

Sunday Reading.

IMMORTALITY OF THE SOUL.

The views of Elizabeth Stuart Phelps on the immortality of the soul, the topic under discussion in the N. Y. Advertiser were given in PROGRESS last week. Here is what Cardinal Gibbons has to say on the same subject:

The knowledge of one's self, the history of others who have passed away, and faith in God compel the belief in the immortality of the soul. Within one hundred years, nearly all who now walk the earth will have bid farewell to the scenes of life, and their bodies will be a forgotten and insignificant portion of the earth upon which they tread. Though no fact is more evident than death, though nothing is more certain to the learned and unlearned alike, yet there is in all the millions who now inhabit the earth, a something that reaches beyond the grave, a something that peers through the portals of death, a something which says: I shall not, I must not die.

Besides the body, which will soon be consigned to the grave, there is a principle by which we move, and live, and have our being. This principle we call the soul. This soul has intellectual conceptions and operations of reason and judgment. Our minds grasp that which the senses cannot reach. We think of God and of his attributes; we have thoughts of justice and of truth; we know the difference between good and evil. This consciousness is inexplicable on the basis of a society material principle of being.

All nations, ancient and modern, whether professing the true or a false religion, have believed in the immortality of the soul, how much soever they may have differed as to the nature of future rewards and punishments, or the mode of future existence. Such was the faith of ancient Greece and Rome, as we learn from the writings of Homer, Virgil and Ovid. Belief in the soul's immortality was held by the ancient Egyptians, Chaldeans and Persians and other nations of Asia. Grotius testified that faith in a future life likewise existed among the Germans, Gauls, Britons and other tribes of Europe. The Indians of North and South America looked forward to the happy hunting grounds, reserved in after life for the brave.

This belief in a future life was not confined to the uncultivated masses. It was taught by the most eminent writers and philosophers among the enlightened and polished nations of antiquity. Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Seneca and Plutarch, guided by the light of reason only, proclaimed their belief in the soul's immortality. "The belief which we hold," says Plutarch, "is so old that we cannot trace its author or its origin, and it dates back to the most remote antiquity." Even idolatry implied a recognition of the soul's immortality, for how could men pay honor to departed heroes if they believed that death is the end of man's existence?

Belief in the soul's immortality follows necessarily from a belief in an all-wise God. God, who created nothing without a purpose, has given us a desire to know, and a longing to be happy. Man's intellect is not confined to the narrow limits of the body. It reaches down to the unexplored depths of the sea; it wings its flight to the heavenly orb; it enters into the subtle substances, penetrates the matter that composes them and separates their elements; it dissects its own thoughts; while the carnal body can at best but serve as an unwieldy pivot, upon which this time-defying principle depends. Yet when analysis and calculation have exhausted their powers, the intellect of man still finds itself balked by unsolvable problems. Can it be that this intellect so superior to the body of man, will perish forever, with its capacity for knowing still unsatisfied?

Why this unsatisfiable desire for happiness? Is it in vain? Yet ask any one of the millions who now live: Was there ever a time in your life when the cup of bliss was filled, was there ever a moment when you had all you desired and feared not its loss? Not one could answer yes, for death would say, with a hollow, mocking laugh: Thou fool, I come. Ask the miser who loves his wealth: Have you enough? His answer, accentuated by his thin, meager form, will be: More, still more. Ask the ambitious man, who loves self: Are you satisfied? His answer will be: Higher, still higher. Ask the sensual man: Did you find happiness in the gratification of your appetites? He will answer: "Vanity of vanities, and all is vanity." Ask the affectionate father or husband as he stands at the grave of his beloved. He will answer: We will meet again.

God has given us a desire for perfect felicity, which he intends to be one day fully gratified, and it is this felicity cannot be found, as we have seen, in the present life, it must be reserved for the time to come. And as no intelligent being can be contented with any happiness that is finite in duration, we must conclude that it will be eternal, and that consequently the soul is immortal. Life that is not to be crowned with immortality is not worth living. "If a life of happiness," says Cicero, "is destined to end, it cannot be called a happy life."

It must be so. Plato, thou reason'st well. Else whence this pleasing hope, this fond desire, This longing after immortality? Or whence this secret dread and inward horror Of falling into naught? Why shrink the soul Back on herself and craves at destruction? 'Tis the divinity that stirs within us, 'Tis heaven itself that points out an hereafter And intimates eternity to man.

