

SPIRIT-COMMUNICATION

to him, to go home at once, telling her that a snake had crept into her house. The woman hastened home and searched the house all over, but found nothing. Finally it occurred to her to shake out her pallet, which she had laid in the sun to air; as she did so, she saw a snake crawling out of it. A young girl whom he saw standing in the church was directed by him to return home without delay, as her presence there was urgently wanted; upon her arrival, she found her sister, who had hitherto been in perfect health, lying dead. Once a woman, who had been given a bottle of an alleged miraculous remedy by a "sorcerer", came to Ars to confess her sins. After Vianey had listened to her confession he remarked to her: "You have told me nothing about the bottle that you hid in the bushes outside of Ars."

Even more frequent were his demonstrations of his ability to read the secret thoughts and feelings of others. This gift invariably manifested itself in the case of a particularly difficult reformation. It happened almost daily that Vianey left his confessional and beckoned to those persons who were the most pressed for time or the most unhappy, in order that they might be the first to receive his attention.

Among his visitors were some who merely came to test his powers. All of these left greatly crestfallen. One of them confessed a number of imaginary sins; after listening to him, Vianey remarked quietly: "You have indeed much guilt upon your conscience; but the evil which you have actually committed does not consist of the sins which you have just recounted to me, but of the following ones," whereupon Vianey, to the great dismay of the impostor, revealed all of the latter's past misdeeds.

Those who could not visit Vianey personally and were obliged to communicate with him by go-betweens or by letter, were healed, advised, consoled or reformed by him at a distance.

Every hitherto mentioned individual trait in the picture of the spirit-forces working through Vianey, appears also in kind and in extent, and, it might be added, identically, to the smallest detail, in the case of Blumhardt. As for which one of the two was visited by the greater number of people, who streamed to them in thousands and experienced in their own persons the miraculous workings of their powers, it is difficult to say.

Another manifestation which was shared by both was what might be called a miraculous replenishment of the food-supply. With Blumhardt it happened that owing to the great influx of out-

IN THE LIFE OF A CATHOLIC PRIEST

siders who were hospitably received and lodged by his parishioners, a serious food-shortage developed. But a special blessing seemed to preside over the question of sustenance. One family which did not have enough food on hand for fourteen persons, managed to give forty-two people enough to eat without exhausting its larders entirely. In Vianey's case an even more remarkable miracle is reported, and vouched for by everyone in his parish. He maintained a home for poor children, and one day discovered that there were no provisions left except a few handfuls of grain in the corn-bin. With a heavy heart he made up his mind to send the children away, but before doing so, he offered one more prayer to God for help. On going back to the corn-bin he found it filled with grain to the top. All of his parishioners likewise came to see the miracle. The event caused great sensation throughout the entire district. In the end even the bishop visited the home and was shown the height to which the corn-bin had been filled.

If we compare these two men as instruments of God, we cannot fail to notice a very important point. We have before us two persons of radically different creeds: on the one hand, a Catholic priest, who venerates saints and relics, who attributes all cures to Saint Philomena, who celebrates Mass and regards confession as essential to the forgiveness of sins, who believes in transsubstantiation, and holds fast to all other teachings of his church; and on the other hand, the Protestant clergyman Blumhardt, whose creed is diametrically opposed to Vianey's; who categorically repudiates the adoration of saints and relics, the Mass and communion, the Catholic form of confession and absolution, Popery and everything connected therewith, as not ordained by God, but as the offspring of human errors. And yet, under the hand of God, both rank equally as instruments for the delivery of mankind from sin and from Satan, and for guiding it back to the Home of the Father. And both, in spite of the differences in the tenets of their respective creeds, receive the highest gifts which Christ promised to those who followed Him.

In one respect they are alike: in a profound faith in God and in their consequent reliance upon Him, as well as in their great love of God and of mankind. Before God, therefore, the religious denomination to which a man belongs is of no weight. He regards this only as an outer garment supplied to men, and as of no influence upon their spiritual personality, if this is imbued with faith, and with a love of God. He allows men to retain this garment,

SPIRIT-COMMUNICATION

which is a patchwork of human errors, so long as it does not obstruct the task which has been assigned to mankind.

If the question should be asked why the good spirit-world did not enlighten these men as to the errors of their religious views and inform them of the truth, it can be answered without difficulty.

In the first place no such enlightenment was necessary, because the doctrinal errors in no way obstructed the work which God had assigned to both. They were called upon to persuade the people of their immediate neighborhood and those living at a distance to search their own hearts and to return to their God, something to which no objection could be found in either the Catholic or the Protestant creed.

But above all, the spirit-world could not have enlightened either man as to the errors of his religious doctrines, without making the fulfillment of the tasks by either a Blumhardt or a Vianey impossible. For had the Protestant clergyman Blumhardt received any new revelations, he must have altered his teachings accordingly, which would have placed him outside of the Protestant Church and thereby lost him his position as well as his sphere of activity.

The same thing is true to an even greater extent of the Catholic priest Vianey, for had he departed in only a single point from the doctrines of his church, his connection therewith would have been severed for all time.

Among Catholics the task of saving souls could be performed only by one who wore the robes of the Catholic faith, just as Blumhardt could hope for success among his co-religionists only as a representative of the Protestant creed.

Even as it was, the efforts of both were attacked without moderation by their own colleagues, although each of them was devoted to his church. How much more, then, would they have been antagonized, had they departed in one point or another from the doctrines of their respective churches?

In Vianey's case particularly there were no bounds to the attacks by his colleagues. As already mentioned, he was persecuted, criticized, slandered, abused, and made the object of suspicion by them for ten years, and was even threatened with physical violence. When the Catholic clergy of his immediate and more remote neighborhood saw their parishioners hastening to Vianey and paying more heed to his opinion than they did to those of their own priests, envy and jealousy were added to their hostile feelings. They

IN THE LIFE OF A CATHOLIC PRIEST

spoke of him as the ignorant priest, who had barely been able to acquire a little Latin and had nearly been expelled from the seminary. Above all, the enthusiasm with which people spoke of the curate of Ars, caused the measure of hatred harbored against him by the other divines to overflow. He was slandered most shamelessly. Priests forbade their parishioners to go to Ars for confession, and threatened them, in case of disobedience, with barring them from the sacraments and denying them absolution even in the hour of death. Sunday after Sunday they thundered against the curate of Ars from their pulpits. Speaking of this in after days, Vianey once said: "The Gospel was given a complete rest in the pulpit, while everyone was busy preaching sermons against the poor curate of Ars." While some ridiculed his ignorance, others cast reflections on the life he was leading. He was the recipient of countless anonymous letters in which the most blackguardly charges, couched in the vilest language, were brought against him. The clergy even tried to incite the public against him. Mornings, on opening his front door, he would find it decorated with posters accusing him of having passed the night in the most shameful debauchery.

In his case as in Blumhardt's we find a repetition of the attitude taken by the Jewish priesthood toward Christ: "and the chief priests and the scribes heard it and sought how they might destroy him, for they feared him for all the multitude was astonished at his teaching." The popular sayings regarding "clerical jealousy" and that "one clergyman is hated by the rest as though he were the Devil," were amply confirmed in the case of these two men.

Even if the attacks made on Blumhardt by his colleagues never fell to the level of those delivered against Vianey, the former suffered his full share of trouble and persecution at their hands.

If such bitterness was shown in the fight that was waged against these two, in spite of their scrupulous adherence to the doctrines of their creeds, what would not have happened had it been possible to convict them of holding views in conflict with the teachings of their churches?

In selecting and preparing their instruments, even God and His spirit-world are guided by the condition of the times and by the religious atmosphere that prevails in the surroundings in which those instruments are destined to labor. Human opinions and errors are ignored by God's spirit-world, so long as they do not constitute a serious obstacle to the attainment of the goal it has

SPIRIT-COMMUNICATION

set. Not a single one of Vianey's erroneous religious beliefs was corrected by the good spirits which appeared to him, because these errors in no way interfered with the task he had to perform. Only when, as a result of his mistaken views on bodily penance which he regarded as particularly acceptable to God, he undertook to mortify his body in this way, did the spirit-world intervene by means of its teachings. At that point such intervention was imperative, since any lowering of his physical powers would have resulted in a corresponding loss of effectiveness of his efforts. A commanding voice which he heard by clairaudience, reminded him of the real task that had been assigned to him. Speaking of this incident, Vianey says: "I do not know whether it was a real voice that I heard, or whether it was merely a dream; at all events, it caused me to wake up. This voice told me that it was more pleasing to God to save the soul of a single sinner than to offer untold sacrifices. This happened at a time when I had resolved to do penance for my own sanctification."

Vianey, the Catholic priest of Ars, was canonized by his Church. If it is at all within the power of man to canonize man, the Protestant clergyman Blumhardt is entitled to the same honor, for in point of character and effectiveness, and of the amazing gifts with which he was endowed, he was in no way his Catholic brother-clergyman's inferior.

The lives of these two men show, that the good and the evil spirit-powers are as actively concerned with mankind today as they were at any time in the past, and that their workings are subject to the same laws.



Spiritism in the Light of Modern Science

PRIOR to the time at which I learned of communication with the spirit-world, I had had no knowledge of the possibility of any such intercourse, having read neither books nor periodicals dealing with the subject. Similarly, throughout the period during which I was receiving the teachings recorded in this book from my ultra-mundane guides, I never came into contact with other spiritistic circles nor did I consult any spiritistic literature whatever. As long as I remained a member of the clergy, I devoted my full attention to the truths which were imparted to me week by week through the mediums, and which, more than anything else, caused a radical change in my religious views. My hours of study were devoted to the Scriptures, as I was eager to learn whether the new truths which were demolishing the structure of my previously-held beliefs, agreed with the teachings of the Bible. The Holy Writ was to be my touchstone. Moreover, the spirit-world was constantly urging me to compare my newly acquired knowledge with what is set down in the Bible. At our religious meetings the spirit which manifested itself, regularly took up the Bible and expounded its contents.

However, after a certain time, when I had absorbed the presentation of the truth and had acquired a firm conviction of the same, I was invited to make myself acquainted with present-day spiritistic phenomena, which I would have the opportunity of testing and interpreting in the light of the laws imparted to me. Should I witness anything that I could not understand, I could obtain the desired explanation by asking for it at one of the seances which I attended.

From the outset I resolved to test only those phenomena of whose genuineness there could be no question. At about that time, early in 1928, I heard of a scientific periodical issued with the cooperation of eminent scientists of almost all countries, and devoted to the discussion of occurrences which cannot be explained by any known natural laws. This periodical is entitled: "*Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie*"¹ (Magazine of Parapsychology). The word "parapsychology" signifies the science of things beyond the scope of the familiar laws governing psychic life.

¹ *Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie*, published by Oswald Mutze, Leipzig.

SPIRITISM

Securing the 1926 and 1927 series of this periodical, the earliest published, I used them as the material for my comparative study. The facts therein related are so thoroughly substantiated as to leave no room for doubt regarding their authenticity, and embrace all phenomena observed in the realm of spirit-communication. To be sure, the periodical confines itself to the statement of facts. As to how these are to be explained is something about which opinions differ widely. Regarding the existence of a spirit-world as the intermediary in these phenomena, modern science refuses to recognize this, and it is only very occasionally and with the greatest diffidence that a scientist will hint at the possibility of intervention on the part of spirit-beings. Instead, explanations are concocted which must strike any normally minded person as puerile.

Inasmuch as the "mediums" are the sources of the power used by the spirit-world for the production of the various phenomena, I shall, in the following pages, group the occurrences observed at the present day about the respective mediums, who are discussed in the publication in question, from which, also, the facts are taken, their correct interpretation being appended in the final part of each section.

Kluski, the medium of Warsaw. (Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie, 1926, p. 5-22.) F. W. Pawlowski, professor of anatomy at the University of Michigan, U.S.A., who gives an exhaustive account of his observations of the medium Kluski, writes as follows:

"The phenomena which I witnessed in Kluski's case were most extraordinary, and surpassed everything I had previously read and heard of such matters.

"The preliminaries that usually preceded a *seance* with the medium Kluski consisted of a minute examination of the room in which the test was held, and of all the articles contained therein. Windows and doors were locked and sealed, and strips of waxed paper, bearing secret marks and signed by the spectators were pasted over the crevices. If so desired and when no ladies were present, the medium appeared entirely naked.

"Almost as soon as the participants had taken their seats at the table and formed a chain, the medium went into a trance, upon which the phenomena usually made themselves evident at once. The chain was formed by hooking the little finger of each hand into that of one's neighbor. This allowed the observers to move the rest of the hand freely, as for writing, or for feeling of or touching objects, without breaking contact.

"The *seances* were held either in complete darkness or by the light of a red-lantern. In either case, luminous plates were provided on the table. The plates have a surface equivalent to about one square foot and are made of some light wood, having a handle something like that of a hand-mirror. One face of these plates is covered with a luminous composition.

"It is frequently unnecessary for the observers to turn off the white light, for as soon as the medium falls into a trance the white light goes out of its own accord and the red light is turned on. Habitual attendants relate that the going and coming of the light proceeds slowly and by stages.

"From personal experience and from first-hand testimony given by perfectly trustworthy observers, I can state it as a fact that the medium Kluski produces the following phenomena:

a. "*Rappings* or knocks which are characteristic, and represent something peculiar to themselves. I have often heard them and noted their peculiarity at once, without having my attention called to it by anyone else. I could distinctly hear, or rather feel, that they were not produced on the surface of the table or of the walls, but within the same. I mention this particularly, because I made several attempts to imitate the rappings produced by Kluski, but failed entirely to obtain the tone of the rappings heard at Kluski's *seances*.

b. "*Exhibitions of levitation* (maintaining the human body in the air without support). I did not witness this personally, but heard that it often occurs at Kluski's *seances*. Not only has the table been upset and lifted, but the medium himself as well as one or more spectators were raised several feet above the floor.

c. "Kluski's specialty is the production of partial, or, more often, of completely formed *apparitions* or *phantoms*. The partial materializations usually are those of heads. These materializations appear almost instantly either above or behind the medium, but still oftener behind or among the spectators, who are seated at some distance from him. After a few sharp, distinctly audible raps on the table or the walls, bright stars or sparks appear, rising above the table and floating upward toward the ceiling. These sparks, which have a bluish light, vary in size from that of a pea to that of a hazelnut, and often appear to the number of a dozen. They all move simultaneously and at considerable speed above the seats of the observers, flying in all directions and forming in groups or by twos. Some vanish, while others descend in pairs close to

SPIRITISM

the spectators. Whenever they came within about sixteen inches of me, I could see to my great surprise that they were pairs of human eyes which looked at me. In a few minutes a perfectly formed human head appeared about such a pair of eyes, being clearly visible by the light of a hand which had also been materialized and the palm of which was luminous. The hand was raised above the head in order to see it plainly. All the while the eyes rested steadily upon the spectator, the face assuming a friendly, smiling expression. I saw a number of such heads, occasionally two at a time, flying like balloons from one spectator to another, and when entreated: "Please come over to me" taking the shortest route to the person making the request, often directly across the table and as swiftly as shooting stars.

d. *"Invisible phantoms, which, however, made themselves heard by foot-steps and the creaking of the floor-boards, came and touched my face and hands and other parts of my body with their soft, living hands. The sensation of the touch of a living human hand was unmistakable. At the request of the spectators, these invisible phantoms will fetch articles from the different parts of the room in which the seance is being held, and in spite of the darkness, never make a false move, never collide with anything and never touch a spectator, not even when moving a heavy object like a bronze bust weighing thirty pounds, or when setting down an iron kettle filled with twenty-five pounds of melted paraffine.*

e. *"Apparitions visible by red light. These phantoms generally picked up a luminous plate and turned its back to the spectator, throwing the light upon themselves and going from one person to another, to give each one the opportunity of observing them close by. The light radiated by the plate was so strong that the pores and roughness of the skin of the phantom faces and hands could be distinguished. In the nose of one old man I could even see the sinuous tracing of the tiny veins. I could distinguish also the texture of the cloth with which the phantom was covered. These apparitions came so close to me that I could hear them breathe and feel their breath against my face.*

"But the most impressive and convincing feature of these apparitions when they came toward us were the eyes and the faces with their lifelike expression. When questions were addressed to the apparitions the facial expression was always perfectly suited

to the answer, while an amiable smile played constantly about their lips.

f. "*Of specters of animals* we saw chiefly squirrels, dogs and cats. On one occasion a lion appeared and on another, a large bird, either a falcon or a buzzard. I myself saw an animal of each of the first two mentioned species, which behaved quite as might have been expected, the squirrel hopping about the table, the dog running around it wagging his tail, jumping into the laps of the spectators and licking their faces. In short, he acted as any house-dog would. According to what was told me, the lion's demeanor was more threatening; he lashed his tail, striking it against the furniture and the startled observers, unable to control the brute, put an end to the *seance* by awakening the medium. The buzzard flew about, beating the walls and ceiling with his wings, and when he finally perched on the medium's shoulder, a flashlight photograph was taken of him, an apparatus already focussed upon the medium, having been held in readiness for the purpose.

"Within this class of phantoms should also be included the strange specter of a creature called the "pithecanthropos" by the members of the group. This apparition is frequently in evidence at Kluski's *seances*. Since it arrives only in complete darkness, a minute examination of it is difficult. It has the *appearance of a hairy man* or of a large ape, its face being covered with hair, its forehead fairly high; and its arms long and powerful; its behavior toward the observers is rough and boisterous. It tries to stroke their hands and faces, and in so doing generally breaks up the *seance*, or compels the spectators to do so, as they are unable to control the beast. I saw, or rather felt it only once, when it brushed against me, and noticed a peculiar odor which at the moment I could not define, but which others who were more familiar than I with the phantom, described as that of a wet dog. On the occasion mentioned it passed behind me, going to the lady at my side who was holding the medium's hand. It broke the chain and put an end to the *seance* by grasping the lady's hand and rubbing it against its face. This frightened her so, that she uttered a loud scream.

g. "*Many apparitions have luminous hands*, that is to say the palms of their hands shine in the dark. The light given off is white, slightly tinged with green, and is so strong that whenever the phantoms hold or pass their hands above their heads, faces or figures, every detail is shown as plainly as when luminous plates

SPIRITISM

are used. They illuminate themselves in order to give the spectators an opportunity of observing them closely. They also turn their luminous hands or rather palms toward the spectators, so that the latter may be illuminated and, apparently, be observed by the phantoms in turn. On one such occasion I could see distinctly that the light was not altogether steady, but was constantly vibrating, showing different intensities, although the total amount of light thrown off by the palm remained the same throughout. I could also note especially bright sparks or rays running in zigzag courses by various routes from the base of the hand to the fingertips. At the same time the luminous palms diffused a powerful smell of ozone.

h. "One of the rarest, but perhaps one of the highest types, is the *phantom of an old man which is perfectly luminous by its own power*. I have seen it only twice. The apparition resembled a pillar of light, and, as I was told, is often seen by the Kluski Circle. The light radiating from it is so intense, that not only all the spectators, but all objects, near and distant, in the room, are illuminated by it. When I saw the apparition the palms of its hands and the region about its heart were more luminous than the other parts of its body. The phantom rose in the middle of the room, at some distance from us, the table at which we were seated standing near one corner, while the medium sat directly in the corner. The old man wore a high, conical headdress, and was clothed in a long robe which hung down from him in deep folds. He approached us with majestic strides, his robe swaying as he walked. His hands were engaged in making motions in the shape of triangles. At the same time he was speaking in a deep, solemn voice. He stopped behind me for about ten seconds, waving his luminous hands above us and speaking continually. He then withdrew to the far end of the room and vanished. His coming was accompanied by a wave of ozonated air which filled the room even after the *seances* had ended. The phantom is that of a very old man with a gray beard. His language was rather guttural, and unknown to anyone present, although between us we commanded probably twelve different tongues. To date no one has succeeded in identifying his language, or in discovering who the phantom is. Among the members of the Circle he is known as the Assyrian priest, a designation which fits his external appearance perfectly.

i. "*Paraffine molds* were made by the phantoms. As soon as they noticed the kettle filled with melted paraffine on the table,

they would approach it with evident pleasure, and on request, would make complicated figures out of the paraffine. Sometimes they dipped their hands into the substance and allowed the glove-like molds so formed to drop upon the table. Whenever the phantom hand is luminous, it can be seen as it splashes about in the paraffine like a goldfish in a bowl. The glove-shaped molds were treated rather carelessly. On one occasion a pair of them fell from the table into my lap and from there to the floor. I called the attention of the others to the matter, asking them not to move their feet, lest the molds should be damaged. One spectator asked the phantom to pick up the molds and replace them on the table, which was immediately done. At the same time my ankle was seized and my leg pushed aside, to make room under the table where there were seven pairs of legs. The phantom required from half to three quarters of a minute to make a mold, whereas when I tried to do this myself, it took several minutes for the paraffine to cool sufficiently to be removed. Even then I found it impossible to strip the glove from my hand without breaking it; in fact I was unable to accomplish this with the coating of a single finger which I had dipped into the paraffine as far as the second joint.

"When I removed the paraffine from the plaster cast, by dipping it into hot water, I noticed a *number of hairs* floating in the water. They were of the kind that grow on the back of the hand and on that of the third finger-joint. Since I was quite sure that I had used perfectly clean water and a white porcelain bowl in conducting my test, I was greatly astonished at the discovery. I therefore examined all of the casts previously made, and noticed through the fine film of paraffine which surrounded one of them several bits of hair or downy matter embedded in the paraffine.

"One of the cases observed by me in this connection was especially noteworthy. In one cast the hand is doubled into a fist, the tip of the thumb projecting between the index and the middle fingers. In the test involving this particular case the phantom had been asked to do something complicated, unique and hard to imitate, but was left at liberty to do just as it liked. It had apparently reflected for a while as though trying to think of something appropriate. Then it had dipped its extended hand into the paraffine, and after having done so, had doubled it up. Before I filled this mold with plaster, I could see on the inside several irregularly shaped ribs of paraffine running through the hollow in

SPIRITISM

the interior of the glove and supporting certain parts. They corresponded to the curved recesses between the fingers.

j. "Of *apports* I saw only few, and these were of small objects. I was told, however, that fairly heavy articles had been brought from distant rooms into that in which the *seances* are held. The most remarkable phenomenon of this sort was the disappearance of Kluski himself from the *seance* chamber which had been locked up and sealed. Greatly to their amazement, the members of the Society found him in a fairly remote room of the apartment, sound asleep.

k. "I was able to establish the fact that there was a considerable *fall in temperature* in the *seance-room*. I, as well as several other observers felt distinctly chilly toward the end of the *seances* lasting from one to two hours. The thermometers provided in the room showed a fall of temperature toward the end of the *seance* ranging from six to eight degrees Centigrade (10 to 15 degrees Fahrenheit). This is contrary to the usual experience since the temperature of a room, and especially of a tightly closed room, in which seven persons remain for a considerable time, generally rises, the more so as the room in question was only moderately large.

l. "As the phantoms made their appearance I saw something resembling *luminous smoke* or *fog* floating above the head of the medium like a small *cloud*. This cloud moved to one side and in a very few seconds became a human head, or else it would be extended vertically and become a complete human figure, which immediately began to walk about.

"The most astonishing and interesting part of these phenomena, and, in a way, their most important feature so far as I was concerned, was the *absolutely human behavior* of the apparitions. They acted precisely like guests at a party. As they passed around the table they greeted those persons with whom they were acquainted with a smile of recognition, whereas they studied any new faces attentively. The inquisitive look in their eyes is hard to describe. I could see from their efforts to understand our expression, our smiles, our questions and answers, as well as from their actions, that they were particularly anxious to convince us of the fact that they actually existed and that they were not illusions or hallucinations.

