alone. This union with God or living to the Spirit is "mystical" only because it is uncommon among men, but the wise in all lands and all ages have seen this, and this only, to be the answer to all the perplexities that beset men here. It is the kernel of the philosophy of the Upanishads, wherein, centuries before

Jesus was born, Indian mystics had faced the difficulties of faith and works, of efficacious grace and predestination, and all the maze of questions which perplex Christian theologians because they persist in fixing their eyes on dogmas rather than on principles and their effects. Let us hear the Vagasaneyi Upanishad from the White Veda, summarised and paraphrased into modern speech :—

1. All must be surrendered to God. Our life must be hid in Him.

2. The consequence of earthly acts does not cling to him who has this highest knowledge. (Because a man's destiny depends not on arbitrary punishment for past acts, but on what he is in himself.)

3. Mere ritual and observance end in darkness after death. (Because the man who regards these things as in themselves acceptable to God sees them as ends, not as means.)

4. God, the Highest Spirit, or Supreme Self, is ONE, unnameable, above sense, causing sense, the all-pervading Spirit.

5. This Spirit is cause and effect, internal and external to all things ; external as their cause, internal as their life.

6. The man who realises this never falls away. (Because he must have obtained kinship with that Spirit before this realisation is possible to him.)

7. He is above sorrow. (For no earthly accident can touch him who truly knows that he is, not will be, immortal.)

8. The pure Spirit is all-embracing, glorious, incorruptible, bodiless, self-existent, omnipresent, untouched by evil ; He has disposed all things rightly for eternal years.

9. All who worship forms and ritual and abide in works go to darkness. They who worship knowledge only go to greater darkness. (Because the pride of intellect which

regards its perceptions as final truth blinds all such more than the humble who, though ignorant, know their own insufficiency, and on the farther side of the grave are readier to learn.)

10. Both together are necessary, knowledge and intuition.

11. Death is overcome by spiritual principle, and immortality is obtained by knowledge of Spirit. (*Cf.* This is life eternal, to know Thee, the only true God.)

12. All who worship aught but the true cause enter into darkness; they who consider an external deity only enter into greater darkness. (Because their conceptions of an anthropomorphic God blind them to the laws of Spirit.)

13. The reward of sacrifice (observances) is one thing; the reward of knowledge is another.

14. He who understands the true relation of matter to Spirit has attained to life.

15. His face is covered with a golden disc. (He becomes as the sun in physical nature, covered by rays of glory.)

16. O Thou who art the only Seer, Judge of all men, I see the glory of Thy light.

17. In the hour of death my life to the immortal and my body to ashes.

18. O God of being, of the sacred fire, lead us to Thy true riches, keep far from us crooked evil, so shall we offer Thee fullest praise.

The same teaching is the corner-stone of Buddhism. Some five centuries before Christ, the Prince Siddartha, oppressed by the griefs of the world, renounced all to seek their remedy. In the forest and the desert truth came to him. He saw with clear spiritual perception that the one cause of misery is Desire, the strife for wealth, honours, place, power, and sensuous ease. He saw that all these are the results of living to the flesh instead of to the Spirit; and moulding his teaching on the lines of the Brahmanic philo-

sophy in which he had been nurtured, he took its idea of transmigration as the means of expression. Whether this be true or not is not now the question; this is but an accident of his teaching, not its essential meaning, which is the dominion of Spirit by the perfect law of Love. This is

“The noble Eightfold Path; it goeth straight
 To peace and refuge. Hear!
 Manifold tracks lead to yon sister-peaks
 Around whose snows the gilded clouds are curled;
 By steep or gentle slopes the climber comes
 Where breaks that other world.
 Strong limbs may dare the rugged road which storms,
 Soaring and perilous, the mountain's breast;
 The weak must wind from slower ledge to ledge
 With many a place of rest.
 So is the Eightfold Path which brings to peace;
 By lower or by upper heights it goes.
 The firm soul hastes, the feeble tarries. All
 Will reach the sunlit snows.
 The first good level is Right Doctrine. Walk
 In fear of Dharma, shunning all offence;
 In heed of Karma, which doth make man's fate;
 In lordship over sense.
 The second is Right Purpose. Have goodwill
 To all that lives, letting unkindness die,
 And greed and wrath; so that your lives be made
 Like soft airs passing by.
 The third is Right Discourse. Govern the lips
 As they were palace-doors, the king within;
 Tranquil and fair and courteous be all words
 Which from that presence win.
 The fourth is Right Behaviour. Let each act
 Assoil a fault or help a merit grow:
 Like threads of silver seen through crystal beads
 Let Love through good deeds show.”

—*Light of Asia*, p. 229.

How this sublime teaching became degraded it is easy to trace. As man is everywhere the same and always debases lovely principles, first into more or less incorrect dogmatic

“truths,” and then into mythical past phenomena, the after-history of this beautiful religion came to be the same as that of Christianity, to which it offers a truly remarkable parallel.

Siddartha was not born perfect Buddha (The Enlightened) any more than Jesus was born the perfect Christ (The Anointed). He became such by growth in wisdom, and he also was made perfect through suffering. No sooner had the Lord departed this life than the first councils of the Church were called, the one at Râgagriha (circ. B.C. 477), the other at Jerusalem (circ. A.D. 30). The words of the Master were collected into a body of doctrine, which, however, seems to have had no fixity in either case, neither canon, definitions, nor creed; the idea was still to preserve meaning, not to compose formulas. What Buddhist writings there may have been were, like the many versions of the gospels, unauthorised. Other councils followed, and a patriarchate was founded (“Sacred Books of the East,” vol. x. p. xlv.). Each man who felt impelled to write did so, and reverence for what was written did not exclude alterations by transcribers—the sacred text was still fluid, the doctrine becoming more and more elaborated, with the natural result of a multiplicity of heterodox sects, exactly as orthodox Christianity grew up among Gnostics, Nicolaitans, Carpocratians, Donatists, Arians, and the crowd of “heresies” of the early centuries. What Constantine did for Christianity, Asoka did for Buddhism; he adopted it and made it a State religion. All Asoka’s inscriptions which, with the zeal of a convert, he set up all over India, tend to show that Buddhism was still but little removed from pure ethics, the abolition of sacrifice on humanitarian grounds being a leading feature in the cult.

But as in the one case so in the other. Immediately upon entering on wealth and honour, council after council met and defined orthodoxy. About B.C. 88–76, some three centuries after Buddha’s death, the canon was compiled, just as the

Council of Constantinople, A.D. 381, and of Carthage, A.D. 397, decided what writings should be held to be the Christian New Testament. Thenceforward the crystallising process is seen in full activity, morality being more and more relegated to the second place, and during the next four centuries we find the Prince Siddartha represented as born of a virgin queen, come to earth as fore-ordained saviour of men, translated to heaven, and made, not only into a god, but the one primal and universal Cause incarnated on earth to save mankind.

When in either case dogma had been established, as Gregory the Great (A.D. 590) made the Christian system into an ecclesiastical polity, so Nagarjuna * (circ. B.C. 50) similarly founded the Mahâyana or Great Congregation as opposed to the Hinâyana or primitive doctrine. Till the time of Hildebrand (A.D. 1073) the Roman system and hierarchy was incomplete; the priesthood was still allowed to marry, and was part of the laity in the sense of being unorganised. After that time it became a separate order.† So under Buddha-ghosha (A.D. 420) the Buddhist system was perfected in all its parts and became thoroughly crystallised; the priesthood segregated from the laity, having a regular liturgy, sacraments, and a monastic system. Steady social deterioration, following on the mechanical routine of pardons and indulgences, led in the former case to Luther's attempt to restore the Christian Hinâyana; in the latter it raised up Sankara Acharya,

* The Tibetan Târanâtha, qu. Vassilief, "Le Bouddhisme," places him between B.C. 14 and A.D. 28. But Nagarjuna was the ruling spirit in Kanishka's council. Kanishka was the Tartar king of Northern India, and he erected a tope at Manikyala, in which, round the relics, he deposited a number of Roman coins which date from B.C. 73 to B.C. 33.

† As late as the Council of Trent the Emperor Charles made the proclamation known as the Interim, by which married clergy were allowed to retain their wives pending the final decision of the Council.

A.D. 850, who revived the Vedic Scripture as the basis of faith, and cut off the excrescences which had been grafted upon it.*

In both religions the same cause of rise and fall is evident. The degradation of spiritual truth to a system in order to bring it down to men, instead of raising men to it by insisting on its free apprehension under all metaphors, was followed by the same results—loss of spirituality, and therefore, in the long-run, of power over the hearts and lives of men. In later India, Buddhist “nuns” would seem to have been so generally lax in their morality that offences against their persons were actually placed on the same legal footing as those against prostitutes; and what was the state of monasticism in England and on the Continent just before the Reformation as given by the sincerest supporters of the Roman Church may be read in the pages of Froude (“Short Studies,” vols. i. and iv.). At the present day in Buddhist countries all life is sacred except human, and in Christian lands the altruism of Jesus is practically denied in all social life. Buddhism and Christianity have each become a formula, and in spite of many sincere believers who find in each comfort and strength, neither is to the many a living power, but rather a necessary badge, with little or no practical bearing. But the inner meaning which won them the allegiance of millions is not dead, for it is the eternal power of Spirit which causes men in all lands to turn from dead formulas with the heart-cry, “My soul is athirst for God; yea, even for the Living God,” and to find for themselves the living waters that flow direct from Him.

* This parallel is drawn by Ferguson, who remarks that the Life of Buddha, to which modern knowledge is most indebted, the “Lalita Vistara,” is the exact counterpart of the “Legenda Aurea” and similar works of the Christian Middle Ages. J. Ferguson, D.C.L., F.R.S., “Serpent Worship,” 1873.

