

QUESTIONS ANSWERED EXTEMPORE

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

AT THE

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MR COLEMAN, in introducing Miss Hardinge, said that the evening would be occupied, as previously intimated, in answering Questions proposed by various Ladies and Gentlemen. These were numerous, and the Committee had endeavoured to blend those which were related to each other, but they were still too numerous to be answered on one evening. None of them had been seen by Miss Hardinge, whose Answers would therefore be wholly unpremeditated. For the satisfaction of all, he would ask some of the Ladies present to draw promiscuously four or five Questions.

The following Questions were then drawn in the manner suggested by Mr Coleman, and were answered in the order in which we present them:-

Question 1

ANIMALS have brains and nervous systems, and exhibit phenomena, mental, moral, and emotional, which seem to differ only in degree from those of human life: they think, they reason, and invent novel and ingenious methods of attaining their objects, of overcoming their difficulties and remedying evils; they also manifest, love, hatred, gratitude, revenge, joy, grief, jealousy, etc., and have also methods of communication with each other. In our superior human nature we regard these as manifestations of the spirit within us, acting through the machinery of the brain and nervous system, and we know that spirit to survive the death of our mortal part. What is it that produces these analogous, though inferior manifestations in the brute creation, and what becomes of it after their death?

Answer

THE first Question presented requires us to define the difference between instinct and reason. It has been claimed, and justly, that the higher order of animals have a nervous system, whilst even the lower orders, in some form or other, are provided with an apparatus for the diffusion of nervous sensibility, correspondent to a system, excepting such forms of life as the mollusca, or other rudimental creatures, up to the humble worm, which exhibits a chain of ganglions, terminating in the larger one called the brain. Ranging up from the lower order of animals to the highest, we find a gradual improvement in the complexity of the nervous system, which is the apparatus which thought traverses: it is the telegraphic wire upon which the life-lightnings play,

and without it the most magnificent and boundless scope of thought can never exhibit itself in matter. Consequently it is with especial reference to the nervous system, as a physical cause, that we must first attempt to answer your Question

We find that even the lowest orders of being exhibit a degree of instinct which is admirably appropriate to their condition. All the creatures of the dry land or of the water possess instincts adapted to their state: the reptile and the amphibious creature, fish and cold-blooded animals, generally are, if not fully provided with the same complex system of nerves as the mammalia, still organised with special arrangements for the generation of just the amount of vitality adapted to their state, and subservient to the instincts peculiar to that state. Yet the amount of instinct thus exhibited has never yet been classed as reason. It is, then, between the mammalia, as the highest order of animals, and man, that we must endeavour to draw the chief distinction between instinct and reason, and the question assumes a still more subtle form when we remember that the highest order of mammalia possesses a nervous system almost equal to that of man. In them, too, we find the heart, with its arterial and venous apparatus for the distribution of the circulating fluids, as elaborately developed as in the human form. We find that the brain, although it differs in quantity in different creatures, is almost as complex in its structure and convolutions as that of man: but we also find that the great column of the nervous system – the spine – with its ganglionic termination of the brain, is disposed differently in the animal to that of the man. In the animal it runs laterally with the ground, and the brain receives the galvanic power of the solar ray at an angle which varies considerably from the direct or perpendicular. Man, on the contrary, in his erect position, receives the first direct impetus from the solar ray in the action of a horizontal beam; hence, whatever force the power of light and heat can exercise upon receptive forms, have in this attitude full scope for their exhibition, and must form a line of demarcation between the play of nervous force in the human and in the mammalia thus differently stimulated. And the next evidence of difference in degree of nervous force exhibited in form, is found in the fact that no single form in creation is capable of exhibiting the same amount of intellectual power as man. Whilst the eagle's wing can bear him upward to the sun, the power of man can transcend the eagle's flight in the mechanical powers of mind displayed in the balloon. The mole can mine; the beaver build; the ant and bee manifest the united power of the geometrician and mathematician; the wasp's and the tarantula's nests are models of self-taught architecture: in short, throughout the whole range of natural history, every creature manifests a peculiarity of instinct which antedates human inventions, and emulates, in every form, the genius of man. But let it be remembered that these evidences of mental power are only exhibited in the lower creatures in one or two directions at a time. The animals which seem capable by training of enlarging the sphere of their faculties are very rare, and it is only in creatures which become the companions of, and are subject to, the intellect of man, that we realise the qualities set forth in your statement.

The instincts necessary to the preservation and perpetuation of species are manifest in all living creatures alike, for instance; the love that protects their young and associates gregariously in species and tribes. The manifestations of love, hatred, jealousy, revenge, prevision, and caution; all these are displayed in every species; but their exercise is limited within its species, and comprehends nothing outside of its own nature. All species realise others antagonistic to them; comprehend that which forms appropriate aliment, confine themselves within their own element, yet seem to

comprehend the creatures on whom they can prey or consociate with; but none of the lower kingdom manifest evidence of an intellect outside of their own limited and defined form. Thus the building beaver, the geometrical ant, the weaving spider, and the hunting buffalo, are wonderfully instructive only in the direction of that one peculiar attribute which their form implies. The keen scent of the hound, the wonderful instincts of the migrating bird and of the hybernating animal, and even the prophetic power which teaches these creatures to lay up stores against the approaching seasons of scarcity - all this which looks so very like the action of calculating reason, when analytically considered, resolves itself at last into a necessity which grows out of the anatomy of all these creatures, and without now entering into detail, I affirm that each one is not only peculiarly adapted for the manifestation of the instinct it displays, but is as much compelled to exercise that instinct as the necessity of its form, as the flower must needs give off peculiar fragrance, and fruits or roots their quality or essence. It is far otherwise in the organism of man: this is mobile in every conceivable direction. Could the span of human life and strength, extend to the physical exertion, the foot of man is capable of compassing the earth; while the power of intellect enables him to traverse it by mechanical means without the waste of time and strength either on land or air or ocean. The wild beast of the forest is unfitted for the habitations of rock. The savage tenants of the cave subsist not in the field or pasture in the meadow. Each creature is fitted only for the soil and scene in which it is found, nor has any individual of a species, instincts which direct it to enter upon any other element, scene, or sphere of action than its own. But how various and infinitely subtle are the instincts whose assemblage we call reason in man! The throbbing pulse, like the wonderful indicator of the steam-engine, records the quantity and energetic action of the fires of life. Each organ works a telegraphic chain of nerves which informs the brain how much fatigue or effort man may make - how much emotion mind can well endure. The beast may feel all passions you describe, as love or hate or jealousy, or any of those feelings called emotions, yet is unable by any telegraph between the heart and the brain to determine how far its power must be controlled by judgment, intellect, or reason. It ever acts in the peculiar direction of its passions, and knows no hindrance to their play but physical exhaustion. Throughout the whole range of the human organism there is an adaptability to every circumstance; while the reason of man knits up into one, all the fragments of intellectual power that are manifest in every other creature. Thus man is a spinner, weaver, builder, engineer, and navigator. With the mariner's compass he is enabled to guide his course over the pathless wastes of ocean better than the migratory instincts of even the swallow or the martin: by his intellect he is enabled to calculate atmospheric changes, and to determine even centuries hence what shall be the physical aspects of nature, from what they now exhibit by the observation of the growth and formation of strata beneath his feet. There is not an element of mind, nor an atom of matter, but what is subject to man, and combined in his organism. There is not an element of mind or an atom of matter, but what is *distributed* amongst the animal creation, but only in diverse forms and scattered fragments; whilst therefore we find the parts of being divided in them, in man we behold them all combined as in creation's microcosm.

Then arise the questions which I would fain elaborate more fully, were there not so many other subjects of interest to consider. What shall become of this sovereign spirit of man, the totality of all other spiritual entities? And what of the fragments which constitute the life and instinct of the animal creation? Ask the realm of nature how she deals with the perfect and imperfect, the parts and whole of being. There we find that

whatsoever is perfect is preserved, while imperfection pays sins wages - death, and passes as a fragment into higher forms to constitute a whole. Hence, while every animal is perfect in its degree, it is not perfect in relation to the highest of forms, which is man. It is only perfect as regards its own peculiar state and sphere. Here upon this earth, its being is necessary, its place is marked; but man, to whom the earth and all things of it are subjects, transcends the earth, and, therefore, belongs to spheres higher than earth. It is sometimes claimed at the spirit circle that all the forms known in the animal kingdom are found in the spirit-spheres. And this is true of some spheres which contain all types of earth and which preserve the representations of every condition manifested here, from the lowest mollusca to the highest man. You can annihilate nothing, therefore you cannot annihilate the fragments of thought which vitalise and move the very humblest form; but such forms are not preserved in permanent immortality, because they are not perfect, nor susceptible of continuing an individualised existence any longer than the form which it occupies is useful to creation, therefore, though for a time in the eternal progress of things the animal forms are preserved in something like a spiritual representative shape, these at last become extinct. Even as the monsters which are no longer useful to the earth's surface have now become extinct and passed away, so for a time in the lower spheres you will find the representative forms of animals preserved, but not in the higher. There, where the perfected spirit of man dwells there is no consociation with animal forms whatsoever. We claim that the animal spirit, then, has a continued but not an immortal existence, whilst the spirit of man, as the perfect elaboration of form, the elaboration of intellect, the cosmos that binds up all of existence known or conceived of in the universal mind - this remains for ever. The imperfect dies; the beautiful and perfect, never.

Question 2

Is the spirit, in its progress, incarnated more than once?

Answer

THE Question first demands an explanation of the word "incarnate." We find that its popular definition is the association of spirit with matter in the form of an animated being. Thus we may say that the spirit of the animal, the thought of which we have been speaking, is incarnate in its form. We presume that the question relates more especially to the incarnation of spirit in the human form? And to this we answer, as we ask, Does the eagle return to the egg? Does the oak return to the acorn? Do the sun's rays return to its central heart of fire? Never. Whithersoever we turn our eyes, in search through the grand analogies of nature, we find that the universal genius of creation is progress. How, then, can we respond to the question that asks whether the spirit returns to the mould that shaped it? Whether the water of life returns to the pitcher broken at the fountain? Or motion to "the wheel broken at the cistern"? Believe it never! The purposes of material existence are all included in the growth and development of the spirit in a material mould. We believe that the Eternal Spirit shakes from his Divine hand the scintillations of life like star-dust and that these, precipitated in the mould of matter and associated with it, becoming incarnate spirits. But, oh! remember our claim, ever basing itself upon fundamental principles of being,

and ever demonstrating itself in the widening revelations of spiritual unfoldings, that spirit is the power of life - not matter; that spirit is the real organism, matter only the shadowy mould in which it grows. The purposes of incarnation are simply those of growth and development. These effected, the spirit bursts its material cerements, and knows no more of incarnation. It is a spiritual body, and, as such, life's real and only substance. As a spirit, grown through matter, it is already a fully-perfected being: what has it, then, to do with the clay of earth again? There is not the highest form of matter bearing an incarnate spirit now on earth that equals in its attributes the splendour of a spirit disembodied: no, not one. Whatever be the moral degradation of the disembodied soul, there are certain attributes which belong to spirit that far transcend the obstacles of matter. Clairvoyance is one of these. The darkest and most degraded of spirits, too, realises his disembodied state with a power that belongs not even to the wisest minds of earth, for there is in the prison-house of matter a veil of materiality which obstructs the vision by death removed. Hence, spirit sees no more what seems, but that which truly is. Spirit, too, is boundless; there is no time or space in its existence. In eternity all time is merged; infinity has no horizon in the spirit-world, but soul-development and power to observe the boundless realm of being. In short, spirit - whether in itself, its attributes, or sphere - is so resplendent and supreme a condition, compared to matter, that the very question of re-incarnation involves the whole question of retrogression - a movement nature knows not, and creation never proves. Spirit incarnate in matter, more than once, and that once as the embryo state of being only? Never! Never! The soul's nature and existence, as defined to us by the Infinite Spirit, whose voice we humbly and reverently re-echoed in this place some short time since, saying, "I am Alpha and Omega; I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore!" is the history of all spirit. *It never dies*; and therefore never returns to the material form through which it has been born into life eternal: whatever forms, in the long ages of eternity, the ascending spirit may assume, in harmony with the laws of progress illimitable, - the earthly clay once spurned, the casket broken, the mould destroyed, sooner would creation return to void and space, suns, stars, and systems be quenched in night and darkness, than spirit return to dwell in the tomb of earth, which victorious death has vanquished.

Question 3

CAN you give any explanation regard the suffering which the animal kingdom is called upon to endure, in connection with the physical well-being of man, and the purposes of science; as also concerning the perpetual warfare waging therein?

Answer

WE must first respond to that portion of the question which demands a reason for the suffering of the animal kingdom as it originates with man. We ask, why is suffering inflicted upon the animal kingdom by man? In the first place we find, that notwithstanding the supreme excellence and triumphant powers of the human soul, it still manifests its alliance with all lower existences in nature, and progresses through the realm of matter; thus there are inevitable analogies between the influences which act on the progression of matter, the development of soul, and the forms and instincts

of animals. Thus, in man is found the aggregated instincts of animals; and in animals the same effects of influence that act on man.

Destructiveness, the love of rule, the domination of the strong over the weak, are all outgrowths in the human mind from the types in the animal kingdom. In animals and men alike, such tendencies arise from an undue excess of the love of self. There are but two primeval ideas in the realm of moral nature: these are the love of self and the love of the neighbour. When either of these exists in excess, they are crime; in equilibrium, they are virtue. Until man realises the true and just balance, one or the other prevails; and hence originate all his faults and failings, and all his crimes. In the animal kingdom (which we believe to be in broken fragments, the exhibition of nature practising to develop man, exhibiting various fragments of intellect, and displaying in various degrees the instincts, which in their totality in man, is reason) - in the animal kingdom, instinct unrestrained by reason, constantly evidences a tendency to excess. In man, this excess is crime; in the animal, simply injurious instincts of nature.

When we attempt to show why man inherently, as if by nature, appears desirous to inflict pain on the animal kingdom, we are painfully recalled from a consideration of the sufferings of these poor victims of our uncurbed vices, to pause on the pages of our daily journals, and there discover that man inflicts wanton acts of cruelty on a higher order of being than even the animal kingdom, and in this his hapless victims are the weak and helpless of his own race. What philosophy can show why the savage hand of violence is raised to strike a fellow creature? What sophistry can justify the haughty rule of the aristocrat over the poor and humble? Why does man trample beneath his very feet the meek sons of toil, or scorn the humble labourer? Why so often shrink, as if from a pestilence, from the ignorant, the criminal and ill-conditioned members of society, who, as cramped themselves by the chains of adverse fortune, claim from us protection, care, and teaching? All this is part of the same spirit that strikes the helpless animal, and abuses the lower creatures; and yet more problematical in view of man's high nature is the fact, that the very weakness which should claim our pity seems to be the plea on which we make it a safety-valve for this our inevitable spirit of destruction, and tyranny, and wrong. In view of man's relations to the lower kingdoms, and his inheritance of violence from alliance with the brute, we assume that passion in the beast is excess of self-love in the man. Self-preservation is the column around which group all the attributes which make us men and women. Without it we cannot maintain an existence. In the excess of this feeling, which, repressed, is virtue, self-love, I repeat, is crime; and its tendency degenerates in satisfaction of our angry passions by the sacrifice of those on whom we wreak them.

But your Question also enquires concerning the result of ill usage upon the animal kingdom. We may not hear the moan of the creatures we punish, there may be no voice to rebuke the cruel blow with which we strike the patient steed; there is no appeal in human tone, no word of reason to remonstrate against the wanton blow we strike the brutes, but if these speechless subjects of our wrath are dumb to our mortal ear, their every wrong is a prayer which their Maker answers, and that in results which are manifestly shewn in these creatures' spiritual natures. The endurance by the strong animal of wrongs inflicted by weak man, proves in the first place the total absence of that consciousness whose highest function is the knowledge of self, of its own strength, and of its relations to the oppressor. The brute knows not its power, and

therefore not itself, and in this ignorance it is that it endures. Now, we have before stated that the spirit of the lower creatures maintains a continuous existence. In this place it is proper to add, that that existence is progressive, and that the sufferings which each creature endures are its means of progress. As we strike the iron at the forge we make it finer; as we burn or beat the gold we elaborate qualities in it that are never to be found in the unwrought metal. We call forth magnetic life from stones and metals as we strike or bruise them. The fragrance of the flower ascends beneath the foot that crushes it. And even so with the suffering spirits of the creatures subject to us; the tortures which we inflict correspond to the adversities which lessen man himself. There is not a moment in our lives more fraught with instruction than the hour of bitter failure, or the moments of life's agony. 'Tis then we first begin to know ourselves, to turn our eyes within and summon up around us all the remaining energies of soul to meet the emergency. 'Tis then we come out of gladiatorial combats with life's woes, and pains, and penalties, fully developed spirits. By analogy the same process is exhibited on the spirits of the lower creatures though we mark it not. Every blow and every cruel wrong inflicted on these creatures has a corresponding effect upon their spirits.

We do not say this to justify the offence of wronging them. "It needs must be that offences come; but woe unto those by whom the offence cometh." Still there is a power of transmutation in the great crucible of divine mercy which brings out the thrice refined gold from the fire of suffering wheresoever it is inflicted; and therefore it is that in the divine philosophy of suffering we are reconciled to the processes by which endurance is forced even on helpless animals: independently of the wisdom that is manifest in the system of necessary destruction which one species exercises upon another, to the destruction of noxious creatures burdensome to the earth; independently of the fact that the foul and pestilential exhalations of the earth, that would otherwise fill our atmosphere, become incarnate in these noxious creatures, and that organic life is always superior to inorganic, and the destructiveness of one species aids the progression of another - besides all this, and the fact that through all these mutually related incidents in nature, earth and its inhabitants are evermore progressing, - 'tis strange but significant of God's creative wisdom to observe that destructiveness invariably prevails amongst the lowest forms of life, and its tendencies invariably diminish as we ascend to the higher grades of being. In the highest of all forms, the gentlest kindest natures become more and more manifest; and the more capacity for education exists, even in the animal kingdom, the more surely is it associated with that docile disposition which preys not upon other creatures. Thus, then, do we claim, that in the ascending scale of being, destructiveness is a gradually receding tendency. It would seem to begin as a fundamental law of life's necessity, and ending, as all necessities of being end, in the fully unfolded intellect and noblest types of man - the highest reason of the highest man shall ultimately be so triumphant, that when man himself shall have learned self-government, and attained to a noble equilibrium between the love of self and the love of his neighbour, when his own superior intellect shall recognise the wrong of inflicting pain or unjust punishment on any living creature, his pure life magnetism shall go forth, and create a new earth, from the new heaven that is born within him. When man is himself a fully perfected being, and his atmosphere is radiant with his goodness, all earth will partake of his own controlling spirit life, and physical emanation. Destructiveness will cease - destructive creatures perish, the earth will become refined and purified, and the atmosphere be sublimated. The poisonous carbonic acid gas exhaled from man's

respiration descending to the ground forms now a portion of the vegetable world, and this again taken up by the animal creation, influences if not determines much of their characteristics, and thus even our respiration no less than our influential forms and lives and minds are repeated in all nature subject to our influence. When we are centres of purity, gentleness, and mercy, and that reason which legislates between the love of self and others, produces in man earth's sovereign lord, and God on earth's viceregent, the fruits of love and wisdom, truly the bright prophetic vision of the seer shall rejoice the new born earth in the new born heaven of human souls that rule it. Until this glorious consummation of life's progress shall ensue, we thank our God that He transmutes our crimes into the welfare of his creatures, and from our very darkness ultimates the means of progress for creation.

Question 4

Can you throw any light upon the mystery of insanity and its purposes?

Answer

WE will respond to the first portion of the Question but must claim permission to change the phraseology of the last. We answer then by asking - *What is sanity?* Let us attempt to define that, e'er we speak of its opposite. We take all the various moral and intellectual functions of the human mind, and we find that they may be divided into five. The first of these is manifest in the earliest period of infantile existence in the form of a senuous nature. The tender new-born creature manifests the power of life and motion in its wailing cry of pain and unconscious appeal for sustenance. Each motion and each sound is urged by great nature's primal law, the senuous care of self, or the yearning instincts of mere animal life and nature. With every day's advancing stage of life, as the young child grows, it manifests its second element of being in its affectional nature. We perceive the little arms of the babe out-stretched to those that are ever kindest to it, we realise how readily the nurse or mother's tender love is responded to by the youngest child amongst us. Truly then, the next manifestation of human nature in the scale of mind must be affection; the next is the moral element in man. The young child no sooner takes part with its companions in its daily sports or rudimentary education than it manifests a simple sense of justice. The child in its very play cannot be trampled upon by its companions, nor venture to inflict its petty tyrannies on others. Every group of children in their sports teaches a code of morals.

The next manifestation of life is the development of the intellect. Here the mind reaches out to select its favourite objects, or to pursue some special occupation, art, or science, or it displays itself in mediocrity, indifference, or incapacity for learning. And the last of the developments of mind that constitute the group which I have classified as five great elements of reason, is man's spirituality, and this is manifest in the deep yearnings of religion, tendering to reverence, fear, awe, worship, aspiration; and finally to inspiration, which in its normal action on the human soul, is the voice of God inbreathed in the mind of man. In all these five departments - namely, the sensual, affectional, moral, intellectual, and spiritual elements of mind there are corresponding organs seated in the brain, each endowed with its separate and peculiar functions. The sensual part of man's nature must be guided and regulated by

knowledge, or it degenerates into excess, which is crime; even so, must the moral and other tendencies in human nature be ruled. In fact, in every department there must be a power which rules the proclivities of mind arrayed at its tribunal: we call that power reason. It requires for its perfect exercise - first, the harmonious working of all the elements of mind; next, the knowledge to discriminate and judge amongst them. Reason comprehends and speculates; and judgment legislates and passes verdict on the faculties of mind; and hence we find that sanity is an equal development of all man's mental faculties. Wherever one or other is deficient, there is insanity, or unsoundness. You may not recognise it, unless it manifests itself in some extreme; but I say that every crime and every proclivity to excess which is, indeed the essence of crime, is more or less insanity. Any tendencies which become dangerous to humanity are as much insanity as the passion known as frenzy. Excessive madness, or that which is recognised as such, and demands the restraint of physical force, is only the excessive *plus* or *minus* of some organ of the brain, resulting in inequality of balance between the various functions of the mind. So long as there is even a partial equilibrium amongst all the mental faculties, whilst the sensual nature is restrained by others - when the stern, strict sense of morality does not lead the mind into fanaticism; so long as the affections do not run riot, or the intellect absorbs the being to the exclusion of the rest, or the spiritual yearnings of the soul wrong not material duties; just so long as there is an equal balance amongst all these various tendencies, the result is mental health or sanity; but even the least disturbance of these mental forces - a predominance or lack of either element resulting in lack of balance amongst the whole - is, in its degree, insanity. Anatomy records that in many cases where insanity prevails, especially in such instances as appear traceable to cerebral excitement, there is often no evidence of anatomical change in the brain. The brains of lunatics, in *post-mortem* examinations, are not unfrequently found in a healthful state, although there is almost invariably discovered physical disorganisation in some other portion of the frame - especially of the great nervous centre, the spine. Insanity, too, is often promoted by a deterioration of some portions of the system apart from the brain, every part of the wonderful structure of humanity being so intimately connected, that any organic disturbance is calculated to produce the abnormal condition called insanity. I call insanity, then, the want of equilibrium in the entire system, which localises an injury, in want of balance amongst the various organs of the brain; for though this state may be produced by physical causes, these causes ultimately represent themselves, through the system, upon the mind, and therefore in the brain, as the throne-room of the sovereign mind, and the demon of insanity finds there its exhibition. Our question further adds, "*What are its purposes?*" In the divine economy there is but one purpose subserved by suffering, mental or physical, and this is - to teach us to know ourselves, to warn us to legislate among our faculties, and to guard well the noble structure of the physical form, which in disorganisation presses too rudely on the mind, and to avoid the dangerous excesses which, in mind, is crime, in matter, disease and death. In the economy of the human system you may trace all its defects, either from hereditary tendencies, accident, disease, or some disturbance in the nervous system.

I believe with Hahnemann, that there is a spiritual cause for all disease, and that when we can produce and equalise the perfect flow of life's electric currents, there will be no disease, and in this state there can be no cerebral disturbance called insanity. The purpose - if we may conceive that God designs a special purpose in insanity - is only to be subserved by studying the human system, by considering carefully those

causes which produce inequality or want of equilibrium in the brain; and foremost amongst the subjects of this fell disease I call as criminals. To my mind all crimes and moral obliquities are insanity. To me it seems that evil tendencies are not alone ignorance of the highest good and the highest wisdom, but that they originate in most instances in some physical or mental state, induced by physical or inherited deformities; “the sins of the father visited upon the children;” and that in these inherited tendencies, the inequality that produces crime is insanity. We do wrong only to visit the causes of insanity upon those who are restrained for the safety of the public in lunatic asylums. The only madmen are not the raving maniacs: to study the worst species of insanity we should visit the prisons, jails, and penitentiaries. To deal with these as physicians rather than magistrates, we should convert our prisons into moral hospitals, and infirmaries for sick souls. Then, and then only, shall we realise what insanity is, and how it may be cured. Lunacy is the want of balance only between any of those five functions which I have thus hastily classed as constituting all the assembled faculties of mind. When reason and judgment can legislate, fairly amongst these, there is perfect sanity; when there is a want of balance from any cause originating either in physical disorganisation, or excessive predominance of one mental faculty over another, that state is insanity.

Question 5

WHAT do you understand to be the conditions necessary to admit of mediums being lifted in the air, and of the passage of spirits through material objects, if they can so pass?

Answer

THE condition for the elevation of any body from the ground is counter-attraction. All things are held in their place upon this earth by the power of gravitation; that is the one sole power that draws to the common centre the entire of the beings that remain upon the round moving world. Any power that can overcome the earth's gravitation, whether it be the mechanical power that enables us to lift an object, or that which causes the loadstone to suspend a certain weight of iron, or any power corresponding to the power of the loadstone - any force, in fact, that will overcome the gravitation of the earth, can upheave the heaviest body from the earth.

Now, there is a power of magnetism, within that which is the strongest magnet in creation - namely, the human form, which, when the spirit is liberated from matter, and, by a knowledge of chemistry, is enabled so to compose the elements which emanate from a mediumistic body, together with those which are held in solution in atmospheric air, as to form a strong and powerful magnet, or loadstone, which can upheave substances in air. This phenomenon is but the result of the spirits' and the mediums' vital magnetism; or the act itself is but a result of that same force which upheaves in this, imponderable ether, the vast bulk of the mighty sun, and revolving satellites. All these are held in space by attraction and counter-attraction. The centripetal force which draws you to the centre of the earth is overcome by a centrifugal force, which sends lighter bodies from the earth. Now, between these two forces in operation, there is an inevitable inequality. There is in all things in nature a

lack of equilibrium which produces alternating movements between the forces of attraction and repulsion. To produce the phenomena of which you ask, we must overcome the attraction of earth's gravitation, and thus we can upheave the mightiest bodies in space. Spirits are but experimenting in the present phase of spiritual phenomena; they are, like yourselves, learning the exhibition of the rudiments of the science of magnetism, and the very simplest of these is the power which enables them to form a magnet of mediumistic and atmospheric essences, and where they have a good battery in the person of the medium who must be highly negative to their positive force, it is one of the simplest of the phenomena of Spiritualism to upheave that negative body in the air.

Your Question concerning spirits passing through material obstacles involves another set of laws entirely. We must ask leave to enter a little more into detailed notice of the subject, and remind you that we requested the permission of this audience, some six weeks since, to deliver in this place a course of Lectures. We did not aim in this to produce mere oratorical effects, but to give through our medium's best capacity the rudiments of a philosophy. On that philosophy, time, study, and spiritual growth will add great superstructures, but it will not remove the basis. A portion of that philosophy related to the question, "What is Spirit?" And in rendering the answer, we stated that spirit lived in accordance with a set of laws in no respect analogous to those which govern matter; we urged that spirit transcends all the laws of matter, and that there is no law which rules or governs matter that belongs to a spiritual existence. One of the laws of matter which spirit transcends is that of time and space. We now ask leave to enter upon the question more in full. Time is the boundary of material movements only; there is no time in eternity, but there are periods occupied by certain changes of matter. The changes, for instance, between the sun and this earth, are effected in a certain period of eternity which we call time, and marked by night and day - seasons and years. We find that when material forms are moved in any direction, they require a period in eternity to effect the change. One of the attributes of matter is called impenetrability, but in reality this attribute does not exist; for though you may pierce the very hardest crystal, you still find spaces within it, and still no one atom of matter can occupy the space that is occupied by another atom. The boundary of material forms, then, is that which constitutes space.

But these are the laws of matter, not of spirit; for spirit occupies no space, and spirit lives not in time; and this I must illustrate by calling to your remembrance the late address on Hades: therein it was declared that the spirit outworks from itself its own light or darkness, and therefore makes its own night or day. Cold and heat are also outwrought from the *morale* of spiritual nature, and hence it is that disembodied souls reside in their own atmosphere, which to them is summer or winter, according to their nature; hence, all darkness, light, season, and time, is of the spirit's creation. Periods in eternity are needed for spirits' progress, but the extent or limit of that period is dependent on the spirit's energy in working out its progress; hence the bitter season of spiritual cold and spiritual winter may be through countless ages, since it must endure until the frozen heart outworks the latent heat of a moral summer; and the period of summer is the already sunny soul of spiritual love and kindness, an ever lengthening never ending summer-day of eternity. So there is no time in the spirit world. And as the spirit has no density, no weight, and is lighter than all things in creation, so it occupies no space. Your physical bodies are heavier than the ether in which you move, than the water on which you sail, or than the mould on which you tread. Thus

you are the very reverse of the spirit, which is lighter than its world, its atmosphere, or scenery, and thus as unobstructed as the lightest of all elements, it passes through all obstacles of matter. As the finer permeates the grosser, so does spirit permeate all things. Were your eyes open like the seers of old, and could you perceive the various spheres of spirit life, you might see them penetrating each other, and spirits of the finer passing through the very forms and spheres of spirits yet more gross - ay, even *passing through them*; for pure spirit has no analogy whatsoever with matter, and therefore matter is no obstacle to it. You may say, indeed, that spirit is not ubiquitous, and that in passing from point to point it must occupy time and move through space. I reply, no. All movement in spirit land is effected by will. According to the energy of that will does the spirit pass from point to point. True there are points in infinity, as there are periods in eternity; but the spirit's will overcomes all these. So if the will is energetic the space exists not; the spirit is where it would by will be. If the will is languid, or if there be counter-attractions to its exercise, the spirit pauses, its will is not strong enough to project itself more swiftly than the moving elements around it, and so it *seems* to pass through space. And in response to the last part of your question, I answer, the spirit-world is here, nor needs your open door, nor unroofed ceiling, nor aught of material form removed to permit the entrance of the unfettered spirit. Spirit-world and life and presence are already here; spirit is fine and subtle, boundless and transcendent even as thought. You realise no obstacles to thought, and thought is the attribute, and the only attribute that can be comprehended in this world of matter of true spiritual being. The material forms and substances that spirits take on themselves, when, clothed with magnetic matter they strive to telegraph to man through the phenomena of the spirit circle, are the clothings of atmosphere and mediumistic emanations, and these though infinitely sublimated, being compared to spirit still as substance, occupy space, and are definite in form. Nevertheless no obstacle that you can present, not the sword that superstition wields against the apparition, not the bullet that may be fired, the stick with which one strikes, or the hand that passes through the substance of the spirit, can in truth affect it: it is the pure essence of things; while matter is their gross external covering. The laws of these opposing elements do not cohere.

I shall conclude this Question by merely reminding you of one fact patent amongst yourselves, and that is, the experience of the somnambulist. You find, in the waking state, that you are constantly fearful of falling from heights; and the power of gravitation exerted by the earth upon your physical form, drawing you to the common centre, compels you to steer your way carefully in order to prevent your fall in obedience to this force of gravitation. But far otherwise is it with the somnambulist. Unconscious of the presence of a physical body, the spirit and its consciousness alone being awake, the spiritual nature and its laws triumph over the nature and laws of the material body; it realises no gravitation, feels no weight, therefore it passes along the dizzy heights of precipices and stupendous steeps unconscious of its danger, and therefore rarely falling, never indeed, unless the depth of the somnambulist's sleep is disturbed by accident. As gravitation only acts between matter and matter, spirit is not obedient to its force, and the somnambulist's state is one of its most familiar illustrations.

Question 6

WILL you explain the law of faith as a practical principle of life?

Answer

WITH permission, we will materialise your Question. We claim that faith is knowledge. Wheresoever faith exists it is the spirit's knowledge of that which is. True faith is in reality the soul's perception of truth. It is often demanded as an act of volition, that the mind shall manifest faith; but you do not represent to that mind what are the antecedent facts which constitute the knowledge which ensures faith. There can be no faith within the human soul, which is not the result of a manifestation of some realised truth. Take, for example, the faith required by the Gracious Master for the performance of cures. It is represented even by the followers of Christ, that He could not in some places perform the cures He did in others, because of the lack of faith of those who appealed to Him for aid. It is claimed in sacred history that His greatest cures were performed upon those who asked not even for the touch of His healing hand, or the contact of His garments, but had a faith which perceived that the cure was with Him, and demanded alone His exercise of will. What was this faith? It was the knowledge that he could effect a cure. So a true faith existing in the human soul, is always a perception of a truth. It may not be an actual truth in nature, but it is a truth to the perception of that soul which feels its movement, and thus faith may exist in error as well as in truth. Faith is often what you call mere blind belief and is then founded upon fanaticism. Faith is often the tendril of the soul that outreaches to grasp some shadow which it mistakes for substance; but it is the perception of a fancied truth in the soul, which constitutes true faith. There are spiritual truths which illustrate faith far better than that which we have alluded to; for "faith is the substance of things unseen," and such is man's faith in immortality. Such in part is our confident trust in God, or even in the love of friends. Faith alone, it must be, that realises the protection of an all-wise heavenly Father; faith that believes God is our Father. Mark the faith of the poor ignorant savage who prays to the "Manitou" of whom no Bible gospel or creed has taught him. Remember man's faith in the true and beautiful which enables him still to go on conquering the spirit of destructiveness of which we spoke in the earlier part of the evening, and still to do battle for the right even in the midst of all earth's cruel blows levelled against his work. What is it but faith that carries us onward to the unseen realms of immortality - still striving for the prize we have not seen, the goal we have never known? Faith in God is the action of the grand divine Magnet Himself - the action of God in the universe who by faith is ever calling us upward to Him. I ask not for faith in aught which is not a truth to the individual whom I would convince. The objects I should lay before him whom I would convince, should seem to me to be some comprehensive truth. If the mind of my client cannot perceive this truth, I ask in vain for faith; for faith is like the reason and judgment of which I spoke in the definition of insanity: it is the culminating point of mind; the soul's perception of what that soul believes to be the truth and nothing but the truth, hence faith is indeed the spiritual substance of things unseen, the knowledge of that which the spirit feels as truth.

