

THE
SPIRITUAL TEACHER;
COMPRISING A
SERIES OF TWELVE LECTURES
ON THE
NATURE AND DEVELOPMENT OF THE SPIRIT.

Written by Spirits of the Sixth Circle.

R. P. AMBLER, Medium

Wisdom speaks when mortals listen

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TO
ALL ASPIRING SOULS,
WHO SEEK FOR TRUTH ON EARTH
AND FREEDOM IN THE SPHERES,
THIS VOLUME
IS
AFFECTIONATELY DEDICATED
BY
ITS UNSEEN AUTHORS

LECTURES.

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INTRODUCTORY TESTIMONY.

In presenting this volume to the public eye, a few words of explanation are deemed appropriate with reference to the peculiar mode of its production. It may be Stated at the outset, that the twelve lectures contained in this work were written in the presence of witnesses without thought or care on the part of the undersigned, and were presented, in the apparent ease and rapidity with which they were written, as a test of spiritual communion. The whole time required in writing these lectures was embraced in precisely forty-three hours and forty-three minutes, the subjects herein discussed not having been previously investigated or even conceived by the writer, until they were gradually disclosed through the movement to which his hand was subjected. To me, indeed, the entire process was as wonderful and unexpected as to any person present and when informed of the number of pages that had been written during the first four hours of my sitting, I felt literally oppressed with astonishment,—as in my former condition when not sensibly assisted by spirits, I was accustomed to write quite slowly and always with considerable labor.

But a more complete and satisfactory statement of this matter may be found in the following testimony, which was voluntarily given and published by the individuals who witnessed the writing of this book:

TO ALL WHOM IT MAY CONCERN.

The undersigned, having been called upon to bear witness to the writing of a book purporting to emanate from spirits and to be given to the world through the medium of R. P. Ambler, and having witnessed the writing of this book as requested, which book is to be soon presented to the world, desire to respectfully submit the following statements:

1. With relation to preliminary arrangements, it maybe stated that Mr. Ambler was seated beside a small portable desk, furnished with implements for writing but removed from all books, pamphlets, or papers, and that he was supplied with sheets of paper separately as they were needed, these having been previously examined, signed and numbered by at least two witnesses, for the purpose of precluding all possibility of fraud or deception.

2. By reference to the facts in the case, it is found that this book has been written with vast and almost incredible rapidity. On this point the undersigned would state that the whole book, which comprises a series of twelve lectures, extending over two hundred and six pages of foolscap paper, was written *within four days*, this process having been commenced on the morning of Wednesday, March 10th, 1852, and completed on the following Saturday evening, March 13th. The average time per day employed in writing was ten hours and fifty-five minutes, and the maximum number of pages produced on a single day was *fifty-five*, the shortest time occupied in writing a single page being *eight minutes*.

3. With relation to the *manner* in which this book was

written, the undersigned would state that the hand and arm of the medium were suspended during the whole time of writing in such a manner as *not to rest on the desk or manuscript* and that, upheld in this way, the pen glided rapidly over, the paper with an even and continuous movement Without any apparent thought or care on the part of the writer, and without any perceptible pause at the commencement of sentences or paragraphs; and in this connection it may be mentioned that, frequently, when one lecture was finished another was immediately commenced in the same sitting, Without any previous knowledge on the part of Mr. Ambler, according to his own statement, with regard to the subject to be discussed.

4. During the process of writing which has been above described, Mr. Ambler appeared to be in the normal state, made frequent remarks to others while his hand was moveing over the paper, and did not seem to be disturbed by the conversation of persons present.

5. In the four days employed in the production of this work, the physical system of Mr. Ambler did not appear to be unfavorably affected by the application required in sitting, and he was not, according to a statement voluntarily made by himself, conscious of any unusual fatigue or exhaustion.

6. In regard to the original manuscript of which this bock is a transcript, the undersigned will mention that this was written in a fair and legible hand, and to us appeared, with the exception of a few slight corrections, to be prepared for the compositor.

As to the intrinsic merits of the book which is here mentioned, the undersigned will not speak, since it was

their office only to offer such statements in regard to the mode of its production as are appropriate and true.

JAMES WILSON,
JOHN D. LORD,
MRS. G. W. HARRISON,
MISS DELPHINA, P. DUBNAR,
MRS. R. F. AMBLER.

Springfield, March 20, 1852.

In addition to the above testimony, it is proper to remark, that the original manuscript to which reference is here made, was placed into the hands of the compositor almost entirely without perusal or correction, and that, with a few trilling exceptions, the lectures are now presented to the public precisely as they were originally written. If in the present work are found those truths which are adapted to the desiring soul-truths which will serve to expand the reason, illuminate the understanding, and elevate the whole being of Man, the design for which it was introduced to the world will be doubtless accomplished. For the satisfaction of many inquiring friends, a brief outline of my individual experience has been prepared by the spirits, and will be presented in the article which follows.

R. P. AMBLER.

New York July 7, 1852.

EXPERIENCE OF THIS MEDIUM.

It is the desire of the spirits who are members of the Sixth Circle of the Second Sphere, to unfold to the world the experience of the individual whom they have selected as a medium for the transmission and revelation of important truths. This experience comprehends the truths and principles which constitute the primary lessons that are necessary to be first learned and understood, in the course of spiritual progress on which the earthly world is destined to enter. It will illustrate the mode of operation which the spirits of this Circle employ for the purpose of enlightening and developing the human spirit, and it will reveal the philosophy of those mysterious trials and sorrows, which have been imposed upon the individual through whose physical organization they now write. Therefore will the unseen writers proceed to present a brief and comprehensive statement of the experience through which he has passed as a scorching but purifying fire.

The spirits who are developed in the wisdom of this Circle, desired to establish an intercourse with the world for the purpose of introducing truths which have not been revealed in all the ages of the past—truths which will sink down into the recesses of the spirit, and unfold the beautiful germ of purity which here exists. To accomplish this object, it was seen to be wise to select an individual who, from the first buddings of infancy, should be moulded and influenced in such a manner as to possess the appropriate qualities of soul, which would be adapted to the mission that was held in view. Among the numerous

personalities that were born upon the earth, the spirits discovered this individual as a being who would inherit a healthy and harmonious constitution, and whose spirit would naturally and irresistibly seek the divine inspiration which flows from Nature and the Spheres. Accordingly, by a unanimous consent of the Sixth Circle, the individual referred to was selected as the medium through whom the treasured wisdom of spirits might be revealed to the earthly mind; and this selection was responded to with songs of angelic praise and love by the host of the heavenly-born. All unknown and unsuspected was this decision of the spirits by the medium whom they had chosen, and all unanticipated and undesired at this early period was the blessing which they designed to bestow. But unseen the celestial guardians watched over the infant and the youth. With silent whisperings of thought they guided and controlled his steps; with sweet and thrilling inspirations they cheered and animated his spirit, and by a powerful moulding of circumstances and conditions, they introduced him by degrees into that expansive sphere of thought and labor which they had designed he should enjoy. In order to successfully accomplish the end which they proposed, the course of education and training was caused to be one of such a character as would naturally develop the most sublime and interior qualities of the soul; and this education and training had also a tendency to discipline and strengthen the powers which were to be afterwards exercised in the career of spiritual ministry. By the aid and instruction which he had received from invisible agents, as well as by the force of circumstances which they had measurably controlled, he was enabled to enter into the pulpit at the age of fifteen years,

as a minister of the gospel. Pale was the youthful cheek when, as if struggling in the mazes of a dream, he first lifted up his voice in the sanctuary of worship; yet strong grew the heart which the dawning of beautiful truths had cheered in that solemn hour, and deep flowed the thoughts from lips which had been tuned to the utterance of the soul's music. There was even then a vision of the future flitting among the shadowed thoughts of the youth, and floating through the vista of coming years,—for while yet he spake to the people of the attractive power of love, and showed by what a silent and inward power the Divinity was to attract all his children towards the vortex of the supreme glory, he unfolded the exalted destiny of humanity upon the earth, breathing out the picture of that universal love and harmony and peace, towards which the race of man are rapidly and inevitably tending.

From this point in the history of the individual whose experience is here related, there was manifested a rapid progress towards the desired result which had been long anticipated, until he at last reached the point of spiritual development and enlightenment which was adapted to the revealment of a more complete and immediate intercourse on the part of his invisible friends. Accordingly, in the evening of the sixteenth of December, 1851, he was irresistibly impressed to retire to his chamber and place his hand in the attitude of writing. Soon the spirits were enabled to produce a slight movement of the hand which he perceived, and this was continued until the pen was carried completely across the paper and returned again in the same manner. After several movements of this nature, the spirits guided the hand in such a manner as to produce the figure of a star, which was made as the

first sign of intelligence to indicate hope and progress. Then various angular and irregular marks were traced which resulted in the formation of the word "Constance"—which word indicated the spiritual name of the individual on whom they were operating. But this was not understood by the medium, and the spirits perceived a shadow of distrust and perplexity stealing across his mind, until he mentally exclaimed, "This is very strange—I do not understand it". To quiet and satisfy the mind which was struggling with the burden of a new-born joy, the spirits, by a powerful effort, succeeded in writing the words, "This is practice". Then through the influence of a spiritual impression, the medium was caused to leave the table at which he was seated, and thus commenced the first obvious and external intercourse which he held with the invisible world

The spirits, having gradually obtained control of the physical system of their medium, proceeded to test the powers and qualities of the spirit, by placing him in such circumstances as would have a tendency to exercise to their utmost capacity the inward energies of his nature. These circumstances were of the most painful and agonizing character, and were designed as a means of trying, the real strength which was possessed by the inward being. The test was in all respects satisfactory to the spirits. Beneath the heavy burden of woe which had been imposed, the medium stood up in the pride and dignity of his nature, and bid defiance to all the powers of heaven. This result was precisely what the spirits had desired, and they rejoiced when they saw that the soul was not crushed by the storm which had been breathed upon it, but rose above the agony of the hour which was dark and fearful with portending grief. From this time until the date at which

this article is written, the course of the spirits with their medium was involved in the deepest and most perplexing mystery. He was subjected to a course of discipline which brought forth and exercised the latent faculties of his being and which, in the most singular and inexplicable manner, caused him to enter into a new and enlarged sphere of thought and feeling. The faculties of patience, perseverance, independence of mind, and spirituality, were developed in the soul by the influence of certain conditions, which were unavoidable as they were unanticipated; and these faculties, in their exalted and sublime action, invited the lessons of heavenly wisdom which could not have been otherwise received. Thus was the individual selected moulded as the spirits desired for the work to which he was destined. The education which he derived in his intercourse with spirits, was gained in the severe, but profitable school of experience; and the impressions which were in this manner created, are destined to be lasting as the Soul itself.—though it is true that, for wise and benevolent purposes, the details of the experience here mentioned have been almost entirely removed from the memory of the individual by whom it was undergone.

When the course of discipline had been completed as was announced through the columns of the Spirit Messenger, the invisible friends of the world commenced the process of spiritualization, the nature and philosophy of which are explained in a lecture on this subject contained in another part of the present volume. To carry on this process as was desired, and as was essential to bring their medium to the required condition, the spirits operated directly upon both the physical and spiritual system, causing indescribable sensations of pain in the one, and the most

intolerable agony in the other. This mode of operation was utterly mysterious, and indeed literally dreadful to the medium affected by it, and in the torture of mind and body to which he was subjected, he cried even unto God for that mercy which he supposed had been denied by His ministering spirits. But he knew not the beautiful process that was taking place within the structure which writhed in suffering; he knew not that the spirit was being born into the world of interior life and light; he knew not, when the clenched hand was made to beat his brow, that the vision of the soul was thus being developed and expanded; he knew not that wisdom and goodness superintended the agonizing ordeal, though he prayed that the bitter cup might pass away from his lips. Had the spirits with whom he held communion been actuated by a feeling of sympathy without a predominance of the wisdom-principle, they would not have manifested such seeming cruelty to one whom they deeply love; but while they looked down upon him with emotions of heavenly compassion in his moments of suffering, they beheld the result to be accomplished as a greater and sublimer good, which would more than compensate for all that had been endured in trial and sorrow. The spirits have now demonstrated to this individual that they are not evil in their nature, but have been moved by a wisdom and goodness which, in the earlier stages of his development, he was not prepared to perceive or comprehend.

The result which has been attained by the process of spiritualization, is one which can only excite the emotions of gratitude and joy on the part of the medium who has been subjected to this trying ordeal. Though the spirits have interfered with his earthly interests—though they

have found it necessary to disturb his business relations, and though for weeks they have refused to write the inspiring truths for which his soul has thirsted, yet is he now elevated to a position where he can perceive the wisdom of the course which has been pursued, and the benevolence of the design in which this was first conceived. The sweet sense of harmony which pervades the entire system—the deep, inexpressible tranquillity which, like the waters of the unruffled lake, reflects the serenity of heaven—the unfolded senses of the soul whereby it sees and hears the realities of the Spiritual Universe, and the developed germ within where thoughts of everlasting beauty and happiness are repositied,—all unite to form an incense of love and praise which rises ever upward to the receiving heavens. Yet there is a truth which the spirits desire to express in this connection, and that truth is that the process to which they have reference, is not one to be *desired* by the weak and superficial mind—a mind whose thoughts are engrossed by external things—whose aspirations are confined to the attainment of worldly wealth—whose life is yet feeble and suppressed beneath the burden of earthly corruption. For it is freely and designedly confessed, that this process is one which tries the soul—which exhausts its inmost strength, and renders death but a welcome change; and when the process has been carried on to the height desired, there is an absence of all hope—an utter desolation of the spirit—a state of terrible and unbroken darkness, which appalls the most powerful and determined, mind. The spirits have not designed that the mass of the world shall be subjected immediately to this process, because it is one which could not be generally or patiently borne, and which would result only in

mental confusion and distress; but they have designed that this should be endured by a few individuals whom they have decided to employ as instruments in the work of human redemption. For the consolation of such it may be repeated, that the reward which is ultimately attained—the spiritual powers and gifts which are bestowed as the crowning blessing of this process, more than compensate for all the suffering which may be endured in their attainment. Indeed it is only through this process as a means that the human spirit can be fully concentrated and individualized in its material frame, and therefore it is only by this that the highest and sweetest blessings of the spirits can be conferred upon man. Thus the mysteries which have seemed so deeply dark, are penetrated by the light of heavenly wisdom; and the clouds which looked so dense and fearful, are seen to only veil the radiance of a glorious sun.

It should be Observed that, in the foregoing remarks, the spirits have only presented a general outline of the experience of this medium, without descending to those minute details which it would be painful to revive in his memory. In closing their remarks on this subject, they will say that he is now prepared to receive the spiritual initiation or introduction into the temple of celestial realities, and that from time to time other works of greater value and importance than this, will be written with his hand and published to the world.

SPIRITS OF THE SIXTH CIRCLE

LECTURE I

ADDRESS TO THE WORLD.

Looking down from the serene heights of their sublime abode, the spirits of the Sixth Circle desire to present to the inhabitants of the earth a revelation of truths and principles which are adapted to the present state of human development. They desire to speak to the world in the tones of kindness, and to express the thoughts which they have gathered in their researches into the mysteries of the Universe. The object of the present Lecture, which will be exceedingly brief, is to unfold an analysis of the designs which spirits have in view in their intercourse with the children of men. It should be understood that these designs do not comprehend the selfish gratification of any desire on their part, which has not a connection with the interest and welfare of those whom they address. The spirits have no low ambition to gratify in the presentation of heavenly truths; they have no selfish motives by which it is possible for them to, be governed in the labor of human enlightenment, and they have no power to stoop from the height of their sublime wisdom, to administer to the sensual passions and tendencies of the people. Therefore they will speak of the realities which need to be revealed, for a purpose which is high and holy as their own blissful state.

In the darkness and depravity of the human mind, it has not properly appreciated the reality of a future existence;

it has not conceived or realized the sublimity of an intercourse with spirits, and it has not been suitably informed with relation to the truths which are beheld and known in the celestial world. From this lamentable gloom in which the soul has been sunk for ages, the race has groped with no guide but the feeble light of earthly wisdom and thus, through a long and doleful night, the children of men have mourned and sorrowed as those without hope, beholding no light and no sign of day in the clouded and threatening sky. But, in the present era, the dawn is rapidly approaching. It is the mission of spirits to bring life and immortality to light. They are sent forth as ministers of truth and knowledge to reveal the reality and nearness of the spiritual world, to overshadow the thirsting souls of men with the glory of the angelic presence, and to speak, in the tones of deepest love, the wonders of the Divine creation. To the lonely and depressed they whisper, and the heart which was crushed with grief becomes strong with inward hope, while beneath the power of the influx which they are pouring into the universal mind of humanity, the clouds of superstition and error are taking their everlasting flight.

The midnight of the world is past. The light of the dawn is streaming through the shadows of the departing gloom; and the great world is awakening to its glorious destiny. Arise, for the day is at hand. The glory of the Heavenly Spheres is dawning upon the earth, and the brightness of angelic wisdom is irradiating the darkened bosom of humanity. The time for thought has come; the time for investigation can be no longer delayed,—and the time for action will come, when the period of the prevailing darkness shall be ended. When the light of Heaven

has entered into the human mind—when the radiance of higher Spheres shall have been revealed to the world in all its overpowering splendor, then shall the wrongs and evils whose existence is now lamented be removed, and then shall the song of joy and praise be lifted to the echoing heavens.

Behold, the angels have now gained a strong and irresistible control over the world, and they have decided to accomplish the purpose which they have conceived. They will cause the tears of men to flow no more; they will turn the doleful cries of suffering into the anthem of universal joy,—and they will cover the desolated earth with fruits of immortal growth, whose life shall be breathed out as sweet incense unto God. Long have the husbandmen labored as in a barren field, but the time of the harvest is approaching. The will of the celestial world shall be accomplished, and the darkness shall flee away beneath the light which shall break, like glorious morning, on the benighted earth!

Spirits have waited long for the approach of this day. They have gazed earnestly through the hazy gloom of earthly imperfection towards the brightness of the Spiritual Era. Then have they rejoiced with the joy of fulfilled desire, that the fruits of their long labors are beginning to be seen upon the earth; and that the beautiful unfoldings of love and truth are about to expand, and brighten, and hallow the inner sanctuary of Man. Let the world listen in the future to the revelations of truth, as it has received in the past the influx of celestial breathings.

LECTURE II.

WORLDLY HAPPINESS.

Worldly happiness is a happiness which the world enjoys. It is a happiness which the children of the earth love and seek. It is a happiness which those who are engrossed in the affairs of the lower sphere are laboring to attain. It is a happiness which the selfish, grasping and avaricious seekers of wealth are laboring to find. It is a happiness which the proud and haughty tyrant—the lover of pleasure—the sensual voluptuary, and the devoted worshiper of mammon, are unceasingly struggling to enjoy. It is a happiness, which the wise and great of the earth are supposed to possess, and which the poor and lowly regard as the lofty and almost unattainable eminence which can be reached by only the few and favored. It is a happiness which consists in the acquisition of the glittering baubles with which a child might play, which is found in the whirl of sensual excitement, and which is sought amid the scenes of revelry and dissipation. It is a happiness which is transient as the dreamy visions of youth, which is as unstable as the fleeting clouds of summer, which is as fickle as the changing winds of autumn. Therefore is the happiness of the world a happiness which should be viewed in its true light—a happiness which should be seen in relation to its inherent nature and external effects, that the inhabitants of the earth may turn from the idle dream in which they have so long indulged, and seek a happiness which is more satisfying, in its tendency and more godlike in its character.

The spirits have introduced the present subject because it is possessed of intrinsic importance—because it is a subject which should be known and understood by the children of earth, and because it will have a tendency to attract the degraded and allured victim of sensual lust to the attainment of a higher and more enduring joy. For this reason, this subject will be presented in its true light by those who see and analyze the elements which compose its nature, and who fully understand its bearing, upon the interests of Man. What, then, is the happiness for which the world seeks and sighs? What is the pleasure for which it labors so earnestly, and which it as constantly fails to obtain? The spirits will answer; and in the answer which they will furnish, may be found the true cause of the unhappiness which is so universally experienced on the earth, and the source of that true and lasting enjoyment which the mass are blindly and unrighteously seeking.

The happiness which is sought by the world is a selfish happiness. Among the multitudes which throng the marts of life, there are few indeed who are laboring with disinterested feelings and motives for the happiness of others. The primary and most prominent object for which all are laboring is the happiness of themselves, or, in other words, the gratification of their own selfish passions and desires. The individual who seeks the places of amusement where the gay and beautiful display their charms, is attracted only by a desire to gratify the feelings of the animal nature; and the man who struggles in the marts of trade where the multitude are seeking for earthly treasures, is moved by an all-absorbing passion for the wealth which will rear a palace or deck his outward form with gold. So it is with all the various pursuits of human life. The spirits see that these

are all impelled and actuated by the same general motive,—that of furnishing a selfish gratification to the faculties of the sensual nature. This, therefore, is a vision which is exceedingly repelling to the inhabitants of the Second Sphere. When they behold the seekers of pleasure expending all their energies in the pursuit of a worthless bauble, to the neglect of the higher and nobler faculties of their nature, they are filled with pity that the time which is passed on earth should be so miserably mis-spent. It is seen that man has no regard for the great world around him; that every individual is laboring for himself alone, and that each is endeavoring in his efforts to attain his desired object, to prevent his brethren from enjoying the same gratification. It is seen that the aim of all the world is to heap up the treasures that are found upon the earth, and that he who has created or gathered the largest heap is esteemed the most happy. It is seen that with this individual desire, and for the object of defeating and trampling on each other, the mass labor with unwearied zeal to collect, each for himself, all the treasures that lie within his reach, without any respect for the wants of his poorer and less fortunate neighbor. It is seen that the success which follows this grasping and hoarding propensity of individuals, is called happiness, and that, since happiness is acknowledged to be the great end of human life, this propensity is cherished and nurtured within the breast of the mass as a means by which the most selfish and sensual feelings may be indulged. The spirits have gazed upon the great cities of the earth, where thousands are congregated in a comparatively small locality; they have looked with pity on the struggles of the poor and unfortunate; they have witnessed with emotions of sympathy the distresses of those who were less successful than

the more crafty in the attainment of worldly happiness, and they have seen that the cause of all the anguish and desolation which has crept into the human heart, is the erroneous conception of what happiness is, and a debasing selfishness which would gather the whole world, if possible, under the direction of the individual will. Thus it has been seen that all the happiness of the world is selfish in its nature, and that all the misery of the world results from the circumstance that the selfishness of the heart is not fully gratified.

There is another point in this connection which is worthy of being, considered. This point has reference to the unsubstantial nature of the happiness which is enjoyed by the world. The spirits have looked into the homes of those individuals who are esteemed as the favored few upon the earth whose desires are gratified and whose object has been fully attained; and they have seen that the happiness which is beheld by surrounding individuals, is but a gilded show—an appearance which could deceive the external eye and inflame the earthly mind, but which contains no real or substantial joy. They have seen that even those who have been the most successful in the attainment of wealth, have been less successful in obtaining real happiness; that after laboring with unwearied energy for years in the active business of the world, individuals have sunk down into the lethargy of disappointment, while yet the golden trappings glittered upon their person; that misery and wretchedness have crept into the palace where the rich man reclines upon his couch, or eats his costly viands. Thus have spirits beheld and realized the truth that the happiness of the world is unsubstantial—that it is not the reality which is indicated by its external appearance,

and that it contains no true and satisfactory enjoyment to the inward being. What is this happiness but a round of sensual pleasure?—what is the enjoyment which the world seeks but the giddy whirl of excited throngs and the alluring pleasures of revelry and dissipation? These comprehend the sum of the happiness which the mass are ever seeking; and when they have spent their energies, both physical and mental, for the attainment of this happiness—when they have labored for it through long years, and wept amid the toils that they have undergone, they have found at last, when they have reached the pinnacle which they once beheld in the distance, that the real object of their efforts—the substantial happiness for which they sighed and labored, is still as far away as when the tiresome race was first commenced. Behold! the butterfly which they have sought so eagerly has at last been attained, and in gazing upon its golden pinions, they had thought to have found the acme of delight; but now that it is attained, they find to their deep disappointment that the beautiful form dies within their grasp and fades before their eager gaze. Such is the unsubstantial nature of worldly happiness.

But still another truth is presented for elucidation in this place. This refers to the transient and fleeting nature of the happiness which mortals seek upon the earth. When the joys for which they have sighed for years, have been attained through the exertions of unceasing industry, the reward which has been obtained is found to be only a perishable treasure, which the slightest breath of misfortune may immediately destroy. Like the dew-drops which sparkle upon the breast of earth—like the rainbow that lingers in the weeping clouds—like the dreams which haunt the slumbers of the body, is the happiness which is sought on

the planet which angels have now visited. It is seen that this is a happiness which never can be treasured in the heart—a happiness which can never be laid up in the depths of the soul, but that it is like the froth of the ocean which for a moment sparkles in the sunlight and then sinks beneath the wave. This truth is felt, and known, and realized by the inhabitants of the earth. It is felt in the anguish of the troubled and disappointed heart; it is felt in the sorrow of the breast which the wealth of the world has failed to soothe; it is felt in the deep perplexity and distrust which are experienced by him who has mingled with the crowds of the ambitious and selfish, that are moving onward towards the same unsatisfying end.