6. Coloured by the Vedic philosophy, which regards all being as a manifestation of the Supreme Soul and contemplates this under its aspect of impassive and universal force rather than as the source of spiritual emotion, Buddha seems to have passed over in silence the personal presentment of GOD as impossible to human knowledge. Jesus, bred under an exactly opposite training, shows the antithetical tendency of Judaism, and dwelt rather on the personal and affectional than on the philosophic idea of Deity. His clear insight and pure soul rejected the tribal Jehovah, delighting in blood and sacrifice, the "jealous God" who was the especial guardian of the Jewish race, who rooted out the heathen and planted them in, gave them increase of corn and wine and oil, hating other nations and scattering them before His chosen people, and He presented to men the beautiful simile of the Father in Heaven, sending His rain on the evil and the good, His sunshine on the just and the unjust, the Spirit of universal power indeed, but of universal love also. Neither aspect excludes the other, and both are true, the one being the truth of power, the other the truth of love. But it will always be asked, What room is there for prayer in any pantheistic cult which sees GOD as an immanent Cause in all things good and evil,* and conceives of Him as never for one instant departing from the regular order and sequence of cause and effect? Perfect Wisdom, ruling according to law, not from outside the world, but from within it through successive orders of power, seems to

* Not of the evil, which is negative, but of positive being. In so far as things *are* at all, they are by virtue of developing power. The very will that misdirects and the intellect which misunderstands exist by virtue of GOD, as does the highest archangel; but the one is filled with the fulness of the Divine life which the other rejects in its higher developments. The one exists physically, intellectually, and spiritually in harmony with the Divine; the other, physically only. Transgression of all law means annihilation.

presuppose the uselessness of prayer, and in such teaching where can the universal instinct which cries out for the touch of a guiding Hand find a place? Is it not hard and cold, without power to sustain crushed and bleeding hearts, giving no refuge from sorrow, no help in times of trial?

The answer to this is decisive. If by prayer is meant a request for phenomenal interference for selfish ends, for the grant of wealth, success, and generally of all those pleasant temporalities which men so often pray for, it is useless. Is the testimony of the centuries unavailing to show men that these prayers are always futile, that God does not "interfere" to save men from their own acts or the result of violated law? Did He stretch forth His arm to save the orthodox Syrian Christians from Amrou's cavalry? Or the African Church of Augustine from the fire and sword of the Ausurians? Was not Christianity stamped out in either case? What was the fate of the Vaudois and of the Lollards? Did the Heavenly Power discriminate between true and false in the Papal schisms? Or did it avenge the deaths of either Lutheran or Roman martyrs? Where is the sign of His approval among a hundred warring sects? Does not each declare in its prosperity that this is the mark of God's favour, and when eclipsed and cast down, when the pretended blessing is proclaimed by rivals as the stamp of Divine approval, does it not point to texts that the Lord's people are tried and outcast? Cannot men draw the obvious conclusion from the constant succession of flood, earthquake, tempest, drought, and disease, sweeping off thousands decade after decade through all history? The average of casualties at sea has diminished since the legislation against overloading, and rises or falls with the seaworthiness of the vessels in the hands of our sailors, quite apart from supplications. The sarcasm of Diogenes when shown the votive offerings of those who had escaped shipwreck

is still deserved. "See," said the votary, "the marvellous powers of GOD!" "True," said the cynic; "but where are the offerings of those who were drowned?" We can see the absurdity in a temple of Poseidon, but not in a Christian Church.

All the prayer in the world will not save those who, with a weak heredity, drink foul water and breathe infected air. Pestilence was the very creation of the Ages of Faith because they were also the Ages of Dirt. Can men not yet see what Job saw three thousand years ago, that calamities are not "judgments of GOD," nor prosperity the sign of His blessing? Does not every nation, from the Chinese and Hindu to the Russian and the English, think itself under the special protection of GOD, who will hear its prayers as against all others? Will men never understand that they on whom falls the tower in Siloam perish because the builder failed in skill and not because of sins of their own; and will they not see that, if the theories of "judgments" on sins were the true explanation of such occurrences, GOD would necessarily be bound to visit every sin with condign punishment, for to delay it would be criminal in proportion of His power? Is it not patent that every war involves supplication from opposite sides, that all suffering implies the cry of the sufferers for relief, that victory follows strength and skill, and that suffering is alleviated by removing its cause? The race is to the swift and the battle to the strong if the strong be no blunderer, notwithstanding all assertions to the contrary made by the hope that is all but despair; and notwithstanding the fact that strength often comes from moral sources and may more than make up for numerical inferiority. The universal experience of all men is that the heavens maintain their eternal composure, and safety comes by courage and foresight. Were it otherwise men would be put to permanent intellectual

confusion, no effect could be referred to its true cause, and weak supplication would everywhere take the place of skill to plan and strength to execute. To declare that we stand in the presence of Infinite Wisdom, Knowledge, and Love, and yet need to inform Him of our desires and remind Him of our interests, should need no refutation.

Prayer is far other than this. We may ask indeed for temporal aid, and there is reason to think that it may be given by helpers from the unseen as by those around us, given by perfectly natural means; many kindly hands are stretched out to help worthy purposes, and others than Elijah have still their angel guards. But this asking is not true prayer. Prayer is the yearning for communion with the all-encompassing Spirit, the Father of Love, who disdains not the warm though erring heart. Whether or not it be accompanied with bent knee or bowed head, it is always the love that seeks closer union with its Object, the faith which trusts in the Supreme Reason, the will which turns to God like the flower to the light. It is the heart-cry of those who hunger and thirst after righteousness that they be filled; that they may come into contact with that Power which is the Giver of all life, and draw from that boundless source draughts of renewed strength, that they may partake of the character of Spirit in its transcendent purity and its all-embracing love. This development of the spirit of man is the growth of character. Righteousness is its natural law. To desire God is to desire purity, truth, and beauty, to put on the attributes of Spirit; and earnest will that avails itself of every opportunity brings its own fulfilment. This prayer is always granted, for it is here that Spirit can normally act. Wisdom is never refused; the water of life is free to all; knock and it shall be opened, seek and ye shall find, ask and receive. But

this asking must be untainted by the self-will which seeks its own confirmation, and must also be in the realm of the spiritual and the causative, for the realities of Spirit, which stand far above the petty and sordid gains on which we fix our eyes, far above rewards and punishments in a life to come. This is prayer, the conscious meeting of the human and the Divine, the ecstasy which carries the spirit of man out and away beyond the bounds of Time and Sense, to where it realises the emptiness of earthly ambition, the hollowness of earthly pleasure, the vanity of all material things, and lifts it to its native air, thrilling its every fibre with joy, a human reed shaken by the Spirit which reveals itself to spirit as the Eternal Beauty and the Eternal Truth, the Presence of God.

All other prayer than this thirst for God is futile, and may be little better than the Italian brigand's devotion to the Madonna, comforting itself with what its better reason knows to be false. Health may perhaps come in answer to prayer in some cases, for disease is often due to internal rather than to external causes, and it would be rash to venture to limit the possibilities of psychic action. Perhaps the laying hold of the power of Spirit is the "faith" which Jesus spoke of as the agent in so many of His cures. In fine, it is not necessary to go beyond the teaching of Jesus for an answer to the question, What is the true place of prayer? What is His model? A prayer which excludes, from its severe simplicity, all but the barest request for daily needs, if indeed that clause be correctly rendered "daily bread" rather than the sustenance required for the coming day by man who "doth not live by bread alone." But even if we have here the correct meaning of Jesus, who said that to those who seek first the Kingdom of God all necessaries should certainly be added, even so, it is to be observed that this request for the bare necessities of life is the only clause that asks for any temporal blessing.

The dominant notes are aspiration, worship, the desire for purification, and the joyful conviction of the sovereignty of God. This is a model of spiritual prayer, and this can be fervently offered by all who feel that to labour is to pray, and that temporal requests for selfish ends are as foolish as they are unavailing. True prayer, when it is not an aspiration, is a temper rather than an act.

7. This is the mystic union with Christ, the development of unity of character, for thus alone are spirits united. Those who perceive the same principles and desire the same unselfish ends, the establishment of the Kingdom of God, sympathise with a strong, deep love unknown to us foolish, selfish men and women here; their aims, their hopes, their thoughts are one; their work, their successes, their disappointments, are the same; they are comrades and brothers, and in that world, where state of being stands for place with us, identity of character means identity of circumstance.

This character is the great need of man; the development of the powers of Spirit is the path of perfection alike for the unit and the race, and this must be for all equally, for in exact proportion to the lack of development of each unit is the retardation of the organism as a whole. This is the object of life. It is not health, for that may coexist with savage brutality; nor material progress, for we die and leave all that behind, and even in this life the weight of civilisation often oppresses. It is not knowledge, for life is too short to acquire it, and all knowledge can be at best but relative; but it is the "more excellent way," that development of character that is manifest by Love. This is the source of health of body, strength of mind, and keenness of intuition, and they who have these things are necessarily successful; to them all other things are added by natural operation of the Spirit, "that worketh in all to will and to do." But neither material possessions nor intellectual knowledge will suffice to man. As with those who exalt

matter into the highest place and enthrone its desolate emptiness as GOD, so with those who worship mind only. "The eye is not satisfied with seeing nor the ear with hearing; of making many books there is no end, and much study is a weariness of the flesh. Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter—Fear GOD and keep His commandments," which are, not any Sinaitic code, but the law written on the fleshy tables of the heart, "for that is the whole duty of man,"—fealty to the Sovereignty of Ethics, which is the law of Spirit. Health and knowledge are of all but priceless value, but as means, not as ends: health is the basis of all activity. Intelligence is needed to direct activity wisely, but both exist for Righteousness as their purpose and end. Man as the spiritual being is the field for the manifestation of GOD. Mind in matter, spirit in mind, GOD in spirit, such is the chain of descending power. The Kingdom of GOD is within, and acting thus from the inmost nature, it subdues all things to itself, not by external cataclysm, but by vital process; man is the agent, and development of character is the method.

This result, like material civilisation and intellectual progress, is necessarily brought about by co-operant human action. Our ethical standards are formed on those of our fellows whether we will or no, and even the hermit represents the best ideas of the world from which he has fled. We can see the absurdity of an individual civilisation, but such is our moral cretinism that an individual salvation actually seems a reasonable theory! In things spiritual we are egotists to a frightful and appalling degree. We actually think that the object of the last great revelation was less to reform the world by turning it from the evil to the good than to teach us how to "save" our individual souls who, ever else may be damned, a piece of egotism so astounding that it is looked on by the angels who watch us as mania. For to them and to every healthy spirit it is as clear as day-

light that as salvation is no after-death reward, no saving from the consequences of wrong-doing, but the putting on of the white robe of a pure mind and a loving heart, so it follows as day succeeds night that no man who thinks he can be blessed while others are in misery can be aught but a contemptible selfish wretch, neither intelligent enough to apprehend God nor kindly enough to love man, and is by that very fact damned as deep as his own darkness can damn him, never to rise out of that state till he can grieve over the sorrow of others and be ready to do all that in him lies to help them. That such men can be "saved" though they were selfishly innocent all their lives, is as impossible as for a man to be in two places (or states) at one time.

