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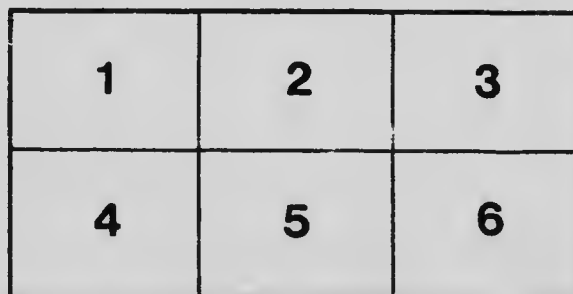
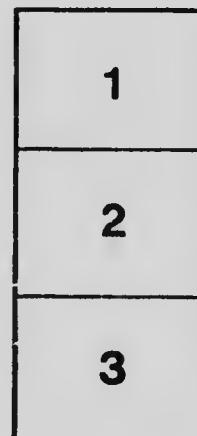
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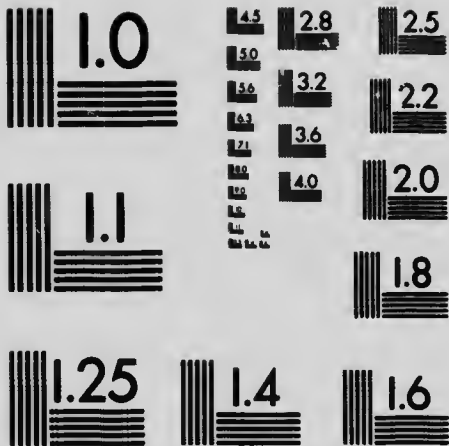
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THE MISSION

OF

SPIRITUALISM

AND

Original Poems

BY

REV. B. F. AUSTIN, B.A., D.D.



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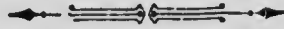
"The Message

OF

SPIRITUALISM

TO THE

Twentieth Century."



AN ADDRESS DELIVERED IN PAINE MEMORIAL HALL,
BOSTON, BEFORE THE MASSACHUSETTS
STATE SPIRITUAL ASSOCIATION,
MARCH 31ST, 1902.



BY

B. F. AUSTIN.



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Message of Spiritualism to the Twentieth Century.



I must have been but half awake—for I had been sleeping in a dark valley—when I lifted my eyes to the eastern sky and saw a beautiful girl, clad in white raiment, tripping down the cloud banks of the heavens till her feet touched the rosy hill-tops, then leaping from peak to peak until she stood on the mountain brow above me, fair and beautiful as the image of youth and love incarnate. Her rosy cheek, flashing eye and raven locks were bathed in the glory of the rising sun, and the dew-drops of the morning glistened like jewels in her hair.

“Who art thou? Whence art thou, Fair Stranger?” I asked.

“Some style me the Daughter of God,” said she, “others call me Truth—and in later days many speak of me as Spiritual Philosophy. I come from the bosom of Infinite Life and Love and my mission is to the sons of men.”

“What is thy message and thy mission, Fair Child of Heaven?” I asked.

“I am come to repeat and emphasize all of truth and inspiration that have ever come to human minds and hearts. I am come to re-echo every noble prophecy of past days, to sing again every song of love and sweetness of the poets of the olden time, to give new meaning and empha-

sis to the wisdom of sages and philosophers, to verify every noble dream of the reformer, and to perpetuate and multiply the words and works of all the world's Christs.

I come to give absolute liberty to man, woman and child—to break every human fetter ; to banish sickness, poverty and suffering ; to make mankind one happy human brotherhood ; to prepare men for pure and noble living here and now and thus set up God's kingdom on earth— rather than perpetuate the morbid views of the past that religion is to prepare man for dying and for some fanciful and irrational condition hereafter. I come that all men may have life, *free, joyous, abundant, full of power and progress.* I come to lift all men into a consciousness of their *divinity*,—to banish fear, and enable every man to stand amidst the great forces of the universe and rule them as the driver does his steeds, by force of hand and will. I come to crown man Sovereign, and to place in his hands the sceptre of the universe.

I come to unfold and develop man's spirituality and divinity—and I alone can save him. While many a one has come before in my name and under my inspiration has so taught truth and lived it as to become a Saviour of men or a Christ, I alone am *The World's Saviour* ; I alone am *The World's Christ.*”

“ *The Spiritual Philosophy!*” I said in some surprise, “ *Why that, according to my orthodox teachers came not out of the skies but from the pit. I have heard it ill spoken of by the religious teachers, as a mixture of fraud and nonsense. I would test thee, Friend Stranger, with a few questions—first as to what you teach to men and, secondly, as to*

what you propose to do for men. Now, for example, I have heard my friends say that your teaching leads to immorality—that you remove the old standards of conduct and leave men to follow the passions of their hearts and the whims and fancies of their minds. What hast thou to say to that?"