The spirits have delineated in the preceding remarks, the prominent characteristics of worldly happiness. They have spoken the words of truth and soberness when they have said that this happiness is selfish, unsubstantial and fleeting in its nature, and that it cannot be received as food and strength for the immortal being. But they have not yet finished their remarks upon this subject. There is a deeper and more important principle to be elucidated than has been mentioned—there is a still more interesting and essential reality to be disclosed, which will have more immediate reference to the welfare of the race. In the elucidation of this reality, the spirits would remark that the happiness of the world is the happiness which belongs entirely to the animal and earthly nature. The truth is, that man upon the earth has not properly realized the nobleness and dignity of his own nature; he has not appreciated the image of the Divinity which is impressed upon him; he has not understood the relations in which he stands to the Supreme Being, and he has not felt the deep and thrilling

joy which wells up from the depths of the interior nature. Man has sought for happiness, but he has sought for it by an exercise of the most external faculties of his being—he has sought it by repairing to the scenes of vicious indulgence, and by steeping the soul in the lusts of the flesh. The consequence has been that the happiness which he has found has corresponded precisely with the manner in which this was sought. Having sowed to the flesh, he has of the flesh reaped corruption—and while he has administered to the sensual appetites and passions, he has discovered to his sorrow that he has been visited with the legitimate results of such a course;—he has found that he has been degraded, disappointed and perplexed—that he has utterly failed to obtain one unalloyed joy, or to experience one deep and soul-thrilling delight. Thus has it been inwardly realized by the world that the happiness which is dependent upon the animal nature is unsatisfactory in its character, and contains the very elements of disappointment and sorrow. Many of the spirits which now write have desired that this truth should be placed before the world in its true light. They have desired that it should be seen as it really exists, unclouded by the shadows of bigotry. Let it, therefore, be seen and felt that the happiness of the world has been dependent upon the exercise of the sensual and animal nature; let it be kept prominently in the mind that this happiness consists in the selfish gratification of those desires, passions and propensities, which belong to the lowest and the most imperfect department of the human being, and then let it be deeply impressed, even as the truth is felt and lamented, that the pursuit of this happiness has been an unavailing and unsatisfactory labor, bringing sorrow, disappointment and grief to all who engage

in the course of pleasure which has been here indicated, and ending in the destruction of all the sweet and blissful hopes which have arisen from the recesses of the pure heart. And when this truth has been fully impressed and understood, than let the inquiry be made which relates to the elevation of the race to a loftier plane of thought and feeling; and let it be inquired with relation to the nature and source of that true happiness which the world does not, and cannot afford.

The inquiry which is here referred to will be answered by the writers of this Lecture; and they will endeavor to elucidate a principle which is of the greatest importance to the inhabitants of the earthly sphere. It has been seen that substantial happiness cannot be obtained from the exercise of the sensual faculties, for the reason that these are themselves unsubstantial; and hence, as a corresponding truth, it may be discovered that true and imperishable happiness must essentially be dependent on the exercise of those faculties which are in their nature substantial and enduring. This will be recognized as a self-evident truth by the reasoning mind, and hence it may be considered as established on the highest authority which needs to be presented. If, therefore, true and substantial happiness must be dependent on the exercise of those faculties which are themselves substantial, then it follows that this happiness will be obtained by a proper cultivation of the powers which are inherently united with that being which dwells within the outward frame, and is impressed with the stamp of the Divinity. The spirits are fully aware that this position cannot be controverted, and hence they wish it to be distinctly understood. It is stated that true and substantial happiness can be only experienced in the development and unfolding

of the immortal being. The nature which reflects, the beauty and glory of God—which is endowed with his own eternal being, and which is destined to grow brighter and brighter as it approaches nearer to the throne of the Everlasting, must be accepted and acknowledged as the basis of pure and unfading happiness—a happiness which will not pass away like the dreams of earth, but which will flow deeper, and sweeter, and stronger through the very bosom of the soul as the endless ages of the Eternal roll away. This is the happiness which the spirits have labored, and are still laboring, to introduce upon the earth. This is the happiness which they have desired that the earth-children should universally enjoy. This is the happiness which is higher, and broader, and wider than the streams of time, reaching far out into the ocean of eternity.

LECTURE III.

SPIRITUAL WISDOM.

The subject which is indicated in the above title, is one of the greatest importance to those who are addressed in this volume. It will be the design of the spirits to reveal the nature of spiritual wisdom—to show the difference which exists between this and the wisdom of the World, and to present the object to be attained by the human mind in such a clear and attractive light, as shall be adapted to the mental conceptions of the world. The sentiment has prevailed on the earth, that wisdom is the mere attainment of exterior knowledge—that it is the gathering of certain forms and thoughts into the recesses of the memory, and that it is attained by the profound study of ancient books, by poring over antiquated doctrines and theories, and by introducing into the chambers of the mind the rubbish which the learned of past ages have been engaged in collecting. The spirits have seen the wisdom of the earth, and they have seen that it is stagnant, and dead, and worthless; they have seen that it has no beauty or animation sufficient to render it worthy of the name which it has been made to bear, and they see that the beauty and grandeur of the wisdom which resides in the spiritual world has no correspondence with that which has its birth and death in the world of undeveloped humanity. The spirits will, therefore, speak without hesitation of the wisdom of earth and the wisdom of Heaven; and, unmindful of the prejudices and perversions of the earthly soul, they will endeavor

to present a true conception of the divinity and purity of that wisdom which has its birth and everlasting life in the regions of unending bliss.

It will be the primary object of the writers of this lecture to unfold the prominent characteristics of the wisdom of spirits, as beheld in contrast with the apparent characteristics of the wisdom which prevails on earth. The first point which they desire to have understood, is the spirituality of the wisdom of Heaven. By this term is signified that this wisdom has no reference to the mere external arrangements which form the prominent object of human labor. The wisdom of the Second Sphere is the wisdom which has relation to the things of the spirit, and which searches into the deep things of God. The wisdom of the Heavenly Spheres is the wisdom which analyzes the profound principles of the Universe, and which penetrates through the superficial coating that makes the appearance of external things. This is a wisdom which soars above the fleeting and fading objects of the earthly sphere; it is a wisdom which rests upon the foundation of the Eternal Mind, and which has reference to the most sublime and heavenly realities of his creation. Thus the wisdom of the spirits is the wisdom of God, and the wisdom of God is the source of life and light to the soul. The wisdom of the world is the wisdom which is the gathered error and ignorance of centuries, and which counsels to promote the good of man, while it wants the power to accomplish the design which it forms. Therefore is the wisdom of the world a wisdom which is imperfect and corrupt in its nature, and weak and powerless in its action. Spirits see what will be an antidote to the weakness and imperfection of the wisdom which is of the earth, and they see that the only means of supplying the

world with the essence of spiritual vitality, is the wisdom which is pure and immortal, and which flows down from the serene heights of Heaven.

It has been stated that the wisdom of Heaven is pervaded with the animating presence of spirituality. This is a truth which should be properly appreciated. In the wide-spread earth where the millions toil, and groan, and suffer—where the poor and suffering beg for the bread which keeps the machinery of life in motion, may be seen an illustration of the wisdom of the earthly mind. The designs of men are the designs of minds which have no power to accomplish the results which are conceived and desired; and the reason that these minds are thus weak and powerless in their influence, is that the wisdom by which they are moved and animated is worldly, grasping, and selfish. When the highest thoughts of the soul are caused to be absorbed in the corruptions of the world when the best affections and noblest aspirations of the inward spirit are crushed and suppressed by pride, and lust, and sense—when the life which dwells within the man is buried beneath the hard concretion of materialism, there can be no true wisdom—there can be no design which is worthy to be accomplished, and there can be no power dwelling in the spirit to perform the fickle purpose which it cherishes. Yet in this statement is represented the precise state of the worldly mind. Amid the low and groveling multitude of human beings, but comparatively few can be found who have any thought or feeling which has not some relation, more or less remote, to the things of time and sense. If they think of the theories and doctrines of the most sublime Theology, the inward thought grovels at the shrine of popular devotion and worships mammon instead of the true God; and if the

sentiments of religious reverence are awakened by the power of foreign and disturbing influences, even these are mingled with the calculations of earthly profits and sensual pleasure. In this manner, the wisdom of the world—even that wisdom which sits within the sanctuary and reads lectures from the pulpit—is tinctured and corrupted with the things which belong to the transient forms and visions that haunt the realm of sensuous being. The wisdom of the world, therefore, is not spiritual—it is not fixed and founded on the eternal and unchangeable realities of the interior Universe, but it is a wisdom which delights in the oppression of the poor, in the suffering of the needy, in the Wails of the broken-hearted, in the sighs of the sorrowing and in the tears of the mourner,—because it is a wisdom Which brings crime, and war, and inequality, to which causes all the evils that are felt and endured by the mass, are to be justly attributed.

The wisdom which the world cherishes is thus the viper which winds its folds around the bosom where it is nourished, and implants a deadly sting in the vitals where it is allowed to rest. It is lamented by the spiritual world that man, on the earth, has been degraded by a wisdom which is not pure, and which is a cause of the deepest injury. It is Mourned by those who see the saddening desolation which has swept over the face of humanity, that the brightness of the Upper Spheres has had no reflection in the sphere of earth, and that the voices, which subdue and hallow the bosom on which they fall, have had so faint an echo in the human heart. It is seen that man is degraded by the perversion of his mental powers—that he is turned aside from the course of justice and purity by the imperfections of his interior perception, and by the absence of

that wisdom which is divine and eternal; and when spirits who dwell in a sphere of undying radiance thus look down upon the darkness of humanity, they are actuated, by the very love and sympathy which they feel, to expose the false and corrupting wisdom of the world, and substitute in its place a wisdom which entertains more exalted designs, and is endowed with a more irresistible power.

Is not the wisdom of the world resolved into mere policy by which the things of the world may be obtained and preserved? Is not this a wisdom whereby the end and aim of life become the attainment of wealth—the gathering of treasures which shine and fade before the gaze—treasures which the earthly grasp may never permanently secure, and which take to themselves wings and fly away! Is not the wisdom by which the mass are governed the deep-laid designs of avarice, ambition and sense? Is not this the agent of all those fearful crimes which have marred the dignity of the human being—the source of those dark streams of corruption which pour in overwhelming floods through the avenues of the social world—the prolific fountains of all those deep and heart-felt miseries which have burdened the breast of humanity as with a terrible nightmare? Answer, ye who have witnessed the doleful scene—ye who have tasted the bitter waters—ye who have felt the cruel anguish. Look within this bleeding heart which labors with its untold anguish—gaze at the scene of poverty, and crime, and pollution, which is spread out before the eyes of spirits—witness the deep and heart-rending misery Which is the effect of oppression and inequality in the rights and privileges of the mass—hear the groans which are forced from human hearts by the stem power of the tyrant, and then answer the demand of conscience which shows that all

these results, and more which forbid expression, are the legitimate products of the wisdom which has been made the standard of thought, feeling, and action on the earth. When this is conceded, as it must be on the authority of reason, then the force and truthfulness of the statement will be perceived that the wisdom of the world is selfish, earthly and material in its character. If it is said that these evil results flow rather from a want of wisdom than from its gross and material nature, and that they are not, therefore, to be attributed to the wisdom of man, it will be said in opposition to this assertion, that the results which have been referred to proceed directly and immediately from the wrong institutions, the unwise regulations, and the perverting influences of existing society; and furthermore, that these institutions, regulations and influences are created and established by that wisdom which dwells in the human mind on earth; and thus is it just and righteous to attribute the results which are seen and lamented by the spirits, to that mortal and corrupted wisdom which is the primary source from which they flow.

In the light of this conclusion, it will be seen that the wisdom of the world needs to be eradicated from the earthly mind—that it needs to be dissipated like clouds before the light of morning—that it needs also to be superceded by a wisdom which is more pure in its nature, and more beneficent in its results. Therefore will the spirits now introduce the statement that the wisdom of Heaven is the wisdom which should be received and known on earth—that the accumulated thoughts and experience of angels should be substituted for the blindness and imperfection of human ignorance. That this truth may be clearly perceived, the spirits will say that the darkness of the night which has

long rested upon the shadowed earth, shall be dispelled by the radiance which has its origin in the Spiritual Spheres; and that the beauty of such a process will be seen and appreciated by the purified and elevated souls which look upward for the light, and not downward to the source of darkness. The wisdom of Heaven is not like the wisdom by which the human world has been degraded during the long ages of the past; and the mission which it will perform among the mass of human beings will be seen in the spiritualization, elevation, and refinement, of the earthly soul. It is this wisdom which is to be substituted for that which depresses, and weakens, and crushes the immortal energies. It is this which is to have an influence to dispel the ignorance and superstition of the world, and which is to clothe again the heart which was destitute of its true joy, with the happiness and power of Heaven. It is this which shall remove the evils and wrongs of society—which shall eradicate the lingering roots of oppression and sorrow—which shall overturn the temples of a corrupt and heartless religion, and which shall bring to all the weeping and mourning children of humanity, the joy which the freed spirit knows when it enters his eternal home. Therefore shall the wisdom of Heaven prevail over the wisdom of earth; and thus shall its victories be welcomed with the songs of the redeemed heart—with the praises of the worshiping soul, and with the silent incense of inward and holy gratitude. The power of the wisdom which is here indicated, consists in its spiritual nature. It is known in Heaven that there is here an element of vitality which can never be destroyed—that there is here a power which can never be weakened—that there is here an authority which can never be resisted. It is upon the eternal

realities of the interior world that this wisdom is based; it is in the deep heart of the spiritual Universe that its power is founded, and it is in the all-pervading essences and elements of Nature that it finds the light which it imparts to those who dwell in darkness. Shall mortal arm oppose such wisdom as this? Shall human scorn, or contempt, or prejudice stay the stream of truth, and love, and harmony which it rolls through all the channels of human life? No. The feeble arm may be raised—hatred, and opposition, and bigotry may be made the external manifestations of human folly, but the power of the spirits which consists in the interior wisdom that they have gathered, can never be successfully resisted, and the result which this wisdom conceives will be executed by the power which it innately possesses, and none shall be able to stay its progress or arrest its triumph. Then, in the wisdom which lives and has its being in the minds of angels—in the wisdom which has its birth in the fountain of Supreme Intelligence, let mortals place their trust; and when the gloom and sorrows of earth weigh down the spirit with their fearful weight—when the stifled cry of suffering and misery gives pain to the senses and the heart, let it ever be impressed upon the soul that there is a watchful, superintending and governing wisdom in the heavens above, whose radiance shall be felt and enjoyed in the world beneath.

The spirits wish to mention, in this connection, the truth that the wisdom of the spirit is the characteristic and quality of the developed soul. This wisdom is the policy which has no reference to the attainment of the things of earth—which has no relation to the gathering of transient treasures, and more than all this, which is the highest and noblest attribute of that Godlike being which basks beneath the

refulgence of the Everlasting Throne. As, therefore, the spirit advances towards a more elevated and perfected state—as it moves onward through the attraction which it feels for the good and true—as it approaches nearer to that state of sublimation and refinement which forms the designed and approaching destiny of the human race, the wisdom which exalts, purifies and enlightens, shall be made the prominent quality of the spirit, and then, like a beautiful gem, shall it shine upon the brow of the aspiring angel who has escaped from the entanglements of flesh and sense, and soars upward to join his waiting kindred lingering far away in a higher Heaven. Thus there is a power in the wisdom of the spirit which is the power of the expanded and unfolded angel; there is a power here, beneath which the monuments of human pride and ignorance shall tremble and fall; there is a power here which shall penetrate to the holy sanctuary of the inmost heart, and shall reach far down to the foundations of prevailing wrong—a power in which the holy and the pure shall find their refuge—in which the righteous and aspiring soul shall enjoy its sweetest bliss, but in which the tyrant and oppressor shall find the strength of spirits and the energy of God.

LECTURE IV.

NATURE OF THE HUMAN SPIRIT

The world of mankind has no proper conception of the exaltation of the soul which dwells within the human frame. It has no realizing sense of the brightness and purity of that interior spirit which is the image of the Presiding Mind. It has no just thought of the beauty of that inward mirror which reflects the countenance of Deity, and it has no philosophy by which the true nature of the human spirit may be determined. Therefore will the present writers unfold the subject which is indicated by the above title, in such a manner that the intrinsic purity and sacredness of the inward being will be fully and clearly perceived. The blessing of divine truth is the joy of angels, and the light of angelic wisdom is the joy of earth; so that, with the influx which descends from higher Spheres, and with the pure and holy joy which mortals receive through this influx, the spirits may make their appeal to the internal consciousness of individuals whom they address, as the only safe and reliable guide of human thought and action.

It is a subject of peculiar difficulty with mortals, to ascertain the nature and qualities of that which is beyond the sphere of sensuous observation. It is a matter of the deepest perplexity to conceive a proper and definite idea of that which cannot be seen, touched, and handled. It is a source of the most distressing embarrassment to endeavor to search after that which is not to be found in the ordinary

way, which dwells far away in the recesses of the Universe, and which has its being in the undiscovered realms of spiritual existence. When the mind searches for that which is thus beyond its reach, it becomes faint and weary because it can find no resting place on the plane of sensuous being; it soars away into the heavens by the aid and strength of excited fancy, but returns with tired and drooping win, and mourns that it is dark, and blind, and weak. But the freed and immortalized spirit which is disenthralled from the clogs of the earthly nature, has not the faintness and weariness of the earthly mind; but in the power of its own concentrated and united powers, it soars up far beyond the reach of the external sense—far up beyond the clouds of the lower world, gazing upon the bright realities which cluster around its rapid flight and fill the immensity into which it roams. Thus the spirit feels its freedom when released from the body; it feels the power and energy which exist inherently in its nature, and which are the streams of the eternal well-spring that dwells within its depths; it realizes the divinity which is enstamped upon its being; it feels the sweetness of its inward life; and when called to search for the profound truths of Nature and of God, it goes forth in the strength of its own perfected essence, with a consciousness of power which is sweet and thrilling beyond all expression. The freed spirit can analyze the essences and elements of which its own being is composed. It can perceive and comprehend the substances of which its organization is formed, with the same ease and certainty that the learned and practiced physiologist can determine the nature of the substances that compose the external body. Hence will the spirits which are engaged in writing the present Lecture, reveal the

prominent qualities and essences which make up the spiritual organization, and which render the soul indestructible and immortal.

The first essence which should be noticed as forming the most external of the spiritual body, is Electricity. This constitutes the most material and outward clothing which it has to cover the more interior essences, and this is the element by which it becomes related, and continues to sustain a relation, to the outward world of matter. Electricity may be defined as that substance which dwells beneath the visible substances of the earth, and exists within the most subtle and refined fluids which animate the great world of matter. By electricity, as used with reference to the spiritual organization, the spirits do not signify that gross and unrefined fluid which pervades the mineral creation; neither do they refer to the more refined fluid which is the primary agent of motion in the vegetable and animal productions; but they signify by this term that fluid which represents the refinement and perfection of all these—which is the sublimated and etherialized element which has been withdrawn from the grosser elements of matter, and which forms the agent of that godlike intelligence which resides in the human system. This is the fluid which, in the connection of soul and body, unites the spirit with the physical frame; it is this which produces all motion in the body, and which comes in such intimate contact with the directing mind as to guide, control, and regulate the movements of all its limbs. Therefore is this fluid the medium through which the spirit operates on the gross substances of its earthly organism, and by which it produces all those physical manifestations of its presence that are given in every action, gesture and expression

of the form. It is in this fluid that the spirit finds its power to operate in an outward manner; it is by this that it is enabled to assume its supremacy over the material compounds with which it is surrounded, and by this, also, that it gives a sensuous expression to all those beautiful thoughts and divine emotions which rise within its conscious heart. The fluid which is here denoted is exceedingly powerful in its nature—powerful not as a material force, but as the agent of spiritual power—not as a Mere operation of gross materials, but as the glorious working of a divine essence. Electricity, considered in this light, is the sublimated agent and medium of mind; it is the external of the indwelling spirit which has no other power than its own inherent divinity; it is the sweet and purified substance which sustains the relations that this forms with the outward universe, and renders the unseen resident of the human frame the powerful soul of a weak and fading temple. Let it be impressed, therefore, that what has been termed and defined as electricity, is the outward body or clothing of the spirit, by which it becomes connected, and sustains its connection, with the material organism, and by which, also, it lives within its unilluminated abode as the supreme soul of a miniature creation.

The next essence or element which may be mentioned as entering into the composition of the human spirit, is a fluid which is termed Magnetism. This essence is more refined than Electricity, and forms a more interior portion of the spirit. In nature it is the same as that which forms the external clothing of the internal organism; but as to degree of refinement, there is the same difference as exists between the higher and lower gradations of matter in the visible creation. Magnetism, in other words, is the refinement

of electricity—which refinement is produced by the same eternal principle of motion which is the inherent and all-pervading law of existing substance. This essence, therefore, approaches nearer to the internal consciousness of spirit, and sustains a more close and intimate relation to the germ of the inward life. Hence it will be seen that magnetism forms the next higher and more interior grade of the spiritual being—this forming, while in its connection with the body, the agent by which sensation is produced in the human frame—the medium through which the intelligence which it receives is conveyed to the inner chambers of the soul, and by which the spirit is stimulated to thought and action through the impressions which are thus transmitted from the material world. This sublimated and ethereal essence pervades every portion of the human body as the soul of the electrical element which constitutes the outward clothing of the spirit, and as the latter is the agent of motion, so the former is the medium of sensation—as the one is the connecting link between the spirit and the body, so the other is the communicating essence by which the internal germ of the Divinity may be united with the external garment. Thus, through the medium of this essence, the spirit, though enclosed as a prisoner within its material frame—though shut up as a captive in the prison of the body, may still receive intelligence from surrounding objects, scenes and events, and may derive a sense of those beauties, glories, and harmonies which pervade the vast sanctuary of Nature. Hence the mind of the reader will be readily impressed with the fact that this essence, in the sublimated and perfected state in which it exists in the spiritual organism, constitutes the real and divine body of that immortal being which is enclosed within the perishing

structure of man as its animating and never-fading life.

If the conceptions of the soul can extend so far as the spirits have gone in their elucidation of the present subject, it may now descend still deeper into the mysteries of the immortal nature with which it is endowed. Down, far down in the almost inconceivable recesses of the spiritual being, lies a spark—a spark of life—a spark of light—a spark of fire, which fell from the ever-burning and shining Throne of the Omnipotent! This spark of life, and light, and fire, is the most interior germ of the human soul—it is the deathless, unfading, and eternal germ of thought, intelligence and consciousness. It is this which renders man immortal: it is this which places him far above the wreck and desolation of surrounding matter, and it is this which constitutes the inexhaustible source of all-expanding and endless life. In this, therefore, consists the real spiritual being; in this is represented the likeness of God; in this is felt and known that deep well-spring of happiness and purity which only the immortals see. Therefore is the soul immortal because the heart which dwells within it is the spark of the divine essence which can never die—because the germ of ever-enduring life is implanted in its inmost nature, and because the consciousness of the living and breathing spirit is the indwelling and eternalized production of the Supreme Mind. It will be seen, therefore, that the chief element and most prominent characteristic in the nature of the human spirit, is its immortality. High above all the changing materials of earth—up far above the occurrences of the earthly sphere, it dwells in the serene consciousness of its own endless being. The true evidence of immortality is the sense which the soul feels

of this great reality. When all things fade and die in the realms of matter—when seasons come and go in their unceasing round—when the deep voice of autumn winds moans sadly over the falling leaves, and when the beautiful form which was an external representative of the divine soul, bows beneath the change which creeps over all fair and lovely things on earth—then may the spirit, retiring within its hallowed sanctuary, feel the evidence of its eternal being in the profound consciousness of indwelling life, which gushes up from the germ of the unseen, but immortal soul. This is an evidence which does not depend on the action of the external senses—which does not rest on the presence of the testimony of the ancient saints—which is not dependent on the life or death of any individual, and which has no connection whatever with any established faith or dogma of the Church. In the last analysis of spirit, this is the nature of the being which is known by this term—the immortal and eternalized intelligence, which is the individual form of that divine essence which constitutes the breath of the Deity. Hence the foundation of a belief in spiritual existence beyond the grave, must be ultimately resolved into the interior consciousness which is felt by the enlightened and perfected soul, of the immortal nature which it essentially possesses. Here is the true—round of a faith in this living truth; but the world is not prepared to perceive this truth from evidence of this character, or rather it has not become sufficiently advanced to receive the most interior and satisfactory evidence of immortal being, which is found only in the depths of internal consciousness. Dwelling upon a material plane—living in the world of sense, and finding all its pleasure in the realms of matter, the soul has not been sufficiently expanded and

illuminated to admit the sublime realization that the soul is immortal and can never die. This is an evidence which can only be received by that spirit which has outgrown the narrow garments of its earthly nature, and has entered upon a higher plane of advancement. The evidence on which the world has relied, has been of the most unsatisfactory nature. It has been an evidence which has rested upon the testimony of individuals who lived more than eighteen centuries ago—individuals whose characteristics and opportunities for observation are entirely unknown by the present generation; and it is on this evidence that the human mind has rested its faith in immortality—the richest and most priceless boon of the Creator, while it will not trust the reason and intuition which dwell within the soul to-day, because they do not speak with an audible voice, and write in visible characters. The soul which has expanded itself beyond the limits of sect and creed—which has been enlightened with the wisdom of Heaven, and which is enabled to appreciate thereat essence of the spiritual being, regards all wisdom of this nature, as worthless and unworthy of its own aspirations. It looks with pity on the weakness and materialism of those minds which depend on the sayings of ancient apostles for the greatest truth that was ever born on earth, while at the same time it laments the superstitious folly which leads such minds to reject what already dwells in their own being, for something which is entirely foreign and material in its character.

