

A PROSE PREACHMENT

The Fatal Paradox and Sin of Sorrow For the Dead.

THE current iniquitous and ruthless war has greatly enlarged the world of Death. The only way to decrease its empire, to reduce it to insignificance, is to enlarge the world of Life. The enlargement of the world of Life is a personal duty for each individual still alive. Once undertaken, it will result in the enhancement and ennobling of existence, and in the discovery of ineffable and compelling consolation for the spirit, not only in spite of the tribulations of existence but also in very virtue of them. The only way to enlarge the world of Life is for each living individual voluntarily to establish, consciously to create, connections with the noumenal, the incorporeal, the invisible, the impalpable world—the world of Spirits Departed.

I am not recommending any species of necromancy, occult science, clairvoyance, clairaudience, or spiritualistic transports. My point of view is human and logical—practicable; my aim is as practical as it is human; and my method of creating connections with the Departed is as sane as it is simple and effectual. Possibly by the following homely illustrative simile I may the more convincingly be understood to be commending a genuinely commonsense method of enlarging the world of Life.

Tyros in writing nuptial notices for the rural press are wont to use an ohese platitude, if the contracting parties to a marriage happen to be residents of different towns. In poverty of imagination and vocabulary, these "society reporters" turn this engagingly balanced period:—"The bride is one of Belleville's fairest daughters; but what is Belleville's *loss* is Lakeview's *gain*." This is gallant, but it is untruthful. There is really no loss at all occasioned by the departure of the Belleville bride to the Lakeview society; there is a compensating gain "all around"—a threefold gain. Lakeview's pleasant society is enhanced by the acquisition of another winsome woman. But Belleville is compensated, and should be consoled, by the fact that the marriage union of two citizens from different towns has created a new and living connection between the two municipalities: a hitherto non-existent common social interest in the life of each other now obtains in the two communities. That is a considerable gain in social or spiritual enlargement for both municipalities. Further, though the bride has gone to a distant town, parents and friends know that she has but departed in body, and that by voluntary thought and affectionate remembrance of her she is really, if not physically, as much with them *in* Belleville as she was before her bodily