“Spiritualism,” my fair visitant replied, “furnishes the highest ethical standard of human conduct. It asserts that law reigns universally and that obedience to law is life—disobedience is death. Every act of man, therefore, brings its own reward or punishment. There is no escape, no exception, no interference in this world or the next, on the part of God or man, with the sovereign sway of divine law. A good deed can no more fail of its reward than nature can cease to be. It requires no set tribunal—no august judge—no formal sentence—no arbitrary judgment. Nature’s order is perfect: her plan faultless: her rewards and punishments imbedded in the very constitution of things. How can such teaching properly understood lead to anything but purity of thought and life? Spiritualism teaches the potency of thought—its creative power and its rulership over the physical and material realms. Its mandate, therefore, is to all: learn to think clearly, logically, lovingly and purely of all things: purify the inner temple of your being. *‘Make the house where Gods may dwell, beautiful, entire and clean.’*”

Spiritualism asserts and proves that our highest personal development and happiness can only be secured by altruistic endeavor for others’ good.

Its religion is, therefore, essentially that of good deeds. Its religion is briefly expressed in this couplet :—

“Out of the bondage of man-made creeds
Into the practice of loving deeds.”

Spiritualism teaches that a man cannot fulfil the law of his own being, cannot unfold his nobler nature, and cannot taste the highest bliss, without a life of loving ministry to his fellows. Spiritualism rejects no standard of human conduct that experience has proven to be for man's advancement or society's good. It tests all ethical standards by appeals to experience and to nature. It has not ten commandments, but one, and it is this : *Live up to the highest ideals of your spiritual nature.*

It is true Spiritualism rejects much of the conventional morality of this and other lands which rests upon observance of certain days, rites, ceremonies—and upon professed revelations from the Almighty. We deny the authority of all these commandments except so far as experience has demonstrated their utility or they approve themselves to man's moral consciousness. Their authority lies in their utility and in their agreement with nature and not in any supernatural origin. The charge of immorality does not lie against the Spiritual Philosophy—but rather against the credal teachings which assert the possibility of cheating Nature by securing rewards we have never earned—and of escaping punishment our just due. The creeds deny the sinfulness of sin by making it a thing to be forgiven—to be atoned for by another—to be escaped from by an act of faith. The charge of immorality lies

against those who teach that a man may live a sinner and die a saint—that “between the saddle and the ground, pardon may be sought and found”—that man may cheat outraged moral laws of the universe by substituting an innocent victim to bear his pain—that he may lean upon a tortured Christ and gain admittance to a heaven he has never merited. Surely it lies not in the lips of orthodoxy to assert that Spiritualism leads to immorality. If Spiritualists are ever—like too many others—immoral, it is against the whole teaching and trend of their Philosophy.

Spiritualism by demonstrating the continuity of life, by proving the universality of law, by showing that the future character and life is a natural, orderly development from this life, by teaching the potency of human thought for good and ill, by its doctrine of telepathy proving that no man liveth to himself, or dieth to himself, and by its doctrine of angelic ministration showing that all our conduct is under the inspection of our arisen friends, *has placed the greatest possible safeguards around human character and conduct.*

No other philosophy known to man offers such natural and powerful motives and such exalted inspiration to noble living.

“But what does Spiritualism teach regarding the Home?”

I asked: “*I have heard it asserted by its opponents that it destroys homes rather than builds them. This is a serious charge.*”

“Spiritualism,” said my fair Visitor, “recognizes the home as the one fundamental institution of humanity. Its foundations are laid in nature. Humanity can exist without schools, churches and

government better than without the home. No civilization and progress can come to man without the home. Out of this primal integer grows the school, the church, the government. All other institutions in human society may be called artificial: the home is the very foundation of human progress. All other institutions may be called human: the home is imbedded in the very nature of humanity and is divine. Its foundations are love and justice, and just in proportion as the school, church and government are patterned after the ideal home will they contribute to human progress.

Man's nature makes home a necessity and in all his future unfoldments it is doubtful if the home will not be to man a word of larger significance and increasing sweetness. Man's growing and affectional nature will add ten thousand new charms and meanings to the word as he unfolds through the centuries.

A religion, therefore, that does not recognize the sacredness and supreme value of the home and teach the people how to build and perpetuate and preserve the sanctity of the home, must stand forever condemned. Spiritualism, however, does not recognize four walls and a wedding certificate as constituting a home. It asserts that home is the heart union of man and woman, based on natural adaptation, mutual love and unselfish devotion. If these be absent all the wealth of Ophir, all the sanction of the marriage rite, and all the benedictions of the clergy, are but desecration of true marriage and constitute only a counterfeit of the true home. Nature teaches that oil and water will not unite while certain atoms of

hydrogen and oxygen in definite proportions form a compound. You cannot upset, reverse or improve nature's ordination. True marriage is based we say on nature : marriages are made in heaven : the counterfeits are often manufactured here by avarice, pride and false social ideals and blessed by priestly hands. Out of these counterfeit marriages and counterfeit homes, spring the discords and divorces. Spiritualism holding to the doctrine of the absolute liberty of man and woman and child asserts that no man or woman should be compelled to live a lifetime in domestic hell because in their ignorance and blindness they entered upon a foolish and unnatural contract. Yet so sacred are the relations of married life, and so many the interests involved, that no one should lightly make or break the marriage bond.

If it be said, therefore, that Spiritualism destroys the true home, our answer is that the charge is maliciously false in every respect. Spiritualism recognizes the supreme sanctity and value of the true home, blesses it, pronounces it the most sacred and holy spot on earth : and rightly regards it as the largest factor in human progress.