"Moreover, these apparitions are not always of life size. Toward the end of a *seance*, when the medium has become rather exhausted, or if he happens to feel indisposed before the *seance*

opens, the phantoms do not appear in their full size, but smaller by a third or a half. When I saw a phantom of this kind for the first time, I thought it was that of a child, until on closer examination, I could tell by the wrinkled face that it was an old man or woman, though much below normal size.

"When such a shrinkage occurred, the leader of the Society would often say: 'Let us help the medium'. He would then beat time, while all the spectators *breathed deeply and regularly*. The effect was remarkable, for the shrunken figure of the phantom would instantly begin to grow, and in a few seconds would regain its full size.

"The phantoms which appear to Kluski belong to different nationalities and generally speak their native language. Nevertheless they readily understand remarks addressed to them in any tongue. They seem to have the power of reading the minds of others, for it is not necessary to utter any given wish or question; merely to think it is sufficient. It is necessary only to form the wish that a phantom should do some particular thing, in order to have such a wish granted, or, as the case may be, refused. In fact, phantoms occasionally refuse to do certain things, declaring that these are beyond their power, either at any, or at that particular time; again, they may promise to grant, or to attempt to grant, the request on some future occasion.

"Not all apparitions are able to speak. Many prefer to make themselves understood by rapping, a very tedious and lengthy proceeding, since the raps always correspond in number to the place of a letter in the alphabet.

"The voices are perfectly distinct and of normal strength, sounding like a loud whisper.

"The expression which animates the faces while the phantoms are speaking is very convincing. In one instance I could plainly see the look of expectation in the features of the apparition of a Turk who bowed before me saying: 'Chokyash Lehistan'. Seeing that I did not understand him, he repeated the words with an amiable smile. I still did not know what he was trying to say, but out of a feeling of admiration for his chivalrous nation, replied: '*Vive la Turquie!*' His pleasure at my remark was evident. He smiled with radiant eyes, folded his arms and disappeared. I wrote his words down on a pad and on the following day had them translated by a linguist, who told me that they signified: 'Long live Poland'."

SPIRITISM

Explanation of the foregoing facts. The experiences related as personal ones by Prof. Pawlowski in connection with the medium Kluski confirm in every respect what I had been told of the laws of spirit-communication, and especially, what is set down in the portion of this book relating to the odic force.

In nothing that takes place at the Kluski *seances* does the medium function in any way as a *thinking or acting person*. He is simply and solely the source of power from which the spirits that appear secure the od necessary for the manifestations. If the medium is unable to supply enough od, either because of his physical condition or because of a great drain on his strength due to the od already liberated, the phenomena take place either imperfectly or not at all.

The od was seen by Prof. Pawlowski as a *luminous smoke or cloud*, and again as *sparks or tiny flames*. Within these he saw pairs of eyes, and later, entire faces, which, in the measure as odic force increased, grew into complete figures.

It is the same thing that we find in the Bible in connection with the burning bush, the pillar of cloud and fire of the Israelites, the cloud resting over the tabernacle, the cloud on Mount Tabor, and the odic flames seen at Whitsuntide. All of these references occur in the Bible in connection with communications from the spirit-world, as has been exhaustively shown in the preceding chapters.

Regarding the accounts in the report quoted above of the growth of small apparitions to normal size, as soon as the participants at the *seance* began to breathe *deeply and regularly*, keeping time, this, after what has been said, will be understood at once. Not the medium alone surrenders od to the spirit-world, but also the others present, some of them liberating less, some more, especially those who have been attending such *seances* regularly. They are, in a manner, assistants to the chief medium. It is a fact, furthermore, that the liberation of od by those in attendance is greatly increased by deep and regular breathing; hence the art of breathing plays so important a part in the exhibitions given by fakirs.

That the temperature should have fallen toward the end of the *seances* instead of rising as might seem logical, is also due to natural causes. As was stated in the chapter devoted to od, it is only in its condensed form that od is perceptible to the human senses and can be used by the spirits for working on matter. It was further explained that the condensation of od is effected by means of cold

currents according to the universally applicable law that *cold condenses*. Such cold currents must be used at an extra strength toward the close of a *seance*, because the warmth radiated by the persons present has an adverse effect on the condensation of the od. *It is these cold currents that cause a fall of temperature.*

Prof. Pawlowski is astonished at the human behavior of the incorporated spirits, into whose eyes and faces he could look, whose shapes he could feel, and whose heartbeats and voices he could hear. If, however, we bear in mind that these spirits are the same personalities that they were as mortals; that as spirits they possess the same organs as we, with the sole difference that *what is substance with us is ethereal matter with them*, we can readily understand that the heart of a materialized spirit beats audibly to us and that we can hear the breathing of the materialized lungs of the spirit-beings, which function precisely like ours.

By the same token, the various *individual members* that appear are simply the materialization of the respective *spirit-members*. The hands which were dipped into the paraffine until this cooled, were the materialized hands of a spirit, and had the same distinctive features that they had when that spirit inhabited its earthly abode. Hence the thumb and finger prints of a materialized spirit-hand are exactly the same as those of the corresponding human hand. Hence, also we find all of the other peculiarities which the spirit had when alive on earth, reproduced when it is materialized as a spirit, by means of the condensed od of a medium. That also is the reason why *the hairs on its hands and fingers* can be seen, if the spirit, as a human being, had patches of hair on these spots. Consequently it is quite natural that some of these hairs should have been found in the paraffine after it had cooled, for if a person whose hands are at all hairy dips them into hot paraffine, some of the hairs will fall out and remain in the same.

At this point it becomes necessary to insert a very important observation. The former physical peculiarities of spirits are *retained by them in the Beyond only as long as they remain at the spiritual level which they occupied as mortals. If, however, they progress in the Other World, their spirit-forms become finer and more beautiful and the defects and blemishes of their human shapes disappear.* Nevertheless, even spirits which thanks to their advancement in the Beyond have acquired a different and more beautiful aspect, are accustomed, when materializing at spiritistic seances, to appear as they looked in their human form which they

SPIRITISM

are able to resume by artificial means. This is done by them only if they have *friends or relatives* present at the *seance*, and desire to be recognized by them. It is their way of establishing their identity.

The paraffine molds of which Prof. Pawlowski speaks could be made by the spirits only if the latter dipped their hands into the liquid mass and de-materialized or dissolved them completely or partially after the paraffine had cooled. In order to withdraw the hands without injuring the molds, a partial de-materialization, that is to say, a reduction of the thickness of the joints and a shortening of the fingers was sufficient. A hand-shaped mold could also be produced if, at the moment of immersion, the materialization had the *consistency of a dense mist*. The odic form of a spirit having this degree of condensation is even able to pass through solid matter. Therefore, a spirit-hand of a mist-like consistency can be withdrawn from the paraffine mold and leave this behind even *without being de-materialized*. Consequently when this happens the observer can see no change in the materialized spirit-hand.

A spirit therefore has the choice of three ways in which it can make and strip off such molds. It may either materialize its hand *solidly*, and re-dissolve it *completely*: again, it may dissolve the solid materialization only *partially*, reducing its thickness and length to the extent required, or, finally, it may use od condensed to the consistency of a heavy fog, in which case it can make the molds and take them off without changing the hand and without injury to the molds. By the last method the spirit-hand passes unhindered through the solidified paraffine, picks up the mold from the outside, and lays it on the table.

If in Prof. Pawlowski's opinion the spirits treated the molds rather casually and in one instance allowed them to drop to the floor, while in other respects their friendly and obliging manner commands his praise, his view reveals his ignorance of a very important matter. He seems not to know that it is not within the power of a spirit to *keep its hand materialized as long as it pleases*. Such materialization depends entirely on the od at the spirit's disposal and on the degree of condensation of that od. *But, as we know, heat dissolves od*, and in consequence the hot or very warm paraffine quickly destroys the materialization of the immersed spirit-hand, so that when the paraffine molds are taken from the bath, the degree of condensation is often no longer sufficient to allow the spirit to lay the molds down carefully. The molds are

dropped, *not from carelessness on the part of the spirits, but for want of sufficient odic power and condensation.*

As for the materialization of the *spirits of animals* as well as of spirits of human beings, this is easy to understand if we remember that when an animal dies, its spirit leaves it in the same manner as a human spirit departs from its body. The sole difference between the spirits of animals and those of men is one of *degree of development*, not of kind. Animals are the incarnation of low spirits, while human beings are that of spirits which have already made progress upward.

The fact that animal spirits were materialized at Kluski's *seances* proves that these meetings are dominated by the low spirit-world, even if it happens now and then that spirits of the better class, like that of the "Assyrian priest" make their appearance there. These are as a rule the medium's guardian spirits, which endeavor to mitigate the evil influences as far as lies within their power. They cannot, however, accomplish much in that direction unless the medium and the observers of their own accord seek connection with what is good and lofty only, and reject everything low and mean. The greatest sufferer from the connection with the low spirit-world is the medium himself, and not alone morally but *physically* as well. The teachings which I received allude to the fact that the odic force taken from the medium by Evil, is not restored. Hence, as Prof. Pawlowski says, the medium Kluski is *completely exhausted after every seance*, and often *has to be put to bed before he recovers consciousness*, which occasionally does not return until several hours later. For this reason the medium under discussion prefers to hold *seances* not oftener than fortnightly, since otherwise his strength would be over-taxed.

Evil, once it has gained admittance to such a gathering, thanks to the faulty mental attitude of the medium and of the other participants, and has found its activities appreciated and welcomed by them, becomes rooted there. It does as it pleases, not as those who attend the meetings desire, and not infrequently perpetrates unmitigated mischief, at times creating scenes which can be terminated only by closing the *seance*. The situation is well described by the words of the poet: "The spirits I have raised, I cannot exorcise." Worst of all, *the medium's health is undermined little by little*, this being the reason why a great many strong mediums give out completely after a time, since during their *seances* much of their odic power is taken from them by the low and evil spirit-

SPIRITISM

world, without being replaced. *Once a medium's odic power is gone, the phenomena cease.* Such mediums are then exposed to a new danger, to which many of them fall victims. Accustomed as they are to being highly regarded as mediums, they have not the moral courage to admit the loss of their mediumistic power openly, and try to conceal this loss by resorting to *trickery* and *deceit*, which they continue to employ until exposure follows. Exposures of this kind are then seized upon by the ignorant to brand the whole question of spirit-communication as a fraud and a swindle. On this score a heavy responsibility rests on all, who, when attending spiritistic meetings, fail to see to it that everything is done in the name of God, and that all evil is barred. If a meeting is regarded and conducted as an act of Divine worship, those who attend it have nothing to fear from demoniacal influences. *The forces of good are in control* and only that is admitted, which finds favor with God. The reader cannot, therefore, be warned too emphatically against spiritistic *seances held merely to provide a sensation or for scientific ends*, and not inspired by an endeavor to attain closer to God through the offices of the good spirit-world.

Again, the statements made earlier in this book regarding the smell of od, is fully confirmed by Prof. Pawlowski's observation, that the odor given out by the higher spirits was pleasant and sweet, while the od materialized into the great ape had the offensive smell of a wet dog.

Prof. Pawlowski's account concludes with the following remarks: "It is impossible for anyone to deny or to reject these phenomena, or to explain them by ascribing them to sleight-of-hand performances. I realize perfectly that it will be difficult for most people to believe them; that it is hard to conceive of the possibility of the coming into existence, within a few minutes, of living human beings, whose bones can be felt through their flesh, whose heart-beats can be heard and felt. . . I admit that all of these things are beyond our comprehension. We have been spoiled by the marvels of modern science. We believe only in natural happenings, presented to us in all their beauty; but we do not believe *in the secret of Universal Life*; in that *Divine secret* which is so carefully guarded from us. *To admit the possibility of these things would revolutionize our entire viewpoint of life and death as well as our entire attitude toward philosophy and science.*

"Science will recognize officially the great mass of experimental

material already available and will lend its hand to the establishment of the truth, regardless of those moralists who see in the acceptance of psychic phenomena a menace to morality and religion. Intellectual cowardice is more or less excusable in moralists, whose narrow outlook is concerned more especially with matters of transitory interest, that touch the generality but fleetingly.

"But no student, no seeker after the truth, can afford to take such a stand. *In the end, truth will conquer and rule all things; it need not, however, be either feared or belittled.*"

Carlos Mirabelli, the Brazilian medium. (Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie, 1927, pp. 450-462). In 1927 there appeared in Santos, Brazil, a book entitled: "O Medium Mirabelli" containing a 74-page account of the phenomena observed in connection with a medium of that name. These phenomena occurred by daylight or at least by bright artificial light, at times in the presence of as many as sixty witnesses representing the leading scientific and social circles of Brazil.

Inasmuch as the relation of the occurrences includes the most amazing accounts as yet presented in this field, the editors of the "Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie" inquired of the Brazilian consul at Munich whether the persons cited in the book "O Medium Mirabelli" as witnesses of the truth of the aforesaid phenomena were known to him by name or reputation, to which the consul replied in an emphatic affirmative, adding that he was *personally acquainted* with fourteen of the witnesses named in the book, among them the incumbent President of the Republic, who had acted as the chairman of a board of arbitration, convoked to settle some question concerning Mirabelli. The consul furthermore named the Secretary of State, Reynaldo Porchat, Senator Muniz Sodre, and Olegario de Moura, professor of medicine at the University of Sao Paulo, and declared that if only these four men, who were not alone great scholars but persons whose veracity was beyond suspicion, vouched for a thing, it was not for him to express any doubts as to the correctness of their statement.

Mirabelli has been observed by 557 persons, including 452 Brazilians and 105 foreigners. Among them were 2 university professors, 72 physicians, 18 druggists, 12 engineers, 36 lawyers, 8 translators, 3 agriculturalists, 22 dentists, 5 chemists, 20 writers, 89 men in public office, 25 military men, 52 bankers, 128 merchants, 9 manufacturers, 18 journalists and 32 men of miscellaneous callings. Members of many religious orders also attended the *seances*.

SPIRITISM

Mirabelli is a universal medium, his odic power being adequate for all phenomena embraced by spirit-communication.

Mirabelli as a speaking medium. While in a state of trance, he speaks, besides his mother-tongue and several of the local dialects, German, French, Dutch, English, four Italian dialects, Czechish, Arabic, Japanese, Russian, Spanish, Turkish, Hebrew, Albanian, several African dialects, Latin, Chinese, modern Greek, Polish, Syrio-Egyptian, and ancient Greek. In his *normal state* he knows only his native language. While in a trance he delivers talks on subjects of which, in his ordinary human capacity, he knows nothing. These talks cover medicine, jurisprudence, sociology, political economy, politics, theology, psychology, history, the natural sciences, astronomy, philosophy, logic, music, spiritism, occultism and literature.

According to the medium's own statement, nothing that he utters while in a trance is evolved by him, his words being merely those of the spirits which speak through him and the names of which he willingly gives. He calls them his spiritual guides.

Mirabelli as a writing medium. To the present Mirabelli has written in 28 different languages while in a trance, setting down his words at a rate of speed which no penman in a normal state can equal. Thus in 15 minutes he wrote out 5 pages of Polish on: "The Resurrection of Poland"; in 20 minutes he wrote 9 pages of Czechish on: "The Independence of Czechoslovakia"; in 12 minutes, 4 pages of Hebrew on: "Slander"; in 20 minutes, a German composition on: "Greater Germany, Its Downfall and Restoration"; in 40 minutes, 25 pages of Persian on: "The Instability of Great Empires"; in 15 minutes, 4 pages of Latin on: "Famous Translations"; in 12 minutes, 5 pages of Japanese on: "The Russian-Japanese War"; in 22 minutes, 15 pages of Syrian on: "Allah and his Prophets"; in 15 minutes, 8 pages of Chinese on: "An Apology for Buddha"; in 15 minutes, 8 pages of Syrio-Egyptian on: "The Fundamentals of Legislation"; and in 32 minutes, three pages of hieroglyphics which have not yet been deciphered.

Mirabelli's mediumistic writing was done under the supervision of scholars who took the following measures to guard against fraud: the medium was led by two investigators into the *seance* room where his clothing and body were carefully searched. Paper and pencil were laid on a small table which had neither drawers nor shelves. Mirabelli, who is always in a state of great agitation before such *seances* seats himself in a chair in broad daylight. His

IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE

examiners and the other participants form a circle around him and follow all his motions closely. The presiding member then calls for silence until the spirit-guide of the medium announces its presence.

The medium, now in a state of great ecstasy, begs in loud tones for Divine aid, and, still in a trance, begins to chant a hymn. His hand seizes a pencil, hurls it away repeatedly, grasps it again, and falls to writing feverishly. The pencil glides over the paper at lightning speed without stopping. While writing, Mirabelli turns his eyes upward and sighs, without any abatement of the speed at which his pencil travels. Then, with a radiant look, he gazes straight upward, allegedly at his guiding spirit hovering above him, which guides his hand while he writes and with which he converses affectionately. A secretary who stands beside the medium takes up the sheets of paper as they are covered, and puts them away in their proper order.

It sometimes happens that the medium's state passes from one of ecstasy to apathy, after which it undergoes still another change: Mirabelli seems quite beside himself, laughing, weeping, singing, shouting out names, answering questions, twisting about like an acrobat, spitting right and left without regard for anyone, assuming indecent postures, cursing, trying to beat out his brains, or to drink chemicals, frothing at the mouth and striking out in all directions. In the end he grows calm, and the *seance* can be concluded.

The manifestations just described should be explained before we proceed. The agitation of the medium before a *seance* opens is caused by the great number of spirits, good and evil, which crowd around him, knowing that he is about to write. They therefore press close to him in order that they may guide his hand, and a battle ensues between the good and the evil spirits. This is shown by his seizing, throwing away and resuming the pencil. If the evil power gets the upper hand temporarily, it uses the medium's body to commit the improprieties of speech and behavior mentioned above. The power of Evil is bent on accomplishing the physical and moral ruin of mediums serving the good cause. Mirabelli endeavors to attract only the good spirit-world and to serve as its instrument, as proved by his prayers for Divine assistance, but the fact of his also lending himself to *seances* held only to satisfy the scientific ardor of those who attend them and in many cases merely their craving for something sensational, is an error on his part which gives the evil spirit-beings a great hold on him.

SPIRITISM

Were he to confine his activities to religious gatherings exclusively, thus devoting his mediumistic talents to the cause of good, the forces of evil would have no power over him and the low and vulgar exhibitions which he makes of himself would never occur. Moreover, his mediumistic power would *remain unimpaired*, while as matters stand, it is to be feared that this will dwindle little by little if he continues to lend himself as a medium for wordly purposes. The weakening of his odic power by the evil spirits will assume such proportions in the long run, that he will fail utterly as a medium, losing his physical health entirely and possibly suffering an even worse fate. I shall ask the reader to compare Mirabelli's case with what is said elsewhere in this book concerning the influence of evil spirits on mediums.

The strength which the evil spirit-forces occasionally develop in opposition to the efforts of the good spirits is illustrated by certain events recorded in the Bible. When the high spirit, Gabriel had been sent to reveal the future to Daniel, the evil spirit, which had been made prince over the idolatrous kingdom of Persia "withstood Gabriel for one and twenty days, until Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help Gabriel" and delivered him from the attacks of the forces of evil. (*Daniel 10 : 13.*)

Mirabelli as a physical medium. At the Assis Pharmacy, Rua 15 de Novembro No. 9 in Sao Paulo, the panes of glass suddenly flew out of the show-cases while the medium was present. A skull which had been articulated came out of the laboratory, remained suspended in the air, opened and shut its jaws, threw various articles about, flew back and forth, and finally fell to the floor without breaking.

At a meeting held on a national holiday and attended by the medium and many other persons, they, as well as the people who did not take part at the meeting but who lived near by, heard the roll of drums and the blare of trumpets, playing a march. At the same time, glasses and bottles standing in the *seance* room were clinked without being touched by human hands, and gave out sounds that were perfectly harmonious, rendering a military march with wonderful musical skill.

Mirabelli played billiards without touching his cue, which made the strokes of its own accord. A skull moved its jaws, and a hat which had been placed upon it was raised as though in salutation.

All of these facts were confirmed by unimpeachable witnesses,

the original affidavit stressing the point that all references to phenomena that are at all doubtful have been rigidly excluded.

At a well-attended *seance* in Sao Vicente the following things happened in the presence of the guests of honor, Drs. Mario Alvin and Annibal de Meneses, while Mirabelli, seated in a chair, was closely scrutinized by all present. The chair, still holding the medium, was suddenly moved out of place, without being impelled in any way by the medium's legs, as was definitely established. Mirabelli turned his eyes skyward, opened his arms, and sat as though enraptured. After he had prayed silently for some minutes the chair again moved with a sudden start and rose several centimeters from the floor. All the while closest attention was concentrated upon the medium's feet, arms and sides. The chair together with the medium continued to rise, floated to and fro, and finally reached an elevation of two meters above the floor. Another examination of the *seance* room was immediately made by those present. The duration of the levitation was 120 seconds actually timed, the investigators following the chair as it floated about in the air unsupported. It moved in one general direction and finally descended slowly back to the floor, landing at a distance of 2.30 meters from its original position. All the while the medium was in a trance and was speaking with different spirit-beings. Upon awakening, he could recall nothing of what had happened.

As has already been explained in the chapter on "Mediums" physical phenomena are usually the work of inferior, though not necessarily evil, spirits. Generally speaking, good spirits do not lend themselves to experiments like those referred to as Mirabelli's physical phenomena, described in the foregoing paragraph. By way of exception, they may participate in such performances if a Divinely willed purpose is involved, as, for instance, that of proving the existence of ultra-mundane spirits to a person seeking after God.

Mirabelli as an apport-medium. A revolver locked in a trunk, was apported from the residence Pinto de Queiros in Sao Paulo into that of a Mr. Watson, after the announcement had been made that this would be done. Furthermore, a picture was apported in broad daylight from Mr. Watson's home over a distance of several kilometers into the office of an insurance company, where it fell to the floor with a crash, causing immense excitement.

On another occasion, Mirabelli was at the da Luz railroad

SPIRITISM

station with several companions, intending to take a train for Santos, when he suddenly vanished. About fifteen minutes later a telephone message came from Sao Vicente, a town ninety kilometers away from da Luz, stating that the medium was present in Sao Vicente exactly two minutes after he had disappeared in Sao Paulo.

On the occasion of a session of the investigating committee held in honor of Dr. Enrico de Goes and attended by many scientists, Mirabelli vanished from the *seance* room without loosening the cords with which he was bound and without disturbing a seal on any of the doors or windows. He was found lying in a trance on a sofa in an adjoining room, singing a hymn.

These so-called "apports" come within the province of the dematerialization and re-materialization of matter. The latter is disintegrated and converted into od at one place, being thereupon transported through walls or closed doors in that state, and is re-condensed into solid matter elsewhere. Several instances of the same phenomenon are recorded in the Bible; the prophet Habbakuk, who was brought from a great distance to Daniel in the lions' den; the disciple Ananias, who suddenly disappeared from one place and instantly re-appeared in a far-off city; the liberation of Saint Peter from prison, all of these things happened according to the same laws of disintegration and re-condensation of matter, as in the case of Mirabelli.

Mirabelli as a materialization medium. The materializations produced by Mirabelli are the most marvellous exhibitions of the incarnation of spirits witnessed in modern times.