MR COLEMAN proposed a vote of thanks to Miss Hardinge, which was unanimously carried.

MISS HARDINGE: Permit me to say a few words in reply. Although my inspiration must fail me as far as the power of oratory is concerned, it will at least be prompted by the sentiments of truth. You are doubtless aware, many of you, that I am of English birth, but you will also remember the words of the poet, that, "we live in heart-throbs, not in figures on the dial." Therefore during my ten years' residence in America, English though I am, I lived so very quick, and my heart-throbs in that great land of the West were so rapidly repeated, that I believe I have lived more than thrice-told the number of years in events in that country, consequently, when I returned, I felt far more like a stranger among you than one who had never trod your shores except in the facts of history or tradition. I had forgotten my country's institutions and perhaps in some respects, many of my country's customs. The best effort that I could make to serve the cause of Spiritualism I felt was due, for to me it is my life. I had been spiritually born in America since my departure from England, and I felt I never could make sacrifices enough for that which had brightened my way and been a lamp to my feet – an angel presence in all my wanderings; and these have been very far, sometimes amounting to thousands and thousands of miles in one single year, yet at every footfall the power of the spirit was about and with me. I went where the spirit voice bade me. I never took a step, nor fulfilled an engagement that was not sanctified by the voice of one whom men called "dead," and I never passed from point to point where my path was not illuminated and made straight for me by those whom the world say "are not." In obedience to the voice of this dear invisible host, I had determined to make my short visit to England (although it was necessarily one of business) one of spiritual effort also. You may remember, or you may have heard, that we have five millions of Spiritualists in America, and that our ranks are divided into societies which are recognised by the laws of the country. And as union is strength, so the existence of these societies enables the Spiritualists to extend their sphere of usefulness in many ways besides providing hospitable homes, arranging meetings, and focalising interests about their mediums, which places them very much in the position of priests, and sometimes as in my case, amongst the dear Americans almost as an idol in their midst, for truly their love was sometimes worship and there was and is a deep devotion in the ties that bind the people to their mediums, that fills our hearts with love and designates me as "their Emma," they, as my "peculiar people."

I have found their hearts, their arms, and homes ever open to receive me, and in all these they have enshrined me with so much tenderness, and with such a vast amount of that faith of which the spirits have been talking, that it seemed to me I had almost forgotten myself, my country, and that country's very widely differing institutions. So when I came to England, where I find that Spiritualism stands upon another basis, and in the exceeding wisdom of the spirits has reached a different class of mind to those who constitute American's millions, I was sad, disappointed, and perhaps impatient. It seemed to me that the long habits of my ministry in past days were closed against me. I had been accustomed frequently to visit the prisons, the dens of vice, the hospitals, and even the woeful battle-field; I had been called upon to labour for the poor, and take part in charitable movements, and every Sunday to sanctify Spiritualism by the blessed name of religion, and to perform two Sabbath services to "our people." All this was so very dear to me, and gave me the feeling of leading a life of such exceeding usefulness, that here I felt almost lost; I thought I could do no good amongst you, and I longed for the Spring-time to come that would send me back to a life of very great labour, but withal of very great usefulness. I could not see in what

direction I could be of service here, for where I found an opening for giving spiritual lectures, it appeared to me to involve such a great amount of responsibility on my part, to which I was not accustomed, and such a heavy tax upon my own limited means, for which I had no provision, that I felt it was almost impossible thus for me to begin life afresh. Then it was, that - in obedience to the kind invitation of our good Chairman, who has been to me more like a father than a mere friend in this crisis - simply to please him, because I felt so very grateful to the ever-warm hand that had been stretched out to greet the stranger before he knew whether I was to be successful or not - simply, I say, in response to his kind invitation, I came amongst you for the first time. You remember the opening night of these meetings. With me my presence was an act of personal friendship, as I stated. Before I left this stand, I felt that the masses I had left behind me were compensated for in the quality of that which I that night addressed. I felt that I had stood within a noble circle of appreciative minds - minds which fully realised the truth and worth of Spiritualism in its higher and grander phases, as a prophesy of what is yet to come. I had spoken to the comfortless and sorrowful; I had lectured much to those who live so fast that they have no time to reflect upon the future, but only stoop to gather the flowers of the present hour. Here, however, I was speaking to the stern old British heart and brain, to that which digests philosophy and ultimates it in the slow and inevitable course of a progress that the ages cannot uproot. I felt all this realisation crowding upon me the first night I was amongst you; and then my home-sick longing for the dear land of the West became gradually appeased, and I felt it was a privilege to be amongst you; that although my usefulness to "spirits in prison" might scarcely be called into play here, I could gather strength from you, learn philosophy by intuition, and realise phases of spiritual life, which have often failed me when I alone was the giver and all about me were recipients. I have begun to change places amongst you, and realise an inspiration, for which I heartily and gratefully thank you all. Our ministrations have not been long together, but I have already learned to feel not as if you were "my people" - but my friends, my support, my counsellors, and that we are walking together up the steps of that mysterious temple, on whose threshold we are standing, and which, when we have purified ourselves and practised knowledge till we have made it deeds, we may hope to be permitted to enter. This is my relation to you.

Now I am about to enter upon another experiment, but one which I contemplated from the stand-point of my American experience, rather than my knowledge of this country. I thought it was but to present myself to the public as of old, and I should certainly be received at least with candour, and be enabled to present myself in most of my arrangements as I had done in America. In this, however, I have been grievously deceived. I find that in this great Babylon of London there is so much preliminary effort required and such a vast amount of responsibility to be undertaken, that I have already shrunk back again and again from the effort I contemplated; and nothing but the strength and confidence which your outstretched hands have given me could induce me to go on even for one lecture on my own account. It is already now determined that that lecture shall be given. It is an experiment, perhaps too rashly entered into in view of its financial arrangements which are overwhelming; nevertheless it has been, like all other movements of mine, *the word of the spirits*. It has been given to me months and months ago to present to you a picture of the land I have traversed. I have no fear of my undertaking as far as that success, which in spirit-land is *motive*, rather than human results, is concerned. I have acted from the motives of the deepest gratitude to those who have *sent* me forth and guarded me with a wall

of spirit-fire. The spirits bade me lecture, the spirits bade me stand before large public audience here, and tell the English public what should be given me to say about America. It matters not whether I speak to those who politically may have been opposed to my course or not. God's truth and the spirit's mode of rendering it know no politics, no sect or section. The chief success, if I may venture so to state it, of any political efforts which I have been privileged to make, has been because those efforts have been made from the stand-point of principles and not of politics. Now I have no fear of addressing you - though I love you so dearly, every one of you, that I feel that my lips should be seared before I should speak the words of unwelcome truths to you - or even tread hastily upon your prejudices, but I have no fear of doing this. I am going to speak God's truth so far as wise spirits can give it me to say, and my own humble obedience to them can render it. And I ask you all to come and hear me - not because I feel I can enlighten you, or that you, in especial, need my teaching on this subject - but because you can strengthen me, because by surrounding me on that occasion I shall feel that I am in the hands of those who have witnessed my shortcomings, and yet feel that in my obedience to the precious masters whose I am, and whom I serve, I have been permitted to render that which of myself I could not do. We have all felt that the spirit has been amongst us here. Oh, extend to me the girdle of your affection, kindness, and sympathy amongst the strangers where I am now to be launched, and I have no fear of failure. I will offer but one pledge more in conclusion, and it is this: so long as you feel that I can be a mouth-piece for the presentation of those thoughts which find an echo in your own hearts - so long as you are seeking light from the spirit-world, and I am standing like a foot-print on its boundary, and am permitted to catch the dear voice of the spirit, feebly re-echoing it again to you - so long as I can do this during my stay in England - I am yours.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED EXTEMPORE

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON

January 15th, 1866

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Question 1

CAN you assist us to comprehend the statement of Swedenborg, that in the spiritual world are neither time nor space, with reference to the accounts which he gives of its scenery, history, institutions, and occupations?

Answer

THESE questions, as we view them, may be resolved into one, for we deem that the main point to be considered is the question concerning time and space. The occupations of the spirit-world, as detailed by the Swedish seer, would necessarily involve the idea, both of time for their performance, and of space for what is represented to his vision, as the scenery of the spirit-world. We must first recur to some of the positions assumed when last we met, and again attempt to define time and space as they are familiar to yourselves. Time on earth is nothing but a succession of periods, during which certain changes in matter are taking place. The chief divisions of time known to you upon this planet, are necessarily regulated by its movements, with reference to other bodies in space. The chief of these movements are the revolution of the planet upon its axis, and its annual revolution round the sun. The first movement, namely, the revolution of the planet on its axis, necessarily involves the relations which the sun and the earth occupy towards each other. In a former address I presumed to offer my hypothesis concerning the origin of light, and claimed that it was the result of a galvanic action which takes place between the atmosphere of the sun and that of the earth - that the result of the attrition of the atoms (for material atoms they are which compose the atmospheres of these two bodies in space) produces a change which first elaborates heat, and next luminosity, or such a change in the atoms as causes them to give off the quality called light. I think the production of light is mainly due to the energetic action which goes on between the solar fluid and the emanations or vapours of the earth, and that their galvanic action upon each other is the cause both of heat and light. Nay even more, I think it will be ultimately shewn in chemistry, that it is this action which produces the abundance of nitrogen, of which so large a part exists in combination with oxygen in atmospheric air; hence that the presence of nitrogen and the quality (peculiar to atmosphere in a state of action)

called light, are both due to galvanism effected between the sun and that part of the earth's surface exposed to the sun's immediate influence - hence light is the state which exists in atmosphere when the sun's rays are acting upon a certain portion of the earth. Darkness or absence of light is the result when that action is no longer going on; hence, the division of the periods when the sun and earth are related to each other into days and nights, marked by the alternations of light and darkness; hence also, time is but a definition of the periods of change which the sun and the earth sustain towards each other, and such periods as defining more accurately those changes, are divided into hours, and these again into minutes and seconds. Again, the changes which take place between the sun and the earth, produced by the inclination of the earth's axis, and requiring to effect them longer periods than days and nights, are called seasons, whilst the annual revolution of the earth around the sun is termed a year.

Now, we will shew you how purely special, and peculiar only to the relations sustained between bodies in space like the sun and the earth, are those subdivisions of period called time. Take for example the subdivisions of time even upon your own planet, in the difference between the equatorial and the arctic regions. In the latter you find that the day, instead of being something over 24 hours is little less than six months and the night rather over the same period. When discovery arrives at that point for which John Franklin and his western martyrs have laid down their mortal lives in the bitterest form of death ever endured by man; when you arrive at that point to which the finger of inspiration is still directing man, the actual polar point of the earth (not alone its magnetic pole) night and day will cease altogether. In the vast area of ether, where the free and unshadowed beams of the sun, produced as I have claimed by its galvanic action with the earth, shall pour forth without intervention or remission by any of the changes which operate only in sections alternately exposed to, and turned from the sun, then and there even upon this earth you will perceive that there is literally neither night nor day, and hence no time. Thus, except in certain portions even of this planet time does not exist except as a mere technical arrangement by which you mark the various changes which material bodies are ever undergoing, you might as well attempt to claim that time exists because there must be certain periods for the growth and development of mineral forms, for the precipitation of the atoms of matter into metallic veins, or into the growth of trees, or the blossoming of flowers. Periods are required to effect all these changes; periods are occupied in every change incident to the growth and decay of material forms, but as these periods vary with the peculiarities of every form and substance, so they cannot constitute arbitrary and fixed divisions of time in eternity. Were it possible, however, to classify periods, thus infinitely varied, into time upon this planet, such an arrangement could not subsist in any other body in space. For instance, the revolution of the satellite Mercury around the sun, would give it equivalent to a year and 87 of our days; that of Venus 224 of earth's days, and as every other known body in space exhibits varieties equally marked in proportion to distances, weight, velocity, and other incidental causes, the periods which mark time upon one planet would be totally inapplicable to all others. Hence if time depends upon the movements of material bodies and is only regulated by these, and these are as I have shown, infinitely various, it is evident that no arbitrary division of eternity into fixed periods called time exists. Precisely the same definitions apply to space which is simply the ether in which material forms effect their changes, but which though boundless, is so filled with life and being, ranging

from the infinitely little to the infinitely large, that it is impossible to conceive of any unoccupied portion of the boundlessness we call Infinity.

It is argued that no one atom of matter can fill the place occupied by another atom, hence that there must be space to bound matter. I answer that the ultimate molecule of matter called "an atom," has never yet been discovered, nor the last point of divisibility attained. Even in the most seemingly impenetrable crystal, there are spaces filled up with gas and sublimated fluids, and in the rarest gas are spaces occupied by ether, and ether is filled with electricity or magnetism. So, as all the realm of nature known to man is charged with matter in varying degrees of rarity, we have no evidence whatever to show that such a condition as *space* exists at all. Assuming, however, that we might define space by the magnitude of bodies, and the room which they occupy, our definitions are as various as those which apply to time. For as all bodies vary in size, and in every substance various others combine; it would be impossible to define the exact amount of room occupied by anything. For instance, water may receive in addition other fluids, and even soluble solids, as sugar or salt, without in the least changing the bulk of the whole. Size is indefinite, and matter all pervasive throughout infinity, hence there is no rule by which to define space, even in material forms.

Thus the only true definitions which can be given of "time and space," are those of being periods and places which are occupied in eternity and infinity to effect changes in material forms.

We now turn to a consideration of the division of places and periods in the spirit world, and we ask how they correspond. I believe that I shall be understood by those *who have realised the moral transmutation* of spirits in the phenomena of death, the power which it exercises as a dominant and supreme principle in being, which the laws of matter cannot touch - I shall be understood by believers in such opinions, when I say that spirit is unhindered by, and supreme over all the laws of time and space as applied to changes in matter. The laws of matter do not even analogically define those which bind spirit. Spirit is a separate existence, an entity of itself. It is at once the cause and the ultimate of being. No laws of matter, nor even of magnetism, apply to spirit. It may be that we shall never step behind the sublime mystery of the "I am" within us to comprehend ourselves; but we do know enough of the revelations that are now patent amongst us and which have been brought so tangibly to the spirit-circle as an open volume for our investigation, to realise that the spirit is independent both of time and space. And this is shewn first in the fact that there is a moral transmutation in death, by which the deeds done in the body, the motives engraved upon the soul, and the habitudes of thought, which have at last become the custom and finally the character of the soul - that all this determines the external surroundings of the inhabitants of spirit-land. If there is light within, the soul is its own source of light, and from that, as a central sun, go forth the irradiations of luminosity, that reveal, as in physical sunshine, or the splendours of an incomparable day, the grand and most glorious arcana of the nature of spirit-land. Spirit not alone gravitates to the place to which it belongs, but it carries with it the scenery and characteristics of the place itself. We might recur again and again to the deeply philosophic, yet ill understood, assurance of the Master, that "The kingdom of heaven is not to be found by observation - "Lo, here! Lo, there! - but that it is within us." Even so are all the states in which the soul dwells. They are in fact gradations and conditions of

mentality, represented in corresponding conditions of the soul's external life, and ranging from the highest state of illumination, to the lowest of darkness. And thus that which we have loved on earth, that on which we have poured out our human magnetism, and chained our affections to, becomes actually represented in the scenery and surroundings of the spirit-world. There in the illimitable realm where time ceases and space is not, the spirit is chained and fettered to the point of its own peculiar attraction, and its memories and its loves are all externalised in representative scenery. These do not occupy space according to the boundaries which define matter. Spirit and spirit-land are so fine, and infinitely pervasive, that this very chamber is even now full of the scenery, surroundings, and inhabitants of spirit-land.

In the chemical decomposition of death, spirit quits the form it occupied, yet all the attributes of matter will be found in their integrity with the form which *was the man*, but which, destitute of spirit is man no more. Weigh the lifeless corpse, and nothing seems to be wanting - nothing there is lost, nothing at least that lived in what you call time, or occupied what man terms space. By this alone we find that the true man - the invisible, the spirit that has fled - has neither weight nor density, impenetrability nor divisibility, nay, nor any of the attributes of matter; but is like thought, free to come and go, and realises none of the boundaries of time, nor the obstacles of space. There are no periods of darkness or of light with the spirit, except those moral states which continue only in proportion to its own growth and development. So long as the spirit wills by its affection, or by the force of habits acquired on earth, to remain in a condition of moral darkness, the scenery and surroundings of the soul correspond thereunto. So long as the spirit is radiant with light within, yet full of aspiration for higher and better spheres its periods of residence in each, will only be determined by its fitness for progressive changes, so that time in the spheres is only known by transitions from one glory to another, and by the soul's changes through varied spheres and different scenes. You ask how such vague and unsatisfactory ideas, (for such they seem in comparison with the laws of matter, and in consequence of your views of time and space,) are reconcilable with many of the statements of the spirit-circle that there are houses, scenes, landscapes, and even occupations in the spirit-world analogous to yours? I answer, there are all these in the spheres of earth-bound souls. The habits, thoughts and affections of the spirit, if they are still earth-centred, will reflect on all around the spirit its own peculiar aspirations, and urge the soul to run in the grooves of its earthly occupations, but only so long as that soul loves the things of earth and aspires to nothing higher: when the spirit yearns for higher spheres, its aspirations are its means of progress, and in these higher spheres, the earth scenes cease to be. Again, the arbitrary distinctions which govern matter do not apply to the spirit, for it penetrates all space and all obstacles which make up forms in space. There is nothing so fine or sublimated in matter as to afford an analogical description of spiritual substance. No material bodies, nor the laws that govern their movements, represent the nature and laws even of magnetism. How then by material analogies can you attempt to define the yet more sublimated mystery of thought? Are there hindrances or obstacles of matter to the flight of thought? Send it, if you will, speeding away to the farthest realms of being! Let it traverse the galaxy of stars, launch it into the infinite, and only suffer it to anchor round the heart of its infinite Father - there is no obstacle to hinder you. Even so of your spirit, for thought is but the external manifestation of the spirit

Truly, then, there can be no time for that which defines its own periods of change, no space for that which is all unhindered by every obstacle which makes up that which you call space. It is most difficult for those who live in time and space, as defined by matter, to comprehend the boundlessness and infinitude of spiritual existence, and for the occupations of spirits, you know as much of these as the earth-bound spirits can reveal to you. More than this you could not comprehend. "You cannot leap beyond your shadow," and were we to tell you of occupations, scenes, instruments, machines, ideas, and entities of which you have had no experience, we should place you in the position in which you would place the uninstructed savage, were you to tell him of the attributes of civilisation. In the higher spheres of spirit-land conditions exist of which you have had no experience. I can but bid you share the faith of the brave apostle, who realised that he should pass "from glory to glory," who *knew* it not, but *believed* it because he felt the spiritual truth in his very soul, and already saw with the eye of faith, the brightness of the glory to which his mortal course was tending like a foregleam of the incomprehensible life of heaven, irradiating his earthly way. This is the only interpretation we can give you of the spheres, and though so many of its conditions are still beyond your comprehension, we may realise enough to know that the bright and better world is unhindered by the laws and obstacles of matter, and that spiritual existence is independent of the mere local and material subdivisions of eternity and infinity called on earth, and belonging to earth alone, "time and space."

Question 2

MANY of the phenomena and communications which we are accustomed to attribute to spirits of departed persons have been explained by some on the principles of mind reading, of mesmerism, of clairvoyance, etc. Will you give us your explanation of this, and to what extent, if any, such phenomena may be thus accounted for?

Answer

THOSE who claim that all communications which impress their minds without a visible or material origin proceed from disembodied spirits alone, forget that themselves are spirits, and that whatever attributes "the spirits" possess, whatever powers they can exercise, are measurably possessed by themselves. They forget, moreover, that the ever-ascending spirit is constantly obeying an invisible magnetism, namely - the action of the grand magnet of creation which I call God. I BELIEVE IN GOD; I believe that the Great Spirit is related to me as a father to a child. Though I see Him not, I know that He is, and that He is a magnet ever calling us up to Him. Even in the deepest darkness of crime and ignorance He speaks in the voice of conscience to his erring children, and therefore I feel, though I cannot always interpret in human speech, His constant attraction upward and onward. I know, moreover, that I hold a relation and am kindred to all things in nature, whether in matter or form, below myself. I know that the earthly magnetism of the lower kingdoms are also attracting me downwards. Between the two magnetisms, the supreme good and the antagonistic, my spirit strives and fights life's battle, in conquest or defeat. In this strife, and the daily external cares which belong to a material existence, in the difficulty of looking through the windows of the soul upon the world without, my spirit often seems wiser than I knew of. It has in part the gift of clairvoyance,

sometimes the power of soul-reading, and it can often receive monitions and impressions though it knows not from whence. It is partly prophetic, and constantly sympathetic with distant things and persons; and it is in these mystic attributes of our own spirits that we do not always know how to disentangle the identity of our own soul's aspirations, powers and possibilities from the action which suddenly breaks upon us in the revelation of modern Spiritualism. The presence of a spirit-world has become to the uninstructed a great solvent in which they suppose that all occult powers of the soul are resolved and overshadowed; and they determine that whatsoever they cannot comprehend, or seems occult and strange, must be the action of disembodied spirits. We are apt, therefore, to attribute in some cases too much to a spiritual source, in others too little. The spirit world is as the soul of this world, and bears to it precisely the same relation; so there is a perpetual action and reaction going on between the two worlds which produce influences of whose source and action we are often unconscious. Suppose some man of crime is bent upon the commission of a deed of murder and waits for the cover of darkness to commit his act of blood. Ere the shadow of the night is fully fallen he lies down beneath some sheltering hedge to wait until the pall of darkness is thrown around his guilty way. As thus concealed, he crouches in obscurity, the sound of a young child's voice is heard singing a Sabbath hymn. Perhaps it is the strain of an old familiar prayer, which many years ago he learned at his mother's knee, ere guilt fell across his path like a gulf between the innocence of youth and the age of crime. Behold that gulf at this moment as he listens bridged over by that young child's voice. The memories evoked by those tones and words convert the man grown hoar with crime into a little child again. The past returns, and with a retrospect fraught with every deed he has done, and the many fearful steps he has trod, are all presented in panoramic view before him. With the fearful contrast of the happy past, and the miserable present, comes the deep resolve to arise and "go to his Father." The prodigal retraces then his steps and quits that spot a pilgrim on the road to Heaven. Earth never knows the cause of change, but angels do, and know that the child was the murderer's ministering angel; he who made the hymn, the very hand that set it in published form afloat, the mother who taught the little one to chant it, all these, and every circumstance of time that brought that child within the reach of the ear of guilt were footprints of ministering goodness. And yet these agencies of redemption were all unknown to the man of crime, and to human reason unpremeditated; and yet it is ever so, and as we pass along the city street, in all our walks of every day and night, an angel's wing sweeps by us, we hear it rustle in the air, we scent the perfume of its fragrant presence as of flowers from Paradise, perhaps we hear the music of its tread; we know not what it is that has filled us with good thoughts, we only realise that some inward monition has spoken and that we are better for its presence.

Even so is the spirit-world related to the natural. It is a world of unceasing influence, of unseen ministering spirits. We cannot define how far the soul's own supernal powers exceed the laws of matter, nor yet tell you wherein, by phenomenal acts alone, the spirit-world is exercising influence upon you. Neither can I refer you to the Scriptural test rendered by the apostle charging you to try the spirits only through the accepted belief of the writer; a belief that involves no question of good or evil, and simply applies to the mind's acceptance of a sectarian dogma. But we would charge you to try the spirits by the teachings they enunciate, and see if they agree with your highest sense of right, and echo the still small voice of God in your heart, speaking through the tones of conscience. Try the spirits through such teachings as Christ's,

and if they be of God they will acknowledge that God speaks to man through every good and beautiful and holy word and thing that exists or has a being. Try them by reason, intelligence, and by the test facts of identity; try them by all those means which dictate to judgment in the daily affairs and common routine of life. You have your chemical tests, you have your standards of truth in morals, arts, and sciences. Even in astronomy itself, acting in apparently the largest, grandest, and most unattainable sphere in which the human intellect can range, you can find tests of truth so accurate the man has gauged the heavens and measured the depths of infinity, and even be gazing on the blank expanse of millions of miles from the last sphere of his observation, he can determine the existence of undiscovered planets. If in this infinite largeness science has grappled with the mightiest problems of matter, cannot you apply reason, judgment, and the ordinary tests of truth as known to men, to the simple and daily routine of intelligent communion between yourselves and the spirit? You desire to know if father, brother, sister, or mother speaks with you. Seek for their identity through proofs known to such spirits as those you ask for - weigh carefully corroborative testimony - bring to bear the judgment and reason that you suffer to guide and direct you in other events of life. If God grants you the glorious privilege of communion with a higher world than yours, it is not to make you subjects to that higher world, but to raise you to it by the exercise of your own highest faculties. "Know ye not that ye shall judge the angels?" Therefore, I repeat, your question admits of no distinct definition, but I throw it back upon your reason to answer for yourselves, and if in the search for truth the ordinary modes of practice must be pursued, and you should stumble and fall, and often mistake your aim, grope in the dark, and sometimes fail in ascending to the topmost round of the ladder, where you can behold as in a vista all problems laid out that you seek to comprehend - if in this effort you fail to succeed at last, what then? Why you have tested your strength, you have tried the muscles, thews, and sinews of your soul and intellect; and in the strife gained more than you even sought. The grandest lessons that man has ever learned have ever been gained by his failures. And we must not hope to except this mode of teaching from the communion called Spiritualism, whose highest truths can only be discovered through patient effort, candid investigation, many failures, but ultimate success.

Question 3

WHAT are the ideas revealed to you regarding the law of temptation?

Answer

I HAVE already said that in our alliance to the world beneath ourselves, in our relations to the animal kingdom, in our gravitation to the earth on which we tread, in the fact that within us are to be found all the constituent elements of matter, and with them their forces and proclivities, so in all these, there is a perpetual tendency to outwork a set of lower faculties which of necessity grow out of our relationship with a lower kingdom than man's. It is not absolutely necessary, then, that a personal tempter should be present with us to realise the fact that we feel and often act out the irresistible tendencies of sin. Besides these movings to evil, originating in our connection with matter, consider the action of a personal and individualised tempter,

and analyse how much of influence such a one can exert, in human or spiritual intercourse.

Suppose that a murderer would tempt his fellow men to commit a deed of death: he arrays all the motives that would induce men to commit such an act. Acquisitiveness, hate, vengeance, a desire to rid the earth of the presence of some obnoxious person, any and every reason that could induce the committal of the deed are urged upon perhaps two differing human natures. On one they have no effect: on the other they are said to produce, by the strength of the temptation, a result in the deed of crime. This is the world's view of the action of temptation, but I affirm that the deed and its proclivities thereto were in the heart, or ever the tempter could have power over it. It is an impossibility that the weaker can control the stronger: we acknowledge this in physics, and yet in metaphysics by the world's verdict on temptation we deny it. But I believe that *only* if you are weaker, then the suggesting demon will make you yield - if stronger, his temptation has now power over you, but in your strength you may affect your tempter; for as you essay to resist him, you too array a set of motives which may influence him, and therefore while resistance to temptation strengthens yourself, the action is beneficent, and often proves a source of strength to others.

In this sense, then, it seems that the philosophy of temptation is a part of the Divine scheme, first for outworking by mental, moral and intellectual effort the soul's great latent powers of good and judgment, next as a means of freeing our spirits by a struggle from the material mould and its attractions in which we are born; above all, it is a battle fought not only with ourselves but also with those undeveloped minds which seek to become our tempters. Temptation, too, to sin is a prompting to that spirit of investigation which teaches us to search into the sources of crime, not only in the world but in ourselves. Should we desire to bring to a yet more critical issue the subject of temptation, we must ask *who does the deed* of sin? whose hand is it that strikes the blow, whose lip receives the intoxicating draught, whose hand that shakes the dice, whose tongue proclaims the angry word. Is it the tempter's or the actors of the crime themselves? Be assured we are not only the battle-ground on which the mighty warfare of right and wrong is enacted, but we are one of the warriors; and as we rise above the temptation or sink beneath it, we may assure ourselves we have defined the true measure of our guilt, far more than of that of our tempters. He at best or worst but proffered the cup of guilt, we it is that have quaffed it, we therefore it is that are guilty. There can be no power in the sinful man to tempt the good, and none can sink the impure down lower than himself. I believe in no retrogression, and I define that the power of temptation only exists to externalise some latent sin that lies with us hidden. It may indeed be deemed the fiery match applied to the cannon's mouth. The materials of destruction were quiescent there before the spark was applied; it might have so remained for ages, and none have known that it was an instrument of death, until the touchstone of the fire revealed its destroying nature. Even in such an action as this do I find the force of temptation to consist; and yet in view of its manifold uses in the Divine scheme of soul's growth and ultimate triumph over sin and matter, I still must say "thank God for temptation.² It is said in the ancient Scriptures that "When Satan presented himself before the Lord, he came amongst the sons of God." It will be ever so. Among the sons of God that cluster round our hearts, the angelic virtues that are striving through aspiration for expression, Satan, the Adversary, is ever there. It is said, to carry out the figure, that the Adversary went forth to tempt man. Never let us forget that the same parable

instructs us that such temptation only was permitted by the mightier power of God, and that it was only through the Adversary we then, as now, discover the strength of good to overcome the bad; the power of mind to battle for the right, or the glorious triumph of that victory which conquers darkness by the power of light, and only slays the evil with the sword of good.

Question 4

CAN you explain to us the origin and purpose of pain?

Answer

I WILL endeavour to answer your question by a simple figure. Take the structure on which pain is exercised. Consider it in its day of infancy, when it still moves and acts in childish ignorance of itself. The child unconscious of its strength would fain exercise this beyond the measure of its capability, when lo! the sentinel, pain, steps in and calls it back. The child is dazzled by the flame, delighted with the glittering fire, and would fain grasp it in its hand, in its unconsciousness of its nature. The same guardian angel, pain, withdraws that little hand ere it has tampered too far with the destroying flame. Unconscious of the nature of the liquid water, ignorance would plunge within the wave; the pain of suffocation in the whelming flood, instructs it how to struggle back to life, leaving a lesson of the character and nature of the watery element engraved on the mind by the permanent fear of pain. And so we might proceed through all the various departments of being, and everywhere we should find pain standing as the sentinel at the gates of life, preserving its integrity. In all our many trespasses, and lapses from virtue, pain stands with his angel finger pointing to the results of crime. His warning knock is heard in the dangerous throbings of an angry heart. He speaks in our fear of just retaliation from those we wrong or hate: He prints in our flesh his never-failing lessons of every vile excess; He throws back against our bleeding breasts each stone we seek to hurl at at one another. In a word, I cannot find a single step in human life unguarded by their stern and retributive angel, whom we so often call our adversary, pain. Pain is man's wisest educator. We know not how much we learn outside of books, till we remember the effect of past life-lessons on ourselves, when chief of all our teachers stands life's guardian, pain.

As we launch forth upon the great ocean of life, hour by hour we are warned and guaranteed from dangers by the pain ourselves have felt, and by the penalties which others have paid for us. We know but little of the depth and breadth of the riches of the Infinite and of the glory of a better life, but we are only fit to ascend to these, when we have been fully instructed in the rudimentary schools of earth through pain. Disease in various forms has made us acquainted with our wonderful structure, and by its exigencies alone, have been founded the grand schools of knowledge and instruction, which have grown up into systems of anatomy and physiology. It has been beneath the keen stimulus of pain, adversity, and even of hunger's bitter pang that many a noble artist, poet, and painter have gemmed the world with their labour's grandest efforts. Splendid works of genius have often been outwrought by the bitter necessities of poverty and the inexorable demands of mental and physical pain. Poverty, which is in truth pain's sharpest goad, has compelled men to labour, contrive,

invent, and in many forms dive into the arcana of nature and drag forth her grandest secrets. All adversity, all suffering, whether mental, moral, intellectual, or physical, is pain; and in each department of life, I repeat, pain is an educator, and yields not up its care of mortal life till its work is fully done, and then it resigns its charge of the spirit it has leavened into wisdom to the hands of its sister-angel - death, which like pain, men blindly call their enemy until in the day of spiritual revelation they discover that it is the beneficent liberty angel, who opens the door for the soul to immortal life and freedom, when the teachings of earthly pain are for ever ended and their mission done.

Question 5

IF it be admitted that self psychology presents phenomena similar to those observed in the communications of external spiritual agency, will you explain these and lay down some rules for safely distinguishing them?