But this is quite in harmony with the liberty we teach of living happily apart rather than in a domestic hell together. The fact that a minister has unwittingly pronounced the bans upon oil and water is no reason for perpetually keeping them in one bottle. Gunpowder and matches are safer some distance apart.

We deny the inference that a marriage rite can constitute a true home and until a clergyman can cause two diverse elements—devoid of chemical

affinity—to unite in one compound by pronouncing the banns of union and saying the doxology, until that hour we must deny his power and that of the church or government to make a true marriage or a home.

Spiritualism does teach fidelity to marriage vows, the union of one man and one woman as the law of nature, and has no sympathy whatever with unions that are easily formed and broken at the dictates of avarice, fashion or lust.

“Free love”—as a term of reproach—is charged against Spiritualism and by it something vastly different from free love is meant, for what love is there but *free love*? But *free love* is not *free lust*! And in the sense in which the charge is made it is false and malicious.

No purer, sweeter and more loving homes are found on earth to-day than those built and perpetuated under the principles of the Spiritual Philosophy.

Oh, if our leaders of wealth and fashion, if those who have the time and freedom, were to seriously ponder the great underlying principles of true home-building—how to mate and marry according to Nature’s ordination, if they would learn the laws of sacred generation, and thus build homes of divinest harmony what a god-like race of men and women would we rear upon the face of the earth! Earth and heaven would gradually melt into one and men and angels would dwell as one family on earth. But many of the “400” in the principal cities have no time for these problems without neglecting their poodle-pets, dog shows and ping-pong!

So Spiritualism estimates the home—teaches the true principles of home building—and sings the praises of home to men and angels. If all the harmonies of earth and heaven were united, if all the sweet singers of the past and the present, of mortal and spirit realms, were to join in one glad chorus, if all the spheres were to sing in unison—if all nature were to vibrate with divine pulsations of joy and peace—no sweeter music could be produced by earth and heaven, by men and angels, than the echo in a truly loving heart of that divine song, “Home, Sweet Home.”

“What of the School?” I asked my beautiful young friend.

“The school is the hope of the future so far as it is removed in its teachings from traditionalism and authority, or in other words, so far as it follows nature and brings the student face to face with nature’s divine revelations it is an unmixed blessing! Unfortunately the school and College are not fully emancipated yet. Custom, tradition and authority of great names still rule the classroom work. Those schools which encourage free enquiry, emphasize the teachings of science, and blaze out new pathways of progress for the enquiring mind are among the world’s greatest treasures.

The Schools of Theology are the most unprogressive, retrograde and stereotyped of all scholastic institutions because they are founded upon the idea that theology is a completed science, being a finished revelation, and since revelation is closed, all improvement is impossible. Nay, the very idea of improvement or of additional revelation is scouted as impossible and irreligious. This

attempt to fetter the human mind to the narrowness and ignorance of past days is only partially successful and—owing to the rising tide of New Thought which threatens to sweep away all ancient landmarks—every theological college is a whirlpool of faith and doubt and scepticism. Imprison as the church attempts to do the minds of her youth in mediævalism, nature's evolutionary processes of growth are so strong and so mighty that heretics spring up in every church until to-day the Theological Training Schools are hot-beds of heresy."

"What of the Churches and Creeds and Religions and Bibles?" I asked, "Are any of t' em divine? any authoritative?"

"All are divine and all are authoritative," said she, "in the same sense and in proportion as they contain truth. All are outgrowths of man's spiritual nature reaching out after God. All have a measure of authority and that is the amount of truth contained in them which appeals to reason and to man's moral conscionsness.

None of the Churches or Creeds or Religions or Bibles are absolute or infallible or of any other origin than human. *The theory of one perfect, absolute, infallible religion of supernatural origin coming direct from God as contrasted with the multitude of religions supposed to be merely human, imperfect and erroneous, is receiving its death-blow at the hands of the new Science of Comparative Religion.* What has this new department of human study and the Higher Criticism taught us?

1. That in our Christian System (which is certainly the one perfect and infallible and superna-

tural religion if there be one) are many evidences of imperfection and many proofs of merely human origin.

(a) We know now that much of our Bible is mythical, legendary and in place of being original revelation to the men, who, it is said, wrote it directly under infallible inspiration, is a *borrowed literature of earlier ages and peoples.*

(b) We know from the Higher Criticism that there are the same errors, contradictions, mistakes and absurdities found in the Jewish and Christian Bible as in sacred books of other religions !

(c) We know that on great and fundamental questions such as the Soul's Immortality—the condition of the dead—the standards of human conduct and character—and the methods of salvation, the Bible is not one book but a library reflecting the diverse and conflicting ideas of different ages and different peoples.