What follows happened at a *seance* held in the laboratory of the investigating committee in Santos, over which Estanislao de Camargo, Alberto Riveira and J. F. Schmid presided. This *seance* which took place at nine o'clock in the morning was attended by many people of note. The room in which the test was conducted was situated on the ground floor and was eleven meters long by ten meters wide. The windows opening upon the street were faced with iron bars; the floor was composed of narrow strips of wood which had been examined one by one to make sure that they could not be manipulated surreptitiously. Everything was found to be in order, and it was definitely established that the only way of forcing an entrance into the room would be to break through its thick walls or its doors framed in stone.

Mirabelli, seated in a chair, turned pale, indicating the ap-

proach of a deep trance. His eyes bulged and he twisted about as though someone were trying to strangle him, while beads of sweat stood out all over his body. Suddenly three sharp raps sounded on a table which stood in the room, and a child's voice called out: "Papa". Dr. Ganymed de Souza who was present declared with great emotion that he recognized the voice of his little daughter who had died of the grippe in the capital. Everyone sat in tense expectation, and presently the shape of a girl appeared beside the medium. Almost beside himself, her father stepped out of the circle, spoke to his child, went close to her and folded her in his arms. Amid convulsive sobs he assured the others again and again that it was his own daughter whom he was holding, and that the dress worn by the apparition was the same as that in which she had been buried.

All the while, Mirabelli lay as though in death-agony, cowered in his chair, his complexion waxen, his muscles completely relaxed, his breathing weak and wheezy, his pulse barely perceptible.

Colonel Octavio Viana now rose to convince himself of the reality of the apparition. He also took the child in his arms, felt of her pulse, looked into her deep, fathomless eyes, and asked her several questions, which she answered rationally, although in sad monotonous tones. Viana also was able to confirm that the vision was tangible. Dr. de Souza then recalled several childhood incidents in his daughter's life to the apparition, receiving replies which showed that his remarks were understood. *The apparition was photographed*, a copy of the picture being appended to the investigating committee's report.

After the picture had been taken, the child began to soar about the room, rising into the air and plunging about like a fish in its native element. The spectators had risen to their feet and followed the vision, which remained at a height within easy arm's reach. The medium meanwhile continued to imitate the child's motions with his forearms. She floated about in the air a few seconds longer, and disappeared all of a sudden, after having shown herself for thirty-six minutes by daylight and under unexceptionable conditions to a gathering of educated men, who testify that they saw before them a perfectly formed human being.

Dr. Ganymed de Souza thus lost his daughter for the second time, so deeply was he moved by what he had seen. The statement which sets out this occurrence is attested by the signatures of ten men holding the degree of Doctor of Science.

SPIRITISM

For some time after the medium had overcome the intense nervous strain caused by the demonstration described above, he continued to tremble and to give signs of great exhaustion. Even before he had regained his strength, violent blows were heard in a cupboard in which a skull used for purposes of study, was kept. The skull was being hurled about inside by an unseen force as though trying to break from its place of confinement. Someone present hastened to open the cupboard, when its door suddenly swung apart of their own accord and out shot the skull, rising into the air and chattering its teeth hideously. Dr. Ganymed de Souza was wondering to himself why the rest of the skeleton did not appear, when, as though in answer to his unspoken thought, the vertebrae of the neck began to form, followed in order by the bones of the chest and arms, the entire spinal column, the pelvic arch, the legs, and finally the feet, complete to the last bone. At this the medium, whose arms were held fast, erupted a mass of frothy saliva and, still seated in the chair, tried frantically to strike himself. All of his arteries seemed filled to bursting and throbbed violently, while his body diffused a sickening, corpse-like odor which was very annoying to the spectators and which impregnated the room to such an extent that not even the admission of fresh air served to drive out the smell.

The skeleton now got up on its feet and undertook to walk about the room with long, unsteady strides, occasionally seeming in danger of falling, but always regaining its balance. To assure himself that what he saw was real, Dr. de Souza touched the apparition and tapped its greasy bones. As he did so, he felt a nervous shock, and returned to his seat.

In the meantime the medium was squirming about in his chair to which he was held with difficulty, while the skeleton proceeded on its weird journey. Other participants, emboldened by Dr. de Souza's example, overcame their horror and got up one by one to touch this ghastly personification of death and nothingness. All of them were unnerved by the ordeal.

While the smell of decay was still much in evidence, the skeleton began to disintegrate in regular stages, commencing at the feet, until nothing was left but the skull which, though its teeth had ceased to chatter, continued to float in the air for some time, before it fell to the table and came to rest.

All this occurred at 9:45 a.m. by bright sunlight, under conditions as exacting as any that could be imposed by the police, and

in the presence of numerous cultured persons, and extended over a period of twenty-two minutes.

While the spectators were still discussing the events related above, the medium again fell into a state of great excitement and declared that he could see the presence in the room of the figure of Bishop Jose de Camargo Barros, who had lost his life when the ship "Syrio" was wrecked. All conversation was quickly hushed and Mirabelli was again put under the prescribed supervision, conducted this time by the Messrs. Ataliba de Aranha and Odassio Sampaio. As the medium passed into a trance, the odor of roses filled the room.

Suddenly there appeared within the circle a fine mist on which all eyes were immediately fixed. The mist parted and became denser, gleaming like a golden cloud, out of which gradually, minute by minute, emerged a smiling apparition wearing the episcopal biretta and clad in the full insignia of office. Rising from the chair it announced its name: "Dr. Jose de Camargo Barros", in a clear voice which all could hear.

Rising from his seat, Dr. de Souza fearlessly took several steps toward the vision, face to face with which he stopped. The apparition smiled silently at the investigator, who now went closer to it, touching and examining it minutely by tapping its body and teeth and rubbing his finger over the gums to determine the presence of any saliva. He listened to the heart-action and to the breathing, applied his ear to the abdomen to assure himself that the bowels were functioning, looked at the finger-nails and eyeballs, to the veinlets in which he gave particular attention, and resumed his seat. There was no question in his mind that the figure before him was that of a man.

The other witnesses followed Dr. de Souza's example and were all shown an equal amount of consideration by the mysterious guest. Everyone was certain that this was no childish hoax that was being played on him, but that he was in fact face to face with a human being which possessed all of the organs of a normal human body. The bishop conversed with those present in pure, well-chosen Portuguese, and finally said: "Now watch me closely as I disappear." With this he went back to the chair of the medium who was still in a deep trance, while the spectators observed every motion, in order that they might lose nothing of the most interesting part of the phenomenon, namely the de-materialization.

On reaching the medium, whose trance continued unbroken, the

SPIRITISM

bishop bowed over him, laying his hands on Mirabelli's head and regarding him for a while in silence, as all present gathered in a circle around the two figures. The bishop's body contracted spasmodically several times and then began to grow dim and to shrink in size. The medium, in a cold perspiration, was breathing with difficulty. When the vision had dwindled to a height of thirty centimeters, it vanished with incredible suddenness. Again the odor of roses filled the room, and Mirabelli slowly regained consciousness. A subsequent examination failed to yield any natural explanation of the occurrence.

At Santos where the headquarters of the Academy are situated a *seance*, the results of which are attested by sixty signatures, was held at half past three in the afternoon.

The first apparition seen was that of a woman who engaged in conversation with those present, and then vanished; a few minutes later a bell rose into the air and began to ring in silvery tones. Mirabelli woke from his trance and asserted that he saw a venerable figure clad in white linen and surrounded by an aura, standing by the table. Meanwhile, the bell in the air was ringing incessantly. Several spectators, seated somewhat apart, now rose and approached the circle proper which was formed by the investigating committee. Presently a sound was heard like that of a person's heels brought down firmly on the floor, whereat Colonel Soares and Dr. Octavio Moreira Cavalcanti announced the presence of the deceased Bezerra de Meneses, well remembered by all present as an eminent hospital physician. The apparition, turning to the spectators, spoke to them of himself and assure them that it was he himself who was with them. His language, and the positiveness with which he spoke, made a deep impression on all. His voice was carried all over the room by the megaphone, and several attempts to photograph the vision were successful.

Drs. Assumpcion and Mendonca now approached the shrouded figure and subjected it to an examination which lasted for fifteen minutes and furnished evidence that they had before them an anatomically normal human being, possessed of all of its natural organs. All of the scientists who were present vouch for the correctness of this conclusion.

After the incorporated spirit had shaken hands with the spectators, it announced that it was about to depart and soared off through the air like a flying machine. The feet vanished first, followed by the legs and the abdomen, while the chest, arms and head

IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE

still remained visible. Dr. Archimedes Mendonca who, like all the rest, had watched developments with the keenest interest, stepped within arm's reach of the portion of the body that remained in a materialized state, and tried to grasp it, but instantly fell to the floor unconscious while the vision vanished entirely. When Dr. Mendonca regained his senses in an adjoining room into which he had been carried, he declared that he had felt a sticky mass between his fingers before he swooned away.

On waking, Mirabelli was greatly exhausted. His fastenings were found to be intact, as were the seals on the doors and windows.

The report of the investigating committee contains thirty-four illustrations, of which the first three show the conditions under which the test was carried out, the manner in which Mirabelli was tied, and the supervision exercised by the committee. A particularly remarkable photograph is the one showing Mirabelli dressed in white, in the midst of the fourteen members of whom the committee was composed. His forearms are de-materialized, nothing being visible of the left one and only a faint blur of the right. Most interesting of all, however, are the eighteen photographs of the spirit incarnated, most of them showing the materialized figure and the medium together on the same plate. In a few instances the apparition alone was photographed; in several others, the incarnated spirit is seated at the table with the medium and the persons conducting the test, and looks for all the world like a living member of the committee.

As the editor of the "Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychology" aptly remarks: "*In the face of the testimony of so comprehensive a body of witnesses and in the face of so thoroughly conducted an investigation, we have not the right to ignore, without further ado, this new and overwhelming mass of evidence of the genuineness of mediumistic phenomena.*"

On going over the report relating to the phenomena produced through the medium Mirabelli, we are able, in the light of the laws governing od, as set down in this book, to understand them all without difficulty. Everything follows in accordance with immutable laws, whether the phenomena occur in Europe, America or any other continent, or whether they happened in ancient times or recently. The appearance of the three men to Abraham, the materialization of the angel Raphael to Tobias, the materialization of Christ after His resurrection, and countless other materializations of

SPIRITISM

spirits, were brought about by the same laws as were the materializations recorded in the case of Mirabelli. The only difference between the former materializations and the last-mentioned, lies in the fact that in the case of the materialization of the high spirits of God we are not informed of the source whence the od was drawn, whereas in regard to the materializations which took place in Brazil, Mirabelli, as a medium, was the chief source of that power, assisted by the participants at the *seances* most of whom were undoubtedly mediumistically gifted to such an extent that they could contribute their own od without entering into a trance. Elsewhere, mention is made of the important fact that when the higher spirits are called upon to deliver messages to mankind at God's behest, the od necessary is placed at their disposal in unlimited amounts, so that they shall not be dependent on human mediums. Nevertheless, the laws according to which they manifest themselves remain the same.

Mirabelli's speaking and writing in the numerous languages foreign to him and his discussions of the wide range of subjects enumerated, are the work of the various spirit-beings which employ him merely as an instrument. The apports are brought about by the fact that the spirit-world, with the aid of the medium's odic power, produces the currents required for disintegrating matter and for recondensing the same. The materialization and dematerialization of the spirits are effected by means of the application of those same currents and by means of the utilization of the medium's od and his physical substance. Unfortunately the German version of the Brazilian report fails to state the amount of weight lost by the medium during the period of materialization of the spirits. The stunning shocks suffered by those who touched a phantom in the act of being disintegrated, proceeded from the odic currents by which the *disintegration* was effected. Had anyone attempted to touch a *materialization in the process of formation* his experience would have been the same. After materialization is complete, these currents are turned off, and the apparitions can be touched with impunity.

The presence in the materialized spirit-beings of all the organs of the human body is explained by the fact that a spirit possesses these organs in spirit-form. It has only to condense them with the aid of human od to the extent required, in order to make them visible in the material shape of a human body. Indeed, the same process took place in the case of Mirabelli himself, when he van-

ished out of the *seance* chamber, through its closed doors, and was found later, lying in another room. His disappearance from a room that was closed was possible only by virtue of the dissolution of his material body into an odic one, which was re-materialized in an adjoining room into solid matter, in the same manner and according to the same laws as in the case of the materialization of the spirits.

The fragrance of the od of the higher spirits in contrast with the smell of decay noticed in the presence of low spirits is sufficiently accounted for by the facts related concerning the smell of od in connection with the dissertation on that force.

Clairvoyance at a deathbed. (Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie, 1927, pp. 475-476). A contributor from San Francisco relates the things he witnessed for five hours by the bedside of his dying wife. His story is as follows:

"I have never had a satisfactory solution to the riddle as to whether I was subject to an illusion, or whether I had suddenly become clairvoyant during the last five hours which immediately preceded my wife's decease.

"Before I begin the relation of this incident, I wish to state for the benefit of the reader that in my case neither alcoholic beverages, cocaine nor morphine enter into the question and that I am not at all highstrung nor imaginative. On the contrary, I am generally called cold-blooded, calm and collected, and exceedingly skeptical regarding everything appertaining to spiritism.

"As all my friends know, my wife passed away on Friday, May 23rd, 1902, a quarter of an hour before midnight. A few of my closest friends had come to my house and were present, together with the physician in the case and two experienced nurses. I sat by the bedside, holding the patient's right hand in my own, and in this way two hours passed without any visible change. The servant came in to announce that supper was served, but no one seemed inclined to avail himself of this opportunity of partaking of food. At about half past six o'clock I urgently begged my friends to eat something, as there was no telling how much longer our vigil might last, whereupon all of them finally left the room.

"A quarter of an hour later I happened to glance toward the door and saw three separate, well-defined, *layers of cloud* drifting into the room. Each cloud seemed to be about four feet long and six or eight inches thick, the lowest one being about two feet above

SPIRITISM

the floor while the others moved over it at intervals of approximately six inches.

"My first impression was that some of my friends were standing outside of the bedroom door, smoking, and that the smoke of their cigars was blowing into the room. With this in mind I jumped up to express my indignation at their conduct, but there was nobody near the door, nor could I see anyone in the hall or in the adjoining room.

"Overcome with wonder I looked back at the clouds. These floated silently toward the bed and enshrouded it completely. As I stared into the mist, I saw at the head of my dying wife a female form about three feet high, transparent but having the appearance of a bright mass of shining gold; it was the shape of a woman of so sublime an aspect that I cannot find words to describe her fittingly. She was wrapped in a Grecian garment with long, wide, sleeves, which hung down loosely. Upon her head she wore a radiant crown. Thus she stood motionless in her full splendor and beauty, her hands raised above my wife, seeming to bid her welcome with a cheerful and serene expression, and radiating peace and repose. Two other figures in white knelt beside my wife, apparently leaning against her. Still other shapes, more or less distinct, floated over the bed.

"Above my wife, but connected with her by a cord of od, hovered a nude white figure, apparently her odic body. For some time this remained perfectly still; then it shrank in size until it was barely eighteen inches tall. The odic body was complete, with perfectly formed limbs. While shrinking in volume as described, it beat about with its arms and legs as if struggling to get free and escape. For a long time it twisted back and forth, until it seemed exhausted; then it grew quiet, increased to its former size, and recommenced its struggles.

"This vision, or whatever else it may have been, was before me uninterruptedly for the entire five hours that preceded my wife's decease. Occasional interruptions that occurred, as when I spoke with my friends or closed my eyes and turned my head aside, failed to affect the mirage in the slightest, for as soon as I looked back in the direction of the deathbed, I would see the spirit-shapes again. Throughout these five hours I had a strange feeling of oppression, as though a heavy load were resting on my head and limbs, while my eyes felt heavy and full of sleep. During the entire time my sensations were so peculiar that I felt as if I were

going out of my mind, and said more than once to the physician: "Doctor, I am going crazy."

"The fatal moment came at last. There was a sound of gasping; the odic body writhed to and fro, and my wife's breathing ceased. To all appearances she was dead, but a few moments later she began to breathe again. After she had drawn her breath twice, everything became quiet. At the instant of her last breath the connecting cord broke and the odic body vanished. The clouds and the spirit-shapes also disappeared immediately, and, strange to say, the sensation of heaviness that had weighed upon me left me all of a sudden. I was my own self again, cold-blooded, calm and self-possessed, and from the instant of my wife's death was perfectly capable of making all the arrangements necessary for looking after her remains and for laying them away in their final resting-place.

"I must leave it to the reader to judge whether I was the victim of a hallucination brought on by grief and exhaustion, or whether perhaps my mortal eyes had been privileged to catch a glimpse of the spirit-world in all its happiness, repose and peace."

The deathbed scenes related above were no hallucinations; they were real. However, in order that the dying woman's husband might be able to see the spirit-shapes, two prerequisite conditions had to be fulfilled.

In the first place it was necessary for him to have a mediumistic sense of clairvoyance, even if, as happened in his case, this sense had not been developed. In the second place, enough od had to be present in the room to allow the spirits to make their shapes visible by means thereof.

The source of the od is to be sought primarily in the dying woman herself, for at the time of death, the od is liberated from the body. Her husband also was able to liberate od by virtue of his mediumistic disposition. The sensation of oppression, sleepiness and exhaustion that rested upon him during those hours was caused by the surrender of his od, and consequently disappeared when the od he had liberated flowed back into his body, after the spirits had ceased to be visible.

Here too, the od was seen in the form of clouds which enfolded the whole deathbed and from which the figures of the spirits were subsequently formed. The husband's inability to see *clearly* all of the figures floating above the bed was due to the fact that the

SPIRITISM

amount of od on hand was not sufficient to allow all the spirits present to show themselves with equal distinctness.

Spirits from the Beyond surround *every dying person*. Generally they are those of deceased friends and relatives, or the guardian spirits which watched over and protected that person during his lifetime.

Many dying persons themselves can see these spirits by clairvoyance, for at the time of death the soul is already partially released from the body, and hence is endowed with the power of spirit-vision. It recognizes the spirits of those who have gone before that are present at the deathbed, and calls them by name.

It is the duty of these spirits not only to escort the dying into the Beyond, but to assist in freeing their souls from their bodies.

Whenever a number of spirits are gathered for a definite purpose, they are under the orders of a leader. In the case before us, this leader was the beautiful female figure which the husband saw floating above his expiring wife's bed. She supervised the work which her subordinate spirits were called on to perform with the dying woman.

The naked white figure which the husband saw struggling above his wife's body, was her odic body. The writhing of this body, which was a perfect image of her own, was due to the exertion made by the spirit of the dying, enclosed in the odic body, to break the odic cord which still held it to the physical body, after the rest of the odic body had already made itself free. The husband himself saw this odic cord plainly. Such cords are fairly strong by nature, and are not easily broken.

Special Instances of Clairvoyance. (Zeitschrift fuer Parapsychologie, 1926, pp. 22-25). In an article which appeared in the publication mentioned, Professor Oesterreich discusses several instances of clairvoyance observed by Dr. Pagenstecher, a physician living in Mexico, in connection with his patient, Maria Reyes de Z., and subsequently investigated and confirmed by Mr. Prince, an American. Professor Oesterreich's account is as follows:

"The phenomena studied by Pagenstecher and Prince covered primarily clairvoyance and psychometry. Their investigations in this connection gave thoroughly convincing results, to the striking nature of which alone it was due, that Pagenstecher, a product of the materialistic school, became convinced by his own observation of the existence of such phenomena. On one occasion he recounted his experiences before the Association of Physicians of

Mexico, whereat his colleagues shook their heads, and probably more than one of them began to feel doubts as to Pagenstecher's sanity. Nevertheless, a committee was formed, whose members subsequently confirmed the correctness of his observations."

What, then, were the facts discovered in the case of the clairvoyant, or rather, the clairsentient Maria Reyes de Z.?

a. When in a certain condition, she had the same sensations as those felt by Dr. Pagenstecher who would sit facing her. At such times she felt as though she were enfolded within his organism, but she had this feeling only so long as Dr. Pagenstecher stood or sat in front of her at a distance not exceeding three meters.

b. On these occasions she would see a multicolored radiation and a luminous band which connected her with Pagenstecher.

c. When given a piece of a meteorite, she had the sensation of flying through space, passing alternately through hot and cold regions, and of falling into bottomless depths.

d. She was handed a letter, and although its writer was unknown to her, she sensed and described the scene of the sinking of a ship, and drew as accurate a picture of the person who had written the letter as she could have, had she stood beside him on the deck of the foundering vessel. She also had the sensation of sinking into the ocean and of rising to the surface again. The letter sealed in a bottle, had been picked up at sea.

The explanation of the incidents related above may be found in the chapter dealing with the laws of odic force.

Od is the carrier not of physical sensations only, but of all psychic ones as well. Inasmuch as the spirit of a living being is the bearer of its odic force, all of the thoughts and feelings of the spirit are expressed in corresponding vibrations of the od. At the same time the odic vibrations of a living being are influenced not alone by the thoughts and moods of its own spirit, but also by the odic vibrations of another living being whose odic radiation it receives. If, therefore, "clairsentient people" as they are called, come into close enough contact, in any manner, with the odic radiation of other persons, they will also absorb the latter's sensations. This is the law underlying the ability of certain people to "fall in with" the feelings, the character, the sentiments and the ways of others.

If therefore the sensations of the clairsentient lady in question followed those of Dr. Pagenstecher, it was because his sensations were transmitted by his odic radiation. In his case the radiation

SPIRITISM

had an effective range of only three meters, and was not powerful enough at a greater distance to influence the odic vibrations of the clairscient subject of his experiment. Under such circumstances a clairscient person is in a state resembling a partial trance, in which his spirit is to some degree separated from his body.

The multicolored band of od seen by the lady, connecting her with Pagenstecher, was his odic radiation passing over to her. The fact that all odic radiations are colored has also been brought out in the discussion on od, since color depends on odic vibrations, as is true also of tones, odors, taste, response to the sense of touch, and all other similar od-borne indications of life. All of these matters are intimately correlated.

Meteorites also are living things, each one possessing a spirit, as does every other object in existence. Hence a meteorite has odic vibrations peculiar to itself, which, as it flew through space, were influenced by the odic vibrations of the heavenly bodies there, as well as by its fall into immeasurable depths. All odic vibrations of a living being leave impressions upon its od analogous to those left on a phonograph-record by the notes of a singer, with the result that they can always be reproduced thereafter.

The same process that takes place in material form in the case of a phonograph-record obtains ethereally in the case of the sensing of past events by clairscient persons when they come into close enough contact with the odic record of a living being, whereby the same vibrations, and hence the same sensations, are produced in their own od as those which are borne on the record in question.

This explains the clairscient medium's ability to see the fate and the appearance of the writer of the letter, on board of the sinking ship. It should be added, however, by way of further explanation, that the odic record of a spirit resembles not only a phonograph-record but also a photographic plate, and that, in consequence, it will reproduce not only the sensations, but also the image of the person from whom the odic radiations emanated, since the image too is produced by odic vibrations. In a similar manner our most recent inventions seek to make it possible for us to see the persons with whom we are talking over the telephone. These inventions also are based on oscillations which, in physical processes, occur in considerable material condensation, and in spirit-processes in an etherealized form.