Answer

COULD we instruct you of all the attributes that belong to your spirit, could we classify these - tell you how much you can do, and where your power ends, we should be enabled to shew you where the supramundane power beings. But there is such a much wider range of power belonging to your spirit than you have been accustomed to realise, that it would be impossible for us to lay down any such rule, and you can only learn it, when you know yourselves. For instance, it has been shewn that clairvoyance is an attribute of the human spirit. Yet how can we demonstrate the difference between that and the psychology of a controlling mind visible or invisible. Your speaker asserts her belief of a spiritual control, guiding her utterances, and changing as she responds to different questions. Yet what evidence can we adduce of this? None, but the mere assertion. What evidence can we render even of the sensations which affect your speaker? None, but her mere affirmation of those sensations, so that your acceptance or rejection of her assertion depends on your appreciation of her truthfulness. As much of spiritual phenomena, then, depends upon the sensations experienced by the recipients of spiritual gifts, how can these be rendered in speech? Simply thus. You have all external senses that enable you to apprehend the various forms of matter. By touch, you realise something of the nature of substance; by sight, of form and colour; by hearing, of the sound or percussion which bodies make in movement; by taste, you apprehend certain peculiar qualities of matter, and by smell inform yourselves of material qualities in another way. And yet these modes of sensuous perception only inform you of the attributes of material things, but fail to convey any idea of the modes of perception of the spirit, in whom all sensuous perceptions are so concentrated, that the spirit is all eye, all ear, all taste, touch, and smell. Spirits perceive all qualities in objects, but never can explain to you how; they realise, the moment they approach one another, the mind, by the same perception which your senses enable you to use in judging of the attributes of matter, and yet, even here on earth, you all partake of this power of perception in the spirit; even here you have it in part, for you, all of you, have spiritual senses, which, though immersed in matter more or less, supply you with an information which you cannot realise through sensuous perception, nor yet translate into speech. You perceive the

sphere of those that approach you - you realise enmity, hatred, love, treachery, sincerity, even when not expressed in speech; but you cannot define how the impression reaches you. Even so does your speaker by an extreme sublimation, and possibly by long exercise of the spiritual senses in communion with spirits from the earliest period of her existence, realise not only the presence, but also the different qualities, the influence, the strength, or weakness of the spirits who surround her. But these impressions can never be communicated to another; nor rules for their cultivation laid down, because it is an experience which belongs to the individual organism, and is of a purely spiritual nature only. So in your communion with spirits, you may deceive yourselves grossly in their identity, but you cannot err very far in their quality, which by the aid of your spiritual perception no less than by your judgment refers them to the standards of right and wrong as mapped out for you in the laws of conscience, and revealed in the nature of that which they communicate. In the character of the intelligence which spirits bring, you need not deceive yourselves; and if you are mediumistic, your spirit will aid your judgment, by the antipathy or feelings of sympathy with which you are inspired in their presence. The chief cause of difficulty that lies between yourselves and the spirit-world, is in the want of discrimination between the operation of your own spirit and that of another controlling you. We can lay down no law, but that of experience to guide you in this respect, but we may venture to promise that as you are now but at the opening of the gates, and in the day of the first realisation of the grandeur and breadth of your own spirit, as it bursts upon you in the dawning of the science of mind which Spiritualism teaches - as, moreover, you have but now begun as an assured knowledge to cherish the consoling thought that you are in the midst of God's hosts and surrounded by legions of ministering angels - that while you are now astounded at both these revelations and stand on the edge of the shores of this ocean of light for the first time - though you may now be even overwhelmed by the full blaze of the glorious possibilities that dawn upon you, and bewildered by their multitude, and mistake your way and stumble, as if still groping in darkness - the time shall come when by judgment and experiment, through the lessons of many failures and yet more successes, you shall better learn to discriminate the grandeur and power of your own spirits and the action and influence of those of the better world. We can at this time lay down no present law, but we may venture to promise you the most complete realisation of spiritual knowledge for the future, and this from no sybilline or prophetic view of that future, but from the realisation of the inevitable growth of all sciences. For spirit communion is based upon a science, and the soul within us is as much the subject of a science as all things else in being, and when the self-styled scientists of earth learn this truth, they will cease to sneer at us who have ventured far enough within the threshold of the glorious temple that enshrines this light of spiritual science, to realise that it is not the glimmering lamp that illuminates the tomb, but the glistening of the shining angels' forms who have risen from it. The world shall yet know the Spiritualist for what he is, the pioneer of that glorious science whose dawning era is even now upon us. Humanity shall find that its progress has been a continuous ascent through all the various steps of scientific lore, from the absolutely known to the hitherto unknown; that whilst this progress first commenced with the rudest forms of knowledge, such as man's earliest attempts to supply himself with clothing, food, and shelter, as time sped on he soared in mental effort to erect huge buildings, improve his modes of agriculture, record his thoughts in symbols, pictures, hieroglyphs, and writings. Onward still sped mind, still seeking wider fields for effort, broader plains for stereotyping thoughts, till it finally matured the noble printing

press, the mariner's compass, the knowledge of the earth and its laws of physical attraction, the ocean and its boundaries of continents and islands, the air and its mysteries of elemental gas, light, heat, and lastly of electricity and vital magnetism; and thus by mind's growth through science, have we ascended into the unknown: gauged the heavens, sounded the ocean's depths, explored the earth, and traced the footprint of the Creator down to the very central fires beneath us. We have watched the creative hand in nature's laboratory; we have beheld the working of God's wondrous laws, piling up age on age, and viewed the records of His grand and sublime chemistry throughout creation, and though our human eyes may not see the Almighty workman, by those works do we know Him. And now at least in the fulness of the ages we ascend to His realm of spirit, and already at the threshold, wait but our bridal garments of completeness to enter the sacred portals where we may behold the marriage rites of science and religion. And to this grand and glorious consummation we have the right to believe that the ultimate of all our knowledge yet will tend. The day is dawning upon us, and ere the noontide glory of the sun reveals itself we shall be in the full blaze of the era of this great religious spiritual science; then may we comprehend more fully our souls and their attributes. Then may we distinguish their own great powers from the influence of others, and determine where our still embodied spirit's powers end and the influence of a higher spiritual life begins.

MR COLEMAN, in proposing a vote of thanks to Miss Hardinge, said that if any present were unable to appreciate her utterances, they might be satisfied that the deficiency was not hers. He then referred to the notices appearing in the daily journals, respecting Miss Hardinge's first public address in St James' Hall, especially thanking, on her behalf, one of the editors, who was present, for the generous testimony he had borne to the remarkable display of her powers on that occasion. All the newspapers, he said, contained favourable criticism, with the single exception of the *Morning Star*, with whom she was in political alliance. Spiritualists, however, expected nothing fair or generous from that journal, nearly every department of which, from the editorship downwards, was "tarred with the same brush." Speaking to an assembly not entirely composed of Spiritualists, but comprising many who attended for the purposes of investigating the truths of psychological and kindred subjects, he would take the opportunity of declaring that Spiritualists feared no opposition from any quarter, if it were only just and fair; but they reprobated the distortions of facts and the calumnious statements that too often disgraced the columns of the newspaper press. One gentleman was present who had from time to time manifested an extraordinary opposition to Spiritualism; he (Mr Coleman) wished to speak of him with all kindness and courtesy; and would only say that if he and his friends were serious in their opposition, and desired to arrive at the truth as we desired it, he was ready, on behalf of Spiritualists, to meet all opponents, whether from the religious or the materialistic side, with Miss Hardinge as the champion. When her course of lectures on America was completed he hoped that some public opportunity would be afforded of proving her remarkable power, from whatever source that power might be derived. He was anxious that some question should be put to her by the representatives of the united press of the metropolis, and that she should be judged by the manner in which she dealt with it.

DR DONOVAN defended the press from Mr Coleman's strictures, and said that much as he was interested in the display of Miss Hardinge's powers, what he desired in common with the press, was "more facts and less talk."

MR WILLIAM HOWITT said, that the facts which formed the A.B.C. of Spiritualism were open to every patient investigator. The misfortune was that when they were presented to the public they were ridiculed and repudiated, and the persons through whom they were exhibited were treated with rudeness and cruelty. The object of the present meetings was to observe facts of a higher order than mere physical manifestations; and the manner in which the questions had been answered by Miss Hardinge that evening must have been highly satisfactory to every unprejudiced listener.

After a few further observations from Dr Donovan and Mr Coleman,

MISS HARDINGE said: Most gladly do I answer the last point that has been mooted here; and in doing so I shall be obliged to commence by words of dissent from one of the best friends (Mr Coleman) I have in this country. In view of what he has stated, I desire to say that I believe that an earnest zeal to place me before you in the most favourable point of view has led him to overlook the fact, that though we who have found the "pearl of price" are ready to throw away all things else upon earth for its possession, we are not ready to stand as martyrs and self-sacrificists of all that makes life dear to us, until we have fully realised the worth of that pearl. I have found it; he has found it; and knowing its value, we are ready to go forth and do battle in its defence. I believe that no human being could be found wilfully opposing Spiritualism who like us have proved it to be that pearl of price; but until they can thus appreciate our belief, our antagonists subserve the very purposes which have this night been defined to you as resulting from pain and temptation. In a word, they stand related to us as "the adversary;" but even then, should we not thank them for calling forth, our arguments, and compelling us to produce our strong reasons for the belief that is in us? Are we not in every way indebted to them, compelling us as they do to enter into expositions of our faith, which otherwise we should pour into uninterested ears? We need the work of "the adversary," we require the action of antagonism, for all reforms are more largely indebted to opposition, than they are to the unreasoning faith that accepts our dicta without challenge or enquiry. I thank most cordially those who will lend the hand of intellectual strength, to the mighty warfare of this hour. As for your speaker, she needs no defence but the strength of those whose humble instrument she is, and her meed of human justice. Demanding naught but this she stands before a jury of her country men to ask for a fair verdict on her utterances, irrespective of her belief of their spiritual source. She questions not of her listeners what their religious faith may be, neither should they question of hers before they accept or repudiate her powers. With reference to the action of the press, she has neither sought, nor ever will seek, through friends or solicitation, aught of favour or partial representation. If she cannot trust to the honour of her countrymen to render judgment irrespective of sectarian prejudice, that judgment is not worth the pains of seeking even to bias.

To her spiritual friends she would urge, that the selection of an opening subject, apart from Spiritualism, is a part of her religion, and when they better realise that to her mind every subject which contributes to human weal, or influences human woe is a part of Spiritualism, and that the largest and grandest parts of Spiritualism are those

national relations which bind up in one common interest all members of the human family, then will Spiritualists themselves cease to reproach her, because in discoursing of the national interest of the old world and the new, she has chosen the largest branch of Spiritualism to lecture upon. In reference to the expressions of our friend, who desires to behold facts rather than hear the arguments that belong to the intellectual part of the subject, I desire to say that when he is better acquainted with the quality of our pearl of price, he will find that it is fashioned on a scientific plan. Just so long as the pearl exists latent in the oyster it can be used as a part of the creature itself; when it is crystallised into the pearl, it is changed alike in substance and in use, and can no more subserve its former purpose. It is even so in the various phases of spiritual mediumship. The power that enables the medium to give off an aroma by which the physical manifestations are made, is not the same as that which clusters around the organs of the brain, and enables the subject of spiritual magnetism to become a mouthpiece for the psychological powers of spirits. The condition of the speaker is now different from that which enabled her, in years gone by, to give test evidence of spiritual phenomena in what our friend calls "facts." Were he as thoroughly acquainted with the philosophers as with the philosophy of mesmerism, he would realise that mesmeric subjects, like spirit mediums, pass through many transitional conditions and various phases of psychological and magnetic states, and that the influence which they derive from human or spiritual magnetism only admits of certain phases of manifestation at certain times and during certain states. It is to be regretted that your speaker cannot render satisfaction to all minds at once. It is to be regretted in one sense, although in view of the various talents which are called into operation by the varieties of the species, this diversity of gifts in different organisms is manifestly only a part of the same harmonious plan that pervades all ranks of being. Your speaker is unable to present to you the facts or phenomena of modern Spiritualism, but were she able to do so she would be unwilling to perform a work which belongs to those whose time and talents are devoted to it. You may find in this very city, persons who devote all the energies and powers and possibilities that they possess to the production of the facts you seem to crave. To these we would refer you, whilst you leave in peaceable possession of this meeting those who seek alone its intellectual manifestations. We know that in olden times there were minds so bigoted as to decline to be restored to health, unless they could select the waters of healing from rivers of their own choosing. Nevertheless, whilst we acknowledge the justice of our friend's appeal for facts, we perceive a manifest injustice in seeking them out of place and out of time, and demanding from a rostrum devoted to other purposes the peculiar exhibition which is to be obtained elsewhere. If it is the will of the majority that the modes by which intelligence is rendered on this platform shall constitute the chief feature of the evening's proceedings, here, as elsewhere, we presume the majority must rule; and in view of this will, your speaker, with none of those objects that ordinarily prompt human effort, of compensation or reward in any other sense than the satisfaction of meeting with those she loves during her brief sojourn amongst you, renders such service as you choose to command, but only on condition that it is acceptable. She has been too many years engaged in such addresses to crave an opportunity now to do so, therefore if those who seek for facts cannot receive them on this platform, would it not be better instead of attempting to bind the will of the majority to that of the minority to seek them where they can be found? Any intellectual effort that can be made, according to the limited capacity of your speaker, is wholly at the command of those who seek it. Those more public addresses, the first of which has been recently delivered, and which will as far as means will admit, be

continued for some short period longer, have a higher purpose than the propagandism of special opinion. I believe that the largest and grandest interests that can affect the old world and the new will be subserved when the Atlantic telegraph of kindness is laid between these lands. I profess no politics, nor ever laboured for aught but principles. I shall disappoint both North and South alike if they expect to find in me the mouthpiece of a party. I loved Abraham Lincoln because he was an honest man, because the spiritual philosophy was deeply engraven in his heart and so worked in his life that it ultimated a broader line of action than mere politics, and inspired in him a grander view of human destiny than was to be found in mere obedience to the diction of a party. I loved him because I believed the country's welfare was bound up in his integrity and was safe in his wise guidance. Therefore it is that I have been constantly identified with the party of his supporters. Those who will follow me through these addresses, whether public or private, will find that the largest good to the largest number is my Spiritualism, my politics, and my religion too. And whether those who listen to me believe that spirits communicate or not with man, it matters little. All will some day themselves be spirits, and then, if not before, will realise that all good is comprehended in the spiritual welfare of mankind, and it is in this sense I urge upon my spiritualistic friends, that lectures uttered on America, or any other subject, whether of natural, scientific, moral, or intellectual interest, are all to me true Spiritualism, provided they can make one human being think more kindly of his fellow creatures, or quit my presence with a more exalted idea of their humanity, or kindlier interest in each other's welfare.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED EXTEMPORE

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON

January 22nd, 1866

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Question 1

WHAT do you understand by the term “spiritual atmosphere,” as used by mediums? Does it imply the spiritual body or the proceeding therefrom?

Answer

IN attempting to define the terms used by mediums we must remember that they apply phrases wholly new to themselves, because the ideas they seek to represent are unprecedented in their experience. Hence, when they would describe the aura given off by every substance in nature, this, as a magnetic essence, is perceived by the clairvoyant, who represents it in speech sometimes as a “sphere, an aura, or a spiritual atmosphere.” It is in reality a magnetic atmosphere, and corresponds to the emanations that proceed from all bodies in space, as well as from human and other material forms. It is one of the laws of matter that all atoms move between two forces; the centripetal - attractive or gravitative, which draws all matter to a common centre; and the centrifugal - repulsive or radiative force which throws off the most sublimated portions of matter from the centre to the circumference; and the exceedingly fine particles which form the strata of atmosphere around all bodies, together with the yet more sublimated aroma gathering in and flying off from various material forms, constitute what mediums call the spiritual or magnetic sphere - an atmosphere that by attraction surrounds, and by repulsion emanates from all bodies. If you desire further information on this subject you must represent your wish in another question. We answer simply this one with reference to the definition of the term.

Question 2

MRS BEECHER STOWE has written these lines:- “It is a beautiful belief, that ever around our head are hovering on angel wings the spirits of the dead.” Are the spirits of the departed always near us? Do they participate in our joys and sorrows? Have they the power to see into our inner life and thoughts? What evidence have those whose spiritual vision is not opened of these facts?

Answer

THERE are two modes by which we could respond to your question; one is from the realm of poetry, the other from that of fact. We allow to the poet all the possible use which he can make of our facts, but we prefer, in the analytical discussion of spiritual philosophy, to base our affirmations on our facts. We have stated in a former address that the spirit-world is the soul or reality of the natural world; at least it sustains to the natural such relations as find types in the human form whilst vitalised by the spirit in precisely the same manner as the spiritual world vitalises the entire realm of material forms. Hence you will remember that we stated that the lower strata (in point of position) of the spiritual spheres, immediately interpenetrate this earth. We pointed to the fact that this chamber, (by way of illustration,) might be represented as full of spiritual spheres; are you not therefore surrounded by the spirit world and its inhabitants? In the change called death, the spirit, in fact, does not quit this earth at all, until through the various stages of progression it passes from the earthly spheres into higher and more distant ones. Hades is here; the mid region where dwell the souls of men during their second sphere of eternal existence is within this natural earth of yours. The actual mutual relationship which spirit and matter sustains, is intensified moreover by those ties of kind, affection, and soul affinities, which it belongs to consciousness to remember for ever. If you preserve in the disintegration of the material form the memory of earth, its joys, its sorrows, but above all of its affections, how do you suppose that those who have lived and loved in your midst can pass to a sphere which they find to be progressive in state, and yet fail to carry with them those affections which are the divinest parts of the soul, or retain no memory of those with whom they have lived in ties of sweetest companionship on earth? If, indeed, the spirit still loves beyond the grave, that spirit must also still love, and for the expression of that love there must in the spheres beyond this be means of action, and for that action an adequate mode of manifestation. What think you would be the Paradise of the mother, or the heaven of the father, if, themselves removed from the sphere of human necessities, but remembering all the struggle and care they entail upon the precious ones who still remain subject to them, they were deprived of some mode of ministration and of some method of continuing the manifestations of their undying love? Oh tell us of no heaven, speak not to the heart of love, or to the soul of affection, of any Paradise or place of rest, which is not most surely too the place of love. As the religionist what evidence he has that his God and Father walks the earth, that here in the midst of his joys and sorrows the Infinite One who has dispensed them all, takes cognizance of all. What evidence can he render us of his assertion? He answers "The traditions of my fathers, and the witness of my own soul." Even so have we the vast array of spiritual manifestations which every age informs us of, which this age confirms, and the witness alike of our souls and our senses. There are links of consciousness which connect us with the souls we love, that give us the assurance that if there is a life beyond the grave that life has gathered up all of beauty that made the soul within us divine. And as the most beautiful blossoms of the soul are its affections - so if these expand not beyond the grave into a greater and more beautiful ministry of love than even this earth can exhibit, there is no Paradise, there is no heaven, and immortality and progression are fictitious.

Question 3

IT is asserted that the phenomena of the Bible and of modern Spiritualism are identical in kind and differ only in degree; if this be so, why should the former, that is the Bible phenomena, be regarded as the direct teaching of the Great Spirit, and accepted as authoritative, and the latter not so?

Answer

WE recommend your querist to address himself to those who claim the special authority of the older revelation. No such claim is made in this chamber, and therefore we should be compelled to beg the question ere we answered it. As we present from this rostrum the affirmative only of your question, should you not suggest it to those who deny our truth? Ask your soul's teachers to respond to you. Ask those whom you pay, educate, sustain, and maintain in your midst, for the express purpose of resolving such points of doctrine as this. We say there is neither difference in degree, kind, quality, nor origin between any spiritual manifestation of any age, except in the mode of its representation, in the technical phraseology wherein it is recorded, or in some merely local mode of making the record. Examine the facts of the phenomena of Spiritualism in every age, and you will find that they resolve themselves into all the simple classifications rendered familiar to you at the modern spirit-circle. We find that the element of magnetism, of which we have discoursed so largely, is the force by which the phenomena are made. The soul or spirit within man, and the soul which has already become enfranchised from matter, are the agents; while the scientific assimilation of the spiritual body of the disembodied and of the embodied souls, in the form of magnetic *rapport*, are the means by which the entire phenomena are produced. Magnetism and psychology are the two great pillars that support the temple of modern Spiritualism. Enter within its gates, and you will find there are "differences of administration, but the same spirit." We should be happy to pass over this query to any of the churches of your city, and not alone to place it in the hands of your elected teachers, but to *compel* them to render an answer, and to demonstrate proofs of that answer, coherent with fact, law, science, reason, and religion - and to render it too as publicly as we are ready to render ours.

Question 4

IS spirit developed along with the human body, or does it enter it fully formed, and at what period?

Answer

THE question requires some other explanation than belongs to the mere subject of the birth or formation of the embryo. We have said in a former address, to which we must again refer that spirit and matter have ever been exhibited together in all the various records that man, historically, traditionally or scientifically, can discover of creation. Wheresoever matter has been exhibited, the direct evidence of spirit is manifest in the intelligence of laws that govern matter. These laws always manifest wisdom, power

and goodness, and these, the most Divine attributes of intelligence, are invariably displayed in the forms of matter, in the illimitable beauty, order and consecutiveness, that control all laws, - in the supreme and boundless power that is manifested through them, and in their eternal repetition and infinity. In all representations of material forms, spirit is as imminent in the handwriting on the wall of the temple of being, as if we beheld it face to face, embodied in our presence. What shall we say then of those highly sublimated atoms of matter, - those monads, which exist first in the structureless cell from which the embryo of humanity no less than that of all animated life commences? We examine that microscopic cell, and we first perceive that it is structureless, from the fact that even in the most searching investigation no evidence is there of ought but homogeneous matter; yet in the progress of growth from this unpromising molecule, we find it elaborated into a multitude of other cells, within each of which is the principle of life, growth, and all the forms of motion necessary for its development into an aggregated mass of heterogeneous matter. At this stage a fresh set of functions become manifest, enabling the embryo to secrete these in various organs, and various tissues, substances and qualities of matter. I do not design in this place to enlarge on these processes of growth which are constantly expanding up to the point when there is the manifestation of a brain. From this period of development we claim that there is the evidence of individualised spirit. We affirm this because we perceive that the nervous system is the apparatus arranged for the exhibition of spirit, and that the brain is the great originator or generator of the nervous system. We cannot separate one single atom of being from a connection with the vast totality which we call God, or cut it off from the existence of the Great and Infinite Spirit, whose laws are written in the least as in the great forms of being; hence we cannot point to the exact period when the spirit of the Infinite becomes repeated in His image, and manifests itself in a human soul, except to note the period when, by the development of a brain in the embryo and the formation of a nervous system, that spirit can exhibit itself in the attribute of will. From this point, and from this point alone, are we enabled to draw the line of demarcation between the exhibition of spirit and matter in embryotic forms. And yet, beyond this point we may claim that all matter exhibits spirit, that all spirit requires matter for its exhibition. It is merely a question, then, of individualised spirit; this we believe first becomes an identity from the point when matter exhibits itself, as we have stated in the formation of a brain and of its ramification into a nervous system.

Question 5

HAVE animals spirit? If not, what is the nature of their life, and how is it they have so many of the feelings, affections, passions, and mental endowments of men?

Answer

WE answer you now briefly, because the question has been considered fully within the last few days. We will therefore only remind you, that the exhibition of intelligence in the animal creation is merely partial and fragmentary - that whatsoever of wonder and strangeness, even in the form of intellectual manifestation, appears in the animal kingdom, as in the case of the mole, who works his way in the darkness in certain invariable directions, as if guided by the points of the compass; in

the case of the beaver, who displays an extraordinary ingenuity in the erection of his dwelling, and in the construction of the dam, as would do honour to an instructed engineer; in the work of the geometrical ant, and of the mathematical bee; in all these and in every other creature's wonderful evidence of special instinctive intelligence, there is a tendency in the form of all these creatures to out-work precisely the character of the intelligence, which is observed in them. Were you to separate them from the soil in which you find them habitually living - were you to place them in conditions strange to them - they would still carry out the peculiar tendencies of their forms and none other. I believe that the entire of the animal world is a vast panorama, in which nature, by the ordering of the Infinite Mind, has represented the various fragments, both of form and intellectual life, which are afterwards bound up in the grand compendium and microcosm of all creation - Man. I believe that the existence of many of these primal and experimental creatures of nature's wondrous school-house, antedate the appearance of man on this globe. I believe that their organism, or rather that the progression of matter in their organisms, is a species of preparation for the finer and more sublimated atoms that compose man; and hence I believe that all things are both prophetic and preparatory for the life of man. I believe that in eternity the perfect alone is preserved. I believe that one of those deeply philosophical sentences that from time to time are strewn like gems of spiritual light throughout the Scriptures of the Jews is found in the passage that "The wages of sin is death," and "The gift of God is eternal life." Sin is nought but partial good. Sin is nought but the attempt of a finite being to represent the supernal ideas of the Infinite, broken and marred by imperfect manifestation. When you consider the quality and nature of sin you will find it is either an excess or a deficit of some beneficent virtue which, when practised within the boundary of law, reduces the excess called evil to good and blessing.

For instance, consider the various crimes that man is guilty of, and you will find they either proceed from an excess of love which, when regulated and balanced in due equilibrium between himself and his neighbour, is the law of self-preservation and justice; but, if carried to excess in either direction, becomes selfishness or prodigality, and thus from sin results its sequence, in discord, hate, disease, and death, - so that sin is imperfection, pain its teacher, and death or change its last and inevitable penalty. But even sin is transitory; so transitory as that when we pass the grave of the criminal, we seldom recall the crimes of his earth life with half as much of enmity, as of regret and tender pity. We find that death has paid the penalty of his sin. We feel, even if we do not know it absolutely, that he is changed, lives in progress and our own appreciation of his guilt is modified by this nameless consciousness that the imperfect dies, but the gift of God, the good and perfect, lives for ever. And it is this law of preservation for the perfect only, which bestows immortality on the soul of man, but denies it to the semi-perfect fragments of spiritual life incarnate in the forms of animals. True, their spirits are preserved for a period; the spiritual part or essence which manifests itself in will, and intelligence, is preserved in the spheres that encircle and zone this planet, but not beyond it. All the lower spheres beneath this planet, and their imperfect representations of human life, partake so largely of animal characteristics that they scarcely exhibit the human form at all. Throughout the spirit-spheres, the creatures that have ministered to our use still continue their relations to our spirits, so long as these remain in spheres of animal love, proclivities, and passions. Hence, as I have said the spirit of animals are preserved in the earth spheres, but not beyond. And the destiny of the spiritual part of these creatures is to compose

the grand totality of forces which make up some higher and superior world with its spirit spheres.

Question 6

WILL you indicate the nature of the dangers, if any, attending the cultivation of mediumship, and how any such may be guarded against?

Answer

EVERY human organism possesses the force which constitutes mediumship. I have said that every human being is a medium, and it belongs to the present question to represent in what sense. There is an inevitable and direct relation between the highest and the lowest of all forms and all beings in creation, and this direct relationship produces a mode of mutual influence and spiritual impression between all creatures, which is inspiration. It is the chain of thought which permeates all spheres and worlds, and wherever receptive beings are found, inspiration connects them - the lowest with the highest. Each creature receives its appropriate share of inspiration, and it is such as his organism and process of development enables him to receive. Thus each living being is in this sense a medium for an influence from some other being; whether this can manifest itself in external phenomena or not, is not now the question. Whether it can be cultivated is the point to which we would call your attention, and to this we reply. Yes. As all inspiration is regulated and meted out to every creature by the measure of their receptivity, so whatsoever improves the intellect refines the understanding, or helps to aid the aspiration of the spirit to higher and grander spheres than those of earth; all these constitute the direct and progressive stages of receptivity by which our inspiration may be cultivated. I separate this kind of mediumship from the question of mere external phenomena. This is produced wholly through the physical organism and the amount of magnetism and electricity given off by the system. Electricity is the finer and more sublimated pole of the magnetic battery within us; magnetism is the coarser and grosser: and though it is one and the same substance, yet, as exhibiting polarity, we may separate them and call them electricity and magnetism. Those persons who possess either of these forces in excess (both being one force but exhibiting themselves in a dual mode) and give it off in such abundance as to enable spirits to form a battery with them, are called spirit-mediums. Either of these exhibitions may be cultivated by placing yourselves in magnetic relations with each other, as in spirit-circles; or by determining the nervous forces in the direction of thought of certain organs of the brain, by aspiration, prayer, and contemplation of spiritual subjects. Thus, when you sit in circles, or alone, waiting for the manifestation of the spirit, all your nervous force is determined in the direction of the peculiar thought which is fastened upon the spirit-world, and therefore in the circle, or in the attitude of waiting for the spirit, you may be sure you are in *rapport* with the spirit-world, even if your organism fails to furnish the requisite force of magnetism to produce the evidence of its presence by phenomena. The dangers that grow out of these exercises are the possibilities of parting with too much magnetism, or of sending forth too great a charge of electricity in the determination of the nervous force, and the loss that is sustained is calculated sometimes to derange either the organs of the brain or of the physical system, and hence deterioration of health or of

the equilibrium which we call sanity may possibly ensure. But remember that if these dangers exist in the attempt to cultivate the relationship between the spiritual and natural world, God never leaves himself without a witness of warning and instruction, alike in your senses, hearts, consciences and understandings. The voice of conscience dictates to you right and wrong; the emotions of your heart regulate your affections; and the word is equally potent that comes to your understanding. If your or the equilibrium of your mind suffer, be sure that kind Nature is herself lessoning you to desist from your exertions. If those nameless antipathies and repulsions that sometimes prevail at the spirit-circle are disregarded, how shall the spirit speak to the outward ear if the interior is blunt and deaf? The external senses speak through the understanding, the spirit through feeling and emotion. These are the warnings whose failures and observances are to teach you to wend your way through the new and seemingly mysterious science of Spiritualism. There is no royal road to learning, or to the language of the heart and conscience in morals and affections, and why should there be in this new mental science, which you are called upon to spell out for yourselves through mental monitions. Be sure that the warnings of the spirit which have been referred to, are discoverable in feeling, nervous sensibility, or the various phases of spiritual perception that arise at the spirit-circle. Our spirits are wiser than we deem, and their impressions are the voice of the spirit speaking to the natural man with a wisdom beyond the natural only.

The “dangers of the spirit-circle” arise only when they manifest themselves as danger or direct evils. Heed the voices of warning of which I have spoken; be your own sentinels at the spirit circle; let your conscience be present and warn you back from one single attempt of spirit, embodied or disembodied to trench upon the law of right. The voice of conscience is as potent at the spirit circle if you will heed it as in the city streets, or in the midst of embodied souls. Let your hearts plead with you in the name of affection, in the name of those holy ties of kindred which God himself has knit around your hearts, to communicate with the precious “dead” when they come to you at the spirit circle, as readily as you would do if father, mother, brother, sister, or friend stood before you in the embodied form of mortality. Let none step between you and the teachings of your heart. Wheresoever father, mother, or friend are, and still living, your heart has the right to go out and search for them. It has the right to penetrate into all mysteries of space which can bring you a response from those whom God has taught you to love, and let the voice of your understanding be the third monitor to warn you of the dangers of the spirit circle where they exist. Be sure that wheresoever health, or equilibrium of mind is injured, your understanding clearly points the way of retreat. Use your judgment at the spirit circle, rend the veil of mystery in which you envelope the subject and treat it as it deserves, as a revelation to humanity which does not need any other supernatural revelation to explain it, than the understanding which God Himself has given you. Deal with the dangers of modern Spiritualism after this fashion and you will find that instead of the phantom you fear, you are grasping the substance of life in attempting to explore the science of Spiritualism. There are no real dangers in the spirit circle but such as grow out of the very same excesses which in morals we call sin, in science ignorance, and in spirit communion too much fanaticism, or scepticism, or an attempt to transmute the simply natural into the abnormal supernatural.

Question 7

WILL you explain the meaning of the “tree of knowledge of good and evil,” and “the tree of life?”

Answer

REMEMBER that the earliest mode of writing among the ancients was by pictures and symbols. If you attempt to comprehend the various meanings symbolised in picture writing, you will arrive at the conclusion that there is nearly as much unity in man's earliest attempts to record his thoughts as there is now in alphabetical signs. The universal significance amongst Oriental Nations of the story of creation was this: a tree represented life, its fruit knowledge; a garden the earth; beauty and peace the conditions of man's first infantile state of being; a serpent signified the craft and subtlety of intellect, tempting the human soul to eat of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Man's inquisitive intellect eats the fruit, attains to the knowledge, and finds he has forfeited his Eden of unconscious though ignorant innocence. He pays the penalty of becoming informed of the difference between good and evil by recognising that with his newly acquired wisdom he is a responsible being; he comes restless for more knowledge, goes forth into the world still paying the penalty of intellect by being compelled to outwork it, and in the toil and labour of a self-reliant life that ensues, he finds he has left his Paradise, learns to appreciate life's struggles and realises the curse or antagonism of matter which is associated with his spirit, and by whose movings he finds that there is this antagonistic power as constantly drawing him downwards, as God, the Infinite, is drawing him up from matter to spirit. In a word, with the knowledge of good and evil, he realises that life's destiny is labour and pain. The whole history of man's exodus from the state of innocence, (which is still to the child Paradise though to the adult ignorance, still to the savage Paradise, in the absence of the cares, pains and penalties, that grow out of knowledge); the exodus of man in the earliest period of human history is thus simply represented in picture writing, or that symbolical Oriental mode in which the most early people of earth recorded their thoughts. We now comprehend the true purposes of this beautiful allegorical mode of representing the first condition of humanity, that came from the hands of our God perfect as our little children are perfect, because in their innocence and unconsciousness of life, they have not yet sinned, because they have not eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. Nevertheless, if we would return to our Creator with the knowledge as well as the innocence which constitutes Divine love and wisdom, the day must come when, man *must* eat of the fruit of the tree, and like our children go forth from the Paradise of home and innocence, and bear earth's pains and penalties, because they please the intellect to appreciate that their destiny is the warfare of good and evil. And behold the angel of progression stands with a sword of adversity and pain at the door of our Paradise and warns us onward, compelling us to use the knowledge we have gained in constant effort, labour and spiritual warfare, so that we may return again through the discipline of life and its mighty struggles back to the Paradise we have quitted; not as we left it, ignorant and without knowledge, but innocent through the love acquired by wisdom, instructed in knowledge through the teachings gained, by experience. This we believe to be the design which the Ancients intended to represent through the allegory of the garden, the tree of the knowledge of

good and evil, and the universal symbol of intellect and immortality represented in the East by a serpent.

Question 8

PHYSICIANS and physiologists call the wonderful function of healing, in the restoration of animal or vegetable bodies which are wounded or sick, the *vis medicatrix*. What is this healing property? Is it a distinct power? Is it of, or does it afford any analogy to, any restrictive economy by which the disordered condition of the soul is to be supernaturally regenerated?

Answer

THE question involves some points to which we must take exception. For instance, we could not render our response comprehensible to you were we to speak of whatsoever the physicians may denominate as the life principle, unless we call it by the name of its nearest approximate element, namely, "magnetism." We believe that human structures are made up of the atoms of matter which have become sublimed in infinitely varied organisms below man, and that all these bring in the grand assemblage of elements found in man, all the peculiar magnetic forces that belong to them, the concentration of which is the life principle in man. Now, in the act of what is called healing by touch or magnetism, the whole action is simple, and requires no peculiar and incomprehensible phrases to define it. It is merely the projection of the life principle from one healthful body to another less physically strong and well balanced. All disease has its origin in the imponderable forces of life. Wheresoever the life currents flow equally and freely through the system they produce an equilibrium which we call health; the disturbance of these life currents, therefore, is the true source of disease, and wheresoever there is a debility in the flow of the magnetic life there is decay; where there is undue stimulant and excitement there is fever, and these are the two proximate causes of all disease, and every external evidence of disease surely originates (from foregone causes of course) in one or other of these states of the vital currents of the human system.

Now the action of cure is to restore an equilibrium in the life currents. The entire of the cures effected by magnetism proceed on this principle. The mode of cure practised by the allopathist is to introduce foreign substances into the system, and by these to produce a radical change; or, in other words, to create a new disease which conquers the original one, and this they call the "restoration of health!" The action of every drug is medicinal, and its function is so to disturb the system as to produce disease in the healthful subject and a fresh disease in the sick. By this latter process it purposes to achieve a conquest over the original complaint, and that even at the cost of introducing a new one, for in almost every instance the drug leaves foreign conditions in the system, which deranges its integrity and remains to the latest period of life. And the difference between allopathy and homoeopathy (and we are now speaking of facts and principles, not of personalities), the difference between the mode of treatment in the allopathist and homoeopathist is but a difference of degree. Some of the principles vary, because the first of those claimed by the homoeopathist is that "like cures like"

while the allopathist demands no condition of similitude between the disease and the drug disease. Still with the homoeopathist the drug disease must be introduced into the system, by way of destroying one demon by the presence of a stronger than that which is already there; but it is claimed that in its infinitesimal size the homoeopathic drug demon is too petty to effect harm, although it is assumed to be potent enough to do good. We must confess to a want of faith in this mode of argument, and fear that the potency works both ways, and whilst it quenches one disease leaves another in its place. In one system then we introduce the seven demons into the mansion; in the other, after our house is swept and garnished, we introduce one who is more potent than the whole seven put together. Now supposing, instead of either of these systems, that we can introduce that which is always healthful - the life itself; that instead of dealing with the effect we touch the cause; instead of legislating for the disease, we attack the very source, and restore the equilibrium, the lack of which originated the disease? And by projecting life within the system, permit that life to do its own normal work, and conquer the disease for itself. We believe that to be the true curative mode, but mark, in introducing this to the medical faculty, we must remember that we present it in the form of a science, and not of a mere phenomenal adjunct of Spiritualism; moreover we must present it with all the elements that constitute a science, and that at the present time we certainly are not prepared to do. We are too apt to assume that all magnetisms that are sufficiently powerful to produce an effect are curative in their action. This is not the case; all magnetisms partake both of the spiritual and intellectual as well as the physical characteristics of the operator; when that operator projects his magnetism upon another his psychology follows it: let him look to it that that psychological force be pure and healthful. Though the life principle may be strong enough to conquer the disease and produce the required equilibrium, nevertheless if the magnetizer conveys the irregularities of character, and perhaps the impurities of mind with which the magnetism may be charged, he introduces a yet worse demon than the drug disease of allopathist or homoeopathist.