The beauty of the soul is not seen by the world, because the world has not attained to that plane of being where this is visible; but the beauty of the soul is the beauty of Heaven, and the beauty of Heaven is the beauty of God.

Thus the nature of the soul is light, and purity, and bliss. It is the light, and purity, and bliss of the Great Spirit, in a limited and finite degree, for it is this, and this only, in all the wide creation which bears the reflection of the Divinity—it is this and this only, among all other beings which presents a likeness and image of the Creator. What, then, is the nature of the human spirit but the nature of the all-pervading Soul of Nature?—what is the nature of the human spirit but the miniature of the divine essence which dwells within the heart of the surrounding creation?—what is the nature of the human spirit but the finite embodiment of those divine and unfading qualities which exist in the germ of endless life? Then what shall be the conclusion to which the mind arrives in its investigation of this subject? Shall it not be that the spirit is, externally, electricity—that it is, mediatorily, magnetism—that it is, internally, the germ of unfaing [sic—unfailing?] intelligence—the spark of divine life? This conclusion presents the true nature of spirit—so far as regards its actual and essential being; and it is a conclusion which is not contained in the records of the Primitive History, and has no reflection in the dogmas of the popular faith,—but nevertheless it is true according to the wisdom of the Heavenly Spheres, and it is founded upon the unchanging teachings of that eternal volume which no mortal and no spirit can destroy. Therefore will the spirits proceed to elucidate a part of this subject which will be possessed of intrinsic value to every mind that is not bound by the shackles of bigotry and superstition. This theme relates to the situation and development of the immortal germ of the spirit in the human body. The question arises with many individuals as to the first primary introduction of this germ into existence, and the mode of its development

in the physical frame. This question shall be answered by the writers of this book, so far as relates to the essential formation and development of that internal soul of spirit which is the source of its exhaustless life.

In commencing this revelation, the spirits desire to remark that the beauty and perfection of the spirit itself depend upon the presence of the interior germ to which reference has been made. Without this the spirit would dissolve and die like the external body, because it is not the external elements of which it is composed that render it immortal, these elements having such an assimilation of nature with the surrounding materials of the Universe that they would be liable to become absorbed and swallowed up in the chaos of the external world; but it is the germ of purity—the spark of divine intelligence, which makes the immortality of the spirit, because these act as the magnet—the concentrated union of essence which attracts the remaining elements of the spiritual body into one perfect and individualized organism. In this germ is the assurance of endless being; in this is the seed whose indwelling essence is the attractive power which controls all mere external elements, and binds them together with a power which no outward force or change can separate. Therefore it is the germ of the soul which constitutes its endless being. It is the spark of the divine essences, which dwells in the human spirit in its concentrated form, that composes the deathless nature which is instamped upon the living man. With this, therefore, the spirits desire to commence, in the elucidation of the important point which was previously introduced. They desire to say that the human being produces the corresponding type of its own nature, through the same principles of reproduction which

are manifested in the animal and vegetable kingdoms. But in the human body, the refined essences of spirit have become concentrated and individualized by the constant operation of the lower forms of matter, and hence in this is presented a spirit which is organized on similar and corresponding principles to those which are exemplified in the outward organism. The germ of the spiritual being, let it be understood, is the most interior of the spirit itself, or, in other words, the soul of the spirit; and let it be also impressed that the beauty and illumination of the whole spirit depend upon the presence of this germ. From this truth it will be rendered clear to the mind of the reader that the perfection of the spirit implies the existence of the internal germ, as much as the perfection of the human structure depends upon the existence of the spirit. Hence it will be seen that, when the inherent qualities of the parent are transmitted to the offspring in the process of reproduction, the germ of the spirit becomes implanted as the seed of life—as the magnet which attracts all other elements which have an inherent affinity with this,—and thus acts as the central and controlling power by which the material elements are gathered so as to form the external body. The first attribute, element, or quality which is transmitted in the process of reproduction, is the interior germ of the spirit—it is this which constitutes the inward power which combines the elements that compose both the spirit and the body. When the germ of spirit has been transmitted and implanted, then this begins to attract and gather to itself the surrounding elements which have a kindred relation and character, even as the little seed implanted in the earth is expanded by the attraction of the materials which it gathers in the womb of earth. Then, after this

process has been commenced, the more external form of the spirit begins to be created on the principle which has been explained,—magnetism makes the clothing of the inward germ, and electricity as a still grosser element forms the clothing of the magnetic essence, and thus, through these beautiful gradations, the entire spirit is at last formed within the exterior womb, and gradually attracts to itself those materials of a grosser nature which make up the body of the infant, and compose the shelter and tabernacle "or the undeveloped inhabitant of the earth.

The process by which this result is attained, is of the most beautiful and interesting character. It is a process by which the divine essence which becomes concentrated and sublimated in the human frame, may become transmitted to another organization, and there unfolded into a form of perfect symmetry and eternal duration. It is a process by which a birth is given to the expanding properties of the over-enduring soul, through the principles of generation and reproduction "hose inferior similitudes are beheld in the surrounding creation. Therefore in this process shall the world see an evidence of the perfection of those divine laws, by which the likeness of God is impressed on countless and ever-increasing forms, in whose bosom dwells the spark of the divine intelligence. But let the mind become still more expanded to receive the beautiful truth, that this germ of the divine essence can never be polluted or corrupted through any influence or under any circumstances. This is the unfading and imperishable creation of the Divine Mind; it is the exhaustless source of life, thought, and reason it is the fountain of the indwelling consciousness, and hence were this destroyed, or were it even polluted through any admixture of corrupting elements, this creation

would become marred—this source of inward life would become stagnant and dead, and consciousness itself would be lost in the uncongenial mass of foreign materials. It is necessary, therefore, to maintain the identity of the spiritual being—to preserve that faculty of intelligence which is the essential element of consciousness, that the germ of the spirit should be, kept pure, uncorrupted by any of the external influences which may be breathed around it, and unmarred by any of those unfavorable circumstances which have served to degrade humanity. It should be remarked in this connection, that the germ of the soul may become dwarfed, suppressed and buried in its outward tabernacle; it may become even almost extinguished by the predominance of the sensual nature, and lie in its gross frame as the feeble and flickering spark of the Divinity, but still this germ is pure—the spark is bright, and while the uncongenial influences of the world prevent the expansion to which it is destined in the future, it will dwell there amid all its surrounding corruptions, and repel from its nature those grosser elements for which it has no inherent affinity, thus remaining in itself the same deathless and eternal soul which was implanted by the Supreme Intelligence. Thus the divinity in man—the soul by which he is animated, and moved, and governed—the germ which is the production of the infinite Mind, remains eternally the same in its nature, changing only with respect to the degree of development to which it arrives at the various stages of its progress. In the individual who has been unfavorably organized and situated—in whom the animal nature predominates over the spiritual, there is seen to be but a comparatively small germ of spirit, and hence the qualities which belong to this germ are manifested in an

imperfect degree. The spirits see that the germ here spoken of is, in the case referred to, undeveloped—that it is unimproved and unexpanded with the light of love and truth; but they see that, though the individual may be immersed in sin and crime—though he may be lost in the labyrinth of corruption, the soul by which the internal being is animated and illuminated continues pure in itself, and knows not the filth which is the attendant of lust and passion;—they see, in short, that what God has made pure and holy in its nature, can never be rendered impure and unholy by the existence of those elements with which it has no affinity, and with which, therefore, it cannot come in immediate contact.

It will be perceived by the rational mind, from the course of reasoning which has been pursued, that the germ of the spirit is in its own nature pure, and that it cannot be corrupted by any foreign influence or perverting circumstances. This truth will reveal the nature of the spirit in its true light, and will unfold the true relation in which it stands to the Divinity. It has been affirmed by theologians that man is the child of God; but this has been presented simply as a theological dogma, and not as a natural and philosophical truth, and it has not, therefore, been regarded with that profound and realizing reverence which it justly requires. If the Church could see the nature of spirit as this is seen in the spiritual world—could they see that the beauty and glory of the Supreme Soul are impressed upon it—could it see that the heavenly and immortal gifts of the Great Spirit are imparted to it as a natural and inherent birthright, and could it feel that God has respect for the child which has been created in his own likeness,—it would perceive that man can never, in any circumstance, or by any possibility,

become totally depraved, but that the soul remains pure and uncorrupted amid the realm of sense, and that, though the waves of lust and passion may roll around, it stands like the rock in the ocean which is unharmed by the rising waters that flow against its eternal base. With the sentiment, then, that the soul is pure—that it is created in the image and likeness of God, and is destined to endure through the rolling tide of ages, the mind may obtain some truthful conception of the nature of spirit. But this is not all. Not only does the soul possess the quality of incorruptibility, but it also possesses the quality of expansion. Through the long night of time the spirit may slumber in its gross and darkened tabernacle, but in the light which breaks upon the soul that is freed from its earthly fetters, shall it expand, and glow, and blossom like the rose. The little seed which is planted in the cold ground, at a season when there is no warmth or moisture to give life and unfolding to its powers, remains seemingly dead and inanimate in its dark home: but when the warm breath of spring is breathed upon it; when the gentle dew falls sweetly from the sky, and the cheering light penetrates to its cold bosom, then does it rise from its apparent lethargy, expand with the bloom of its inward energies, and produce fruit according to its inherent nature. So the spirit is imbedded in the body as a seed, which is the prophecy of a glorious expansion; and though, while surrounded by the chilling and uncongenial influences of earth, it maybe prevented from attaining its proper state of development and progress, yet when it is released from all the perverting and crushing influences of earth, and is introduced into the light, and warmth, and beauty of the celestial home, then does it freshen and glow with its new-born joy, and then does it expand

into the fullness and richness of the immortal flower. Hence while the apparent manifestations of Spiritual life may be faint and imperfect—while, the evidence of the divine principle of the soul may be almost wanting and the purity with which it is filled may be smothered and suppressed by the surrounding corruptions of earth, it does not follow that the internal germ is destroyed, neither is there any reason for supposing that this germ is stunted in such a manner that it will be afterwards prevented from expanding to its designed perfection. On the contrary, the soul lives within the frame not only as the incorruptible seed, but it dwells there as the expanding and progressive principle which reflects the glory of the Divinity, and is constantly unfolding towards the perfection which is manifested in his nature and being. The conclusion, therefore, to which the reader may arrive, is that the human spirit is progressive in its nature—that though this principle may be prevented from manifesting itself on earth, it will be fully and beautifully exemplified in those spheres of light where the glory of the Infinite is the eternal day, and night and darkness have fled forever. The clouds and shadows of the lower world, linger only for a season over the aspiring and thirsting soul; and ever, through all the gloom amid which it gropes—through all the sin and corruption in which it seems to be immersed—through all the ignorance and error in which it is apparently lost, it still maintains that beautiful and perfect principle which is uncorrupted and incorruptible from its birth, and ever struggles with all the energy of its immortal nature for that expansion, exaltation, and freedom which it finds in the Celestial Spheres. It is a great thought which thus places the soul so high amid the works of God—a great thought which thus presents the truth that man

on earth is the germ of the angel in Heaven—a great thought which acknowledges the principle of unceasing and never-ending progress—which follows the soul upward in its eternal flight, gazing as it were upon its ever-expanding brightness, and beauty, and glory, until it is apparently lost in the vortex of infinite and overpowering light which flows from the very heart of the Deity, and radiates through all the immeasurable Universe! And yet a thought so great as this is but the most simple truth—it is a truth which constitutes a prominent principle of the divine economy—a truth which forms a basis for that vast temple of celestial wisdom into which the angels enter, and before whose altar they bow in worship.

The spirits have thus endeavored to reveal the nature of the human spirit in relation to its external body, its internal germ, and its inherent qualities. They feel that the subject is one of vast and inconceivable moment, and they have endeavored to present and unfold the truths to be revealed, in such a manner as to cause them to be food, and light, and strength to the inward man. They will now close this part of the present volume with the sentiment that, while the spirit is exalted, and holy, and divine—while it is incorruptible, and godlike, and immortal—while it basks beneath the light of Heaven, and lives with the ever-radiant smile of God, it has no reason to be moved by any sense of earthly pride, when it looks upward to the lofty heights of wisdom which are yet unattained, and feels that it has entered upon that course of endless advancement which can cease only with the flow of interminable ages.

LECTURE V.

AUTHORITY OF THE BIBLE

The subject of the authority of the Bible is presented for investigation in this Lecture, not because it is possessed of that intrinsic importance which would demand a labored argument, but because it has been a subject which is made prominent and conspicuous through the force of human ignorance and bigotry. For long ages in the past, mankind have received the Bible with the most profound and solemn reverence. They have looked upon it as a book which is intrinsically holy, every word and sentence of which are the result of a direct influx from the Divine Mind, and therefore authoritative in the most literal and unlimited sense. So far has this reverence for the Bible extended; that individuals, whose reason and judgment were not sufficiently blinded to receive all its teachings, have been denominated infidels and heretics, and have been treated as the vilest sinners, by those whose faith in the writings of this book has rendered them professedly holy. The Bible has thus been made the standard, immovable and fixed, for all thought and action, with reference to subjects of morals or religion. This has been regarded as *the* book which God has given to the world as an expression of his will, and as a revelation of the destiny which he has designed for his creatures. In this, it has been supposed, is contained the records of truth which are unmarred and unsullied by any admixture of earthly error, and have their original source

in the great vortex of life and love, which exists in the inconceivable depths of space. According to the profound, but bigoted emotions of the religionist in reference to this book, the minister of the temple has made this a basis for the delivery of lengthy sermons and tedious prayers; and in correspondence with the commands which are here enjoined, the people attend to the external forms of worship, communion, and baptism, as the means of saving their souls from hell. The superstitions which belong to the past have thus been brought into the sphere of the present age, and the mass are willing to be bound and crushed by those burdening, chains which have been placed upon the minds and hearts of all past generations.

At a time when ignorance covered the earth as the clouds conceal the brightness of the sky—when the elements of the human soul were in a chaotic state, like those of the primitive materials of which the Universe was formed—when error, and bigotry, and superstition, were the natural results and concomitants of the low state of spiritual development, the reverence for the Bible, of which the spirits have spoken, had its origin and its birth. From this period this reverence has grown stronger and deeper in its hold upon the general mind, as noxious plants in the cultivated garden will strike far down into the bosom of the earth when left uneradicatd. In the natural increase of this reverence, men at last came to look upon the Bible in the light in which it is at present regarded; and, while at first this was respected simply as a valuable collection of wise sayings and useful precepts, it was ultimately adored as the direct and inspired word of God, which could be neither altered nor amended, without a commission of the unpardonable sin, and an extreme danger of being subjected

to consuming fire. As a consequence of this view of the subject which has been gradually fastened upon the human mind, the Bible has been set up as all authority;—it has been appealed to as a true and reliable standard of thought on all subjects which pertain to the interests of man—and has been leaned upon as an infallible statement of truth which requires the most implicit and unreasoning confidence, in view of the most terrible penalty which is attached to a want of faith in its divine origin. Men, therefore, have repaired to this source for their instruction and direction under all circumstances; and so deep and fixed has been the reverence which this has inspired, that it has amounted to absolute idolatry, and has even superceded the reverence which should have been entertained for its supposed author. The world has leaned upon its Bible as the child clings to its toy, and has exercised as little wisdom in the maintenance of its claim as the child manifests in defense of his peculiar property. All other books which have ever been written—all other productions which have emanated from the most expanded and sublimated minds on earth, have been regarded as feeble and unimportant lights compared with this great central sun. Therefore have the bounds presented in the Bible been made to represent the boundaries of human thought.

As far as the teachings of this book extend or are supposed to extend on any subject, so far will the mind reach forth its thought and reason; but the noblest, the most exalted and expanded faculties of the godlike soul have been cramped; bound, and chained by the imaginary lines of truth which are supposed to be established in the word of God! It is a scene which is lamented by the spirits—this blind and irrational reverence for an earthly book; it

is a scene which fills the bosoms of angels with sentiments of the most profound pity; it is a scene which causes the spirits to labor with increased earnestness in the work of human emancipation, which deepens the sympathy which has flowed through all the courts of Heaven for the children of men, and which has strengthened the efforts that the hovering dwellers of the Second Sphere are now making for the elevation and reformation of the earthly world. The reverence for the Bible which has been the ruling sentiment of human hearts—which has cramped and restricted all the free and noble faculties of the soul, has had its sway upon the earth for ages past, and it is now time that this should be removed for the introduction of a principle which is more worthy of the dignity of man, and more consonant with the design of God. It has been seen by the inhabitants of the Spirit-world, that the authority of the Bible has been the chief and prominent source of all bigotry and superstition; it has been seen that this has been the prolific fountain of all the sects and creeds which have cast their darkening shadow upon the face of humanity; it has been seen that this is the primary cause of all the narrow-mindedness, all the contraction of thought, and all the blind devotion to human systems of faith, which have been, and are still, conspicuous features of the world's history. The flowing stream of time rolls onward, bearing the truths and principles of other ages far away, that new truths and principles may be revealed which are in more perfect adaptation to the increased advancement of the race; and yet the bigoted and contracted soul clings, with childish and idolatrous worship, to the crumbling altars of the ancient error. Spirits see that the time is now approaching when this reverence will be done away—

when the authority of the Bible will be no longer regarded as an external standard of thought, and when the gateway of Heaven shall not be closed by the darkness of human minds which are not willing to receive the truth. No effort of the theologian or religionist can prevent the approach of this period, for there is a power on high by which it shall be introduced that is far more mighty than the puny arm of man, or the stern command of his feeble will.

Let those who still cling to the monuments of the past—who still build their faith upon the ancient structure—who still rely with unreasoning confidence on the authority of the book which is termed the Bible—let all such remember that the decree has gone forth and cannot return that the external trust of the world shall be taken away, and that the blind faith of mortals shall be destroyed. This, let it be understood, is the work of divine wisdom and benevolence; it is a work which has reference to the real and eternal interests of the earth-children; it is a work which should excite the profound and unceasing gratitude of the human heart. What has been the influence of the reverence for the Bible which has been nourished in the earthly breast? What has been the real effect of the authority with which this book has been endowed? The spirits have seen this influence and this effect, and they will answer the inquiry which they have made. They have seen that, through the devotion which has been paid to the supposed word of God, the reason of man has been left unexercised and unexpanded; they have seen that, from this cause, all the most exalted powers of the soul have remained weak and unimproved; and they have seen that, in consequence of a rigid adherence to the standard presented in the popular oracles of faith, the soul has been

restricted to the narrow limits of creeds which bear no assimilation with the all-expanding truths of the Universe, and no relation to the bright realities of Heaven. Thus the influence and effect which have flowed from the authority of the Bible have been of the most deleterious character, tending to degrade rather than to elevate, to confine rather than to expand, and to crush and destroy rather than to ennoble and save.

Viewing this influence and effect on the general mind, the spirits have decided to perform a work which has been prompted by the dictates of wisdom and benevolence—a work which shall result in the complete and final overthrow of all external standards of faith and worship—a work which shall bless humanity by causing the interior reason and intuition of the soul to become expanded, and a work which shall excite the joy and praise of the children of men, when they have attained to that condition of refinement and illumination where its importance can be clearly seen and appreciated.

In order to accomplish the work which has been indicated in the preceding paragraph, it will be necessary to furnish instruction with relation to the authority of the Bible, which instruction should be of such a character as will be adapted to unfold the reasonableness and importance of the labor which is about to be performed on earth. The spirits would therefore speak in the outset of the real origin of the book which is revered as the word of God. It should be seriously and candidly inquired, whence came these writings which are termed the Bible?—what is the real source from which the Scriptures emanated?—and the answer to these inquiries will naturally reveal the authority of the book referred to.

Far back in the depths of humanity's history, there lived individuals who were morally and spiritually advanced beyond the medium development of the age in which they lived. These individuals, residing upon an elevated plane of thought, were enabled to hold communion with the spiritual beings which, in all past time, have been hovering in profound sympathy around the dwellers of this darkened planet. In consequence of this spiritual communion, which resulted from the interior refinement and elevation to which they had attained, they manifested to the surrounding mass the evidences of a superior wisdom, and an unusual foresight of approaching events; and since they themselves did not understand the cause or philosophy of these wonderful powers, they were content to yield to the superstitious sentiments of the people who regarded them as being directly and immediately inspired by the Divine Being. By the individuals who are here named, the spirits have reference to the persons who are mentioned in the writings of the old and new testaments, such for example as Isaiah, Jeremiah, Christ, Paul, and John. These persons were seers and prophets. In their systems dwelt that peculiar essence of spiritual life which prepared them for an intercourse with the dwellers of the Second Sphere; and, while they were unconscious of this truth, and knew not the source of their inspiration, they naturally ascribed the impressions which they received to the direct agency of the Supreme Being and really imagined that they wrote and spoke as they were dictated by the Deity himself.

At this distant period, the nearness and influence of the spiritual world being entirely unknown, the spirits had as yet discovered no method by which the reality of their

presence might be demonstrated to mortals. Yet wherever there were minds which were sufficiently impressible, the spirits opened an intercourse with the world through this medium, and revealed those truths and principles that were adapted to the particular stage of progress to which the world had arrived at the period in which they were imparted. Thus the seers and prophets of the past, whose names are mentioned in the Primitive History, were mediums—mediums for impression and influx; and hence they were employed as the agents of the spiritual world which was then unrevealed, to elucidate and promulgate those truths which would be useful and appropriate at the time when they were given, and also those prophecies of approaching events which were important as the evidence of spiritual endowments on the part of the individuals by whom they were delivered. Such being the case, it may be easily conceived that the writings and sayings of the individuals to whom allusion has been made, would be naturally collected and preserved by the people, and handed down to successive generations as the infallible oracles of the Divinity. It was in this manner that the writings of the Bible which have been properly termed the Scriptures, were originated, and it was in this manner also that the authority with which they are now invested, primarily derived its being. Therefore will the spirits assure the world that the Bible is not the direct and infallible word of God—that it did not originate in the Divine Mind as its immediate source—that it was not the revelation of the Supreme Being as given under his own seal and signature, but that it was and is the production of minds residing in the body, which were impressed as clearly as existing conditions and influences would admit by the

influx of thought from the spiritual world—which influx was received by the seers and prophets of the past as the direct inspiration of God.

The spirits have thus related the origin of the Bible, and they have said what is true and wise. They have showed that this book is simply a collection of writings which were produced at different periods and by different individuals, and that these writings have been preserved and handed down to successive generations, through the influence of that servile reverence for authority which stills lingers in the human mind. From what has been already stated, it will appear, also, that the design of this book was far different from that which has been commonly supposed. Instead of being designed for the use of the world at large, it was designed simply for the particular class of individuals to which its several portions were addressed; and instead of being designed for the use of the world in all time, it has its special and legitimate application to the particular ages in which its different parts were written. The Bible therefore should be regarded in the light of an ancient history—a history which can claim no reverence on account of its age, and which can be no more authoritative from its having passed through all the errors and corruptions of past generations. It should be known that even the primitive records have been so mutilated and defaced as scarcely to preserve their original identity; and though the spirits would claim the authorship of these records as they were primarily given to the world, yet in their present imperfect and corrupted condition, they would prefer to concede this claim to those who have acted in the capacity of transcribers and translators. Hence the spiritual origin which the Scriptures originally possessed, maybe properly resolved

into human ignorance and misdirection; for the spirits have more respect for the wisdom by which they are moved and governed, than to degrade it by any association with the idol of popular devotion. Accordingly, they would say to the inhabitants of earth that the darkness in which they have groped so long, shall be illuminated with heavenly light—that the corruptions which have been the result of bigotry and error shall be removed—that the partition walls which divide sect from sect, and which prevent the true expansion of the soul, shall be broken down, and that, from the summit of the great temple of spiritual truth, shall wave the banner of peace and freedom over all the homes of earth.