2. We know now that *all religions are professedly based on revelations from the spirit world*, and that from the diversity and contradictory character of many of these teachings *they are all best explained as messages and inspirations from the intelligences of men and women who formerly dwelt upon the earth plane.*

3. The traditions that are common to all the great religions concerning the Creation, Garden of Eden, Deluge, etc., and the common use of sacrifices and atonements, are all best and most easily explained as *the outgrowth of common experiences, common desires, common fears, and common hopes.*

4. The doctrine (common to so many religions) of a personal Saviour or Deliverer—of his super-

natural origin—his foretold birth—his natal star—his Virgin mother—his atoning sacrifice—his death and resurrection or translation, found in substantial equality in many of the great religions, all point to a common origin and *prove that these are not original with Christianity.*

In short—without having absolute proof—we know as well as history and instruction can teach us that *all religions are one and the same*—all the outgrowth of man's moral nature, differing only according to the intelligence and advancement of the people among whom they originated."

"What does Spiritualism teach about Prayer? I asked.

"Everything depends on your definition of prayer," said my fair teacher. "If you mean to associate the idea of prayer with the creedal teachings of a personal God, arbitrarily ruling the earth and man, and setting aside his own laws at the whim or request of his creatures, assuredly Spiritualism does not believe in nor teach the doctrine of prayer. If you mean by prayer the emphasizing of certain formulas and public petition. Spiritualism does not urge it upon men. But if you mean by prayer that aspiration of all noble souls for communion with the invisible, that fervent desire after the good, the true, the beautiful which all pure minds experience, that reaching out of the soul after God which is the very law of soul growth and progress, then Spiritualism teaches it, emphasizes it, magnifies and encourages it, and declares that nothing is more important to the soul's growth and progress than prayer. Such prayer is not an abject cringing before a terrific God of Vengeance, nor is it any attempt to reverse nature's order, nor is it any verbal flattery

of the Almighty, nor any attempt to instruct God as to how to manage the universe. Oh, no—it is as natural as the breathing of an infant's slumber, it is as spontaneous as the flow of the fountain, it is as beautiful as the love and confidence of a child in its mother. Prayer—the flight of the soul Godward on the wings of love and hope! Prayer—the cry of the child in danger to the heart of infinite fatherly love! Prayer, the law of soul growth and progress through the cycles of eternity! Prayer, the touching of the electric keys of power that start the machinery of the spiritual universe working out the edicts of our will! Prayer is the ONE path over which all the great souls of earth have progressed; it is the one fountain in which all the world's Christs have been baptized!"

"What is Religion?" I asked my fair teacher.

"Religion is the soul's cry after the divine, the ever-longing, ever-seeking, ever-aspiring and perpetual quest of the soul after its eternal source divine. The best expression of religion is love—not some vague emotion toward a personal God—but love felt, cultivated and exemplified toward one's fellowmen. It is substantially what Jesus and Buddha and Confucius and all the great teachers and saviours have taught, viz., kindness, justice, truth and love in our conduct toward men. We may well leave the Gods to take care of themselves if we save ourselves and our fellow-men!

Another definition of religion is *holiness* or *wholeness* or *health*, with special reference to the spiritual nature. Just as obedience to law in the physical realm brings health of body, so obedience to the great laws that govern in the moral realm brings *health of soul, wholeness, or holiness*, and this

is religion in its internal aspect. But as *all things in spirit tend toward expression in action and visible manifestation*, so religion expresses itself in a life of love and charity and good will to men. True religion has no necessary connection whatever with a creedal system—a ritual service—or the formulas of church life. Religion—it is the love of children and all things beautiful. Religion—it is acting the part of the Good Samaritan. Religion—it is the charity that beareth all, believeth all, hopeth all, endureth all and sacrificeth all for one's neighbor—that forgets self and serves God by helping his children."

"What will Spiritualism do for the world?" I asked.

"Spiritualism," said the fair Prophetess before me, "will do much for Society and for the Individual.

"The first great work it will do for society will be a practical recognition of the claims of human brotherhood—resulting in equality of rights and privileges to all. Spiritualism will recognize the equal right and claim of every man to nature's bounties. The earth, the air, the precious and useful metals, the treasures of wood and coal, of lake and ocean, belong of right to *earth's inhabitants in common*. They are not for the *few* but the *many*, and society must be re-constituted, re-organized and regenerated so that as Gerald H. Massey sings :

"The few shall not forever sway,
The many moil in sorrow."

Gladstone declared the best constitution was that under which it was easiest to do right—so we say the best economic constitution is that under

which it is easy for every man to attain at least the necessities of life! How can men study nature or the human soul, how can they advance in knowledge and nobility and wisdom, when the incessant, ever-recurring problem of daily living is how to keep body and soul together—drive the wolf from the door—pay the landlord and tax collector? Nature furnishes abundance of food and fuel and air and sunshine, and it is only the rapacity and selfishness of men, taking advantage of wrong economic conditions, that makes it easy for the few to become very rich and so hard for the many to get food and shelter. Spiritualism is not anarchy—it is not Socialism as many understand it—but it does stand for a new economic system under which the monopolies of nature's bounties and of the privileges of our civilization shall belong not to the *few* but to the *many*. If Spiritualism had the direction and control of human society *the people would own the treasures earth has laid up in her bosom—the coal, the iron, the oil, the gold and silver and copper; the people who make the wealth of the nation would get more than a paltry 17 per cent. of the profits of their labor; the people would own the railroads and canals and telephone and telegraph lines; the people would own the palaces of the great cities.* If Spiritualism ruled it would be indeed: A government of the people, by the people and for the people. Under such a government poverty would be eliminated, and the standing disgrace of our boasted Christian civilization—the squalor and vice and wretchedness of our slum population, the ignorance and brutality of our army of criminals, the idleness and beastliness of our tramp population—would be replaced by order, industry,

comfort and at least the necessaries of life for all.