8. "Dict sans Faict a Dieu déplait!" says the old French proverb. The evil in the world is caused by man, and by man it must be ended. There are two practical means of ending it, by treading down selfishness, anger, pride, and lust in ourselves, and by helping these "little ones." This little book deals with the principles rather than with the practice of a religion of law, but one hint is so obviously appropriate that it must be given. There are many excellent institutions for saving poor children out of the mire of our civilisation, that mire which we have all helped to make by mutual competition, and setting them forward upon life's way. In Dr. Barnardo's Homes, for instance, a great and noble work is being done. He is apparently a literalist Christian, but in this work creed is of no importance whatever. If every family that can afford it, nay, if every father and mother who have lost a child for whom they must have provided, would undertake to keep one only, to save one of "the hopes of earth" (it can be done for £16 per annum, the price of a very few dozen of wine or two dresses), one fruitful source of the pauperism of England, the upgrowth of a reckless, improvident, and criminal class, would be forthwith removed.

Evil impulses must be developed into good. None will do it for us, not even God. We have a glimmering light why He cannot do it for us, for it is through the instrumentality of man that He will end evil, for it is in man that Spirit consciously works. The more work is done here the less pain for all in the life beyond. Then there is pain for all in the life beyond! Yes, there is pain, and evil too. It may be depressing, but it is true. It is chilling to know that the conflict is still to go on. We are disappointed to find our heaven of untroubled rest as unreal as the Elysian Fields or the Scandinavian Valhalla. We long for peace without the battle, for the end of difficulty, for calm and repose. We would fain have our work done for us and enter on an unearned reward; we cannot realise the "war in heaven," the unending conflict between principalities and powers in spiritual states, the strife between forming spirit and reluctant mind, and we shrink from the prospect. This, if weak, is natural; but happily it is but one aspect of the facts. Rest is our own misapprehension. There are two ways of relieving weariness; one is repose, the other is to gain endurance. The strong need little rest, for they feel little weariness, and half of ours is due to the fevered pursuit of riches, and to want of trust in the immutable laws of God, which must surely give the victory to good, which is real and positive, over evil, which is negation. Love conquers all. When we shall steadily fulfil the object of our lives, like the stars, unhasting yet unresting, we shall know how short-sighted are our aspirations after a Nirvana of inaction; and if this gospel of work seems at first sight but a dismal version of the new heavens and the new earth, let us think what is a life here without work and without objects, compared to one spent in the honourable effort which earns the love and esteem of friends; and then let us acknowledge that this gospel is borne out by the universal lesson that effects follow on their adequate causes,

and on them alone ; and then this conception of Law acting in things spiritual will be found no cold agnosticism, but the star of Hope lightening the darkness and proclaiming that though the conflict be long, yet the victory is sure.

The first part of the book is devoted to a general history of the United States from its discovery by Columbus in 1492 to the present time. It covers the period of the colonial era, the American Revolution, and the early years of the Republic. The second part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from the year 1789 to the present time. It covers the period of the Federal Republic, the Civil War, and the Reconstruction era. The third part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from the year 1865 to the present time. It covers the period of the Reconstruction era, the Gilded Age, and the Progressive Era. The fourth part of the book is devoted to a detailed history of the United States from the year 1914 to the present time. It covers the period of the World War, the Great Depression, and the Cold War era.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUMAN FAMILY

“And still they come ; from Quito’s walls,
And from the Orinoco’s tide,
From Lima’s Inca-haunted halls,
From Santa Fé and Yucatan,
A holy gathering, peaceful all.
No threat of war, no savage call
For vengeance on an erring brother,
But in their stead the god-like plan
To teach the brotherhood of man,
To love and reverence one another.”

—J. G. WHITTIER.

“Life is too short for any bitter feeling ;
Time is the best avenger : if we wait,
The years speed by, and on their wings bring healing.
We have no room for anything like hate.
This solemn truth the low mounds seem revealing
That thick and fast about our feet are stealing,
Life is too short.”

—E. W. W.

“It is therefore as good as demonstrated, or it could easily be proved if we were to enter into it at some length, or, better still, it will be proved in the future—I do not know where and when—that also in this life the human soul stands in an indissoluble communion with all the immaterial beings of the spiritual world ; that it produces effects in them, and in exchange receives impressions from them, without, however, becoming humanly conscious of them so long as all stands well.”—KANT, *Werke*, vol. vii. p. 32.

CHAPTER VII

THE HUMAN FAMILY

“Homo sum, nihil humanum a me alienum puto.”—SENECA.

1. THE philosophy of spirit-life is, then, the recognition of man as essentially one organism, every member acting more or less directly on every other, both here and in the unseen. He is not shown as the protagonist in a world-drama, the cynosure of Heaven, a God claiming possession of each soul and helping its separate progress upwards, a Satan striving to drag it to the pit; but as one great family working out its own salvation by the operation of Spirit in many minds, a salvation which is the release from sin and evil; not the reward of progress, but the progress itself, each aiding that end by mutual help and co-operation, or hindering it by selfishness, greed, and lust.

Every one of us influences others directly and indirectly—each one is helping or hindering the Coming of the Kingdom, which is the blending of all purified perceptions in the reign of co-operant love, and this none can avoid here or hereafter. No saving one's soul, no personal progress, is held up as the chief end of man, but mutual help. It is true that personal progress follows, but it is the reward inseparable from duty done. Every faculty attained, whether courage, acuteness, discrimination, technical skill, scientific knowledge, or poetic insight, perseverance, wisdom, or unselfishness of heart, is one step upwards, once truly gained never to be lost, for no virtue excludes another, and each reaps its own reward by consequence,

the most terrible of all penalties, but also the most blessed of all hopes, for it represents the sure judgment of God working by known laws.

But this personal progress is not the end, but the means, for the philosophy of Spirit is the Sovereignty of Ethics over the thoughts and actions of men. Ethics, it has already been said, is a *calculus* which will solve all the problems of the hour which provoke such endless discussions on the plane of mere intellect.

Let us apply it in a few cases. What are the leading problems of modern life? One is the Commercial. On all sides are heard complaints of narrowing markets, of a competition which crushes out the small trader, of poverty, and of the decay of trade. Another is Currency, the difficulty of settling a standard of value between nations. Another is the antagonism between Capital and Labour. Yet another is the position of Woman. How is spiritual principle a guide in these questions? Yet if all suffering is the consequence of violated law, and if spiritual science claims to reveal the laws of human nature, it should be able to point unhesitatingly to the answer. And it can; all that is required is that the logical premises be fairly stated in each case, together with the ethical principles that underlie all sound human relations.

The one thing that we owe to others is Justice, in the very widest application of the word. This involves Truth and open dealing in every relation of life. As it is by the industry of others that my civilised life is possible, I owe it to others to do my share in maintaining that civilisation. As I owe my intellectual training to the thoughts of others, I owe it to them to contribute my share also, which can only be done by complete honesty towards all with whom my thought is brought into contact. Justice, too, demands that what I desire for others should be the same as what I desire for myself—all that contributes to well-being and develop-

ment of body and mind—and my standard should be what I, a just man, justly desire that others should do unto me. I justly want the fullest opportunity for my own activity—so do others. I justly want everything that I can use, not merely enjoy, but use for the higher, fuller life of a healthy body and a growing mind. So do they. I want opportunity for work and leisure. So do they. This is the statement of the ethical principle of JUSTICE, Love altogether apart; for Love needs no arguments, grudges no efforts, and scorns the nice balancing of obligations or the asking for the precise definition of its duties.

2. The commercial difficulty is the first great problem of modern life. How is commercial action to be extended and harmonised with the mutualist principle? Commerce is the interchange of products, and products are the natural raw material of the world elaborated and perfected by labour. The competitive idea demands that every person through whose hands a given product passes in the course of trade shall obtain it for the smallest and pass it on for the largest exchange possible. Value rendered does not enter into the question at all further than that the undue pressing of prices may deter purchasers or send them elsewhere. Those whose means do not admit of forming a “corner” or “ring” to force up prices by an artificial scarcity are reduced to wait for favourable turns of the market, to snatch a profit from its fluctuations, or to seek the cheapest markets for their purchases and the dearest for their sales. Between each man’s desire to raise the money value of the article that he sells and to lower that of all that he buys, there arises a mean which is known as the current price, a mean which is created by the operations of each day, and is nothing more than a statement of the rates at which the day’s bargains have been made. Value, which is primarily based on the cost of production, is the ratio between currency and any given commodity for the time being.

When markets are free to all a relatively large volume of commerce implies the underselling of other nations ; and to undersell other nations a low level of prices is a necessity. This can be obtained in three ways :—

(a.) By abundance of production. (As in manufacturing England of 1800–1850.)

(b.) By scarcity of money and abundance of food-stuffs relatively to other nations. (As in the India of to-day.)

(c.) By lowering the cost of production through improved machinery, smaller wages, or both. (As by the Continental inroads on some of our manufactures.)

Only under the first condition are low prices a benefit. Under the second the inequality so produced tends rapidly to disappear by competition for profits and by influx of currency into the cheap country where prices will steadily rise, as has been the case in India for the last twenty years ; while under the last the number of persons benefited tends to decrease, and when machinery has reached nearly the limit of improvement, the scale of wages becomes the only factor to be clipped, which has the immediate effect of reducing the purchasing power of the wage-earners. It is often said that low prices mean advantage to the working man in so far as he is a consumer. If prices fell quite uniformly in all trades, and contracts and rates of wages were recast from day to day, there would be neither gain nor loss ; but as this is not, and never could be the case, fall in prices in any particular trade tells against all persons who produce more than they consume, and in favour of all who consume more than they produce of the article in question. Poverty increases among these producers, and is only stemmed by strikes, which react on national trade and diminish its volume, at the same time that the absorptive power of the home market is lessened.