Having determined the origin of the writings contained in the Primitive History, it will be easy to decide the real authority with which this is endowed. The truth will be at once discovered, that since this book, in its present form, was not derived from any higher source than the human mind, it cannot be possessed of any infallible authority on which the religionist can rely. Therefore the authority of the Bible will be placed upon the same ground as the authority of all other books;—the authority with which it is invested will be determined by the amount and importance of the truth which it contains, and the amount and importance of the truth which it contains must be decided by an unrestricted exercise of the reason and intuition of the soul. In this manner the external standard which men have erected crumbles in its own weakness, and the prop on which the mind has leaned so long is taken away, that it may stand and act by virtue of its own inherent powers. The Bible is to be regarded as a collection of ancient writings, which have the same intrinsic authority

as the writings which are produced in the present age. If these are discovered to be truthful and important, then they have authority so far as that truthfulness and importance extend, and no farther; but if, on the other hand, they are discovered to be imperfect and incorrect, then they have not authority to the degree in which this imperfection and incorrectness exist. As all works of the human mind are judged by the teachings of reason, so should the book which has been revered as the word of God, be subjected to the same test, and tried by the same standard.

"But," cries the religionist, "the authority which has been a source of faith and confidence in divine truth, will be thus taken away; the mind will find no place of rest where it can repose in the conviction of the saving power of God." The spirits would answer to this objection that the authority which has been revered and leaned upon in the past, *should* be taken away—that the immortal mind should have no outward prop for its faith in God and truth—that it is unrighteous to allow the spiritual powers to remain dead and stagnant by leaning upon an outward standard of thought, and that the only method by which the energies of the inward being can be drawn forth and exercised, is to be found in the inherent attraction of the soul to that which is true, and in the indwelling consciousness of the spirit of the Divine love and protection. The spirits see that the soul which is created in the image of the Divinity, has powers which are independent of the testimony of individuals who lived eighteen centuries ago; they see that this divine and immortal being has an authority of its own—that it has an authority which never can be shaken, though all outward altars may dissolve, and all their pride and glory may pass away—that it has an authority

which dwells in the sublime reason with which it is gifted, in the intuition which constitutes its interior perception, and in the consciousness of truth which is implanted within the germ of the inmost spirit. It is seen and known that this is the authority which man should ever seek—that this is the standard by which he should determine the truth which is contained within the lids of the Bible, as well as that which may be found in all other writings; and it is seen that the authority of the Scriptures which, from the force of bigotry and misguided reverence, have been termed holy, is simply the authority with which all scriptures are invested, which contain truth of the same amount and importance.

The inquiry may here arise, is there, then, no word of God?—is there no revelation of the Divine Mind?—and to this inquiry the writers of this volume answer in the affirmative. There is a word of God and a revelation of the Divine Mind. "Where are these to be found?" pursues the questioner. The spirits will answer. It is not in the revelations of spirits that the world can find, any authority on which to rely as an external standard. These revelations are not presented as the infallible production of the Divine Mind, which are adapted to the state of the whole world and the developments of every age. Therefore the human soul will find here no opportunity for that inglorious ease which it seems to desire—it will find here no support for its external weakness, and no infallible guide for its misdirected powers. The revelations of spirits are designed to stimulate the native powers of the soul; they are designed to impart an inward life and strength which it cannot gain from any other source, and they have a tendency to exercise the internal faculties

in such a manner as to bring forth the beauty of the inward being. There is no authority in the whole spiritual universe which is designed to have the effect on the human mind which has been produced by the authority of the Bible; and hence while spirits will furnish those revelations which will make their appeal directly to the internal reason, intuition, and consciousness of the individuals addressed, they will not furnish a revelation which shall be treated with the blind and childish reverence that has been given to the ancient scriptures.

But there is a revelation of the Divine Mind—there is a word of God, which is superior to all that finite minds can impart or conceive; and this is a revelation which must be regarded with the reverence which is true and just; it is a revelation which will call forth the inherent energies of the soul in the direction of its Divine Author. The revelation to which the spirits here refer, is the Creation which has been introduced into being through the action of the Supreme Intelligence,—it is the Universe which is the natural and untranslated expression of the Infinite Mind. No rational individual can doubt that this is the real and infallible production of the Deity—and no mind which will exercise the powers of which it is possessed, can be disposed to deny that the scriptures of earth and heaven are the only true and direct revelation which has ever been given to his intelligent children. In the beautiful and sublime works which extend far away into the expanse of space, may be read the divine truths which dwell within each living form; and through the deep heart of existing things there gleams a light which flows from the very essence of the Deity, by which the essential principles which have an adaptation to the earthly

mind, or which may be received by the sublimated angel, are easily and legitimately attained. Thus God is ever speaking to his children through the medium of the works which he has made. He is breathing in the light, the air, and the water—in all the myriad forms of life that swarm upon the earth, and in all the countless host of worlds that adorn the heavens—the essence of that love, and truth, and wisdom which ennoble and expand the spirit that receives. The spirits have thus answered the inquiry which was proposed; and in this answer will be found a truth which should be received into the inmost chambers of the mind, and allowed to perform its appropriate work of spiritual expansion.

In the subject which has been presented in the preceding remarks, will be perceived the evidence of spiritual condescension. It is not an agreeable task to approach a work for which there is felt no indwelling affinity; and it is with a sense of repulsion that the writers of this Lecture have entered upon a theme, which they regard only in the light of an ancient superstition that needs to be removed. In an important sense, the theme is one which needs to be discussed and elucidated, because it is one which has been generally misconceived, and has been the source of error and folly on the part of men; but it is a theme which is approachable simply from the love which the spirits feel for their earthly kindred, and not from any inherent attraction which it possesses. In conclusion they would remark, that they designed to speak plainly and boldly, but with the kindest feelings towards those whom they regard with unmingled sympathy; and they have only exposed the weakness and folly which they behold on earth, because it is only through such exposure that the evils lamented can be eradicated.

LECTURE VI.

THE HEAVEN OF THE SPIRIT.

The spirits wish, in the present Lecture, to unfold the beauties and glories which pervade the celestial home. They desire to reveal as far as possible to the gross and darkened minds of mortals, the attractions which are visible and apparent in the Heaven of the spirit, that the inhabitants of earth may attain some feeble conception of the destiny which awaits them, in the change or birth which passes over the outward frame and gives to the spirit its longed and sighed for freedom. The truths which they desire to present have no assimilation with the groveling doctrines and theories of men; nor do they correspond in all respects with the revelations of the seers who have illuminated the world with many truthful and important sayings. It will be the design of the present writers to reveal what is true and wise—to unfold the real reality, and not the external representative—to speak of what they see, and feel, and realize to be the truth, independent of all previous revelations, and apart from all the erroneous and imperfect statements of former writings. It will be their object to present the subject to be discussed in a rational and philosophical light, and not, as it has been commonly presented, in the light of dark sayings and superstitious views. It will be the desire of the writers to reveal the living thoughts and the inexpressible happiness which dwell in the bosom of the redeemed spirit, and pervade the mansion which it inhabits. Therefore will they commence the statements

which they desire to make, by unfolding the truth that the Heaven of the spirit is the abode of the immortal being which is enshrined within the human frame—that this is the home for which this being is born on the earth, and the sphere to which it is destined in the future expansion which it will enjoy in the change from the mortal to the immortal, and from the scenes of decay and death to the realms of brightness and life.

The Heaven of the spirit is the object and end of all human aspiration. This is the home where the poor and lonely pilgrim of time may find a dwelling-place—where the mariner on the ocean of life may find a safe retreat—where the lost wanderer may find a place of refuge—where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest. Every human soul that dwells upon the earth or animates the human form, aspires to this state of rest and peace. In the deep thirstings of the inward being—in the desires, and hopes, and aspirations which gush up from the wellsprings of the heavenly nature, there is a constant struggle and labor for the attainment of a higher condition and a more beautiful dwelling-place than are seen upon the earth. Visions of bliss will haunt the soul, while slumber has wrapt the body in its dreamy folds, and a prophecy of gladdening joy will thrill through the deepest recesses of the heart, while yet this knows not the source from which it flows. The weeping mortals who linger beneath the wing of sorrow, are seeking the home where the tears are wiped from all faces; and the angels who hover in sympathy around them, rejoice to receive and welcome the incense of pure desire which thus rises from the germ of the soul. But the world has been sighing and thirsting for what it knows not—for that which dwells beyond all the

most elevated thoughts of the religionist and theologian. It is seeking for a hidden treasure in the dark, and sees not the position which it occupies, or the nature which it possesses. Hence the spirits desire to inform the world of that which it does not understand, and which it may not find in all the primitive records which it has become accustomed to regard with deepest reverence. They desire to speak of that which has lingered in the thoughts and dreams of men, and which has been only as the ideal vision which Fancy has reared upon an airy basis. It should be stated that the Heaven of the spirit is not the material heaven which has been imagined by the religionists of earth—that it is not the abode of slothful ease and inactivity which is the desire only of the material nature—that it has no correspondence with the mansions of the wealthy, the couch of the voluptuary, or the green fields in which the brute reposes. The abode which is here represented indicates the home of the active, energized and ever-aspiring soul; it is a home where there is rest of a spiritual nature—rest which is independent of an ease of body, or a satiety of taste, but rest which frees the spirit from all the burdening shackles of the animal nature—which gives freedom from all bondage of sensual passion—which consists in the peaceful, yet heavenward flow of all the most interior thoughts, and which is enjoyed in the tranquil harmony that pervades the bosom of the immortal being, and lingers in all the atmosphere which it inhales.

The spirits desire that this portion of the subject should be duly understood; because it is necessary that the true object to be attained should be clearly revealed, in order that the inward aspirations may be righteously governed. The materialist who dreams of Heaven as a place where

he can feel the external pleasures which he enjoys on earth, should be informed that there is no abode in all the mansions of the Father where his dream will lie realized; and the sensualist who looks at the home of the spirit only as a place of ease—where the rivers of pleasure flow through all the expanding plains, and feasts of fat things are spread to allure the earthly taste, should distinctly understand that he can never enter the home of the immortals, until he has become freed from the low desires and sensual feelings by which he is moved in his present state. Heaven, so far as regards the enjoyment which is received by the spirit, is no place, and hence it can never be enjoyed simply by rising a certain distance above the plane on which the earthly being gropes and grovels; and though the home of the soul has reference to substance as well as condition, this can never be truly enjoyed—its beauties can never be fully realized, until the internal being is in harmony with the visible glory. Therefore is it important that this Heaven should be first regarded as a state, the true enjoyment of which will depend upon the presence of certain qualities in the heart of the spirit. When viewed in this light, heaven may be enjoyed by the soul in the body, and while it remains within the sphere of earth, if the essential peace, and harmony, and happiness exist which constitute Heaven. It maybe enjoyed by the pure in heart, and the blessed in spirit, of every age and name; it may be felt by the exalted and tranquil soul, which gazes through all the overshadowing clouds towards the radiance of the unfolded sky; it maybe felt in the chambers of that heart which can receive the truths that dwell in Nature, and the joys which flow down from Heaven. Thus in the attainment of the celestial abode, it is important as

the primary step to establish the kingdom of heaven in the inmost heart; and when this has been made the place and state of purity in the inward man, then can the individual by which it is possessed enjoy the blessings for which the spirit seeks and sighs, amid all the circumstances and influences which surround the earthly sphere. Let it be impressed, therefore, that Heaven must first be introduced and established in the soul, before the superior beauties and glories of any locality could be properly appreciated,—because the sense of beauty dwells within, and if this is not suitably unfolded in the home where it can only dwell, then the attractions which exist everywhere in the surrounding Universe, will entirely lose their power.

But though it is true, as has been stated, that Heaven must commence with the spirit itself and be made dependent upon no external conditions, yet it is true that the human spirit, when it leaves the outward tabernacle in which it primarily resides, is introduced into a Sphere which has a certain relation to the sphere of the earthly world, presenting the refinement, sublimation and perfection of all the external beauties which are here visible, and breathing upon the senses of the spirit those elevating and congenial influences which are adapted to promote its growth and expansion. This Sphere is situated at a distance of about fifty miles above the surface of the earth. It is formed by the spiritual emanation which flows off from this planet and all the objects which it contains, and presents the out-birth or refined atmosphere of the lower world. Spirits see that the process by which this reality is formed is sublime and beautiful in the extreme, though it is difficult, in the present state of the human mind, to unfold this in such a manner as to render it fully comprehensible.

It should be known that there is both a material and a spiritual atmosphere, which flows off constantly from the surface of the earth; that the material atmosphere rises to the distance of fifty miles, at which point it ceases to ascend, on account of the attractive influence of the materials which exist upon the earth beneath, but that the spiritual atmosphere still continues to ascend from the force of the affinity which it has for the more refined regions of space—this therefore constituting the basis of the Spirit World, which extends above the common atmosphere about fifty miles, or about one hundred miles above the earth. In this locality is presented the home of the spirit when it is released from the tenement of clay. To this home it ascends by the power of that attraction which is formed from the affinity that exists between the soul itself, and the elements of which its dwelling-place is composed. This is the real Heaven of the spirit; this is the world of light, and joy, and rest; this is the home of the weary, the refuge of the wandering, and the haven of the storm-tossed mariners of life. Above the clouds where the storms gather—above the darkness where the light is obscured, and above the corrupting streams of human passion, the spirit soars to the regions of unfading light and undisturbed harmony. The inhabitants of the earth may be assured that this Heaven of the spirit is the fulfilled prophecy of all the illuminated minds, whose thoughts and perceptions have been turned to the brightness and beauty of the celestial abode. This is the sweetness of the air which the immortals breathe; it is the undimmed radiance of the divine essence; it is the living fragrance of eternal flowers which no storm or frost can wither.

It is now the desire of the spirits to present some of the

external beauties of the heavenly mansion—to speak of some of the glories which gladden the hearts of the angels. They are aware of the difficulties and obstacles which lie in their way; they fully comprehend the feebleness of the earthly mind which is not enlightened with the wisdom of Heaven, and they understand the want of a proper assimilation between the gross conceptions of the groveling multitude, and that purity which is the reflecting mirror of the Great Spirit. Still will they endeavor to delineate in the language of earth, the attractions of their glorious home. To commence the delineation, they would say that the beauties which are beheld in the external world, are simply representatives of the real reality—the shadows of the inward substance, which is alone divine and immortal. The human eye gazes upon the freshness and verdure of the spring-time, and rejoices in the beauty which covers the blooming fields, or gleams from the shining sky; but the eye rests only on the forms which fade and change beneath the cold wind and the angry storm. Therefore these are not the appropriate objects which the spirit seeks—they are not the fixed and unchanging realities on which the soul can rest with unfailing confidence; but are simply the representatives of some more interior being which bears a relation to the undying soul. This interior being—this reality, is found in the Second Sphere, which has been termed the Heaven of the spirit.

The objects which adorn the expanse of earth, contain an internal essence which, through the same principle by which the external atmosphere is evolved, rises to the height which has been referred to as the point at which the spiritual emanation commences its separate ascension, and thus extends through the surrounding atmosphere till

it is born into the Spiritual world. This process represents the manner in which the objects of the heavenly abode are created, and the real, intrinsic nature which they possess. But the beauty which clothes and pervades every object that dwells upon the earth, is really unseen by the human eye, and the emanation which constantly flows from these, and which is born into the Second Sphere is likewise unperceived and unknown, excepting only by the disenthralled spirits which have arisen to their appropriate home. It should be known that the emanation which ascends from the various substances of the earth, does not maintain in its ascension the precise form which it preserved in connection with the object in which it previously existed; but it passes upward towards the Second Sphere as a lengthened atmosphere, whose inward beauty, brilliancy, and clearness no mortal can properly conceive. In this emanation which constitutes the external beauty of the heavenly abode, there exist the most beautiful and gorgeous hues, the most inexpressible radiance, and the most perfect transparency of which no substance on the earth is an appropriate symbol. The spirits can gaze upon this as it ascends from the earth, and watch its progress till it reaches and enters into the heavenly Sphere. They see that, when it issues from the material object and mingles with the external atmosphere, it is comparatively gross and unilluminated, but that as it advances upward and retreats from the unrefined materials with which it was connected, it becomes gradually purified, sublimated, and refined, so that, when it becomes the resident of the celestial home, it is the perfected essence of all interior elements, and presents the transcendent beauty in which the angels rejoice.

It has been stated, and, should be clearly understood, that

the emanation to which reference is here made, does not, in its passage from the lower to the higher Sphere, preserve the precise form which it had while in connection with the material objects from which it ascends; but it presents simply an interior and lengthened atmosphere of such objects, whose form is in precise correspondence with the nature of the substance from which it flows, and the force of the impelling power by which it is evolved. When, therefore, this emanation enters the spiritual world and becomes a part of the ethereal beauty which is here displayed, it exists only as a beautiful and harmonious blending of the most clear, brilliant, and gorgeous hues, which, to some extent, resemble the colors of the rainbow, which is the refined emanation of the divided light. Therefore is it true, that, while the Spirit-home is filled and pervaded with outward beauties which are perceived by the senses of the spirit, these beauties are not presented as mere external forms—as fixed and tangible substances, but they are revealed as the essence of all light and beauty—as the liquid sea in whose clear depths the purity of the indwelling germ of life is mirrored, and on whose bosom rests the reflected radiance of the overshadowing heavens. There are forms, but they have no definite outlines—there are groves, and vales, and streams, though these are not presented as the fixed and localized substances which dwell upon the earth, but rather as the mingling, blending and harmonious emanation which is constantly flowing from these objects. Hence the spirits find no obstruction in any of the forms which exist in their illuminated abode; they are not enclosed by any external lines or boundaries which might confine the movements of the material body, but they delight to bathe in the ocean of purity which surrounds

rounds them—to bask in the cheering light by which they are warmed and strengthened, and to gratify that absorbing desire which is sometimes felt by the refined soul on earth, to mingle with the very essence of the glory which fills the earth and heavens.

Therefore the delights and pleasures which the spirits enjoy, are perpetual and unceasing; they are the delights and pleasures which thrill through the breast of the immortal being in its elevated and sublimated home. The beauties and glories of the angel-world are the beauties and glories of the earth in their most interior, refined, and concentrated form; and if the human mind can conceive of the attractions which would be thus formed—if it can penetrate, even in imagination, the depths of the material Universe, and gain a perception, even though it be a shadow, of the interior essence of the Deity which here has its being, it may be prepared to appreciate, to some small extent, the richness, the purity, and the perfection which these beauties and glories unceasingly display. All that the spirits can do, therefore, to present this subject clearly before the mind, is to elucidate the reality which they behold, by an appeal to the most interior sense of beauty, the most profound consciousness of the divine, and the brightest dreams of the immortal. This appeal can only be perceived and recognized by the spirit whose thoughts are elevated above the fading substances of earth, and whose affections are exalted to the realm of unfading light and love. The gross, the sensual, and the worldly, cannot receive an appeal which has relation to faculties which they do not possess; such could never appreciate the beauty which does not consist in external proportions, or the glory which is not dependent on the splendors of human

art. It is, therefore, to the enlightened, the unfolded, and the educated soul—the soul in which the inward life has been born and nourished, that the spirits would make their appeal in the present Lecture; and this appeal they would have sink down into the most interior chambers of the mind and heart, that it may shadow there some faint reflection of the inexpressible delight which enraptures the bosom of the immortals.

The spirits have labored to present to the conceptions of the human mind, the external beauties which exist in their superior and perfected world. They would now speak briefly of some of the more internal joys which form the characteristic of their abode. As in the spirit itself there exist different grades of refinement, which represent so many steps towards the interior sanctuary; so in the Heaven of the spirit, there are manifested similar gradations of steps towards the most interior reality, which are the ever-increasing advances of all substance towards the great heart of Deity. Therefore, from the external beauties which gladden the senses of the spirit, there are still more real and substantial joys which result from the unseen, but divine and regenerating influence that descends from the circling Spheres on high. Retiring inwardly from the blending ocean of the most enrapturing glories, the spirits of this beautiful world enjoy the delight which mortals have never known, in the harmonizing and tranquilizing streams of love and truth, which flow down in unceasing currents from the inexhaustible Source of all life and being. Thus ever, to the inhabitants of the Second Sphere, the more outward and superficial beauties are not the chief delight, but they are attracted to find their chief enjoyment in the discovery and application of important truths; they

are moved to search and analyze the principles of Nature, and to receive their Miss in that radiant light, and those harmonious voices, which have their origin in the unseen sanctuary of the Infinite. It will be seen from this statement that spirits are not idle—that they do not sink into inglorious rest, simply because their desire for beauty has been gratified, but that, having attained to the inward and unchanging rest of harmony which they feel in all conditions, they are moved to exercise the sublime and godlike powers which have their being in the inmost germ of the soul, and which exalt and expand at the same time that they enrapture and rejoice the spirit. This point should be kept prominently in mind, because it is important that men should understand that the true Heaven of the spirit is to be attained only through action—not an action of the physical powers or material senses, but an exercise of those native energies which belong to the immortal being. The Heaven which is enjoyed by the freed soul, can never be entered through either the preaching of man or grace of God; but it is to be reached and enjoyed through the natural and beautiful unfolding to which the spiritual nature is subjected, which unfolding results in the perfection and refinement of all the powers and gifts with which it is endowed, and thus secures the internal happiness and peace for which man is unceasingly laboring.

In the foregoing remarks, the spirits have spoken to some extent of the occupation and condition of the celestial inhabitants. They desire to present a still more lucid and satisfactory revelation with reference to this part of the present subject. To do this, they would state that every individual spirit has his appropriate sphere of action, or in other words, to use the language of earth, his employment.

The sphere of action or employment which is appointed for any spirit, is determined by his own inherent qualities, the degree of development attained, and the particular Circle of which he is a member. And here it may be remarked, because it will be understood by the general mind, that the particular employment which an individual followed while on the earth, from the motive of taste and inclination, will be the employment, in a corresponding sense, which he will pursue in the heavenly world. That is, the sphere of action which formed the realm of thought, taste, and feeling on the earth, and which, also, determined the real capacities and qualities of the soul, will be the appropriate sphere of action into which the spirit will be introduced on its entrance into the sanctuary of the Celestial Heaven. For example, if an individual in the sphere of earth has been inherently attracted to the study of scientific principles—if he was actuated from taste and inclination to make discoveries in the realms of philosophical truth, he would possess the same motive and desire on his birth into the spiritual world, with the qualification that his motive and desire would be far more sublimated and spiritualized than they could have been in the primary sphere, and are naturally directed to the investigation of higher and more interior realities than can be discerned by the external reason. The same or corresponding remarks are applicable to all the various tastes and inclinations of the earthly mind—they will find their appropriate sphere in the realm where the highest and holiest thoughts are caused to absorb all those which are more low and groveling. With the sentiment, therefore, that the Heaven of the spirit is one of beauty, action, and progression, let the mind be actuated by the righteous desire to expand the

internal powers, to elevate the inherent desires, and to purify the indwelling affections, knowing that the true sense of happiness is not the enjoyment of outward pleasures—not the visions of fading loveliness, nor the voices of the perishing body, but that this consists in the profound consciousness of interior life—the realization of the inward divinity, which dwells in the bosom of every created soul.

LECTURE VII.

CIRCLES OF THE SECOND SPHERE.

Among the numerous subjects which are presented for contemplation, the theme which is indicated in the above title is one of the most interesting and important. Those individuals in whom a desire has been created to learn the wisdom of Heaven, will naturally make inquiry with relation to the characteristics of the Second Sphere. They will seek to be informed in reference to the condition of the departed spirit, the degrees of happiness which are attained in the celestial world, and the principle of progressive development to which its inhabitants are subjected. The spirits have a desire to gratify the wishes of such individuals, and to reply to the inquiries which are naturally made on this subject; and for this purpose they will proceed to furnish an explanation of the several stages of progress, which are manifested in the Sphere in which the writers of this volume now dwell.

It is the desire of the spirits to announce at the commencement that there are in the spiritual world seven general Spheres of refinement, and that these spheres contain separately twelve Circles—which circles are simply the gathering of those spirits which feel an affinity for each other, being situated upon nearly the same plane of development. These circles have the light of the great central Sun which is located in the vortex of the Universe, and are all illuminated, to a greater or less extent, by the radiance of the divine essence which pervades the most interior

portions of all Matter. Furthermore these Circles are the representatives of different degrees of development, and are the associated and united throng of those kindred beings who have attained to a corresponding sphere of thought and feeling. Therefore are these circles the repository of the wisdom which has been attained in the progress of the spirit, and are the beautiful congregation of united souls in the bonds of peace and harmony. It is the desire of the spirits that the truth on this subject should be known to the world; and it is for the purpose of expressing the truth that they have introduced the subject to the mind of the reader. Let it be known, then, in the first place, that the circles of the Second Sphere are simply the congregation and union of those spirits who have attained to the same or nearly the same, state of progress and development. This truth will prepare the way for another which is more important, which truth refers to the state of the different circles of this Sphere with respect to the happiness and wisdom which they attain.