Our economic system of cut-throat competition, of greedy grasping and selfish monopoly of nature's bounties, of stealing by bribery and corruption the great franchises of the people, is a practical denial of human brotherhood.

"Such questions" you may say "are questions of sociology and not of religion." We reply that true religion is the kingdom of God here and now realized in happy hearts, pure homes and progressive and prosperous society. Spiritualism aims at heaven upon earth: justice, truth, equality love, peace, plenty, power and purity realized in human society here and now. Make heart and home and society right here: the future will look after itself. *Save thyself and thy brother man: the Gods will save themselves.*

Spiritualism means--if its teachings be followed--perpetual peace among the nations. It will turn the thoughts of men from the great guns and armor-plated ships and engines of destruction to the alluring fields of scientific discovery, to the conquest of nature's forces, and to the study of the human soul in its unfolding divinity. Europe will no longer be an armed camp but a vast university for science, philosophy, the arts, and inventions. America will awake from its dream of Imperialism through war and aim to lead the nations in education, in invention, in commerce, in discovery and in spiritual science. The Christian and the Heathen nations will not seek at the point of the bayonet to thrust their religious systems upon each other, but each shall become so enamored of truth, so judicial in judgment, so appreciative of goodness and truth wherever found,

that they will lend and borrow the especial good in each other's systems of religion. The Orient will receive from the Occident, science, art, invention, commerce, and while rejecting theology and sectarianism will accept the pure Gospel of the Nazarene, recognizing in him one of the world's Saviours and rejoicing in his wonderful ministry of love to men. The Occident will receive from the Orient its pure Spiritual Philosophy, its doctrines of self-conquest, of the soul's rulership over nature and will rejoice to recognize in the teachings of Buddha and Confucius and the Adepts and Mahatmas, truths essentially divine and in harmony with the simple teachings of Jesus.

Spiritualism comes to wipe away humanity's tears. By disclosing the true nature of death as a transition into a higher state, a change as natural and as blessed as birth, by showing that it is not a penalty, a judgment, an arbitrary sentence but a resurrection and an ascension, in every sense a gain, Spiritualism has removed forever the gloom and sorrow and torment which humanity suffered through the false church teachings concerning death. By showing to us that the spiritual kingdom interpenetrates the physical and material, that heaven and earth are one locality, that our dead are not departed from us, not forgetful of us, and that in nature's order and under nature's law telepathic communications can and do take place between the living and the so-called dead, in short, by proving that communion between the two worlds is possible and actual, *Spiritualism has become the world's consolation.* Spiritualism asserts a nobler optimism than the world had known before. Paul—under spirit guidance and teaching 1900 years ago—the highest inspiration possible, per-

haps, in his age, recognized the lofty truth that "all things work together for good to them that love God." Spiritualism asserts and proves a nobler optimism that "*all things work together for good to all.*" It proves that cause and effect in nature's ordination are always linked by noble purpose and beneficent in their outworking. Spiritualism recognizes an unfolding of the divine nature in every life and asserts with Tennyson that

"Good shall fall—at last—
Far off—at last to all,"

and "every winter change to spring."

Spiritualism is destined to transform humanity's conception of sin and of crime. It will overthrow the view so long taught by the churches that sin and crime originate in inherent, hereditary depravity of man's spiritual nature and prove that they originate out of man's ignorance and undeveloped condition and out of wrong environment. It will reform our treatment of the criminal population—*doing away entirely with the vindictive or retributive idea of punishment*, (based, I think, on wrong ideas of divine government) and substituting remedial punishment. Spiritualism asserts that all nature's punishment is remedial and none of it vengeful. Our treatment of prisoners (while much in advance of that in past times and systems in other lands) in its indiscriminate herding of criminals—is wrong, as well as in the unnecessary indignities heaped upon prisoners. In bringing together so many undeveloped and vicious elements as we do in our large prisons, we produce a school of crime—a battery of power for the vicious in both realms to operate—and a

moral pestilence which would soon be dissipated if these elements were scattered. We ought to abolish the words *prison* and *prisoner* and substitute "sanitarium" and "patient." With pure air, wholesome food, abundant sunlight, books, and lectures, kindness, patience and love, we could rescue most of our criminals from criminality.