The result is a glut of commodities, and while the need for products among the poorer classes is wide and urgent,

all markets are overstocked. Protection, Fair Trade, and Free Trade are invoked in turn, and upheld as remedies by apologists who shut their eyes to the plain fact that the evils complained of, excessive competition and the ruin of the farmer and small trader, are as widely felt in protective America as in free-trading England. In the one country there are those who would like to see a tariff, in the other those who would repeal the tariff already existing, while in both there are thousands able and willing to give the energy and the skill which transforms raw material, but who are debarred from producing the necessaries whereof they and their fellows are in extreme need. For the hard fact remains, and cannot be evaded, that if every mill in the country were run at its full power, if every man in the community who is able and willing to work were at liberty to do so, and if waste due to the large number of mere distributors were checked, the excess of workers over drones is so great that the abundance of products would be such that the healthy wants of all might be supplied.

The competitive principle is the lion in the path. The more competitors there are for a stationary or contracting market, the less the margin of profit and the greater the tendency to force down wages to the limit of subsistence, and the competitors are therefore driven into ever keener and keener rivalry to secure customers, while the power of great accumulations of capital (whether in the hands of one man or of a company) to undersell all others is proportionately increased. The competition among distributors for the margin of profit in bringing goods to the consumer is yet keener, and leads to the recovery of profit by deterioration of quality, an evil now very widely felt.

In open competition, both of production and over-reaching, intellect divorced from morality has said its last word, and this is the moral deadlock to which it has brought us, "the struggle for existence" and "the survival of the fittest."

Its solution is to let the superfluity of workers die, and to limit the population. Meanwhile in all lands the proletariat differ from the prosperous as to who are the superfluous, and raising the issue by dynamite as being the only argument that is listened to, sow the deadly crop of hatreds which silence Reason. The churches shrink from preaching Malthus; but while they maintain the competitive system it is a farce to preach Christ.

Ethics or spiritual law can alone solve the difficulty, and this points to the ultimate solution by a largely increased number of actual producers, and by production irrespective of price. Following the analogy of all nature, it declares that the prime factor in all wealth is energy or labour, and that the very phrase "over-production" is an absurdity while there are men needing products. The available labour in a country is its potential wealth, and the very meaning of thorough prosperity is that all be usefully employed, not in mere transport and interchange of commodities, nor in making useless and enervating luxuries, but in that production which ministers to the health and well-being of all. The more is produced by a nation the greater its wealth, and its prosperity lies in utilising the whole of the labour it has at command. Production irrespective of price, whether by the national workshop, which even Conservative politicians apparently see as a possibility, or by other means, is the goal indicated. This goal is the ideal of effective co-operation, and should be distinctly recognised as the direction towards which effort should be directed. Of course this solution must come by growth; it cannot be forced upon an unwilling nation. Governmental measures alone are as useless as sumptuary laws, and the first condition of the success of any social scheme for attaining this or any other result is that it be the outcome of the feeling of the nation. Herbert Spencer has abundantly shown the futility of legislative action till the

idea that it is sought to realise is in many minds. Even should peculiar political circumstances allow of paper schemes being imposed, as in France in 1848, they must be failures. Modern political methods do not allow of men being well governed unless they can govern themselves well, and this they can only do by knowledge and personal advance, necessarily a somewhat slow process. Until it has taken place, however, there is "no more reason to look for a high standard in the combination of men known as the House of Commons than in those other combinations known as the several markets," as if the former body were less biassed than the electors it so admirably represents.

That the existing social system needs reform all who study the facts are agreed, and that there are such wide divergences as to the desirable method need not, must not, cause us to set aside the problem and think to deal by mere repression with the wretched who are driven to outrage to gain a hearing. The problem must be faced, and when men see clearly the end to be reached they will find some practical means of reaching it. But the primary means of the reform of our commercial system must be the growth of a healthy public opinion, and nothing is more likely to help towards this than two considerations. First, that Justice between man and man, and not mere "freedom of contract," is the sovereign law which, if violated, works out its own sure punishment in class enmities and the insensate clash of discordant "interests;" and, second, that the personal results of a life spent in ministering to mere bodily desires (quite apart from any criminality) is an empty soul such as hundreds of those who haunt circles to whom they are unable to give one noble or elevating thought.

This is a selfish fear, it may be replied. Yes, it is selfish, but it is both less selfish and more true than the ideas now current (and progress must always be gradual);

while in proportion as men realise the first of these two truths, the dim light of desire for personal progress will be quenched in the dawn of the growing day, in that Mutualism which is perfect justice for all. When it is clearly understood that the result of not denying the baser self is simply to have that self undenied, and not any penalty which it is hoped the Judge will be too good-natured to inflict, then there is a chance that men will seriously endeavour to amend their own selves, and will perceive that the constant struggle for wealth at the expense of others is a suicidal mistake, and that the essence of happiness is not for a few to get, but for all to be, the best that is possible.

3. Currency. It is but recently that America, under the pressure of a growing population and a scarcity of the circulating metal, invited the nations of Europe to a conference at Brussels with the view of united action to establish currency matters on a sound footing. As usual, short-sighted self-interest produced hopeless diversity of argument. Not one person in a thousand in England had an inkling of the momentous issues involved. The British public, laughing over *Punch's* cartoons, suspected nothing less than that the subject of its mirth was and is one of the most serious causes of the depression of trade and agriculture, and one that, by increasing the power of Capital, leads towards an acute crisis in the relations between rich and poor. The evils are: the widespread depression of agriculture resulting from the inability of the home-grown wheat to compete in price with that grown in silver-using countries, and the consequent inability to employ English labour and depression in the value of land; the increasing inability of the masses in those countries to purchase the manufactures wherewith England partly discharges her enormous annual bill of a hundred millions sterling of imported food-stuffs; the terrible and unjust burden thrown on the taxed classes of all silver

countries who owe interest in gold, whereby repudiation is openly spoken of as legitimate under the unforeseen circumstances which were not contemplated in the contract; the dislocation of values whereby gold has appreciated 30 per cent. in the last two decades; the reduction of the metallic balances wherewith trade is carried on, causing frequent and acute panics; and the incentive to silver countries to establish industries of their own in preference to purchasing from England articles which, cheap enough in gold, are ruinously dear in silver, and thus permanently to close markets to our manufactures. This last process is even now in full operation. The rising exports of machinery are largely swelled by weaving and mill plant and engineering tools, all of which are intended to obviate the necessity for further custom.

Competition has failed to find a remedy for this state of things other than lower wages and *laissez-faire* and, as before, the premises require to be clearly stated. Money is a mode of valuation and nothing more. It is not wealth except in a very limited degree, for apart from its exchange value it has very little intrinsic worth. Its value arises from the convention, ratified by legislation, to use a certain weight of the standard metal or metals as a unit of value, that those weights (whose quality is guaranteed by the Government stamp) shall be legal tender for the payment of debts,* and that the Mint will, for a

* In England silver coin is not legal tender for more than forty shillings, and the Mint does not coin silver for the public. In silver standard countries silver coins are unlimited legal tender, and bar silver is usually coined on demand. A bank-note is a token in either a gold or a silver country; it is a promise to pay so much standard metal. If the tokens are not redeemable on demand at the Government Treasury, the currency is called inconvertible, and the notes are reckoned at as much below their face-value as the general estimate of the probability of redemption indicates. Some paper currencies have so depreciated as to be worthless, and then bargains are made specially

very small charge, affix that stamp to as much of the metal as may be presented to it. Money is nothing but a device whereby the value of any one commodity in terms of any other can readily be ascertained. Man must have commodities, and these really are cheap when every man's labour easily brings him a sufficiency of them; they are said to be cheap when rated at a smaller amount of currency than men have recently been used to. Value being merely the ratio between products and the standard metals stated in terms of the unit weight, these must and will vary, but there is obviously no difference to the labourer whether a loaf of bread cost twopence or tenpence, if his receipts are proportionately increased. In the Middle Ages wages were, relatively to produce, considerably higher than they are now, more especially in the fourteenth, fifteenth, and sixteenth centuries, a fact brought out by Professor Thorold Rogers in his "Six Centuries of Work and Wages," and one which may usefully be pondered on by those who think that because a mason got fivepence a day in A.D. 1415 and now gets four shillings, his position has improved proportionately, or indeed at all. Slow changes in values are more or less self-adjusting because contracts run out and are renewed on the basis of fresh values, small increases or decreases in wages are readily yielded, to and so the burden is adjusted. Never-

in the standard metal, and prices measured in paper dollars rise. A note is only worth its full face-value when there is a certainty of its being paid on demand. By restricting coinage, governments can make coin so scarce that its value is kept up, but there is then strong incentive to false coining. This restriction of the currency is the method in which France, Holland, and other countries have met the fall in silver, and in so far as there is no false coinage it has been successful. But as this throws on the Government the responsibility of deciding how much coinage must from time to time be added to that in circulation, instead of this being automatic, the measure can only be regarded as a stop-gap.

theless the effect is not entirely eliminated because the employer always endeavours in a rising market to keep to the old level of payment. Instead of a heavy and manifest injustice, as when, in the case of Indian officials, the purchasing power of their fixed wages falls nearly 50 per cent. in twenty years, a slow rise in prices, or, what is the same thing, a slow fall in the value of money, distributes the loss over generations of wage-earners. To obviate these fluctuations in the actual values paid under running contracts, the currency should provide a fixed standard; indeed it is of the essence of a standard that it be fixed; the present troubles are precisely analogous to those which would result from a fluctuating yard or gallon. A perfect currency would be one in which the production of the metal just kept pace with the development of commerce, with the growth of population, and with waste, without increase or decrease. Payments under long contracts would then always render the same values as far as the money factor is concerned.

The metal in which value is estimated is then merely a measure. That of England is the gold sovereign, which contains 113.0016 grains of fine gold in 123.274 grains, and the silver coins represent or are tokens of certain fractions of this unit. Thus a florin in England is not so effective as so many grains of silver, but as representing one-tenth of a pound, and is consequently always valued at that amount.