I ask that Spiritualists shall reflect upon this, and remember that it constitutes one of the grandest elements of their philosophy to study magnetism, and not only its action upon the human system but upon the human soul. Let them remember that the magnetizer possesses within himself the fountain of life but also with it the fountain of moral disease. Again, there is yet another portion of the science of magnetism which is altogether misunderstood amongst us. It is this: that there must be an adaptation in the magnetisms that are to associate together to produce health. All human beings have magnetisms peculiar to themselves, and though these may be classified, and large groups of individuals may be all good magnetizers and capable of dispensing the fountain of health from themselves to others, nevertheless their subjects must be magnetically related to each of them individually; there must be chemical affinities between the magnetisms of all bodies ere they produce the required results. And so we close these questions tonight by reiterating once again the solemn charge of old - "Know thyself." Surely we have entered upon one of the grandest pages of self-knowledge, when we have stepped behind the veil of matter and stand before the solemn mystery of life; when we begin to realise it by its effects, as it is pulsating in our midst in the form of magnetism, rapping on our tables, heaving up ponderable bodies before our eyes without a visible agency; when it is illuminating our chamber by the combustion of unknown elements producing spirit-lights; when it is pouring its stream of strange mysterious influence on the human brain, producing semi-conscious in one direction, and exalting self-consciousness in another, as in the

state of trance and inspiration. When all these effects are present with us, we may study them as so many pages by which we can analyse the action of magnetism. Besides this, there are the lessons of the spirit-circle with all its mysterious antipathies and repulsions, whose neglect constitutes its danger; the varied effects which the magnetisms of certain individuals produce upon others; the excess of sensibility that shrinks away from the magnetisms of some individuals, and yields control to others. Even this night we have had in our midst an evidence of the over-stimulating effect of the magnetism of this platform, which has produced from its overpowering action the same effects upon the brain of the sensitive who has been removed from this chamber as partial intoxication might have done.

The spiritual magnetism that controls your speaker stimulated to immense nervous force by the combined action of your several magnetisms all projected on one individual, and again by her returned upon yourselves, acts with such excessive force that this room is charged with influence from roof to floor, and to some its power is (as in the example we have witnessed) overpowering to the physical system. When you remember how little you know of the laws of these magnetic relations, manifest as are the effects, when you perceive what a grand foundation for the Lyceum of a spiritual science is now opened to you, you may begin to echo the words of old, "Behold I make all things new." Still I say with the writers of Judea, "Ye men of Galilee, why stand ye gazing here?" "Oh Spiritualists, why stand ye regarding these phenomena only, without attempting practically to apply them in use, without tracing the teachings of the risen spirit that soars above the phenomenal evidence of its presence?" Seek for the knowledge that carries you into the realms of immortality. Grand and sublime is the foundation upon which you are building your church of the future, that broad church where every living creature shall know his God for himself, that magnificent temple where all men shall worship. But remember it is for you Spiritualists to prepare the stones ere they are fit for the final erection of this temple. It is for you, builders in this great masonic lodge of the New Jerusalem, each one of you to bring your stones hewn, and fair and square, and true for the perfection of the whole work. It is for each one of you, whatsoever be your sphere, your station, or your principles, to cultivate the knowledge you may now attain for the practical improvement of your own soul and the general welfare of the race, and as you go hence care not to reflect upon the external form or mode of the expression that has been presented to you, but accept the suggestions to enquire that grow out of these utterances. Go hence every one of you and question what you have gained. If you answer "nothing," still query what you might and will gain of the subjects presented to you by following out their suggestions in methods of study. The words which are here spoken are but goads to stimulate your own spirits to effect the work of progress which at last must be individual effort; and, above all, reflect upon the affirmation which the deepest scrutiny, the most earnest investigation will ever prove to be the noblest study of the human mind, namely MAN, the grand volume of creation, whose first and last page is spirit, whose interpreter is Magnetism.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED EXTEMPORE
BY
MISS EMMA HARDINGE
AT THE
WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON
February 5th, 1866

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The following questions were put and answered:-

Question 1

WILL you explain your own case, as to when and how far you are influenced by an attendant spirit, and how far and in what way this influence mingles with other sources of information? And how do you recognise the spirit communication? It is of primary importance and interest to all to be made aware of the exact nature and specialty of a fact before us.

Answer

WHO is to prove the fact of the inspiration which your speaker is known to claim for her discourses? There are those here present, as elsewhere, who readily accept of, and believe in such facts as were recorded, two, three, or even four thousand years ago; and provided they are found in the record which by such believers is deemed sacred, they question them not. By what authority do those who accept of these facts as truth, question your speaker of the fact of an inspiration of a parallel description? One arises two thousand years ago, and says, "Thus saith the Lord." You believe it, you endorse it, and pin your soul's salvation upon the truth of that utterance - Why? Because it is so asserted in a record in which you have implicit faith, and you believe in the record because it comes from what you pronounce to be the highest spiritual source. Again, you believe in the permeation of this natural world by a spiritual world, you affirm that all mortal existence is the result of, and ultimates in, besides being controlled by, an immortal existence mightier than that of earth. You realise the inevitable necessity for the mightier existence in your own weakness. You recognise its action and influence upon yourselves in the strength of the invisible but potential links that connect you with Deity and a world of ministering spirits. All these are revelations of your own nature, which confirm the records of the Spiritualism of past ages, to you as sacred and indisputable truth, and yet how much of this testimony depends on the individual witness of your own spirit. If you accept, without this interior witness, the truth as proved of any facts which were recorded in human history, without other

testimony than that of the assertion of those who were in its experience, you may accept any human assertion as truth. If, on the contrary, recorded history only becomes assured truth to your mind, when witnessed by the evidence of your own spirits, these should also assure you of the veracity of all spiritual facts. No phenomenon can ever occur in the order of nature, but that which is founded on eternal laws. God's laws never change; hence the recurrence of all phenomena require only parallel conditions to present parallel facts of recurrence. - No spiritual or material facts then can ever have transpired in the order of the universe but what prove the existence of the law that subsists in eternity, and through eternity may be constantly manifesting its action, and under similar circumstances be repeated again. Those who in ancient times claimed that the spiritual power whom they worshipped, whose monitions they felt to be stronger than the perceptions of their external sense, and whom they call "The Lord," those ancients who claimed in the name of the power they called God, that a supra-mundane existence stimulated their own natures, this inspiration which spoke with them by a voice and revealed itself to them in dream, trance, oracle, vision, and unpremeditated utterance - those are the precedents for the facts that are displayed to you on this rostrum. It is in deep reverence for God's law, in all times and all ages, in the realisation that it is never partial, and in all places and all persons is sufficient for all purposes in existence - it is in this abiding faith, in the equal law and action of the Father of Spirits, rather than in presumption, that your speaker claims that a power which she believes to be an individualised spirit action upon her mediating between herself and the Infinite, from whom as a source, all inspiration flows, stimulates her utterance, and by the philosophy of magnetic control, by a power which first magnetises her organism and then psychologises her brain, prepares by neutralising the external form and stimulating the internal, to produce the Addresses which have been given in this place. She claims, too, in this same connection that her own unaided efforts cannot control her efforts on this rostrum, and that a ministering spirit's power does. Of this claim as a "fact," your speaker can give no other evidence than her word, and the inferential testimony of the great mass of spiritual phenomena, some of which corresponds to her own state, to which we have alluded in the ancient record given by those whom you accept as the authors of your religion. She has the same deific source of inspiration to draw from as had the Jews of old, the same claim to the gifts and ministrations of God's angels, the same right to demand of you the credence that you render to those whose assertions, unsupported by other evidence than their own, you accept as the divine and incontrovertible truth. Your speaker not only bases her assertions of a spiritual source for her Addresses on the incommunicable witness of her own spirit, but also on the fact that a spiritual world, permeating this world, can and does under favourable circumstances effect a rapport with mortals, and that as that rapport is effected by magnetic control of your speaker (as a demonstrated subject of animal magnetism), so she is now the subject of a higher or spiritual magnetism. Magnetic control operates between the positive and negative electricities of spirits and susceptible human beings whose magnetic condition renders them receptive as mediums. Such rapport once effected, the mortal beomes, first, the subject of spiritual magnetism, by which the organism is subdued, individual consciousness in part or wholly neutralised, and its place supplied by the psychological power of the spirit. In this state the controlling and operating influence externalises whatever latent powers are hidden within the subject. The whole rapport between spirit and mortal is effected by the laws of psychology and magnetism operating between the controlling spirit and the subject mortal, called the medium. Under the category of these laws of magnetic control your speaker ranges herself. She

has no evidence to offer you of the truthfulness of her assertions except the witness of those who from earliest childhood to the present day have recognised that in her given testimony of spiritual phenomena on favourable occasions, her eyes have beheld the forms of those whom the world called dead. Her ears have drank in the tones of spirit voices, and time has verified the veracity of the intelligence communicated. Even in this place are witnesses present who have had some proofs of these occult gifts of your speaker under yet more favourable circumstances than the last few months of her life have afforded. The facts of test mediumship and spiritual gifts have been so commonly associated with your speaker's name and experience, that it seems difficult now to prove what to herself and her associates have been long accepted as proven facts. For the peculiar character of the influence which now controls her, your speaker can render you no other definition than such as to her spiritual sense appears to be the magnetism of spirits operating on her brain, and subduing it into partial unconsciousness, and the psychology of spirits prompting her utterances. Those who are familiar with the philosophy of magnetism are aware that the magnetised subject can give forth intelligence, and frequently produce evidence of powers that were apparently utterly beyond those of that subject's normal state. Somnambulism often yields similar evidences. A partly somnambulist, purely magnetic, and somewhat psychological state, is that in which your speaker addresses you. It may not be possible to prove it except to those who, familiar with ordinary manifestations of magnetic control, can realise in her case a difference both in the matter and manner of the control, which is not ordinary to herself. But beyond and above all this, she claims credence upon the fact that "Thus saith the Spirit!" through her lips; and never until men are reasonable enough to demand the same external facts, and the same array of sensuous evidence for the support of all those systems of religion which are founded upon the "Thus saith the Lord" of the ancients, as they seem to require for the assertion of the living witnesses of the day - never should reason and justice question the testimony or doubt the veracity of the magnetised subject of spirits, though she is unable to offer any other evidence than that of her own individual assertion. This is all of personality that we consider it necessary this night to render on this subject.

Question 2

HOW are direct writing and drawing done by an invisible agency, as has been satisfactorily proved to have been done, in pencil, ink, and colours, when none of these materials are at hand?

Answer

WHEN you produce drawings with the aid of the materials which your senses can apprehend, where do those materials come from? They are manufactured by yourselves - out of what? Why even of the self-same elements that furnish invisible spirits with their materials. The very pencil which your eye discerns and your fingers clasp was once in the atmosphere; the ink and pen were once portions of the unorganised ether around you, and these, by the gradual processes of growth through organic life have assumed visible shape and form, and become substances appropriate to your use. Now if you possessed knowledge enough of chemistry to organise in a sufficiently rapid period of time the various unorganised elements around you, you

could produce from the invisible world of elemental life, even from thin air or finer ether, every form of creation that is visible to your eyes. The unparticled elements of all being are in part here in this very chamber, and in the invisible world which ignorance calls nothing, vulgar parlance air, and science gas, vapour, and electricity, are held in solution all the elements of organic life. I repeat, if it be possible for chemistry to produce in a measurably short space of time, that which Nature's chemistry produces in simply a longer period of time, why should not better chemists than men (even spirits of men, who in the realm of spiritual science becoming acquainted with Nature's secret methods, can imitate them in very rapid periods of time) transcend man's chemistry, and perform its operations more rapidly than yourselves? Spirit embodied has sufficient power to compound substances by chemistry; have not spirits, disembodied the same knowledge, with, perhaps, added powers? The action of men require for the exhibition of their transformations in matter, time and space; that of the spirits is independent of both: but both act through chemistry and force upon matter, through laws known to both.

But admitting all the possibilities for the action of the spirit independent of time and space, which yourselves claim in time and space, you have the simple *modus operandi* by which all materials could be produced - namely, by the various transformations of matter through the three stages of solid, fluid, and invisible gas. There are many modes in which by spirit-control occult phenomena are effected, and we do not find that spirits ever make use of one mode alone. In the various degrees of influence which by magnetism operate upon what are termed "trance-speakers," there are so many peculiar varieties, that one scarcely forms any illustration of another. Even so in the production of spirit writings without a visible agency. One of the ordinary modes by which they are produced is this: there must be given off, either from the substances connected with the local surroundings where they are produced, or from some persons present called media, an aroma or magnetic essence that enables the spirit to condense around himself an earthly atmosphere. This effected, and clothed as it were in fine and sublimated matter, highly charged with magnetism, spirit can readily control matter. Spiritual electricity is far finer when disembodied than when embodied. When controlling spirits have gathered up sufficient of animal magnetism to act upon the elements of matter, they can remove any substances that are subject to their magnetism into their own atmosphere, and they then become invisible. In all the various phenomena of stone-throwing, or the projection of missiles, or objects suddenly produced before the eyes of a circle, you will find that such movements are not made with the same amount of momentum that would seem to be requisite to bring the object in its place. Those familiar with the phenomena of moving substances brought or thrown by spirits, will remember that they always appear as if they were softly laid or dropped before you; they suddenly appear visible to your eyes; they are not passed through the atmosphere, obviously with the same amount of force that would be produced by projecting them with the momentum of the animal body.

This is a fact which all, familiar with the phenomena of the spirit-circle, will bear witness to. How is this effected? The spirit, enveloped by the earthly animal magnetism, removes within his own atmosphere the various substances he is about to use. So long as they remain in his atmosphere they are invisible to your eyes as much as the spiritual world which fills this chamber is invisible to your sense of mortal sight. And yet the spirit-world is actually here, and permeating this natural world. You assert, in the scientific systems which you call natural philosophy, that all atoms in

space are matter. You acknowledge that a vast amount of matter exists in the atmosphere that is invisible to you; can you not also conceive of particles yet finer than any that have been discovered? Can you question that there must be an ultimate condition of atoms finer than any as yet known to science? Reason suggests this, spirits affirm it; and therefore it is that they may also affirm, within the range of your comprehension, that this very chamber is full of the spirit-world, its landscapes, scenery, and inhabitants - in fact, that the whole realm of matter is vitalised by a spirit-world invisible to you, because you only look through the eyes of materiality, and can therefore only behold material objects. It requires a spiritual eye to take cognizance of the realm of spirit and spiritual beings; therefore, in order to make present, tangible and visible, to your eyes, that which they produce from their own atmosphere they must pass it from their world into yours. So long as they operate upon it within their world, it is invisible, because it is immersed in the invisible atmosphere of spirit-land. And so the great majority of spirit-writings, performed without visible agency, are absolutely being out-wrought by stances similar to those formed in your world; that is, by the same pencils, ink, paper and various materials borrowed from yourselves rendered temporarily invisible, and so either returned or suddenly produced before your eyes, when the conditions of the medium power enables the spirit to present them. This is one mode; and another is that which I have before alluded to, namely, in the rapidity of chemical operations which enable spirits to gather up from the atmosphere such elements and forces as are needful for their purposes.

Although they have not arrived at that condition of chemical knowledge that enables them to render the substances they use permanent, they are still sufficiently material to prove that they possess weight, density, impenetrability, and other of the attributes of matter. All these assertions need the evidence of those who are familiar with the phenomena. When you have observed these you will find that there is an invariability about them corresponding to that which I have stated, and all resolve themselves at last into the power of the spiritual man to do something more in science than can be effected in analogous modes by the natural man. But for the peculiar phenomena named in your question, the two modes referred to are those most commonly used for their production.

Question 3

HOW are we conscious of continued identity, if, as it is believed, our whole frame - every organ of the brain among the rest, is incessantly undergoing waste and renewal?

Answer

BECAUSE we do not depend upon the organism only, for the recognition of our identity. Because our identity is of the spirit and not of the atoms, in which, as a mould, it simply grows, and becomes a temporary and transitory inhabitant of the world of matter. You may as well enquire how we are conscious of our identity, or that of each other's destitute of the garments of infancy or the habits of clothing in which we have once appeared. As years roll on our garments wax old and decay. Our garment of mortality is no more permanent; but year by year, nay, even hour by hour,

is changing, passing, and waxing older and stranger to its former condition than even the work of our hands, the garments we wear, or any of the forms we originate. But does the garment of flesh any more than the fabrics we externally wear constitute the real man? It is one of the strongest evidences of the changeless, deathless, immortal nature of the spirit, that identity is never touched by the laws that affect matter. We gather up images from the first moment the tablet of memory, which we call the brain, is able to receive impressions. These images are overlaid on each other, as on a daguerreotype plate; they are perpetually being renewed, and perpetually being added to, but they are never, never destroyed. In the hour when the spirit is passing from earth, in the day when the snows of many winters whiten the hair of age, when the stronger images of manhood have become dimmed by time, and the spirit has gradually withdrawn itself from the form, and is completing the circle of existence, which unites the second childhood with the first, - then it is that the reverberating echoes of time come charged to the ear with the tones of earliest childhood, - then it is discovered that nothing is wanting, nothing lost. All the first impressions which the immature brain of the child received, or its infantile memory could treasure up, are reproduced, and with these come shadowy forms which year after year has impressed upon the canvas of human life, until at last the whole picture is filled up with the complete panorama of all the spirit's earthly experiences. In the moment of violent death, when the spirit is all eye, all ear, all perception, and outward forms are passing away, the soul suddenly begins to realise the actuality of spiritual existence, and finds in the vast and yet minute records of its entire past life, suddenly reproduced in the moment of death's spiritual transfiguration, that not a grain of spirit is lost, not an atom is wanting - all is there in its perfect integrity. THE SPIRIT EVER GROWS, BUT NEVER CHANGES. Therefore it is, that the preservation of spiritual identity, the memory which stretches away into the past, and the prophetic power which already anticipates by nameless monitions the unwritten future, and connects the spirit with the two infinities between which it is standing - therefore it is, I say, that this very fact of self-consciousness and identity is evidence conclusive of the immortality of the soul. Chemists declare that there is nothing in nature annihilated, that whilst all things are the subject of change, and whilst every atom of matter is passing through perpetual successions of transformation, still not one is ever lost. How then can you make these theories correspondent with the bare shadow of the possibility of annihilating that self-consciousness which is one of the most inevitable functions of the soul? If you take away the fact of self-consciousness, or distrust the power of identifying others, and retaining any and every faculty which appertains to the spirit in earth-life, if you attempt to quench one of the soul's functions, you pretend to have found out the fact of that which your whole system of material philosophy denies, even for atoms, namely, annihilation. Your own theories concerning the impossibility of annihilating ought that is, are witnesses, I repeat, of the soul's consciousness, - its deathless nature, and eternal recognition of identities. Remove your question from the realm of matter to that of spirit, and you will never ask it; for spirit is its own witness of its own identity, and changes never.

Question 4

HOW do you explain speaking in unknown tongues?

Answer

THERE is in every human being a set of faculties that embrace all the possibilities that belong to spirit. Each living creature has the talent for music, painting, poetry; all art, science and intellectual lore; all spiritual attainments and affectional emotions, either latent, partially or fully developed. Spirit is a unit, and all varieties of its external manifestations are but questions of development; hence the faculty of speech and the gift of tongues belong to all human beings alike, though in all it is shewn in different degrees of capacity. But though all possess in the unitary nature of spirit the same quality of soul, all, as each; in every living creature is an infinite variety in degrees of culture of various faculties. All human beings, in fact, manifest the inward qualities of spirit through human organisms in almost illimitable variety. That which is called the brain, or the seat of the various organs, moral, intellectual and spiritual, varies in each individual. Therefore it is that one faculty that is frequently externalised, another is wholly dormant, and some times on predominant tendency of mind, moral or intellectual, is externalised at the expense of another. All are there, as I have said, in germ; but many are wholly obscured, while one or two alone are predominant. With some it only requires the hothouse process of magnetism to externalise the faculties which, though dormant, exist in great force and abundance. We believe that magnetism and psychology are hothouse processes, by which special tendencies of mind (though they may have been latent and wholly unrecognised), if existing in any sufficient force can be called into abnormal action, and the magnetism of a spirit, in or out of the form, is the means by which the phenomenon is produced. The school is the garden of mind-growth in which the child's latent faculties are externalised. The magnetism of a nation and the psychology, which is called "fashion" or "public opinion," is the hothouse process, by which national character is developed. Even so is it in individuals; if you can apply to any susceptible subject the magnetic processes, which are attracted to that portion of the brain where the strongest tendencies of mind exist, you externalise these, and so long as the magnetiser's influence lasts, his subject displays this suddenly developed and abnormal talent; and this is the mode in which spirits control persons for tongues, music, drawing, or any of the various gifts which have not been before manifested in their subject's own normal state. The capacity for this gift, as I have said, must exist latent in the organism; and though it may not have been developed until the magnetism of a controlling spirit externalised it - still it must have been there and formed a predominant quality of the brain. The facility for speaking in foreign tongues is one that requires first a correct ear, and next a facility for imitation, and you may urge that these are attributes only of the sensuous organism, I answer that this facility not only requires a favourable external organism but a receptive spiritual one also; for the gift of tongues, even when cultivated by education, varies in each individual. Where you find a very favourable organism for the repetition of sentences in foreign tongues, you acknowledge that such a person is peculiarly gifted in that direction. For the process of education, substitute that of magnetism, and you will find that by the same spiritual chemistry that annihilates times and space, in an inconceivably rapid process of earthly time the spirit is enabled so to educate the tongue, as to make it exhibit the faculty of speaking in foreign language, which is latent in the brain. It is so of all the various gifts that are produced under the magnetic action of spirits. It may be queried why this, once produced, does not remain a permanent gift. There may be some present who have witnessed electrical

experiments; we will cite one which seems apposite to our position. Apply the two poles of the battery to the root of a plant that is as yet undeveloped - always granting that the life is there and the battery is carefully applied - and you shall find that the magnetic process evolves such an exuberance of life in that plant, that it externalises its growth in a marvellously short space of time. Remove the battery, and you will find that the plant immediately withers and droops, and seems to aim at returning to the law of nature in gradual growth: and such is the case with the medium. The spiritual battery applied forcibly and intelligently to a susceptible subject, externalises its special latent qualities; but when removed, the subject returns to the normal state of growth that is best suited to a physical existence, nevertheless it retains sufficient facility by a habit once acquired, to more readily become the subject of the phenomena again. Thus it has been shewn that spirit mediums have absolutely become educated to give in their normal state the foreign tongue which they have never learnt, but which the habitude and facility of the organs cultivated by the spirits, have gradually accustomed them to manifest.

Question 5

WHAT is the philosophy of prayer?

Answer

WE are asked, "What is the philosophy of prayer?" Oh, answer, little child, thou who has ever looked in the mother's eye, or the father's tender face, with such assurance, such full and confiding trust and affection that thou didst know, ere the request was made, thou hadst the answer in the mother's love or the father's care already, Why dost thou pray? Why dost thou ask a mother or father for love, or solicit tenderness of which thou art already assured? Why dost thou repeat the fond appeal for some wish still ungratified, but sure to find response in parental love? With all thy trust and confidence in father or mother thou must needs pour out thy heart in prayer, for it is the very voice of trust, the appeal of natural faith in love. We are but children of a larger growth; and, waking up in the midst of life's phenomena, we hear the rushing wheels of creation sounding around us in the universal crash of life's grand yet awful procession. We bend beneath the wild wing of the driving storm; we listen to the voice of the awful thunder, and our pulses quicken at the hoarse shout of the booming tempest and the anthem of the winds; 'tis then, in our infinite littleness, that we shrink back from unsympathetic nature in her wildest moods, and feel that we are but helpless waifs on the mighty ocean of life's tempestuous billows.

We stand on the shore of the restless sea, and listen to the ceaseless murmur of its tossing waves; we cannot interpret their voice, and yet they speak to our spirits in a tone that thrills us to their inmost depths. We gaze upon the bright summer sky - how glad it is! How beautiful! How deep the arch of blue that is glittering above us! How the translucent air through which we look out into the vast unknown! - looking for God - looking for God! Perhaps we stand in the presence of the solemn stars, and count the multitudes of God's hosts trooping up before our eyes even as their fiery hosts were marshalled before the enraptured gaze of the ancient Chaldean. Do we remember how long, how very long ago it was that he gazed on those same stars, and

numbered them, and mapped them out as in a chart of human destiny? And as the canvas of the divine eternity from whence we come rolls out in inspiration's pictured forms before us, and we think of all the mighty phantasmagoric past, how small a thing we seem to be! - a mere waif, an atom, a single dew-drop, a being of time yet living in eternity, a child of space lost in this vast infinity! We stretch the tendrils of our yearning hearts, fainting beneath our sense of littleness and weakness to anchor them around the heart of God, our strength and safety; and, humbly bending low in reverent prayer, we murmur, "Our Father, which art in heaven!" We are so weak, so powerless, such creatures of finality in the midst of this vast array of nature's wild phenomena."The Lord passes by," and lo! We hear the sound of the rending rocks, and the crashing storm, and the rush of His chariot-wheels of fire, and quaking earth, and then comes the still small voice of our Father's love and mercy; and, as its tender accents steal into our hearts, and say to our spirits "Peace" - "Be still, and know that I am God," we recognise it is our Father's voice that speaks to us, and then again we humbly answer Him in prayer. In sadness 'tis our cheer; in dark despair our anchor; in overwhelming joy our strong necessity of praising and overpowering thankfulness.

"The philosophy of prayer!" It is the inevitable appeal of the child to the Father; it is the necessity of our souls; it is the link of connection which God Himself establishes between Himself and His creatures. We often know not why we pray, but we do so when we feel our spirits yearn for a communion with our Author, and our souls are too full for mortal utterance; and then it is that we must bow down in prayer, and we know that nothing but communion with the Fountain of all Spirit can hear or answer prayer. I claim that the *philosophy* of prayer is, first, the expression of our relation to the Great Spirit; next, the recognition of our faith in, and dependence upon His Almighty care. I believe, too, it is the voice of God speaking in our own heart's yearnings, and crying ever in the midst of earth's Eden of forgetfulness and sin, "Adam, where art thou?" We *must* pray and the effect of prayer upon ourselves is to bring us nearer and nearer yet to God, not in the sense that He is moved, approaches, or answers our finite supplications by change of His eternal purposes, but prayer connects us with Him, by drawing us up to Him. It is the soul's foot pressing into the temple of His presence. Prayer is the grandest, sweetest, holiest privilege that is granted to man. It is by prayer that we raise ourselves from the gravitating arms of matter that are drawing us down, and obey the grand magnetism of the central mind that is seeking to draw us up to Himself. It is the speech of the soul crying "Abba, Father." We cannot lay down to you a system of prayer; we cannot in mortal words or speech, or set forms, dictate to you how to appeal to the Infinite. The spirit pleads for us itself alone. Let your own spirits arise and go to your Father after their own needs and aspirations. Trust that in this mode you commune with the Great Spirit as only spirit can; God is nearer to your spirit than any being else can be, who would make prayers for you. Pray for yourself, and you shall find in your own nature a spiritual answer, that none but your spirit can interpret - that words cannot render - that does not admit of being formed into a "philosophy." Philosophies are but the creeds, dogmas, and set forms by which we seek to define scientific principles, and understand the fundamental laws of matter; prayer transcends all philosophy. It is in the strength of prayer that human hosts avail not against the resistless power of spirit. The soul that prays and realises the actual presence of the Great Spirit to whom it appeals, is unmoved by all that man can do against it. There is no philosophy in prayer; prayer is the spirit's voice of man's appeal whose answer is in itself; whose

best response is its utterance, when the tones of faith direct it to the throne of Him who ever hears, and ever answers prayer.

Question 6

HOW is it possible that things future, and not depending on any necessary sequence of cause and effect, such, for instance, as the upsetting of a boat can be foreseen or predicted?

Answer

BECAUSE there is no time or space with the spirit, but all things in the universe are one universal present. Imagine that you can behold with infinite eye the vast panorama of eternity. There you will see successions of periods, and the long chain of causation, ultimating in a ceaseless round of events, whose actions form the links in the chain of eternal cause and effect. All that is or ever was or can be on the canvas of eternity, is fully represented. Could you behold this eternal totality, you would see one infinite present: no past, no future! But you are finite, and as you move through this unchanging panorama, you take cognizance only of that which your mortal eye enables you to perceive. Something of the past that you have left you remember; something of the future to which you are advancing you realise. No more. Now, imagine that your vision is more than mortal; imagine that it has a wider radius - that you can behold a larger space in the panorama than is granted to the finite eye. It is merely a larger amount of memory; a larger amount of prophecy, you say. I say it is a larger amount of vision of that which *is* - a wider perception of the infinite scheme. And now extend your vision yet further, till you arrive at that knowledge which enables you to comprehend the panoramic perceptions of ages. Such is the condition of many of the inhabitants of spirit-land. In proportion, at least, to their degree of development. You behold that which is within the circle of your vision, as they of theirs; but as that circle widens, and the spirit throws off the veil of mortal magnetism, and, passing from sphere to sphere, becomes more and more sublimated, it perceives in the vast extent of the panoramic view of God's creation, that which appears to you to be almost as vast as a vision of eternity. And now for the mode in which these perceptions reach you in the form of prophecy. Admitting that there are spirits in sublimated spheres of existence, whose vision is so fine and so vast that they can behold immense circles of the eternal panorama of that which is; when they approach spirits of a lower sphere they communicate something of their influence, and with it something of their intelligence, to the beings with whom they thus come into *rapport*; and these again (assuming that they are in the sphere of your guardian spirits) approach you, and you becoming receptive to their influence, realise something of their knowledge by what the Scientists call induction. And thus the sudden glimpses of knowledge which they possess, passing into your atmosphere, and for the moment impressing your mind, compels that form of unpremeditated speech which you call prophecy.

Prophecy is not calculation. All the calculation of the laws of cause and effect which you possess, would not enable any one of you to determine that you should ever quit this chamber alive, as the phrase of mortality is spoken. Which of you could

determine that you will still remain in mortal form until the moment that you must pass from this chamber? To calculate this, accurately, you must be in the thorough knowledge of all the causes of the stability of the building around you; of the atmospheric laws that may act upon this building, and cause its destruction. You must have a perfect knowledge of your own organic system, to determine how long it will maintain its integrity. You have not this knowledge: you cannot determine even that the flower you plant in spring shall blossom in summer, unless you know the various causes that may affect its growth or decay. Prophecy is not the knowledge of cause and effect; it is the perception *of that which is* - it is the *rapport* which receptive beings on earth can sustain to those who live the spheres of knowledge that enables mortals to prophecy. Sometimes this knowledge is communicated by the guardian spirit, or some controlling mind, under circumstances favourable to the reception of the knowledge. More frequently it is an impress received from the presence of the spirit that is possessed of the knowledge - an impression upon the person who is capable of receiving it. The conditions of the atmosphere, the conditions that influence the medium, must all be favourable to the reception of the impression. When they are so, there come the mournful monitions of the calamity at hand, or the joyous foregleam of some approaching good. You cannot tell whence the knowledge comes; but your spirit recognises it as truth.

I do believe that so long as our perceptions of God's infinite wisdom is bounded by ignorance, - and you cannot recognise here in this mortal pilgrimage how very good, how wise, how beneficent, are all His lessons of adversity, - I do believe that the veil of mortality is wisely drawn across our human eyes to shield us from the view of coming events too mighty in their foregleams for us to hear, although adapted to the strength of the hour of trial. But this veil is fast becoming sublimated. In this age, when magnetism is in the air, and electricity is being determined by our investigations more and more towards the various organs of the brain - in this age, when the working of the spiritual telegraph is sounding at our doors and knocking at our hearts, and flashing in spiritual lights athwart our eyes - the scales of matter are falling fast from our vision, and, as the world of spirits becomes more present and real to our perceptions, so does the knowledge, which they are enabled by spiritual vision to obtain, become more and more impressed upon us, and hence the spirit of prophecy is daily growing with us.

It is in that spirit that we now close the exercise of this night by declaring that the day shall come, - and that within a score of years, - when our eyes "shall behold our teachers," when the spiritual form, that is now immersed in the fine atmosphere of its own realm, shall become palpable to our human sight, for day by day we are creating the new earth around us. These very exercises, by the determination of our spiritual force and nerve aura, in the contemplation of spiritual things to the realm of influential causes, is weaving lines of magnetism, that are traversing the earth. We know not how this great irruption of modern Spiritualism has arisen, scarcely whither it is tending, by what mysterious power it has set up its telegraphic lines from pole to pole, until we find Spiritualism in all parts of the earth making its mark everywhere, and, like the viewless army, whose marching foot-prints we only see when they have passed away, shall fresh phenomenal light of spiritual presence thicken around you. Yourselves are a part, too, of the builders of this great spiritual temple, for, by your own acts of earnest investigation and magnetic experiments, you are determining your magnetism into more and more force and power, and filling the very atmosphere with

mediumistic emanation. Thus every earnest thought which you send forth in search of knowledge to the realm of spirits, returns to earth recharged with the spiritual influence which binds and connects the working telegraph, and so you fill the earth, and charge the air, and bind the elements in chains of magnetic influence.

We hear that "Spiritualism is exploded." "Some say that it has died out;" "that its mediums are exposed;" its viewless hosts all driven back and powerless. We have not heard this news in spirit-world, nor here on earth find evidence that spirits' work is flagging. We see the individuals fail, but not the power; we miss the waymarks, but we find the broad path opening wider and wider before us; we realise the fallibility of the instruments, but the master-hands are still striking the harp of the human heart and the music of immortality is still chiming in the air. Therefore we claim, upon the basis of a science no less than upon that of spiritual love, tenderness, and affection, which is now as ever drawing your kindred and all that you have lost nearer and nearer to your side in missions of love and guidance, that to work the great mystic telegraph that has been built between the natural and the spiritual world by the law of affection, by the law of science, by the law of growth, by the eternal laws of Him who is manifested in all other laws is the mission or aim of Spiritualism; that as its motive powers are eternal so will be its manifestations of growth and progress. Are you not even spiritualising matter? Shall not the new earth, which progress is ultimating, be arched by a new heaven born of the spirits' progress who depart from this earth of renewed and glorious life? Fear not, but the day is even now at hand when you shall recognise the fulfilment of the prophecy of ancient times, "Behold I make all things new," and, "The former shall not be remembered nor come into mind."