In the case of Pagenstecher and his clairscient medium, there

IN THE LIGHT OF MODERN SCIENCE

was an average loss of weight of a hundred grams. This is easily accounted for, since every surrender of od is attended by a loss of weight, which in the case of Pagenstecher was due to the fact that he radiated a large amount of od to the medium, while in her case a corresponding loss was caused by receiving and mentally recording the odic impressions, all work, mental as well as any other, involving a certain consumption of od. It is like playing a phonograph-record, to do which we require a certain amount of power, in order that the disc may move fast enough to reproduce the notes recorded upon it.

All work performed by human beings involves the liberation of a given amount of od, which in turn means a loss of weight. If we weigh ourselves before working, and again afterwards, we find that our weight has decreased in proportion to our exertions, mental or physical, although there may have been no evacuations in the meantime. Even magnetopaths, who treat their patients by magnetization, and in so doing give off part of their od, undergo a corresponding loss of weight during the process.

The foregoing furnishes an explanation of all phenomena connected with clairsentience, regardless of the form of their occurrence.



PART FOUR



**Messages from the Spirit-World Concerning the
Great Problems of Religion**

Introductory Remarks

"And they will be all instructed by God."
John 6:45.

THE teachings received by me relating to the laws governing spirit-communication with the material Creation, as well as all my personal experiences in that connection, shed so much light on events related in the Bible which theretofore I had not been able to understand, that all obscurity was dispelled. Moreover, I was enabled to understand many things that I heard or read of afterwards, concerning occurrences of an extraordinary nature.

However, *the great religious problems* were what concerned me most of all. I was a clergyman, and had devoted my whole life until then to imparting the teachings of my creed to my co-religionists. Hence it was but natural that I should be primarily interested in discovering whether all of the religious doctrines that I had so far believed and taught were true, or whether among the tenets of my church there were any which were at variance with the truth.

Although I could scarcely have foreseen that such discrepancies would prove as numerous and as wide as I subsequently found them to be, I was prepared for some such discovery from the first.

In later years I read that the Catholic Church itself and the writers among its adherents had issued insistent warnings against "spiritism" in general and against the so-called "revealed spiritism" in particular, that is to say, precisely against that which any earnest seeker after the truth is most particularly desirous of learning. Obviously, anyone who like myself, conducted spiritistic meetings as he would conduct Divine service, was not concerned with obtaining strikingly interesting spirit-phenomena, which is the aim of ordinary spiritistic *seances*, but with getting into touch with the good spirit-world which had instructed the people of Biblical times.

It was from this spirit-world that I hoped to learn the truth concerning the most important questions of life. *I wanted to be enlightened about the interrelation between the Here and the Beyond.* Everything else was of minor importance.

Looking at the question from the standpoint of the "churches," I could indeed see reason enough for the warnings they had uttered against spiritism as practiced by me, as well as against "revealed spiritism" for, once we grant the possibility of men being

INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

initiated into the full truth by direct communication with God's good spirits, the foundations of the churches begin to totter. What with their conflicting doctrines, the churches will then be in danger of losing their adherents, for men will no longer have to depend on the clergy in their search after the truth, but will, through their communication with God's spirit-world, learn of the direct road to the source of truth, as it was learned by the people of Scriptural times.

The root of the opposition on the part of the churches to spiritism in general and to revealed spiritism in particular is the instinct of self-preservation. The conflict waged by them is the same as the war declared by Herod in the defence of his kingship when the birth of Him, who was to be the King of the Jews, was announced to him.

But the war of the churches upon Divinely ordained spirit-communication will be as futile as was Herod's war upon Him Whom God had sent.

The truth, that the good spirit-world can communicate with men and enlighten them concerning the great and important problems of the Beyond, independently of any church, will in due time prevail with mankind, while as to the churches, it will be said: "For those who sought the child's life are dead." (*Matthew 2 : 20.*)

That which the churches of today are preaching to the ignorant multitude is not the truth, and differs widely from the answers given by God's spirit-world to the questions put to it, regarding God, His Creation and its ultimate fate, Redemption, Christ and Christ's life and work; regarding the Church and the sacraments; regarding Heaven and Hell; and regarding the origin and purpose of the Universe.



God

"Can you discover the deep things of God? Can you reach the Almighty's range of wisdom?" *Job 11:7.*

"YOU ask that I enlighten you concerning God, but what can I tell you that you would understand? You do not understand even the lowest creatures about you; you do not understand yourself even. You cannot comprehend the smallest stone by the wayside, nor the most insignificant worm of the fields. You are utterly ignorant of the most commonplace objects that meet your eye, and yet you ask me to teach you about the Supreme Being, to give you understanding of something purely spiritual! That is impossible, seeing that you lack all conceptions required to enable you to grasp these mighty truths. "For the corruptible body presses down the soul, and the earthly tabernacle weighs down the mind that muses upon many things. And hardly do we guess right at things that are upon earth, and with labor do we find the things that are before us: but the things that are in heaven who has searched out." (*Wisdom 9:15.*)

"There is only one thing that each of you can reason out for himself by logical thinking; *There must be some Cause for the existence of everything in Creation.* Precisely as it is impossible to conceive of a clock without assuming the existence of a clock-maker, it is impossible to conceive of the greatest and most accurate timepiece of all, the Universe, without assuming the existence of a great Master-jeweler who built this timepiece with its billions upon billions of wheels, all of them so perfectly geared and running so accurately, that the astronomers of today can calculate what the exact relative positions of the various wheels will be thousands of years hence.

"The Creator of this timepiece, whose greatness surpasses the grasp of the human mind, is known to you as God. It should, therefore, be obvious to everyone that a God must exist, for "only the fool has said in his heart: There is no God." (*Psalms 14:1.*)

"But *as to the nature of God,* that is something which I cannot explain to you, any more than I can explain the *Cause of the Divine existence.* It would be like trying to explain the calculations of a planet's orbit to a four-year old child, who would naturally lack all knowledge of astronomy and mathematics and of

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

all the principles, formulas and equations involved. If it takes even your greatest astronomers years to calculate the orbit of a single star, a person unfamiliar with the first inklings of science would be driven mad, if it were attempted to teach him something utterly beyond the reach of his understanding. In the same way you would be driven out of your senses if I were to try to fill your mind with ideas which are quite incomprehensible to you and which your understanding could not assimilate. You yourself would be forced to admit: "Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is far, far beyond me." (*Psalms 139 : 6.*)

"There is little I can tell you concerning God that you do not already know.

"Your own reasoning teaches you that God is a creative spirit, endowed with a will, which orders all things sagely, and similarly, you are convinced of His omnipotence, wisdom and greatness, so far as the human mind is capable of grasping the same. The Scriptures enlighten you further as to the way in which He rules the world, as to His wonders and His love and mercy for His creatures. All that I can do is to offer you a more precise interpretation of the truths to be found in the Holy Writ relating to God, and to call your attention to *erroneous ideas* contained in the teachings of your various creeds as to God and His attributes.

"*The fact that God is a spirit* is one thing on which all religions agree, and for which you have the word of Christ: "God is a Spirit: and they that worship him must worship in spirit and truth." (*John 4 : 24.*) A point on which they do not agree, however, is whether or not this spirit has *shape*. Many people think that shape is associated with matter only, but not with spirit. This is a mistake. Material forms are images of spiritual forms, and since all material things have form and shape, so, too, have all spiritual things, and so also, has God. In fact there is nothing but what has shape, in either the material or the spiritual world. Beauty is perfection of form, a statement which is equally true of the realm of the ethereal. God is the perfection of beauty, and hence, also, the perfection of shape.

"God as an integral, thinking and planning being, is a *personality*, and there can be no such thing as a personality, an "ego" without form or shape.

"God as the highest spirit differs from all created spirits, and difference is possible only where distinguishing features exist. Again, features can exist only where there is shape and form.

CONCERNING GOD

Inasmuch, then, as God has shape, He can be seen by the other spirits. All who go to Him, will see Him face to face, as He is. For this reason Moses begged God to travel *in person* with the people of Israel: "And he (Moses) said unto Him: if Thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence." (*Exodus 33 : 15.*) And again Moses besought: "Show me, I pray Thee, Thy glory . . . And He said, Thou canst not see my face; for man shall not see me and live." (*Exodus 33 : 18.*) God therefore has a figure and a countenance, and can be seen by spirits, though not by human eyes.

"Inasmuch as God possesses shape and personality, He is not *omnipresent* in the sense in which you understand the word. It is true that He is aware of all things and of all events through the force that emanates from Him, for everything in existence owes its being, its perpetuation and its functions solely to the force disseminated by God. "In Him we live, move and are." Through His power He maintains contact with everything that exists; nothing can escape His notice. *But as a personified spirit He is not everywhere.* You unconsciously admit as much in the opening words of the prayer: "Our Father *which art in Heaven.*" The Lord looketh from heaven; he beholdeth all the sons of men; from the place of his habitation he looketh forth upon all the inhabitants of the earth. He that fashioneth the hearts of them all, that considereth all their works." (*Psalms 33 : 13.*) "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek after God." (*Psalms 53 : 2.*) And regarding God's habitation we read: "There is a river, the streams of which make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High. God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved. . ." (*Psalms 46 : 4.*)

"The many references in the Scriptures relating to God are not figurative or allegorical, but literal, with the reservation that what you accept in a material sense, should be accepted in a spiritual one as applying to God. God's throne and God's habitation exist in fact. God is able to visit all parts of the Universe in person. The Bible records the literal truth when it tells you: "And he left off talking with him, and God went up from Abraham." (*Genesis 17 : 22.*) You are, of course, familiar with the many passages in the Bible in which mention is made of the coming and going of God.

"I cannot even begin to tell you how wonderfully God has

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

planned the government of the Universe, for this far exceeds the limits of human comprehension. You probably cannot picture to yourselves *that spirits of God stand watch over each living being and that they report on whatever happens*. Hence nothing can take place without being known to God, and for this reason you speak of God as being *omniscient*. In this you are right, although in one respect you exaggerate His omniscience, perhaps through fear of detracting from His greatness. You teach, namely, *that God also knows how men will act of their own free will at some future time, but in this respect you are misinformed*. God knows everything that has taken and is taking place. He knows the past and the present. He knows men's thoughts, and as for the future, He knows those destinies which He Himself has planned for His creatures. *But He has no foreknowledge of those future events which men may shape by the exercise of their free will*. He does not know beforehand what a creature of His will do of its own will in all circumstances. *For this reason He tries His creatures*. To do this would be superfluous and to no purpose if the outcome of the trial were known to God beforehand, and God does nothing without purpose.

"Again, any foreknowledge on God's part of actions within the control of his creatures would have to be predicated on laws making future decisions compulsory, and hence eliminating the exercise of free will. *To assert that something shall depend on the free exercise of will, and yet be predestined, is in itself a contradiction*. Anything of which God had a definite foreknowledge, would necessarily happen, for even God's knowledge is *subject to eternal laws*, and hence, the law that two and two make four applies to God as well as to every other spirit. *In the absence of anything which might serve as a basis, there can be no knowledge, nor foreknowledge, not even on the part of God*, for even He is bound by the axiom: "Nothing exists without a reason." If God knew to a certainty how his creatures were going to act of their own free will in future situations; there would have to be a reason for His knowledge, and the only possible reason would be, that God so forcefully influences the exercise of that free will, that only one course is left open. This, however, would eliminate any freedom of choice on the part of His creatures.

"Ignorance of future decisions freely made by His creatures, *does not indicate that God is in any way imperfect, but is the necessary outcome of the freedom of will, the greatest gift God*

CONCERNING GOD

could have bestowed upon His creatures. Just as there are many things which God cannot do because they are self-contradictory, as, for example, not even He can make two and two equal five, so He cannot create a free agent whose future actions He can foresee with absolute certainty, in which case those actions would be bound to occur. Freedom to decide, and being forced to decide in a certain way, are two things which conflict inherently, and absolute certainty that an event will take place *invariably presupposes that it must take place*. This is an axiom that none of your theologians can refute, let them write what books they will to prove the contrary. Their conclusions are fallacies which serve only to bewilder mankind. They are utterly in the wrong when they assert that for God there is only a present, and not a future, and that everything that is going to happen, even the voluntary actions of His creatures, is an accomplished fact in His eyes, and therefore known to Him. No more than a house which you may be planning to erect is already built, are the events of the future accomplished facts with God. I might add in conclusion that the very idea of freedom of choice means that there is a question whether the events dependent on such choice *will occur at all, and if so, just how they will occur*.

“You know that I am telling you the truth in this, as I have done in all else. You have had plenty of proof of the fact that I am a truthful spirit. For this you have my oath, taken in the name of the Almighty, the true God. When I tell you that God has no foreknowledge of the voluntary actions of men, I am not detracting from His greatness; it is you who would dishonor God by teaching the contrary and thereby picturing Him to men in an odious light, for there are many people who deny the existence of God because they cannot conceive of a deity capable of creating beings, knowing them *with absolute certainty*, to be predestined to everlasting misery. Among other things which you teach, incorrectly, as it happens, is the doctrine of eternal damnation. According to this doctrine, then, God has created millions of human beings with the full and unalterable assurance that they are to be everlastingly damned. Such a God would not be a God, but a monster. Not even the most degenerate human father would knowingly send his child to unending torment, and yet you are asked to believe that your Heavenly Father, with His infinite love, is capable of a degree of barbarity which in a human father would be unthinkable!

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"Read the Scriptures! They teach that God sends His trials in order to learn how men will act when put to the test, and what course they will choose. "For the Lord your God proves you, to know whether you love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul." (*Deuteronomy 10 : 3.*)

"When God spared certain nations from falling into the hands of Joshua, thus allowing them to survive, His reasons for so doing are given in the Bible as follows: "Now these are the nations which the Lord left, *to prove Israel by them*, even as many of Israel as had not known all the wars of Canaan . . . : namely the five lords of the Philistines, and all the Canaanites, and the Sidonians, and the Hivites. . . And they were left, *to prove Israel by them*, to know whether they would hearken unto the commandments of the Lord which he commanded their fathers by Moses." (*Judges 3 : 1-5.*)

"Of King Hezekiah, who did that which was right in the eyes of the Lord it is told: "Howbeit in the business of the ambassadors of the princes of Babylon, who sent unto him to inquire of the wonder that was done in the land, *God left him, to try him, that he might know what was in his heart.*" (*2nd Chronicles 32 : 31.*)

"In the Psalms you will find: "His eyes behold, his eyelids *try, the children of men.* The Lord *tries* the righteous; but the wicked and him that loves violence his soul hates." (*Psalms 11 : 4-5.*) And in the Proverbs: "The refining pot is for silver, and the furnace for gold; but the Lord *tries* the hearts." (*Proverbs 17 : 3.*) Finally in the Book of Isaiah you read: "Behold, I have refined thee, but not as silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." (*Isaiah 48 : 10.*)

"The tribulations of Job as related in the Bible were only a *test by which God sought to learn* how that righteous man would bear himself toward the Lord in the hour of greatest adversity.

"All trials to which men are subjected by the Lord would be mere farces, *if their outcome were known to Him in advance.*

"Obviously, God Who knows the hearts of His creatures full well, can *foretell very closely* what course they will decide upon, and we spirits also have this faculty to a great degree. Even you mortals, if you know the character of a fellow-creature, are able to *predict with reasonable certainty* how he will behave and decide in any given circumstances. But all of this is *mere conjecture*, and is not the point at issue. I was speaking of *an infallibly certain foreknowledge of a course of action which is determined by the*

CONCERNING GOD

exercise of free will, and such unerring foreknowledge is possessed by no spirit, nor even by God Himself. Hence God could not foresee that some or a great many of the spirits He had created would forsake Him, and naturally could not know in advance which of them would do so. He knew only that there was a possibility of such defection, by reason of the fact that the spirits were free to act as they might choose.

"Had God had the positive foreknowledge, as your doctrines teach, that beings which He had created would abuse their liberty of action by deserting Him, He would not have called them into existence at all but would have created only such of whose loyalty no question could ever arise.

"There are two other grave errors in the conception of God entertained by your creeds, and of these I shall speak very briefly, because they will be discussed at greater length on another occasion.

"You teach of the union of three persons in one Godhead, maintaining that there are three Spirits, each of which is a true Deity, but which, when united, are one God as to substance. This is a piece of human fallacy and is an absurdity. There is no union of three persons and no Trinity in the sense in which you teach. *God is an individual person. Only the Father is God.* All other holy spirits are God's creatures. None of them is the Father's equal.

"Furthermore, you teach of a God Who inflicts *eternal punishment* and you teach of an *everlasting Hell*. Hell is not everlasting. God is Love. He does not condemn any creature eternally. All those who have incurred the guilt of deserting Him, will ultimately return unto Him. That is the truth, as I shall prove to you on another occasion.



God's Creation and Its Vicissitudes

" . . . but Thou hast ordered all things in measure and number and weight. For Thou canst show Thy great strength at all times when Thou wilt."

Wisdom 11 : 20, 21.

"**G**OD is a spirit, and everything created by Him is spirit. It was in His image that He called into existence spirit-beings in numbers so vast, that no figures devised by man can even begin to express them.

"*In what manner* the infinitely great and almighty God created the spirit-world is something that you as a mortal could not understand were I to try to explain it. A knowledge of this is not necessary to man and is of no value to the good of his soul. It is sufficient for him to know how he stands with regard to God's Creation, in order that he may learn why he was placed on earth and what tasks he has to fulfill during his stay there. To teach you these things is the purpose of what I am about to tell you of the Creation.

"God did not create the world at one stroke. God is the great Architect who, with strict observance of laws conceived with infinite wisdom, builds up little things into large ones, simple things into complex, and, out of a single seed, produces the tree with its millions of seeds; who builds up the family, not by calling into existence parents and children simultaneously, but by first creating the parents and endowing them with the power of reproduction, so that in time the family may grow through the birth of the offspring, and that, out of this family new ones may arise without limit.

"In a similar manner God proceeded with the creation of the spirit-realm. Every law which you find on earth, exists in the spirit-world also. I have told you this repeatedly and insistently and shall emphasize it once more, because it is the basic truth underlying all knowledge of the Beyond, whether you believe it, or whether you reject it with a smile of incredulity.

"Thus you may shake your head in unbelief when I tell you that the law which prevails in Nature on earth, with all living things, namely, that of *reproduction by the union of the male and the female*, must and does apply to the same extent in spirit-cre-

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

ation. For matter is merely the incarnation of the ethereal, and hence merely *another state of spirit*, for which the spirit-laws are not abrogated, but applied in a way which is adapted to matter. Just as in material creation there are males and females in every species, so too there are male and female spirits in the spirit-creation. Among spirits there are as many males as there are females, a female spirit being allotted to each male, according to God's law. They are invariably perfectly mated, and find their greatest happiness in mutually supplying each other's limitations and in faithful collaboration in the task which God has assigned to them.

"Such spirit couples which were created for each other are known as 'duals,' a term intended to express: 'two who belong to each other.' These are the matches that were made in Heaven. None but God, not even the 'Son of God' known to you as 'Christ,' is exempt from the union of the male with the female. To all created spirits the words of the Bible apply: 'Male and female created He them,' and 'Be fruitful and multiply.'

"Christ is the highest Spirit which the omnipotent God could create. He is in every way God's most perfect image, so far as any created spirit can possess the Creator's perfection. Hence Saint Paul rightly calls Him 'the image of the invisible God, the *first-born* of all creation.' (*Colossians 1 : 15.*) Christ is therefore not God, as is so generally taught today, but the first created 'son of God', and, as such, His highest and most perfect Creature.

"Following Christ, six further spirits, also called 'Sons of God' came into being, but these owe the existence of their spiritual bodies to the first-created Son and are His inferiors in power, greatness and glory.

"The second 'son of God' was he whom you call 'Lucifer' — the 'Light-Bearer' — next to Christ the greatest of created spirits and subsequently a rebel against God. Still another of God's seven sons is met with in the story of Tobias in which the great celestial spirit which had accompanied the young Tobias in human form made itself known to the youth's family with the words: 'I am Raphael, one of God's seven sons.' (*Tobias 12 : 15.*)

"Save for the first created Son of God, the entire spirit-world was brought into existence not by *direct* Divine creation, as was

God's first-born Son, but was called into being through that Son upon Whom God had conferred creative power. Hence Saint Paul writes in his epistle to the Colossians: 'for in him (Christ) were all things created, in the heavens and upon the earth, things visible and things invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers; all things have been created through him, and unto him; and he is before all things, and in him all things consist'. (*Colossians 1 : 16, 17.*) Just as the whole human race has the source of its *corporeal* existence in the first man, so the whole spirit-world owes its *physical* existence to Christ; and as men have inherited *only their corporeal bodies* from their first ancestor through many generations, while their spirit is united with their body in every instance without any collaboration on the part of their procreators, so the celestial beings owe their *spiritual bodies* to the Firstling of celestial creation, to the first-born Son of God, while their spirits, as coming from God, are always joined by Him to their spiritual bodies. After what I have already told you of the difference between 'celestial' and 'terrestrial' bodies, you will know how to distinguish between the two. In ultra-mundane beings the body exists in spiritual form, a subject to which Saint Paul alludes in his first epistle to the Corinthians: 'There are also celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial: but the glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. . . . If there is a *natural* body, there is also a *spiritual* body'. (*1st Corinthians 15 : 40-44.*) The spirit receives its shape in what is called the 'odic body', being itself a spark of the Divine fire which shines according to the lodging in which it is housed. I am now speaking metaphorically only, but there is no other way of presenting the facts relating to things spiritual to you mortals, than by employing incomplete metaphors.

"As in terrestrial creation you have the most widely divergent kinds and orders of living organisms, high and low, although each one is perfectly designed to fulfill its functions, so too there is a wonderful variety of kinds and orders among the spirits which God has shaped into individuals endowed with celestial bodies. In your Bible, you yourselves distinguish between cherubim, seraphim, archangels, dominions, powers and principalities.

"The spirit-world created through Christ and united with Him in a communion, formed a wonderful *living organism* in which all spirits were members of a spiritual community, although they differed in kind and perfection. Like the members of a terrestrial

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

body, which, though having different shapes and functions, yet constitute an organic whole in which no member is superfluous while none is independent of the others, the spirit-creation formed a spiritual body of which Christ was the head, the members being composed of the other spirits. In a well-ordered kingdom on earth the king, as the head of the country, together with his ministers and his officials high and low, and the mass of his subjects, constitutes a single great family in which everyone works for the common good, upon which, in turn, depends the welfare of the individual. The same was true of the great family of the spirits. Every spirit had its allotted task, great or small, but together they all formed one great and glorious unit, in which no spirit was superfluous and in which no spirit worked for itself alone, but in which all collaborated with each other at the wondrous task to be fulfilled by God's Creation. It was intended that they should share in the labors of God, and, consequently, in the happiness and beauty of Him Who had called them into existence, in the glory of God and of Christ, their King whom God had anointed.

"Hence Saint Paul in his epistles constantly refers to the 'secret of the body of Christ'. 'For even as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: so we, who are many, *are one body in Christ*, and severally members one of another. And having gifts differing according to the grace that was given to us. . .' (*Romans 12 : 4-6.*) 'We must be faithful to the true doctrine and in time through love make all creatures spiritual members of him who is our spiritual head — namely Christ. For through him the spiritual body is fitly put together and joined into one structure in which each member has its duty to perform according to the strength with which it is endowed as a part of the whole. Thus each member helps to build up the spiritual body until the spiritual edifice of Christ is completed, resting on a foundation of love'. (*Ephesians 4 : 15, 16.*) 'Christ is the Head for which the whole spiritual body is knit and held together by its joints and sinews, and thus grows, as God ordained'. (*Colossians 2 : 19.*)

"This great communion of spirits is also referred to by Saint Paul as the 'church'. (*Colossians 1 : 18.*) 'He has put all things under his rule and has made him the supreme head of the church, the 'Church' being his spiritual body which he restores in its entirety by re-uniting with himself all parts of the universe'. (*Ephesians 1 : 22-23.*)

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"The 'church' is therefore the communion of spirits loyal to God under the rule of Christ. The word 'church' signifies the 'rule of the Lord'. Whoever pledges his allegiance to this rule and consequently, to God, belongs to the 'church'. The true meaning of the word 'church' has therefore nothing in common with your worldly churches and religious denominations, which are the work of man, conceived in human error, and, like all of man's handiwork, ephemeral.