If countries are to have considerable transactions with one another and are to treat with each other as members of one great comity, it is essential to justice that the standard of value be the same in all. Between countries one of which uses silver and the other gold as its standard, commerce is impeded and becomes a double speculation, both in the commodity sold and in the metal for payment. One standard for the whole world is an ethical corollary

to the proposition that it is well that all countries should be knit together by free and constant intercourse. Whether the standard be gold or silver or both does not much matter so long as the following three conditions are fulfilled :—

1. It must conform to the values under which great national contracts were entered into.

2. It must be in universal use.

3. It must be stable in value by reason of steady production keeping pace with the growth of population and commerce.

Gold fails by defect in the first and third conditions, silver by defect in the second and excess in the first and third. The union of the two should give the nearest approach to a perfect currency that can be devised. This union is termed Bimetallism.

It consists in freely receiving both gold and silver at the Mint for coinage at a fixed ratio, and making both unlimited legal tender. The relative values of gold and silver may then be said to be fixed, for if sufficiently powerful and solvent countries practise it, then clearly silver all over the world will never sell at less than the Mints of those countries will give for it, less freight and insurance. Either metal is in fact linked to the other.

This bimetallic law was in fact the system in force up to 1798, when England, under the apprehension of a scarcity of silver, declared for a single gold standard. At that time three great events had given her an opportunity to win the trade of the world, and this opportunity she improved by valour and mechanical skill. These events were—the Revolt of the Netherlands, the Thirty Years' War, and the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes. It is interesting to observe that all of these were moral causes, and that it was the righteousness of England's attitude at each of these great crises that was the primary cause of her success—she stood for the great principle of Religious Freedom. The

first named of these great political events ruined the weaving trade of the Low Countries, which then worked up English raw material (chiefly wool), driving the weavers to seek an asylum in England. Flanders was at this time the great manufacturing centre of Europe. Arras, Cassel, Tournai, Valenciennes, St. Omer, Rousselaere, Courtrai, Yprés, Lille, Ghent, and Bruges were all large cities having 40,000 looms apiece. Ghent in A.D. 1400 had 80,000 men capable of bearing arms, the weavers alone furnishing 20,000. The end of the war saw the extinction of all this industry in Flanders and its transfer to England.

So with the great struggle between Catholics and Protestants which culminated in the death-grip of the seventeenth century. Neither creed gained or lost territory, but the countries which were the seat of war were thrown back two hundred years by the destruction of their industries. So again with France. The Huguenot weavers were the pick of the French artisans. Bigotry refused them the free exercise of their religion, and a sensual and fanatic king sought to dragoon them into Catholicism. A hundred thousand of them, evading the prohibition of flight, transported their skill elsewhere, mostly to England, and helped to build up English commerce at the expense of French. Just at this juncture Arkwright and Watt invented the spinning-frame and the steam-engine, thus bringing together Power and Material, which are the only sources of real wealth. A flood of English products as excellent as they were cheap deluged Europe and produced the effect above alluded to as the result of prices lowered by production alone, they enabled England to undersell all other nations, and benefited all by cheapening great necessities of life.

The success which rewarded this enormous advance in production has been and is constantly referred to the currency in which it was paid, and the gold standard has

been called one of the pillars of England's prosperity. Whatever advantages it may secure in a commercial world part of which pays in silver and part in gold, if the measure is to be judged by its main results it can only be considered disastrous. The foundation was laid for that steady increase in the value of gold which is evident in the recent and still continuing heavy fall in prices and in the declining rate of interest. All contracts over ten years old have become unjust, and while the worker is barely able by disastrous strikes to stave off heavy reductions in wages, the value of the gold hoards of the capitalist have gone up by 30 per cent. Bimetallist countries such as France have been compelled to close their Mints to the white metal, thus adding to the general distress and liability to commercial panic. Payments of interest on old debts by silver-users to gold-users have become a heavy burden. The lessening of work for the manufacturing and agricultural classes, and thus bringing them into antagonism with the bankers and bondholders of gold-using countries, and the unduly high taxation of certain classes in silver countries, together with the checking of enterprise there by the difficulty of paying interest on borrowed capital,—these are the conditions we now have to face.

At the beginning of the century England upset the system till then universal in the world, and at its close she feels the effect of her own action. The great sums of money received in exchange for her products (her true wealth) enabled her to lend to others, and to become the great creditor country of the world; but under the growing scarcity of gold caused by other nations following her example and establishing the single gold standard in self-defence, repudiation seems likely to become more frequent, and at the same time the dislocation of values with silver-using countries is paralysing the Eastern and South American trade at the very time that the Continental and American

industries that have grown up under the protective tariffs that are the hothouse to seedling manufactures, have greatly narrowed and will still further encroach on her gold markets.

So turns the wheel. The violation of physical law generally brings early and visible results; violations of intellectual law—errors in thought or illogical action—give rise to consequences which are both more remote and are masked by the effects of right action in details; while the infraction of principles whose effect is always partially and tentatively righted by the varied currents of human action separately rectifying obviously bad results, requires long periods in which to bear its fruit, and its slow but lasting effects endure when the causes from which they sprang are forgotten. But whether injustice be wilful or not makes no difference; justice works out its sure results, and shows its kinship to the eternal world of spirit by its awful and majestic course, which, regardless that the wrong-doing generation has gone to expiate its faults elsewhere, visits by strict consequence the acts of the fathers upon the children, convincing them of wrong by pain.

Confronted with this great problem, the House of Commons can only see that appreciation of gold is good for a creditor country, that is, for those persons in it who hold promises to pay in gold, and the whole question is treated on the basis of interest alone. The right and wrong of the matter are not so much as mentioned, and the discussion turns on the respective numbers of those who will profit by rising silver or by rising gold, a course of reasoning which shows only that men do not believe that honesty is really policy also and that the Right is sure to prove the True likewise.

The ethics of the case are simple. All men need products as the basis of a healthy life. This is true wealth. Money is merely the term in which wealth is stated.

Every man has a right to all that he earns, the money equivalent of what he produces, taking production in its widest sense of all that aids therein, whether education, supervision, or transport. Mere exchange without benefit rendered is not earning, whether between individuals or nations. Therefore all such profit is wrong, and what is needed is a monetary agreement to define one standard of value for the whole world, to the end that debts be payable at a rate as nearly as possible equal to that prevailing when they were contracted.

4. Capital and Labour is, like Currency, another of those problems on which argument spends itself in vain when either side endeavours to justify a position which self-interest has already taken up. The mass of facts is so large and the issues so involved that the dispute is but too likely to end in an endeavour of the one side to crush the other, whether by arms, terrorism, or mere weight of votes, a temporary settlement which can only breed undying hate whichever side is uppermost, leaving the real question exactly where it was. Modern labour difficulties are undeniably the result of the competition for the maximum of products, which leads all men to seek to pay the least possible wage for work done. These products, all in fact that money can buy, are, as has been said before, the true wealth of a people, and are created by the united labour of brains and hands, acting on raw material. But though labour is the first origin of all wealth, it is by no means the source of all possession. As soon as wealth is created arises the feeling of greed, and thence results, in the smallest degree, theft; on a somewhat larger scale, robbery; and on a magnificent pattern, conquest; and these account for a good deal of possession though they create no wealth. For this, access to the raw material is indispensable, and hence it is that a hold over the instruments of production, whether land, machinery, or the common measure of

values—money—confers the power of deciding the amount of production. This involves the power of giving or withholding employment, and therefore of reaping profit from mere possession. The greater the demand, the greater the profit which accrues to the holder. This is the origin of "the unearned increment." If a man should acquire by conquest, purchase, or grant, a plot of land which should afterwards become the site of a thriving town, and without spending on it one halfpenny of money or a hand's-turn of work, should lease it for building sites, it is easy to see that when his ground leases fall in he must become the owner of an exceedingly valuable property, to the creation of which he has in no way contributed.

It is the same with the owner of funded property. The accumulating interest on bonds is as much unearned increment as the increasing value of land. No ethical distinction can be drawn between the two, and the fact that this is at present nearly the only means of provision for old age and for the maintenance of the helpless need not blind us to the moral aspect of the facts. They are the result of competition, as a mutual insurance system might be the result of co-operation. But though it has grown up quite naturally and is a necessary stage in development, it is still unearned increment, and must be recognised as such. It is the unequal distribution of this increase of value which is one great cause of modern inequalities. The labour which produces the increase is the labour of many, and it is just that they who gave the labour should enter into its fruits.

Now, instead of every man perceiving that by acquiring more of this increment of value than his share as a worker entitles him to he is perpetrating a fraud on the community, it is the aim of each, by speculation and otherwise, to clutch all that he can, and hence capital,

instead of watering the ground, is collected in pools here and there. Accumulations, conferring the legal right to the result of the work of those whom it employs, give rise to still larger accumulations, and that this is a greater source of inequality than differences of industry or talent we need only look around us to see. For the amounts that one brain and one pair of hands, unaided by artificial systems, can actually earn bear a very small ratio to the vast incomes of the owners of urban land, of the mine-owners, and of the large "operators" on the Bourses of Europe.

When the chief form of property was land the obligations of wealth were better understood than they are now. It was once the custom for the feudal lord to compel his vassal to work for him gratis, but to give the serf land to live on, and to maintain him in his old age. His home was a miserable cabin, but he was not removed from it, and no workhouse regulations severed him from his wife and children in his declining years. Now, funded property acknowledges no duty to those by whom its interest is provided; all it gives is "charity," a work of supererogation which is a merit in itself. The man who has no trades-union at his back is compelled to take whatever wage may be offered, a wage which rarely permits of any saving, and may be withheld the moment sickness or old age impairs his powers, leaving the workhouse as the end of a life of toil. The labourer, whether with head or hand, is told, with bitter sarcasm, that he is a free man and need not accept less than he thinks fair. But labour is under the disadvantage that to it delay means starvation, and therefore the price of unskilled labour tends always to the bare cost of living, and much skilled labour is not much better off. But for strikes and unions this would be universal, labour would be forced down to the minimum that isolated men could be induced to accept,

not by the ill-will of the capitalist, but by the pressure of unmitigated competition.

The only way out of this state of things is to give up the competitive idea, to cease to apply the brute maxims of survival to beings capable of right and wrong, and to recognise the duty (not charity, but duty) of finding suitable work for all. This will be amply rewarded, for obviously the greater the amount of work done, the greater the collective wealth of the country. But in order that all who are able to produce may do so, it is necessary that they should have access to the machinery which has so largely taken the place of hand-tools, and this cannot be while access to machinery is barred by the individuals who own it, as soon as the volume of production threatens to lower prices below the margin of profit.