God is all good and all just. Yet, if death end all, how can we reconcile our experience of the world with our ideas of God's goodness and justice? If death be the end of all, where would be the reward of virtue, the punishment of evil? Vice that ridicules and virtue that suffers, are

they to have the same reward? The honest man and the thief, made equal by death? The innocent maiden, seduced and betrayed, to have the same destiny as the selfish villain who laughs at her downfall? St. Vincent de Paul, who renounced the pleasures of domestic life to rescue the fatherless waifs of the street, and the vicious wretch who sent these innocent orphans of untitled fatherhood into a cheerless world, both to be treated alike by death? If death ends all, why restrain the inclination of our vicious appetites? If the soul be not immortal, we should say with Caesar, "Virtue thou art but an empty word."

Society, with its laws, is only a tyrant, patriotism an insane sentiment, if the soul is annihilated by the hand of death. The soldier is ordered to a post of danger. If he leaves it, he saves his life, but at the command of duty he remains and dies. Where is his reward? The honors that are paid to his memory? What benefit to him if his untaunted soul has ceased to exist? To sacrifice one's self for the public good is noble, generous and sublime; but if everything were to end in death, such a sacrifice of life were insanity for the soldier sacrifices, gratuitously throws away, a something which if death end all is of incalculable benefit to him—his life. Destroy the belief of the soul's immortality, and there will no longer exist a sufficient motive for heroic patriotism.

Eradicate this belief, and the world becomes the theater of anarchy and crime. Remember the result of the experiment when tried by France. Figuratively, the materialist, hesitated not to say, it was not petroleum but materialism that destroyed the monuments of France. "Destroy this belief, and duty becomes but a 'trope of sand.' Religion, virtue, civilization and liberty are parts of the same chain, linked together by a belief in the immortality of the soul. Break this necessary connection and the whole chain will go.

Great men who Prayed. There is no evidence, that we are aware of, that Napoleon was a man of prayer. Possibly he may have changed his relations to God, in whose existence he believed, after he went to St. Helena—but we must allow this strong man to the side of the argument which sets prayer down to weak women. If any other man of great courage and genius can be named who was prayerless, that side is welcome to the benefit. But Jesus Christ prayed, and he was the most manly of all men. Paul prayed. So also did Robert Bruce and his Scots, Oliver Cromwell and his Roundheads, Gustavus Adolphus and his Swedes, William of Orange and his Dutchmen, George Washington, the Duke of Wellington, General Havelock, Abraham Lincoln, Livingstone. As Paul said of the heroes who won by faith, time would fail to tell of the heroes who won by prayer. When one calls the roll of the praying men, it does not seem as if prayer was a habit limited for the most part to women—and when one calls the roll of heroic and devoted women, it is found that they all pray. And then in regard to praying women, one of the commonest confessions of great men in all the avenues of success and achievement, is that they owe all they have and are, to praying mothers.

Gentleness and Generosity. That which is true of gentleness ought also to be true of generosity. There are a great many generous people that are not liberal, and there are a great many liberal people that are not generous. A man is liberal when, taking a large view, he follows his higher judgment in regard to objects of relief or of donation. He does not need to see; he has a large comprehension of causes and influences, and so he is liberal. But a man that is generous generally follows his senses. He wants to hear the cry, to see the poverty, to feel the loss. Anything that he can hear, and see, and feel, and observe, he has the impulse of kindness toward, and that is being generous. A great many men are very hard and cold; they are liberal, but they have no generosity, and they have no credit for being even liberal. On the other hand, a great many persons are generous, and would give a cow to a widow that had lost one; but they would not give a shilling to a church, especially in the West, or a cent to a missionary among the heathen. They do not believe in such things! "Bring things home to my door and I will be liberal." I beg your pardon—you will be generous, and not liberal; for generosity is the senses working with kindness, while liberality is faith working with kindness, which is very much larger.

Bible Arithmetic. Ezekiel's seed was nearly eleven feet; a cubit was nearly twenty-two inches; a hand's breadth is equal to three and five-eighths inches; a finger's breadth is equal to a little less than one inch; a shekel of silver was about two shillings and eightpence; a shekel of gold was two pounds; a talent of silver was four hundred pounds; a talent of gold was nearly six thousand pounds; a piece of silver, or a penny, was eightpence halfpenny; a farthing was equal to a halfpenny; a mite was less than a farthing; a gerah was three halfpence; an ephah, or bath, contained four gallons and five pints; a hin was three quarts and three pints; an omer was six pints; a cab was five pints.

A Message from God. And Jabez called on the God of Israel, saying, Oh that thou wouldst bless me indeed, and enlarge my coast, and that thine hand might be with me, and that thou wouldst keep me from evil. And God granted him that which he requested." 1 Chronicles 4:10.