Spiritualism is full of kindest thought and intent towards the Christian churches. It recognizes in them much of truth, sincerity and unselfish devotion, and to these Spiritualism would ever pay its devoutest homage. Spiritualism would not abolish—if it could—these various religious bodies, recognizing their necessity for multitudes in their present state of mental and spiritual unfoldment. Still it recognizes from *without* what church leaders are now recognizing from *within*, *the growing inadequacy of the church to the spiritual needs of the community*. It recognizes that while humanity has been growing into larger thought, nobler sentiment and higher conceptions of nature and of God, *the churches have been* (in their creedal systems and formulated teaching) *practically at a standstill for centuries* and there is a *growing gulf between the educated and thinking masses and the churches*. The power of the priest and parson is waning and the day of the teacher and reformer is at hand. Spiritualism would wipe off the slate the worse than useless creedal teachings of an ignorant past, it would have the church come to a wider recognition of truth in nature and in man, it would reform the church's concepts of man and God, it would bring in the wider hope and nobler consolations of spirit communion and

thus utilize the vast organization and ecclesiastical machinery of the church for humanity. If the church were wise in her day and generation—but when was ever a creedal institution wise enough to accept new conceptions of truth!

Spiritualism would transform every parson first into a student and then into a teacher; change every church into a school; and every church member into an independent investigator of truth. Spiritualism declares that the theological seminaries should be emancipated from traditionalism and that they would gain immensely if they made a bon-fire of all theology taught in the past and turned their thoughts and desires squarely upon nature and the soul itself.

Spiritualism would hail the day when the church service would cease to be a rehash of traditionalism and become a free forum for enquiry, demonstration and proof! It would have a ministry in the pulpit—not turned out and branded like so many bits of machinery out of a factory—but a ministry of nature's ordination—a ministry possessing spiritual gifts, a ministry able to discern spirits, heal the sick, catch the vibrations of higher spirit intelligences, and become to our advanced age what the prophets and apostles were to theirs! Oh, for such a ministry! Oh, for such leadership! Oh, for the day when the healthful spirit of enquiry shall break in upon the churches and the pulpit shall indeed lead the thought and enquiry of the age, in place of lagging in the rear! Oh, for the day when men may ask questions—deep, pregnant, soul-stirring problems and express their honest doubts—in the church services! Will it ever come? Yes, or the churches will cease to be!

Turn every pulpit into a teacher's rostrum—every church service into a school session—every church tower into an astronomical observatory—every church lecture room into a hall equipped with the latest scientific appliances and apparatus for studying the blood and brain and testing the physical, mental, and spiritual powers of the human *ego*—and then, and then only, will the church regain her lost leadership.

Let me picture the Church of the Future. A vast building, airy, sunny, commodious, with a hundred halls—*open, free, and patronized by rich and poor, bond and free*, belonging to no sect or creed and dedicated to Truth alone—truth that can be demonstrated and illustrated—the truth that Nature reveals in every page of her Bible. This vast building has in place of a church spire an observatory tower fitted with a telescope that sweeps the heavens. In this tower a spectroscope and every instrument of modern science for study of the star-decked face of God. In the auditorium a vast sea of upturned faces of students waiting the revelations of truth in nature, rather than a drowsy audience listening to a sermon. On the rostrum is the teacher of Science—not the orthodox clergyman—and before him a variety of instruments for illustrating and explaining and picturing his lesson on the screen so that young and old may see and understand. The subject of the lesson is Man, and here are instruments by which through the Crooke's tube and Roentgen rays all parts of the body can be seen and studied—the course of the blood—the form and construction of the corpuscles—the processes of digestion, assimilation, secretion—are shown. Here upon a screen you see how nerve centre is joined to

nerve centre—how telegraphic messages are carried from one ganglion to another—how certain thoughts set up vibrations in one part of the brain—and certain emotions cause another lobe to vibrate—how fear and hate affect the vital functions and cause poisonous secretions from the blood—how hope and joy and glad tidings increase the vital functions, purify the blood and promote good health and strength. In short, the Bible of the 20th Century Church will be the human body, the human mind, the human spirit, studied with the view of finding the way of life and the cause of disease and death. This scientific knowledge under the inspiration of the spirit world will save men.

Every department of science will have its halls, its apparatus and appliances, its expert teachers and lesson lectures in the Church of the Future, and the highest and holiest of all will be the Seance Room, into which only the pure in mind and body shall enter.

Here under the finer conditions, which our increased knowledge will enable us to make, will be witnessed demonstrations of spirit power not dreamed of to-day. Here the puzzled scientist, who with all his searching could not find God, the blind materialist groping in the shadows of his own ignorance, the agonized father who asks of priest and parson in vain for his lost child, will find the continuity of life demonstrated and the communion of saints realized, and the deepest problems of the soul solved!

Such is the message Spiritualism brings, and such is the work Spiritualism proposes to do.

It offers men the highest standard in ethics and the strongest motives to virtue ; it encourages altruism: it recognizes the extreme importance and value of the home and teaches the scientific principles of home building: it asserts that the school and college where free enquiry is had and nature interrogated are channels of divine revelations to men: it regards such men as Tyndal, Huxley, Darwin, Hyslop, Hodgson, Crookes, Wallace, Zoellner, Sargent and Spencer as prophets of a new age, priests of a newer and nobler religion than the world has known before, divinely appointed interpreters of the Bible of our times, Nature; it asserts that all religions have an element of truth and divinity and are to be studied carefully that the wheat may be winnowed and preserved; it denies that there ever has been an infallible man, an infallible book, an infallible church; it asserts that in the noblest sense of the word man is a religious being—that prayer is natural, useful, and rational when we understand the law of spirit communications and free ourselves from the misconceptions of orthodoxy; that prayer and religion—so far as they are true and valuable—are strictly in accord with nature; it asserts that the noblest use of religion is the service of humanity and that in place of prostrations before a personal deity and ritual services in a temple, humanity needs the religion of charity and justice in human intercourse between man and man; it denounces war and inhumanity, and seeks to turn the thoughts of men to spiritual culture and spirit communion; it comes with divinest consolations to the poor and sick, the suffering and the sorrowing, bringing consolation and hope and comfort to every life; it seeks to spiritualize and