Modern socialist writers recognise that without capital the necessary machinery for any branch of industry cannot be provided, and would secure this by arranging that all wealth-producing investments (not private property, but that portion which is devoted to production) should be vested in collective bodies, local or centralised as might in each case be most desirable, which would organise all manufacture. It must be admitted by the most enthusiastic socialist that the difficulties of such a solution are enormous; nor is it easy to see how such a state of things could grow up naturally, and if it could not, then there is no likelihood of its being imposed on the nation. Whether the cheapness by abundance of products which is the necessary condition of general advance, and must arise if every man worked anything like his full share, could not be attained by this capital being freely subscribed by the workers and all profits shared, is not now the question; this is not the place to discuss the practicability or otherwise of various schemes. What it is desired

to bring out is the ethical aspect of things as they are and the verdict of spiritual Law upon them.

This is unhesitating. It declares that modern oppositions are due to no inherently irreconcilable conditions of social life—for man himself creates all the products he needs for civilisation—but to mere coarse, vulgar injustice, to the setting of self-interest and the law of free contract (which is only just between those who are already equal) above ethics, and to the survival of the feudal idea that some men are rightly born to serve others; and this idea is strengthened by the notion of a Providence who orders the world from outside it instead of the realisation of a Spirit of Righteousness working in human hearts and thus making the Kingdom of Heaven.

There should be no question of forcibly making people equal; what is desirable is to remove the hopeless handicap that prevents them from displaying from childhood upwards the powers which prove how nearly equal most of them are. What is wanted is a growing class of men who are prosperous because no share of their labour is diverted, and the most feasible plan seems to be profit-sharing, that all that labour in a concern should be shareholders. Increased purchasing power of wage-earners must result, and the number of such businesses would steadily increase, for they would create their own market. The share of Capital as such would be the sinking fund, reserve, and the repairs, the surplus being divided among all, including those who direct. The great difficulty is, of course, the low standard of knowledge among the workers. This is partly cause and partly effect of existing disabilities; for no man who must toil all day for bare subsistence can be other than ignorant of everything but his trade, and his trade too often tends to make him more and more a mere feeder of a machine; and as no man who is ignorant of the real social forces at work

can be in a position to modify them, the proposals of those who most feel the burden are often too crude for discussion, even when they have progressed beyond the stage of blind hatred of the Law which the poor anarchist confounds with the cold-hearted indifference of the well-to-do. While the upper classes ignore the ethics of the case and uphold the competitive system and the unmitigated law of "free contract," and while the lower think that evils can be redressed by the simple process of plundering the upper, and interfering with results instead of replacing causes of ill by causes of good, while they are harder on those who compete with them than any master, no great improvement is likely, or indeed possible. The ignorance and improvidence of Labour itself is the first thing to remedy, or, having power, they will certainly misuse it.*

* The perceptions of workmen are, however, greatly improving, as may be instanced by the following letter extracted from *The Builder* (February 1892):—

"SIR,—The two 'blacklegs' your correspondent 'Bench' refers to have a perfect right to work where they can. The men have also a right to object to work with them. The employers equally have the right to employ any one they choose. There you have three opposing interests,—first, individual selfishness; secondly, combination, sinking selfishness for the advancement of all; thirdly, capitalism, whose object is to encourage the former at the expense of the latter. These varying interests are inevitable under the present system of production.

"As Adam Smith observes in his 'Wealth of Nations':—'Masters are always and everywhere in a sort of tacit but constant and uniform combination not to raise wages above the actual rate. To violate this combination is everywhere a most unpopular action, and a sort of reproach to a master among his neighbours and equals.'

"That being so, and modern events show it is as true to-day as when first written, more than a century since, your correspondent must therefore admit that the action taken by the men in the firm he refers to is merely a combination to protect their own interests; and to allow any attempt to pass unnoticed that threatens such interests would

Notwithstanding the attempts of sincere Churchmen like the late Cardinal Manning to uphold the Church as the refuge of the poor, the whole of the labour movement looks on ecclesiastics as a spiritual police organised in the interests of property, and while the Church's creeds in any other sense than the symbolical have become incredible to the intellectual, her ethics of pardon for oppression and her past disregard of the most crying abuses by those in place and power have alienated the multitude, which, though it may not understand the reasoning whereby it is obvious that the restitution in "charity" of a thousandth part of the unearned increment is neither remedy for present evils nor provision against their continuance, yet feels strongly enough that neither almsgiving in the present nor the promise of after-death blessings for the poor in the future at all rises to the height of the situation.

In fact, so long as the remission of penalty through a past atonement is put forward as a truth, so long will it remain a standing incentive to laxity of conduct and devotion to present material interests. When it shall be taught that though the way of repentance, the turning back from the lower to the higher, is indeed always open; that though the results of past acts can in a measure, perhaps almost entirely, be remedied by worthier acts, yet they can never through all the cycles of eternity be blotted out, for each deed goes to make one thread in the terribly involved web of human affairs, and acts and reacts in ways that soon pass far beyond our knowledge; when it shall be perceived that ethical law is not the arbitrary institution of a God who will "pardon" its infractions, but His creation, as inherent to spirit as gravity to matter; when it shall be proclaimed that the

be detrimental to that combination. Consequently when individuals choose to work against the well-being of their fellows, they will have to put up with the obloquy and reproach attached to such action.

"JOINER."

abolition of evil here and now is the only salvation, for there is, strictly speaking, no future, but only a renewed present, then, and then only, will it be seen that men must remove their ideas of equity from compliance with the alterable human laws of contract to the region of unalterable ethics whose law is summed up in one word—Mutualism.

5. Woman. What is the woman's question? It is the question of woman's true relation to man, and all the consequences involved in the answer. What, in fact, is sex?

Physiologically it is the separation of the single cell which contains within itself the reproductive power, into two cells by the departure of the male nucleus.* There are, then, two cells, the one active and energy-expending (katabolic), the other passive and energy-storing (anabolic), which separately are powerless, and must reunite before growth can take place. This is the physiology of sex, and the cause of separation must be taken as psychological because no other than a psychological cause can be assigned for any vital process. The human embryo does as a matter of fact originate with the union of two such cells, and thenceforward grows. If the (psychic) katabolic tendency is dominant, development is towards the formation (by specially differentiated organs) of katabolic cells, and the child is a male; if the anabolic, then the opposite sex results. In either case a fresh path of existence is entered on in which the entire organism matures alone till the time comes for its becoming again productive by meeting the complementary organism without which it remains (physiologically) a barren unit.

It is therefore not true that woman is simply a "lesser man," weaker in body and mind. If she were, then the clearly desirable thing would be that the woman should

* Quain's "Anatomy," vol. ii. p. 16, and Vine's "Vegetable Physiology," quoted by Mr. A. J. Bell, "Why does Man Exist?" Chaps. xv., xvi., and xvii.

always be subordinated to the stronger and wiser guardianship of the male; for the great disadvantages of freedom would far outweigh the smaller benefits arising from the redress of individual and isolated wrongs. But if the woman is the complement of the man; the one capable of prolonged endurance, the other of vigorous effort; the one intuitional and deductive,* the other intellectual and inductive; the one more patient, the other more just; if, in short, the two stand to one another in the position of mutual helpers, then their external relation should be characterised by freedom, not tutelage. Even superficial observation corroborates the physiological aspect of the facts that there is some real basal difference between the sexes, and that their psychic characteristics, though they may be accentuated by training, are not primarily due to it, being in fact causes rather than results. Heredity has been assigned as a cause, the prolonged action of men "repressing" women for generations. But this, when analysed, reduces itself to the adoption by men and women alike of the ecclesiastical idea—the subjection of the bride to the bridegroom—an idea which is part and parcel of the whole system of dogma which begins with the perfect Creation and the Fall; and the heredity argument would deserve more attention if the descent of females could be shown to be specially through their mothers, and of males specially through their fathers. Every generation being in fact de-

* Buckle, in his "Essays," states two propositions:—"First, that women naturally prefer the deductive method to the inductive. Secondly, that women, by encouraging in men deductive habits of thought, have rendered an immense though unconscious service to the progress of science, by preventing scientific investigators from being as exclusively inductive as they would otherwise be." He shows that the most important scientific discoveries of modern times—as of gravitation by Newton, of the law of the forms of crystals by Haüy, and the metamorphosis of plants by Goethe, were all results of that *a priori* or deductive method, "which, during the last two centuries, Englishmen have unwisely despised."

scended from both equally, reproduces the personal characteristics of each.

In the past ages of war and turmoil it was natural, and indeed inevitable, that women should be under the guardianship of their men: where mere force rules, gentleness must seek a shelter. But now that it is recognised that individuals are not fit judges of their own quarrels and that it is the duty of the community to see justice done, the conditions are altered. Less seclusion and more justice is the order of the day, and the claim that is put forward by women is, that before the fact of sex stands the fact of a common humanity with the same need for the development of the intellectual and moral nature. The old days placed the fact of sex in the foreground. Woman was first and foremost the wife and the mother: the thought of modern women gives to sex an important but still a secondary place, and these leading ideas are reflected (as is always the case) in their present lives. The girls of past generations were trained as housewives; their mission was to understand thoroughly the duties of the house, the kitchen, the dairy, and the still-room; to do a mother's part in bearing healthy children, in looking after their physical needs, and in teaching them truthful honest ways. The training was useful, healthy, and simple, but painfully narrow; the whole intellectual side of feminine nature was neglected, and the natural result followed; it became dwarfed, woman feared to think for herself in anything, and though the average intellectual standard among men was not so much higher as to forbid the friendship on which the home must be founded, there was yet sufficient difference to lead men to look down on women's thoughts and women's ways, and to consider "piety and cookery" their proper sphere.

At the present time reaction from the narrowness has led to a neglect of training for the duties of life, and in place of the homely but practical knowledge of their great-grand-

mothers, there has been substituted a smattering of languages (except as a key to the literature and thought of a nation, the most useless of all knowledge), a dabbling in art, and a veneer of the slight "accomplishments" without thoroughness of any kind, which go to make up the young lady-hood so painfully familiar, graceful, self-opinionated, ignorant, and wearisome.