MR LUXMOORE, in proposing a vote of thanks to Miss Hardinge, stated that whatever might be the opinion of the audience in regard to the influence by which they were enlightened - whatever might be their notions on Spiritualism or non-Spiritualism, they could not but admire the excellence of the precepts that had been inculcated, tending as they did to produce that love towards God and man, which, if fully carried out, would almost turn earth into heaven. He had never left the room on any occasion after listening to Miss Hardinge without feeling his mind elevated and improved. He begged to thank her for the benefit he had derived, or which he knew he ought to have derived, from listening to her discourse.

[The vote of thanks was carried by the enthusiastic acclamations of the audience.]

ADDRESS

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

DELIVERED AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON

February 19th, 1866

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“AND upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great; Mother of harlots and abominations of the earth.”

You may deem the passage I have selected for this night's address, a strange one; we will ask your attention to its elaboration as the subject of the evening, however, for you will find that it bears especially on our own movement as Spiritualists, and generally on the signs of the times. It has been quoted by those who “wrest” what they call “Scripture” for their own purposes, as descriptive of the splendid hierarchy of Roman Catholicism; but we are taught that “no scripture is of private interpretation,” and that when the passage was written it applied to a period like the present - a period when men desired to array mystery against light and revelation; for though we are told by those who profess to wield the only key which opens revelation, that “there are mysteries that belong to God,” I claim there are none such, but that God's dealing with man is one continuous and continuing stream of revelation; while man's interpretation of God alone is mystery. “The signs of the times” are now rife with the spirit of agitation - an agitation which is stirring the very depths of the human mind, and appears from time to time on its surface in the form of change and disruption; but the restless activity of the mind which characterises the present era, is but an evidence to those who realise the ever imminent providences of God in human history, that it is His divine spirit that is moving on the face of the waters, and that His purposes are again to be outworked in the creation of a new state of order, from the chaos and void of mighty changes. In a word, I believe that there is now a great and momentous warfare pending - the warfare of Mystery and Materialism against Light and Spiritualism; a strife between the mysteries initiated by man, against the manifest purposes of God's continuous revelation.

Let me quote again the passages that I have selected - “And upon her forehead was a name written, Mystery, Babylon the great; the mother of harlots, and of the abominations of the earth.” In the final destruction of the dynasties of the once splendid Orient, in the last dying hours of the broken power of the East, in the day when all the myths of old were being weighed in the balances, found wanting, and their chains broken, in the liberty wherewith Christ made man free; in such an hour as

that were those solemn words spoken to the spiritual ear of John the revelator. The same voice proclaimed that Babylon, the type of mystery “was fallen;” and these words are therefore significant, not of any special sect then in existence, or yet to be established; but of the action of man, in darkening the revelations of God in the solemn and incomprehensible form of mystery.

Ignorant we may be of all the profound and infinite purposes of the Creator; but their meaning is ever becoming revelation to our growing intellect - hence, there are no mysteries with God; mystery is only the invention of man, to darken out God’s counsels. Let us trace some of its onward steps, until the period when it wields its solemn sway over mankind today, and stands confronted with the new Spiritualistic movement, which is so unmistakably “the Word made flesh, and dwelling amongst men.” This Word is once more, indeed, amongst you, and would spread the light over the incomprehensible, which mystery has obscured by its dark and fatal pall. Behold, in this movement, light and darkness arrayed against each other, while the day has come when spiritual persecution wields once more the arms of mental and intellectual shafts, literary racks, and moral crucifixes; and in every form that the law and custom of the time will admit of, look to see the warriors of light, intellectual and spiritual liberty, assailed by the advocates of that mystery which is again attempting to initiate her old captivity of the human soul by the imposing plea, that, “Great is the mystery of godliness.” How idly we talk of God, and pretend to define Him, and threaten each other with His wrath; and yet, what know we of Him whom we call sometimes Allah, or Buddha, Krishna, Jehovah, God? Except, that man from his earliest intuitions of the Power unknown cries “Abba, Father?” We know no more than this; we need to know no more.

Our spirits witness, from one eternity to another, that there must be an adequate cause for the grand yet awful phenomena of creation - that creation, in a word, is but the effect of a mighty cause. What matters it how in any age or any form of speech we name the first Great Cause? Let the heart’s utterances testify of God, and they still will say, “Our Father!” From the hour when we wake to the consciousness of life, from the age when we feel that we have eaten of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, and our intellect is sufficiently developed to enable us to comprehend right and wrong, and the power of a law hindering and binding us about, - even when we realise a feeling of responsibility within, extending from our earthly life into the dim and untried mystery of the hereafter, - by the voice of conscience, - by all that we have ever known or felt as man, our reason has determined that there **MUST BE A GOD**; and we as His creatures are bound to Him in spiritual ties that express themselves in the necessity of prayer, and praise, and worship. And with this ceaseless revelation of man’s own consciousness, recognising himself and therefore his Creator, crying, “I am, O God, and therefore Thou must be,” - from this point man feels that whatsoever of earthly toil and labour his energetic nature and intellectual being propels him to do, is performed in obedience to the viewless power he worships as God. Hence, in the earliest periods of man’s existence he was a worshipper, a religious being; and in his earliest child-like state of natural intuition nearer in aspiration and inspiration to a spiritual life than now. The multitude of objects that now distract his thoughts, and engross his intellectual nature, existed not for him then. On the contrary, all was to him a vast and unknown realm; a world which, to his ignorance, was veiled in profoundest mystery. The earth whereon he trod slowly revealed to him its nature; but ever as he searched through the unfolding law of cause

and effect, spring-time and harvest, growth and decay, resolved themselves from miracle into the domain of natural law, mystery receded, and science echoed the eternal cry of man's searching mind in the ages, "Light, more light!" And ever as light came with search, a broader field of exploration opened upon his view, whose dim horizon, mystery, became plain knowledge. And thus throughout the boundless realms of nature, mystery has receded before the light of science, and science is itself God's revelation of His laws through man. Man queried wherefore winter chilled the earth, and why the sunbeams fell with such diminished force on starving nature at certain seasons of the year? Then he must speculate why it returned to light again the earth with renewed life and vigour in the spring, and in such glorious majesty culminated to full splendour in midsummer? He asked these mysteries of nature, and no sooner would his inquisitive intellect search into the causes of change, than behold! The Light-bringer, Inspiration, speaks to his intellect through the sciences of astronomy, physics, and natural history. He turns the open page of God's Gospel in the earth, and earth, air, sunlight, darkness, pain, and death, become his teachers, until the gathered experience of succeeding ages writes answers full in science. Age after age has each one added its monumental stone to the great cairn of Revelation until it has mounted to the skies, and rears a platform on which man standing, gauges the heavens, measures the heights of air, sounds the ocean's depths, explores and understands his earth, and beholds what was once to him the mystery of God, His most glorious page of open Revelation!

Once that viewless mass of undiscovered matter which surrounds earth, the air - which is in fact composed of the elements of matter, held in solution - was to man, mere empty space, and the upheaval of mighty worlds in its thin and unsubstantial ether, was of mysteries to man the most inscrutable; and yet by search the composition of the invisible worlds of life on every side are being revealed; from thence man has drawn his knowledge of how earth's, planets, suns, and systems move, and have their being. The ages have yielded up one ceaseless revelation through chemistry, of the mystery (for such it was to ignorance) of the workmanship of the Creator in compounding these earths, and suns, and systems. Their nature, movements, their very weight and density, are mystery no more. The creature has studied at the feet of the Creator, until all mysteries find their solution in eternal law, and prove that naught but ignorance is the horizon to the last of the revelations, that shall disclose to man the full sum and perfection of himself, his God, his cause and ultimate, - Spirit, "the Alpha and Omega" of creation.

Geology has declared to him step by step, in its descent to the very lowest chambers of the earth, its chemistry and wondrous construction. Science has pierced even into the central place of the fire king, and carried mind through the dim old corridors of time, until mystery has receded in the light of the living realities of the present hour; thus man, having disentombed the secrets of the past, beholds the Creator working in His works, and piercing the infinite space behind him, realises even what to the ancients was the mystery of creation. To the illuminated eye of science, there is no mystery in the starry path of the heavens. Man has trod with his Maker the milky way; and where stars and suns are the dust of this eternal road, the footprints of science have dissipated for man the mystery of starry worlds and their paths in infinity. The microscope and telescope alike have proved to him what vast revelations shall yet be his, when intellect and brain are sufficiently powerful to grasp yet wider vistas of creative wisdom than science has yet disclosed.

And so - through pain and death, growth, decay, and all the incidents and accidents of human life - man has learned to read, through the ever-opening pages of science, the once mysterious hieroglyphs of God's Gospel, till naught has been concealed from him that his finite being could bear. Step by step he has followed the creative hand, until at last it finishes its work sublime, within man's sovereign mind: and only there does revelation pause; for there only the soul is baffled by the impossibility of stepping behind itself, and comprehending the mystery of spirit. Where, then, are "the mysteries that," man declares, "belong to God?" There are none but in relation, and none there but such as man has invented.

Return once more to the primal ages, and trace God's dealings with his creatures in the revealments of religion. We know that in the earliest days of man's existence, when the knowledge of a vast though unknown power possessed the human mind, man could only realise that power as imaged in himself, or revealed in the phenomena of nature. All men have made a God in their own image. In every age, in every clime, that has been the mode of representing the power whom men have worshipped as the Creator. Something of a Grand Man has been always the human conception of God. Hence we find the ancients represented their God as pleased or offended, hasty, wrathful, repenting, or partial, and propitiated by sacrifices and homage; and therefore it was, that ancient worshippers offered such sacrifices as would be acceptable unto their princes, nobles, or men of power amongst them. They deemed of God as one of these; loving and hating, judging and changing like themselves, but always selecting as the object of His peculiar care, the theological system, and the special nation to which the worshipper belong. They deemed of Him as manifesting displeasure through the elemental strife of storm and tempest; bestowing rewards of wealth, success, and temporal advancement, in return for acts of worship and propitiatory sacrifices. We need not remind the scholar how these systems at last grew into theologies, and became established forms of worship, until, when venerable by age and custom, such forms were labelled "Sacred." But in a working world, it became necessary that those who speculated on these subjects, and devoted time and talents to their exposition, should be exempt from the ordinary routine of life's hard daily duties, and in short be set apart and especially devoted to interpret to the uninstructed people the mysterious and awful themes of religious belief and worship.

Thus the earliest forms of theology that have obtained on earth, were those that man himself has instituted. In the ancient hermitages of Hindostan dwelt seers and wise men; those who passed their lives in silent contemplation of the ways, the purposes, and possible relations with His creature - man, of the awful, the unknown God. Retired from the hum of cities to the solemn depth of sacred groves, dwelling in some lonely wilderness, or the remote recesses of some mountain cave, alone with God and Nature, listening only to the voice of the tempest, or the booming of the ocean; the thunder of the cataract, or the sighing of the summer breeze; the fervid imagination of the Hindoo solitaries might well interpret the voices of Nature into the mystic tones of Divine revealments, and in time persuade themselves that the secret purposes of the unknown powers who ruled in these dim solitudes was conveyed to them through the thousand-toned harmonies of nature.

Living ascetic lives, and devoting themselves wholly to acts of bodily purification and spiritual contemplation, they inevitably promoted whatever of *rapport* can exist

between the realms of the visible and invisible worlds; hence their receptive minds became an open page of inspiration, and their physical forms the recipients of all possible variety of spiritual gifts; so that when visited by the inhabitants of the distant city, attracted to their hermitages by the mysterious awe with which their devoted lives invested them, they were often gifted with the power to heal the sick, reveal the past and future, counsel the ignorant, and astound the wise. To us, upon whom the science of mind is already beginning to dawn, the possession of such powers as these is no marvel, but results, as we can well believe, from the intimate relations which human nature sustains to the realm of Spirit, the gifts of which Nature most freely yields to those who faithfully search into her grand laboratory, and live obedient to her laws. Let the soul ask, and nature answers us with those supernal gifts that prove a source of abundant spiritual supply for all our soul's spiritual needs. If, like the sage of old, we so live as to subordinate matter to spirit, we all may drink at the full cup of the spiritual life that is around us.

In process of time the fame of these ancient sages, and (to the uninstructed of their age) the report of their miraculous powers, grew into such repute that their hermitages became the centres of a new and imposing form of worship. Multitudes flocked thither to sit at the feet of these ancient men, as scholars, and hence were formed the first rudiments of public systems of religious teaching, and the basis of what subsequently became the famous order of Priesthood. From this point, too, may we date the commencement of a system of theology. The revelations of these ancient men, conveyed oft-times in language too rapt and spiritualised for the comprehension of those who sought them, impressed their ignorant and awe-struck listeners with the belief that they spoke the language of the gods and gave forth the edicts of the unknown beings whom they served. As generation after generation passed away, the persons of this ancient priesthood disappeared, but the office still remained. At first that office was filled by those only whose gifts qualified them for it; but after a while and when it was found that the inhabitants of the cities brought rich gifts, costly offerings, and sacrifices to the gods, and that the human depositories of these treasures were necessarily these self-made priests, the office of mediator between the votaries and the gods began to partake of a somewhat commercial, and finally, of a highly mundane character. The office of the dispenser of spiritual gifts was combined with that of the recipient of human gifts, and so at last it became sufficiently profitable to induce the said hermits to desire to transmit its advantages to their posterity. As they claimed to be sacred in their own persons, so of course must a sacred unction be supposed to descend to their children; and so in due process of time the office of priest became hereditary, and resolved itself into the stringent law of a *sacred caste*. As the influence of this powerful priesthood gradually spread through various other lands, and became a model for similar orders in other countries of the East, with all allowance for the varieties of customs and habits which obtain in different places and periods, the Hindoo solitaries and their successors and descendants may still be regarded as the founders of the once splendid and powerful hierarchy of the Oriental priesthood.

True, they commenced in the uplifting of the soul to its Author, and sprang into form from the inevitable demand which the spirit makes to know, commune with, and reduce the comprehension of the Great Spirit to a system of theology. I believe that spirituality is a sixth sense, and that it comprehends all the rest. I deem other senses are but the various avenues by which the sixth is instructed, and by which the outward

forms of matter inform the spirit, which at last gathers up all the revelations of mere sensuous perception in the one grand realisation of its own spiritual nature and its alliance with the Great Spirit. Hence I believe that to the original intuitions of the soul religion is inevitable - religion is a part of self-consciousness, and expresses itself in the invariable forms of prayer, praise, faith, appeal, and worship. Minds there are that have worshipped atoms, and bowed down to dust. Great intellects that, by continued speculation and a keen realisation of the wonderful action of the Great Spirit through matter, have become so enamoured with the effects that they have forgotten the cause. Minds such as these exist, but they are only the abnormal growths upon the normal order of creation. Hence I do not speak of the first dawning of religion in the heart as a direct and special revelation of God to man; nor as yet as the invention of sage or priest. It is no discovery of men, nor result of theology. Theology founds upon natural religion; - religion grows not from theology. The first inquiry of the worshipping man was, to whom and after what fashion it should address the prayer with which the heart was full; and the first and most obvious forms of the large, and the great, and the powerful, in the realm of visible nature, attracted necessarily the sensuous perception of the ancient worshipper, and to this mind what was so obviously the direct source of good, what was so large, so vast, or so powerful as the wonderful luminaries of the sky? They recognised that from the sun came the invigorating warmth of summer, and the genial growth of spring, and in the decadence of its light, and heat, and power, earth languished in the cold and famine of winter. Men beheld the grand luminary in its march through the seasons, always attended by certain groups of stars which they called constellations, and to which they gave names in correspondence with their fancied configurations or influence; and, as these appeared or disappeared, so did they assume that they were subordinate powers, representatives of an invisible spiritual hierarchy of beings that inhabited them; and it is from this point, and the distribution of the heavenly bodies into groups and signs, and their association with certain supposed influences which in connection with the sun they were presumed to exercise on earth, and the destiny of its inhabitants that the earliest attempts of men to arrange religion into a system of theology sprang.

This theme I shall not now follow farther. Enough to note that men imagined they recognised, in the luminous scriptures of the firmament, the subordination of moon and stars to the mighty central sun, a picture of the invisible powers that rules the world through. The visible order of creation first possessed their own mind of the truth of this idea, and priests imparted it, in the ordinary modes of religious instruction, to the people. To the ignorant, who were thus, through their sensuous perception, instructed to adore the invisible and unknown Author of Creation through the mysterious phenomena of nature, such an obvious form of worship was willingly accepted; and the system of theology thus founded was believed by the people, through the teachings of their priesthood, to be the direct revelation of God and his ways. Thus, sun, moon, and stars were worshipped as the visible symbols of the powers of the universe or the creative hands that brought man into existence, and sustained and pervaded the earth; and this belief originated the peculiar system called fire-worship, which, in one form or other, underlies all the old systems of theology that existed in the early ages of mankind, - in fact in all the Oriental portions of the earth, we have some modification of this system of primeval theology. Let it not be supposed, however, that the ancients absolutely worshipped the visible form alone. To the deeply reflective mind of the Hindoo sage, a *Spiritual* cause alone seemed adequate to produce the wonder of creation; and the real mystery of the ancient

priesthood consisted in the recognition of a spiritual and invisible presence, animating the sensuous and visible symbol.

In the most spiritual part of the Vedas, the Zenda-vesta, and the Pouranas, ay, even in the strange and materialistic mythology of Greece and Rome, we have the obvious recognition of an all-pervasive, spiritual cause, permeating external nature.

In every religion we find this spiritual idea redeeming the grossness of sensuous forms of worship. But I repeat this was the great mystery acknowledged alone by the priesthood, and by them studiously hidden from the people; and the better to veil their belief from the vulgar mind, they enclosed it within the net-work of priestly craft, and enrap it in the solemn shroud of "sacred mystery;" and thus the spiritual idea, or true foundation of religion, was veiled in mystery, while the sensuous outward shell was dealt out by the priests at will to the credulous ignorant multitude. Did time serve, we might this night lift up the veil of Isis, and place before you a picture of the famous mysteries of Osiris and Eleusis; of the solemn rites of mystery in Tyre and Sidon; and, above all, that famous and long-preserved form of mystification which originated in the days of which we speak, and still casts its shadow on the mind of man, in the form of that pretentious mystery which asserts that the earth was founded upon a system of geometry, that the entire air was full of music, that all the grand and magnificent revelations of the Master-Workman in matter, were square, and plumb, and true, fashioned with mathematical precision and geometrical skill. And so as the discovery of these facts were deemed profound truths in nature, they must necessarily be shrouded in the veil of mystery. The world, according to these mystics, is a grand lodge, with a starry canopy and tessellated floor, a stairway leading to graduated heights, with an arched portal and columns of strength and beauty on either side. It was, and is deemed, we suppose a knowledge too high for vulgar minds to understand how, step by step, the soul ascends up the mystic stairways of knowledge, through the various degrees of inner life, until the tyro is led through the secrets of creation, and the invisible meaning of nature's visible signs are interpreted to him, and shewn all at last to be merged in the master word of "GOD."

But we know that these ideas, sublimated as they may have appeared to the priests, were, if revealed to the people, a little too comprehensible for the best interests of priestcraft. Had the real meaning of ancient theology been thus unveiled to the people, some amongst them, at least, would have been sure to understand them and become as wise as the priests themselves. No more sacrifices would then have been offered through priestly mediation; no more rites; no more hereditary priesthood, for the people would then have become their own priests. The power of the priesthood was awe and fear; the maintenance of that power was mystery; but do not let us confound the ministry of an hereditary priesthood, or one simply instructed in the ceremonials of the order, with the spiritually-gifted powers which God and nature bestow on man. History proves that though the office of the priests was hereditary, that of the PROPHET *is not*. The priest is of man - the prophet of God; and the two offices were seldom, if ever, combined. God's priesthood has been composed of men like Moses and Elias, Daniel, John, and others of the Disciples, on whom the anointing oil of spiritual gifts was poured by the hand of God, their only High Priest. For the priests of the order of Melchisedee, there exists no need of initiation into those rites that darken knowledge and hide counsel from the people. They are endowed with the

baptism of the Holy Spirit, and go forth to rend the veil of mystery, not to hide their light behind it.

But the whole of this mighty system of ancient mystery, that spread like a pall over the entire East, and wove itself around the minds of the people, sinking them in superstitious error and sensuous darkness, was destroyed by the pure and truthful revelations of the Founder of Christianity; and hence it is that He stands forth to the view of enlightened ages as “the living Word of God made flesh,” the Revelation of light and truth, and the Destroyer of all those corrupt and baneful systems of mystery that darken out the truth of God’s spiritual nature, the universality of His revelations to man, and the soul’s alliance and similarity of nature to its Spiritual Author.

Humanity, enamoured of His mission, still too ignorantly worships the mere name of Christ, rather than the principles He taught, or the glorious deliverance that His mission brought to the human soul; for in Him was found the light that relieved humanity from the abominations of religious mystery, and illuminated the darkness that priestcraft had woven around the mind of man. And thus we may trace through all time, by the aid of priestly craft, the work of mystery.

But there are priests of science and politics as well as of religion - men in all situations and all times that assume the priestly office to their fellow-men, and keep back the little knowledge they possess in the shroud of mystery, that themselves alone may monopolize its power, and dole it out in minimum proportions to mankind. Age after age some great disruptive power arises to break the chains of mystery, and in such epochs timid souls are often found wavering in the balance between the old and new. I do believe that such a disruptive era is upon us now; I do believe that, in the language of one of earth’s greatest politicians, “This is the time to try men’s souls.” To me the signs of the times are pregnant with the prophecy of a day at hand that will sorely try your souls, and try your faith. And yet, whatever may befall, if you are (in your Christian profession) in the truth, your path is clear before you. If you hear His voice, and recognise His teaching who founded your religion, he has left with you the unquestioning authority for the path which you should tread, and has sent you forth all armed to meet whatever trials come.

Oh, permit me then, once more, in view of what I deem to be the coming day of strife, to remind you how by the pure and simple edicts of natural religion your Master rent the veil of mystery in twain. Amongst a people who were accustomed to deem of God as “the awful Jehovah,” the terrible, the fearful - speaking to man only through the voice of storm and thunder; to a people seeking Him either in the splendour of earthly temples, searching for Him only at the foot of the burning mount or in the enactment of scenes of awe and miracle; to a people thus accustomed to deem of God, Christ spoke of the Deity by the tender and familiar name of “Father.” To a people who enacted laws for every hour of life; whose daily walks and practices - whose very garments and ablutions were all regulated by sternest law - this unanointed Priest came, fulfilling all law in the single word of “Love.” He came, too, infracting their daily laws; entering into their synagogues and reading from their scripture with unlicensed freedom. To a people who were accustomed to conceive that eternal salvation depended on the observance of mere external forms, this man came amongst them a “Sabbath-breaker” and despiser of many of their honoured usages.

To those who were looking for a Messiah to come in clouds of power and splendour, amidst great thunderings and lightnings, and quaking of earth, and rending of rocks, and temples, He came, with the voice of singing shepherds - as the Child of the lowly manger; and the houseless wanderer, who had not where to lay His head. To a people that looked for a King of Glory, for a mighty and triumphant Ruler, that should dethrone all monarchs of earth, and reign for ever, He came with a following only of a few poor, humble fishermen, a lineage of poverty, and a ruler over none but Himself. To a people who scarcely knew of the dread hereafter, or only deemed of it as of some great golden heaven, or awful hell of torture, He came telling them of a heaven within the human heart, and as types of the inheritors of the kingdom He ruled over, He pointed to little children, poor outcast Magdalenes, and hated publicans and sinners. To those who were ever accustomed to deem of the law of Moses as of the only revelation of the Divine will, he presented them with all law comprehended in two little verses only; to those who deemed that God respected alone the Jews, He came bidding them go out and proclaim His gospel to all mankind; and while they insisted that the offices of religion consisted alone in priestly rites, and temple services, He pointed to the poor Samaritan, the hated of all sects among the Jews, as the type of the only true religion - the religion of human love, and Divine charity. Even to His disciples, when they would have required from all belief in Him as the only passport to heaven, He declared it was not those that cried, "Lord, Lord," "but those that did the will of the Father in heaven," who would be accepted of God.

In such teachings as these, where then is the mystery of religion? Rent was the veil, from the hour when the Man of Sorrows trod the earth, and made life practise worship, and every act a prayer.

I do not propose to pursue this theme further. Those who are historians may well do this by the light of the fires of persecution, and the track of the rivers of blood, that the attempt to build up once more the temple of mystery have produced. To enshrine mystery, men have hated one another in the name of religion. It is only to represent some solemn mystery in the name, or through the forms of religion, that the sword of religious persecution has been drawn, or that the spirit of fierce sectarianism has arrayed brother against brother. The day has come at last, when in the shaking of the dry bones of science, morals, politics, and social life, - when in the great inquisition of causes, old institutions and solemn mysteries are standing at the tribunal of causes. Busy, angular, one-idea'd reformers are abroad, and thinkers are let loose amongst men; reason is knocking at the door of human judgment, and demanding to be heard in the momentous trial of mystery against eternal revelation.

The spirit of investigation is abroad, and in aid of men's searching inquisition into the infinite realm of causation, behold, the strange illumination of a spiritual science dawning in our midst. As yet men hardly know by what name to welcome the uninvited guest; Sectarianism shrinks from naming it "religion," its spiritual character rebels against the materialism of science alone. The world denies it as a truth - its facts proclaim it no falsehood; and, thus, this mysterious and nameless thing has come like a thief in the night; scarce known from whence or how. It came in the year when the governments of Europe were shaken, and the dry bones of politics agitated to their very centre. It came when kings and kaisers were questioned of their power and right to rule, and the whole framework of European society was moved by a common but irresistible spirit of change and disruption; for it was in the year 1848 that the "Spirit-

knockers” first sounded their telegraphic message in the human ear; and amidst the universal spirit of agitation that shook the earth, it was then that those fires of magnetism by spirit-hand were lighted, whose illumination our own eyes have witnessed. Throughout this century the slow and silent, but inevitable revolution of human thoughts, has been onward, tending in the direction of the various kindred sciences that bear on Spiritualism. The mind has shaken itself free from the dominion of old opinions, and is become an authority unto itself in the name of awakened reason; and it has been in such a crisis in the history of psychology that the bright white banner of Spiritualism has been unfurled, calling upon every true thinker of the race, and every soul that believes in its own individual responsibility, to rally round its standard. And yet, perhaps, in the history of moral persecution and intellectual tortures, modern Spiritualism can present an almost unprecedented record. In the discovery of mesmerism, psychology, and clairvoyance - in all the reforms effected in the healing art, or the progress of science in new inventions or principles - a perpetual warfare against the new has been sustained by the conservatism which is ever battling against innovation; but because the revelations of Spiritualism, by disclosing the master-key of creation, deals with the hitherto undiscovered science of mind, and includes light, progress, and reform in every other department of being, - so has the outcry of that conservatism (whose strongholds are ignorance and whose garrisons are the repellant legions of mystery), been raised with the loudest and most universal wail that has ever yet sounded against the advance of light and knowledge.

By the action of magnetism and the revelations of the clairvoyant and healing mediums, the craft of the mediciner is threatened, and the mystery of disease is in danger of being superseded by the science of health. Spirit witnesses reverse the proverb that “dead men tell no tales,” and the mystery of the law is in danger of being converted into the simple processes of justice. Psychometry is a spirit police, discovering hidden crimes and prating of man’s whereabouts with its piercing and unwelcome revelations of secret life and character. The mysteries of scholasticism are outrivalled by the gifts of the spirit to the ignorant and unlearned. The phantom past and the dim untried future have both rolled back their curtain of mystery to the eye of the spirit; but, above all, the spiritual revelation is the new and universal priesthood of humanity, and by solving all the mysteries hitherto so carefully veiled from the knowledge or even comprehension of the vulgar, by adding to faith the assurances of knowledge, and superseding for the mediations of man the responsibility of the individual; by revealing all mysteries, whether of life, death, immortality, or even the awful and hitherto inscrutable mystery of God the Great Spirit; - modern Spiritualism, by setting the seal of light and complete revelation upon the edicts of religion, has challenged the invincible animosity of every religionist whose faith or doctrine is the ally of mystery. It is as the foe of all mystery or craft monopoly, that Spiritualism has been so loudly and universally assailed. If the image-makers of Ephesus raised their cry against the new teaching of Christianity eighteen centuries ago, for fear only of their single craft of image-making, need we marvel that all classes of craftsmen, who profit by the ignorance of the people, and grow rich and powerful by keeping their craft a mystery from the masses, now join in the universal shout of “Great is Diana of the Ephesians!” for I maintain it is to earth’s mystics only, to those whose craft consists of mystery, whether in science, politics, morals, or religion, that we owe the shafts of hate and scorn, persecution and ribald sneer, that now are launched so freely against Spiritualism.

Is there any one of you that has seen the fading form of father, mother, companion, or child pass from your side into the unrelenting grasp of death? Have you watched these beloved ones day by day grow weaker and fainter, the eye's lustre fade, the waxen impress of inevitable decay steal over the pale white cheek and faded brow? Physicians' skill, love, wealth, all - all fail then, and nothing can keep back the parting soul from the great mystery of the unknown hand, which seems to be tugging at the silver cords of life with the mighty power that mortal hand would vainly strive to restrain; and when the last dread hour of parting came at length, and you have laid your dead away, and felt that a star was gone out from heaven, and that once familiar voices were grown strange to you; and the streets were cold, and the house was empty, and something was missing that had changed the whole tone and current of your life, what would you have given if you could then have been told that the dead was by your side, a glorious transformed angel? Widow! if you could have known that your strong companion still was there, and that the world's cold shafts that they hurled at you were heard and noted; that there was a power guarding you stronger even than the arm of flesh - Country, that hast mourned thy patriots! couldst thou have known that, not removed from earth, but in the brighter counsels of the better land they still laboured for earth, and poured their glorious influence upon the land they loved, repeating themselves a thousandfold in their tides of spirit inspiration - Fathers! mothers! friends! Would you not have hailed such a mighty revelation, even as the rolling back the stone from the gates of death, and the soul's eternal triumph over the dreadful grave?

And yet, look abroad, and listen to the welcome earth has given to the spirits; look at the representation of public opinion in your daily papers, and see what greeting these risen souls have found, whose power and strength and glorious influence is being poured on the scorners' heads in angelic guardian ministry. To the messengers who bring the glad tidings, they cry, "Disturb not the ashes of the dead. Back with thy shades to the sepulchre! back into the darkness of the tomb! Tell us not of the soul, except as sleeping in the dim repose of the endless night, whose awakening is the trump of judgment! What care I to hear of the spirit I once so fondly loved! Father, mother, brother, sister, child! Dead they are all: trouble me not with them! How dare man seek to penetrate the darkness of the tomb? Does not the Church forbid, and declare that life and death are the mysteries that belong to God? I answer, "There are no mysteries with God!" No, not even the mystery of death; for God Himself has promised "There shall be no more death," and Spiritualism is the fulfilment of that glorious truth. But even yet, beneath that awful spell of mystery, men senselessly fear the very beings whom they once best loved; and from those whom a few short days ago they would have clasped with tenderest passion to their hearts, they now shrink back with dreadful fear and loathing.

The necessity for preserving the crafts of mystery and maintaining power over the human mind through its awful shroud, has thus arrayed a vast moral warfare against modern Spiritualism. Modern Spiritualism! do we call it? It is but another phase of the eternal revelation of Him who from the beginning of this earth's existence as a planet cried, "Let there be light." And steadily and inevitably nature has obeyed the charge, and every age has been fraught with growing light. Who, then, denies us light, but human mystics? There is not a realm in the varied departments of nature but it has yielded to our search for light and revelation; there is not a mystery hidden in the bosom of the Father but it has given up its secret to man's inquisition. Tell us, is there

aught that the Father keeps back from the child? as of the silent stars. We have read their record in the vast eternity from whence they come, and mystery hides that shining page no more; we have torn the clasps asunder, and read the heavens as a book. Ask for the earth. Its secrets are our own. No other boundary has the Creator set, but our ignorance, to the full disclosure of all the wonders of its many-hued creation. Where we have not searched, the mysteries of God incite us to investigation; and His unknown is but a fresh demand upon our inquisition, which day by day is answering us with knowledge.

We speak idly of “the great mystery of our own being.” Are we not compelled to comprehend by the phenomena of magnetism, mesmerism, clairvoyance, and psychometry, what the mystery is that the moderns vaguely call the “life principle” and the ancients sought in vain in the philosopher’s stone, and the *elixir vitae*? And such knowledge as this gradually dawns upon us, and that almost without our seeking it. The eternal stream of revelation is ever flowing onwards, and the human mind is irresistibly borne on its current. Where then is the man that dares stand up between the creature and the Creator, and darken out God’s counsel? None such there are, save those who believe that their interest consists in mystery. The day is at hand, when “the war in heaven,” again will be enacted. The dragon of mystery again finds himself arrayed against Michael, the light-bringer, in this modern revelation.

Those who can read aright the perturbed and phenomenal signs of the times perceive the hour is near at hand when your faith will be sorely tried; and in view of this we ask you to search into your own lives, and by the experiences of your reason, to determine your answer. Question whether there is aught of mystery in the ways of God; whether there is evidence of purpose in the great Revelator of the universe, to place one single boundary between Himself and you in your search into His ways and purposes. Follow your inquisition into ALL your systems; into your churches, faith, and doctrines, formulas and creeds. And if you fear to do this, lest the sacred mysteries of Christianity be invaded by the searching scrutiny of reason, go back in spirit with the Master to Jerusalem; tread with Him the hill-top and the plain; follow Him with His disciples through their pure and sinless lives, and you will find the path of religion was simple daily practice. Go to the temples of great nature and worship with them the Father whom we feel although we see Him not, save in His creature’s image. If you still must trust in any name but God’s, why, trust if you will in Christ. You never can place your faith in any name, or word, or form of revelation more bright, more true, more pure, or more divine, than the Spirit that is so named; but only trust in Him for the truths that He revealed, and because He taught the truth; because His teaching is the key that unlocks the truths of all religions; because in Him there is no mystery; because in Him we perceive the great and mighty revelation of the Infinite One preparing us against the attempts of man to make a mystery of true religion. I have ventured thus to warn you, I repeat, from the deep prophetic feeling of this hour, that the time is now at hand to try your souls. If your faith be not based upon the Rock of Ages - Truth - the waters of affliction, the tempests of adversity, and the storms of human opinion, will surely sweep away your faith. Depart from this chamber, then, each one resolving to follow out a true self-inquisition. Search into every mystery; and be sure where there is mystery there is either ignorance in yourself or human wrongs to hide. There are secret societies abroad to-day. What are they? All secret societies were founded in the supposed necessity of keeping light from the people. They were assumed to be necessary for the perfection of human brotherhoods;

and in some sort, and in this respect at least, they have done their work. They have bound the brother's hand with a stronger grip of charity; united man to man, and fulfilled the duties of kindness and human fellowship. But their mission now is ended. If they have done all this, they have only proved in this day of revelation how truly they belong to the whole world, and should be secret societies no more. If they have done all this, the good that they have effected belongs to all humanity. The ancient myth, the idea, it may be the allegorical representation of truth which they attempted to enshrine in mystery, is now the understanding of the age. We know God dwells not in the sun nor stars nor moon, nor is He alone revealed in the order of the seasons, but He is everywhere and in all things.