purify the church teachings and methods, that sincere people in the churches may find bread in place of a stone and comfort in place of uncertainty; it would turn every church into a school—every pulpit into a rostrum.—every class-room into a science hall or a seance room and set men to work studying the human body, the human mind, the human soul as the noblest engagement of life.

Thus Spiritualism goes forth with the glory and radiance of eternal morning on her brow; with the Star of Hope for every man, woman and child shining on her pathway; with the blessed benedictions of ten thousand ministering angels; with the loving gratitude of her millions of followers, redeemed from fear, ignorance, and slavery; in her heart all the love, and sacrifice, and heroism of the world's Saviours; in her hand the world's Consolation; on her lips a benediction for humanity, and around her the music of the spheres as she leads her followers to the heights!"

Day by Day.

Day by day the world is growing older, wiser, better, too ;
Sun by sun the race is rising into manhood just and true.

See from human souls in darkness clouds of error roll away,
As the sun of truth ascendeth, mounting to meridian day.

Lo, from human hearts upgrowing, as the flowers that
deck the lea,
See the graces of the spirit, justice, truth and charity.

Now the gory fields of battle yield the husbandman's in-
crease,
Cannon's roar and shrieking shrapnel, yield to symphonies
of peace.

Now sectarian strife and discord melt to notes of patient
love,
Now angelic music swelling echoes from the courts above.

Now the streams of inspiration flowing from their source
on high
Thro' the souls of seers and prophets, human graces mul-
tiply.

Everywhere the work of spirit ; everywhere men hear the
"word" ;
Soon fulfilled the prophet's promise, "every man shall know
the Lord."

Human souls in countless numbers sense the World of
Spirit near,
Infidels and scoffing sceptics are compelled to see and hear.

Like the swelling tide there rises up within this soul of
mine,
This new sense of human goodness, this new thought, I am
divine.

Da, by day more loving angels, throng our paths and
linger near ;
Sun by sun mankind are sharing more of spirit aid and
cheer.

"My Boy."

Along the crowded streets she passed, with eager tread,
Her quick, excited glance interrogating every face,
Her eye now cold and dull, now blazing with the lurid
light of passion,

Her hair dishevelled; and the vagrant tresses of her brow,
Now prematurely grey, tossed by the wanton breeze,
"The Mad Woman of St. Marks."

Clutching by arm each passer by,
And with a look that pierced the secret soul,
And a voice that thrilled with awe the inner being,
She would ask, "*Have you seen him?*"

"Of whom speak you, my friend," I asked.

"Why, my boy, of course, my lovely, precious, darling
son

My boy—long gone from me—about whose fate

So many tales are telling—mostly lies,—

I seek him here and yonder, every hour,
I seek by day and night, on hill and plain,
To bring him to my heart and home again."

"And was he young and beautiful?" I asked,

"Oh, sir, you mock me, for you surely know
He was the fairest thing the hand of God e'er made
As he came to me, my blessed, lovely babe,—

Two dimpled hands whose velvet touch upon my cheek,

Drove out all sorrows from my heart and life,—

Two eyes like twinkling orbs of light set in a cherub's face,

A face which was my firmament, in which

All glories of the earth and heaven shone out—

A voice so soft and low and sweet, and full of all the finer
harmonies

Of that bright sphere from which he came,

That it awoke more music in my soul

Than all the stately anthems of the choir—

A form so fair and innocent and pure—

So rich in curve and symmetry and grace

That you might say, and truly say,

He was divine, as truly born of God, as Jesus was of old—

But now—Great God! I miss him so—

And search for him each waking hour of life,

But only in my sleep he comes and nestles in my arms
again;

Oft times when storms blow fierce and wild across my path
 And I am cold—and sick—and weary—oh, so weary—
 And sink in faint or sleep—he comes,
 And once again I press my lovely child, my only son,
 Unto my heart again—and feel the soft, sweet touches of
 his hands—

And hear his lisping, crooning cry while lying on my breast,
 And drinking from the fount of mother-life and love—
 But when I wake, oh Stranger say, *why is he gone?*
 Where has he fled? Say, kind and courteous friend,
 Have you seen my boy?"

"Surely if your son was but a babe," I said,

"He could not wander from your heart and home."

