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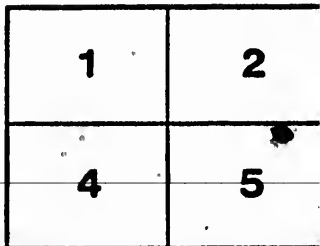
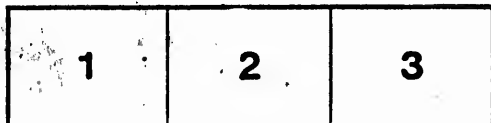
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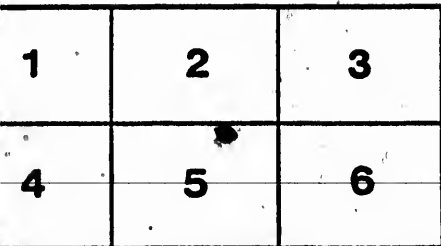
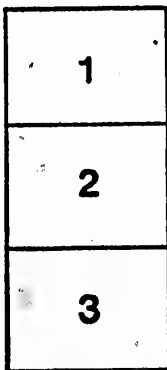
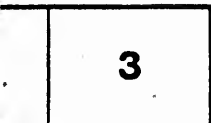
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—BY—

John Maclean, M.A., Ph.D.

ERE a visitant from another world to come to the earth and watch the advent of a child, his progress through the world, the servants which God has given to wait upon him in nature, flowers, fruits, animals, air, sun moon and stars; the amount of food necessary to sustain him from the beginning of life to its end, the machinery called into service to supply him with clothing, the educational institutions and the years of training to supply him with teachers to instruct him; the authors to write books and the factories to print and bind them; the laws of municipal and federal government to protect his rights, the teachers, ministers and churches to lead him in righteousness, and the few accomplishments which are found at last enjoyed by the single human being, he would be astounded by the vast outlay and the small results. This earth traveller lies down at the close of the day and falls asleep to rise no more; friends bear him to his last resting place, a small plot of ground, a simple slab is placed to mark the spot, and in a few years strangers read a forgotten name, his fellow pilgrims having journeyed homeward.. Is that the sum of a single life? Life is impressive with questioning sadness and an appeal for light; we struggle in the

dark with a great sorrow :

"But what am I?
An infant crying in the night;
An infant crying for the light;
And with no language but a cry."

It would be a frightful calamity to live always on the earth. There is a blessing in death. The graves of Christians in the Catacombs contain not a word or sign of the gloominess of death. Death is the best gift of nature to man, while sin, hunger and misery hunt for men in the world. Tradition relates how, when oxen could not be procured to draw their mother's chariot to the Temple of Juno, the sons of Cydippe, Cleobis, and Biton put themselves under the yoke and drew it forty-five stadia to the temple amidst the acclamations of the multitude, who congratulated the mother upon the filial affection of her sons. Cydippe entreated the goddess to reward the piety of her sons with the best gift that could be given to a mortal. They went to rest and awoke no more, and by this the goddess is fabled to have taught the blessedness of death.

The dead have a right to our respect and confidence; we reverence their personality and must not slander them as they are unable to defend themselves. We are under obligation to protect their honor. The friends of a dead statesman lying in the village where he was born will protect him from the calumny of his enemies. The dead have their rights as well as the living, and their confidence in us must not be destroyed. Moral respect for our ancestors will elevate our character and improve our hearts. A high opinion of their merits will restrain us from vice, and beget a sincere devotion to the principles which guided their lives. A godly parent may have an irreverent son, but where there is respect for his person and character,

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there will be restraint. Goodness has an affinity with truth and purity as seen in men and women living and dead. We are one with the saint in the cloister of past ages. We are joined to the hero in the story, the pilgrim of the days of chivalry and the reformer of the past century. We are conscious of alliance with all excellence which has departed. Paul is my teacher, Bunyan is my friend, Luther is my comrade. All ages are mine and all true men and women are members of my household. Their virtue, work and reward is mine to enjoy and perpetuate.