Sign Painters of God. If you paint a bottle only to amuse the spectator by showing him how like a painting may be to a bottle, you cannot be considered, in art-philosophy, as a designer. But if you paint the cork flying out of the bottle, and the contents arriving in an arch at the mouth of the recipient glass, you are so far forth a designer or signer; probably meaning to express certain ultimate facts respecting, say, the hospital disposition of the landlord of the house; but at

all even representing the bottle and glass in a designed, and not merely natural manner. Not merely natural—say, in some sense non-natural or supernatural. And all great artists show both this fantastic condition of mind in their work, and show that it has arisen out of a communicative or didactic purpose. They are the sign painters of God.—John Ruskin.

DUTIES OF A CHRISTIAN.

We are Christ's Witnesses and Should be Willing to Suffer for the Truth.

"And Moses said unto the Lord. Wherefore hast thou afflicted thy servant? and wherefore have I not found favor in thy sight, that thou layest the burden of all this people upon me?—Numbers xi. 11." The ground of the natural man's duty to future generations, as above outlined, is what God has done for the race, says Rev. William J. Hursh, of New York. The ground of the Christian's duty is what Christ has done for them, who believe God has set us a glorious example in this whole matter. He has made all things to await the coming of, and minister to the successive generations of men. No one era can claim all the benefits of the laws and forces of nature. The rain falls for all ages, and on the bad as well as the good. The sun rises and shines for the future as well as for the present, and for the unjust as well as the just. And so I say, because God is doing all this for all men and for all ages of men alike, we, made in his likeness, are committed to the same wide generosity by the very fact of being men. But to us who have accepted Christ and profess to be living out his doctrine and his commands, the obligation is even more binding. Let us show you his.

First of all we are called witnesses. Knowledge always carries responsibility, and it is especially so with knowledge of Christ. He has sent us forth to be witnesses of the truth. To his followers has he committed the whole work of bringing the evangel to bear upon the heart and lives of men. The more we know, by actual experience of our Lord's love and love, the more are we under obligations to witness to others of His grace. When there is a skilled sailor at the helm the sails only help forward the ship on her homeward course, but if the helm be handled badly the more sail she carries the worse it is for the bark. When the water in the millpond is conduced through the trenches to the mill-wheel it benefits man, but if it be allowed to rise unused it breaks its banks at length and sweeps everything before it; and what are these but feeble images of the advantages of used knowledge and the hurtfulness of stagnant and unemployed knowledge?

In the second place, we are called heralds. We are sent forth by our risen Lord not only to witness for the truth, but also to prepare the way before the truth. Surely, one thing is to clear out of the way as many of the stumbling blocks left us by the past as we can possibly remove. A large part of our obligation to the future is to leave as clear a footway as we may for the race with destiny. It is true that some of the disturbances, social, economic, political and religious, owing their rise to the complications of our day, will require many centuries before they are rightly settled, but we are to grapple with them resolutely, and do our utmost to get them quieted before our children step upon the scene of active management. It was because Ambrose saw in the city of Milan a center of ages-wide influence that he wrought earnestly for the clearing of the fountain of art and poetry. It was because Augustine recognized in the humble fishermen of Hippo sturdy evangelists who would carry the Gospel to many an island and coast, that he devoted his splendid talents to their instruction and their aid to think that Luther awakened Europe to his leonine roar simply because he saw that the people of Worms and Wurtemberg needed the gospel; or was he not conscious that that kindly challenge would reach posterity well? These men were great because they heroically faced their duty to coming generations, and as far as lay in their brain and blood and life, paid it!

Female Employment in England.

A report to the British Board of Trade by Miss Collet on the statistics of employment of women and girls has just been issued as a parliamentary paper. It shows, among other things, that only a very slight increase in the employment of women has taken place in the interval between the census of 1881 and that of 1891, the total number of women and girls returned as occupied at the former date, out of every 1,000 above ten years of age in England and Wales, being 340.5 in 1881, as against 344.2 in 1891. The number of males returned as occupied shows a decrease of one per 1,000. A further fact pointed out is that, notwithstanding the large number of headings of occupations in the census report—349 in all—more than four-fifths of the women and girls returned as occupied in 1891—that is, 277 out of every 1,000 over the age of ten—are included under eighteen headings. A remarkable increase in the employment of children under 15 years of age is noted, but, on the other hand, the statistics concerning women employed in textile and clothing trades show that in the towns most affected by married women's labor the percentage of married women employed is diminishing. There is more diminution, however, in the factory districts in the proportion of married women between 20 and 25. Notwithstanding this diminution, however, in married women's labor, Miss Collet thinks that the minimum percentage is still extremely high. Blackburn, Burnley, Preston, Stockport, Rochdale, and Bury occupy, it seems, an exceptionally bad position in this respect, and Miss Collet says of them: "In such towns, where nearly all the girls under 20, and half the women between 20 and 45, are engaged away from home, we may naturally look for a high infant mortality, and expectation is justified by the facts."