No occasion now exists to enshrine in mystery the knowledge of a Spiritual God, and give to the people the crude husks and forms of external ceremonials only; and therefore the theories and supposed necessities upon which secret societies are founded, exist no more. It is not against these alone that I would plead, but against all forms of mystery that darken knowledge. Distrust them wherever you find them, and when they would repel you from clasping hands with the spirit, when they would tell you to beware lest you subvert religion, injure the Church, and wrong the secret "mysteries of godliness," tell them you mean to "stand fast in the liberty wherewith God hath made you free;" that in Him there is no mystery; and that if there were, the light-bringers have come this day through the hosts of modern Spiritualism to rend that veil of mystery, and again roll back the stone from the grave in disclosing the realisation of immortality. Tell them they come to bring us face to face with the consequences of our earthly lives, and produce at our spirit circle, before our very eyes, and in the revelations of our own firesides, the evidences, as well as the conditions, of the soul hereafter. The last shreds of this veil of mystery are destroyed, and in its place are the shining robes of the hosts of bright immortals! Why do men fear this Spiritual revelation, except it is because it comes to widen the church gates, and to let all humanity in? Unless it is because it erects a broad temple where every living creature with sense and reason and comprehension may worship God and know Him for Himself. It comes to brotherhoods to open the lodge gates and extend the grip of human charity to every creature upon whose brow is the stamp of manhood. Who, then, but the votaries of mystery need fear or scoff, or seek to drive back the light of modern Spiritualism? We, at least, however the world may fail to realise it, should turn to the great and wondrous revelation of the future which shone before the inspired eye of John in Patmos, and whilst we cry with him that mystery is "the mother of all the abominations of the earth" - the great Babylon in whose streets is found the blood of the saints, and enmity ever to the progress of truth and revelation - let us, like the brave Apostle, war against mystery with the broad, bright light of spiritual truth and knowledge which this age has even so abundantly poured out on all mankind. When mortals aid the bright immortals in this work, we, too, shall echo the angelic proclamations of old, that "Babylon is fallen, is fallen, is fallen!"

ADDRESS

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

DELIVERED AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON

February 26th, 1866

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WE propose this night to address you on a subject that you will ere long be called upon to consider as a portion of the spiritual philosophy, namely - THE METEMPSYCHOSIS, OR TRANSMIGRATION OF SOULS.

The subject may seem to be somewhat unconnected with the object of these meetings. We stand here prepared to present you with any other that you may be pleased to select; since, however, you have left the choice with your speaker, we propose to address you as Spiritualists, and to call this hour our own. It is not to sceptics or investigators merely that we shall appeal to-night. We would not stand here willingly to repeat, night after night, the alphabet of the spiritual science whose investigation is open for all, but rather call upon Spiritualists to remember what they have already learned, to consider the demands which the attainment of that knowledge imposes upon them, and that too ere the hour which is to try their faith shall be upon them. The present is the seed time, but the summer of our spiritual experience approaches, and the time is not far distant when the world will expect to see what harvest we are gathering in from the fields of this great spiritual science. Is it not well for us to pause and contemplate the ground in which we have laboured, that we may render in full our answer as to that which we have sowed? Enough of spiritual revelation concerning the state of the soul in the life hereafter has already been given to you, at the spirit circle, to enable you to appreciate the nature of one part of the harvest of knowledge which we have gathered up, and therefore it is that I propose to speak on the subject of the Metempsychosis. This question is one that has underlain religious systems almost from the beginning of historic ages to the present hour, and it is still a subject of speculation to some of the thinkers of the day, and occupies a place of some prominence even amongst the believers in modern Spiritualism; and yet, although it has been constantly interwoven into systems of various theologies, it is one of those human opinions that stands without the least foundation in the realm of received phenomenal facts.

The doctrine of the transmigration of souls is one of those beliefs that have grown out of human speculation only. It is a metaphysical attempt to solve one of those vexed

problems of the relation between spirit and matter, to which no age but the present has ever yet been able to offer a scientific and demonstrable solution. Still and notwithstanding the tangible facts of the spiritual science which we possess, as so many Spiritualists still cling to the vague and shadowy opinions of the doctrine alluded to, and as those opinions are casting the shadow of their own dim unreality over the still questioning minds of unresolved investigators, we consider a candid discussion of the subject will be appropriate to the demands of the hour.

Our first inquiry concerns our possession of any data in history for the origin of this belief, and we find we have little or none, except when we attempt to refer back to the most ancient form of theological teaching in Hindostan. From this we find the doctrine of the metempsychosis clearly taught, and that, too, in records written in the language of the Sanscrit, whose very origin is lost in the night of antiquity, but whose existence, even in an early period of the Hindoo dynasty, gives us the assurance that it must be one of the most ancient tongues in the world, from the fact that even in ante-historic periods it was already complete, full, and very rich in ideality and imagery. The people, therefore, who possessed this "perfect language" had many ideas to express; and it is in their tongue that we recognise the first clearly defined teaching of the belief in the transmigration of souls. The ancient Hindoo was by nature and habits disposed to metaphysical speculation. His southern temperament, indolent habits, and religion of caste, formed a combination of circumstances which induced in the Brahmin (the only caste who was permitted the privilege of exercising thought upon religious subjects) a train of speculations on the unsolved problems of creation which favoured the strange and peculiar doctrine.

Amongst the most perplexing of the questions which belong to man's origin and destiny arose the mystery of evil. Whence came it? If from the infinitely good, from Brahma the mighty, the Cause of Causes, the All-wise, All-powerful, Infinite, and Eternal, for what purpose? Was it a part of Himself? Could it be a representation of Him - the Supreme Good? The speculative theorists of Hindostan decided against the affirmation of this position, and determined that evil grew out of the association of the perfect and godlike spirit with matter, and they assumed that from matter sprang all the movements to crime and evil in the human soul. They taught that inherent virtue, and all tendencies to good, belonged to the spirit only, while the base passions and gross appetites, which deform the soul's nature, grew out of and belonged only to matter. From this point they next proceeded to reason upon the various modes in which spirit was related to matter. They perceived fragments of spiritual life, of thought and intelligence in the various animals, and assumed that all the representations of human passions were to be found in the animal kingdom; the ferocity of the tiger, the nobility of the lion, the blood-thirstiness of the hyena - in a word, all the fierce passions which degrade the soul were to be found represented in various of those lower creatures that in some sort they found to typify man, and so they supposed that they discovered in these representative natures the fact of a close alliance between man and the brutes, and also that each of these in their degree represented some of the lowest conditions of the human soul. But ere they could arrive at the conclusion of the metempsychosis, or the degradation of the human soul into the animal form, we must remember that, though the ancients had mastered some of the many problems of astronomy, and had even made much advance in this science, they had not our present knowledge either of the movements of bodies in space or of their composition. We know now some of the very constituent elements

which exist in the mystery of the mighty sun. By aid of the “solar spectrum” we are enabled to determine something of the composition of the atmosphere issuing from this vast body, and to realise that minerals of similar character to those on our own earth exist within it. We are enabled, also, by the present status of astronomical science, to decide upon the weight, density, distance, and motions of the planets, called, by the ancient Hindoos, “wandering stars.” The telescope has revealed to us the immensity of space filled with worlds, and science has disclosed so much of their characteristics, and even of their composition, nature, and similarity to our own earth, that we know that the entire of what man calls space is but an illimitable realm filled with life and being analogous to our own.

The ancients knew not this, and but few of their philosophic minds dared venture on so grand a speculation. Narrowed, therefore, in their conception of creation to the existence of this little world of man’s alone, they deemed that this earth was all of life and material existence that the Creator had appointed for man’s probation. On this planet only, they supposed the sublime image of Deity appeared in its full perfection, and that earth was the scene of all the various grades in which God permitted man to pass through the probationary stages of life incarnate in matter.

We have no such excuse to-day for the petty egotism, or cold Materialism, that would limit the pilgrimage of the soul, to this little dew-drop in space - the earth. Science reveals to us millions of worlds of matter; Spiritualism reveals its corresponding status of spiritual probationary spheres. The ancients limiting their views of material existence of this earth alone, supposed that all human experiences must be here performed: to them, all the countless bodies in space, were either angelic thrones of the subordinate spirits of the universe, the glittering lamps of the Paradises of their gods, or the eyes of Brahma shining through the immensity of space. And so they deemed that earth must be the sole scene of the soul’s probation, and that upon this earth were to be performed all those various rudimental conditions by which the spirit was to be purified for its ascent into the Paradises of eternity. Upon these foundations they built up the belief in the transmigration of souls. From the kingdom of Hindostan, we find the radiating lines of intelligence stretch away to Egypt, Syria, Assyria, Arabia, and the various dynasties of the East; through each one modified the doctrine according to the specialities of the nation by whom it was received, the central idea remained, and in all the lines of migrating thought that flooded the nations of the East with tributary streams, whose source was to be found in Hindoo theology, the one stationary belief of the metempsychosis is ever found. Another idea of ancient metaphysicians was the demand for universal justice for the soul of man, and this they thought they perceived in its transmigration through various material states. They beheld the inequalities of different conditions; above all, the brand of injustice, which themselves had imprinted by the trick of priestcraft upon their fellow creatures, in the cruel laws of caste. They realised as we do, that human life is a harp, upon whose many strings fashioned of human heart-fibres, and struck by the master hand of God, every tone, from the lowest bass to the highest treble, should be sounded. They felt the inevitable fact of inequality and variety in every member of the human family; but in place of aiming to arrange these varieties into order, by instituting high ranks for mind, granting patents of royalty for intellect and nobility for soul, they determined that the law of hereditary caste should form the rule of arbitrary distinction on earth; and in part as a sterling article of belief amongst them on the ground of their natural philosophy, and in part by way of atonement to the victims of injustice whom they

branded with the law of caste, they interwove into their theology a system which promised that justice to man hereafter which themselves denied to him here, and declared that all chances of progress of ultimate perfection which the soul had the right to demand of Creative Justice, was to be found in its transmigratory states.

And it is ever so; where man himself is the author of his theology, he seems compelled to fashion his system, with a view of rendering that justice to his fellow-man which his civil laws deny him else. Human and divine laws are commonly supposed to correspond; doubtless they do in one respect, at least, for divine laws are the substance of justice - human, alas! but too generally only the shadow; and so in this case, the metempsychosis was a shadowy attempt on the part of priests to render that justice that god has allowed to all in the laws of natural life. Repeated, as I have said, in the various theologies of most ancient nations, the metempsychosis struck its deepest roots into the philosophies of Greece and Rome. We find, that amongst the most prominent of its advocates in these countries is the honoured name of Pythagoras. By some it has been believed even that the "Pythagorean doctrine," and the transmigration of souls, were such synonymous terms, that is promulgation has been ignorantly attributed to the great Samian sage; but Pythagoras was but the culminating point of his age. All great men are the torch-bearers of the century, the mirrors in which are reflected the various intellects of the time. So of Pythagoras; he the concentration of the grandest thoughts of his period, taught and realised the doctrine of the transmigration of souls, not only as the idea of the age, but also because his strict sense of justice and his tender humanity demanded compensation for the suffering and unequal conditions of the degraded classes of his race - unhappy ones, for whom there seemed in those dark ages no other compensation in a degraded destiny than the chances of progress hereafter through the soul's transmigrations.

We now quit the mythical ages, and arrive at a period when the transmigration of souls assumes a yet darker and even more superstitious form; we mean, when in the age of Christendom, it appears in the shape of a physical resurrection of the body, for this is nothing but a transmigration of the soul, and that without the beauty and justice which the ancients taught, in the belief that transmigrations were progressive, and were permitted for the purpose of reform and improvement. But the resurrection of the physical body is merely a degradation of the soul, by assuming that after having enjoyed a spiritual freedom from matter, it is compelled to return to it again, and re-assume all the inevitable tendencies to crime and material attractions which matter, as such, must ever impose upon the spirit associated with it. So that either we must believe that the spirit slumbers in an unconsciousness, which prolonged through ages becomes tantamount to annihilation; or else living and acting as consciousness and intelligence must, the spirit which has escaped from the painful trials and material experiences which life upon earth necessarily entails upon it, after passing through countless ages in eternity, and experiencing the inconceivable changes of those vast periods which, if progressive, must carry the spirit onward and upward through spheres of ever-widening and glorious existence must, after all, return to this dull, cold life of matter, quit heaven, or migrate from Paradise, and from the bright and glorious psyche, a purified and spiritual essence, become once more the dark and mournful grub incarnate in the prison-house of matter.

And mark, here is the point that I would have you note. Whence comes this gloomy and fantastic doctrine? whence this opinion so fatal to the truth and justice of that divine teaching which you call Christianity? - a teaching so full of spiritual doctrine and replete with assurances of the soul's immediate entrance through the gates of death to a spiritual existence, where the experiences of life practised in compensative and retributive states are still continued, that I repeat, amongst the followers of Him who declared, even on the very threshold of the land of souls, that spirit should meet with spirit in Paradise! and hence that spirit slumbered not, nor lost its consciousness in death. Most strange it is, that this impossible doctrine of the return of the soul to a physical resurrected body should obtain amongst those who avow themselves worshippers of Christ and followers of Paul, who so graphically describes the shedding of the natural body and the putting on of the spiritual as the result of the decay of the natural form of earth.

When we reflect upon the full and elaborate descriptions which the noble Apostle Paul gives of the spiritual body, and its triumph over the natural, we can only account for the perversity which would acknowledge his authority and yet deny his teaching, by remembering the tendency of mankind to worship mere personalities and forget principles - to be contented with crying the name, and beneath its sanction inaugurate the vague theories of long-cherished superstitions and antiquated and therefore *sacred* errors. And thus mankind has contented itself with acknowledging the name and worshipping the personality of its masters and apostles; and whilst battling over mere phrases and dogmatising about words, designed only for the time and enunciated merely for the age and personages to whom they were spoken, they have forgotten or neglected the sublime principles taught in those words, and substituted for them the teachings and traditions of men. The teachings of Christ as principles were given for eternity. His doctrine was the gathering up of the good and true of all other ages. "The Christian religion," says Eusebius, "was nothing new nor strange." The doctrine of love and the belief that the sword of kindness ever conquers evil, the realisation that to do good is to build up the kingdom of heaven within us, - all this was no *new* teaching of the age of Christendom; it is and ever was the realisation of the "Word made flesh" which God has incarnated in every age in all that is good and true, and pure and beautiful.

But we have forgotten all this, and the great query of what became of *the body* of Jesus, the desire to determine that of which no absolute record exists, has superseded with thousands the Sermon on the mount, and for the sake of a mooted point in history, even with the fact that in the evangelical records of the disposal of the body of Jesus there is marked discrepancy, - even with the fact that traditions existed at the time that "the body was stolen," - age after age we have kept piling up volume upon volume and filling libraries with disquisitions, in attempts to settle the question of the physical resurrection of that very flesh and blood which Christ while inhabiting it, declared could not inherit the kingdom of heaven. And so I repeat, in the resurrection of the physical body we have reinaugurated the old material doctrine of the transmigration of souls and their degradation from a spiritual to an animal life; but I say that the teaching of the possible return of the risen, ascended, purified and progressed spirit to the dust which it has spurned, is even a worse version of the transmigration of souls than was ever rendered by Buddha or Pythagoras.

And now arises another point. This material myth is again cropping out to overshadow our spiritual atmosphere to-day. We have a revelation given to us of the great and glorious truth - in a word, Spiritualism is a combination of all the truths for which religion in every age has been searching; it is the promise of the Master that the day would come when the Comforter should reveal to us all of truth that we are able to bear. The teachings of all systems of religion ever include the belief that the soul shall maintain a continued existence after death which we call immortality.

But independent of all systems of religion, the soul itself is its own witness of immortality in the realisation of its own consciousness. I believe, if we could disintegrate that mysterious function of mind which we call consciousness from the rest of the intellect we should find that immortality is there concentrated as the one sole fact of consciousness. Annihilate that, and we annihilate our being; change it even in the least respect, let it be so tampered with as to make the recognition of self, imperfect, and we have found that which all nature denies, the fact of annihilation. We know not the falsity or truth of re-existence. There are many spirits who teach it, many who believe it, some say they know it. Be that as it may, we know the fact of our existence here. We may attempt by sophistry and hair-splitting of words to question of the fact of self-consciousness, but so long as man can say *I am*, he is self-consciousness. Change the characteristics of that consciousness and let the question be doubtful of the soul's identity to itself, and, I repeat, you have found annihilation. You cannot put out of existence one grain of dust; you cannot destroy from the realm of being the largest or the smallest atom. All which you may call in its infinite littleness even an indivisible atom lives for ever. Can you destroy, therefore, one function that makes up the integrity of the soul? You may not touch it, we may not tamper with it, and Spiritualism *proves* that which nature and science teaches.

We hope for, trust in, and even intuitively feel, the truth of a spiritual existence. The poor savage knows it. He buries bow and arrows by the side of the dead, and supplies, in his trusting faith of continued existence, the mouldering form of death with provisions for the inevitable future to which he believes the risen spirit has passed. Save the traditions of his fathers, no priest or gospel instructs him of immortality, and yet he questions it not, for he feels it in his own soul. From the time when man first ate of the fruit of knowledge of good and evil, from the time when he learned to think, and looking, in the face of his fellow-man, loved, and seeing him fall like the last year's snow, and decay in dust and ashes, while love and life and consciousness stiffened into the rigid monumental form of death, the soul has followed the departed spirit into the land of spirits, and believed in its unquenched and unquenchable existence. But the age of reason and analysis has come, in addition to the age of intuition. We know that there are men who have stood in our midst - men of mind, and power, and station - who have written volumes to prove that we have no existence at all; that life is a shadow, and the substance of life a myth. Philosophers there have been who not only question the existence of spirit, but chop logic on the query of - whether there is even matter. And who can answer them? We feel we know; but this is no admitted argument. Destitute of the angelic phenomena which in a spiritual existence prove all things, infidelity, in the unrepeatable past, has swept the earth, and those who have thought the most, speculated the deepest, and analysed in them most profound realms of being, have come out of the investigation shorn of the glorious belief in immortality. They have looked upon this sorrowful life, and so many a pilgrimage of pain and woe; they have beheld the beggar, the outcast, the

cripple, and the blind, and have thought that life and death was all of them, - life a failure and death a terror, and yet this was all! They have seen young children die - sweet buds of promise blighted! - and thought there was nothing more of them but their blighted life and death. But this dark philosophy ends not here: it bears its fruits in action; - mark them. Bring to the tribunal of human practice the influence of such a belief as this, and let it become disseminated as a fact among all people. We know from the leadings of one or two master minds, and then spreads among the masses until it becomes public opinion. It is the "little bird" that whispers first in the ear of one and then another, and carries the tidings far and wide, until it masses itself into public opinion. And what did infidelity do in the shape of influence upon public opinion, when the psychology of Danton, Marat, and Robespierre, had banished the belief in God and immortality from the land of France, in the days of the Red Revolution of 1793? We know that so long as the restraints of law are about us, we act as if the restraint proceeded from within. We do not know ourselves or realise what we would be in the large liberty that is void of all restraint; but we know what we have been when such restraints are removed; and woe to a nation of infidels! woe to a nation that has no hope beyond the grave! and woe to the individuals who govern it, the people who riot in it, the souls that are wrecked by it. It may begin in "reason," but the reason that narrows down life, - cause and effect, responsibility and being - to this dark and finite section of existence bounded by earth, is madness, not reason; blindness, not light; slavery to animal passions, not liberty in spiritual good. Hence, its rule is vice, passion, sensuality; - it begins in licence and ends in blood - dethrones a king and sets up the rule of an executioner - upsets a throne to elevate a guillotine!

To the people, such a condition is but the government of tigers and panthers thirsting for blood; to the rulers, it is the war in heaven, where the fabled Lucifer - incarnate in the demoniacal form of the human mind, that rejects in its blind and miserable pride the rule of God and the responsibility of a hereafter - calls itself a monarch in its supposed freedom from the light of religion. Alas! such minds only wake up at last, like the rulers of the Red Revolution of France, to find that they are but monarchs in Pandemonium, and that the laws of God whom they have spurned, find them out even in the hell they have vainly thought would hide them from His presence. To the Spiritualist assured of the inevitable fact of a hereafter, conscious that man's vain boast of annihilation cannot avail to quench the life he is not master of - to those who smile at the baseless conceit of theoretical philosophers, that life's mistakes may be atoned for by the myth of reincarnation - to those who feel as we do, that our deeds must follow us and that every wasted drop of blood man sheds, and all the throngs of victims he sends out, in the power of a wild and lawless rule, to death, array themselves in a ghastly tribunal, before whose awful judgment seat his ever-living spirit must appeal - to those who feel that such a doom awaited the men who proclaimed in fated France, "there is no God," "there is no immortality" - think, think of the doom of him who stood in the dying hour of his blood-stained shipwrecked life, but still in the insane triumph of his age and time, went forth from the day of reddest crime to the day of inevitable retribution, crying, "I am Danton. My age is thirty-five, my abode will soon be in nonentity; but my name will live in the pantheon of history."

Friends, it is for us to answer the question whether that name of terror has outlived that soul of crime. WE KNOW that Danton still lives; but how, and for what, is with

him, not us, the question, except for a sign and waymark to the insane Materialist who would follow in his darkened footsteps. Danton may yet be within this very chamber, and still cry, "I am Danton! my *name* will soon be nonentity, but I SHALL LIVE FOR EVER!"

Like the Jews of old, when we would offer man the glorious light of Spiritualism, he cries, "We have our Moses and the Prophets; what need have we of strange new revelation?" Had not Danton, Marat, Robespierre, with all their destroying myrmidons, this faith in heroes and the Prophets to rely on? Have not the blind eyes of Materialism, which throughout the length and breadth of Europe is even now spreading its pall of darkness over religious faith, their heroes and the Prophets? Have not the solemn utterances of Christianity been reverberating for eighteen centuries through the corridors of time, and been chanted forth by the lips of highest civilization, but in the ears of thousands of earth's greatest thinkers with such little meaning that thousands would say to-day with Danton, "My name will live, while my soul will be nonentity." If, then, a true spiritual faith is the mightiest law of life that can bind the soul of man and compel him, in the fetters of eternal responsibility, to live, not only for time but for eternity, may we not say, "Thank God for modern Spiritualism! Bless Him that we have now the assured knowledge of immortality!" And were there no other results outworking from this knowledge, at least we may fairly calculate that every rap that proves the continued existence of a human soul will make its impress of conviction in the salvation of a human soul from the blindness of infidelity. But this is not all that Spiritualism has done, or will accomplish for mankind. One of its basic revelations is the fact of a law of mind, and the clue to the discovery of a science of mind. Other ages have revealed to us the fact that all things in nature (mind excepted) are governed by laws immutable. Science has taught man to discover law in everything - law in the tossing wave, the falling leaf, the blossoming flower, the pattering rain. All nature moves within the circle of eternal law, save mind alone; and for lack of a science and law of mind, we have not known the causes of crime. We have visited upon our criminals punishment instead of reform. We have taken vengeance for the errors of society, which itself has created criminals, because we have not comprehend the links of causation, nor understood why the solemn edict of Moses that "the sins of the fathers should be visited upon the children," was not the vengeance of God, but the writing of an eternal law in mind as well as matter. But with the comprehension that mind was shaped by the human organism, that matter helps to stamp the character of mind with the revelation of phrenology; with the fact of clairvoyance piercing through the outward form, and beholding there the secret of disease, and diagnosing character through disease; with the fact that an electrical magnetic battery is a revelation of character through a diagnosis of the cranium, determining by its susceptibility not only the diseased form but the poisoned mind as well; with all these revelations brought to light by even our imperfect investigations of the spirit circle, I say that we have this day the dawning of a science of mind, and are beginning to discover that mind, character, intellect, and all the faculties, moral and intellectual, of the soul are under the dominion of law, and that there is a cause of them all, as there is an effect for them all in the hereafter. With all these revelations we are at last commencing to obey the charge, "Know thyself;" - we are at last beginning to reduce our knowledge to a practice here, and an influence upon our destiny hereafter. We know now that there are differences of spheres and progressive states for the soul; we may look over the mass of mankind, and almost begin to determine what will be the condition of every soul we behold in the spheres hereafter

by what they are to-day. The mystery of evil, too, is solved by the dawning of this science of mind. The justice of God is vindicated by it; for when we go down to the dens of crime and contemplate the underground stratas of life, beholding the poor deformed and degraded objects in whom the spark of Divinity is scarcely visible, but still realise that there is a life as glorious for them as the highest and the noblest amongst ourselves - that there is not hope, but assurance, certainty, and confidence of world upon world, and sphere after sphere of progress for them as for us - when we see the angel's hand stretched out above them, and realise that for them as for all, are the grand developments and noble unfoldings of mind that ourselves have profited by - comprehending as we do all this, in the midst of sorrow, and trespass, and disgrace, we may truly say, "He doeth all things well."

And shall they come to us now, and tell us, that perchance instead of progress in the spheres of the hereafter, we must retrograde, to be born in this weary earth again? that the souls we fondly hoped were speeding up the steps of time in eternal progress, are lost to us, and returned to do penance in some mortal form again, while the precious ties of family and kindred all are lost and broken? Shall they tell us, that after leaving this sphere of sorrow and tribulation, and groping our way in blindness, suffering, and sorrow, through earth's bitter pilgrimage, we may not rest nor labour on in hope, in a better and a brighter land, but must come back here to a cold and sinful material form again - the precious ties of kindred all unheeded or rent, and torn asunder, and all because God's providence is not enough for them beyond the grave? There is no room in space for them to progress, no angelic ladder with another round for them to step upon, except in return to earth. In all the vast rolling worlds, suns, satellites, and glittering systems - in the shining roads, full of bright star-dust, vast walls, piled up with worlds reaching to the throne of God Himself - shall they tell us that there is not room enough in all of these, for our souls to progress, and grow pure, and good, and great through, without returning to this little dew-drop earth, and groping once more in blindness through the veil of matter which spirit has rent in twain?

Away, away with such wild fantasies! They are the destruction of hope, the blight of the soul, and a pernicious poison, that is being poured over our bright and beautiful revelation. I call upon you, Spiritualists, though yourselves may not have drunk of this poisoned cup, to note that it is now being presented to human lips. And yet you thinkers, who have realised the fact of eternal law throughout the realm of nature, and now perceive it in the realm of mind, must know there is a standard of truth for the soul as well as for the testing of atoms, must know there is a standard of true knowledge for the mind, and eternal laws for the soul and its testing, which cannot change with merely theoretical opinions.

To save yourselves from these, accept of no authority then, but that of principles. Accept of no standard of belief, no doctrine or teaching that is not in harmony with the divine truths of law and principles. You will find this authority of truth as manifest in mind as in matter. You will find these principles as plainly proven for the soul as for the body. I have already pointed to the fact that we are at the dawn of the science of mind. I do not propose to lay down for you what that science is, but in the conduct of your spirit-circles, in the phenomena of life and magnetism which they reveal to you, you cannot fail to find the laws which regulate the changing spheres and eternal progress of the spirit as clearly marked as chemistry and science teach the history of atoms. The time is now at hand when you Spiritualists will be questioned of your

doctrine, you will be asked "What is your faith? What do you teach, and wherefore have the spirits come?" And if dancing tables and vibrating floors are all the results of the great outpouring of the spirit you may well be asked what then is the use of Spiritualism? You must answer to the world what you have learned of spiritual truth beyond the mere belief in the phenomenal exhibitions of the power of spirit to act on matter. What answer will you render? When you reflect upon what that outpouring has been on some amongst you, when you remember how the scales have fallen from your eyes, how your house of mourning and bereavement has been filled by the presence of returning spirits purified and holy, how the lonely heart has been cheered by love's precious message, when you remember what a glorious unfolding of life beyond the grave Spiritualism has been to you who have truly realised it, how much are you bound to give that light to others which yourselves have received so fully. Oh, widow! when you walk the streets once so desolate and lonely, and remember that again your loved companion is by your side, no more a suffering sinful mortal but an angel now; - Oh, mother! when you realise that ever by your side is the precious child you mourned as lost, lost to you for ever; - you may be old, and poor, and comfortless, but though all human kind forsake you, angels are about your footsteps - angels bright and holy.

With such a view of a bright and angelic world guarding and permeating earth - with such a realisation of spiritual surroundings, hovering around our faltering way, and guiding our failing footsteps, what matters all that man can do against us? Why friends, we are standing with the Jewish boy of old, before the mountain, blazing with the horsemen, and the chariots of God's guardian hosts of spirits! If this knowledge is comfort, strength, and consolation to yourselves, then it belongs to you to give again to all who need that strength; - to keep it pure from vain and idle theories, to base it on the corner-stone of truth, revealed to us in law, and facts, and science, and to proclaim it through the land without fear or favour. Proclaim it with the clarion voice of truth in your halls of legislature, and make it a living fact for those who rule the people, for those who hold the lives and liberties of thousands in their grasp, who legislate for the poor, the ignorant, and darkened; and either by neglect or false legislation keep them in darkness and crowd them into sin. There are thousands and thousands of victims disappearing from bad legislation; tell their rulers that they wait for them in the land where right, not law, or power must rule. Tell them this, nor let them think to escape the deeds that follow them through priestly mediation, or ceremonial rites. Tell them this, nor let them hope to put off the day of just and inevitable retribution, by coming back again to earth to undo its mistakes, and repair its past short-comings, through incarnations, doubtful chances of living better lives, or perhaps, beneath the ever-present attractions of matter, *sinking yet still lower*.

Heed the poet's warning, and "lay not such flattering unction to your souls." God returns not ever on His footsteps, - nature never repeats herself; but God and nature, law and life, and all things thereto belonging, move to the eternal burden of creation's day - "Onward, for ever onward!"

Glorious as is the light which Spiritualism brings to the mourner, fearful as is the voice of warning with which it awakes the evil-doer from his slumber of irresponsible annihilation; better it had never come at all, to give men our human faith in immortality, if it is to be masked by the hideout pall of that doctrine which admits of a sinful life, not only scattering its poison through one baneful career of mortal sin, but

permits the re-incarnation of earth's monsters, until long ages may be too short for the burdened earth to endure the horror of the ever-returning load of guilt, until it consumes itself, and purifies itself at earth's expense, in successive re-incarnations.

Better that Spiritualism had not assured mankind of immortality on the faith of undoubted science than that the holy, just, and pure who have borne the bitter drops of mortal suffering should go hence, assume their crown of glorious immortality to find it torn from martyred brows, and themselves thrust back to re-act their goodness on the insatiate earth that craves for them back again. Are there not demons enough in one generation, but we must keep on sending them back through succeeding ones? Can we not manufacture crime enough in one life, but we must spin it out to the length of many? Or is there no other place in illimitable space for the soul to progress in but this little floating dew-drop in immensity - this one poor burdened earth of ours? Is goodness so scarce in God's angelic hierarchies of worlds, and suns, and systems, that one bright soul must endure its dismal round of re-incarnated pilgrimages, and stretch out its solitary excellencies through successive ages? Or are God's ways so narrow that He can find no other means to instruct His creatures than by returning age on age the self-same soul to be born again in matter? Is the hope of the mother instructed by blessed Spiritualism that she shall meet her loved and lost one in Paradise a myth, and when she would clasp her precious child to her maternal heart in spirit-land, must she be told her dearer one than self has gone back to earth - the earth that she left with anguish - to be some other mother's child in a dismal re-incarnation? Oh, foul and baseless doctrine! unsustained by facts, or love, or reason, nature's harmonious law of progress, sense, fact, or justice!

Believing that Spiritualism is a science, that as a science it will grow, and demonstrate all truth to man, as man is fitted to receive it, I have no fear that this pernicious theory will long survive our facts - in a word, I hope everything from Spiritualism; I expect everything for the race from Spiritualism; I only put home to yourselves, Spiritualists, the earnest charge that you shall think out this subject deeply for yourselves, and analyse it to its very foundation. In doing so start with the proposition, "What is Truth?" Resolve that Truth is, "that which is." Determine that all things shall be tried by that standard - Truth - that in right and wrong you will abide by it, and it alone; that by its standard all things shall be tried, and you will accept of no other authority than that of Truth. I see a Coming Man whose presence is foreshadowing amongst you. You may call him by the name of the righteous Nazarene if you will; and so long as that name can realise to your mind the *truths He taught*, so long as it gives to your view the perception of all the holy all-conquering truths that are knit up in the glorious sole commandment, "Love," why, worship Him, if ye needs must worship any but your God?" Worship Him, not for His name, or the book wherein it is written, but worship Him for the very truth's sake; because He spoke and lived and taught the self-same truths which God in nature teaches, and immortality and heaven demands, and nature sanctions. And let all nations bend before your Teacher; for teaches He not by the authority of truth?

Meantime, remember that it is not in the name that your faith can save you; it is not in the fabled evil serpent that your sins can find excuse, nor in the name alone of Christ that they can find atonement. Your spirit friends are already in the judgment of their earthly lives. As they are, so will you be - can you doubt them? You have trusted and known them in life: trust and know them still; but if they do no more for you than

enable you to realise the consciousness of their presence - if they do not more for you than reform your opinions concerning the mere phenomena of spirit action upon matter, you are no true Spiritualist; you are no power to the world; you will be no benefit to it; you are not the torch-bearers of Him who sent the spirits. When they questioned Jesus of the destiny of others, He answered them saying, "What is that to thee? Follow thou me." It was not the following of the man, nor of the risen spirit, nor of the Master that He demanded then; *it was the following of His teachings*, the following of His principles. Have men followed these? If not, does not Spiritualism come in its purity, its warning tone and voice of sweet encouragement, to lead us back to those principles, too often sacrificed in idle worship of the name of Him who taught them? Let no idle promises of extenuation for the value of a name tempt you to close your ears against this solemn charge. Let no fantastic hope of atoning for a misspent life by a further re-incarnation induce you to evade the stern command to let all else be naught to you, but follow the spirit of the highest truth you know, whether this be incarnate in the form of Vishnu, Christ, or Buddha; or be the voice of God in all and each that speaks of love and purity and truth and beauty.

As for this vague and baseless theory of man's re-incarnation, I conclude as I commenced, by warning you that of all the eccentric forms in which the human spirit has sought to approach its God and solve its destiny in systems of religion, this is at once the most wild, unfounded and untrue to reason, sense, and justice. It has arisen, too, in human fantasy, and is a mere side issue, arising only when men step aside from the authority of truth, and rush off into the theories and vagaries of strange and fantastic doctrines.