To place this truth before the mind of the reader in its true light, it will be necessary to refer to the fact that there are also corresponding circles in the sphere of earth, which extend as far as the sixth circle of the Second Sphere. What is signified by this remark is simply that there are individuals on the earth who exist in the several circles or states of development which are here mentioned. For example, there are some men who reside upon the lowest plane of development, and are, therefore, members of the first circle; there are other persons who are somewhat more elevated and refined, and consequently belong to the second circle; and thus there are individuals in the primary sphere who occupy positions in the six circles

which belong to earth, each individual having that place which corresponds with his state of moral and spiritual development. The difference which is observable between the circles of the earth and those of the Second Sphere, consists in the fact that the former do not exist as distinct and organized societies, but as diffused and intermingled elements, which are as yet in a chaotic state, not having found their appropriate position; while, on the other hand, the circles of the Second Sphere do exist as distinct and definite societies, these being organized by the power of an internal affinity which can never be destroyed. In this statement it will be seen that the correspondence between the circles of earth and Heaven, is perfect in one sense, but imperfect in another. To the vision of the spirits there are really six general circles on the earth, which are representatives of so many different stages of development, and it is a matter of no difficulty with them to perceive the true position which every individual occupies, and the precise locality to which he will ascend on his departure from the sphere below. Hence the spirits are now prepared to proceed with the elucidation of the truth which they have commenced to unfold.

The individuals who reside in the first circle on the earth, will, on their entrance into the Second Sphere, become members of a corresponding circle here. They will rise to that position with respect to the earth, which will be indicated by their interior refinement; and they will enter into that association of spiritual beings which will naturally be determined by the affinity which they feel within them, as the results of a certain degree of spiritual unfolding. Therefore the individuals who reside in the first circle upon the earth will ascend to the first circle of the Second

Sphere, because it will be here that they will be located by the inherent affinity which dwells within the soul, and which no power in heaven can destroy. The same remarks will apply in a corresponding sense to the individuals who are members of other circles on the earth; they will ascend to such a circle in the Second Sphere, as will correspond precisely with the circle to which they belonged on earth. When an individual on the earth departs from the form, or, in other words, when the spirit becomes released from its earthly frame-work, it is attended by the representative spirits of the circle to which it will ascend, and is welcomed with the greatest conceivable joy. As the spirit leaves its perishing form, the waiting spirits receive it to their embrace, and tenderly, when the process of birth has been completed, do they bear it away to the circle of which it is naturally a member. If the spirit during its residence in the body has been undeveloped, if it has not been unfolded by the congenial influences of love and truth, then will it be borne to that circle which represents that plane of development to which it will naturally be attracted; and in this circle it will have precisely the same wisdom—no more, and no less—as it has attained in its primary sphere, or, at least, this will be the case until that period has arrived when the spirit has become fully concentrated, and is prepared to unfold with an increased rapidity. Thus if an individual is undeveloped on the earth, he will be undeveloped in the Second Sphere; if he has left the highest and noblest powers of his being in a state of lethargy while in the body, he will suffer the want of those powers when he has become a spirit. This is a truth which is known as an established reality in this Sphere, and which all the theories and doctrines of earth cannot destroy.

When the spirit becomes fully individualized, it has a perception of the beauties and glories which abound in the sphere of the soul, and which are the shadows of the Divine presence which expands through all the courts of Heaven. But though the interior vision is unfolded, though the immortalized being is enabled to perceive the external glories which exist around him in all surrounding space, yet the appreciation which he has of what he may be able to perceive, will be always in precise accordance with the state of interior development to which he has arrived, and he will not be able to enjoy any more of these glories than he can receive into the bosom of his inmost soul. Therefore it is true that while the beauties of the Second Sphere are opened to the vision of all the circles of which it is composed, yet the degree of enjoyment which these beauties will impart, will be in precise correspondence with the degree of interior unfolding to which the spirit has attained. Those spirits who reside on the lowest plane of development, enjoy but a small part of the beauties which they are enabled to perceive around, even as the gross and sensual on the earth do not and cannot realize the glories which pervade the earth and heavens. But those spirits who have ascended to a higher plane of development, who have become the members of a higher circle of wisdom, are able to enjoy a greater portion of the celestial beauties which they behold, because they are capable of receiving these beauties into the depths of the soul, where they flow as streams of ever-increasing peace. From this truth will be seen a prevailing characteristic which belongs to all the circles of the Second Sphere. The degree of happiness, which is enjoyed from external scenes must be proportionate to the state of the interior soul.

Many dwellers of the Second Sphere desire to present another truth, which it is important should be Understood by the inhabitants of the earth. This truth is, that the spirits of the circles in this Sphere are enabled to perceive and realize the presence of all other spirits in the same sphere. The highest and most advanced spirits of the loftiest circles of wisdom, are enabled to behold those spirits who are the members of the lowest society in the lowest circle. Thus there is a perfect bond of union between all spirits in the Second Sphere with respect to the knowledge which is possessed of each other, and the understanding which is obtained of the interior qualities of the soul. Every spirit in all circles manifests the precise character of his interior mind, and it would be perfectly in vain for any spirit to attempt to hide what cannot be concealed. Hence all the thoughts, feelings and emotions of the interior soul, are at once discovered and understood by all spirits whose attention may be attracted in this direction. The inhabitants of this sphere stand as before a sun, whose light penetrates to the deepest thought; and all are unmasked and revealed before the gaze of a million eyes. When, therefore, the interior of any spirit is comparatively dark and unilluminated, this is discovered by those who dwell upon a higher plane of development, and is revealed to the individual who is thus degraded. The sense of this perception on the part of more advanced spirits, serves to fill the undeveloped soul with the most profound humility, and at the same time has a tendency to inspire the most fervent desire to ascend to a more lofty and beautiful sphere of thought, and to become a member of those higher circles of wisdom, beneath whose penetrating vision he now quails with fear. Then into the

deepest bosom of the undeveloped spirit there flows a sweet and tranquil light, which seems like the very element of life itself, so exhilarating, and yet so tranquilizing is its breath; and as this light sinks far down into the recesses of the heart, and expands its influence through all the interior avenues of the inward being, the germ of the soul begins to unfold and awaken from its slumber, and the purity which is here impressed upon the spirit is thus brought forth to the most glorious perfection. The spirits have seen that this process has a perfect analogy with that by which the flower is unfolded, through the influence of the light and dew; for when the rose has been confined in the cold and darkness of a dungeon, it ceases to expand its internal properties, but when it is brought forth into the cheering light, and feels the breath of the distilling dew, it opens its petals to the irresistible attraction, and unfolds in all the freshness and beauty of its summer birth. But the spirit, unlike the flower, which is developed in the light and withers beneath the frost, is not affected by any of the chilling influences which are felt upon the earth, but it continues to expand, and grows fresher and brighter at every stage of its advancement, through the flowing years of eternity.

The spirits see that this truth will appropriately introduce still another, which is possessed of intrinsic importance. They see that the beauty of the spirit depends upon its interior unfolding; they see that the brightness to which it attains, is entirely proportionate to the degree of development to which it has advanced. No spirit can by any possibility put on any external appearance which does not correspond with the interior reality, for every spirit will manifest just that degree of transparency and brightness

which is the natural outbirth of its internal condition. Consequently, there is no external cloak of hypocrisy which can hide the deformity of the soul; but the external appearance is in all cases the correct and infallible representative of the interior reality. Accordingly one spirit can in no case deceive another with regard to the position which he naturally occupies for the degree of brightness and purity which is manifested, even in the external clothing of the spiritual form, is the standard by which this position may be at once decided. Hence there can be no arbitrary election or election of the members which compose any circle, for the degree of interior development, which is always clearly apparent, will be the unfailing criterion by which these members are selected. As an inference from this statement, it will be seen that the circles of the Second Sphere must be necessarily in a state of concord and harmony, being composed, as they are, of those spirits which have arrived to the same degree of development, and are therefore situated upon the same plane of being. It is a consoling truth, therefore, that there can be no war, discord, or inharmony in the Second Sphere, and that the implements of destruction have here no existence, because the occasion for their use has passed away. The spirits express this truth, for the reason that they desire to elucidate the superior position which they occupy with respect to the dwellers of the earth, and because they wish to present an attractive condition towards which the aspirations of the earthly may be directed.

In this connection it should be stated that every circle of the Second Sphere has its appropriate mission or employment, and that this mission and employment are made to correspond to the prevailing qualities of the spirits of

which the different circles are composed. There is no compulsion or force required to direct the movements of any circle, or any of its members. There is no external or arbitrary authority which is essential to the suitable exercise of the inward powers, but all spirits have an irresistible attraction towards that mission and that employment which are adapted to their interior state and capacity,—so that from the ties of affinity, from the impulses of a special and all-powerful attraction, the soul flows forth into the works of harmony and development, which are presented as the appropriate labor to be performed. Thus in the sweet and internal flowing of pure desires, in the deep and indwelling conviction of truth and duty, and in the strong and irresistible attraction of a deathless love, the spirits of all circles enter upon their suitable mission, and perform the work which is given them to do. Then as to the rewards of the labor in which the dwellers of the Second Sphere engage, they find the recompense which is not sought, but which, for this reason, is the more delightful. They are visited by those sweet breathings of peace and joy—those internal influences of celestial happiness, which are the legitimate fruits of the harmonious exercise of the spiritual powers. The soul, therefore; requires no external recompense; it works not for hire like the laborers of earth, but it goes forth upon its mission with the holiest desires and the most ardent affections, and receives into its bosom the same purity and love which it labors to diffuse among those who are destitute of these heavenly qualities. Therefore the conception which supposes that the spirit on the earth must labor for salvation in the next world, as an extraneous reward for such labor, is seen to be gross and repelling in the extreme; for it is known in

Heaven that the beauty of the Mission which every spirit has to fulfill consists in the free and outflowing love with which it is performed, and that the dignity of every labor which may be imposed upon any circle, is the disinterestedness and benevolence with which it is carried on.

It is true, and the fact should be here stated, that the circles of the Second Sphere are subjected to certain laws, that they have a certain form of government, and that they have certain officers which represent superior dignities and stations; but what is signified by this is simply that all circles have such laws, and forms of government, and dignitaries, as correspond with the position which they occupy in the several stages of development; or, in other words, that the spirits of every circle have an understanding among themselves with relation to certain courses of action, and also with regard to the regulations by which they shall be governed—which understanding is based on the universal law of affinity to which all spirits in all Spheres are subjected. When, therefore, it is seen in the wisdom of any circle, that a certain work should be performed, there is formed immediately an attraction for the work presented; and in accordance with this attraction, there is at once a general and united movement towards the accomplishment of the object which has been decided to be wise and good, each spirit naturally falling into precisely that position for which he has an attraction, and fulfilling just that office for which he is adapted by virtue of the internal qualities of which his nature is possessed.

To illustrate this point, the spirits will refer to the design which was formed by the Sixth Circle, to write the present volume through the medium who is here employed. When this design had been fully formed and was decided to be

wise by the entire circle, then the part of the labor which should be assigned to each individual was immediately perceived, and when perceived, was welcomed by the impulse of the interior attraction which was naturally and instantaneously created. The spirit who was best adapted to this purpose, approached the medium whose hand and arm were to be employed, at a distance of about two miles from the earth; then he breathes out the spiritual atmosphere which he inhales towards the individual who now writes, and in this manner causes a complete chain of spiritual substance to be established between the directing spirit and the system of the medium, by which chain a perfect connection is formed from the one to the other, so that the hand and arm are moved by the will of the spirit, while at the same time the mind of the medium is entirely passive. Thus the process by which this work is performed, is one which is sublimely simple in its nature, and yet One which illustrates, in a clear and forcible manner, the regulations which are established for the government of spirits; for no spirit which was not fully adapted to this work, could have either the desire or the power to superintend this process, or produce the movement which is necessary to its successful accomplishment. To continue the illustration which the spirits are here offering, it may be stated that all other portions of the work which is connected with the process of writing, are performed by those spirits who are particularly adapted to the sphere in which they are placed. The labor is divided in such a manner that it is exceedingly easy and agreeable to all who are engaged in its performance; and so great are the union and harmony with which every thought are action and made manifest, that the efforts of all are directed towards one

common end and tend to produce one important result. Thus the spirits all have a mission to perform; and the regulations by which the particular offices of all are determined, are as precise and definite as the law of affinity can render them, and as binding and powerful as the inherent ties of spiritual attraction.

The object of the present writers will now be to present an analysis and classification of the several circles of the Second Sphere, with reference to the particular qualities and degrees of development which are here manifested. They would, in the first place, speak of the lowest circle of the Second Sphere which corresponds with the first circle in the sphere of earth. This circle, to the vision of the writers, appears exceedingly dark and unilluminated. It is the gross and imperfect development of spiritual forms, which is repelling to the more sublimated spirits which bask in the light of the celestial sun. The state in which they exist is a state of extreme imperfection—it is a state which corresponds with the lowest sphere of development on the earth, and which presents all the angular and inharmonious movements which result from a partial unfolding of the interior germ. In the circle which is here referred to, the manifestations of spiritual life are feeble and imperfect—there seems to be only a flickering spark of vitality by which the outer elements of the spirit may be preserved in their appropriate relations. From the predominance of the earthly over the spiritual nature while upon the earth, the soul has become dwarfed and stunted in its growth; it has been prevented from expanding in the strength and beauty of the angel, and has been left to become almost swallowed up in the mass of darkness and corruption by which it was surrounded. Spirits have seen

that the dwellers of the first circle in the Second Sphere are not wicked or intrinsically evil; but they see that the germ whose expansion would render them bright and pure, is not unfolded, and that, as a natural consequence, this remains in a state of comparative gloom until they are pervaded with the elevating and tranquilizing influences which descend from higher circles. It is unrighteous to call that which is not developed in wisdom, evil, and therefore, though the movements of the spirits in the first circle are angular and imperfect, and though they are not in all cases under the guidance of superior wisdom, it is good to believe that they are subject to the same law of progression by which even the grossest forms in Nature are perfected, and by which they will be attracted to a more illuminated sphere, where the brightness and purity of their interior nature shall be clearly developed.

Next to the first or lowest circle of the Second Sphere, may be properly noticed the Second Circle. In this is manifested the next step in the pathway of progression to that which has been previously considered. The germ of the soul in this circle begins to expand beneath the light and warmth of the heavenly sun. This circle is the circle of love, in which the first buddings of the inward soul are seen to spring forth from the sanctuary of the unseen flower whose bloom and fragrance are eternal. The members of this circle are the unfolding germs of a higher spiritual creation—they are the feeble and imperfect manifestations of the divine love which is the attractive magnet of all human souls. Brighter grows the light which is received into the bosom of these spirits, and beneath its genial and irresistible influence they expand towards the bright and overpowering sun from which it flows. The heaven of

these undeveloped but developing beings is the heaven where the soul delights to exercise its inherent affections, and to manifest its active and profound sympathies towards those who are depressed and suffering. Mien the kindred whom they have left on earth are in perplexity and doubt—when they are suffering beneath the sorrows and evils of the world, these sympathizing and loving spirits hover unceasingly around their homes, and impart to them the influence of their heart-felt affection. But in them the principle of wisdom is not developed; they are not unfolded in a knowledge of the truths and principles which pervade the glorious mansions of God, and are not, therefore, prepared to impart instruction on any subject that pertains to the welfare of the race. In respect to the course which should be pursued for the enlightenment and redemption of the world, they are entirely unprepared to furnish any definite or reliable information. The spirits see that the circle of which mention is here made, is possessed of benevolent feelings and is moved by the impulses of love, but that it is not guided and regulated by the dictates of wisdom. Accordingly the communications which are received from this circle are characterized by the predominant affections which have been most fully expanded, and do not present a source of wise and useful instruction by which the mind may be elevated or the heart improved. Therefore it is not wise for the inhabitants of the earth to seek wisdom from a source where it does not exist, or to ask information, as many persons do, from spirits by whom this cannot be furnished; and it is well to note that the spirits of the Second Circle will not profess to furnish instruction with regard to the more elevated truths of the celestial world when seriously questioned, and only do this from the blind impulse of love

which seeks the gratification of those with whom they converse. If this fact is kept prominently in the mind, it will serve to account for the circumstance that in the primary stages of spiritual development on the earth, the messages which were conveyed from the unseen world were characterized by a complete absence of that food which the soul seeks, and the light which tends to its unfolding and progress for it should be known that, in the primary stages of spiritual development, the spirits of the first and second circles were employed to produce external demonstrations of an invisible energy, and to convey to the investigating mind the messages of friendly affection.

It is now the desire of the writers to ascend to the next higher plane of development, which is seen in the Third Circle. In this circle of spirits there is manifested a more complete unfolding of the interior germ of the soul, and a corresponding increase of the light of wisdom. The members of this circle are able to perceive some small portion of the grandeur of the celestial world, and are prepared to delineate to some extent the condition of the spirit when it rises from its rudimental form. Still it must be remarked, and should be generally understood, that the spirits in this circle are but partially unfolded in wisdom, and are, therefore, not prepared to reveal to the world those truths which will be adapted to reform and purify its corruptions; and it is especially observed that the members of this circle are the individuals who upon the earth were the victims of religious bigotry and sectarianism, and that they do not for some length of time become released from the trammels by which their minds were bound while in the body, and are not, consequently, entirely relieved of the impressions which were enstamped upon the soul in

the process of early education. It is seen and proved to be the case, that the spirits of the Third Circle are still the same in the prejudices which were fastened upon their minds as upon the earth; that they still retain and defend, as far as they are able, the peculiar views and doctrines which they were taught to cherish, and that they do not hesitate to confirm the prejudices of the earthly friends with whom they converse, when those prejudices chance to be in accordance with their own. From this cause it has occurred that numerous inconsistencies have been witnessed by investigating minds, inasmuch as contradictory communications have been received from spirits in this circle with relation to certain points of religious faith and doctrine. Those individuals who were, while in the body, zealous advocates of the popular doctrines of the church, whose minds were trammelled by sectarian bigotry, and immersed in the deepest gloom and despondency from the fear of eternal suffering, will still continue, even while surrounded by the beauties of the Second Sphere, to cherish the same dogmas to which they were formerly attached, and will embrace every suitable opportunity to impress these dogmas on the minds of their earthly friends. It should be known that these spirits are perfectly honest in the expression of their religious views, and are fully convinced, for the time being, that these are the exact truth; so that the communications which seem to be of an inconsistent nature, with reference to the religious views of spirits, should not be traced to an evil source, but should be regarded as the legitimate expression of the undeveloped and unilluminated spirit. On the principles which are here presented, the reader will discover that the spirits of the Third Circle are not the appropriate teachers of the

world, and are not adapted to supply the wants and relieve the necessities of the earth-children, but that they have already performed the mission which they are chosen to fulfill in the part that they have taken to produce evidence of the spiritual existence.

The spirits will now proceed to speak of the Fourth Circle of the Second Sphere. This circle represents an obvious improvement on that which was last mentioned, and contains a more full and extensive supply of heavenly wisdom. The germ of the spirit is here unfolded to art extent which it is pleasing to behold, and a deep and earnest aspiration is created for a more rapid progress. Here the light of higher circles begins to be reflected with a powerful radiance, and the warmth of love is mingled with the sweet and tranquil flow of a divine knowledge. In this circle the affections and sympathies are elevated upon the plane of wisdom; the principle which gives dignity and divinity to the spiritual nature—the principle which is the counterpart of divine intelligence, begins to expand and ripen in the inward being. The objects which are here sought, are those that serve to ennoble and dignify the soul which seeks, and the efforts which are here made for the welfare of humanity are guided in a high degree by the dictates of wisdom. Yet even in the Fourth Circle there is not a complete unfolding of the heavenly germ—there is not a complete deliverance from the profound impressions which were produced by early education; and hence, while the spirits which reside upon this plane are moved by the best and purest motives, they have not the ability to furnish that amount of information which is required to complete the work of social reform—and hence these spirits should not be blamed, or treated harshly by

the inhabitants of the earth, when they fail, from a want of power which they do not possess, to communicate such instruction as is adapted to the advanced mind.

The Fifth Circle of the Second Sphere is situated next to that which has been previously noticed in the ascending gradations of spiritual development. It is the truth which spirits desire to express with reference to this circle, that its members are entirely freed from religious bigotry, released from the chains of creed and sect, delivered from the bondage of sectarian dogmas, and introduced into a sphere of light where the soul may expand, and bloom, and freshen in the sweetness of the celestial air. The spirits desire to state that the members of the Fifth Circle are unfolded in wisdom; that they have cultivated and cherished the immortal germ that gives life and being to the spirit; that they have searched and investigated the principles of the spiritual universe, and that, from the wisdom which they have gathered in a continued course of investigations, they are prepared, authorized, and commissioned to act as teachers and reformers of the human race.

The spirits which are engaged in writing the present Lecture, are fully aware that they have now reached a point in the present investigation where the native delicacy of the earthly being would forbid expression, on the principle that the truly wise will speak least of their own wisdom. Yet it should be understood that the spirits of the Sixth Circle which now write, are moved by a higher principle than that which is founded on a sickly delicacy, and hence they have presented their claims to be heard by the inhabitants of earth with a bold and unhesitating confidence. It is not their desire to compel the world to receive their sayings on the strength of their own testimony,

but it is their desire that the human race should listen to, and inwardly digest the teachings which they convey, testing the intrinsic value of all that may be written by the standard of reason and intuitive perception, which are the ever-watchful residents of the illuminated soul. With relation to the circles of the Second Sphere that ascend above the stage of progress to which the writers have arrived, it does not become the spirits of the Sixth Circle to remark; and therefore they will close the present Lecture, by remarking that the circles which extend through the lofty heights of the spiritual heavens are sublime and glorious beyond the conceptions of the human mind, and form an attractive magnet, by whose silent and impressive influence the expanding spirit is drawn upward with the ever-deepening sense of divine wisdom, and a blissful assurance of immortal love.

LECTURE VIII

RELIGION OF THE CHURCH.

The subject of the Religion of the Church is the subject which the spirits design to present in its bearings on the interests of the soul and the advancement of the world. It might, perhaps, be just to question the propriety of affirming that the existing Church has a religion, if this term is used in its literal sense, to signify the ties or obligation by which an individual is bound to truth and duty. But employing this term in the more usual sense in which it is accepted by the world, the spirits clearly perceive that the Church has a religion, and that that religion has been the bane of the world. The truth on this subject needs to be fully understood; and hence the real truth will be spoken in the present Lecture, independently of the fear or favor of men.

What, then, let it be first inquired, is the religion of the Church? The spirits will answer That this religion is the structure of Materialism—that it is the combination and concentration of those sensuous thoughts, sentiments and expressions, which can be only received through the medium of the most external powers. The religion which the Church aims to inculcate is a religion of forms and ceremonies, in which there is not sufficient vitality to keep the soul from death; and the Church itself, being destitute of any animating life, is a dead and rotten organization which is ready to crumble and dissolve. The religion which has

been introduced in the name of Jesus, is a religion which is founded upon the laws and institutions of Moses; it is a religion which has reference to those ancient forms and time-honored customs which move the elements of the outward man, but have no effect with the immortal soul. This is a religion which the world has loved, because it could enter into its most holy sanctuary and worship beside its most sacred altar, while at the same moment it could consistently carry on the process of thoughtful abstraction with regard to the things of the external life. It is a religion which the world has loved, because it has been adapted to all the material views and feelings with which it has been filled, and because it has fostered in its bosom those nurslings of the mass which are seen in the perverted passions of the depraved mind. It is a religion which has the good of the world in its professions, but which has the perversion of human thoughts and feelings in its tendency. It is a religion which has the most flattering voice, but the most corrupt heart; which is like the whited sepulcher, fair as to its external appearance, but within the home and sanctuary of death itself. It is a religion which is dependent upon the external arrangements which are necessary to its very existence; it is like the sensation of the animal but which exists while the organization endures, which becomes diffused and swallowed up in surrounding elements when this decays; it is the religion which consists in the existence of the outward temple, in the institution of certain ceremonies, in the observance of certain rites, and in the punctual observance of all the obligations which are imposed upon its adherents under the penalty of divine wrath. Thus the religion of the Church is wholly and lamentably material in its entire nature and constitution—

it is utterly destitute of that animating and indwelling life which can only exist as the influence of an inward soul.