"What Saint Paul describes as the spiritual body of Christ was a *literal fact* in the spirit-creation. All spirit-beings brought into existence were members of the great spiritual organization and were subject to Christ, its Head. They were, however, under no compulsion, enjoying perfect liberty and being free to follow their own will in all things. All of them were truly devoted to Christ, God's Regent and their King, and through Him, to God. This great spiritual family was closely united in the bonds of love. Christ's rule as God's regent was not that of a despot, but one of brotherly guidance; it was the protecting hand of the strong extended to shield the weak.

"In view of their freedom of action, which was the highest gift conferred upon the spirits by the Creator, it was possible for them to refuse obedience to the laws of the King whom God had set over them, for the words of the Bible: 'Even on his heavenly servants he cannot rely; his very angels he convicts of error', (*Job 4 : 18*) and 'Even on his angels God cannot rely, the very heavens are stained to Him' (*Job 15 : 15*) are true of every created spirit, save only of the first Son of God. And yet, the *spirits are holy* so long as they recognize the authority over them of God and of Christ, *and do not by apostasy, secede from God's kingdom.*

"*Unhappily the defection of a large part of the spirit-world from God came about through rebellion against Christ. It was not, as you teach, a direct rebellion against God Himself, but against the Regent appointed by Him.*

"*This was the first revolt, which took a course more human than you could imagine. It was an exact counterpart of the revolutions you have on earth. In your own uprisings, it is not the physical bodies of the revolutionists which lay the plans and attempt to carry them out, but their minds. And if you follow the origin and history of human revolutions in all their details, you will get a very faithful picture of what happened during the first revolt in God's spirit-world.*

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

· "All revolutions are planned well in advance. They do not come suddenly. They usually originate with some ringleader who wins as many adherents as possible to his cause, unfolds his plans to them and promises them high offices and places of influence in the event of success. Those so initiated next go to work, carefully at first but gradually more openly, on the great mass of the people, without whose help no revolution is possible. This mass of so-called *partisans*, who do most of the vociferating and shouting in human revolutions generally know nothing of what it is all about. They join the movement because others do, and shout because others shout. They are, therefore, less guilty than the *ringleaders* who considered their plans with all of the consequences thereof beforehand, and carefully prepared for all eventualities. These know exactly what they are doing and hence, even when judged by human laws, are subject to the greater penalties, whereas the mass of their followers are judged and dealt with much more leniently.

"The *ringleader* in the revolt in God's spirit-kingdom was *Lucifer*, the 'Light-bearer', the second son of God, and after Christ, the highest and fairest spirit in Creation. What was his aim? He was ambitious: *he wanted to be the supreme ruler*, being unwilling to occupy a second place, subordinate to a superior. He wanted to step into Christ's place and to reign in His stead. He wanted to usurp his Brother.

"This plan did not come to him suddenly; it matured gradually within him, until his determination became fixed and found consummation in the sin which eventually besmirched this high spirit.

"God did not interfere to stifle the revolt in its birth and to prevent it by force as He could have done. He leaves His creatures free to act as they choose, just as among men He does not intervene when they begin to plan a crime and prepare for its execution. So He allowed Lucifer and his *fellow ringleaders* to proceed and did nothing to hinder them from trying to corrupt the higher and more influential spirits and to mislead the masses of the *partisans* with promises. It was the supreme test to which God desired to put the whole created spirit-world, leaving it free to decide whether it would remain true to Christ as its lawful King, or whether it would desert to Lucifer.

"One of the *partisans*, of whom there were many in all ranks of the spirits, was a prince known in your Bible as Adam, the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

name he bore as a human being. Of these princes there were many in God's spirit-kingdom, each of them, like Adam, the ruler of numerous subjects. Not a few of the princes became ring-leaders to help Lucifer in his preparations for the revolt. Others, of whom Adam was one, merely supported the movement, seconded by the greater or smaller contingents of their adherents.

"The moment arrived when Lucifer and his party considered themselves strong enough to usurp the control of the spirit-kingdom, the more so as a large part of Michael's forces was ready to throw in its lot with them. As is also true of your revolutions on earth, great efforts had been made to win over the army to the side of the rebels. In this, Lucifer had succeeded to a great extent. God had maintained these forces, which were, in a sense, a standing army provided against any possible future need, as you also keep standing armies as a safeguard against sudden emergencies.

"When the war broke out and the spirits had made their choice whether to fight for or against Christ, God intervened. The hour of trial was over; covert and open treason had become a fact, and the punishment was at hand. Prince Michael received orders to overthrow the rebels with the legions which had remained loyal, and, armed with the might of God, he obeyed. Fearful was the fate which overtook the one-time Light-bearer and his chief henchmen. They were driven into the deepest spheres of Creation, into darkness and horror of which you can form no conception, not even were I to attempt to describe them. The darkness which you know on earth may give you a faint idea, for, as you know, darkness comes on with the waning of light and becomes ever denser as the light continues to fail. Darkness therefore *owes its being* to the withdrawal of light, but of what it *consists* is beyond your comprehension. You do know, however, that a mixture of all colors produces white and that all colors are contained in the light-ray; you know moreover that black is merely the absence of all colors. Translate these human observations of yours into the exile of the fallen spirits from all contact with light and consequently with all color, and you may form an idea of the impenetrability of the gloom to which they were consigned, even if you cannot conceive of its full measure.

"The Scriptures contain frequent references to this war of the spirits and to the overthrow of the evil ones. Christ Himself says: 'I beheld Satan fallen as lightning from heaven'. (*Luke 10 : 18.*)

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

The Apostle John had a vision of the battle of Michael and his legions with Lucifer: 'War broke out in heaven; Michael and his angels assailing the dragon and the dragon and his angels offering resistance. But they could not prevail nor could they maintain any place in heaven'. (*Revelation 12 : 7, 8.*) Saint Peter writes: 'Even the fallen angels were not spared by God, but were driven down to hell, into the caverns of darkness, there to remain until they have repented of their ways. . . . (*2nd Peter 2 : 4.*)

"The account of the spirit-creation and of the secession of part of the spirit-world as contained in the original Bible was very similar to the description I have given you. Subsequently however it was deleted.

"In considering the defection of a great part of the spirit-world, men may well ask: How was it at all possible for spirits, high in rank and enjoying perfect happiness, to fall? The reason in the case of these spirits was the same as that which so often leads your own souls astray: the craving for more. He who has much, always wants more, and he whose power is great, desires to see it augmented, even at the risk of losing everything at one stroke. Do you not see the same thing exemplified in the great events in the history of mankind, and in a small way in everyday life?

"Ezekiel, in his lament voiced at God's behest, over the king of Tyre, pictures in stirring words the reason for the king's apostasy from God at the time of the great revolt of the spirits under Lucifer, in which he had taken a subordinate part and had been overthrown in consequence: "Thou sealest up the sum, full of wisdom, and perfect in beauty. Thou wast in Eden, the Garden of God; every precious stone was thy covering, the sardius, the topaz, and the diamond, the beryl, the onyx, and the jasper, the sapphire, the emerald, and the carbuncle, and gold: the workmanship of thy tabrets and of thy pipes was in thee; in the day that thou wast created they were prepared. Thou wast an anointed cherub that covereth: and I set thee, so that thou wast upon the holy mountain of God; thou hast walked up and down in the midst of the stones of fire. Thou wast perfect in thy ways from the day that thou wast created, till unrighteousness was found in thee. By the abundance of thy traffic (with Lucifer) they filled the midst of thee with violence, and thou hast sinned: therefore I cast thee as profane out of the mountain of God; and I have destroyed thee, O covering cherub, from the midst of stones of fire. *Thy heart was lifted up because of thy beauty: thou hast corrupted thy wis-*

dom by reason of thy brightness: I have cast thee to the ground; I have laid thee before kings, that they may behold thee. By the multitude of thine iniquities, in the unrighteousness of thy traffic, thou hast profaned thy sanctuaries; therefore I have brought forth a fire from the midst of thee; it hath devoured thee, and I have turned thee to ashes upon the earth in the sight of all them that behold thee . . . thy fate is awful. . . (*Ezekiel 28 : 11-19.*)

“‘Thy heart was lifted up’. These words best express the reason for the defection of the spirit-world. ‘I want to rule, not to serve’, brought about its downfall.

“*What, however, was the fate of the great mass of the rank and file?* They were far less guilty than were the ringleaders, and since God’s punishments are always commensurate with the offense, He could not, in justice, commit them together with Lucifer to the pits of darkness.

“God dealt very leniently with them, condemning them to a relatively light penalty. He did, indeed, cast them out from their former glory, but only to transfer them to a sphere which, if you could see it, you would regard as Heaven. It may not have been comparable to the splendor which they had enjoyed in God’s kingdom, yet it answered your conception of *Paradise*, for the sphere to which the followers were transported was the Scriptural “Paradise” even though it was not situated on earth, as you incorrectly assume, *for at that time, material creation had not yet come into existence.* The Scriptural account of Paradise with its rivers, trees, flowers, and fruits, has led you to think of it as being on your planet, as you do not know that everything you have on earth in *material form*, is also to be found in *spiritual form* in the ultra-mundane spheres. There too are shapes, habitations, rivers, trees, bushes, flowers, fruit, food and drink, gold and jewels, mountains and valleys, music and song, fragrance, color and tone. You will find this statement of mine confirmed in many passages of the Scriptures, where there are descriptions of the City of God with its walls and towers, its running waters and its blooming flowers and every treasure that gladdens the heart. You look upon these things as imagery. *They are no imagery, but facts.* Did not Christ Himself say: ‘In the house of my Father there are many dwellings. If there were not, I would have told you. And because I am going there now, I will have a place prepared for you, and when I am there and prepared a place for you I will come back and take you with me, that you also may be where I am’. (*John 14 :*

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

2-4). And again: 'You have my solemn assurance, that I shall not offer again a drink of the fruit of the vine, until that day in which I drink it in God's spirit-world and indeed in a form as yet not known to you'. (*Mark 14 : 25.*) And in the Old Testament did not the angel Raphael tell Tobias: 'I eat invisible food and drink something invisible to human eyes'. (*Tobit 12 : 19.*) Finally, does not the description of the fallen cherub given by the Prophet Ezekiel, expressly mention the beautiful garments set with jewels and embroidered with gold, in which that spirit was clothed before its fall? Have I not told you, when speaking to you of od, that every spirit possesses an odic body for its spiritual body, and that your terrestrial bodies are merely the condensed odic ones? The most perfect state of od is therefore not one of condensation into matter, but ethereal. It is not the material, but the spiritual body that is the more beautiful; not material but spiritual gold that has the greater value, gold and jewels, in both material and spirit form being nothing more or less than marvellously prepared od, which in one case is present in its condensed, and in the other in its uncondensed state. This may be hard for you to understand since you are accustomed to thinking in terms of the materialistic, having no true conception of an ethereal state about which you were taught nothing in your younger days. But clairvoyants, whose spiritual vision enables them to see the ethereal, can understand perfectly what I have told you. They can also comprehend the description of Paradise with its trees, herbs, fruits and rivers as applying to a *spiritual sphere*. In your own case, what you experience, see, and hear in your dreams, is not perceived by you physically, but appears to you in spiritual form and shape.

"Such was the spiritual sphere of Paradise into which the rank and file of the rebels were sent, not altogether as a *penalty*, but to *try them once more*. It was an act of justice and kindness on the part of God to give these spirits one more opportunity to redeem the transgression of which they had been guilty through weakness. They were mere followers, who had sinned not out of malice, but because in a moment of weakness they had yielded to the tempter's blandishments. They had outwardly renounced their allegiance to Christ's authority, but at heart they were still divided between Christ and Lucifer, as is the case even today with so many people. In a way, they were carrying water on both shoulders, but God, with justice, demanded that they choose one way or another, even with regard to their inner sentiments. By transferring them into

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the paradisaic sphere He therefore put them into a 'neutral zone' where they could make up their minds at their leisure. To make their choice would have been easy enough, had they still retained their mental faculties to the extent to which they possessed them while dwelling in God's kingdom. This, however, was not the case, for as I told you when speaking to you of od, every act of insubordination to God on the part of a spirit is attended by a change in its odic body which becomes clouded, losing its purely ethereal nature and undergoing a certain condensation. This not only impairs the intellect, but deprives the spirit of all recollection of its previous existence. Consequently, the spirits in the paradisaic sphere were unable to recall the splendor in which they had lived in God's kingdom before their fall. Could they have done so, the test to which they were submitted in Paradise would have been impossible, for had they possessed any consciousness of their past happiness, and compared it with their actual lot, their choice would have been made without a moment's hesitation. But they remembered nothing whatever of the splendors they had forfeited, nor of the spirit-war which had been fought, nor of their own treasonable attitude in that war. They were aware only of their existence at the moment, just as you mortals are aware only of *the life you are actually living* and have no recollection of any previous state of existence, most people believing that their present appearance on earth as human beings is also their first one. Of their erstwhile dwelling with God, of their banishment from God's kingdom in consequence of a revolt, and of the subsequent incarnations on earth of their spirit, they know nothing. Only a few have a dim consciousness of having lived before.

"The test provided for the spirits in Paradise consisted in a prohibition laid upon them by God, the purpose of which they could not understand, and which the Bible pictures as a certain fruit, to eat which they were forbidden. This prohibition extended to all who, like Adam, had followed in the wake of the revolution, who dwelt in the same sphere with him and who were clothed in a similar odic body.

"These spirits were the object of particular concern to the loyal hosts of Heaven as well as to the sinister Powers of the Abyss, the former seeking to persuade them to remain steadfast and to observe God's command, the latter sparing no pains to convince the spirits that it would be to their advantage to ignore the same, by dangling alluring prospects before them. It was the same

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

battle that rages today about every man. On the one hand he hears the insinuations of Evil, counseling the violation of the Divine laws and picturing sin in an advantageous light, and on the other, the inner voice of conscience, warning and admonishing him not to yield to temptation. It is for him to decide, which of the two he will follow.

"Men, whenever they wish to attract the great mass of the people to their cause, seek first of all to win over persons of standing in the community, and such, whose judgment and course of action are likely to be the deciding factor with the masses at large.

"Such also was the case with the hosts that dwelt in Paradise, among whom Adam, once a high prince in Heaven, stood out prominently by virtue of his great intellectual qualifications. It was therefore natural that his attitude toward God's prohibition would decide the course to be taken by the other spirits in Paradise. For this reason, Evil was primarily concerned in bringing about his downfall, making use, for the purpose, of a female spirit, the same one which had been allotted to Adam as his dual, and which is known in your Bible as 'Eve'. Eve fell a victim to the temptations of Evil, and in her downfall, caused Adam's as well. Their example was followed by all the spirits dwelling in the sphere of Paradise.

"By this second fall, Adam and the other followers of the revolt became the prey of Evil, and fell almost to the level of Lucifer himself. Driven from the sphere of Paradise, they were hurled into the darkest depths and thenceforth Lucifer was lord over them. In his own realm he was an autonomous ruler. It is true that he was still subject to the might of God, and hence not entirely free to do as he chose, but God did not restrict his authority over those who had voluntarily become his subjects. It was the terrible consequence of the justice meted out by God that Lucifer was allowed to call his own all those who had seceded to him. For such, there was now no escape. Even if they repented of their desertion to the standard of Evil, their retreat was cut off. They had indentured themselves to the Ruler of Hell for all time. That is the acknowledgment of indebtedness to which Saint Paul refers in his epistles as an 'insuperable obstacle' to the salvation of the fallen.

"Things are no different in your temporal States. Whoever becomes the subject of a country must yield obedience to its authorities. Without their permission he may not leave its boundaries, and if the country in question goes to war with another, he

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

is never allowed to join the enemy. The same thing is true of Lucifer's realm: it is in a constant state of war with the kingdom of God, and hence it was out of the question that Lucifer would allow a vassal of his to return to that kingdom.

"Let me cite another example: whoever volunteers for service in the Foreign Legion is held to the terms of his enlistment. He may regret his step a thousandfold; he may weep over and lament the hardships he has to endure, but it will avail him nothing. He is under a harsh discipline that knows no mercy. He must stay, for if he tries to desert he will be overtaken and recaptured by the legionaires, after which his lot will be harder than ever. There is no bridge to carry him back to that home and country which he left of his own accord.

"Satan's dominions are a Foreign Legion of this sort. For those who had entered it, there was no retreat, no bridge spanning the gulf that lay between the Foreign Legion of Darkness and God's kingdom. Not until later was this bridge built in the Redemption through Christ, Who, in the parable of the rich man and the beggar Lazarus, causes the same truth to be uttered through the words of Abraham: 'And besides all this, between us and you there is a great gulf fixed, and they that would pass from hence to you may not be able, and that none may cross over from thence to us.' (*Luke 16 : 26.*)

"By way of a third illustration, consider the fate of a soldier who deserts his own side in wartime and goes over to the enemy. However bitterly he may repent of his desertion subsequently, and much as he may long to be back in his native country, he will not be released.

"I have now taken you to that point in my teachings at which you are shown two antagonistic realms, separated from each other by an unbridged gulf: the realm of those who had departed from God, or the 'Kingdom of the Dead', and the Kingdom of God; the realm of Darkness, opposed to the Realm of Light; Lucifer's kingdom against that of Christ; on one side Lucifer, on the other, Christ.

"Nevertheless, God loves all His children, even those who were driven from their Father's home because of their own transgressions. Since He had created them through His Son, and had incorporated them as spiritual members with the spiritual body of Christ, He was desirous that these severed limbs be reunited to His Son's spiritual frame. 'And they also, if they continue not

CONCERNING GOD'S CREATION

in their unbelief, shall be grafted in: for God is able to graft them in again'. (*Romans 11 : 23.*)

"However, this re-grafting of the limbs broken from the tree of life, this re-incorporation of the severed members with the life-giving organism of Christ's body, was possible only if *freely desired* by the apostate spirits. It was of their own free will that they had joined the rebels, some as ringleaders, others as partisans in the revolt. If the partisans, when again subjected to trial in the sphere of Paradise, had fallen a second time, it had been by their own free choice, and by their own free choice must they raise themselves anew and return to the house of the Father.

"This did not seem possible. Out of hand, the return of Lucifer and his chief henchmen was considered out of the question, for arrogance that has been humbled turns into sullen spite, which had rather remain unhappy than to confess itself beaten.

"The rank and file, those spirits which had been deluded into joining the revolt, were still animated by sentiments very different from those entertained by their leaders, yet even they saw no hope of being saved from the Pit. Where no hope of salvation exists, the will to achieve it is absent, and where the will is lacking, no effort is made to prepare the way to salvation.

"Even if these spirits had possessed the will to escape, they would have faced an impassable obstacle in the shape of Lucifer's control over them, which even God, after He had granted it, could not curtail.

"But God's ways are wonderful, and His wisdom finds means to achieve every end. 'But thou sparest all: for they are thine, O Lord, thou lover of souls'. (*Wisdom 11 : 26.*)

"Therefore, after the defection of the spirits, He determined upon a plan by which He would recover those who had forsaken Him.

"God's plan of salvation is the great secret imparted to Saint Paul and to the other Apostles by spirits which Christ had sent them, but even the apostles did not dare to reveal this plan in its entirety to the early Christian communities, to which indeed the greater part of the plan would have been incomprehensible. In their case it had to be left to the spirits of God, speaking through mediums, to instruct these communities little by little in the whole truth, much as I am instructing you at this moment.

"You too will find it difficult to grasp the full truth of God's plan of salvation. Mortals cannot, as Saint Paul told the early

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

Christians in his epistles, digest solid food, but must at first be fed with milk, as infants are fed. The truth in its full grandeur and in its entirety is an intellectual food, fit only for those whose minds have acquired their full strength. A selection of truths which are easily understood is the 'milk' which is given to those who are undeveloped in the faith and its truths.

"What I shall give you hereafter will not be milk, but meat, as indeed there was much meat in what I have already related to you. I shall not content myself with *merely apprising* you of the truth concerning the great questions of the Beyond. I want, rather, that you should gather a *thorough knowledge of the fundamental correlation of the individual facts from my teachings, for the inquiring mind is satisfied only by an understanding of the underlying causes of events.*



God's Plan of Salvation

"And yet, what we say as true wisdom, although it is such only in the eyes of those who are ripe to receive it; not the wisdom of this world or of its rulers, who are far from being wise. We proclaim the mysterious plan conceived by God in His wisdom, a plan which was hitherto lain hidden, but which was perfect by God, before time began in order that we might be led back to glory."

1st Corinthians 2 : 6, 7.

AFTER the revolt of a great part of the spirit-world, God determined upon a plan for saving the unfortunate beings which had fallen into the Abyss, and for bringing them back into His Kingdom. His clemency would be extended first of all to the less guilty, those countless hosts which had deserted Him when they were subjected to trial in the sphere of Paradise. Only after these had been saved, would their corrupters, Lucifer and his lieutenants, be allowed to return to the house of the Father.

"God is just. Those who had been misled were guilty of weakness only, but those who had led them astray had sinned with premeditation, and since their offenses had been fundamentally different, so too would be their punishment, and so too would be their respective roads of escape from the Abyss.

"God's first step toward salvation was the creation of spheres of progress or amendment, disposed in stages after laws incomprehensible to you and conceivable only to the infinite wisdom of God. In his letter to the Ephesians, Saint Paul hints at these steps by which spirits may ascend out of the darkness toward God, by Whom they were created in order to insure the execution of His decree providing that all would once more be reunited with His Son. At this point the original text of the Bible makes use of the metaphor of the erection of a house with its several stories. If you will apply this metaphor in a spiritual sense you will more easily understand what I am about to tell you of the spheres of amendment for the fallen spirits.

"What you call "Hell" is the lowest stage into which they sank. But even Hell has its spheres of progress through which a spirit may climb upward by a change of heart, until it reaches the lowest of the *terrestrial* spheres. These begin in the lower forms of animal life and advance through the stages of rocks, plants, herbs, flowers, and the higher beasts, arriving at last at the highest of animals known to you as "man". Such terrestrial

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

spheres exist not on your earth only, but also on the other heavenly bodies. There are, therefore, many stages parallel to those on your earth. Moreover, the terrestrial stages exist not only in material shape as you see them in animals, plants and minerals, but there is also a corresponding *spiritual shape*, and, in consequence a spiritual animal, plant and mineral kingdom embracing all orders and species of living beings, which in the spirit-kingdom are clothed in *odic bodies*, the counterparts of the *material bodies* which you see on earth.

"Spirits, parted from their material bodies by corporeal death, enter into the respective parallel spirit-spheres where they remain until they are reincarnated by rebirth on earth. Spirits which have not progressed are reincarnated in the same stage as often as may be necessary to fit them for reincarnation in a higher one.