Then, for the majority of women comes marriage as their life-work, and with it the lesson how pitiless the struggle for existence can be. The woman learns, painfully and piecemeal, through many errors and their consequent suffering both to herself and her children, some few truths which should have been familiar to her from her teens, but much she never learns at all.* If women knew what is the special business of their sex, the laws of physical and mental growth, the improvement in strength and beauty that must result in one generation is incalculable. But they do not, and mother after mother continues to violate those laws till they regard the ailments that follow in themselves and their children as part of the burden of sex, of maternity, and of infancy, instead of the direct consequences of the acts and the omissions of parents; while, so far from understanding the modes of growth of a child's mind, scarcely any mothers are aware that there is anything to understand. Every woman who may be a mother should be a trained kindergartner and know that it is largely within her power to mould a whole lifetime in its first ten years. This training is women's real work, and they do it execrably.

In later life they lose all hold over their children as these grow up because they can furnish no help for the difficulties of growing minds. Reasoning breeds doubt of established opinions, and "doubt is sin," and so repression of

* Those mothers who desire to know wherein they offend should consult an excellent book called "Tokology," by Dr. Alice B. Stockham, Chicago, which should be in the hands of every married woman.

thought, ignoring of facts which tell against pet theories, and a standard of colourless innocence is the usual maternal regime, whose watchword is, "Don't," instead of the positive training which results from high ideals.

But the home no longer limits woman's ambition, and yet she is dimly conscious that she cannot compete against masculine strength,* individual instances of gifted women notwithstanding. There are many women who have come to a stage when they feel that their lives have no meaning, and are frittered away in so-called "social duties" which they only half care for, and in vanities of dress and decoration which do not satisfy, and in the intervals of unrest they are conscious that this is because they have not yet attained the grasp of life that gives them a purpose in it. The more intellectual train themselves for professions, and for a while are sustained by pride in their abilities. But sooner or later, to them also, except to the very few who can make their works and thoughts their offspring, and love the professions they have chosen for the sake of the real effective work they can do in them, the fact of sex reasserts itself, and there comes the feeling of barrenness in life as it came to Aurora Leigh:—

"I might have been
A happy woman now, with children at my knees ;"

and the result of cramping the affectional side of nature is more disastrous than stinting the intellectual.

Spiritual law gives a clear answer to this as to other

* It is true, and a very disastrous fact it is, that female labour has in some places driven out men's labour in mills and factories, the women toiling from daylight to dark, while the men stand idle or get intermittent work ; but the cause of this simply is, that women can be beaten down to wages that men will not accept. As a result, the very possibility of home-life is destroyed, to the mutual ruin of both sexes.

difficulties. Woman, like man, is first and foremost a spirit in earth-training; with the same future and the same work, that of establishing a noble humanity. But her part in the work differs. The fact of sex is not a mere bodily difference, to be cast off when man goes into the unseen. He is not there a sexless, mateless being. Sex is no mere accident pertaining to the bodily nature, for bodies merely express the differences of souls. Even if there were not strong evidence that this is so, it would be a necessary inference. Once the idea of the essential unity of all life is grasped, and it is perceived that all body is but soul externalised in matter, it follows that all life involves sex, though its manifestations may be very different to those with which we are familiar. It is our own degradation which leads us to regard the facts of sex as in some way impure. Where unperverted it is the very type of purity; every flower that blows proves it, for are not flowers the emblem of all that is sweet and lovely, and is not every flower nothing more nor less than Nature's bridal chamber, fitted to the union of male and female whom God hath joined together?

That the fact of sex remains after the change called death, there is experimental evidence. Those who return to earth and manifest themselves do not come as sexless forms, but as the men and women we knew in earth-life, and they speak of themselves and others in the same way.

But there, we are told, is the most perfect and absolute equality. Relieved from the necessity of supplying material needs, there is only the necessity for meeting the needs of the soul, and for this women are as well equipped as men. No man can dominate or compel a woman there, for she is bound to none either by law or necessity, but only by choice. Love neither can nor needs be simulated, and is therefore that real feeling which only deserves

the name, the pure unselfishness which works for another, that passion stronger than death which welds two souls into one, one in aims, one in actions, and one in aspiration. There, as here, each is necessary to the other, and the life here is not a thing isolated and cut off from the life there, but is the same life with different surroundings. Here, as there, souls are the same, the masculine the more intellectual and active, the feminine the more pure and receptive, and each is required to the training of the other and to be had in mutual honour. This is the clue to the problem—they are complements, not rivals.

Mutual honour and mutual aid, that is the simple secret. Man's function in the great work is the conquest and the direction of the forces of nature, and this he effects by POWER, both of body and reason. LOVE is the woman's strength. Her mission is the training of the race, its ante-natal and post-natal culture. Firstly, to give to the generations that health which is the foundation of all after-development and whose first requisite is a good maternity; and, secondly, to raise men's ideals and to uphold the moral purpose of life, not by negative precepts, but by positive action, chiefest of all by her choice of a mate and her married life. But till her physique and her intuition alike are trained and fortified she must bear the reproach of being a lesser man "in every excellent character, whether mental or physical, inferior to the average man in the sense of having that character less in quantity and lower in quality."

This is the answer of the Religion of Law to the woman's question. The work of man in the world is to establish a nobler civilisation wherein all may develop upwards, and in this work woman has an equal share. It is not by competing with men of strength and worth, but by co-operating with them, that woman finds her true mission, and the heart of every healthy woman will confirm

the statement no less than the facts of life. Separated from one another men get coarse and women get narrow. The tone prevailing in women's communities is, in every instance I have been made acquainted with, incredibly babyish and small-minded. Jealousies for the smiles of the Lady Superior, for her praise and notice, of each other's friendships, microscopical loves and hates, absorption in feeling to the exclusion of thought, and pettinesses indescribable, characterise the life of women who have shut themselves away from the free, bracing wind of the outdoor world of working and loving; while any assemblage of men from which female influence is absent shows, I believe in the long-run invariably, a marked declension below the standard of men of the same class who have homes; and this is true even where strict discipline is observed, as among soldiers and in boarding-schools, as well as in workmen's barracks and in mining camps, where hundreds of men are herded together. In such cases the brute in man too often breaks out and descends to depths of unnatural crime which almost destroy humanity.

No graceful and kindly social intercourse—in a word, no society, can exist without women. In countries where, as in the East, they do not enter into social gatherings and Schopenhauer's ideal is fully realised, the zenana is the hothouse of petty jealousies and impotent ennui. Embroidery, sweetmeats, scandal, child-bearing, make up the horizon of its inmates, and among the men social intercourse is confined to visits of etiquette, with religious or political gatherings at rare intervals. Society properly speaking is the corollary of the home, and the home depends on its mistress being neither her husband's toy nor his drudge, but his equal friend. The natural life for men and women alike is the married life, because here only the two minds exercise the deepest influence on each other, and this is Nature's school of unselfish work.

The chief obstacles to the realisation of this for all are, not any marked excess of marriageable women, but the oppression of workers by the competitive system, and that which is rightly called pre-eminently "the social evil."

The solution to the woman's question is therefore inextricably bound up with that of the labour question. As long as the pressure of competition enforces celibacy, and compels the toil of women and girls at trades which stunt their growth and cripple their lives, and forces them into unnatural competition with men, so long will homes be out of the reach of many workers. In the middle classes the reluctance to marry is often referred to the growing luxury of men and women alike. This is not the true cause, or is at best a very minor one: most women, even when frivolous and vain, show the capacity for better things, and there are few indeed who will not respond to the worthy ambitions of a strong man. The ugly truth is the second great cause that has been mentioned above. Next to the instinct of self-preservation, the strongest impulse in human nature is the sex passion. Men do not need to marry to gratify this, and therefore they do not marry. English social hypocrisies are nowhere more blatant than here. Concealment of known facts is universal. It is pretended that it is an injury to female purity to know before marriage what their own functions are, and devastated lives result from girls not knowing the difference between worthless and worthy men till too late to be of use in their gravest decision. It is said that the ways of the world are too foul for women to walk in. Perhaps they are; but if so, that is because while man exacts complete chastity from all women he permits to himself promiscuity. For it is true—and no honest and observant man dare deny it—that most men before marriage, and a high percentage afterwards, live in promiscuity, pleading physical necessity. Now this is mere hypocrisy. It is very doubtful whether healthily nurtured and educated

youths, used to the society of refined women, would show appreciably stronger passions. The stronger passions of men are partly due to a false standard of manliness among boys, partly to concealments of the common facts of life giving rise to curiosity, to bad literature and false art which suggest sensual thoughts, but mainly to that want of worthy ambitions which have been summed up as plain living and high thinking, and to the teaching which suppresses facts and puts pardon for consequence. But the apologies gravely put forward for things as they are amount to an assertion that the moral and physical ruin of many women is necessary to safeguard the more fortunate from the brutal passions of men, as it is also seriously asserted that the misery of thousands of workers is a condition of material prosperity.

The whole system is one gigantic LIE, for it is built on the two pillars of lust and greed, which shall fall when the nobler humanity, now blind and crippled, shall arise in strength and destroy the temple of shame to whose obscene deity so many now devote health and life. It ignores the spiritual nature of men and women alike, and treats them as mere animals. "Live to the spirit, so shall ye not fulfil the lusts of the flesh," said S. Paul, who understood well enough wherein lay the remedy for the incubus which, then as now, weighed down those who would rise. Generations of living to the flesh have produced the degenerate neurotic temperaments, infirm of purpose and hungry for pleasure, which are, alas! so common. The Religion of Law declares that generations of living to the nobler self, of delight in knowledge and of work for others, will be required before humanity can endue the white robe of the true marriage of strength and purity.

But to bring this about both sexes must co-operate, and ask, each of the other, a higher standard. Young men will do whatever women admire, and when women cease to reserve their highest praise for successes over others in the

competitive arena, and give it for real beauty of character, for strength, intellect, and self-conquest, the women's question will have ceased to be. "Most men have a period in their career when they might do something great, a period when nothing seems impossible. The ignorance of women spoils for the human race this magnificent opportunity; and love, at the utmost, in these days only inspires a young man to learn to ride well, or to make a judicious selection of a tailor" ("De l'Amour," De Stendhal). So in their turn men must cease to look for ignorance and submission, but seek the true nobility of character, which can only exist in the mind which knows the realities of life and can distinguish the worthy and the unworthy among men.