The spirits are fully prepared to demonstrate what has been previously stated, by an appeal to facts which can not be overthrown. They are prepared to show that the statements which they have made do not result from any hostility which they feel for the Church, on the ground of a combative feeling, but that they do result from an absolute perception of the wrongs and evils which are implanted in its very heart. Look, then, at the reality which has been expressed. See the blindness, ignorance and superstition which are presented to the people as divine truth; and then gaze upon the crowds which gather in the sanctuary where the music of the human voice is caused to bear tidings of eternal woe—and when this is beheld and realized, let the mind retire into its own interior temple and ask the consciousness which slumbers there, if this is the religion of Jesus? In the first place, the religion of the Church is material, because it cherishes the ceremonies which have been made the offspring of the most sensuous people. At the time when the institutions of Moses were established, the general mind was groping upon a material plane; it was unilluminated with the truths of the inward life, and it had no conception of those higher attainments which dwell in the regions of unfading light. Accordingly the only form of worship which could be made to apply to the mind in this condition, was a material one. This was the only form of religion which it was at that time prepared either to receive or comprehend. It was therefore the dictate of wisdom to furnish the people with such a religion as should appeal mostly to the external senses, and should be acknowledged by the most external reason. The

Jewish nation was the recipient of this religion, which, although it is stated that they represented the chosen people of God, was still immersed in the grossest darkness of which the world can now conceive. To this nation, the forms and ceremonies ordained by Moses were imparted, because they were adapted to its internal state; and these forms and ceremonies were simply the external symbols of interior truths, for the reason that the minds of the people were not in a suitable condition to receive such truths through any other medium. There was, therefore, an excuse for those who were thus material and unenlightened, to foster a material and unenlightened system of religion; but the great and lamentable evil stands prominently before the vision of spirits, that the same dark and sensuous religion is made the cherished offspring of the Church in this age of light and spiritual life.

This is the fact which the writers of this volume wish to be kept before the mind of the reader; for that it is a fact, which even the eyes of mortals can perceive, is known by those who are conducting the present investigation. Let the mind boldly meet the facts in this case; let it see that there is a reality in the statements which have been made in this Lecture. The religion of the Church, then, consists in the performance of certain external rites. Where would be this religion if there were no churches? Where would be this religion if there were not services of worship? Where would be this religion if there were no sermons delivered, no prayers offered, and no hymns sung? It must be seen by every candid mind that the very meat and substance of this religion consist in these outward services of devotion—services which may have influence on the external movements of individuals—which may cause the knee

to bend, the arm to be raised in supplication, or the lips to be moved to chant the praises of God, but which can never of themselves move the heart to love—which can never breathe the joys of inward life—which can never introduce into the soul that deep and sweetly-pervading harmony which is the tranquil happiness of the blest in Heaven. Therefore shall it be triumphantly reaffirmed by those who see that its condition is material, that the religion which is maintained and fostered is sensual and external in its nature, and has no similitude with the sublime and heavenly devotion which the immortals feel.

But the religion of the Church is not only material, but it is also narrow and contracted in its sentiments. This fact will be proved by an appeal to the existing realities which are felt and known by those who dwell within the courts of the temple. Spirits perceive that the expanded and elevated conceptions of the advanced mind, have no existence within the gates of popular creeds; but they see that the contracted and groveling conceptions of the bigot are the food and strength of the religionist. What they thus perceive is true and wise, according to the state of the interior vision; but it is the lamented condition over which the spirits have sighed and mourned, without possessing the ability to impart immediate relief. Let the mind look at the doctrines and dogmas of the church, and examine their intrinsic nature; let it see for itself the narrow and contracted platform on which they rest, and the exceedingly limited space into which it compresses the aspiring soul. What are the doctrines of the church which form a prominent part of its religion? They are doctrines of woe and terror, which represent the race as being under the wrath and condemnation of God—the

doctrine of the vicarious atonement, which is the sentiment that God commissioned an agent, which agent was a part of himself, to interpose between the displeasure by which he was moved, and the race which he had previously decided to punish—the doctrine of election and reprobation, which represents the Divine Being as choosing some of his creatures from the beginning to enjoy everlasting life, and as predetermining the remainder to suffer everlasting torture—the doctrine of the torments of hell and the salvation of the redeemed—the doctrine of a personal devil and the divinity of Christ. In all these doctrines, there is presented to the view of spirits the most lamentable ignorance, and the evidence of contracted thought. They are doctrines which are based merely upon some external expressions contained in a volume which has no other authority than its native and inherent truthfulness, and which can claim no other reverence than that which truth may always, under all circumstances, and in all localities, demand. They are doctrines with which the soul, illuminated by the truths of Nature, has no sympathy, and by which the emotions of holy gratitude and praise are left to slumber in the chambers of the heart. They are doctrines which have no foundation on the principles of the Universe—which have no assimilation with the realities of the spiritual world—which are entirely unsustained by that reason which is the divinest gift of man, and which have a legitimate tendency to restrict and cramp the free thoughts and exalted aspirations of the soul. Hence these doctrines, since they stand as the representatives of the religion of the church, may be said to be the prevailing sentiments of the people, by whom the church is sustained; and this being the case, the spirits

may state, as a corresponding truth, that the religion of the church is the thick and adamant wall by which the human mind is confined, within which it is bound, and beyond which it is not permitted to roam under the fear of the most terrible penalty. Therefore the adherents of this religion have been the passive slaves of the creed by which their souls are chained. They have been the willing subjects of the fearful despotism of theological tyrants. It is degrading in the extreme for men who bear the image of the Divinity, and whose thoughts should flow out like the pure air of heaven, to be thus confined within the narrow limits of a creed. It is degrading in the most literal sense for the immortal being to be thus chained and cramped by the shackles of a sect. It is degrading in a degree which causes spirits to most deeply sigh, for the flower of creation to become thus withered beneath the damp breath of religious bigotry—to be thus shut out from all the beauties and glories which dwell around it in the Universe, and which well up from an inexhaustible spring in the unfathomable depths of creation. The spirits have mourned that this has been the sad and lamented fate of those who have bowed before the altars of the church, and they have seen that the religion which is here born and nourished is the productive source of all the degradation of soul to which these have been subjected.

In connection with the truths which have been previously elucidated, the present writers desire to unfold another truth which it is important should be borne in mind. This truth has relation to the fact that the tendency of the religion which the Church has cherished, has been unfavorable to the real interests and welfare of the world, and has been utterly powerless to effect the reformation which is to

be desired in the morals and habits of the people. The philosophy and foundation of the truth which is here stated, may be seen in the agents which this religion employs to accomplish its object. These agents will be found to be those which can only apply to those minds that dwell upon the lowest plane of human development; and the tendency of these agents will be seen to be the complete depression and debasement of the minds which they are adapted to affect. What, the spirits inquire, is the great engine of the Church? It is the engine of terror—the engine of degrading fear—the engine of eternal torture. What has been the chief feature of the sermons which have been delivered from the pulpit? It is the repentance of sinners through the fear of hell; it is the escape from divine wrath by believing a lie; it is the anguish of a crushed and broken spirit which is withering in eternal torture. What effect has this religion upon the mind? It has an effect to wither all the pleasures of purity which may be born there to bloom in Heaven; it has an effect to depress the energies of the soul by the oppressive burden of fear; it has an effect to degrade and lower the whole being of the individual, while he is endeavoring to gain a passage through the narrow way which leads to life. The consequence has been that the adherents of the religion of the Church have been debased and contracted in all their thoughts, feelings, and desires; and that they have been deprived from receiving those pure delights and exalted pleasures which are enjoyed alone by the free mind. But this is not all. The consequence which has resulted from the religion of the Church, has been still more serious than that which is represented in the debasement and contraction of human thought. There is a consequence in

this which ultimates and exercises the lowest powers, passions, and desires of the earthly nature; there is a consequence here which feeds and nourishes the sentiments by which the most degraded of the human species are governed; there is a consequence here which is rendered distinctly visible in the hypocrisy of the man who commits sin during the six days of the week, knowing that they will be all pardoned on the seventh—in the vileness of the sinner who attends to the services of the sanctuary in order that he may escape from hell, and in the saintly ungodliness of the priest who conceals the faults of his everyday life by the convenient cloak of religious profession. These are some of the consequences and effects of the religion of the Church, and they are such as have been brought to the light of human investigation, which any individual may discover who has the candor to acknowledge their existence.

Yet even this does not represent the extent of that influence which is exerted by the prevailing religion. It has a tendency to promote skepticism in relation to the most important subjects of religious faith. It tends to cause the mind to doubt the reality of a future existence, by presenting no satisfactory evidence on which this reality can be based. It tends to weaken the faith of the human mind in the existence of the Divine Being, by attributing to Him those revolting characteristics which can never be recognized by the internal reason. It serves to destroy the belief which the soul naturally entertains in the truth of spiritual communion, by enforcing the sentiment that the spirit, on its departure from the body, is enclosed within the walls of its distant Heaven, or is confined amid the flames of its consuming hell. Such has been

the natural and legitimate effect of the religion of the Church—such has been the legitimate influence which it has exerted upon the human soul; and this effect and influence are seen and lamented by those from whom no good and no evil can be hid. Is it not true that the Church has made more infidels than it has made Christians! Is it not true that the religion which has been fastened in its bosom, has served to weaken and depress the energies of the mind, so as to introduce doubt and perplexity when there should exist faith and trust. Is it not an established fact that the noblest and most expanded minds which have ever dwelt upon the earth, have entertained the least faith in the records of the Primitive History! And is it not true that those who have been denominated infidels and heretics by the Church have been the acknowledged reasoners of the world, in whom there was found no fault so much as a want of faith in the dogmas which cannot be comprehended—which no mortal can satisfactorily explain, and which have no foundation in the Scriptures of the earth and skies? If these facts are admitted as they must be by all well-informed minds, then let it be conceded at once that the influence of the Church has led to infidelity—let it be confessed that its religion has tended to weaken and impair the intuitive faith of the soul? Then let the reader and the world look at the condition of those who dwell within the courts of the religious temple. What is the state of their interior thoughts? Why, they profess to believe in God, and yet they have not sufficient faith in his existence to believe that He has cognizance of the operations of Nature, and guides the affairs of men in the channel of unerring wisdom; they have not sufficient faith in his being to think that He can commune with the

deep-planted germ of the interior being, without an outward expression of the desires which should be felt in the in most heart they have not sufficient faith in the attributes which form the inherent qualities of his nature, to believe that the great end of the Divine government will be attained by the operation of a power which no mortal can resist—that this end has been conceived by wisdom which is infinite in its expansion, and that this will be attained through the ceaseless influence of that exhaustless love which gleams forth from every living thing. So the adherents of the popular theology profess to believe in a future existence, and yet they have not sufficient faith in this to awaken any inherent aspiration for further knowledge with respect to this state; they have not faith enough to inquire with relation to the nature or mode of the existence in which they profess to believe, and with all the faith which they pretend to guard and preserve with such jealous care, they can sleep upon the cushioned seats of the temple in which they worship, while the priest deals out the vials of wrath, and charges God with filling the world of spirit with tormenting devils. In the same manner, the religionists of the Church profess to believe in a Heaven of bliss, where the purified and redeemed spirit will be saved from the tortures of the wicked; and still they have so little faith in this Heaven that they sink into stoic apathy when all its imaginary glories are described, and when, under all the fears which can be inspired, they are warned to make this the chief object of attainment; they have so little faith in this that they take no trouble to inquire where Heaven is—what is the state of its inhabitants, and what is the nature of the employment which the soul will seek in its new abode? Determining, then, the existence of the cause from

the effects which follow, what evidence is furnished that the religion of the Church inspires any true or living faith in God, a future existence, or the Heaven of the spirit? Surely this evidence, if weighed in the scales of justice and reason, would be found wanting; and in this case the world is left to take the profession in place of the works which should be manifest.

The materialism and infidelity of the Church are displayed in the treatment which this has paid to the subject of spiritualism in the present age. It is a prominent point with the Church to insist upon the worship of the Supreme Being. This worship, it claims, is natural, legitimate, and necessary. It is precisely what man should render unto the Being by whose power he has been introduced into existence, and is an obligation resting upon him which he is required to discharge, at least once in seven days. But notwithstanding the necessity and reasonableness of holding communion with the Supreme Spirit, it is supposed to be entirely irrational and inconsistent to believe that the mortals of the earth can by any possibility hold communion with the finite spirits which have become disrobed of the garments of the flesh. The great obligation of Divine worship will be readily acknowledged; and its reasonableness and possibility will be easily conceived, but when it is stated that it is possible and righteous to commune with the dwellers of the Second Sphere, men can perceive no reason in this because the doctrine has not been distinctly taught by their revered fathers, and because it is not contained within the narrow limits of their creed. The religion of the Church professes to be especially spiritual—because it is a point which is made particularly conspicuous that the letter killeth, but that the Spirit giveth

life, and it is a prominent sentiment of the writings which are professedly revered by the, Church, that the inward man may grow fresh and strong while the body decays beneath the influence of surrounding elements that the kingdom which is established in the soul is the true source of human enjoyment—that the beauty, and glory, and immortal blessedness of a future existence are to be known and enjoyed by the inward being. But it is unfortunately the case that, while the Church has professed to be spiritual, and has laid its platform upon those records which contain the elements of a spiritual theory, the religion which is made the popular repository of faith, has discarded every thing which may bear the semblance of spirituality, in case it proceeds from any other source than the established systems of belief. This is an inconsistency which clearly reveals the inherent nature and legitimate tendency of the religion in question, and is but one of the numerous repelling features which are manifested to the gaze of spirits.

It is now proper to consider the inefficiency of the religion of the Church to renovate and reform the world. From a corrupt and polluting spring can flow no streams which will serve to impart life and vigor to the soil which it moistens; and on the same general principle, there can proceed no saving or elevating influence from the systems of religious faith which are intrinsically rotten and polluted. For long centuries has the religion of the Church exerted its influence on the world; and down through the channels of human society have flowed the murky streams of death, which have proceeded from the fountain that has been established in the very heart of the world. The ministers of the sanctuary have delivered their sermons, and offered

their petitions to God, and sun, praises in adoration of his name; the people, led blinded and weakened by the force of priestly authority, have followed in the footsteps of the ancient fathers, and the great mass, with a common but forced assent, has moved on in conformity with the established usages and customs which religion has established. And yet what is the effect of all this? Answer, ye who rely upon the saving power of religious faith, Answer, ye who have believed in the redemption of the world through human blood. Answer, ye who have cherished the faith that the race are cleansed from its corruptions through the sufferings and death of an individual who lived on the earth more than eighteen hundred years ago. When this question is answered, then will the spirits make the statement which they desire to have distinctly remembered; and that statement is, that the prevailing religion of the Church has been utterly powerless to accomplish the work of human redemption—that it has been like a stagnant pool in which the elements of life have all departed—that it has been like the cold, unilluminated body of some darkened planet from which the sun has withdrawn its beams forever. In all the efforts of past centuries, this religion has been entirely incapable of promoting the true interests of the world; it has been unsuccessful in securing the reformation and refinement which it professes to have in view, and it has failed—signally failed—to create any deep and lasting effect which can be recognized as a blessing to humanity. Therefore will the spirits whisper in the ear of mortals a truth which should be deeply realized, that, while the religion of the Church is but a dead and crumbling organization—while the elements of which it is composed shall dissolve and become absorbed in the

chaos which itself has created,—there is a religion pure, holy, and heavenly, which has the essence of divine life, which is derived from a source that is exhaustless and immortal, and which will lead the human race upward to the temple of everlasting truth; and they would say that this religion is the indwelling consciousness of light and truth—the internal obedience to the laws of Nature and of God, and the deep conviction that what has been introduced into being as the child of the Divinity, shall continue to advance nearer and still more near to the bright and blissful source of its original birth.

LECTURE IX.

PHILOSOPHY OF SPIRITUALIZATION.

The world of mankind is in a state of darkness and depravity. Materialism, with its cold and polluting touch, has fastened upon the life-chords of humanity, and the life of the spirit has been extinguished upon its sacred shrine. A dark and impenetrable veil has been thrown upon the face of Man, and through the thick shadows that surround his way, has the brightness of the angel-world been darkened and obscured. This state of mankind has been the doleful want of spiritual life and power; it has been the absence of all the holy and elevating faculties which belong to the developed and perfected soul. This has been a state of ignorance and evil, so far as evil represents a condition of extreme imperfection; for the gross and earthly nature of man has predominated over his moral and spiritual powers, and the indwelling and unfading glory which lingers in the deepest depth of the human spirit, has been suppressed and buried. The true dignity of the immortal nature—the germ of eternal purity which is therein implanted, and all the holy powers and energies that slumber in their deathlike lethargy, have been swallowed up in the fearful and polluting streams of the sensual passions. It is the world of sense which man has most fondly loved; it is the realm of matter to which he has been most deeply attached, and it is to the beauties which fade and die that his soul has been the most heartily attracted.

This is the condition of the world which is lamented by the inhabitants of the angel-home. The spirits have lamented that the race should be so far lost to the nobleness and dignity which are impressed upon the very nature of man. They lament that the stains of sin and crime should have marred the bright and holy life which was born within the soul. They lament that the sweetness and purity of the spirit in its native condition, should be buried and unknown. They lament that the low and groveling passions and propensities of the flesh should be suffered to predominate over the eternal and ever-living spirit, so that its noblest powers, its most indestructible energies, and its most heavenly gifts should be obscured by the blackness of earthly corruption. The angels have mourned long over the degraded condition of the race; and when they have witnessed the deeds of crime—when they have heard the wails of woe—when they have beheld the tears of sorrow, they have sympathized with fond and heartfelt affection with the dwellers of the human world. O they have labored, when darkness covered the earth—when Sorrow lifted up her mournful voice—when streams of blood flowed through the avenues of the social world, and groans were made the echoes of crushed and broken hearts—they have labored to restore to humanity the dignity which it has lost; to furnish it with the privileges which it seeks, and to breathe upon its dark and desolated bosom the elements of an inward life. For long ages have the angels thus labored with their earthly kindred; and as the tide of time has flowed rapidly down the course of the advancing World; they have sought by all the means which angelic wisdom could devise, to elevate, enlighten and reform the race,—reflecting upon its surface the radiance

which streams from the brightness of their own heavenly abode, and introducing into the heart of existing society the influence of a new-born love.

The efforts which were made in this manner were not unsuccessful, though they were unspeakably severe—severe in a sense of which mortals can form no just conception; for when the pure and unfolded angel descends from the glory of his ever-beautiful home, to bless his degraded brother on the earth, he must meet with the most chilling and repulsive atmosphere, whose presence seems to dampen the immortal energies by which he lives and moves. Yet these efforts have resulted in the gradual and unceasing progress of the race towards the exalted end of human destiny; and as the holy and peaceful influences have descended from the spiritual world—as the sweet voices of the angels have flowed into the very heart of the weeping world, and as the gentle yet irresistible power of the disembodied soul has been made manifest, there has been an effect of pure and hallowed aspiration produced—there has been a deep and thrilling echo heard—there has been a work of saving and illuminating energy accomplished. Thus the labors of spirits have been already partially rewarded; they have been blessed with the first sprouts of the coming harvest; they have been followed with those fruits of life and peace whose fragrance shall arise like sweetest incense unto God. The hearts of the spirits have been encouraged with the increasing evidences of human advancement. They have been comforted by the manifestations of a constant and increasing progress—they have been filled with hope and joy, as the deathlike slumber has passed from the great body of humanity, and man is arising to the blissfulness of the immortal life. Therefore are their

efforts strengthened, united and powerful, towards the accomplishment of the vast design which has been conceived in the spiritual world. They still labor, and will continue to labor, with unceasing and irresistible power, and the world of mankind shall feel the deep and immortal energy which dwells in the angel-bosom.

The spirits have designed to show that the world has been in a state of darkness and materialism—that it has been in a condition of ignorance and depravity, and that it has been destitute of the elements of the spiritual life. They have endeavored to show that the human family has been beneath the care and protection of the angel-world, and that by the influence which this has exerted, it has been enabled to advance through the shadows of the ancient gloom, along the shining pathway of eternal progress. What they would now state is, that the world is more immediately under the direction and control of spiritual beings than at any previous period—that it is more directly and authoritatively inspired, than even in the time of Christ and the apostles—that it is more deeply and powerfully impressed with the presence and influence of the spiritual realms, than when the gift of the Holy Ghost was given to the Christian believers on the day of Pentecost. The spirits hesitate not to affirm that the world is now so far beneath their power, that it must inevitably obey the decrees of angelic wisdom, and that the course which it takes in the future must inevitably correspond with the primary authority of a higher and diviner world. It is true that the human family may not at all times realize the presence of the spirits who linger around it. It may not at all times know or feel that it is guided and impressed by the dwellers of the Second Sphere, and it may

not profoundly appreciate the truths which are revealed for its enlightenment and elevation. But the power which dwells on high is still supreme; the voice which whispers from the deep of Heaven is still sweet and irresistible, and the will which is exerted for the appropriate development of Man, is silently performing its important office. There is no fear now in the bosom of angels with regard to the welfare of the world. They have now the authority and the power vested in their own hands. They have the commission which is their native right and most precious privilege, and they have an irresistible and unconquerable energy which no time or sense can weaken. Silent, but deep and powerful, flows on the stream of human advancement; sweet and pure the whisperings of angels fall upon the faint and sorrowing bosom, and tranquil is the influence which brings peace and harmony to the oppressed and sorrowing heart. The wisdom of spirits will now be substituted for the wisdom of mortals; the truth of the angel-world will now be revealed to the darkened and deceived mass, and the peace which rests like a slumbering lake in the bosom of the spiritual world, shall be mirrored upon the breast of universal Man. Here is represented the design of spirits, and the accomplishment of this design will be the evidence of their unconquerable power. It is known that the wisdom of Heaven is not like the wisdom of earth. It is known that the light which breaks in its glory upon the disenthralled soul, is not like the shadows which have covered the earth for centuries. It is known that the bliss which thrills through the deep recesses of the sacred and purified spirit, is not like that which results from sensuous ease and worldly enjoyment. But the human world shall know what is the real

truth; it shall know what is the unfading light of the Divinity it shall know what is the eternal and sweetly pervading peace which dwells in the enlightened and redeemed soul. The efforts of the spirits shall not be thwarted by the opposing power of mortals; they shall not be terminated through the scorn and contempt of those towards whom they are directed; they shall not be ended by the cries of the departing ghost which rises from the dying form of materialism. Onward shall the stream of progress flow, and upward shall the aspirations of the great heart of Alan be constantly tending.

The dwellers of the Heavenly Spheres do not work without appropriate means. They do not labor blindfolded and in the dark as do the teachers of the world. They do not labor without a sufficient purpose, and when that purpose has been formed they do not labor in vain. Therefore has the spirit of man been subjected to the unfolding process, which has been discovered and applied by the inhabitants of the spiritual world. It has been operated upon by the direct and concentrated influence of whole circles of spiritual beings, and it has been enabled to advance in the work of progress with a rapidity which is astonishing to mortals and pleasing to the angels. The entire body of the human world has been operated upon in this manner. To all the influence of the celestial world has come, and in the great bosom of mankind has there been created a thirsting and conscious desire to be unfolded to the light and happiness of the Upper Spheres. But to the world has the power of spirits been manifested in an external manner. In the view of the outward senses have there been furnished demonstrations of invisible power, and through the circling avenues of the lower world have

flowed the desired evidences of the hovering presence of unseen intelligences. Therefore is there a universal awakening on the subject of spiritual truth in almost every portion of this country, and the mortals who have long dreamed that the grave was the end of man, have been favored with the messages of their immortal friends. A new life is thus breathed into the dull and apathetic soul of man—a renewed energy is now circulating through all the elements of his being; and he begins to feel that he is something more than an animal—something more than a combination of dead and stagnant materials, and that he possesses within his frame the spark of divine intelligence which all the mouldering corruptions of earth cannot entirely smother. This represents the first step in the advancement of man towards the attainment of a true spiritual life. Since men have lived in the external world, it was necessary to commence the process of unfolding by appealing to the organs of sense, and by stimulating the external reason to the exercise of its important faculties. Here was the beginning of the development which has been prepared for Man; here was the primary lesson in the school of divine wisdom; here was the shadow of the future glory cast upon the desiring and struggling soul. These primary evidences of spiritual intercourse have had their designed effect upon the mass of the world. They have awakened the attention and excited the interest of men on the subject of the immortal truths which are embraced in the discoveries of spirits, and thus have implanted a deep and insatiable thirst for knowledge, with relation to all the sublime and glorious realities which dwell in the immensity of the expanded Universe. Therefore have they been given as the steps which lead up to

the great spiritual temple, whose basis rests upon the depths of eternal wisdom—whose summit reaches up to the heights of the Celestial Universe, and whose altar forms the sacred repository of angelic thought.