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IS PARALYSIS CURABLE?

MR. GEORGE LITTLE, OF ESSEX COUNTY, SAYS IT IS.

He Gives his Own Terrible Experiences to Prove the Truth of His Assertion—Suffered for Over Two Years—Both Himself and Family Thought That Only Death Could End His Sufferings—Again Enjoying the Blessing of Sound Health.

(From the Essex Free Press.) Life is truly a burden to those not blessed with a full measure of health and strength, but when a strong man is brought to the verge of almost utter helplessness, when doctors fail and there is apparently nothing left to do but wait the dread summons that comes but once to all, the case assumes an aspect of extreme sadness. In such a condition as this did Mr. George Little of the towns of Colchester North, find himself, and recently the Free Press bearing incidentally that he had recovered his strength, a reporter was sent to investigate. When seen, Mr. Little expressed a willingness to state the nature of his case, and his story is as follows:—



"Had to sit with feet in a hot oven."

Some four years ago Mr. Little suffered from a severe attack of lassa grippe which left his lower limbs partially paralyzed. He called in one of the best known physicians of Essex county, who appeared to do all that lay in his power for the relief of Mr. Little, but to no avail. For two and a half years he suffered the most intense pain and was confined to his bed for the greater part of the time. The doctor was puzzled with his case and as he seemed to obtain no relief, he changed doctors for a period. The second doctor did no better than the other, and Mr. Little returned to the one he had first called in. Finally, despairing of ever obtaining relief, he told his physician that he did not see any further use of taking his medicines, and believing he should die if he did not obtain relief in a short time. He had wasted away to little more than a mere skeleton, and was an object of pity by his neighbors, and felt himself a burden to his family. His wife and family had given up hope, and his neighbors all thought it was merely a question of time when Mr. Little's death would relieve his sufferings. While his limbs were partially paralyzed he could use them sufficient to hobble about the house and door yard, but if he undertook to walk to the stable he would be confined to his bed for a week or more. His limbs grew numb and cold. During the hottest summer days he was obliged to sit with his feet and legs in a hot oven, wrapped in flannels and hot cloths until the skin would come off in scales. Mr. Little believed that his physician was doing all that could be done, and has nothing but kindly feeling for the treatment he received at his hands but he is certain the doctor had no hopes of his recovery. He had tried an advertised mineral water taking in all seven gallons of it, but failed to obtain relief. After suffering for two and a half years, Mr. Little in the summer of 1893, read of a case similar to his own, that had been cured by the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Grasping at this last hope, he sent for a few boxes and began taking them. Before the second box was all used, Mr. Little was satisfied that he had found a remedy that would cure him of his exceedingly painful and mysterious ailment. Mr. Little continued the use of the Pink Pills for several months and was able to get out and do light work about his farm, which he had not been able to do for over two years. He continued taking Pink Pills a while longer, when he was fully recovered and was able to do any of the hardest work on his farm, and in the winter time worked almost steadily at saw logging and wood-chopping. During the past fall he says, he was frequently caught out in heavy rain storms when away from home, but he had so far recovered that his exposures have not brought any bad results. During the very cold weather of the present winter he was hauling wood to Windsor, a distance of fifteen miles. He looks at present as if he had never seen a sick day in his life time.

Mr. Little feels deeply grateful to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and claims that his complete recovery is entirely due to the use of the pills. He gives his testimony for the benefit of others who may be similarly afflicted. Mr. Little's wife who was present at the interview, corroborated Mr. Little's testimony and believes he owes his entire recovery to the use of Pink Pills. The entire family look upon the husband and father as one rescued from the grave by the timely use of Pink Pills.

On inquiry among Mr. Little's neighbors, we find that he is a man of undoubted veracity. He has lived in Essex county all his lifetime, and on his present farm in Colchester North, about four years. He is the superintendent of the Edgar Mills Sunday School, and his case is too well known in that district to be disputed. His neighbors looked upon his cure as a most miraculous one, his death having been expected among them for many months before he began the use of Pink Pills.

Bamboo Organ.

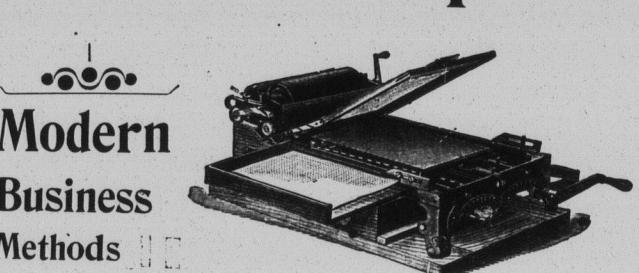
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