We search through the realm of nature in vain to find evidence of retrogression; we search in the realm of chemistry, and it will assure you that even the insensate atoms progress. There is a spirit of progress in every drop of water; leave it in its mobile state, it is nothing but a drop of water; vaporise it into steam, and in its progress it becomes a mighty force; and the lightnings that flash destruction before our eyes, that rend the rocks, and destroy the noble works of art, in their progress through mechanical laws become one of the greatest and most useful elements of science. And so of every single atom in creation. Progress is the genius of being. Where do these Re-incarnationists find their doctrine? Where in the whole realm of nature do those who plead for the return of the risen spirit to the atoms of dust which it has left, find their evidence? Not in science, not in God's laws, not in God's realm of nature, not in God's law of love, not in God's own witness of the soul's immortality, which is for ever and for ever self-conscious, and whose identity you cannot touch. This doctrine that is now becoming patent amongst mere Spiritists (in the attempt to explain some problems yet unsolved), is put forth in the mere desire to enunciate theories and set up human authorities; but Spiritualists accept it only as a stimulus to enquire for the authority of truth, and bend before that shrine, ignoring all doctrines else.

I have taxed you overlong, and I conclude with once more urging upon each a yet deeper search for truth. In this age, above all others, the restless inquisition is going on into the realm of truth in morals, science, religion, politics, and governments. All things are being brought to judgment. You, Spiritualists, who are entrusted with the noblest and grandest truth of the age - you who have been favoured with the brightest and noblest revelation of comfort, hope, and certainty that ever was granted to man - who are permitted to be pioneers of the grand science of mind - I would

ask each one of you to go hence from this place and, whether ye be accepters or rejecters of the name of Christ as God Himself incarnate in the form of flesh - none can be here with reason, sense, and goodness, who honour not that name as the highest mark of pure and true example at which humanity can aim, - in the name, then, of that teaching, in the name of that Divine instruction, whose duty both to God and man was condensed in the one word, "Love," heed naught of human teaching or human revelation that silences the voice of that spirit of truth that in the midst of theory, diverse opinions, and fantastic doctrines, ever cries, "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!"

ADDRESS

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

DELIVERED AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, LONDON, MARCH 12th, 1866

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[MISS HARDINGE was requested to deliver an Address on any subject she might select.]

MARTYRDOM

WE take advantage of this privilege to present you with a strange, and perhaps it may seem at first a repulsive, subject. We desire to speak to you to-night on the subject of martyrdom and the questions that grow out of it, not only with reference to its causes here on earth, but its results in spirit-land. Far away across the wide waters of two oceans a voice of pleading has come, that here, in this chamber where we are gathered together as the pioneers of a science whose origin we scarcely comprehend, whose ultimate we cannot foresee - that here, as a centre of power which should go out from this place into the world, and, perhaps, as a grain of mustard seed, grow into a mighty tree, - I say a voice of pleading has come to your speaker, that the record should be made here to-night that may go back again to those who dearly love her and trust her words, and believe that she can interpret a great and mighty grief, and say why the fair and good untimely perish miserably - why the fires of martyrdom are permitted to enclose, as a burning winding-sheet, earth's best, most beautiful and good - where the guardian angels are that should protect the loved and sinless ones from the grasp of the destroyer in some dark and hideous form of death - why God permits the unjust to triumph over the just - why man is not only suffered to strive against the powers and principalities of a spiritual and material life, and too often left to struggle vainly against the evil of both worlds, but why the hand of brother man is so often stretched to crush him down. In a word, what and why is martyrdom? We know that age after age this question has been asked. We have put it to our theologians; they answer, "It is the will of God." We ask the Materialists, and they tell us "It is inevitable fate" - "a destiny that none can turn aside." We question the Spiritualists, and even they marvel, when so many times the whisper of the guardian angel comes and warns one back from death, or some fate of misery perhaps worse

than death, why this voice is dumb to other ears - why all are not alike protected by the ever-watchful power of ministering spirits. And questions more than this grow out of the mystery of martyrdom. We all ask, - What of the spirit violently driven forth from its earthly tenement? what of those who should drop like ripe fruit in the fullness of old age, and learn all of life's experiences that earth can give? Perhaps the answer to this question may by some be rendered in the teaching of "re-incarnation," assuming that back to earth the spirit roams that has failed in the mission that earth alone can give. But despite all attempts of sage or philosopher to solve the mystery, age after age we see the bright and beautiful untimely perish - some "leaping to heaven from fiery graves," and some going out in torture or a sea of blood; and still the question follows them - "Perhaps they live again, and do perform their earthly mission, earthbound as they needs must be, in re-incarnation?"

Questions such as this have hovered on men's lips from age to age, and now find expression in the voices that have pleaded with your speaker to leave some record here concerning the teachings of those spirits who prompt your speaker's utterances on the vast and vexed questions of the necessity, providential action, and spiritual results of martyrdom. And first, in the wise and beneficent laws that rule the universe, can we discover what is the cause of martyrdom? where exists its origin? and what is its effect upon the human soul beyond the vast unknown which mortal eye vaguely seems to scan in a spiritual hereafter? Let us call to mind the definition which we must apply to the term "a martyr." A martyr is one who suffers unjustly - one who has not earned in his own person the penalty that is forced upon him. It is no explanation of God's providences, in this form of unjust suffering, to reply, with Moses, "that the sins of the fathers are visited on the children." We know that this is true, but this is not enough for reason; we know that day by day we pass earth's martyrs in our city streets. Not only those are martyrs whose dark and dreadful fate has set them up on some earthly Calvary, for all to behold their doom; there are martyrs in this chamber, broken hearts, in whom the racks and thumbscrews of life are tearing away, piece by piece, the joy and brightness and blossom of earth. There are martyrs everywhere: - men who strive against man's injustice; and, with stern poverty, or wrong, or misery in some form of other, bend beneath the yoke, that they themselves have not through sin or crime, fashioned for themselves. How many meek and suffering ones there are who stand in the presence of earth's judges, and hear the shouting multitude choose a Barabbas and reject a Jesus! There are yet others who have knelt with righteous Stephen, and felt the stones of persecution, hate, and loathing crushing them down to death, even at the very hour when all might see the angelic light of heaven in shining glory on their bleeding brows. Oh! Why is this?

Turn we to the eternal revelation of God's providence in universal laws, and let us inquire what this declares to us in answer.

We know that the progressive light of science is bringing us face to face with the causes that move around us in the effects of life and action through all the grand phenomena of nature, and by investigation of these we find we are enclosed in a network of eternal law. We behold on every side the strange and erratic manifestations of nature, so very varied, and yet so constant - constant in cause, yet varied in effect. We know that though the heaving tides shall ever return at certain periods, they never return to any exact spot with the same force, nor dash on the pebbly shore with the selfsame measure of power that marked the preceding wave.

And yet, notwithstanding the infinite variety of nature's phenomena, which age by age is fraught with change, and rolls on in the eternal march of progress, pointing man, sun, stars and planets ever upwards and onwards, never pausing, never retrogressing, - amidst all this, we trace the action of eternal law. We are prepared, then, to accept of the belief that between the laws appropriate to each, matter and spirit move eternally. I believe these laws apply to each, and may be called two sets of laws; the one of which is physical, or those which are manifest upon and through matter: the other is a set of moral laws, and bind and regulate the Psyche or soul. Both move on harmoniously; are often related, but are never found clashing with each other. In the physical universe, we find that the largest as the smallest atom in nature is the subject of laws which govern matter generally; and yet beneath the influence of mind, the more we consider the nature of the elements with which we deal, the more we arrive at the inevitable conclusion that we, as beings endowed with a power superior to matter, govern and control it, and are destined to be God's viceregents on earth in subjecting it to our will and use, always provided that we understand the law that hinders and binds and governs matter. Just in as far as we comprehend this law, all things and all elements are our servants. Where we fail, they master and destroy us. Search as we will for precedents to find some partial providence infracting law, we search in vain. The fire will burn - the water drown - the falling mass will crush us. If we comprehend the nature of the elements, I repeat, they are our subjects; we control them ever. What are these wondrous manifestations of fire, heat, light, and electricity? We know they are imponderable elements that resolve themselves into one cause, and that cause - motion. As we comprehend the causes by which motion elaborates all these varieties of one primary element, as we understand that it is the same matter appearing in different states of motion, as we begin to comprehend this law, so we hold the key that enables us to guide and regulate the results; and just so long as, by your wisdom or our caution, we place ourselves in harmonious relations with them, just so far are we safe from all the penalties which so often destroy us, and which we so ignorantly assume to be "the will of God." When we consider the infinite beneficence of that Being, the vast and boundless realm of power in which He permits man to act, in which His wisdom and love have endowed us with the authority of ruling creation, I call this charge upon the Deity scarcely less than blasphemous, and but the result of that excessive ignorance that fails to perceive how God works through law. When we murmur, then, against the eruptive earth, or the leaping fire, the quaking ground beneath us, the yawning gulf that swallows up the city, the whelming wave that encloses in its watery winding-sheet the saint and the sinner both, - when we deplore that the leaping flame tortures the bright and the beautiful as cruelly as the wicked and worthless, - while the falling mass crushes the evil and spares not the good, - when we consider all the "accidents," as we term them, of life, the catastrophes and calamities, storm and tempest, that have destroyed at least one-third of the human race, that God has fashioned with such wondrous care, - we can at last arrive at but one conclusion, and that is, that man may and does by wisdom control the powers of elemental nature, or in his ignorance must be controlled by them.

When we comprehend the nature of our planet; when, step by step, we arrive at the knowledge of matter, and by the sciences of geology, chemistry, and the workmanship of the great laboratory that is fusing and still composing and re-composing earth's crust, fashioning unborn islands, and preparing for the upheaval of unborn continents, and, by the eternal law of action and reaction, now engulfing cities and consuming

towns, we find that, large as is the sphere of knowledge in which we must search to comprehend the causes of all this vast and awful realm of change, wisdom can learn, science reveal, and mind can, comprehending, adjust itself to meet it. There is no mystery with God: with Him all is light and revelation, and as the sciences are systematised by the mind of man, and as page after page of the grand revelation of creation is unfolded to his view, he compasses, first, the knowledge of the catastrophic action of elemental life on earth; and, next, the power to govern it. Thus much for the physical laws: and observe, they regard not, or are ever turned aside to respect the moral law. The fire consumes the saint and sinner alike: the water drowns the fairest and the best, as well as the most repulsive: the falling tower crushes the forms of saints; and the engulfing earth clasps in its dread embrace the tender infant or the aged sire. No matter what be the virtue, pre-eminence, or excellence of the moral law manifest through the victims of ignorance, physical laws act with their stern and unyielding force on all alike.

Even so do I claim that there is an inevitable and immutable chain of law in the realm of morals. Age after age we have sought for the source of crime; we have fancifully traced its action back to a failure of the Creator - assumed that the Great Machinist of existence was insufficient for His work. Like the ancients, we have endeavoured to solve the problem of evil, as we term it, and shouldered it at last upon the Supreme Being. We now begin to understand something of the physiology of sin, and to discover that there is an intimate relation between the chemistry of every atom and its results upon human character. We thank mesmerism, clairvoyance, phrenology, but, more than all, bright, reveling Spiritualism, for the assurance that that imponderable "*nerve aura*," "*life principle*," or "*magnetic force*," which connects spirit and matter, is charged with the nature of both; that the outward form and the internal character are both represented through the magnetic sphere, both represented on the external form of the cranium, both represented to the eye of the clairvoyant, not as the mere mask of human flesh and blood, but as the dark or the bright spirit. We find, by all the various glimpses of revelation that precede the dawning of the one grand science of mind, that at last we are beginning to discover wherefore the solemn course of Moses on sin was pronounced as "inevitable in its descent from father to son, and onward through succeeding generations. Every characteristic of the human mind has a corresponding effect in matter. Every physical inharmony of the human system has its inevitable expression in mind; and thus it is that we may understand why our city streets present such dark and deformed specimens of human nature. The correlative sciences of mind and matter, studied together, reveal the causes that underlie crime, and treat the soul as the physician treats the body, as morally sick rather than wilfully wicked. And thus we learn that there is any inevitable moral law that grows out of the physical, and that all nations, complexions, and even characters originate in law; that all inhabitants of varied soil and scenery, as well as of various grades and strata of humanity, the dwellers of our gutters and cellars, no less than of our palaces and saloons, are, in part, the results of the surroundings and the circumstances that first bind them about in a set of physical conditions, and then represent themselves in moral states.

And now let us proceed to consider how the force of these two sets of laws act upon the question of martyrdom. When we remember who and what earth's martyrs were; when we take our stand in the day of the brightest and purest revelation that was ever given to man, and in memory behold face to face that sinless Being whose every act was a benefaction, who walked amongst men to bless who gave of His love and pity

to every living creature, and hear the wild cry of an insensate multitude, demanding the life of a murderer and rejecting Him; when we see the edict of so-called human justice branding on that brow the doom of malefactor, and writing innocence upon a wretch who, as murderer, was man's direst enemy, we need seek deep in the mystery of the human heart, and search for the tangled skein of laws that stultify some human consciences, to discover the springs of hatred, envy, jealousy, and bigotry, that could prompt such dark obliquity of moral vision to reason, sense, and justice; and yet we know the love and law of crime is stamped upon some human natures as surely as virtue is upon others. From what other stand-point can we contemplate the scenes at Calvary, the judgment hall of Pilate, and the mockery at the cross? The law of bad natures, bad organisations, of cruelty and injustice, is as stringent as the nature of consuming fire unchecked, or whelming waters unrestrained. And when we heed the stern necessity by which our spirits are related here on earth to matter, our spirit, pure in its essence, unitary (as I believe) in its origin, but when associated with matter, compelled to progress from the very lowest to the very highest conditions, when we behold human nature in all these stages of progress, we must expect to see these undeveloped states of mind as surely as we know the unlovely root must precede the life of the fully-blossoming plant. The hour must come when we Spiritualists must understand this physiology of crime, and realise that those who inflict martyrdom upon man, that those who have stained the history of religion with fire and blood and persecution, who have haled the blessed and bright and beautiful to the stake, and who, age after age, have sacrificed whole hecatombs of human life, are as much the creatures of inevitable law as the pure victims whom they sacrificed. But mark here: though I claim that tendencies to crime and cruelty are stringent laws of certain inharmonious organisations, sometimes inherited and sometimes shaped the time and place and circumstances, I also would remind you that it is for us to obtain a conquest over the elements by a knowledge of their physical laws; that as we progress in wisdom, and ascend from the ages of barbarian to civilisation by a study of the elements, until last we make them our servants, even so must we deal with the moral law. We must not flinch from the question and evade responsibility, or fear to look causes, laws, effects, and true philosophy calmly in the face. We find the evil is a portion of the development of the race; but we have no more right to permit it to be stationary, than we have to suffer the fire to consume us, or the waters to drown us for want of wisdom to control them. Remember, that with every catastrophe in nature, and every suffering that results from our ignorance, we grow daily wiser. It is by the action of fire, the yawning earth, and the destroying lava, that we have first begun to understand the chemistry and composition of our earth. Warned by the destroying power of lightning we have discovered the mode to master it, and apply it in the uses of science. It is by the wail of the drowning mariner and the shriek of the victims engulfed in the destroying wave that we have improved our systems of navigation, charted and mapped out the dangerous paths of the whelming ocean, and prepared vast ships, with ever-improving powers, to guard against the wrecks of past experiences, whose very ruin has been our teacher. Whatever conquests we have thus achieved, whether in fire or air, ocean or earthly perils, has been the result, in part at least, of physical martyrdoms. Goaded on by suffering, we have learned at last that either the elements must control us, or we them. What has been the result? Do we stand idly by and complain of the fierce storm, while we bow before it? Do we suffer the tempest to sweep us away or the fire to consume us without seeking to master it? Not so. There is not a single point of history but what is fraught with the benefits that have grown out of this system of teaching.

I have dwelt on this before: I revert to it now to illustrate my affirmation that the same system is demanded of us in dealing with the moral law. We have been content to suppose that the mind was beyond our control, but that it was an erratic, wayward, masterless thing - perhaps too sublimated for us to comprehend, much less to control, subject to no laws which we could understand. We have taught that as sin was amongst us we could only submit to it, or at most restrain or punish it. I claim that if we study the science of mind, morals, and the inharmonious conditions of the human soul, as outgrowths of the bad conditions of the human frame, the physiology of sin as a corollary of the physiology of disease, if we attempt to comprehend and deal with the fine lines of demarcation that separate sanity from insanity, and reason from passion, we shall find that there is as much a science in mind, and a law of morals that we can guide, rule, control, and improve upon, as there is a law for every atom of matter in creation. How changed would be our systems then for the prevention of crime! Instead of the art of the mediciner legislating alone for disease of the physical frame, we should institute moral hospitals for the soul, and gaols and penitentiaries would become infirmaries for sick intellects and diseased and poisoned minds. What possible benefit would you Spiritualists gaining the advancement of your belief from hurling unoffending beings into the destroying fire because they believe not as you do?

You smile at such a mode of propagandism; apply this to the whole of the dark and calamitous history that stains the page of religion; ask why other men did so, and you do not. Will you not urge that you have seen the light, and understand the cause of sin; that you comprehend the nature of the human mind, and realise that it is a flower not yet unfolded, and that the spirits of all living creatures are destined for perfection; that each one is running his race, and somewhere on the great harp of creation, from the lowest bass to the highest treble, the angel of experience is striking life's strings, and that, in the infinite variety of tones, the oratorio of creation is produced?

Thus do you reason: can you not comprehend, then, that the lack of the light which you enjoy has produced the ages of moral darkness we deplore? Can we not understand, that if the motive power of cause produces one set of results, their absence necessarily engenders another set? By the analysis of mind do we not realise that now, as ever, we are, and have been ever, under the dominance of law; that mind is the result of its association with matter, and its necessary growth through various conditions of place and scene and time and circumstance? Students of psychology in this age, we know that the psychology of one bad man's thought poisons the universe; and even the power and magnetic life of one good and pure mind, one sigh of pity, one gentle wish, one tender purpose (though it may be baffled) - all these are in the air which all men breathe, and make all nature better for their life. One secret whole heart wish for good, is like the little violet in the hedge-row, that mortal eye has never seen, but yet its fragrant breath is in the air, and makes earth better because it has lived and died. Comprehending the vast array of subtle forces that act through nature upon mind, we need to be very merciful in our construction of poor human nature; need to determine how much of stern law elaborates the bad man's acts: but still, having done this, let us next deal with his evil. It is not because we know the cause, that we should neglect the effects; we must apply not only one science, but many, in the reform of our criminal minds, ere we can hope to prevent the development of evil minds in evil acts, or restrain this upas tree of crime from imposing the horrors of

martyrdom upon our fellow men. And yet let our ways, like our judgment, be fair and equal; let us search into our own natures, and ask wherefore we hear, and read, and admire the gentle loving spirit of Him we call The Master, and yet fail to do what He commanded us? We answer, we cannot. Wherefore not? Because we have not the organisation that has grown to this; because we have not the motives that impel our minds to this; because there are too many inharmonies within ourselves, and these appear in angularities of character that jostle one another, instead of fitting in with all that kind and loving gentleness that masks a human brotherhood. But yet a law applied may work the cure; and I would here revert to one of the former Addresses delivered in this place, on the example of secret societies, and the law of brotherly kindness and charity that there *compels* even the bad man to become the subject of the fraternal bonds that bind the whole. I would ask, if this can be done in one heterogeneous society of men, why not in the whole human family? I would ask, if a law that is thus binding upon the few, cannot become so upon the many? I do not ask for the system of restraint, nor a bond, nor an oath to compel us to be obedient to the highest law; but I do ask that we, as professing thinkers, shall give to the world the system of psychology proved in spiritual communion, whose revelations of the law of mind will throw its radiative light on every subject of human weal and woe, which originates in the influence of mind, or impresses itself upon the human consciousness.

Not long since, in point of earthly time - though, perhaps, as we shall show you, very long in spirit-life and its peculiar mode of registering periods - there were two thousand of the purest and most beautiful blossoms of mortal life gathered together in a solemn place of worship, for the holy purpose of tendering praise and prayer to God in religious service. There were to thousand of the youngest and most sinless girls (so says report), the most loved and lovely portion of the population of the city of Santiago, met to worship God, perhaps not in your peculiar fashion, nor yet in mine. They may have called on God after some other mode than we do: they may have knelt, or stood, or uttered their orisons in some other language than our own, but their spirits were moved upon by the same Spirit that moves on us, and their appeal to the great Father was made after the same heart impulses that inspire our prayers, and so went up to the same throne of mercy as we say needs our prayers. And yet men say that at that special time and in that special place the God of Santiago failed or forgot his worshippers. As they prayed on that dreadful night and in that place of doom, the leaping flame surrounded them. The voice of prayer was choked by clouds of wreathing smoke, driven back in the throats of scorching victims by waves of fire, and the anthem of praise concluded in the dying shrieks of two thousand burning, tortured, writhing creatures, roasted alive in the very act of prayer. For some thirty ghastly minutes a vast and heterogenous mass of agonised humanity, tossing in seas of fire, torn limb from limb, in frantic struggles to escape - crushed, mangled and hideously charred by fire and scalding blood, writhed, shrieked, contorted, blazed and midst the roar of flames, death wails, and echoing yells of horror from within and without - all miserably perished. The flames sank down upon those blackened, stark, and moveless forms, sobbed out their muttering wail, and went out for lack of life to feed them. Slowly and dolefully the hideous pall of wreathing smoke ascended to the high, groined arches of the distant roof, then settled, like a curling, mocking, giant monster, over the awful wreck of charred black forms that it left below; and then - why, then - the hour of martyrdom was done, and all was over! A few handfuls of undistinguishable cinders, a few dark, ghastly shapes, half human and half formless mass of ashes, and that was all of the largest, fairest, loveliest portion of the mourning

city of Santiago! Those who gazed with seared eyes and bursting hearts on that miserable wreck were glad - *ay, glad!* - when all was still; glad when the crash of that most dire death anthem that ever wailed in mortal ears was hushed; glad that the black hour of the dreariest martyrdom that ever racked the form of dying mortality was done. But, oh! the awful memory of that wild half hour of the reign of fiery death! Oh, the thought of the martyrs who endured it! Back, back, wild tortured fancy! Nor ever let the nameless horrors of that scene stretch the racked mind to think *what they endured*, or what they felt in that wild and fearful spell of fiery death till all was done, and the martyrs were at rest. And then how many were the voices that went up in demand to God to know why *He* had thus dealt with his good and sinless children; for though men could not wrestle with their Deity, by their murmurs, fierce, wild questionings, and unreasoning charges on the God of doom, did they not accuse him of the deed of death? How many amongst the suffering survivors of that mourning city spoke of the hour of death as proceeding from man's folly, carelessness, and ignorant violation of law, as the cause of this great woe? Few, few were those who thus knew how to think or reason! "God's inexorable will," "the Holy Virgin's wrath," or some supernature or miraculous act of a supernatural world, were the chief causes which ignorant superstition could assign for so mighty a physical mistake of ignorant and superstitious man.

A few short weeks ago, the public heart was wrung by the tale of a sinking ship, an overwhelming storm, and hundreds of shrieking human forms engulfed in the tossing billows of a tempest-torn ocean grave. The scene, far, far away from here, was witnessed by some agonised survivors of the fatal wreck. A fair young mother, and a gentle boy, clinging in desperate anguish to a shivering spar were heard to cry to *guardian angels* for protecting care - and still they died, died miserably. A long protracted night and day's fierce agony rolled over their martyred heads, and still they were heard to cry for pity to *their guardian angels* and when the tale was told, and these piteous utterances were recorded in the sneering sceptic ear, they said - "Can Spiritualists thus perish? What is the *use of spirits* if they cannot save their votaries?" None answered them with "Where was God? Or why did he not save? Or how could finite spirits do what the *Infinite had not willed?*" But Spiritualism answers for God and spirits both. The history of the universe reveals no precedent wherein 'tis shewn that physical laws were ever turned aside for moral ones. The moral law which would have prompted tender friends, or loving guardian spirits, to have saved the mother and child from death, could not prevail against the storm/s unyielding power which rendered their salvation all impossible. If spirits ever save their human charge from death or accident, some physical combination of favouring circumstances aids them; but without this, spirit no more can turn aside the whelming force of nature's eternal laws. God breaks not these Himself, and yet we even claim of spirits what we dare not ask of God. We demand of our guardian angels, what the Infinite power that rules the universe cannot or does not do - namely, to infract his supremest laws. There is no change in them, and, therefore, such scenes as I describe (and such as all our memories will supply us with), whether they arise from accidents in nature, from the ignorance that places us in false relations with the elements, or from the wilful infliction of suffering by men, all and each take place by the direct agency of God's eternal law.

And the law of morals acts in one more direction, of which I shall speak to night: and this is in the law of retribution. I have claimed that the martyrdoms of human nature

are our best teachers. We all know that hunger, suffering, poverty, distress, and all the pains and penalties that toil and labour force on man, have been the motive powers for elaborating the genius of the race. Poet, artist, and musician have produced their sweetest music, painted their noblest gems of art, and written their finest epics beneath the stimulus of hard necessity. Sometimes, indeed, they have perished in their martyrdoms from out our midst, but they have left the noble tributes of their genius as evidence of the flowers that bloom in the bitter atmosphere of cruel pain - earth's stern but inexorable cultivator. Inventions, arts, and sciences have sprung from the suffering people. The non-producers, alas! having no need, have also little energy to labour. The intellectual wealth of history has, it is true, grown from out the ranks of those whom time and leisure compel, by the very martyrdom of indolence, and the pains and penalties of idle wealth, to labour in some direction; even luxurious indolence becomes a burden, and so we have our Newtons, Herschels, and those whose minds can pause in contemplation and silent leisure on the wonders of creation; but, even then, the weariness of leisure is often the goad which prompts the mind to labour.

Thus all the pains and penalties of life, whether in poverty or wealth, have elaborated themselves in the noblest works of art, the progress of science, and the gradual discovery of those realms of ever-widening natural beauty that only yield their revelations to the worker.

But there is yet another kind of martyrdom, whose fruit we too must analyse. What of those who have laboured in our midst and borne the shafts of bitter persecution? Such men as Mesmer, who gave to the world a priceless gift, and laid the foundation of the noblest science that ever yet has lit the ages; for mesmerism is the opening of the gates of Spiritualism, the discovery of the mystery of life; and by the understanding of that mysterious power which Mesmer at last discovered to be identical with life, or vital magnetism, we have the key to the whole philosophy of ancient and modern miracles, and the telegraphic force of spiritual communion: and yet, when we ask how mankind has rewarded Mesmer, we have the old tale of base ingratitude - a life of persecution, a death of neglect, and poverty. And Mesmer's is the fate of thousands gone before, and feebly halting after him. Our city streets are full of such: the poets, who die for very want of bread, whom posterity will enshrine in useless bronze and marble; musicians, whose starved and hungry faces make our own grow pale to gaze at - haunting our path, beseeching bread, for the very notes we shall chant with immortal honours on their names when they are starved and dead.

Kind Heaven! why we jostle our martyrs in the city streets each hour, and know them not! we see them go down to nameless graves, and ages hence the world shall all be changed, and the surface of society shall be alight with their resurrected genius! Regard the flame that meets your eye this night; the light that conquers darkness. What a glorious invention is this light! and yet, do you hear the shouting multitude giving honour and doing homage to him who discovered gas? Few even know his name. And such is the fate of half life's unknown martyrs. Our only question then must be, since earth denies them justice, what is the result upon their spirits in the great hereafter? I propose to answer this question in an allegory - by one of those word-pictures by which the ancients used to signify a deeper meaning than the blunt rebuke or pointed individual appeal.

They say that long ago a fair and tender wife died in the arms of the husband of her love. He had been her idol - the joy and star of life - her only earthly hope or thought or occupation. And when this tender wedded pair beheld the inevitable hour of doom that was to part them, their souls alike were torn with speechless anguish. She passed, and left her mourning love with all the light and joy of life departed. She carried with her to the spirit-world naught but the memory of him whom she had loved. She stood (so says the fable which I quote) at the gates of Paradise, a risen spirit, and, still deploring her lost love, sought for her place within the land of the blest; but ere she entered, the judgment angel pointed to the book of life, and thereon she read recorded all the faults and unconsidered sins of her earthly life; there she beheld, with wonder and amazement, how very few, how small and scarcely worth the noting were the good deeds she had done. Poor idle careless child! They had not told her of the worth of life: she pleaded this, but it was all in vain - the stern, immutable moral law was on her. She must learn there was no royal road to heaven; she must *live all of life* in positive experience, actual practice. All her thought had been idolatry for her lost love; all her joy and earthly life had been knit up in him; to her all the world was naught beside. Now she must suffer - so the angel said: and "a thousand years of penance" were before her. Ere she entered upon the mournful doom of practice and instruction in her thousand years of fresh rudimental life, the still loving woman pleaded with the angel yet once more to return to earth and warn the idol that she had left; to whisper in his ear, and teach him how in mortal experiences to practice life, and strive to live so greatly better than herself, that he "should not come into this place of torment." And the kind angel yielded to her prayer, and took her back to earth again. They sought the lover of her heart within the mansion she had lately left: he was not there. They passed into the groves where she had wandered with him hand in hand, in the blessed days of love; she knew he would be walking midst those shades, she said, in tender memory of his vanished joy: but still he was not there. "Surely," she cried, "we shall find him in the house of God, bending before the altar of religion, pleading for resignation to bear his loss of me; we shall find him where we knelt and prayed so oft together. Take me there." The angel, yielding to her pleading, led her to the altar; and there indeed they found her loved one, but not in supplication for the lost dead wife, nor yet in prayerful mourning for her loss: he stood beside a fair young girl repeating the marriage rite, and placing on her hand the ring of the dead wife. In the deep and burning agony of woe that pressed on the poor spirit, she turned to the guardian angel and bade him take her hence - take her to doom - take her to torture - take her to any penalty; nought now was too hard to bear. Her heart's love wrecked - all, all was wrecked; no doom of burning pain or agonizing torture would be penance now to the wrung and broken spirit. But, turning from the path of doom to Paradise, the pitying angel cried, "Come home, come home! Poor spirit! come with me; come to thy Paradise! Thy penalty is paid - thy penance done - thy free soul purified; for in the deep unfathomable anguish of one dreadful moment, - in the single sand grain of an hour, when all life's bitterest martyrdoms are crowded in one point, - thy thousand years of penalty is paid."

And in this allegory I tell you the history of the martyr in the world of spirits. In this I have told you the effect of martyrdom upon the human soul. It is ever so. In spirit land, there is no time or space. We only mark the dial "by our heart-throbs;" we only know the movements of creation by the emotions of our souls. There we may live in one short moment of agony for centuries, and so in the few consuming hours of torture wherein the human form is racked with a martyr's suffering, in the few

dreadful moments that destroy the blazing body; in the pain of long imprisonment, or the quickened heart-throbs of bitter grief with which we suffer man's ingratitude; in the wretchedness of woe which consumes in silent anguish so many breaking hearts; in every pain and penalty of life there is a moral transmutation in our souls, a glorious transfiguration that makes the doom of martyrdom the gate of purgatory through which we pass to Paradise. You still may question this assertion because we cannot prove it, because it is not in your experience. But have you stood in the presence of earth's martyrs, returned again to earth at the spirit circle? Question one of these: question of those who in the agony of drowning have beheld all memories of life, all its event and with it all its judgments crowded upon them - think you there is no transmutation there? Think you that when we behold the page of cause and effect mapped out before us we do not comprehend far better than in the darkness, in which we are now groping, why we have erred, and how to make atonement? And in this knowledge we are transfigured. There is no real time in spirit life, as we define it, and whilst therefore we do not excuse the hand that strikes the blow, whilst we have no extenuation to offer for those who make earth's martyrs, still the pain inflicted by whatever cause is purifying in its action. The spirit vision opened as with the drowning man to the page of cause and effect, the spirit sits in judgment upon himself, his book of life is opened, but especially in the tortures of martyrdom, the transfigured spirit comes out of the fearful crucible of pain, instructed in a spiritual point of time in a whole life's penalty of action. Thus much for the martyrs; but for their persecutors, remember that, "though offences must come, woe unto those by whom the offence cometh." I would rather say, "God help the men that make the martyrs", than "God help the martyrs" - they have more need of prayer. Every living creature that is in the hand of God is safe. Every living soul that places itself in harmony after its best knowledge morally or physically with the Infinite is safe. We may by ignorance become the victims of physical law, but in the martyrdom with which we pass from earth in some agonising form of death; in the few moments or hours, weeks, months, or years, in which we endure the pains of martyrdom, we are in the fire of purification, we are in the great crucible of pain, and He, the Eternal Alchemist, is preparing to produce from this the thrice-refined gold. But not so of those that do inflict the pain - woe, woe to them! If there is an inevitable result of the moral law that purifies the soul through suffering, so there is an inevitable result of the moral law that re-acts upon those who inflict the suffering. Oh! let us take heed to this and reflect upon it. Pause, Spiritualists, before the spirit-circle, and question of the martyrs what is their condition. Question of those who have passed through great fires of tribulation. We may not, with illuminated eyes, perceive the angel-light upon their brows, but it is surely there. It shines on many an obscure form, on many a broken-hearted wife, a toiling child, a patient unrequited drudge, and many an humble being who lives and dies unknown, toiling away in dim obscurity the precious oil of life - from mortal recognition finding no sympathy, no pity, no help nor hope on earth. How many martyrs move around us now, bearing this bitter cross! We may pity as we hear the tale of martyrdom, but oh! the glorious transfiguration of the hour of death! Have you ever thought why the Man of Sorrows, despised and rejected of men, a houseless wanderer, without "where to lay his head," should appear to the eyes of his amazed disciples in the moment of transfiguration, a being so gloriously bright "they wist not what they said." Was not this the effect of the change from the mortal sufferer to the spiritual conqueror! Was not this the picture of a sorrowing earthly soul, shorn of its mask of earth, and shining in the glorious radiance of a spiritual life?

This is the glorious representation of the effect of earthly life and its pains and penalties appearing upon the purified spirit. And it does not take years, nor even hours, to effect these changes. It is enough that we suffer, endure, and realise the judgment without ourselves, whether in a minute or in a life; it is enough that in that judgment all the causes and effects of crime are judged within us: we spring up free from that judgment bright and purified. No need to come back to earth for “*re-incarnation*.” There are spheres enough in spirit-life to afford us all of progress, knowledge, and experience that we shall need; even those whose career has been violently cut off, whose earthly mission seems to be destroyed and snapped in twain. It is not a question of time how they shall work that broken mission out, it is only a question of soul experience; and whether it be the life of an hour for the babe, or the life of the century for the old man, so long as the soul is associated with matter here, it obtains all that the earth need give, all that material life can render. And beyond the boundaries of this life are all the experiences necessary for the full elaboration of that soul’s progress, especially, as I have shewn you, in the transition of the suffering spirit through the dreadful gates of martyrdom. It may be a consolation even to some amongst yourselves to analyse the deep and sublime philosophy of martyrdom, and consider the stern, but wise and just character of physical laws; to speculate on the soul experiences of those who may have perished in some vast catastrophe. When you have familiarised yourselves with spiritual revelations and spiritual conditions, you will know that martyrdom is not in vain - that lives are not snapped in twain outside of law - that no laws of God are broken, but all are ultimated and carried out, even in that worst and darkest problem of existence which we call martyrdom.