But the primary steps in the spiritual development of man, are designed to lead to higher and more important results than are comprehended in the sensuous evidences of spiritual intercourse. The ultimate effect to be produced is more exalted than can be conceived by the human mind; it is more deep, and high, and broad than the most expanded thoughts of the brightest soul on earth. This effect can be felt and understood by the inhabitants of the spiritual realms, though it is not as yet entirely produced. It can be read with unfailling certainty in the depths of the divine wisdom by which it was primarily conceived, and the sublimity and grandeur which are here manifested, form a subject of profound reverence with the illuminated spirits, who are engaged in the execution of the design which was the natural outbirth of the Divine love. Thus is the effect to be produced the representative of wisdom and goodness;—the effect was the proposed result of the divine and immortal Mind, which presides over the affairs of all worlds and all beings; and this effect was the contemplated end of the wise and benevolent economy, which has been established in the earth through the agency of angelic beings. Seers and prophets in the past have seen the exalted destiny of man on the earth: they have beheld with enraptured souls the blissful result of the Divine government on the planet which the spirits are now engaged in illuminating, and they have spoken in sublime and eloquent tones of the peace, and harmony, and happiness which shall reign at the period of

the final redemption of the race. But these have witnessed but the weak and imperfect symbol of the approaching glory; they have seen but a shadow of the blessing which is to be conferred upon the race; they have had but a faint and feeble conception of the sweet and radiant light which shall bathe the weary breast of earth, and the language which they have employed has been only the shadowy representative of a blessedness which was unconceived and unexpressed. Therefore has the end been established in the depths of the coming ages, as a result of an immutable decree which is above and beyond the most exalted visions of the most illuminated minds; and while the darkness has rested in thick and heavy folds over humanity—while a gloom more terrible than the darkness of midnight has enshrouded the great deep of the universal soul, and while the forms of error, ignorance and superstition have hovered around the most sacred altars of Humanity, the stream of internal life flows onward through the prevailing corruptions of earth, and freshens the wasted energies of the spirit into the newness of the angelic being. It is seen that the end to be attained is worthy of the labor of centuries; it is seen that the result to be accomplished is the great end to which the world is rapidly and unceasingly advancing, and it is seen that the effect to be produced is the result which is worthy of that divine and sublimated wisdom by which it was conceived, and through which it will be ultimately produced.

Therefore are the spirits now laboring to accomplish the result which has been conceived in Divine wisdom; and the decree has gone forth which can never be revoked, by which this result shall be speedily attained. The spirits have employed the means for the attainment of this end

which will be suitable and appropriate. They are using the implements which have been placed in their hands by the Spirit who rules in wisdom over all. They are taking a course, which, though strange and mysterious in the eyes of mortals, is in precise accordance with the true direction which the inward designs of the immortals have taken, as the only real and effectual method of accomplishing the proposed result. Let it be understood and deeply impressed, that the great object which the spiritual world is now laboring to secure, is the attainment of a state of internal harmony and perfection, in which alone man can reach the designed end of his being.; and let it be impressed, also, that this state represents simply the spiritualization of the human system—the refinement and sublimation of the gross elements of which it is composed, and the elevation of the internal being above the earthly and animal nature, so that it may reign in its own native and sublime dignity over all the inferior creations of the Divine power. This, therefore, being understood to be the object for which the spirits are now laboring, it will be readily perceived that the means by which this is to be attained, must be of such a nature as will produce, in the human system, the requisite degree of refinement and perfection. These means are known in the wisdom of spirits, and are not known in the wisdom of mortals. They are known by those who have earnestly and profoundly investigated the relations of cause and effect, and they are clearly perceived to be the only effectual method by which the world can be relieved from its corruptions, and be prepared to reflect the beauty and glory of the immortal world. Since man needs to be refined, there is, of course, a refining process to be employed in the production of this effect. A method must be

adopted which will have a tendency to sublimate and purify the materials of which his system is composed, and for this purpose a spiritual chemistry must be used which will have a tendency to separate the refined essences of spirit from the gross elements of matter, and breathe into the polluted structure of man a regenerative energy which shall quicken into active life all its slumbering powers, and bring forth the dead bodies from the sepulcher of materialism to the newness and blissfulness of the heavenly reality. To attain this important end, it is necessary that the human system should be subjected to a certain process of spiritualization; it is necessary that the internal essences should be separated and withdrawn from the gross matter which forms the outward and visible body. It is necessary, in short, that there should be a process instituted by which both the material and spiritual constitution may be refined and exalted to the state of harmony which is desired and designed in the wisdom of Heaven. Therefore the spirits have searched long and deeply to find the essential means which are here denoted; and in the investigations which have been made on this subject, they have had a constant reference to the ultimate happiness and harmony of the human family, and the real, immortal interests of the individuals on whom they proposed to exert their influence. The means to be employed have been found to be such as will infallibly secure the result designed; and these are seen to be founded upon the unchanging laws of Nature, and to be perfectly and wisely adapted to the sublime end whose glory shines even now through the dim mists of the future. It is proposed by the writers of this volume, to reveal to the world the philosophy of the process of spiritualization, which has been referred to as the

all-important end for which spirits are now laboring; and in order that this may be more effectually accomplished, they will explain the cause and effect which are here involved by a reference to the operations of external Nature.

In gazing over the expanse of the outward world, the eye will naturally rest upon the beautiful and attractive forms which adorn its surface; and while the admiring gaze is thus directed, the philosophic mind will as naturally inquire in relation to their growth and expansion—it will search profoundly to discover the causes which are in operation to produce the results which it beholds, and to ascertain the principles on which these causes are tending towards the perfection and beauty of all existing things. The first law which is most conspicuously manifested in the production of these results, is Motion. There is constantly occurring a certain change in the position of the individual particles which compose the substance of all outward forms, and a certain movement of the interior elements which constitute their animating and indwelling soul. The effect of this inherent motion, which is established in all matter, is seen in the progressive unfolding of all material forms, and in the sublimation and perfection of all the vast and immeasurable world of matter. This effect is the natural product of the existing and actuating cause which has been mentioned. A constant and unceasing change in the internal and unseen elements of matter, has a natural tendency to produce refinement in the nature and composition of the substances which are thus affected; and thus motion became the agent which has been appointed by Divine wisdom to accomplish the sublimation of all external forms to the beauty and exaltation of life and thought. Motion in the mineral produces life in the vegetable;

motion in the vegetable produces sensation in the animal, and motion in the animal produces intelligence in the human being. Thus the principle which has been noticed, is the appointed means by which refinement may be produced in the constitution of material substances; and this refinement will be found to consist in the separation and withdrawal of the inherent and invisible essences of matter, from the gross materials which are beheld by the outward eye. In the lower forms of material substances, the essences of spirit are the diffused and pervading soul of the forms which are here seen; in still higher gradations of material substances, these essences exist in a more concentrated form, and thus, as the principle of motion is carried on in its own legitimate course, the essences which are of the nature of spirit, become separated from the more material elements, so as to manifest the sublimated qualities which they inherently possess, as manifested in the life which thrills through the human frame, in the sensation which gives delight and pleasure to existence, and in the exalted and godlike intelligence which gleams forth from the inward temple as a sun which has been lighted by the torch of the Divinity.

From the foregoing it will be seen, that the principle of motion constitutes the agent by which the refinement of matter is carried on, and by which also the beauty and perfection of surrounding forms are made apparent to the external eye. Therefore this has been seen to be the agent of refinement in the human system, and the representative of that method which spirits have discovered for the sublimation and purification of the human soul. Let this truth be properly impressed upon the mind of the reader, as the first important point to be remembered in this investigation.

The great aim of the spirits in the refinement of man is to render him more enlightened and happy—to convey the blissful and enrapturing joy which fills their own hearts to the hearts of mortals, and the means by which this is to be accomplished are found in the perfect and beautiful operations of Nature, in which it is seen that motion is made the great agent of refinement, and the appropriate means through which the perfection of all existing forms is attained. Thus in the effort to spiritualize the human system, the primary object is to introduce a commotion among the most refined and interior essences which here exist, or, in other words, to operate on the system in such a manner as shall have a tendency to disturb and throw out of balance for the time being, the fluids which course through the intricate channels of life, and animate the living world of unseen existence. This motion, when it exists in the system in its ordinary and undeveloped state, is comparatively slow; and hence, though by this means alone the race would progress and draw near to the end of its aspiration, this progress would be under existing circumstances only gradual and at times almost imperceptible, and the approach which man is now making towards the destiny which awaits him, would be delayed by the slowness and feebleness of the internal movements which are essentially attendant upon the existence of life and intelligence. Therefore have the spirits decided to introduce a process of spiritualization, by which this motion in the system may become quickened, and by which the end to be attained may be more speedily and surely approached. The angels have had a regard for the real interests of humanity in their works; and it was love united with the wisdom of the Second Sphere, that prompted

the efforts which are now being Made towards this result. The process which is referred to is the process of decay and death, and the process of birth and life. It is the process of internal and invisible motion, by which the whole system becomes changed and exalted to an almost inconceivable degree in a comparatively short space of time.

When, then, the spirits have decided to spiritualize the system of any individual, they first employ some means, the precise nature of which will vary in individual cases, to produce an intense motion among the fluids of the system. If the individual is sufficiently impressible, they exert a direct and powerful influence upon the nervous fluid which pervades the brain, and by virtue of the control which is thus gained, they are enabled to throw the entire body out of its accustomed equilibrium, and cause a change which is rapid and powerful, to take place in the nature of the substances affected. In case the individual is not sufficiently susceptible to the influence of the spirits to produce this effect in this mode, then through the medium of circumstances which are wisely controlled, they place him in situations of such a nature as will have the effect to introduce a similar change into the system. Whatever has a tendency to produce the required condition—whatever subserves the purpose of producing intense motion, will be employed as an essential means in the process of spiritualization. When this effect can be produced by the exhilarating emotions of joy and delight, then this means is the one appointed for the accomplishment of the desired result; and, in this case, the spirits are pleased to impart all the sweet and thrilling emotions which they may cause to flow into the human heart. But there are certain conditions of the system, lying entirely

beyond the reach of human observation, which require a different mode of treatment and when such conditions exist, it has been found to be necessary to introduce into the system the emotions of pain and suffering. The necessity which exists in this latter case is one which is lamented by the spirits, and has been the source of much doubt and perplexity in the minds of individuals who have either experienced or beheld the operation which has been here indicated. In cases where it has been necessary to produce pain, it has been supposed that evil spirits were at work—that beings inherently malicious and moved by the most corrupt designs, were endeavoring to crush the joys, blight the hopes, and destroy the reason of their hopeless victims. This supposition has been exceedingly prevalent, and has been a source of many erroneous conceptions which are entirely unworthy of the dignity of the human soul. The spirits utterly disclaim all truth in the imaginations of individuals who believe in the doctrine of evil spirits, and would have it distinctly understood that the Divine Being has no power to create that which is evil, and that the spirits which He has created have been formed in his own likeness and impressed with his divine image. When, therefore, in the process of spiritualization, the spirits find it necessary to produce disagreeable and painful feelings, they are not to be branded as evil, but are rather to be blessed for the accomplishment of a good and necessary work. If mortals could conceive of the unutterable sympathy with which the spirits look down upon all their sufferings, and could they appreciate the regret which is ever felt when there exists a necessity for producing pain, they would discard the unworthy sentiment which attributes this result to evil

spirits, and would bless the saving power by which they are exalted and redeemed. The spirits, as they have intimated, take such a course and employ such means as will be adapted to the production of a good and benevolent result; and if this result involves suffering either bodily or mental, then such suffering only implies the use of the means which have been appointed by angelic wisdom. It is not pleasure for any spirit to produce pain; it is not a joy for them to inflict suffering; it is not a gratification for them to cause deception, but all these effects are produced as the essential means by which alone these evils may be effectually eradicated—as the legitimate and appointed method through which the gracious and benevolent ends of divine wisdom may be attained. Therefore in the process of spiritualization, the spirits take means which are presented for their use as the best adapted to the purpose for which they are employed; and these means, whether they bring joy or sorrow, pain or pleasure, are ordered and devised in that wisdom which is separated from all the errors and ignorance of earth.

The process which has been discovered and established by the inhabitants of the celestial world, will be found to be in exact accordance with the corresponding processes which are going on in the expanse of Nature, and is only the natural and necessary means whereby the race may become renovated from its inmost heart and clothed with the garments of eternal life. This is the process by which the blessing that is to be conferred upon humanity will be imparted, and whereby also the period will be hastened in its approach, in which the harmonies and blissfulness of Heaven shall be introduced upon the earth. The spirits disclaim all idea of supernaturalism in the process to

which they refer. They would affirm that they make Use of natural means for the production of all desired results, and that the principles employed are precisely the same in their character, as those by which the gross earth becomes replete with the forms of life and beauty which adorn its bosom. Could the human eye descend into the unseen recesses of visible forms—could it penetrate to the hidden essences by which these are animated, and view the silent but powerful operation which is there constantly carried on; and then could it turn to the process which spirits cause to be established in the human system, and compare the operations which are visible in these two departments of natural and spiritual chemistry, it would discover a most perfect and beautiful analogy between the two, which would demonstrate the likeness of angelic wisdom with that wisdom which has its being in the Divine Mind. Thus shall the world be instructed in the truth, that the spirits are the agents or mediums of the Deity for the accomplishment of those beneficent ends, which have been foreseen and foreordained in the counsels of the Infinite.

Spirits see that the process of spiritualization is the process of refinement; they see that the process of refinement is the withdrawal or separation of the spiritual from the material elements; they see that the withdrawal of the spiritual from the material elements is the sublimation and perfection of the substance which undergoes this process; and they see that this sublimation and perfection are the approach of the thing created towards the interior bosom of the Creator. This statement will apply both to the material and spiritual world; and its application is especially required in the process of spiritualization which

is introduced into the human system. The plant undergoes a process by which the internal essences are so withdrawn as to form the element of life: the animal undergoes a similar process by which the life-principle becomes sublimated into that of sensation, and the human being, under the direct and special influence of spirits, undergoes a similar process by which the immortal spirit is drawn forth from the realms of material existence, to enjoy the light and glory that stream from the Heavenly Spheres. Thus there is a beauty and a naturalness in this process which commend it to the reason and intuition of the illuminated mind, and which also manifest the superintending wisdom of those beings by whom it is discovered and applied. If the process produces an emotion of joy, this is because the condition of the system required this emotion; or if, on the other hand, the process produces pain, this effect is also in perfect correspondence with the peculiar circumstances of the case. Therefore should the human mind view the process of spiritualization in a philosophical light, and not through the distorting medium of old theology and when it is thus viewed, the throng of evil spirits will vanish like the mists of morning, or the dew of the brightening earth. The whole object of the spirits is accomplished when they have produced motion in the system, of such a nature and degree as may tend to subserve the purposes of refinement. It should be known that every emotion of the mind produces a corresponding movement in the nervous system. Such is the connection existing between the body and mind, that the former is affected in some way, and to some extent, by every change that occurs in the latter. The mind is the superintending power of the whole body; this is the controller of the entire

frame-work which it inhabits, and when this commands the body obeys, and when this moves, though in the slightest degree, a corresponding motion must necessarily take place in the refined fluids with which it comes in immediate contact—which fluids are so connected with other portions of the body as to extend their influence throughout the entire organization. In this manner and on this principle the spirits carry on the process of spiritualization.

To begin the operation, they act, either directly or intermediately through the influence of circumstances, on the most refined fluids of the brain. This action on the most tender and susceptible portion of the human organism, naturally serves to affect the operations of the mind, and these operations connect directly with the elements with which this comes in immediate conjunction, so as to extend a corresponding movement of the fluids throughout the whole body. When the mind feels a sense of joy, this results from the mode in which the fluids of the brain are impressed, and this mode will have special reference to the production of ultimate results in the system; and when the mind experiences pain, this proceeds from another mode of impression, which mode has also a similar reference to the attainment of wise and important ends;—so that, whatever may be the precise mode of operation as required by existing conditions, the ultimate result is precisely the same in its nature. This process shall be known to the world as the Savior of the world; for it is a process by which the human soul is brought forth from all contaminating elements and influences, and exalted upon the heights of eternal wisdom—a process by which the desired and desirable period of human emancipation shall be speedily

reached, by which the glory of the future condition of humanity shall be enjoyed by the regenerated soul, and by which the lofty and inconceivable grandeur of the celestial world shall be opened to the gaze of the enraptured spirit. Will not, then, the world bless the unseen agents by whom its chief and most valuable blessing shall be secured! Will not the song of praise go up even to the courts of Heaven, for the enjoyment of a privilege which mortal has never enjoyed before. O let the inhabitants of earth endeavor to appreciate the efforts which are being made for their elevation and refinement; let them spiritualize their perceptions so that they may see the love which flows so freely down into all the dark recesses of earthly sin and error, and let them banish the clouds which have darkened the beaming sun of wisdom, whose tires are the eternal breathings of the Supreme Soul. Then will they know and understand that what they have termed evil is but the agent of a sublime and glorious good, and then will they realize the truth, that the beautiful unfolding of the spirit is the great end towards which the labors of the angels are ever tending, and the distant but ever-approaching destiny to which humanity is now moving on.

The process which the spirits have discovered to spiritualize the system, is exceedingly simple in its nature, but is at the same time singular and mysterious in the extreme to the individual by whom it is experienced. When he is enjoying the delights and pleasures of life, sudden gloom will overcloud his joys, and his heart will sink into the deepest despondency; or, when plunged into the dark waves of sorrow, the mind will dash the depressing gloom from the brow, and the countenance will be illuminated with the smile of joy. To the view of mortals, these results

have seemed the most mysterious and unaccountable; but in the light of the principles which have been explained in the present Lecture, it will be seen that these are simply the results of that internal motion which is produced in the fluids of the brain, and by which the mind becomes affected in such a manner as to produce the desired motion throughout the entire system of the individual. The ultimate result of the spiritualizing process is more glorious than can be conceived by those minds which have not yet arisen to the plane of wisdom. This operation introduces an intense and exceedingly rapid motion throughout all the fluids which form the most refined portions of the organization, and this motion causes the fluids thus affected to become refined, which refinement is the separation of the spiritual from the material elements, in such a manner as to create within the human frame a more united and concentrated spiritual form. In the ordinary state of the individual, the spiritual essences are intermingled with the gross substances of the body and are caused to pervade the body in a diffused state, so as to form a correspondence between the state of the unrefined organism and unrefined earth. But the process of spiritualization introduces a different state of things in the body. It produces such a withdrawal of the essences of spirit from their associate material elements, as to form a union and concentration of these essences in one separate and independent organization within the body: and when this result is attained, the true state of the individualized soul is attained—the lofty and indwelling powers of the inward being are exercised with all their native strength and vigor, and the priceless and unspeakable gifts of the new-born spirit are displayed with all their celestial brightness, It is only in this state

that man attains the true dignity of his nature; it is only in this state that the native and internal energies of his being are drawn forth into their sublimest action, and it is in this state only that the beautiful and blissful joys which thrill through the hearts of angels, can be experienced by man on the earth. This, it should be understood, is the Superior Condition, in which the spirit has attained a supremacy over the sensual nature; in which the gifts of the soul are known and manifested; in which the perceptions which belong to the inward man—the senses which are possessed by the concentrated spirit, are employed in search of those heavenly realities which are repositied in the depths of the surrounding Universe, and sink down into the bosom of the seeking soul. The Superior Condition is the condition which is attained by the process of spiritualization, which is secured by the direct influence of spiritual beings, and which is enjoyed as the legitimate tendency of the refinement that is the result of an inherent motion in the human organization; and this condition can be attained only through the process which has been discovered by the wisdom of spirits, and which is introduced in the systems of those individuals who may be selected as the blessed subjects of spiritual action.

The spirits have thus far, in their general influence on the world, spiritualized the systems of comparatively few individuals; but they have designed that this process shall be made the means by which the darkness of earth may be dissipated, and by which the radiance of the Spheres shall be admitted through the overshadowing clouds. Therefore let those who are affected by the influence of the spirits be passive and tranquil; let them realize that they are in the hands of those who are intrinsically wise and good; let them

feel, though they are called to suffer pain and grief of the most intense and agonizing character, that they are suffering beneath a power which is mighty in its effects and wise in its results, and, in the sweet conviction that the angels will do all things well, let them rest on the bosom of that love which is ever ready to receive and welcome them to the joys of the great redemption.

LECTURE X.

THE SPIRITUAL INITIATION.

Spirits who have long waited to communicate with the world and who have been the sorrowing witnesses of human crime, and sin, and folly, desire to offer to the world a brief exposition of the manner in which they propose to regenerate and reform the race. This will be at once recognized as a subject of primary importance and intrinsic interest. It will be seen to be a subject on which philosophers, and seers, and teachers of all ages have been puzzled and perplexed—in relation to which the most anxious and earnest thought has been elicited, and yet with reference to which no satisfactory conclusion has been formed. A general sentiment has prevailed among the most advanced minds on the earth, that the world needs to be reformed—that the structure of existing society is wrongly constructed, and that it is a source of prevalent evils which do not exist inherently in the nature of man. This sentiment the spirits recognize as perfectly correct, and they have been pleased to witness its rapid progress among the minds of the mass. It is a true and righteous thought that humanity is at present in a degraded state, and that this state results, not so much from any inherent tendency to evil, as from the false and unnatural position in which it is placed.

But the perplexing and yet important question still remains, By what means shall the race be reformed?—In

what manner shall humanity be lifted up to a loftier plane of thought, and be made to reflect the glory and brightness of the Heavenly Spheres? Men have sought long and anxiously for an answer to this question; and in the aspirations and struggles of the mind to arrive at the real truth, numerous theories have been formed in relation to the proper mode of reorganizing society, and the true principles on which the social compact should be formed and sealed. These theories, however, though they have shadowed forth an important truth—though they have revealed the innate aspirations of the human soul, and though they form the earnest of the approaching glory which is reserved for man in the future, do not at the same time meet the wants of the present age; they do not take the world as it is at present; they do not descend down to the root of existing evils; they do not lay a true and unflinching foundation of the temple of Humanity, but they simply represent a state which would be desirable at a period when the race has become farther advanced, and have reference to the time when the exalted powers of the human spirit shall be more completely and harmoniously developed. Therefore these theories do not meet the real demands of the present era; they do not make their application in such a manner as to benefit and improve humanity now, and hence it is evident that there is a necessity for a more perfect and also for a more practical theory, which shall be adapted to the present requirements of the people, and shall be invested with power to reach down to the very root and foundation of existing wrongs.

The subject thus presented has been made a matter of special and earnest investigation by the dwellers of the invisible world. For long ages have they gazed upon humanity

with sorrowing hearts, and have mourned that the noblest work of God should dwell in debasement and corruption. From the sympathy with which they have looked on the earthly world, they have been prompted to employ the means which are placed in their power—to exercise the wisdom with which they are invested, for the purpose of devising some appropriate method whereby the inhabitants of the earth may be raised to this state of heavenly exaltation, and placed beyond the crushing and perverting influences of prevailing evils. As a result of the investigation, which has been made by the spirits of the Second Sphere, the writers of this work will present a statement of the mode in which they propose to enlighten, reform, and regenerate the race.

In the outset the spirits desire to remark that they exist upon a plane of being where they are enabled to perceive the relation of cause and effect, and hence they have investigated the subject to be unfolded with a special reference to the existing causes by which the desired effect of human redemption may be produced. These causes are inherent in the constitution of Man; they are already established in the organization of both body and spirit, and all that is needed to be accomplished by those who are the unseen agents of the work here represented, is to bring these causes into active and successful operation. In other words, there are certain established principles in the human structure—certain relations subsisting between the body and spirit, and certain influences at work upon the entire system of man, by which the desired and designed result of a universal reformation can be and will be attained. These principles, relations and influences are clearly seen and known by the inhabitants of the Second

Sphere; and hence they desire to place themselves in the position of teachers with relation to what they are enabled to perceive on a subject that lies beyond the sphere of earthly conception. The statement which they desire to make in this place, will be designed to open and prepare the way for a perfect elucidation of the whole mystery which pertains to human redemption. They desire to remark that the primary principle which is observed as the foundation of the grand system that they have erected, lies in the truth that the world is gross and needs to be refined—that the world is material and needs to be made spiritual—that the world is earthly and corrupt and needs to be rendered heavenly and pure. The real work, therefore, to be accomplished is thus placed clearly before the mind; and the question that remains is that which has relation to the means by which an effect so grand and glorious in its nature can be produced.

This question the spirits will endeavor to answer. In the first place, the human system needs to be refined. For this purpose it is necessary that it should be subjected to a certain process which is seen and known in the wisdom of spirits—which process is the process of spiritualization to which reference has been made in another portion of this volume. By this process the primary stages of spiritual development are attained; and the individual who is subjected to the pains and sufferings which are incident to this process, has entered upon the course of unfolding whose ultimate is seen in the complete development of the immortal nature, and in the supremacy of the spiritual powers over the lusts and passions of the flesh. This, therefore, represents the primary mode by which man is to become enlightened, elevated and spiritualized, and by

which the race may become raised to that lofty position to which it naturally aspires in the sublime soarings of the soul. The spirits wish to remark here that the process of spiritualization to which reference has been made, represents the first stages of the spiritual initiation which forms the subject of the present Lecture. This process is the preparation which every individual must undergo, previous to his entering upon that sublime and beautiful initiation which the spirits have prepared for those who are worthy, or, in other words, for those who are advanced to a suitable point of interior development. When the process of spiritualization has been undergone—when the system has been refined and purified by the application of the principle of Motion, then the individual to be initiated has been elevated to a higher sphere of thought—he no longer grovels in the world of sense—he no longer gropes in the darkness of the lower sphere, but he feels elevated, harmonious, and spiritual, and looks upward towards the flowing light of those higher Spheres, whose beauty is ready to dawn upon his vision.