"Each stage of advance required a special act of God to permit of the desired physical shaping of the spirits, and to this end He created the odic shapes of pairs of spirits corresponding to the shape in question and endowed with the power to reproduce the body peculiar to that stage. The spirits themselves are incorporated in the bodies thus procreated, according to fixed laws which prevail in the spirit-world.

"You mortals cannot indeed understand "how" these processes came about, any more than you really understand the processes of Nature which go on all around you, although you witness them daily with your own eyes.

"Your science concerns itself with the problem of descent, particularly with that of the descent of man from the apes.

"There is no such thing as physical descent of a higher form from a lower one. Plants do not produce animals, nor do the lower animals produce the higher forms. Every form of life breeds true to kind, although within each species there are many races, the individual belonging to races of the same order being mutually capable of reproduction among each other.

"Man belongs to the order of the apes. He is the highest race of this order, and you are correct in saying that the ape is the lowest stage of humanity and that man is the highest of the apes. Man is, therefore, the highest animal on earth. Nevertheless, he has not descended physically from the ape, in spite of the fact that in point of physical development, the ape most closely resembles him.

"Before the *first incarnation* of the spirit of man in the human

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

body, that spirit inhabited the body of an animal, and is therefore the same spirit rising through the different stages of Nature in constantly increasing perfection.

"These stages undergo no physical changes. They are the same today that they were milleniums ago, even if, in the course of the ages, certain orders died out because spirits were no longer incarnated in them. For this reason God created other and higher forms incarnating in them those spirits which had previously inhabited the extinct species, which had served as intermediate stages in the evolution upward. When they disappeared and the higher forms took their places, the spirits in question were compelled to wait until the replacement had been effected.

"So it is that you find to this day the remains of extinct species of plants and animals that lived in former ages.

"There is no retrogression of the spirit from one stage of progress to a lower one even though a spirit may remain at the same stage for a long time. As I have already told you, a spirit which, when its body dies, has not progressed during its incarnation, must be reincarnated again and again until it is fit to enter the next higher stage. That is true of man also; if, during his life on earth he has made no advance on the road leading to God, he must go through life again as a human being. Every life is an examination: whoever fails to pass, must try again until he succeeds. That is a Divine law which applies with equal force to all Creation: there is nothing capricious about the ways of God.

"When I tell you that a spirit does not retrograde into a lower stage, the reason is, that although it may have degenerated in one respect it will have advanced in another, so that a balance is struck. Here too you can see the working of a Divine law.

"Of the ages that elapsed from the days of the fall of the spirits to that on which the first fallen spirit was fit to be incarnated in human shape, you can form no conception. "One day is with the Lord as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day." (2nd Peter 3 : 8.)

"Of all these facts Christendom of today is ignorant, and they run counter to your own previous ideas. But why conceal the truth from you even if you may find it beyond belief and because it may be scoffed at by your fellow men? You have the opportunity of inquiring into these truths during the spirit-communications at spiritistic services, and if you do so you will find my statements confirmed in every particular.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

“Unfortunately the important facts which I have revealed to you have been deleted from the Biblical account of the Creation, until scarcely any of them have been retained. This account says nothing of the creation of spirits by God, nothing of the revolt and secession of the spirits, nothing of the spheres of progress, nothing of the shaping of the odic bodies of the fallen spirits into their various stages, and nothing of the incarnation of those odic bodies into earthly substance. Your Biblical story of the creation of the world describes an original and entirely independent creation, quite unconnected with the creation of the spirits and their fall.

“The original Scriptures contained all of these facts, but when they were revised later, the Powers of Darkness were at work to deprive men of the knowledge of the links in the chain of God’s plan of salvation and to withhold from them the consolation of knowing that *ultimately everything will return unto God.*” “This is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior; who would have all men to be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth.” (*1st Timothy 2 : 3.*) It was for the very purpose of leading everything back to God, that the material world was created.

“The Powers of Darkness were, of course, much better served by the doctrine of hopelessness and despair, and by the belief in an “eternal Hell” of which your poet has written the dreadful words: “All hope abandon ye who enter here.”

“Such sentiments were far more acceptable to the rulers of Hell than was the belief in a merciful God, Who may, indeed, be angered, and punish with just cause, but Who, at last, will forgive His children and call them back to Him. The conception of a Deity has been debased by the doctrine of “eternal damnation” designed only to inspire terror. What is more, that doctrine added to the difficulty of carrying out the plan of salvation conceived by a God Who sent to sinful and suffering humanity this message of all-forgiving affection: “Can a woman forget her infant, forget to pity her babe? Yet even were a mother to forget, never will I forget you.” (*Isaiah 49 : 15.*)

“Many passages in your Bible have shared the fate of the paintings by the old masters placed upon the walls of some of your ancient churches. In later times, so-called “church decorators” came and daubed their commonplaces over the masterpieces, so that if today you remove the outer layer of paint care-

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

fully from the walls, the ancient pictures are once more revealed, leaving the beholder enraptured over the great painter's art.

"In the same way the truthful picture presented by the original Bible was defaced in later times. Erring mortals revised the Biblical accounts, omitting what they could not understand or adding their own mistaken explanations. Their successors "improved" further upon the previous work, supplementing and abridging at will. In this way was not only the truth crowded aside, but many things crept into the Scriptures that tend to make a travesty of the word of God. One of your poets coined the phrase: "Books have their vicissitudes," and unfortunately this is true of the Bible also. Much that it should contain has been eliminated, and much of what it does contain should never have been admitted, because it conflicts with the truth.

"The various "churches" which refuse to acknowledge this fact and persist in regarding your version of the Scriptures as "authentic" are serving the cause of God but poorly. In fact they are doing that cause more harm than good, for even the least intelligent reader of the Bible, and of the account of the Creation in particular, must realize that much of it must be inaccurate, to say the least.

"The falsifications introduced into the Old Testament called forth the protests of God Himself, voiced through the prophet Jeremiah, as witness the passage: "How do ye say, we are wise, and the law of the Lord is with us? But behold, the false pen of the scribes has written falsely. The wise men are put to shame, they are dismayed and taken: lo, they have rejected the word of the Lord and what manner of wisdom is in them?" (*Jeremiah 8 : 8, 9.*)

"Elsewhere in the Holy Writ the truth has suffered at the hands of translators who have rendered certain words and phrases of the original text so inadequately as to distort their real meaning beyond recognition.

"From what I have said you can see the reason for the great obscurity and the many misstatements to be found in the story of the Creation as you have it today. Only occasional references retain a faint glimmer of the truth. It is true that some of the stages of the evolution of material creation are indicated, but these are not consistent with facts, in point of number or of sequence.

"The same is true of the Biblical version of the creation of the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

first human beings, a passage in which the creation of spirits is hopelessly confused with their first incarnation in the human body.

"In the first chapter of the Bible you are told that God brought man into existence as the last act of Creation, after the earth, plants and beasts had already been made. Then follows the statement: "And God created man in his own image, in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them. And God blessed them: and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply. . ." (*Genesis 1 : 27.*)

"It is perfectly true that the two spirits which were the first to be incarnated as human beings and which, as such, bore the names of "Adam" and "Eve", had been formed by God and in God's image previous to their apostasy. It is also true that He had created them male and female spirits, and had blessed their union. This, however, did not happen after the earth with its plants and animals had been made, but at the time of their creation as spirits. Anything made by God in His image must perforce be a spirit, for God is spirit, and spirit only, and hence, not substance. Therefore, whatever He creates in His image must likewise be purely ethereal, and not partly ethereal and partly material, as is the case with mortals.

"The rest of the Scriptural account of the creation of man contains contradictions even more flagrant, for a few lines further on you are told that God made man out of clay, and, moreover, only the male, at a time when there was no other living thing on earth, whereas, according to what went before, man is said to have been made *after* all other life had been created. Thus, according to the second statement, God placed man upon a barren earth, and not until then did He create the Garden of Eden into which He "put the man whom He had formed." Still later, it is said that God caused this "Paradise" as you call it, to grow up in trees bearing luscious fruits of all kinds, and that He put the man into the garden to dress it and keep it. Inasmuch as there was no living thing on earth to endanger the garden, it is hard to understand the need for such keeping. Every single sentence contradicts the one which precedes it!

"Compare this picture with the facts as I shall relate them! You now recognize in Paradise that spiritual sphere into which God, after the revolt of the spirits, sent the least guilty of the rebels, partly as a punishment, partly to try them once more. Within this Paradise grew the spiritual tree of the knowledge of

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

good and evil; this was nothing else than God's commandment, which had been given for the purpose of proving the spirits in this sphere and the significance of which they did not grasp. The observance or the violation of this commandment or rather, of this prohibition, would show whether the spirits in the sphere of Paradise were prepared to take sides with God, or whether they had fully determined to join Lucifer. Should they respond to this test by obeying God, the commandment would become for them the tree of life in God's glorious kingdom; should they disobey, it would become a tree of death. They would be driven from Paradise into the realm of Lucifer, and on that day, the day of their spiritual "death", their severance from God would be complete. "For in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." (*Genesis 2 : 17.*)

"Now you will understand why Adam was commanded to keep Paradise, namely, to protect himself and others against succumbing to the temptation to sin by disobeying God. Now you will also understand what the Scriptures mean by saying that after the expulsion from Paradise of the spirits which had shown disloyalty, they were prevented from returning thither by Cherubim "and the flame of a sword." The die had been cast: they had given their allegiance to the Ruler of the Pit. Henceforth the spheres of Darkness were to be their lot; they had no further claim upon the fields of Paradise, which will remain closed to those fallen spirits until the day on which they are once more admitted to them as a step Heavenward, on their return to God. Then they may re-enter the spiritual Garden of Eden, and from it ascend to that glory out of which they were once driven because of their own sins.

"The mocking remark said by the Bible to have been uttered by the Lord on this occasion is also the reverse of the truth. By the Scriptural account, God, at the moment when countless hosts of His children were being driven into the unspeakable woe of utter exile from His kingdom, exclaimed: "Behold, the man is become as one of us, to know good and evil; and now, lest he put forth his hand, and take also of the tree of life, and eat, and live forever, therefore the Lord sent him forth from the Garden of Eden. . ." (*Genesis 3 : 22.*) These are the words of a fiend, not those of an infinitely benign God, and as a matter of fact they were spoken by Satan in mockery of the deluded spirits. On the contrary, God wished that even after their fall, those spirits would

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

reach out after the tree of life, in obedience to His will and in an effort to return unto Him.

"But the Powers of the Abyss are intent upon preventing the spirits which were the first to benefit by God's clemency, shown by the creation of the spheres of regeneration, from extending their hands toward the tree of life and from returning to God. Could Lucifer have had his way, those stages would never have been created and no material world would ever have existed. He would then have been able to exercise his despotic sway over those spirits without restraint and without having to fear the loss of a single one of his subjects.

"Furthermore, I must take exception to the way in which the creation of the first woman is described.

"As told in the Scriptures, God resolved to give to the first man a helpmate in his isolation. To this end He is said to have formed out of the ground "every beast of the field and every bird of the heavens; and brought them unto the man," in order that he might find a helpmate among them. "But for man, there was not found a helpmate." Then God is said to have caused the man to fall into a deep sleep, during which He "took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof, and the rib, which the Lord God had taken from the man, made He a woman, and brought her unto the man." (*Genesis 2 : 21, 22.*)

"As you know, this story has been made the butt of ridicule, especially among the irreligious. It is a sad thing to see the act of creation so grossly misrepresented and converted into a laughing-matter for mankind. In this instance also, Evil has turned the fair image of truth into a repulsive caricature, through the instrumentality of its human agents and with the view of converting the conception of a sublime and all-knowing Deity into something ludicrous, since to make a thing an object of ridicule is to forge the deadliest weapon for its destruction. God did not prevent this distortion of the truth, as indeed He never intervenes in misdeeds contemplated by man. Seekers after the truth, and the righteous generally, always had means at their command to allow them to discriminate between the true and the false in the altered versions of the Scriptures, being free to communicate with the good spirit-world from which they could learn the truth at all times.

"What, then, is the true story of the creation of the first pair of human beings?

"Adam was the first spirit to reach the point at which he could

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

emerge from the higher orders of beasts and be incarnated in the form of man, although his incarnation did not proceed in the manner incorrectly related in the Bible. God did not fashion a human figure out of clay and blow life into its nostrils, thus making man a living soul. On the contrary, the formation of the first man proceeded according to the identical laws which still apply today in the materialization of spirits.

"This is a subject in which I have already instructed you at length, so that you know that nowadays the od of so-called "materialization mediums" is required for converting the spirit-forms into matter.

"This same law was applied by God in the incarnation of the first human spirit. Since, naturally, no human materialization mediums were available to supply the required od, God took the od of the earth, and, incidentally, in a composition which corresponded to that of the human body. The odic mixture was the same as that by which the formation of the human body through growth, takes place today. In the words of Saint Paul: "But God gives to the plant its body as he pleases, to each according to the seed. Neither are the bodies of all living creatures alike. The body of man is unlike that of the four-footed beast, as this again is unlike that of a bird or a fish." (*1st Corinthians 15 : 38, 39.*) The preparation of the od for the incorporation of the first man was undertaken by God's spirit-world.

"The body of the first man whom you call "Adam" was therefore literally taken from the earth, although not in the manner in which you have heretofore believed. No figure was fashioned out of clay, but the ethereal members of that human spirit were covered with a material garment, with the aid of the condensed od of the earth, and that same body of Adam, formed as I have described, was again dissolved into earthly od after his death. It had been taken from the earth in the form of od, and in the form of od it was returned to the earth. That is the law which rules all material creation.

"The first man who thus came into existence was the only one of his kind. As your Bible quite rightly says, he was lonely, surrounded as he was by nothing but plants, and by the beasts of the earth, and longed for the hour when another spirit should have progressed to the point at which it could be incarnated in human form. He therefore looked about among the higher animals to find one which at its death would be considered worthy in God's

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

sight of being advanced to the human stage. Your Scriptural account hints at this when it tells you that God brought all the beasts unto the first man, so that he might choose a helpmate from them.

"The day came at last on which another spirit had reached the human stage. This time it was a female spirit, the same one which had been Adam's consort in God's kingdom and later, in the sphere of Paradise, where it had been the first one to disobey, and in so doing had caused Adam to fall likewise.

"As her guilt had been the greater, so too had been her punishment. Her ascent from the depths had therefore been slower, and she did not reach the level of human existence as soon as did her male dual spirit.

"The story of the incarnation of this female spirit as given in the Bible of today gives a faint inkling of the truth.

"The incarnation of "Eve" as the first woman is called in your Bible took the same course as do all spirit-materializations. In her case it was no longer necessary that God should take the od of the earth, since a materialization-medium, namely Adam, was available. The possession by Adam of unusual mediumistic powers is to be ascribed to the circumstance of the materialization of his own body by the spirit-world, with which he was in constant mediumistic contact.

"Just as today the materialization of a spirit is possible only when the materialization-medium is in a deep trance, so was it in those times. The deep trance into which Adam went is referred to in the Bible by the words: "And the Lord God caused a deep sleep to fall upon the man, and he slept." (*Genesis 1 : 21.*) This was a mediumistic sleep, in which Adam's spirit left his body. As is the case today, the od of the materialization-medium is not sufficient to effect complete materialization and must be supplemented by substance drawn from the medium's body in dissolved form, so, in materializing Eve, the spirit-world dissolved a part of Adam's physical substance and used it to fashion Eve's body. This proceeding gave rise to the Biblical account of the removal of one of Adam's ribs: "and he slept: and God took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof: and the rib which the Lord God had taken from the man, made he a woman. . ." (*Genesis 2 : 21, 22.*)

As a rule, the materialization of spirits lasts for a limited time only, after which dissolution again takes place and the physical substance lent by the medium is returned to him. However, in the

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

case of Eve, *permanent* materialization was aimed at, and for this reason, none of the od nor the part of the physical substance taken from Adam could be restored to him. Hence the spirit-world had to make his loss good, which it did by drawing upon the od of the earth, as it had done when it first formed Adam's body. This is indicated to you by the Bible in the words: ". . . and he took one of his ribs, and closed the flesh instead thereof."

"In this way was formed the first pair of human beings, from whom the whole race of man was to descend by reproduction.

"In physical reproduction, the germ alone, out of which the offspring's body is to grow, is transmitted. The spirit is united with that body only moments before birth, in conformity with laws unknown to you. The life of the child within its mother's womb originates with her. It is her blood which circulates through the child's body and sets its organs in motion as soon as they become partially ready to function, which generally happens in the fifth month of pregnancy. This movement of the child's organs while it is still in the womb is necessary, to accustom them by times to the part which they will have to play, and is not, therefore, produced by the child's spirit, which is not embodied until later, but to the mother. It is a process similar to that used in breaking in an engine after it has been finished and assembled: at first it is set in motion by outside power, before being allowed to run under its own. It must be broken in before it is ready for service, and the same thing applies to the bodies of terrestrial living beings.

"God's omnipotence and wisdom are nowhere more evident to thoughtful minds than in connection with the great natural secret of the coming into the world of a new human life, the same thing being true, of course, as regards all other living creatures. In all instances it is fallen spirits which are incorporated in bodies produced by procreation, in conformity with the laws of God conceived with such wisdom that your human understanding could not grasp this Divine secret, even were I to try to explain it.

"Adam and his wife had sons and daughters. (*Genesis 5 : 4.*) The brothers took their sisters as wives, so that when you read in the Bible that Cain, after slaying Abel, fled into another country and "knew" his wife there, this does not mean that he became acquainted with her in the ordinary sense of the word, or that there were in existence people not descended from Adam and Eve. According to the usage of the Hebrew tongue, the word "to know"

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

also connotes having sexual intercourse; hence, as you are told: "and Cain knew his wife; and she conceived, and bore Enoch." (*Genesis 4 : 17.*) The same words are used in speaking of Adam: "and the man knew Eve, his wife; and she conceived and bore Cain." (*Genesis 4 : 1.*)

"Thus all of mankind is descended from the first pair of human beings and constitutes the highest terrestrial stage of progress in the ascent of the fallen spirits. This was the frontier of Lucifer's jurisdiction, and *before the Redemption, this was the point beyond which no spirit was allowed to pass.* Being lawfully Lucifer's subjects, none could escape from his rule, since he was unwilling to waive his right of sovereignty even in the case of those spirits which had repented of their misdeeds and longed to return to God's kingdom. *The surrender of this right had to be forced upon him by a Redeemer,* prior to Whose coming all human spirits would be obliged to remain in the human sphere, either as corporeally existent human beings, or as spirits in a sphere of the same level as that of mankind.

"Beyond this lay the great gulf dividing Lucifer's kingdom from that of God. To bridge this gulf, a victory over Lucifer must be achieved. As to how the Redemption was conceived and carried out I shall tell you presently.

"Once Redemption had been accomplished, God contemplated the creation of the spirit-spheres through which the spirits of men could, after their earthly death, ascend to the sphere of Heaven step by step. To create such spheres before the Redemption would have served no purpose, since none of the fallen spirits could have reached them, and through them attained to Heaven.

"In this connection I will call your attention to another matter of great importance, namely, that before the Redemption there lived a great many people who were the incarnation *not of fallen spirits,* but of spirits from Heaven to whom God had granted permission to be born as human beings, in order that they might help others to attain the true faith in God and thus prepare themselves for redemption. Of these spirits which lived in human form were Enoch, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Moses, Joshua, Caleb, most of the prophets, Mary, the Mother of Jesus, and many others whose names do not figure in the original Scriptural documents. After their death on earth, these spirits returned to God's kingdom, since, having taken no part in the secession from God, they had not fallen under Lucifer's jurisdiction.

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

"As for the spirit-spheres which had been provided for in God's plan of Salvation and through which, by that plan, the souls of men were to ascend to God after the Redemption, these are *thirteen* in number. I need not describe each in detail. What you, as a mortal, can understand of this subject has already been told to you personally in the many communications imparted through mediums for your enlightenment, by spirits from the several spheres. From their manner of appearance and from their speech you were able to form an idea of their lot in each sphere, as well as of the general appearance of the spheres themselves.

"You have seen those suffering souls which after death went into the lowest of the thirteen spirit-spheres, and in them you have learned the meaning of Christ's words: "Cast him out into the outer darkness; there shall be the weeping and the gnashing of the teeth." From them, also, you learned the meaning of those words of the Bible: "The dead know nothing." Those spirits, severed from God and condemned to spiritual death as a result of their unbelief during their life on earth, knew nothing. They were ignorant of their identity as human beings, of their former place of abode, and of the significance of the horrors which they were experiencing in the darkness and which rendered their lot so wretched.

"You could also see that as the spirits rose into higher spheres their consciousness broadened and their attitude toward God became less refractory. You were able, likewise, during these communications to distinguish the different light-effects pertaining to the individual spheres, the colors ranging from the deepest black of the lowest stage, through all hues, to the most radiant white of the uppermost sphere. The thirteenth sphere is of a white too dazzling to be endured by mortal eyes. This is the color that prevails in the sphere inhabited by God's pure spirits, or that which you call "Heaven".

"From what you have seen of the spirits of the lowest spheres you will have gathered how hard it is for them to struggle upward from their lamentable state, since their ascent within those spheres is possible only if they will turn to God. But you yourself have witnessed the rebellious attitude taken by these very spirits toward any thought of God, and in their case it is a great act of clemency on His part to allow them to reassume human form with the least possible delay, for as human beings it is easier for them, from what they see of God's Creation and learn from their own reflections or

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

from the precepts and example of others, to acquire a belief in God, than it would be in those low spirit-spheres.

"Most human spirits must go back to earth repeatedly, seeing that their lives there again and again leave much to be desired and cause them to fall back instead of fitting them for the higher stages in the Beyond. Consider the lives of most men. Are they not wholly centered on worldly matters? How many ever even think of God? How many firmly believe in Him and live righteously? Ever since the Power of Evil introduced money into the world it has an instrument which gives it an unrestricted dominion over the majority of mankind.

"The time which the spirits of the lower spheres must spend in the Beyond before they are re-incarnated in human form varies in each individual instance. It is determined in part by that spirit's transgressions during its last preceding stay on earth. God is just, and every sin must be atoned for, but He is also charitable, and never punishes His creatures beyond their deserts.

"The spirit-communications from which you learned what you know of those thirteen spheres came through mediums of the most *widely varied types*. The purpose of this was to convince you of the truth of these communications, for had you received the accounts of all the spirits through one and the same medium, you might have thought that they proceeded from his subconsciousness. As you know, your up-to-date science is always ready to resort to the word "subconsciousness" when asked to explain anything in this field for which it cannot account on purely human grounds, and which it is unwilling to attribute to the working of spirits.

"The creation of the thirteen spirit-spheres was the last act in God's plan of Salvation, and before it could be effected, a far more difficult problem had to be solved. Of what avail were the stages of progress from the deepest infernal spheres to the highest terrestrial—the human—stage, and of what avail were the thirteen spirit-spheres contemplated for the further ascent to the level of God, so long as Lucifer refused to release any of the spirits which had deserted to him, and so long as he insisted upon exercising his sovereignty over them, as a right which God had conceded?

"Who, indeed, could force Satan to waive his rights over those, at least, who longed to return contritely to God? It is true, God Himself could have done so, but from a sense of fairness He had conceded that right to Lucifer, and for the same reason He was now unwilling to withdraw it.

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

"Only a spirit willing to enter the realm of the Prince of Darkness and to expose itself to the rigors of his tyrannous rule would have the right to do battle with him. The same situation holds good in your international law, when a nation which is oppressed and harassed by its rulers, rises against its tormentors in an effort to shake off their yoke.