Life is continuous, There is no death to him who is blest with the godlike vision.

"There is no death !
What seems so is transition ;
This life of mortal breath,
Is but a suburb of the life elysian,
Whose portal we call death."

It is the loosening of the bonds of earth, the gateway of the City of God. Some night there comes a tap on the door and a spirit voice says, "Good-bye" and we quietly leave our earth-home for the land beyond. We take each other gently by the hand at the close of the day of life and say "Good-night, we shall meet in the morning." We are not separated, only standing apart waiting till the task of the day is done to go home together. Wordsworth's little maid asserts her faith in the continuity of life, and in the union of the family, though a brother and sister lie in the churchyard :

"How many are you then," said I,
If they two are in heaven?"
The little maiden did reply,
"O master! we are seven"

We pass under the cloud as we travel down the last lane, and the hand of the supreme touches ours and leads us out into the light.

There is only one life and one home divided

by a thin partition, the time portion of the house, the kitchen of earth and the eternal portion, with all the appurtenances of heaven. The human Christ was still in heaven while at the side of Nicodemus. "Life is the continuous adjustment of internal relations to external relations." We are always living. God is Father of the living and not the God of the dead. In agreement with God we are always alive.

Death is the entrance to another form of life. It is not the end of life, but the passage into a higher and purer sphere. The soul leaves the body as the butterfly leaves the chrysalis, for a new kind of existence. The dying seem to see and hear something which our senses cannot appreciate. Are their new senses awakened or old senses intensified and purified preparatory to new condition of life? Do they become departing seers blest with a vision reserved for mortals about to dwell in a new clime? Changes take place in body and mind in the evening of life and there seems to us to be changes going on in the soul. We stand in the presence of a great mystery and we are impressed that the inhabitant of earth is getting ready for the silent land. Is it possible for us to get a glimpse of the soul as it departs, or is this reserved as one of the spiritual discoveries of the future?

We are now enjoying the beatitude of one day, but we shall yet enjoy the beatitude of eternity. Earth is the shadow of heaven. The passing hour finds its beauty in the hope of immortality. The true man is willing to live or die as seems best to the Master of Life. Heaven is begun on earth and the grandeur of our life is found in the doctrine of eternity. The love of life is a mark of a healthy state mind. We are living in the valley where the

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shadows lie, but as we scale the mountains, the clouds of sin part asunder and we reach the pure atmosphere of heaven. God is on earth among men. There is an unseen world. There are hidden things in nature, a wider world of beauty, a land of mystery which we cannot see. It is unexplored, unknown and unseen. The flower and bird, the soil and air, the water and sunshine await the advent of him who has eyes to see. There are mysteries in providence, the ways of God seem dark to men. In science and literature there are veils which trained minds alone can pierce. The book is sealed to him who cannot understand it. The rock speaks to the geologist and reveals its history and lesson. There is an intellectual world which is unseen, there is an unseen spiritual world. In the moonlight God's angels walk to and fro singing their lullabies to calm the troubled souls of men. The blessed ministry wait upon us to shield us from danger and guide us into the light. There is an unseen world at present existing and an invisible order of things. There are men of no vision who cannot behold through the mists of sin the inhabitants of the spiritual world. Blinded through vice they walk in darkness and see not the truths which God is daily revealing to men. They hear not the voice of their Father calling them home, and they lie asleep in wickedness or wander through the world in fear. Thousands of spiritual worlds may exist unseen forever by human eyes. There are men who live in the unseen, seers of to-day, blest with the vision of the pure in heart who see God. They behold the deep things of God with their spiritual sight. This is not the power of imagination, nor poetic insight. It is not the ecstasy of the monk in his cell, nor the rapture

of the seer of the mountains, but the vision of the soul. These modern seers walk with unclouded vision among the things of earth, beholding the face of their Father, and rejoicing in his wisdom and love.

