

THE SERMON.

justice to admit the scriptural character of their doctrine.)

It asserts that memory and affection survive the change called death, and that our loved and lost are not caged up in the narrow enclosure of the orthodox heaven, but in a world as real as our own, a counterpart of our own, and that, under the laws of spiritual attraction which bind together those of mutual affection and similar character, they are often near their friends in the flesh and eagerly desirous of communion.

It asserts—and this is the key-note of the Spiritual Philosophy—that friends in the spirit realm may, by the now generally recognized law of telepathy, which, undoubtedly, is the basis of language in the spirit realms, communicate with those who are sufficiently sensitive to receive these impressions from the finer spirit realms.

A few words now about the bible. In arguing that Spiritualism is the teaching of the bible we do not mean to imply that this bible teaching is an absolute authority. We wish to show those who regard the bible as an infallible authority, and its teachings beyond all questioning, that Spiritualism is abundantly supported from its pages.

For ourselves we regard the bible as a very useful collection of books when properly interpreted. It is a library abounding with spiritual ideas, containing lofty ethical teaching, much beautiful inspirational literature, and a vast amount of religious poetry, prophecy and history, peculiar to the Jewish people.

It is not in any proper sense "a book," but as its title implies should be called "the books." It is not a unit in its teachings either upon God, man, or nature. It is a vast collection of Jewish sacred literature, embracing much that is mythical, allegorical, and fabulous, along with the history of the Jews, and the poetry and prophecy of that nation.

Its books generally do not claim inspiration, and no unprejudiced reader in the light of present-day science can accept its stories of the creation of the world and man,

or even its history, as correct, much less infallibly inspired.

All this, we hold, is quite consistent with a higher appreciation of its great value ethically and its great value historically when we receive it as a mirror reflecting the religious ideas and concepts of earlier times.

We do not question the assertion that much of the literature of the bible is the product of inspiration. We fully recognize the inspirational element in its literature, and can hardly understand how intelligent men can fail to perceive in some of the Psalms and Prophets, and in some parts of the New Testament, clear proofs of inspiration. We do not, however, on this account regard those passages as infallible because inspired; much less do we accord inspiration and infallibility to those legends of the creation of the world and man, and fabulous accounts of the flood and Babel, etc., with which the bible literature is bestudded.

No phrase more fitly describes the portions of the bible which are the product of inspiration than Heb. II:2, "the word spoken by angels," it being understood that the angels are the spirits of departed men whose loftier and sublimer thought resulting from contact with the spirit realms has been poured into the current of human life through the sensitives (prophets) of past ages, and thus found its way into our bible. The bible, then, so far as it is the result of inspiration, is the "word spoken by angels."

We are now prepared for a series of propositions showing the relationship between the collection of sacred books called the Bible and the Spiritual Philosophy.

1. The Bible in many passages both of the Old and New Testaments, asserts intercourse between earth and heaven in the frequent appearance of angels to men, and conversation between angels and men. To deny this is to deny the Bible. In fact, the record of these angelic visits to earth and of the messages thus delivered and of the influence of the spirit world upon prophet and seer and apostle, makes up the substance of both Old and New Testaments. It is the heart of the Bible story.