"But it must be a spirit which would not, by deserting God, become subject to Lucifer, and thus fall irretrievably into his clutches.

"It must be a celestial spirit which, after assuming human shape, would invade Satan's dominion in body only, for every incarnated being is exposed to the influence of the Powers of Evil. Hence Evil has so great a hold over all earthly creatures, even over those which are not evilly minded. The most righteous of men daily experience the influence of Evil over them, and often stumble under its impulse.

"Thus the undertaking would be a great act of daring on the part of the celestial spirit which would venture upon it. Born, as it was to be, in human form, it would necessarily, as a mortal, remember nothing of its previous existence in Heaven. It would therefore be ignorant of its own identity as well as of the mission for the performance of which it had been incarnated, and would be tempted by the Evil One to sin. Moreover, God would not give it any greater spiritual aid than He gave to others, for this would have offended His sense of justice. It would have to earn whatever special Divine aid might be needed for solving its task, by repelling all advances of evil, and hence would receive such assistance only in the measure in which it withstood such attacks. That is true of all men. On the other hand, as the measure of Divine aid increased, the assaults by the Powers of Evil would grow in violence. God permits temptation commensurate with the power to resist it; children must not be as severely tempted as are adults; shoulders able to bear only half a hundredweight must not be called upon to carry twice that amount.

"By the same token, the celestial spirit that was to assume human form would not be exposed in childhood to the evil influences with which it was to be brought into contact at maturity. Only after it should have discovered its identity and the purpose to be served by its incarnation was Hell to be permitted to unleash its full strength. Then the life and death struggle was to begin, a war to be waged by that spirit as a mortal *defensively*, against

the attempts on the part of Evil to induce it to abandon God. It must be a war ending in the bodily martyrdom of the incarnated celestial spirit, provided it remained steadfast unto death, since it is the recognized procedure of the Forces of Evil, when their light and intermediate artillery fails to reduce a fortress, to bring up their heaviest batteries in the shape of physical torture, and thus to compel surrender. For this purpose they never lack human instruments and helpers.

"If, in the face of the greatest torments of mind and body which the spirit could suffer as a mortal at the hands of the Powers of Hell and their human agents, it remained faithful and true to the last breath, then indeed it would have earned the final measure of Divine aid and strength which can be granted to any spirit. Armed with this Divine power it could, after its earthly death, enter upon a *war of offense* against the Powers of Hell, which as a mortal it had been able to meet in defensive combat only. Its victory over Lucifer was then assured, since the warring hosts of Heaven would be at its disposal.

"Then indeed there would be a war like that which had raged in Heaven when Michael and his legions overthrew Lucifer with his satellites.

"This time, however, the war was to be fought in Hell, which the celestial redeeming spirit would invade, in order to overcome Lucifer on his own ground. It was not intended to deprive the latter of his sovereignty over the apostate spirits or to condemn him to utter impotence; the victor was to content himself with merely *curtailing* Lucifer's previous authority, for theretofore he had exercised it not only over those who were with him at heart, but to an equal extent over others who had deserted to him deliberately, it is true, but who now repented of their step and longed to be discharged from Satan's Foreign Legion, in order that they might return to the house of God. By the victory of the celestial spirit, Satan was to be forced to release the *penitent* spirits from his despotism, retaining the right, however, to employ every means of corruption, as before, in order to bring about another change of heart in them and to bind them to himself anew. But no longer might he keep them under his scepter *by force* as he had done in the past. He was to be compelled, as it were, to retire his frontier guards from the bridge to be built by the Redeemer, so that no spirit desiring to return to its homeland would be forcibly prevented from so doing.

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

"Should the Prince of Darkness consent to this limitation of his rights, which, as the vanquished, he was bound to do, and should this limitation be embodied in the terms of the treaty of peace, its observance by Satan would thenceforth be *obligatory*, since God Himself was to be the omnipotent and just guarantor of that treaty, even Hell being subject to His might and helpless against His arm.

"The consequences of such a peace would in the end be disastrous to Lucifer and his kingdom, for by it, he would lose his subjects one by one, and in the end, be in the position of a captain whose entire forces have deserted to the enemy and who, when at last reduced to utter helplessness, has nothing left but to admit defeat, and surrender.

"In the same way, Lucifer, after having been abandoned by all, would ultimately recognize his impotence before God and be forced to tender his submission.

"This, then, would be the day on which under God's plan of salvation there would be no more separation from Him, no "death". On that day all limbs broken from the tree of life would be re-grafted to it, woe and wretchedness would be no more, and all the tears shed in such numbers by His erring children on the long road of their wanderings, would be dried by Him. That was to be the day on which the kingdom of God would once again shine in the full glory which it had before the fall of the spirits, and on which all of His children, who had returned home, would resume the places which once had been theirs in their Father's house.

"Even Lucifer, the last and most penitent of all to cross the bridge built by his Conqueror, would again be the glorious Light-Bearer of old, by the side of his brother, Christ, whose love and benign rule he had so contemptuously spurned, and the Heavens would resound with peans of joy.

"Such was the plan of Salvation conceived by God after Lucifer and his angels had fallen, but it was revealed by Him only to His first-created Son and to a few of the holy spirits of Heaven, one of which was to declare itself ready to undertake, *when called upon*, the dangerous mission of being born of woman, and as a human being, vanquishing the Prince of Darkness. All knew what it meant to assume the human shape. All knew that as human beings they would incur the risk of being *overpowered themselves* by the very foe they had set out to conquer, and that, in this event, the coveted Salvation could not be accomplished. They knew, too, that a defeat of that spirit sent to earth as a redeemer, would

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

make necessary the sending of a second, perhaps to be followed by others, until the effort was successful. Nevertheless, every one of the high heavenly spirits eagerly volunteered to undertake the venture.

"However, Christ, as the highest of created spirits and as God-appointed king over the spirit-world, begged to be the first to be allowed to make the attempt. It was against Him that Lucifer had revolted, and it was on His account that the great secession had come about. It was on His account also that the gulf between the kingdom of God and that of Darkness had opened, and for these reasons He felt that He, and no other, should build the bridge across that gulf to enable all of God's wayward children to make their way home.

"God consented to the incarnation of His Son, to take place when the fallen spirits, in their ascent through the spheres of progress had reached the highest terrestrial stage, that of man, and had thus advanced to some extent, and when, as men, they had given evidence of a desire to return to God.

"The plan was kept secret from all other spirits of God's kingdom as well as from the Powers of Darkness, in order that Hell might have no opportunity of thwarting it. Had the Forces of Evil known the true purpose of the human birth of the Son of God, had they known that His desperate struggle against the assaults of Evil, and His agonizing death were pre-requisite to his victory as a spirit over Lucifer, they would never have tempted Him, and would have done their utmost to prevent, instead of bringing about, His death upon the Cross.

"Only after Christ had died a redeemer's death would the time be ripe to reveal to all Creation God's plan of salvation in its full, inconceivable grandeur, for then its revelation could no longer do harm, but only good. The outer structure of the edifice of salvation being finished, it would be safe against destruction. The completion of the inside work would rather be hastened by proclaiming the plan, for this completion would lie in the fact that the spirits which had forsaken God would now return home over the bridge which the Redeemer had prepared for them.

"Every part of God's plan of salvation that might be revealed to mankind as an anchor for its hopes was to be found in the original Bible, including the truths concerning the creation of the spirits, their revolt, their fall, the creation of the spheres of regeneration as the means for a gradual ascent from the Pit, and the

CONCERNING GOD'S PLAN OF SALVATION

coming of a great, God-sent Envoy as Deliverer. Except for the announcement of the Messiah to come, everything has been expunged from the sacred writings of the Old Testament little by little. Mankind no longer understood these truths, and what men do not understand, they as a rule regard as folly and dismiss from their minds.

"This was true also in the days of Christ. Whatever lay outside of peoples' daily experience or conflicted with the creed inherited from their ancestors, could not be brought home to them then any more than it can today. For this reason Christ did not devote Himself to expounding the foregoing truths at length, but confined His teachings to proclaiming the truth concerning God, the fulfillment of the Divine will, and His own mission on behalf of the Father. Everything else He left to the truth-bearing spirits which He intended to send to visit mankind.

"But even after God's spirit-world had arrived in the role of teachers, only men who had made progress in the knowledge of the truth were able to comprehend the Divine plan of redemption. For the others, it was a diet too hard to digest. There were even many Christians who considered Saint Paul beside himself when he preached on the subject, (*2nd Corinthians 5:13*) and when Paul spoke before King Agrippa in the presence of the governor Festus, about the revelations which he had received, Festus said with a loud voice: "Paul you have lost your wits. Too much study is making you mad." (*The Acts 26:24.*)

"You also, when you lay my teachings before your fellow men will be told that they are absurd fancies, and that you have gone out of your mind. It has been the fate of the truth in all ages to be branded as untruth and folly, while at the same time palpably incorrect doctrines as to the Beyond are thoughtlessly accepted as true, are preached broadcast and raised to the rank of religious creeds.

"What I have told you of the Divine plan of salvation you will find confirmed in every detail on a later occasion, when I shall disclose to you Christ's whole doctrine in due sequence as revealed to the faithful, partly by Christ Himself, partly by the truth-bearing spirits speaking through the Apostles and through mediums. Then we will also draw a comparison which will be most instructive to you, between the real teachings of Christ and the Christianity of today.

Christ — His Life and His Work

“There is for us Christians but one God, the Father, from Whom all things are and to Whom we shall all return, and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through Whom all things came into being and through whom we shall return to God.”

1st Corinthians 8 : 6.

“**WHAT** think ye of Christ?” This question was written in letters of fire before my eyes from the day on which I had resolved to join the ministry. It was to be my duty, henceforth, to proclaim not only Christ’s teachings to my co-religionists, but also the truth concerning His person, His life and His work.

Who was Christ? Who had He been before He became a man? Was He God, or only a Son of God? Was He, born of woman, a man like ourselves in mind and body? Was He begotten and born like all other men? As a child, was He obliged to acquire knowledge, as are all children? Was He compelled to come, step by step, to a recognition of God, and to travel the same road travelled by all seekers unto God, in order to learn God’s ways and God’s will? Was He exposed to the temptations of evil, and to all of the fateful consequences attendant upon His choice, as happens to all of us daily? Was it possible that He, like the rest of mankind, might succumb to those temptations? Could He, perchance, like millions of others, be induced by the Powers of Evil to forsake God? And if He had been sent to redeem humanity, wherein did the redemption lie? What was the explanation of all these correlated questions?

Consequently, after I had convinced myself at the spiritistic meetings that God’s spirits speak to men through mediums, as they had spoken to the early Christian communities, my first thought was to beg for full enlightenment on these problems concerning Christ. My request was granted, to the smallest details, and that knowledge thenceforth constituted the most precious possession of my soul.

In what follows, I shall repeat the truths regarding Christ, His life, and His work of Redemption, as they were imparted to me by the spirit which taught them:

“You are in search of enlightenment as to the person of Christ, His birth as a man, His life, sufferings, and death as a man, and as to the truth relating to Redemption.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"A few of those questions I have already answered by telling you of God's Creation and its later history, as well as of His Plan of Salvation.

"At that time you were told that Christ is the highest of the spirits created by God and the sole one to be created directly; that the rest of the spirit-world came into being through Christ, and, together with Him, formed a great spiritual community or kingdom with Christ as its Head, as God had willed. In this kingdom Christ was therefore in a sense God's viceroy. Christ Himself was not God, but only the first of God's sons, and owed His power, and His glory and His kingdom to God. He was but one of God's creatures and as such, not eternal like God. It was against Christ's reign that the revolt of the spirits headed by Lucifer was directed. After the defection of a part of the spirit-world and its fall into the spheres of the Abyss, Christ volunteered to bring back the fallen spirits to God's kingdom in accordance with the plan of Salvation which God had conceived.

"Christ's work of redemption was begun immediately after the apostasy of the spirit hosts had occurred. It was Christ Who created the stages of regeneration of which I told you in detail in the course of my teachings on God's Plan of Salvation. Thereby Christ became the creator of the whole material universe, which forms the ladder for the ascent of the fallen spirits from the Abyss to the heights of God's kingdom.

"From the earliest days, after those spirits had risen to the level of human existence, Christ became the leader of mankind, and strove to turn men's thoughts, which ever tend toward evil, Godward. As opposed to Him, the ruling powers of Hell did their utmost to maintain their sway over men. This led to a mighty struggle between Christ and Lucifer over the spirits incarnated as human beings, a conflict which forms the main theme of what has been preserved to you in the writings of the Old Testament.

"In this conflict Christ was supported by the good spirit-world under His command, many of the spirits volunteering to become mortals, in order that they might, by preaching the truth and by setting the example of righteous living, lead men unto God.

"One of the celestial spirits whose incarnation on earth was permitted was Enoch, who proclaimed to his contemporaries the true God and the right path to a knowledge of Him. Moreover, he particularly taught them of communication with God's spirit-world with which he himself was in daily contact, for in his day,

almost all were given to communicating with evil spirits and had been led into idolatry of the most abominable kind and into all manner of depravity.

"Unfortunately the result of his efforts was not lasting. The power of evil was so strong that the nations of those times became addicted to abominations of which you of the present age can form no conception. The highest of the infernal spirits made use of human deep-trance mediums not only for speaking, but also for purposes of propagation, for just as the spirit of a medium can use his body for that purpose, so a strange spirit can enter that body and, through it, propagate, the corrupt female world of the times considering it an honor to be thus mistreated at the idol-worship. You will find confirmation of this in the Bible, in the passage relating that the "sons of God came in unto the daughters of men, and they bare children unto them." (*Genesis 6 : 4.*) The term 'sons of God' refers to those spirits which had taken a leading part in the revolt against Him. These are the same spirits of which Job says: 'Now it came to pass on the day when the sons of God came to present themselves before the Lord that Satan also came among them'. (*Job 1 : 6.*) In this case also it is only the apostate sons of God to which the passage refers, for Satan, as you know, was the second son of God. As rulers of the kingdom of Darkness, these sons of God are not free to do as they like, but remain subject to God's sovereignty, and are, at times, called to account by Him.

"The efforts of Christ and his world of good spirits to influence a race of men who had become corrupted almost without exception, were fruitless. It was therefore imperative that the whole existing generation be wiped out and replaced by a new one. The destruction was brought about by the Flood, from which only one family, that of Noah, was saved to perpetuate a better race of men.

"However, very shortly after the passing of the Deluge, evil once more raised its head among Noah's descendants, as witness the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah and the family of Lot. The more widely mankind spread out, the more zealously did men serve the Devil by idol worship and unrighteousness.

"In order to accomplish His end in spite of the terrible sway of evil over humanity, Christ strove, long before His incarnation, to win over at least a small fraction of mankind to the cause of God, a fraction which was to be the bearer of the faith and of the hope of salvation for later generations. It was to be the yeast

with which the whole mass of humanity would ultimately be leavened, the mustard seed, which in time would grow into the great tree of the true religion and the search unto God, and gather all mankind under its sheltering boughs. Once this tree had attained a certain growth, the 'fullness of time' would have arrived for the Redeemer to descend to earth as the Son of man, to complete the last part of His mission of salvation. Not until then would it be worth while to build the bridge by which the righteous spirits could cross from Lucifer's realm into the kingdom of God, even as you do not build bridges unless the number of persons likely to use them warrants their construction.

"The first to be chosen as the leavening and the mustard-seed of the faith and of the hope of redemption, was Abraham, a man of unshakable loyalty to God. Christ communicated with him, at times directly, at times through His spirits, since Abraham himself was an incarnated celestial spirit.

"His devotion to God was soon put to a severe test, as is the case with all to whom God thinks of entrusting a particularly important mission.

"When you build a railroad bridge to be used by freight and passenger trains, you, also, test its bearing-capacity before opening the bridge to traffic. If it fails to meet these tests it is strengthened, and if, even then, it proves unsafe, it is condemned, and a new bridge is built. Even so, God proceeds in the case of mortals selected to fulfill tasks of importance to His kingdom. If their power to endure fails under His tests, and if His efforts to strengthen them are futile, they are put aside as unfit, and others are taken in their places. It often happens that people otherwise fit for God's great ends must be discarded because of disqualifying defects for which they themselves are responsible, but which they persist in retaining. Many are called, but few are chosen.

"Fearsome indeed was the test to which Abraham was put when he was commanded to sacrifice his son, for 'he that loveth his father or mother, his brother or sister, his son or daughter, or his friend' more than God, is not worthy of performing God's great work.

"Sorely tried though he was, Abraham proved steadfast, and was rewarded with God's promise: ' . . . because thou hast done this thing, and hast not withheld thine only son, in blessing I will bless thee, and in multiplying I will multiply thy seed as the stars of the heavens, and as the sand which is upon the seashore, . . .

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

and in thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed'. (*Genesis 22 : 16-18.*) By the seed mentioned in this promise is not meant Abraham's human progeny, for even had this embraced all the nations of the earth it would not have equalled in numbers 'the stars of the heavens and the sand which is upon the seashore'. However, God does not exaggerate, and what He says is always literally true. Abraham's seed was spiritual and would ultimately embrace all of the fallen spirits, in the sense that his faith in God and his devotion to Him would little by little extend to all who had forsaken God. Indeed, it would not have proved a blessing to Abraham had he had a countless human progeny which eventually might fall into evil ways. As a matter of fact, in later days whole generations of Abraham's descendants forsook the true religion and turned to the worship of idols.

"Abraham's human seed of the second generation, Jacob and his sons, were led into Egypt, where they were to settle in the fertile land of Goshen, there to become a great nation, isolated from the idolatrous inhabitants of Egypt, and free to uphold the true faith.

"But long-continued worldly prosperity always endangers a nation's faithfulness to God, Who therefore permitted the Hebrews, as Abraham's descendants had come to be known, to be savagely oppressed by the Pharaohs and to be held in rigorous servitude by them.

"It was not God Who instigated Pharaoh to pursue this course, but the Powers of Evil which had realized that the Hebrew nation, as the bearer of the true faith, was a dangerous weapon in Christ's hands and might be used by Him against themselves. Hence, its destruction was determined upon, and since this end was not being accomplished by the forced labor which the Hebrews were compelled to perform, the demoniacal powers suggested their extermination to the Pharaoh by the simplest and at the same time the most effective method. Every Hebrew man-child was to be killed at birth. As a justification for this measure, the Powers of Hell had filled the King's mind with the thought that the Hebrews within his dominions, having already waxed strong in numbers, might become a source of danger by allying themselves with the enemies of Egypt. Evil well knows how to attack men, and the rulers of men in particular, at their weakest point, which, with a King, is always a fear that his throne is in peril. Hence Pharaoh fell a ready victim to the insinuations of the Evil Ones, and began the slaughter

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

of all of the newborn Hebrew male infants. According to Pharaoh's plan, this measure would have resulted in the extinction of every Hebrew man within a comparatively short period, and when this had been brought about, the Hebrew women having become the wives or slaves of Egyptians, would have been absorbed by that race and, like it, have fallen into idolatry. Thus at one blow all the efforts of Christ and His spirit-world to provide for human upholders of the true religion would have been nullified.

"But once again it happened, as it happens so often in Nature and in the lives of men, that the very force which was intent upon doing evil, promoted the cause of good, for the moment at which a nation is driven to desperation by the slaughter of its children on the part of the authorities, is also the most favorable moment for persuading that nation to leave the scenes of its sufferings.

"There was still another and yet more potent reason why it was high time for the Hebrew nation to be led out of the land of the Pharaoh's. During the four centuries of their sojourn there the Hebrews had gradually drifted toward Egyptian idol-worship, until not a few of the members of that race were participating in the pagan rites. This grave danger to the religion of the Hebrew people could be obviated only by an exodus from Egypt, and the present moment was the most propitious one that could be imagined for the purpose, since the massacre of their infants was making the sojourn there a living inferno for the Hebrews.

"To conduct so numerous, and by nature unmanageable, a people out of the land, was a task which called for a great human leader, hence Christ selected one of His heavenly spirits for the purpose, and caused it to be born in human shape. The spirit so chosen was Moses. As the son of Hebrew parents, he was saved from death by Pharaoh's daughter, who saw to it that he was instructed in all of the sciences of the times, thus equipping him, as a mortal, with whatever learning he would be called upon to display as the head of a great nation.

"When he had grown to manhood, Christ spoke to him from the burning bush and appointed him as the leader of 'God's people'. Moses was called upon to perform, first of all, two tasks, one of these being to reveal himself to the enslaved Hebrews as God's envoy, charged with the mission of leading them forth from Egypt. His second duty was to persuade Pharaoh to allow the Hebrews to leave his realm.

"Superhuman power was conferred upon Moses by Christ, for

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the execution of both of these missions, but the evil spirits, seeing their plans thwarted, appeared in the theater of war in full force, making use of the Egyptian sorcerers as their instruments.

"Then began the greatest battle among spirits, ever fought on earth. On one side was ranged Christ with His good spirit-world, and Moses as His visible champion; on the other, Hell with its retainers, the Egyptian magicians. With the aid of God's spirits standing invisible beside him, Moses performed the greatest miracles which the world ever saw before the coming of Christ and by which he hoped to convince both the Hebrew people and Pharaoh of the Divine nature of his mission. By these signs which took place before their eyes, God's people were to be moved to render obedience to Moses as their leader, and Pharaoh was to be induced to allow those people to depart.

"At first, and for the purpose of counteracting any effect Moses might produce upon Pharaoh and the people, the evil powers accomplished miracles equal to his, but before long their efforts began to fail the magicians themselves were forced to admit: 'This is the finger of God'.

"Never had such materialization of spirits been witnessed as that which took place in this battle. On the part of Moses, a good spirit, disintegrating his rod, changed it into a serpent; the same thing was done for the sorcerers by the evil spirits. Entire hosts of spirits were materialized as frogs at Moses's command, and at the command of the magicians, low spirits did the like. Moses turned the waters of the river to blood, with the aid of God's spirits, and with the help of the infernal powers the same miracle was performed by the magicians. God allowed the wicked to exert their powers to the utmost of their ability, in order that, in the end, He might have the opportunity of showing His full omnipotence, and thereby, above all, of fortifying the faith of the Israelites, since this was a life and death struggle in which the Hebrews, as God's people, were the stake. Israel was the first-born of the true faith; should it fall a victim to Hell, a long time must elapse before another nation fit to take that part could arise.

"Christ, God's First-born, fought against the first-born of Hell, on behalf of the first-born human upholder of the faith and of the hope of salvation. Christ was the victor. God's destroying angel smote all of the first-born in the land of Egypt, and thus forced the decision. Pharaoh and his people were seized with fear, and at the insistence of his subjects, he allowed the Hebrews to depart. Trav-

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

elling in a pillar of cloud, Christ led the fugitives, and out of that cloud He spoke to Moses, protecting the people from the pursuing hosts of Egypt. The good spirit-world divided the waters of the sea, and made the waves as a wall on the right hand of the people and on their left. Putting their trust in Him Who spoke from the pillar of cloud, the children of Israel walked upon dry land in the midst of the sea, receiving their first baptism unto Christ, with full faith in the 'Angel of the Lord', who was none other than Christ Himself. God and Christ led Israel through the desert; it was at Their behest that the good spirit-world brought forth water from the rock and prepared manna. Hence Paul says, rightly: 'for I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea; and did all eat the same spiritual food; and did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of a spiritual rock that followed them: and the rock was Christ'. (*1st Corinthians 10 : 1-4.*)

"God and Christ, as well as the good spirit-world, gave to the people whatever advice and instruction were necessary. It was God Himself Who issued the Commandments on Mount Sinai.