Therefore as the next step in the spiritual initiation, the senses which belong to the spirit become unfolded by the direct action and influence of spiritual beings—the interior perceptions and the vision which belongs to the soul are unfolded in the inward being, so that it is no longer dependent on material organs for the observations which it desires to make, and acts on the principle of an independent agent which has been released from a degrading bondage. Now the external world retreats from the view the grasp which the senses had upon external things becomes relaxed, and the spirit enters into that inward sanctuary where it exercises its own exalted powers, and

worships in the beauty of holiness. In this manner the superior condition of the spirit is attained, and thus the individual who has undergone the preparatory process, is go prepared to be initiated into the mysterious, but beautiful and sublime truths which dwell in the Spheres of undimmed light and pervade the boundless sanctuary of the Divine Mind. The preparatory process has exalted the individual to a state where he is freed from the bondage of lust and sin—where he can look forth upon the wide expanse of spiritual life as a sea in whose depths is mirrored the bending sky; but the spiritual initiation conveys him within the sanctuary which mortal eye has never beheld, and which the most expanded reason of the earthly mind is unable to conceive. Rising far above the shadows that darken his way while undergoing the severe and mysterious ordeal of spiritualization, he now looks upon life with a calm serenity of spirit, and receives into his welcoming bosom the thrilling voices which fill the silent air. He now perceives the inmost reality of life; he now sees the substance of that which he had before only beheld as a shadow; he feels that he has approached near to the Divinity—that he has entered into a sacred and hallowed temple, and that he can commune with the glorious powers on high, until his own spirit is filled with the ambrosia of celestial life. This is the spiritual initiation—the ultimate means of bringing the whole race into immediate connection with the invisible world, and placing man upon that elevated plane of being where all the wrongs, and sufferings, and evils of society will be removed forever.

The spirits wish to elucidate the subject of the spiritual initiation still farther, this having been presented thus far only in a general view. They wish to unfold, as far as possible,

the precise nature of the process by which the spirit becomes expanded and ennobled to that degree, where it is prepared to receive and digest the heavenly truths which are waiting to be disclosed, and which have power to infuse a new life into the deepest heart of the soul. The initiation which the spirits have designed for those who are prepared to be thus blessed, is simple and natural in its character, and yet is sublime and glorious beyond all human conception,—even as the stars which adorn the nightly sky are simply worlds revolving in their orbits, and are yet majestic and inconceivable suns whose pathway reaches to the distant depths of the Universe. This initiation has reference not to any external requirement, not to any arbitrary authority, not to any sensuous experience, but it is the interior reception, appreciation, and digestion of great truths, which have relation to the real and immortal interests of the spiritual being. It has relation to the elucidation and consciousness of those realities which it has been the mission of angels to discover, and which it is the highest office of humanity to receive. It is the ordeal by which the soul is sublimated to its divinest height—by which it is raised into immediate and personal communion with the dwellers of the heavenly world, and whereby it can listen to the sweet and tranquilizing discourses which are filled with the essence and extract of divine truth. It is the initiation of the spirit into that interior temple which it is designed to inhabit in the worlds of bliss and immortality, which are the home of the ever-living soul. It is in short, the experience, appreciation, and inward digestion, of that appropriate and corresponding truth which is the light, and strength, and joy of the soul on earth, and the inexpressible exaltation and glory of the redeemed

angels. Therefore will it be apparent to those minds that can appreciate the beauty and reality of this initiation, that the spirits have discovered a means by which the world may be truly and completely saved—by which its errors, its superstitions and follies may be removed from the earth, and through which, also, the radiance of the divine mansions may be seen, and felt, and enjoyed in the habitations of men.

Thus the spirits have taken the work of human redemption into their own hands; they have seen that the efforts of mortals were in vain; they have seen that, with all the light which they could obtain from the world around them—with all the exercise of the reason which they were prepared to use, the labors of men would be hopeless and comparatively fruitless, without a direct and special interposition of spiritual power. For this reason the spirits have investigated the essential principles to be applied; they have examined the causes that were necessary to the production of the desired results, and they have seen that the result which they desire to accomplish will be easily and naturally attained by the use of the means that have been discovered. The blessed results of which they here speak, is the end that forms the object for which the philanthropist ever labors, and the blessing for which the great heart of Humanity ever sighs. As the stream of human progress rolls onward through the avenues of the world—as the light breaks in upon the advancing nations, the spirits will commence the process which they have in view, and will introduce the glorious result, of which they have here spoken. The precise nature of the process which has been prepared will not be fully comprehended by the sensuous mind, because there is an

absence of all corresponding experience, and there is no comparison to be made between this and the sensual pleasures in which the mass revel and delight. But the great end to be attained will be universally recognized as one which is worthy of the labors of the celestial hosts; and to those who have a faith and confidence in the power which they have now gained over the world, it will be a sweet and unfailling thought that the means which are contained in the spiritual initiation will be adapted to the production of the designed effect, and will be successful in removing the corruptions and errors of the race.

See the gloom which rests upon the face of the earth. Do the mortals of the lower sphere realize the cause of the darkness which comes between them and Heaven? Do they appreciate the truth that the cause lies in the predominance and supremacy of the animal nature, and that sensuality and materialism form the veil which shuts out from their vision the forms of glory that float above them in the sky! No. They do not realize this, and hence the theories which they have formed for the eradication of existing evil are unnatural and wrong; but the truth which is here expressed is perceived and realized by the dwellers of the Second Sphere, and it is made the basis of all their efforts for human elevation. It is to elevate and refine the spirit, that it becomes necessary to spiritualize the system as a preparatory process; and it is to expand, to strengthen and ennoble the interior powers. That the spiritual initiation has been discovered and systematized by the unseen friends of the human family. The institutions of society have presented some faint shadow of the interior process which will be adopted in the spiritual ordeal; but they are filled with that same external grossness—that

sensuous experience—that same groveling conception of outward virtue, which has weakened and depressed the energies of man in all ages. The spirits desire to reach down to the inward life—to affect the springs of action in the soul—to breathe upon the dead mass of stagnant elements a renewed animation which has connection with the inner thoughts, and feelings, and aspirations of the living heart. It is for the attainment of this grand end that the spirits have discovered a new and more elevating initiation than has been employed by any earthly institution; and it is for this that they have introduced the preparatory process of spiritualization, by which the system will become prepared for the reception and mingling of those ethereal essences that form the refined body of the disrobed soul, This is an initiation which serves to develop the spirit—to render it predominant over the animal and earthly nature—to exalt its aspirations, its hopes, and its desires to a higher and more blissful sphere of action in the world of angelic purity. The mode of social regeneration that is thus adopted, presents the only method by which humanity can be deeply and thoroughly impressed with the love and truth of heavenly ministers—the only way by which the darkness can be fully and successfully removed—the only way by which the beauty and divinity of the human soul can be clearly revealed. If, therefore, the world will trust in the power, and wisdom, and goodness of the celestial beings who ever hover lovingly around it; if it will have faith in the process which has been discovered for the spiritualization of the material body, and then if it will be willing to enter into the inner courts of the divine sanctuary and bow before the altar of celestial truth, it will be saved from the burdens with which it is

now oppressed—it will be delivered from the evils which have weighed down the soul to dust, and it will be released from all the entanglements of flesh and sense by which it has been bound and fettered; so that in the coming era which is beheld in the dim future, the race shall stand as the redeemed and sanctified production of the Supreme Mind, and shall be illuminated with the light that streams from the lofty heights and deeper depths of the spiritual Universe.

LECTURE XI.

MODES OF SPIRITUAL INTERCOURSE.

The subject of Spiritual Intercourse is one which is possessed of intrinsic interest and importance, both to the dwellers of the Second Sphere and the mortals who dwell upon the earth. It is a subject which has reference to the most momentous results of which the imagination of man can entertain any shadow. It is a subject which will be the cause of a general awakening of humanity from its death-like slumber, to the newness of a glorious resurrection. It is a theme which the world will receive with the most gladdening welcome, when it has properly conceived of the blessings with which it is pregnant. Therefore will the spirits, in the present discourse, reveal some of the prominent truths which are connected with this subject, with a reference to the several modes of Spiritual Intercourse which have been established on the earth.

In the introduction of an intercourse with the earth-children, the spirits found it necessary to employ such means as were placed in their power, and take such a course as would be best adapted to the state of the human mind. Accordingly, the modes by which they have manifested their presence and power, have varied according to the existing conditions of the general mind, and the degrees of development to which the race has arrived in different eras. Spirits have seen that the dignity of spiritual intercourse consists in the value which this possesses intrinsically,

and not in the particular mode by which it is established and made manifest; but they see that this mode has been varied so as to be precisely adapted to the condition of the minds with which such intercourse has been held. As light is adapted to the eye—as sound is suited to the ear—and as the fragrance of the flower corresponds precisely to the sense by which it is perceived, so is the mode of spiritual intercourse in all cases made to correspond with the development and capacity of the individuals by whom it is enjoyed. In this manner a perfect gradation is produced in the modes in which this intercourse has been manifested, which corresponds with the gradations that are observed in the forms of external substance.

Spirits have an inexhaustible source of ways and means whereby to convince the world of their presence and power, and these ways and means will be always employed in accordance with the dictates of wisdom and the necessities of the people who maybe addressed, In any event which can possibly occur—under any circumstances which can ever transpire, the spirits have a reserve supply of exhaustless resources, which renders their action and influence steady, unvarying, and incessant. When from any cause they are not able to operate in one way, they take the opportunity which is presented for operating in another; and when they perceive that the means which they have used to accomplish a certain object have not been entirely successful, they immediately employ the other means which will be adapted to the production of the desired result. Thus there is no possibility with the spirits of ever being placed in a situation where they will be compelled to desist from any undertaking which has originated in divine

wisdom. The source from which the thoughts of angels are derived, is always inexhaustible; and hence they are never at a loss for a power with which to operate in any conceivable emergency. Accordingly, the dwellers of the Second Sphere, having many centuries since determined to open an intercourse with their earthly kindred, employed the means which were first presented, and which seemed to be adapted to the production of the designed result.

The primary mode of intercourse formed a complete representation of the imperfect and undeveloped state of the human race, and was made to accord with the materialistic views and feelings which were prevalent on the earth. In this mode of intercourse, the spirits with whom the design of communicating with the world originated, employed the spirits of a lower circle who resided nearest to the sphere of sensuous existence, to so operate upon material substances in the presence of certain individuals, as to produce a physical demonstration of the existence of some invisible power. This was the mode by which the spirits could appeal directly to the external senses of man, and by which they could furnish an evidence of immortality that could not be gainsayed or resisted. With the production of physical results, which were the primary means of attracting the attention of the world, the spirits associated such impressions and breathings of thought as would be felt and received by the gross minds of the people. In the early stages of this development, it could not be otherwise than that the results produced should be of the most imperfect nature, and should also be illy adapted to satisfy the reasoning and expanded soul. Still, even then, the designed effect was successfully produced; the attention of the people was awakened—an interest was

excited in the subject of the invisible presence and power, and the thoughts of the mass, though mingled with the grossest superstitions, were directed towards the revelation of some unseen and powerful agent which was to overthrow the established institutions of the world. It has been seen that the first object to be accomplished was the awakening of the general mind from the apathy of ignorance; and it has been clearly perceived that this result has been completely attained by the introduction of the primary mode of spiritual intercourse, as manifested in the production of physical results—such as the moving of material substances, and the startling vibrations of the atmosphere. To the dull senses of the corrupted world, this mode of intercourse was precisely adapted; and it was with a wise regard to the effect which would be produced upon the sensuous nature, that the sounds and demonstrations referred to were primarily conceived by the dwellers of the Second Sphere.

It was not congenial to the exalted spirits who desired to benefit the world, to even imagine or conceive such a mode of intercourse as is here represented; but the wisdom by which they are governed dictated this course as the only method by which the foundation might be laid for a more extensive structure of spiritual truth. Therefore the spirits, when they had clearly seen that the course which had been conceived was the only one which would be effectual, commenced immediately the accomplishment of the purpose which had been formed, and commissioned the more undeveloped spirits which reside in lower circles to introduce the manifestations of their presence by the production of physical results. Accordingly the world was startled by the sounds, strange and mysterious, which

occurred in the vicinity of Rochester, N. Y.; and, from this beginning, the same or similar manifestations have been extended to numerous localities, and have been produced in the presence of many individuals. The testimony with reference to these manifestations has now become so accumulated and extensive, that it is not necessary for the spirits to refer to individual instances in which they have been known to occur. It is only necessary to state that spiritual demonstrations are almost constantly occurring in different localities, and that these irresistible evidences of invisible power are confounding the skeptic, enlightening the ignorant, and reforming the vicious. The spirits are pleased with the result which has thus far been produced; they are pleased that the human mind is arousing from its lethargy, and arising to a realizing sense of the destiny which awaits the race; they are pleased that the world has received an evidence of immortality which it could not find in the musty records of past ages; they are pleased that the possibility of an intercourse with departed kindred is beginning to be almost universally perceived and acknowledged; and they are pleased that the sweet conviction of immortal life—the re-union of friends in Heaven, and a communion with the departed on the earth, has served to elevate the thoughts, desires, and affections of men, leading them upward from the things which fade and die, to the Eternal City whose maker and builder is God. It is seen by the spirits that the primary mode of intercourse with the world, has supplied a want which had always existed previous to the period of its introduction, and also, that it has effectually and successfully accomplished the result which was originally intended and desired. Therefore, when they had seen that the

world was prepared for something higher and better than the husks on which it had been feeding—when they perceived that there was an appreciation of the great primary truths of spiritual intercourse, and that there was manifested an aspiration—deep and unceasing—for the revelation of realities which lie beyond the sphere of the senses, then did the angels descend from their lofty home, and approach the planet of which they were once inhabitants, for the purpose of ministering to the necessities of such as had outgrown the garments of sensuality, and were prepared to receive and digest interior food.

This action and purpose in the minds of spirits resulted in the introduction of another and superior mode of intercourse with the inhabitants of the earth, which is seen to be of a higher and more perfect nature. This mode is represented by the moving of the hand and arm of an individual to write, independently of the action of his own mind. In this mode of spiritual communion, the individual who acts in the capacity of medium, is the passive instrument of the communicating spirits. There is no effort of mind on his part to originate or control anything which is written; but there is a sense of tranquility and trust experienced by such an individual, which amounts to the most peaceful and harmonious frame of mind that can possibly be induced. Indeed, the more completely passive becomes the individual—the more fully and thoroughly the mind sleeps during the process of writing, the more satisfactory and intelligent are the communications received. This state of mental passiveness being essential to this mode of intercourse, and the intelligence conveyed being imparted from a source which is entirely independent of the mind of the medium, it cannot be inwardly felt

or righteously asserted that the thoughts and truths expressed in the writing proceed, either Consciously or unconsciously, from the mind which is, so far as outward influences permit, entirely passive. It should be understood that the mode of intercourse which is here explained, is of a character which entirely forbids self-deception; and if there be deception at all, this must result from the predetermined will of an individual to deceive. The medium sits in the attitude of writing; he knows that his hand will not move to write without it is moved, either by his own will, or some foreign power; if it is moved by his own will, he is, or may be, entirely conscious of the fact, because the very faculty of will necessarily implies a self-consciousness of the act of willing; and if the hand is moved by a foreign power, this fact is made equally plain, because the medium well knows that if he himself is not conscious of moving his hand and it still moves, there must be some extraneous agent or influence by which the movement is produced. Therefore there is no necessity for any medium who is employed for writing, to be self-deceived with relation to the movement of his hand; and if the world requires a test of the genuineness of the communications which are thus produced, the test can be given by an intelligence which dwells far above the regions of earth, and which is freed from the corruptions of earthly minds.

The spirits desire to say in this place that the writing which they produce through the medium of the individual who is now employed for this purpose, is produced independently of his own mind; and the evidence of this fact will be furnished to the world in the elucidation of those truths which are beyond the grasp of his own conceptions. It is their desire to state farther, that the mode

of intercourse which is here represented, is the most exalted and reliable of all others which have been previously introduced and the results of this intercourse will prove that what is here stated is the exact truth. Spirits have selected the medium by whom the present article is written, to act as an agent for the spirits residing in the Sixth Circle of the Second Sphere. By the process of spiritualization which he has undergone, they have discovered that he is worthy to be received into the inner courts of the spiritual temple, through the sublime initiation with which he will be speedily blessed. When this initiation has been conferred, he will then be furnished with a, precise and accurate knowledge of the mode by which others, who have attained to a similar degree of development, may be introduced into the same sphere of light and love; and it will become an important part of his mission to visit the circles of love and wisdom in different localities, and confer the same blessing on others which has been bestowed primarily on him. The spirits speak of these things in this connection because they form a prominent feature in the philosophy of social regeneration, and because they are necessary to be understood in order that an aspiration may be excited for the truths and principles which are contained in the spiritual Universe. If the world will receive and comprehend these things—if it will realize the necessity of the initiation which has been mentioned—then will it be prepared to solve the great mystery of social reform and human redemption, which has been penetrated by angelic wisdom.

Spirits have seen that the modes of spiritual intercourse have been adapted to the state of the general mind, and that the efforts which they have made to confer upon the

world the blessings of Heaven, have been thus far successful to the extent of their desires. There is no joy so great in the angel-bosom as that which flows from the benevolent thought and the kind deed; and it has been this joy which has counteracted the repelling influence of corrupted minds in the lower sphere, and has sustained the efforts which have been commenced for the elevation and redemption of the human race. An intercourse which cannot be destroyed or overthrown by worldly bigotry, has been established with the children of men. Complete control has been gained over many individuals who will act as mediums for the transmission of spiritual truth, and who will be sustained and strengthened in their exalted mission by that same power and wisdom by which they are moved. Therefore shall the joys and privileges of spiritual communion be extended to the great mass who have groped in darkness; and thus shall the streams of peace flow over the earth in refreshing and invigorating floods, which shall cause the waste places to be glad and the wilderness to bud and blossom as the rose.

LECTURE XII.

BIRTH OF THE SPIRIT.

The spirits approach a subject which they take pleasure in elucidating, and to which they are inherently attracted, because they see that it is a theme which should be brought clearly before the human mind, and understood in that beautiful and sublime light in which it is beheld by the inhabitants of the Second Sphere. In order that this subject may be clearly and satisfactorily presented to the reader, it will be necessary that the spirits should refer to the nature of the human organization. It should be understood that the human being is composed of two substances which are known as matter and spirit. These two substances are incorporated with the very elements of his constitution, causing him to present the example of a miniature universe, in which the elements of gross matter are mingled with the essences of refined spirit. But it should be observed that, in the human organization, the elements of spirit exist in a concentrated and organized form, constituting a separate and distinct personality within the material and external frame. This indwelling organization is formed by the attractive influence of the germ of the soul, which germ is the essence of the Divine Being that has an existence in the most interior portions of all matter, and becomes concentrated in the structure of man, because he is the perfected flower of creation. Therefore this internal organization, which is termed the human spirit, contains

the essence of the Divinity as the inmost heart by which it is moved, animated and governed; and it is by the power of this pure and heavenly germ that the organization of the inward man is maintained and preserved. There is a physical body, and there is a spiritual body, and it should be universally known that the spiritual body resides within the physical as the soul by which it is kept in being.

In the ordinary condition of individuals, the elements of the spirit, being retained in the organization to which they belong through the power of the inward germ, are diffused to a certain extent throughout the entire system, and are caused to pervade the gross materials of which the body is composed. Therefore the spirit, in this condition, is dependent on the external organs—receives its intelligence chiefly through the medium of the external senses, and produces the manifestations of its presence and power by an exercise of the material limbs. From this cause the existence of the spirit has been a matter of doubt with many intelligent and reasoning minds, and there has been no evidence which could entirely remove the unbelief of the skeptic, with the exception of that which is being produced in the present age by the inhabitants of celestial regions. But the spirit has a no less substantial and vigorous existence, though the more outward essences are intermingled with material elements,—because these essences are caused to maintain their appropriate position in the spiritual organization, through the power of the inmost heart which lives within its depths. Accordingly, the spirit preserves the identity with which it is endowed, and continues under all circumstances the same separate and independent organization which it was originally created. From the sentiment which is now before the mind, the spirits

will proceed to remark, that the spirit in the human body commences its existence where it does, because it was necessary that the elements of which it is composed should have a framework by which they might become properly arranged, and because it was required that these elements should have a temporary basis on which to rest during the process of internal organization. But when the spirit has been created and caused to dwell within the external frame as an interior organization, then there can be no power or change in the whole Universe by which the spirit can be destroyed, and this reflection leads immediately to the subject on which the spirits propose to address the reader.

It is universally known upon the earth, that there is a change which passes upon the human frame, whereby its vitality is extinguished and its elements dissolved. It is known that this change has been the essential attribute of the physical frame—an attribute by which it becomes like the perishing flower of summer or the falling leaves of autumn. It is known that this change has been a source of the deepest grief and sorrow—that it has been the cause of the most heart-rending suffering which mortals can experience, and that it has been the direful destroyer of human hopes and the dreaded desolation of earthly joys. This change has been denominated *death* by those who do not properly appreciate its nature, which term does not express the reality of the change that is here indicated. The term death indicates an entire extinction of being, and is appropriate only to apply to the external appearance that is visible in physical dissolution. As has been shown in a previous paragraph, the spirit—the organization which lives within the man—can never die. The storm and tempest may breathe upon it but it remains ever firm and

steadfast as the eternal rock; the outward tabernacle in which it has been nurtured may dissolve, but this endures as the sublime creation of the Infinite; and when the change which passes upon all flesh brings destruction to the physical frame, the spirit by which it was sustained soars upward with a freed wing towards the attractive sky. Death, therefore, which has been the cause of sorrow and mourning to the inhabitants of the earthly world, is not an entire extinction of being as has been supposed, and as this term indicates; but it is the glorious birth of the spirit, a process or change by which it is released from the fading tabernacle of clay, and is enabled to exercise its own exalted powers in the light of a more expanded Sphere.

The spirits have now arrived at a point where it will be necessary to elucidate the nature of the birth which is here mentioned. They desire to speak of the beautiful and interesting process by which the spirit becomes separated from its material structure and is born into the celestial world. It has been stated that the elements of the spirit are ordinarily diffused through the entire organization of the body, and are not in a state of perfect concentration so as to be withdrawn from it as a perfect and undivided form. Therefore when the vitality which forms the connecting link between the spirit and its frame-work is destroyed, the elements of which the spiritual body is composed, are attracted from the surface and extremities of the organism to the brain, from which they are eliminated in the form of an emanation or atmosphere that constitutes the substance of the spirit. When this emanation or atmosphere has become completely thrown off from the perishing body, then this gradually forms into a definite and perfect figure, through the attractive power of the most interior essence which has

been denominated the germ of the Soul. After this process has been completed, and the spiritual form has been rendered perfect and indestructible by the combination of kindred elements, then the spirit is gradually separated from the structure to which it was previously attracted, and is borne away by the aid of congenial companions to the position in the spiritual world which it naturally and appropriately occupies. Thus the death of the body is the beautiful birth of the spirit; and the spirits have presented this explanation simply that the perfection of the existing Universe and the laws which govern it, may be made clearly manifest.

Spirits have designed in introducing the present subject, to offer a pleasing exposition of the change which is termed death, and to speak of a process which has been deemed fearful and solemn by those who have been acquainted simply with the external appearance. They have in this article made an application of principles which are established in the bosom of Nature, and they will conclude with the sentiment that these principles are the eternal and unchangeable manifestations of the Divine Mind.

WORDS OF WISDOM.

Be guided in every action more by the inward voice than by any external direction, inasmuch as the external is not the real and the internal is the true reality.

Rely not upon any external authority, though it should be presented in the name of the most advanced spirits, for authority forbids the proper exercise of reason, and that which is received without reason can make no appeal to the spirit.

Place reliance not so much on what spirits *say* as on what they *be*, for what they say will be but a feeble and imperfect expression of indwelling truth, but what they be involves the inherent qualities of the soul which no change or circumstance can destroy.

Receive only that as truth which can be comprehended by the reason and which has an application to the inner consciousness of the soul, for that which is above or beyond reason cannot be inwardly digested, and that which does not appeal to the consciousness of the soul can do the soul no good.

Finally, let the standards of thought and action which mortals have erected, be made subservient to the divine and immutable standard which is presented in Nature and the developed soul.