6. In short, the solutions to modern difficulties are moral ones. Firstly, to know that mind is as surely subject to law as matter is, and that no code or device, except right practice, can secure Divine favour. Secondly, to realise and respect the rights of all men and women. The Pharisees still ask "Who is my neighbour?" and the answer is still the same. Not only those who are related by blood, creed, or interest, but the Samaritan also—all with whom we may be brought in contact. What more powerful incentive to such unity is there than to know that in the world whither we are bound there are no distinctions save those due to quality of soul and spirit—that is, to knowledge and morality? Can there be any stronger reason for us to do all that lies in our power for others than the knowledge that even as here no one man or clique, however gifted, can by their own unaided efforts make a civilisation for themselves, but are limited, whether they will or no, by the actions of others, so there also the joint action of all is necessary to any possible salvation?

All material advantages are but the passing means of discipline, and are to be used as such. They are the transient and external riches, the things of this world which

are to be used as not abusing it, whose fashion passeth ; while the true riches which none can give or take away are, not crowns and mansions miraculously conferred after death, but powers of mind and spirit, of intellect and will, which, being part and parcel of the soul of man, are fixed in it as no mere external possessions can be. Can there be any more valid argument for this than the knowledge that human beings, except in so far as they work their own or each other's undoing, enter the spirit-world free and equal ? Why should lack of opportunity be suffered to retard the race ? We are all of us responsible for the evil of the world, for war, for prostitution, for poverty, disease, and crime, for we all contribute to make up the total of spirits who aid in establishing these things instead of that which it is our business to establish, the Kingdom of God. Every time we pass by the sorrows of others with cold-hearted indifference, every time we close our ears to truth, every time we transgress the law of love by desire to be revenged, every time we yield to sensual temptation, every instance of appropriating aught not fully earned, every instance of using power to extort more than even-handed justice confers, every careless violation of sanitary law, and every wrong, even the smallest done to another, each goes to foster and to maintain the temper which shows its ultimate results in bloodshed, degradation, and death.

The fair distribution of wealth and its benefits, the abolition of waste of power in competitive strife, the purifying of hearts and minds, these are the real problems of the future : not whether of the many opposing creeds are nearest to truth ; not whether the world came to be by fiat or evolution ; not the antiquity of man ; not the origin of the Christian system ; not any historical theorems soever, interesting as these all are, and bound up as they are into one body of truth which forms the intellectual basis for a

practical philosophy of life. The problem we have to face is no mere intellectual one, but the dispelling of the moral darkness which overclouds the world. Little avails to weigh suns and planets, to know the cosmic laws, to spread out the panorama of history, to cover the sea with ships and the land with railways, if the proportion of the wise to the foolish, and of the prosperous to the suffering, remains unaltered, and if all our knowledge teach us no sympathy with aching hearts.

This is the real essence of all religion, and the practical purpose of all insight. It is first of all needful that we should realise the exact bearing of our accustomed thought towards the immutable law of Right and Wrong, for this is the preliminary to all action. When this has been done we shall be able to face the great task set to the Twentieth Century, one whose solution requires strenuous action, not thought only, how to alleviate the lot of those who toil and suffer, and to bring all into conditions where they can lead healthy, and therefore happy, lives. This chapter may be fitly closed by a vision of Andrew Jackson Davis which expresses this great truth :—

“I saw a mighty Spirit traversing the world without rest or pause. . . . It was invisible to every creature born upon the earth, save once to each. . . . It had its work appointed, and neither sped nor slackened. Called to, it went on unmoved and did not come. Besought by some, who felt that it was drawing near, to change its course, it turned its shaded face upon them, even while they cried, and they were dumb. It passed into palaces where there were lights and music, pictures and diamonds, gold and silver ; crossed the wrinkled and the grey regardless of them, looked into the bright eyes of the bride, and vanished. It revealed itself to the baby on the old crone’s knee and left the old crone wailing by the fire. But whether the beholder of its face were now a king or now a labourer, now a queen or

now a seamstress, yet sooner or later it turned its impartial face on all.

“I saw a Minister of State sitting in his study, and round about him, rising from the country which he governed, up to the eternal heavens, was a low dull howl of ignorance. It was a wild but inexplicable mutter, confused but full of threatening, and it made the hearers’ hearts to quake within them. But few heard. In a single city where this Minister of State was seated, I saw thirty thousand children hunted, flogged, imprisoned, but not taught, who might have been nurtured by the wolf or the bear, so little of humanity had they,—all joining in this doleful cry. The Minister of State, whose heart was pierced by even the little he could hear of the so terrible voices day and night rising to heaven, went among priests and teachers of all denominations and faintly said—

“‘Hearken to this dreadful cry. What shall we do to stay it?’

“And one body answered, ‘Teach this!’ Another said, ‘Teach that!’ Another said, ‘Teach neither this nor that, but the other.’ Another quarrelled with all three; twenty others quarrelled with the four, and no less bitterly among themselves. And the voices cried out day and night; and still among those many thousands, as among all mankind, went the Spirit, who never rested. . . . And still in brutish sort they died.

“Then a whisper murmured to the Minister of State, ‘Correct this for thyself. Be bold! Silence these voices, or virtuously lose thy power in the attempt to do it. Thou canst not sow a grain of good seed in vain. Thou knowest it well. Be bold, and do thy duty!’

“The Minister shrugged his shoulders, and replied, ‘It is a great wrong. BUT IT WILL LAST MY TIME.’ And so he put it from him.

“Then the whisper went among the priests and teachers,

saying to each, 'In thy soul thou knowest it is a truth, O man, that there is good to be taught, and stay this cry.'

"To which each answered in like manner, 'It is a great wrong. BUT IT WILL LAST MY TIME.' And so he put it from him.

"I saw a poisoned air in which life drooped. I saw disease, in all its hideous aspects and appalling shapes, triumphant in every alley, by-way, court, back-street, and poor abode where human beings congregated. I saw innumerable hosts, foredoomed to darkness, dirt, pestilence, obscenity, misery, and early death. I saw, wheresoever I looked, cunning preparations made for defacing the Creator's Image from the moment of its appearance here on earth. I saw from those reeking and pernicious stews the avenging consequences of such sin issuing forth and penetrating to the highest places. I saw the rich struck down in their strength, their darling children weaken and wither, their sons and daughters perish in their prime. I saw that not one miserable wretch breathed out his poisoned life in the deepest cellar of the most neglected town but from the surrounding atmosphere some particles of his infection were borne away, charged with heavy retribution on the general guilt.

"There were many attentive and alarmed persons looking on ; they were well clothed and had purses in their hands ; they were educated, full of kindness, and loved mercy. They said to one another, 'This is horrible, and shall not be !' And there was a stir among them to set it right.

"But opposed to these came a small multitude of noisy fools and greedy knaves, whose harvest was in such horrors ; and they, with impudence and turmoil, and with scurrilous jests at misery and death, repelled the better lookers-on, who soon fell back and stood aloof.

"Then the whisper went among the better sort, saying, 'Over the bodies of those fellows to the remedy !' But each of them moodily shrugged his shoulders, and replied,

‘It is a great wrong. BUT IT WILL LAST MY TIME!’ And so they put it from them.

“The Spirit, with its face concealed, summoned all the people who had used this phrase about their time into its presence. Then it said, beginning with the Minister of State, ‘Of what duration is your time?’

“The Minister of State replied, ‘My ancient family has always been long-lived. My father died at eighty-four; my grandfather at ninety-two. We have the gout, but bear it (like our honours) many years.’

“‘And you,’ said the Spirit to the priests and teachers, ‘what may your time be?’

“Some believed that they were so strong that they should number many more than the threescore years and ten; others were the sons of old incumbents who had long out-lived youthful expectants. Others, for any means they had of calculating, might be long-lived or short-lived—generally (they had a strong persuasion) long.

“‘But every man, as I understand you, one and all,’ said the Spirit, ‘has his time?’

“‘Yes!’ they exclaimed together.

“‘Yes!’ said the Spirit, ‘and it is—ETERNITY! Whoever is a consenting party to a wrong, comforting himself with the base reflection that it will last his time, shall bear his portion of that wrong throughout ALL TIME. And in the hour when he and I stand face to face he shall surely know it, for my name is—JUSTICE!’

“And the Spirit departed, turning its face hither and thither as it passed along its ceaseless work and marking all on whom it looked.

“Then went among many trembling hearers the whisper, saying, ‘See, O wicked, selfish men, that what will “last your time” be JUST, that it may last for ever!’”

7. So the great work goes on. From all ages and reli-

gions may be learned that man is ever essentially the same, dimly perceiving the same eternal truths, striving to express them by the images he loves best and knows as highest; losing them in the mire of sensuality, among the phantoms of dogmatism, in the mists of ignorance, or by the blindness of arrogant self-assertion, ever prone to Materialism which is Idolatry, reverencing the form and losing the idea, prizing the garments of Truth above Truth herself; falling and rising again, learning by his errors, his follies, and his sins, no less than by "admiration, hope, and love."

Sic itur ad astra. God, who has made of one blood all nations upon earth, has deprived none of His children of the light, nor appointed any one only salvation. Not only of one blood, but of one mind also, the true Church is the Divine in man welding all humanity into one body by one Spirit, having one hope, one Lord, one God and Father of all, who, by whatever name He be called, is above all, and through all and in all. She is one great communion of living and dead, excluding none who will to any degree share in her aims and hopes, and aid by any means soever in establishing the reign of Love. All else is valueless. The things of Spirit alone are the real:—

"The earthly hope men set their hearts upon
Turns ashes, or it prospers; and anon,
Like snow upon the desert's dusty face,
Lighting a little hour or two, is gone!" *

Equally transient are worldly success and what men call failure, if we leave the scene of our school-time blind and deaf to the grand realities of Spirit, and dumb in the language of praise.

But to those whose life's devotion is given to that work, whose hearts are set on that Love, the insight into the world

* Omar Khayyam.

of Spirit announces that, though there is no reward for the enlightened selfishness which will defer its wages to the other side of the grave, no beatitude for the profession of a creed ; though it is easier for an idiot, by pretending to be sane, to look and act sanely than for one who, careless of others, aims at securing a personal salvation to win the crown which is the perfecting of the spirit by practical unselfish Love and comes by consequence alone ; yet it is surpassingly true that eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to imagine the joy that God hath prepared for them that love and strive after Eternal Beauty and the Eternal Truth.

THE END

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