Souls of the martyrs! shades of the heroes! bright and glorious forms of earth’s patriots, brave reformers, noble sufferers and mighty teachers! If we have dared to draw aside the veil this night that hides thy shining forms from the eye of man, thou best knowest that thine inspiration has been the coal of fire that is placed upon these lips. Thou best knowest that it has been for earth to ask of thee, and that thou, through earthly lips, have rendered back the answer. Perhaps there are many of earth’s best and dearest yet to follow in the path of martyrdom; - perhaps there are some about us treading even now the hill to Calvary. Oh, may the lesson of this hour be with them in the darkness and the gloom - may they remember not alone the glorious liberty in which the martyred soul goes free, but may they ever feel in their bitter hour of trial that thou art pouring on this earth thine inspiration, and teaching us the uses of the bright and glorious mission which pain and suffering bring to men, then thou wilt not have died in vain; and, if by thy bright example, by thy holy teaching, by the revelation of thy transfiguration from earth’s darkness to the light of Paradise, we may be strengthened in our hour of trial - martyrdom for thee, and us will not have been in vain.

QUESTIONS ANSWERED EXTEMPORE

BY

MISS EMMA HARDINGE

AT THE

WINTER SOIREES, HARLEY STREET, LONDON

March 19th, 1866

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Question 1

IT is alleged by most mediums that there are times when a suspension of the medium power occurs; will you explain the law which governs mediumship in this particular?

Answer

IT is alleged by some naturalists that electricity is essential to the growth of the vegetable world, and that in the spring time when the processes of growth are most active, that the demand for this life element is great, and no surplus exists to produce storms of thunder and lightning. Pursuing this train of reasoning still further, it is added, that in the fall of the year when the processes of growth are ended, and those of decay in the vegetable world have supervened, the surplus of the unappropriated charge of electric life in the atmosphere is manifested in the form of the numerous thunderstorms so prevalent in the season of autumn. The same law that pervades the universe and manifests itself wherever electrical phenomena are displayed, attaches also to the human form, though with less definite periodicity. There is no existence throughout the realm of nature so apparently uncertain as the human form, because (being a compendium of all the forces in nature), it is subject to a greater variety of influences. Nevertheless, the laws that affect it are the same as those of the whole realm of nature. It is in the absence of a surplus amount of the electrical force, that medium power is ever suspended, it is when there is an excess of this force that medium power is in operation. Those persons who possess by nature great excess of electrical force are never subject to the total suspension of mediumistic power, however much the degree of that force may vary. There is a variety but never a total loss of it, and it is healthful to practice mediumship, from the fact that if such an excess is permitted to accumulate, it would manifest itself in the wild, erratic, and constant tendency to movement, that is always observed in the young of all creatures in whom there is a vast charge of what we call vaguely "the life principle" - but what should more correctly be termed electrical force. In the young of all creatures who are largely supplied with this force, nature wisely disposes of the surplus by an amount of involuntary activity that would wear out the set form of the adult. In conditions of suffering and disease also, you will find that persons who have manifested no medium power while enjoying the full play of health, are frequently the subjects of clairvoyance and mesmeric phenomena, such as trance, vision, dreams, somnambulism, and other phases of spiritualistic and mediumistic power. Why is

this? Not because the abnormal condition of disease is absolutely more favourable to mediumistic development than the normal state of health, but because the life principle which should be concentrated and distributed equally throughout the system is too rapidly parted with, from the very face of disease, and because the system has not a sufficiently concentrative force to retain it. As it is this life principle which forms the force or power which constitutes mediumship, the state of disease which gives off this force in excess, is of course favourable though not essential to mediumship. Now, all the varieties which appear in mediumistic powers result from changes in the organism and the action of physical laws producing varieties of physical states. The same varieties may be produced by changes in the atmosphere, the surroundings, or even the diet, mental state, associations, or physical conditions of the medium? We can lay down no precise analysis of conditions favourable or otherwise for mediumistic phenomena, from the fact that everything which affects the medium, affects the power, and change is the genius of life and temperament. Nevertheless we may define generally favourable conditions, classify and group temperaments, and in the varieties of groups, we find one class who never lose even temporarily their mediumship, although its force varies; another who only manifest it in conditions of physical suffering, yet another class who only exhibit it at special times and under special conditions of atmosphere and surroundings. There is a science in the production of all mediumistic manifestations, the study of which can alone render the erratic nature of the phenomena comprehensible. We should be happy to enlarge upon this subject should further questions be demanded in reference to it.

Question 2

WHAT is the connection, if any, between hysteria and mediumship?

Answer

HYSTERIA is a nervous affection common to persons of a highly susceptible temperament. As its seat is not unfrequently found in special nerves which physiologically speaking are peculiar to the feminine organism, and as mediumship is more frequently developed in the finely strung and susceptible physique of woman than the more indurated frame of man - so hysteria, which is produced by a highly susceptible condition of the nervous system unduly stimulated by excitement, is frequently supposed to be connected with mediumship, and that only because both states are liable to affect the same subjects. Hysteria and mediumship are not necessarily connected with each other, but both become manifest under certain conditions in the same person, and those who are highly sensitive to the influence which produces mediumship are the most likely to be affected with the disease "hysteria." There are many curious psychological and physiological facts related to each other which careful observation of the phenomena of magnetism and catalepsy, somnambulism and hysteria, mediumship and nerve-aura, together with other mental and physical states strangely interblended with each other would serve to illustrate. Affections of the throat and glandular diseases generally, are often found to co-exist with the occult powers of mediumship, clairvoyance, and somnambulism, at the same time that they can by no means be regarded either as their cause or effect. I would say that those highly strung physiques generally, which by reason of their peculiarly

nervous temperament are the subjects of one of these states, become liable from the nature of such a temperament to all and each of the other manifestations of nervous affections, and the relation between them is simply that which exists between fire heat, force movement, soothing and agitating influences, all and each varying phenomena of which can be called forth from the same electro-magnetic apparatus, under different conditions of its powers.

Question 3

WILL you explain to us the origin of language? Are the element forms which we term roots mere abstractions? Are they imitations of the sounds of nature, or are they formed in obedience to some law by which sound becomes a fitting expression; first, of the outer, and then figuratively or correspondentially of the inner life of man?

Answer

THE whole of these questions involve separate points. The first of these, concerning the origin of language, we shall treat as first in order. You will all have remarked who have observed the habits of savage life, that the earliest attempt which man in his primitive state of being makes to express himself is by gesture, especially in those who manifest the nearest approach to what we may call an aboriginal state, as in the savages of Australasia, and Central Arica. We find there is an invariable difficulty to teach such persons to articulate words clearly; in fact, the utterances of the most savage nations scarcely exceed low guttural sounds. As men advance into higher states of civilisation, we find marked evidence of an improvement in their powers of speech, a diminution of their redundancy of gesture, and a clearer utterance through the improvement, which the practice of speech produces in their vocal organs, and capacity for articulation. Again, in the earliest forms of language or speech, we find that the tendency of man is to express himself in monosyllables. In a people who hold little or no intercourse with their fellow men, and who are therefore unprogressive, language is mainly confined to monosyllables, as amongst the modern Chinese, and some others of the Mongolian tribes. Amongst this conservative people language now, as thousands of years ago, consists principally of monosyllables. On the contrary, in an old, and probably a decaying race, like the Red Indians, a race which has been, but is now unmistakably and inevitably "passing away," this people (still retaining their ancient traditions and habits, and even the shadowy memories of all that their prime has once witnessed) use a compound and highly synthetic language. The Indian dialects, varied as they are in different tribes, are so full of ideality, and so redundant in their attempts at expression, that no language upon earth is more instructive in deduction concerning the past history of the people who make use of it.

Physiologically speaking, speech may be regarded first, as one of the strongest lines of demarcation between the animal and the man; next (when the spine, instead of running laterally along the ground, as in the animal, becomes erect, as in man, and there is a freer expression for the air which passes through its proper conduits), it is evident that this change of attitude is instrumental in its effect upon the vocal organs; again, as the mind becomes impressed with many ideas, and great varieties of objects (as in conditions of civilisation) are presented to the intellect, requiring many words to

represent them, mobility of speech, and a corresponding improvement in tone, is invariably manifest in the expression or clothing for the ideas which language affords: hence (as the inevitable expression of the intellect), speech must be proportioned first, to the formation of the vocal organs; next, to the mental stimulus that moves those organs; next, to practice in variety and mobility of words; and, finally, to an ear cultivated by listening to varieties of sounds from others. Now, whilst we believe that speech is the peculiar gift of humanity, we notice that all creatures have a mode of communication with their kind. Some means of communion exist even amongst the humblest of creatures - as in the insect, reptile, fish, and amongst birds. All creatures hold intercourse with each other; and the higher the animal kingdom ascends, the more surely does their mode of communication become obvious, improve in intelligence, and tend towards the utterance of sounds. Hence the culminating point of nature's efforts at expression are found in the varied tones of the human voice, while the highest expression of civilisation is a diffuse and synthetic language. Speech, which must be necessarily imperfect in the *child race*, ever improves as it tends onward to the manhood of time; nevertheless, when we investigate, through the study of philology, the various "Families" or groups into which the languages of earth have been classed, we find much reason for assigning to them a common origin. Even in the ancient Sanscrit, a tongue very full, complete, and redundant, we have abundance of proof that the roots of the language have strong affinity with the modern English; while the monosyllabic Chinese and the compounded American-Indian, both as strikingly different in grammatical structure as opposite points of the compass, still give evidence of a decided affinity in their roots or origin. Finding, then, that the two great sources of comparison, namely grammatical structure and roots, are liable through laboured investigation to resolve themselves into great probabilities of a common origin, we propose to deal with this difficulty by considering whether there is not in nature herself, and the attempts of primeval man to emerge from barbarism and express his progress in the form of language, quite sufficient testimony of a deductive character to show that language is nature's own impulse to express ideas; and that as ideas multiply, forms accumulate, and a large range of objects to represent, necessitates a large range of language, - these all grow proportionally together, and develop in increasing ratio with each other.

The study of philology is so complicated and so diverse that it would be impossible, in answering one question, to enter more deeply into it; but we may here add, we cannot accept of the bald definitions concerning "roots" which scholars give. Tracing it to the *origin of roots*, language starts with nature. Roots, indeed, are distributed amongst various nations; but whether we search amongst the Greek roots, or the Hebrew, or even the Sanscrit and Chinese, there is a wonderful similarity in each, and in each a resemblance to many of the sounds which are still uttered by savage nations. We believe that all "roots" are the inevitable expressions of nature; that they are the words which God puts into the mouth of ancient Adam when he arrays all things in creation before him, and bids him name them. They come even as the conception of colour comes. We name it; it is inevitable to us; and could we trace back the earliest attempt to found a language, we should arrive there at the true name of all things. Varieties of language arise simply in harmony with the varieties of nations, of customs, and the growth of ideas. Permit me to add to this answer one thought that is not included in the question. It is this - In the most advanced spheres of spiritual life there is no spoken language - no outward form of speech. All communication is *perception*. Spirits look upon each other, and know and understand each one's

thoughts: spirits behold the flower and realise its meaning. It is a hieroglyphic, having a meaning far deeper than its beauty, bloom, or perfume merely. It is apart of nature, and where it appears it represents to the comprehensive mind its entire history, place, and affinities in creation. And so of all colours, sounds, shapes, and forms - all and each have far more of meaning than their more external appearance. They mean good and evil, light and darkness, mind as well as matter, and metaphysics like physics, - all that is bright or dark in the human soul is as much mapped out in colour, sound, and shape, as in outward expressions of deeds themselves. There are most potent meanings in sound - meanings in the very utterances of nature, which, to the quick ear of the spirit who understands nature, are appreciable at once. Consequently, all creation's harmonies speak so intelligibly to the spirit, that speech which is but an imperfect mode of attempting to interpret thought, and which is confined simply to the material form, is no longer needed by the spirit. The foundations of language exist in barbarism. The ultimatum of language is civilisation, while its necessity ceases with spiritual perfection. We commence with the rudest forms of matter - making sounds to attract attention; we end with that knowledge which needs no other expression than the perception of the spirit.

Question 4

WHAT was the state of the human race in its first creation, and what did it lose by the fall?

Answer

YOUR questions are so shaped as to make one answer another. What was the state of the flora and the fauna in the earliest periods of the earth's history? The flora was rough, rude, coarse, simple; the fauna were either strange, grotesque, and monstrous, or else humble molluscs, or simple radiata. The vertebrate animal and mammalia came at length, - but came as *growths* in the progressive order of nature. What then must have been the first condition of humanity, when the atoms of matter were sublimated enough (by passing through immense varieties of animal forms) to produce man? He came as did the flora and fauna. Whenever the conditions for life were fitted to originate him, and wherever in every part of the known world there was a capacity to produce man, thus did he come, in harmony with the development of all other forms of being, and in no special or different mode. "The fall! "The fall from what? From ignorance to knowledge! is that a fall? From barbarism to civilisation! from infancy to manhood! Thus, and thus only, has man fallen; - in no other sense, that we can discover. Even if we could accept of that which lacks all scientific authority - that is, authority in aught but the allegorical mode of representing the exodus of mankind from its state of innocence into knowledge, as rendered in the Jewish Scriptures - if we could accept of any other historical account of the origin of man than that which nature, science, and the harmonies of both point out, our reverence for the Great Architect of creation would induce us to deny the possibility that He could make any mistake in His creation, or so great a failure in His all-wise purposes as you imply in the term of "The fall." How would you deem of any human workman who should fashion a machine with the intention that it should perform a certain work and who so failed to accomplish his purpose, that in anger or disgust at

its failure he should next proceed to destroy it? and yet more - after having condemned his first work as worthless, that he should hit upon no other mode of improving on his failure than the re-creation of a machine similar to the old! We have before, in this place, been compelled to point to the fact, that we accept of the historical account of "the fall of man" rendered in your Scriptures, as that which Christ and his apostles claimed it to be - "and allegory" - the teaching of the "letter which killeth," requiring the interpretation of the Spirit to make that Scripture life and wisdom. Were we to take the entire of the history of the Jewish Scriptures and measure them by the definition rendered by St Paul - himself one of the noblest and best of the theological writers amongst the Jews - we should say that even the history of Abraham and Sarah, according to him, "is an allegory," - "which things are an allegory," he writes. We need not enquire into these mysticisms now; it is enough for us to know that science now gives us absolute proofs concerning the origin of material forms, the construction of society, and the growth of civilisation, knowledge, and human history. All this carries us back to Central Asia, where strange, rude troglodite remains of humanity, are the first monuments of the race, and these represent a people of whom we have even no history, no tradition. A small, dwarfish, woolly-headed race are there sculptured; and from this alone, besides innumerable other sources of witness, we may gather something of our first view of primeval man upon this earth. Why do we question so doubtfully the origin of man, more than that of any other being or form of being? Science assures us that we need but place the conditions for life in order anywhere, to ensure its manifestation. Associate moisture, air, heat, and solid matter together, assemble the elements of life, whether in the vegetable or animal world, in due juxtaposition, and we have life - life in the insect, reptile, animal, or the vegetable form. All things are tending to life: is man alone an exception "No! It is the glory and sublimity of creation to recognise that its grandest and culminating points of existence - man, proceeds in the march of the ages just where he should be, as the last work performed in the grand laboratory, but ultimated by the same simple and sublime laws that pervade all nature beside. It is in reverence for God's laws rather than scepticism of what man calls "His Word," that we believe the Creator has made NO FAILURE IN CREATION.

We reject, therefore, the literal interpretation of the fall, as rendered by a literal interpretation of your Scriptures; and, whilst we believe that the babe falls from the state of pure, angelic innocence - which is, after all, but ignorance - to the condition of manhood, which in the knowledge of good and evil may prove him to be no longer the ignorant and innocent, but the very guilty man, so do we recognise that humanity changes by growth, and in that sense, and in no other, do we recognise a fall for man.

Question 5

WILL you explain the process of death, and of birth into the spirit-world?

Answer

DEATH and birth, whether into the natural or the spiritual worlds, are one and the same thing. Mortal death is but the birth of the soul into the spirit-world. There is, perhaps, no more beautiful or philosophical explanation of death than that passage, so

often quoted and yet so little understood, that “the wages of sin is death.” We do not mean by sin the guilt of criminal action only, but sin is imperfection - imperfection throughout the realm of nature. There is a law by which all things harmonise. They commence from a point, they grow up from the smallest atom in being, become a centre of attraction, and, by the inherent life in all things, gather up from the various elements that surround them, materials to build up the form to which they tend. They arrive at last at the culmination point of their vigorous growth, and from this stage they have no more power to attract a sufficient amount of life elements to sustain the now decaying form. They have turned the hill of time, and descend into its valleys; they waste more than they gather in; and, at last, when the power of attraction is ended, when the electrical pole of the battery of life can no more draw the aliments from nature necessary to sustain being, the spirit withdraws; the gates of life are closed against it, and the spirit, fully ripened for another world, is born therein.

This is the history of all forms - whether in what is called the inanimate or the animated world. And thus the history of birth, life and death are but sequences one to the other. As the seed dies, the shoot grows from it, and hence the development of the plant, the blossom, the new seed, and then the death of the whole structure, and the gathering in of whatsoever it has produced, the flax, the hemp, the cotton. We kill the fibre, *as fibre*, in order that it shall live again in some fresh and more useful condition. We weave it into this fabric (*holding up a handkerchief*), and now it is full of life. There is some mysterious power of attraction that binds together these particles. We see it not; but to-day it is - a few years hence and it shall be dead; dead in its present form, but still living in some other element than this shape. This fabric will be crumbled into dust, but the attraction that binds it together now will be somewhere in existence, and every atom gathered up into the great totality of matter. Nothing is lost, visible or invisible. The process by which this substance decays from the culminating point of its life and vigour until it dies, is very gradual - but it comes at last, and in the death of this substance it liberates the attraction into the vast laboratory of attraction, and so even the substance of this thing, which is the life principle, is born into some other substance. The vast earth itself was born, from the death of the comet. The comet was a birth from the nebulae of some starry mass in the skies; and this again was condensed as a birth from the unparticled nature of the elements. As one state of nature died, another was born from it. All is the same, even in the vast sums of life existing in suns, satellites, and worlds; our earth is very young; it has not yet attained its full culminating point of life, but there is a period when that too must progress to a standard of final growth, and then turn the hill of time, and perhaps die! Mountains, vast hills, and gigantic rocky ranges - all these grow, aggregating unto themselves the elements that form them from mere atoms. They reach their vast life's manhood, and then the attraction passes from them - they crumble into dust, and perish.

I have said thus much to shew you that the law of life and death is pervasive in all things alike. Even so with human life and the relations of matter with spirit. I have before traced the embryotic cell in its processes of growth, and shewn how a mere monad of matter gathers up from its surroundings the elements that extend it into the rudiments of a brain; and then, by throwing off fibres, forms a nervous system, then proceed to secrete the various elements that build it up into a heterogenous and organic structure, until at last it produces a fully formed and living being. It is then born into another sphere than its embryotic one - even into the outer life of earth -

and from this birth, growth proceeds, until the magical transmutation from the wailing babe into the strong and mighty man is fully effected. When we contemplate the grand and powerful form of man - the man of muscle, knowledge, and mind - we may cry, "Can this then be the babe? Surely the babe is dead, and the man is the growth from its altered life! Ay! and such are the processes of life in the mighty changes that are effected through growth.

The only diversity in man is the fact that he has gathered up from all things in nature the elements that make him man. When he arrives at manhood, he still builds up the form with aliment and elements, but he wastes more than he attracts, and so he gradually decays; and if life is permitted to attain to its full and natural periods of being, the waning life of man will slowly pass away, and the repulsive force shall prevail over the attractive, till the hour shall come when the powers of life shall feebly pulsate, and then be quenched in the eternal sleep of death. But even then, whilst the freed spirit escapes from the broken casket, the forces of motion shall act in the crumbling form, but operate only in the mode of repulsion or decay. 'Tis strange and touching to observe how, in the age of feeble man, as the spirit nears the bright and shining shore, and the glorious forms of the immortals gleam across the beautiful river in dreamy shadowy visions, scarce understood, or deemed hallucination, how surely the normal decay of the earthly powers seems to enlarge the border of the spiritual, and the old and feeble man, in his state of gradual abstraction, seems to be drawn nearer and nearer to the shining shore, to which his soul is speeding. He feels the invisible cords that are drawing him away from the realms of matter to the home of his soaring spirit. Earth's landscapes grow more dim, but the visionary glory of a brighter world breaks ever through the gloom. As earth's twilight closes round him, heaven's stars come trooping up on the firmament of mind, until, when the midnight hour of mortal death is sounding, the last vibrating echo of the bell is lost in the glorious morning chime that heralds in the arisen day of spiritual existence. This is not death, but birth. The changes of mortal life are but the immortal's growth, and whilst the body fades like a worn-out garment, the spirit shakes it off in the normal birth of a new and better state.

Death! There is no death. It is but change from one glory to another - it is but the birth from one sphere to another. Death is a liberty angel, which opens the door of matter for the captive soul bound in the dungeons of earth. Death pays the wages of sin; for sin is the imperfection of the worn-out body, unable to sustain and fulfil the uses of existence longer. Death is the beautiful and holy steward, that pays back to the earth all the wages of earth's imperfection. Have you ever passed by the graves of those who have perished from out your midst by violence, with a stain of evil on their names, and not felt the loathing with which society regards the criminal softened by the change of death, until your voice grows low and pitiful as you speak of them, and the tone of harsh reproach is changed to kind regret? And thus is it ever, death is the penalty of sin, and its just demands fulfilled, we feel, if we fail to comprehend our thought, that the good alone is eternal and preserved, the evil is a transitory shadow which death in part dispels. The good man becomes exalted through the gloom of death into actual sainthood, the evil melts like midnight shades in the bright revealments of a spiritual day; so death is the mighty alchemist whose work it is to transmute earth's baser metals into spiritual gold. Let the old past die! Old buildings, forms, old architecture, customs and habits, all must perish; but in their death spring up the new and beautiful. The great Architect of creation gathers up the beautiful with

such perfection and fidelity, that nothing good can die. Rome and Greece are in ashes, but their faults alone have perished - their virtues still survive - their histories of warning and instruction are with us still - their arts and sciences are the foundations of our schools and colleges - their pride and luxury - their reckless waste of life - their dark superstitious rites, and spirit of greedy conquest, death has swallowed up - their grand achievements in the games of intellectual warfare, are all immortal as the souls that battled for the good, and won, through triumph over evil. In physics as in metaphysics, the imperfect only dies. The sin alone can perish. So I hail the angel of death, as the genius of progress, and that not alone for the soul, but for the earth on which we live. Surely it would be cumbered with forms of the effete, the old and worn, did not kind glorious death sweep away with the besom of destruction, the relics of the imperfect in the past, while it still conserves the spirit of the beautiful in never-dying life.

Question 6

WHAT is the philosophy of spiritual possession?

Answer

SPIRITUAL possession is at once one of the most perplexing and apparently paradoxical spiritual problems which can be offered to human philosophy to solve. It has been vaguely stated by some spirit communications that “like attracts like,” and hence that the pure and virtuous cannot attract, and therefore cannot be possessed by the impure and unholy spirit. Again, it has been represented that, as the spirit medium, or the person capable of being possessed by spirits, becomes so by virtue of some specialty in the *physique*, the moral and intellectual status of the spiritual influence is not necessarily determined by that of the medium - it is simply, therefore, a question of whether the medium is susceptible in its physical structure of the influence of spirits, and, if so, the rest depends on the ability and will of the spirit to exercise control. It must have been remarked by those who have had much experience in the unhappy condition called “spiritual possession,” that its subjects are far more constantly found amongst young children, fair girls, and pure women, than amongst the impure and naturally vicious; also, that the exhibition of this calamitous state seldom takes place amongst Spiritualists, but rather in persons unacquainted with the subject of Spiritualism; and, again, that the line of demarcation between acknowledged lunacy and spiritual possession is exceedingly difficult to draw. To the experienced in such matters this fact seems to be obviously overlooked by the medical faculty generally.

In the first place, then, we would urge that lunacy is not always spirit possession, that the latter state exists alone, but can co-exist with lunacy. We believe that the influence of spirits upon the human mind is the normal and healthful relation between the two worlds; that the action of the spirit in the various phases of mediumship, and the possibility of a spirit’s possessing temporarily the organism of a medium for the purpose of *temporary* control is also legitimate, and, under proper conditions, healthful and beneficial, physically as well as spiritually; but, in the case of a spirit entering into the organism and wilfully maintaining possession of it, either against the

desire of the subject or for the expression of words or actions objectionable to that subject, is diabolical, and only takes place under conditions of mental or bodily disease, and in its results is always pernicious and highly to be deprecated.

In the first place, then, we claim that no spirit mediumship occurs so much in accordance with the mental as with physical states; hence, the finely strung nervous organisms of women are more favourable to the electrical conditions of spiritual control than those of men - while the very susceptible forms of the young and fragile, are still more liable to become subjects of magnetic influence. In the case of obsession, however, we would urge that there are two specialities to be observed, first, the nature of the operating spirit, next that of the subject.

I affirm that the spirit, in such instances, is invariably *evil*; and the organism of the subject invariably diseased, or, at least, mentally or physically unbalanced. Carefully investigate the subjects of possession, and you will find it *inevitable* that no such condition can occur until a decided lack of balance might be noticed in the organism, in some instances almost amounting to a tendency to insanity. Insanity and spiritual possession are constantly mistaken for each other. In your lunatic asylums are unbalanced minds, as you term them, who are absolutely possessed by restless, ill-conditioned, unhappy, and depraved human spirits, and these exhibit themselves through the disturbed mind or weak body in what the physician calls insanity, but the psychologist determines to be the action of spiritual possession.

Nevertheless, I affirm, without being in this place or at this time able to prove my affirmation, that no such possession ever takes place in a subject who is not, previous to that possession, partly unbalanced, mentally or bodily. And thus it is that we find the pure, fair, and innocent often become subjects of this fearful calamity. You may ask wherefore such persons should be more subject to this evil than those whose tendencies are in the direction of vice? I answer you that the bad man is often as strong as the bad spirit; and it needs, in the philosophy of spiritual control, that the subject shall be weaker than the operator. Where the power is equal, the spirit may tempt - may add by his influence to the tendencies of the bad man, but he does not *control* them. You have noticed, in the modern spiritual movement, that woman is far more susceptible to spiritual influence than man. If your experience extends to ancient history, you will find that the sybil and the prophetess, though rarely the subject of historical mention, yet when described (as in the case of the Cumean sybil, graphically depicted by Virgil) give evidences of a condition strongly analogous to the highly strung, susceptible, and nervous sensitives who are known amongst you to-day as spirit-mediums. Were the true philosophy of psychology and spirit-control clearly investigated as a science, it would be found that the ancient sybil and modern medium are of the female sex, from specialities of organism and susceptibility of mental and magnetic control, arising, not from mental imbecility, but physical susceptibility; and, I repeat, it is from these causes that women and fragile persons generally, irrespective of their mental and moral states, are more commonly the subjects of spiritual possession than men. With reference to the purpose and nature of the spirit who operates in this matter, I cannot modify my opinion that it is invariably evil - evil alike in object, tendency, and result. A good and wise spirit would realise the abnormal and injurious tendency of the control too thoroughly to practise it; hence the permanent possession a human organism by a good spirit is unknown. As the spirit is, therefore, invariably mischievous and evil in purpose, it will be understood

that he realises some gratification from his pernicious act - gratification of a similar character, in fact, to that of ill-disposed and mischievous minds who love to exercise rule over others on earth, or delight in tormenting those whom they can influence. There are myriads of unhappy spirits, earth-bound, as it were, by their attractions to this world, who love to hover around the scene of their vanished affections, and who find gratification in acting out evil and malicious propensities again, through the susceptibility of their suffering victims. In a word, there is, unhappily, far too much reason to understand why the demons whom human societies too abundantly manufacture in their city streets should, when landed on the shores of spirit-land, long to return to the more congenial atmosphere of their earthly crimes, and gladly avail themselves of some weak or susceptible human organism to do so, for us to marvel at the action of the spirit. The greatest difficulty in the solution of the whole problem is the proper mode of cure for such cases; and in attempting to deal with this, I must again reiterate my affirmation that every subject of spiritual possession will be found physically weak, if not actually diseased, and sufficiently mentally unbalanced to become a subject for the control of the spirit. I believe the first efforts of the good physician, in such cases, should be directed invariably to the physique of his subject. As much and as constant exercise as the constitution can bear is the first prescription; legislation for the whole system - applied, of course, to special manifestation of disease, another; careful avoidance, either of undue stimulus or abstinence in diet, most essential; the force supplied by stimulant in diet is always unsafe in cases of spiritual possession, because it is far too satisfactory to the spirit to be endured for a moment, whilst the weakness induced by fasting is equally injudicious, as tending to lower the system, and therefore promote the magnetic control of the spirit.

Bathing is one of the most special and invaluable aids to the cure of obsession, for magnetic and physiological reasons, which can not at present be rendered. The best and most important mode of treatment is psychological; and in this respect infinite judgment, adapting itself to special cases, is demanded in the physician. To speak only in generalities, I would urge that the first aim of the operator shall be to distract the mind from all spiritualistic subjects, and all magnetic emotions; let the whole subject and its possibilities be studiously banished from the mind of the subject, and totally different organs than those unduly exercised be called into play. Let *music, exercise, bathing, diet, strong will, healthful magnetism, pure air, constant occupation in light, trifling and interesting duties*, be some of the medicaments employed; and, under the action of the paroxysms, strong, pure, and healthful magnetism be applied in mesmeric passes, accompanied by a strong will and determined purpose, and the treatment will surely be ultimately successful. I consider proper and well assimilated magnetism, administered in mesmeric passes, as a cure which could ACT ALONE, and supersede all others; but as this agent requires careful adaptation and special conditions, both in subject and operator, I must commend the use of treatment, which would be effective without it.

Question 7

WILL you define the difference between soul and spirit, as used by St Paul in the First Epistle to the Thessalonians, 5th chapter, 23rd verse, "I pray God your whole spirit and soul and body be preserved blameless."

Answer

WE are asked to define the meaning attached to words which are susceptible of entirely different interpretations in the lips of different individuals. Unquestionably St Paul intended simply to represent a difference between soul and spirit and body, and that such a difference exists, is the opinion of the intelligence that controls your speaker; but whether he realised the same idea that we attach to these words, is a question we are not prepared to answer, and therefore we will render you such a response as proceeds from what we feel to be a truth existing in nature, rather than an attempt to speculate upon what St Paul might have believed on the subject. There is a triune nature in man. The body is the material part, consisting of a structure made up from a combination of all the elements in the universe. Throughout this structure there is that magnetic element of which we have so often spoken as the life of all things, and this magnetic element, or life, is one substance, but differs in degree in various bodies, according to the nature of the atoms of matter which compose various bodies. Hence, whilst magnetism in its universal effect of motion may be called an unitary substance, yet as differing in its exhibition in different bodies, it is variously described. Thus it is called simply magnetism, in metals; electricity, in airs; life, in animated being; but in all the entire range of creation it produces life or motion. It is a substance, though invisible, not intelligent or ponderable. Compared with the known forms of matter in fluids, airs, and solids, as classified by chemistry, it seems to be neither matter nor spirit: it inheres in form, grows with them, gathers up the elements to sustain them, and by attraction builds up the life-like form, and maintains by cohesion its integrity. Again; by repulsion it holds the atoms apart, and in due order gives off waste material, and finally separates or scatters them in the process of the decay called death. It moves in two modes only, namely, by attraction and repulsion; it inheres about the spirit, and is the bond that binds it to the body. It is often mistaken for the spirit, but we treat it as a distinct element, and only in combination with the spirit call it "soul." By those who fail to recognise the active agency of this element and its distinctive functions and being, the spirit is often improperly called the soul: but we claim the soul to be dual, and define it as consisting of this magnetic or spiritual body and the spirit. We realise that in the human form there is a trinity of elements and that these are the outward, or material body; the magnetic life, or spiritual body; and the still more sublimated and most interior element of spirit. We believe that this trinity of elements pervades the entire universe. In the realm of matter, the vast mass of suns, satellites, systems, and earths, constitute the body; the illimitable fountain of magnetism, from which all things derive the power of motion, is the life; and the boundless ocean of intelligence, or mind manifest in the grand or supremely intelligent order of the universe, is the spirit. The totality of all these elements is the universe, and in this immensity we recognise the being of an infinite, eternal Trinity, whom we call God! The God of theology is most commonly a representation of some vast image, conceived by the superstitious minds of men; but the vast totality of the God of the Universe is the Trinity that fills space, and occupies being, and is Creation and Creator alike. Hence God is at once the body, spirit, and soul of the universe. As of the God, Creator, so of the child, creature; like our Author, we are body, life, and spirit - as a mortal man, a trinity; as an immortal soul, a spirit and spiritual body. So long as soul inheres to the body we are triune; at the separation of the body by death from the soul, we are dual - that is, life and spirit. In the action of death, that spiritual body departs with the spirit, and in the duality of life and spirit is the existence of the new-born soul. We believe that the noble apostle Paul, the best

and most philosophic of the Hebrew writers, understood this definition. He speaks of "a spiritual body and a natural body." He realised in this phrase that there was a spiritual body that was not alone intelligence, mere embodied mind, but an actual body, though of a spiritual nature; therefore we believe that in the passage referred to he felt, if he did not scientifically define, the trinity existing in a man of a body, a soul, and a spirit. We only differ in terms, by calling the soul the combination of the spirit and the life, and therefore we simply define his phrase by somewhat different terms, although we agree substantially with him in the idea that there is a diversity in the elements that constitute man, which closely analysed we may aptly term, body, life, and spirit, or simply, body and soul.

MR COLEMAN said that he thought the meeting would agree with him, that they should not trespass any further upon Miss Hardinge on that evening. She professed herself to be perfectly ready to continue answering the questions, but he thought they would agree with him, that they ought not to make any further demand upon her.

MISS HARDINGE: Our strength is inexhaustible to-night! There is not only a source of magnetic strength outpouring from the mental states of those who surround us in this chamber, but as the times are rife with change, and the demand upon all workers in the cause of truth has been, and still will be great for effort - so the supply to all susceptible and receptive organisms is proportioned to the demands of the hour.

As the great demand of the hour, which has truly been called one of "the eclipse of faith," is for "spiritual light" - as the torch-bearers who have been entrusted with the glorious charge of bearing the bright standard of spiritual light are dependent for their strength on the inexhaustible fountain of life, "magnetism" - and the magnetizers of the spirit medium, though invisible, are never-failing sources of supply for the world's demand - so we repeat, your speaker's strength, dependent on an inexhaustible source, is of inexhaustible power. In deference to the wishes of your chairman, and respect to your patience as auditors, we cease to tax your attention further, earnestly thanking you for the courtesy with which the wearisome metaphysics of this evening have been received.