Man is able to hold communion with God. The Spirit of God dwells in and acts upon believers. There is a power from the unseen which reaches the soul of man enabling him to live for the unseen. The invisible world acts upon the individual soul, working upon it, and pervading the whole spiritual nature. The only perfect life is a life for the unseen through the unseen. Man is able to hold converse with God and is brought into intimate relationship with the spiritual world. Earthly things lose their hold upon him when he is able to look beyond to the eternal.

Men are conscious of unseen things, feeling their presence and power in their lives, controlling and guiding them. A mysterious something surrounds them, making their thoughts, words and acts impressive. They cannot define or give a name to these spiritual realities as they are not wholly understood, and spiritual things must needs have spiritual understanding to grasp and spiritual language to express them. Hence there lies the danger of definitions and delusions. It would seem as if what we see and feel we cannot describe and we alone are permitted to enjoy our individual visions. The departed are still one with the great human family on earth. They are still living somewhere, not in the old way, but with the same revered and loved personality. Our friend is dead, but he is grown larger in his soul, and all the air is sweeter for his happy release and our life is made more complete by his conquest. He is sharing with us the progress and triumphs of the kingdom of Christ,

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ever learning with us, and helping on the final consummation.

"The spirits of the loved and the departed
Are with us, and they tell us of the sky.
A rest for the bereaved and broken hearted;
A house not made with hands, a home on high.
Holy monitions—a mysterious breath—
A whisper from the marble halls of death.

They have gone from us and the grave is strong,
Yet in night's silent watches they are near.
Their voices linger round us, as the song
Of the sweet skylark lingers on the ear,
When floating upward in the flush of even,
Its form is lost to earth and swallowed up in
heaven."

The departed are still with us, they have gone but they are still here. Memory restores their faces and forms, the kindly words are not forgotten, imagination vividly pictures their new life and labor. We see them in the works they have left behind, not in material acts as buildings, pictures, furniture and other artificial things, but in men they have made, winning them from sin and leading them to a noble purpose. We see them in their gifts to the individual and community, and their children and friends are with us. A lock of hair, a few lines on paper, a small locket bring tears to our eyes and nerve us for the duties of life, ever keeping the departed in remembrance, but they are nearer to us than any of their personal treasures. As the shadows round us creep, we cry, "O! for a glimpse of Father's face." The aged grandmother sees the little chair where her little boy of long ago sat and as her eyes are wet thinking of him, again she sees the curly head sitting with pencil and slate working out his sum. We are not antagonistic to the departed or they toward us, as the Blackfoot Indians believe, but we are in agreement with them. They are ours still, and we love them as of old. They are all here.

We are all here—
Even they, the dead—though dead, so dear;
Fond memory, to her duty true,
Brings back their faded forms to view.
How life-like through the mist of years,
Each well remembered face appears!
We see them as in time long past.
From each to each kind looks are cast;
We hear their words their smiles behold.
They're round us as they were of old.
We are all here "

We are not alone. The house may seem empty, the long hours may creep along like years and we may sit in the darkness, brooding over our loss; then shall we feel alone, but if we look upward to the light that lies beyond, we shall hear the song of the blessed, the vacant room will shine with the benedictions of heaven, and the smile of the angels will dispel our gloom. From a serene height our loved ones behold us, and we are transformed by their presence. The dead do not need us but we need them. They are beyond our help and they are not benefited by our praise. The monuments we build to commemorate their noble lives are not for them, but for us, testimonials of our affection and an acknowledgment of our obligations to them. Their thoughts words and deeds have been transmitted to us. They may live and die unknown finding no honored place in God's Acre, yet they have made their age heroic and their lives have been eternal seeds for the propagation of righteousness, and all the world is made better by their residence among us. Let us live for them by transmitting their influence to others, and thus shall we enrich the ages. Joined to them by an infinite bond, we can carry on their work. Let us live with them, conscious of their presence though we cannot, define it. Our comrade has entered into life more abundant than we can dream.