"Oh, but, kind Sir, you do not understand—

He was a babe—and grew—and grew—but still and ever
 was my babe to me—

A school boy with his books upon his arm,

And my rich kiss of love on either cheek,

And then a stalwart handsome man,

(Yet still and ever was he unto me my first-born babe)

He won an honored place in school and college halls,

And I was, oh, so proud to look upon his noble form,

To lean upon his firm strong arm—My babe—My boy—

My man—

And picture forth in fancy his great future deeds—

Oh, Sir, you'd surely know him though he stood with
 thousands round,

His brow was like the clear-cut marble and his locks were
 raven black,

And his clear dark eyes flashed forth the light and fire of
 manhood—

And his face was heaven's latest revelation

Of light and truth and love to me—until that *awful night*

They came and told me lies—*black, hell-born lies*—

About my darling boy—and said he fought and killed a
 man—

And that—Oh, God, how black the sky becomes—

And that he too must die—must suffer what they call the
 penalty of law.

(But all the while I knew they lied—my baby boy—he
 could not fight or kill.)

And then they came more lies to tell—lies black as night
 and false as hell—

And said a man had drawn a cap down o'er his lovely face

And placed a rope about my baby's neck,
 And that he, too, was dead and damned!— *Liars all—*
 For all the while I knew my boy was living and was well
 —*only gone from me—*
 For every night he came and nestled near my heart,
 And while I sang the lullaby he slept upon my breast as
 in the by-gone days.
*But only in the night.—It is so strange, he never comes by
 day!*
 Say, kind and gentle Stranger, what keeps my boy so long
 away?
 Do foes detain him? Is he ill, think you?
 Or does he plan some sweet surprise for me when he
 comes home to stay?
 And then they brought the preacher, the blackest liar of all!
 For he declared my boy was shut in hell—
 And that I never, never should his fair face see
 In that fair mansion of my Father's house
 Where God's own hand shall wipe these tears away!
 My boy in hell! My babe shut out by God's immutable
 decree?
 My child in suffering and torture and no one there to com-
 fort him!
 Why, Stranger, when he was sick no hand but mine could
 minister—
 No voice but mine could soothe his pain—
 He could even tell my touch upon his fevered brow from:
 all others!
 And now they talk—these shameless liars talk—
 Of that abyssmal gulf I cannot pass—of walls insuperable
 by God's decree,
 To separate my darling boy and me—and prate
 Of sheep and goats divided right and left and of the awful
 word “depart.”
 But hear me, ye who dare to say a God of love has this
 ordained,
 But hear me,—fools and blind, ye foul blasphemers of your
 God,—
 I swear to you, though wall reached to the very throne of
 God—
 I'd spend eternity to climb and plunge me to the nether
 gloom of hell
 To find and fold to my embrace, my boy again.
 Omnipotence itself can never rear a wall

My love will not surmount,
 Nor light up fires of torture which my love can't quench,
 Nor form a gulf so deep but love will fathom it and bridge
 it o'er.
 Stronger than God's throne itself—for that is built on love,
 Stronger than judgment and the power of death,
 Is this mother love of mine! And all the gods that walk
 Olympus,
 All the dark distorted progeny of gods
 Which men have first created and then worshipped,
 All the heights and depths, the principalities and powers,
 Shall never rob me of my darling babe, My Boy,
 Nor quench the fount of mother love within my breast!
 Say, Stranger, if you see him"—but I heard no more.
 And soon her form was lost amid the surging crowd,
 But the tragedy of human life sped on its course.



We Never Know.

We never know the good that we are doing
 Along life's rugged way,
 When we attempt to lift a brother's burden
 Or wipe his tears away.

We never know how far a thought of kindness
 May spread its circling wave,
 Nor how an effort to redeem one brother
 A multitude may save.

The thought unvoiced and unexpressed in writing,
 All silent in the soul,
 May reach some distant friend in benediction
 And make the sick one whole.

We never know when we are stoutly struggling
 Against some giant wrong,
 How many unseen friends are gath'ring near us
 To make us wise and strong.

And when some sad affliction, deep and painful,
 Robs life of hope and cheer,
 We never know how many blessed angels
 In sympathy draw near.

We never know which one of life's conditions,
 The gloomy or the bright,
 Shall bring us richest joy or greatest soul-growth
 In realms of peace and light.

But some day we shall know that by our pathway
 God's angels ever stood,
 And each experience, both sad and joyful,
 Has worked out for our good.



Why Weep for Those Who Pass Away?

Why weep for those who pass away,
 Whose wearied hands in peaceful rest
 Lie folded o'er a tranquil breast
 Free from all toil and care for aye?

Why weep when bird with pinion strong,
 Long prisoned by its iron bars,
 Escapes to view its native stars,
 And fills the skies with richest song?

Why weep when friends long schooled in pain,
 Long burdened with disease and care,
 Escape to find their mansions fair
 And greet their loved and lost again?

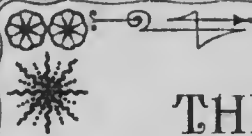
Why weep when from your bed of flowers,
 Some plants in form and fragrance rare
 Transplanted to a realm more fair,
 Enrich with beauty Eden's bowers?

Oh, selfish sorrow! foolish, blind!
 To wish our ransomed friends again
 Enslaved to sorrow, care and pain,
 And in this prison form confined.

Oh, foolish grief! For those we love
 Are never lost. Death's cruel darts
 But sunders hodies, while our hearts
 More closely cling to friends above.

We lose them not who pass away,
 For round our path they linger still
 In ministry of love, and fill
 Our lives with sweetness day by day.





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