"The long sojourn in the desert was necessary in order that the people might be proved, to show whether their faith and belief in God were strong enough to enable them to face the perils which would threaten them on the part of the pagan inhabitants of the country that later was to come into the possession of the Israelites. It was imperative that they preserve their religion intact, since otherwise, all of the work of the past would go for nought.

"Still another menace to their faith, against which provision had to be made, was the greed for worldly belongings and the excessive love of material wellbeing, which ever tend to drive men into the arms of evil.

"Christ resorted to every measure which would obviate, or at least diminish this danger, taking radical steps to cure His people of these failings by enacting legislation by which the Israelites, as the Hebrews eventually came to be known, were obligated to the payment of tithes. Furthermore, they had to offer their first-fruits, or to redeem these with some other offering, and in addition, they were called upon to make numerous sacrifices of beasts and fruits such as burnt-offerings, meal-offerings, peace-offerings, sin-offerings and trespass-offerings, for which only unblemished gifts were accepted. When harvesting, they were forbidden to reap wholly

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the corners of their fields or to gather the gleanings of the harvest, which they must leave for the poor and the sojourner, and every seventh year they might not till their land, but must let it lie fallow. Every fiftieth year they must 'return every man unto his possession, and every man unto his family'. Finally, the taking of interest was forbidden, thereby forestalling usury at the outset.

"Should the people of Israel observe these statutes, the danger of their being ruled wholly by worldly considerations and breaking faith with God out of love for Mammon, would be brought within reasonable limits.

"The other danger which threatened the faith was therefore far greater: this was the idolatry of the nations with which the Hebrews would be brought into contact in the so-called 'promised land'. Their idol-worship was all the more dangerous, because, like all of its kind, it consisted of tangible communication with the evil spirit-world.

"The realm of the spiritual possesses a mystery of its own in human eyes, and all mystery exerts an irresistible attraction on men. Ghost-stories are the ones to which you listen with the greatest attention, and wherever anything mysterious and spectral actually or allegedly happens, the crowd will invariably gather.

"On this account the Israelites had, already in the past, been allured by the mysteries of the Egyptian idol-worship. Saint Paul refers to this in writing to the Corinthians when he says: 'Ye know that when ye were Gentiles, ye were led away unto those dumb idols, howsoever ye might be led'. I need scarcely add that the Israelites did not content themselves with merely looking at images, for lifeless stone and wood attracted the people of those times as little as they attract men today. The allurements lay in the actual communication with the low spirit-world. The speech by spirits through images and human mediums, and the performance by them of other marvellous feats were the factor that attracted people. It was here that they were told so much that was mysterious; that they received answers to their questions relating to their worldly prospects, and that they heard alleged predictions as to the future, something that all men welcome eagerly. Added to this, they were told things highly gratifying to their human passions, for here vice was elevated to virtue, while virtue was branded as vice. Whoever once became addicted to this kind of spirit-communication found it difficult to desist from the habit.

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

“As the leader of God’s people, Christ took two measures to guard his wards from relapsing into idolatry.

“One of these measures was to give them the opportunity of communicating with good spirits, as a substitute for the form of spirit-communication which had been forbidden by Him. He gave to the Israelites the tent of testimony, the breast-plate of judgment, and the good mediums known to you as ‘prophets’, as I have already related to you at length in my previous teachings.

“As the second measure He commanded them, in the name of the Lord, to exterminate certain nations into whose country they were destined to migrate. Of these nations there were six which had fallen into such idolatry and abomination that their reformation seemed impossible, while on the other hand there was every reason to fear that should they be allowed to live, they would corrupt the Israelites who had settled among them.

“The command to exterminate these peoples has led many of you to look upon the God of the Old Testament as a cruel Deity and to maintain that the writers of those portions of the Scriptures were incapable of conceiving of a Christ-like Divinity, since otherwise they would never have attributed such cruelty to the will of God. In this they are mistaken. One and the same Christ preached the conception of God which you find in the New Testament, and commanded the destruction of the peoples which I have mentioned. In one case as in the other, Christ appears as the Savior. By consenting to the extermination of those peoples, He preserved them from sinking still further into idolatry and depravity, and indeed gave them the opportunity of working their way, in a new existence, out of the depths to which they had fallen. The underlying motive was the same as that for which, in earlier times, the human race was destroyed by the Deluge and for which the cities of Sodom and Gomorrha were laid waste.

“To this motive must be added the even more important one of preserving religion among God’s people. When men make war, they do not hesitate to shoot anyone who tries to induce a soldier to desert, a measure which you accept as perfectly justified. Was not God equally entitled to the right of ordering the death of those who were about to instigate His chosen upholders of the faith to desert their colors and to go over to the Powers of Darkness? Again, it was through God’s people that the hour of the redemption of all mankind was to be prepared; was Christ, then, to stand idly

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

by while this work, difficult enough at best, was being ruined by those who were enemies of God and instruments of Lucifer?

"You mortals become very tender-hearted when God's wisdom and justice demand the destruction of utterly wicked and irretrievably depraved people, lest they corrupt millions of others and in order that they themselves may be brought back into the path of salvation. Remember, also, that it was God Who did these things, the Master of Life and Death, He Who had showed these people unmerited forbearance, even though they had committed everything abominable in His sight at their worship, going to the length of sacrificing their own children as burnt-offerings to their images. (*Deuteronomy 12 : 31.*)

"When making war upon other peoples the Israelites were commanded to conduct themselves humanely. 'When thou drawest nigh unto a city to fight against it, then proclaim peace unto them'. (*Deuteron 20 : 10.*) They were forbidden even to injure fruit-trees when laying siege to a city and were commanded to build their siege-works of the wood of trees bearing no edible fruit.

"Moses received his first foretaste of the danger of idolatry on the occasion on which his followers began their worship of the golden calf. Soon afterwards, also when they approached the land of Moab, 'the people began to play the harlot with the daughters of Moab; for they called the people unto the sacrifices of their gods; and the people did eat, and bowed down unto their gods'. (*Numbers 25 : 1, 2.*) The harlotry here alluded to was part of the pagan ritual and was demanded by the demons through the mediums as particularly pleasing to their gods. It formed an important part of the religious ceremonies, as it does among all heathen races.

"Armed with the weapon of idolatry and its attendant abuses, the Powers of Evil in the days that followed did much harm among God's people and thereby, to the work leading up to the Redemption. Whole generations of the Lord's chosen race subsequently forsook the true God, almost without exception, a transgression for which terrible vengeance was later exacted from them. Christ on His part sent the prophets, in an effort to win them back to the good cause, these prophets, the mediums of the good spirit-world, being hard put to it to maintain a successful fight against the influence of the demons' mediums, or Baal's prophets. Most of the true prophets were incarnated celestial spirits, although in their life as mortals they were quite as much exposed to evil as was the rest of mankind, but thanks to their efforts they succeeded in

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

preventing, at least, the complete eradication among the generations which were to follow of the belief in the true God and in the Redemption.

“The time finally came when a great part of humanity was ripe, at all events insofar as its desire went, to accept a belief in Christ's act of redemption, and to cross the bridge which He was destined to build over the gulf dividing the realm of the Abyss from the Kingdom of God. Countless human souls stood waiting, eager to cross.

“At last the fullness of time had come when under God's plan of salvation, the Redeemer was to appear.

“Shortly before Christ was born upon earth, He sent a herald to prepare for and proclaim His coming. This herald also was a celestial spirit, Elijah, the same spirit which at a time when idolatry was at its worst, had gone upon earth on Christ's behalf and had fought victoriously against the tools of the Forces of Evil. After accomplishing his mission he had been taken back to Heaven without having suffered the pangs of earthly death. Now, as Christ's precursor, he was born as a mortal for the second time as the son of Zacharias, and bore the name of 'John'.

“Even before John's birth the incarnation of God's Anointed was foretold. The archangel Gabriel who had announced to Zacharias that he was to be the father of a son who would be the forerunner of Christ, was entrusted also with the message of the coming of the Redeemer.

“Gabriel was sent to a virgin named Mary, living in Nazareth, who had been chosen to be the Mother of the Savior.

The Human Birth of Jesus.

“Generation and birth within God's Creation follow immutable laws. The union of the sperm of the male and the female is in every instance imperative, a law to which there is no exception.

“Human propagation can therefore come about only if the germ of the male unites with that of the female. Hence no discarnate spirit, celestial or infernal, can beget offspring without employing the human body and the human sperm.

“You interpret the Biblical account of the conception of Christ as though a spirit from Heaven had begotten the Child in the virgin's womb without the aid of a human body. This is an incorrect interpretation and gives countless people, believers and un-

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

believers, good ground for denying, or at any rate for doubting, the way in which the Son of God became a human being. Here we have an instance in which the marvellous and the unusual, although at the same time the normal, borders closely upon the unreasonable, and hence the incredible.

"I will tell you the whole truth of the matter, for I know that you can understand it.

"When a deep-trance medium's spirit has left his body and a strange spirit has entered, that spirit is capable of using the organs of the body in precisely the same way as they can be used by the medium's own spirit. Consequently a strange spirit, good or evil, which occupies the body of a male medium, is capable of begetting offspring with a woman. Did I not, when speaking to you of the idolatry of ante-Deluvian times, particularly call your attention to the carnal intercourse had by the evil spirits with the daughters of men, by whom, according to the Bible's own testimony, they had children? If this is possible for evil spirits, should it not be equally possible for the good ones? If the fallen sons of God could beget children through human mediums and so corrupt mankind, ought not the true sons of God be able to do likewise on behalf of mankind's salvation?

"Now you will understand the human origin of Christ without the need of any further explanation from me. The human medium was Joseph, to whom Mary was betrothed. Spirits of God had already repeatedly announced to Mary through Joseph, as their medium, the coming of the Redeemer. Such spirit-messages were nothing out of the ordinary; on the contrary, the Jewish people were thoroughly familiar with communication with the spirit-world. This is evident from the account in the Scriptures of the appearance of the angel to Zacharias, who when he left the temple was not able to speak, by which the people knew that he had been visited by a messenger from God. (*Luke 1 : 22.*)

"Hence Mary was not alarmed when it came to pass that a spirit entered Joseph as its medium and brought her the Divine tidings, but she was greatly troubled at being addressed as being 'highly favored', by which it was indicated that she would become a mother. This was beyond her comprehension, as she had never had relations with any man and therefore had no reason to expect motherhood. But 'the angel answered and said unto her, A Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of a Most High shall overshadow thee; wherefore also the holy thing which is begotten

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

shall be called the Son of God'. The spirit then told what was about to happen, although this is a point on which your Bible is silent. It announced that as soon as it had left the medium's body, a very high Spirit from Heaven would enter the same, and by this Spirit she would become a Mother by the law which obtains throughout Nature. And Mary replied: 'In my own eyes, I am a servant of the Lord. Let it be with me as you have said'. (*Luke 1 : 38.*)

"After Gabriel had departed out of the medium and before Joseph had awakened from his mediumistic sleep, Christ Himself entered his body and through Him Mary conceived under the same law that governs conception in all women. His spirit entered the body of the embryonic Child during the last moments of the Mother's pregnancy, or at that stage at which the incarnation of a spirit occurs with all mothers, through the entry of that spirit into the infant organism.

"That such was the way in which Christ was begotten was well known to the early Christians, to whom it was revealed in the same manner as that in which I am revealing it to you. They knew, therefore, that the mortal body of Christ was begotten by Him through Joseph as His medium, by which I mean that the Holy Spirit which, according to Gabriel's message was to come upon Mary, was Christ Himself, Who wished to perform in person everything that He held necessary to achieve the Redemption. It was by Him that the most difficult preparatory work had been taken in hand at the outset, by Him that God's people had been chosen as the upholders of the faith, by Him that they had been led, taught, admonished, warned and chastised, and by Him that the high spirits of Heaven had been sent to earth as prophets. The last step was the begetting of the mortal vesture into which He was to pass after a few months within His Mother's womb, in order that, by being born as a mortal, He might mingle with mortals as one of them.

"As soon as Joseph had awakened from his deep trance Mary related to him the things that had happened. It was a hard test to which he now found himself subjected. Was he to believe what his betrothed had told him? Like all other men, he was but human. Evil thoughts assailed him fiercely. The Powers of Hell had but one end in view: to incite Joseph to doubt Mary and to cast her off, for under the Jewish law, a virgin betrothed who was found to have relations with another man, was stoned to death. Evil

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

sought to inspire him with the belief that Mary had deceived him, and that she was now making use of the pretext that a spirit of God had used Joseph's body while he was in a mediumistic state. There was nothing in the way of distrust, jealousy and bitterness to which men are subject by reason of disappointment, that the Evil Powers neglected to instil into Joseph, and under their onsets it seemed as though the burden placed upon him was more than he could bear. At times 'he was minded to put his betrothed away privily'. Privily, indeed it must be, for Joseph, being a righteous man, was unwilling, in the absence of positive proof that he had been deceived, to denounce a fellow-creature for an offense the penalty for which was death. On the other hand, he was not ready to make his betrothed his wife as long as any lurking misgivings persisted. Mary's sole defense was, that God would reveal the truth to him in one way or another, for she, also, suffered unspeakably under his suspicions. Then, during that very night, an angel of the Lord appeared to the clairvoyant Joseph, bidding him not to fear. This ended the conflict within him.

"I realize that this truth, — and it is the truth, — will appear entirely too human and too much in accordance with the everyday laws of Nature to convince you puny mortals. It is not marvellous and mysterious enough to satisfy you. The human act of procreation is something debasing in the eyes of many, who, as it were, blame God for making it a part of the order of things. To their way of thinking, God is wanting in chastity. Wretched beings that you are, to so misjudge the most wonderful laws enacted by God's omnipotence and wisdom, as exemplified in the procreation, the prenatal life, and the birth of a child! Christ, the highest of created spirits, did not find it beneath Him to beget His own earthly tenement in conformity with the eternally fixed laws of propagation, in order that He might dwell and suffer among you. Even though the truth regarding His human paternity may not be miraculous enough to suit you, for Him everything was miraculous that happened according to the sacred laws given by His Heavenly Father, of which the Preacher says: "I know that, whatsoever God does, it shall be forever; nothing can be put to it, nor anything taken from it; and God has done it, that men should revere him'. (*Ecclesiastes 3 : 14.*)

"That reverence is something which unfortunately you do not feel, and for this reason you account for the incarnation of Christ by means of ingeniously concocted theories, which, because of the

CONCERNING CHRIST – HIS LIFE AND WORK

alleged miracles they involve, are full of contradictions, and furnish good grounds to the skeptics for deriding the first step which had to be taken in order that He might assume the shape of man.

“Had the incarnation of Christ not followed the laws of human propagation, He would have differed fundamentally from other men, and Saint Paul could not have said of Him that He was ‘born according to the flesh’. His body would not have come into being from human seed. Christ became as one of you, even as regards the generation of His mortal vesture by the human germ.

“Now, at your request, I shall speak of certain doctrines of the Catholic Church which touch the subject I am discussing. As you were formerly a priest of that church it is natural that you should be particularly eager to learn which of its doctrines are true and which are false.

“The Catholic Church teaches that the Mother of Jesus was free from ‘*original sin*’. This is true, but not for the reasons advanced by your former church. Like certain other mortals who lived before her and who had been called upon to perform the work of the Lord, Mary was an incarnated celestial spirit. The same was true of Enoch, Abraham, Moses, Elijah, and others of whom I have spoken. It was true too of John, who foretold the coming of Christ and in whose shape Elijah returned to earth. In Mary, therefore, there was incarnated, not one of those spirits which had forsaken God, but one which had remained loyal to Him. The sin of that desertion, of which all other terrestrial beings are the heirs, did not rest upon her. That is the ‘*original sin*’ from which she was free.

“On the other hand the Catholic doctrine that Mary as a mortal was devoid of all sin, even of the most venial, is utterly false. There is no mortal who has no human failings as you call them, but these have nothing in common with *that sin* from which Christ meant to redeem the world, namely, the sin of having rebelled against God. *That is the real sin*. All others are human frailties from which not even Mary was free. Nevertheless, she remained true to God, as did also Moses, that high spirit from Heaven, in spite of the fact that as a man he transgressed on more than one occasion, and was punished by not being permitted to enter the promised land.

“Again the Catholic Church is wrong when it maintains that Mary *remained a virgin* even after the conception and the birth of

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

Christ. She was, thereafter, as little a virgin as is any woman who has conceived and given birth to a child.

"Only before Christ's conception was she a virgin; it was not intended that the Redeemer should be born of a mother who had conceived and borne other children before Him. That is the meaning of the words of the prophet: 'Behold, the virgin shall conceive and shall bear a son'.

"It is furthermore contrary to the truth for the Catholic Church to assert that no more children were born to Mary after the birth of Christ. On what grounds do you assume that after the birth of her First-born, she was willing to waive her right to be a mother, or that Joseph was ready to waive his rights as a husband and a father? The fact that Christ had brothers and sisters who were born after him can in no way detract from His personality, nor from His life, His teachings and His work.

"The references in the original texts of the New Testament to brothers and sisters of Jesus allude to His own, *flesh and blood* brothers and sisters, and not 'kinsfolk' as the Catholics try desperately to prove. Had 'kinsfolk' been in question, they would have been called such, and not 'brothers and sisters', or do you suppose that the language of those days had no word equivalent to your word of 'kinsfolk'? You surely cannot maintain this seriously, for in the story of the visit of the twelve-year-old Jesus to the temple, it is related that His parents had sought Him 'among their *kinsfolk* and acquaintance', whence you see that where *kinsfolk* are meant, the Evangelist finds the word to express the idea. When somewhat later the same Evangelist writes: 'And there came to him his mother and his brethren . . . (Luke 8:19), he is surely not trying to convey the meaning that these were merely kinsmen who happened to be with His mother, nor were the people who told Him: 'thy mother and thy brethren stand without, desiring to see thee'. Matthew and Mark likewise relate that Christ's 'mother' and His 'brethren' had come to speak to Him; do you believe that all three Evangelists used the word 'brethren' when they meant 'kinsfolk', in which case that was the word which they could and should have used? Any such assumption is foolish.

"Furthermore, in telling of the appearance of Jesus in His native village of Nazareth, Matthew records: 'He went on to his home city Nazareth and preached in the synagogue there. His words impressed his hearers so deeply that they asked of one another: From where has this man all this wisdom and the power of

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

his eloquence? Is he not the son of the carpenter? Is not his mother's name Mary, and are not his brothers named James, Joseph Simon and Judah? Do not his sisters also live there? How has he come by all this? (*Matthew 13: 54-56.*) Can any rationally minded person contend that this enumeration of the father, mother, brothers and sisters of Jesus refers to kinsfolk only? Just as the allusion in this case is to the real father and mother of Jesus, so too His real brothers and sisters are meant. What purpose could be served by calling over the names of His kinsfolk? The inhabitants of Nazareth were astonished at His works and His teachings, and asked each other, as you would under similar circumstances: 'Whence has He all these things? His father, the carpenter, is a man like the rest of us. Mary, His mother, is a simple, unpretentious woman, and His brothers and sisters are nothing out of the ordinary, for his brothers James and Joseph, and Simon, and Judas, live among us and we see them every day, but we have never discovered anything unusual in any of them, and as for His sisters, all of them live in this village and are no different from any of the other women of Nazareth. How does it happen that of all the family, Jesus is the only one who is so wonderfully gifted?'

"The contention that the expressions: 'brethren' and 'sisters' as used here, refer to 'kinsfolk' only, is too trivial to be advanced by anyone without an ulterior motive. You can see in this an instance in which one untruth must be supported by another. The Catholic Church has taken the unreasonable stand that Mary remained a virgin in spite of the fact that she bore Jesus, a position which would, of course, be utterly untenable in the face of an admission that she afterwards gave birth to other children. On the other hand, there are many references in the Bible to the brothers and sisters of Jesus, and since this conflicts with the doctrine of Mary's perpetual virginity, it becomes necessary to transmute these historically established brothers and sisters into 'kinsfolk'. Otherwise, the dogma of Mary's perpetual virginity, and with it, that of the Papal infallibility, would fall to the ground.

"The birth of Jesus took its course like any other human birth, as regards both the Mother and the Child. The newly-born Infant was nursed, cared for and eventually weaned, as are all children.

"The message of the angels to the shepherds and their salutation of the Redeemer of mankind Who had appeared, the presentation of Jesus in the temple, the coming of the Wise Men of the East, all happened exactly as it is related in your New Testament.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

These Wise Men were Divine instruments and were highly gifted with mediumistic powers. At home they were the dispensers of the true faith, and through their communication with the good spirit-world they had been initiated into many of the truths relating to the salvation of mankind. The same spirit-world which had announced the birth of the Savior to the shepherds, brought to the Magi also the tidings of the happy event which had already been foretold to them as impending, by messengers from God. They were now invited to set out in search of the Child in Whom the Son of God was incarnated. The name of the place at which the Child lay was withheld from them, but they were told that the gleam of a light would go before them to guide them on their way. Not only the Wise Men, but everyone else saw this light, which appeared as a bright star moving before them and leading them as Moses and the people of Israel had once been led by the pillar of cloud.

"Their journey took them first to Herod in Jerusalem. This was an act of God, by which that temporal prince was to be apprised of the human birth of Him Who was to rule the world, and in order that the fate of the children of Bethlehem might be fulfilled, as had been foretold by the prophet. Here again the forces of Anti-Christ gave evidence of their activity by inspiring Herod with fear for his throne and thus driving him to perpetrate the slaughter of the children, in order that the new-born Herald of the truth might perish.

"The Magi did not reach Bethlehem until *after* the presentation of Jesus in the temple, His parents having returned thither from Jerusalem with the intention of resting a few days before resuming their journey to Nazareth. It was immediately after their arrival in Bethlehem that the Wise Men found them, and after the latter had set out for home, the parents of the Child also prepared to continue on their way, when a messenger from God appeared to Joseph warning him to flee into Egypt with his wife and child, as Herod, who on first learning of the birth of a new King of the Jews had determined to destroy him, was now on the point of carrying out his design.

"After the Babe had emerged from the years of infancy, His childhood was like that of other children. He learned to walk and to speak, and in time began to play, like the rest. On occasions, He misbehaved, as all children will. With the passing of His boyhood His understanding developed, and inasmuch as He was

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

the incarnation of the highest of created spirits, He was also endowed with intelligence of a high order. Nevertheless, He had to learn things from the beginning as does everybody, even the most brilliant minds. As a child He came to know of God exactly as you yourself did, namely, by what He learned from His parents and teachers. He listened to sermons on God in the synagogue of His native village, and discussed them with His elders, of whom He asked for explanations of the things which He had not understood or which had impressed Him as being untrue.

“As a boy, moreover, He was assailed by those temptations which come to all children of men and which are sent of a strength in keeping with youth’s powers of resistance, temptations which He overcame in the measure as His knowledge of evil increased with the advancing years. Nevertheless, there were times when He erred and was guilty of failings due to human weakness, as is the case with the best of children. With every victory over temptation the Boy received from God greater inner strength and knowledge of the spirit, but as His power of resistance grew, the Forces of Evil were permitted to increase the violence of their assaults upon Him. It is so with every mortal, and no exception was made in favor of the Boy Jesus, for it is a law that applies to all men alike that they gain in ability to resist sin with every victory over temptation, while, on the other hand, Evil is left free to proceed with more vigor than ever, with the result that the whole life of a God-fearing man is a constant battle with the Hostile Powers. ‘War is the lot of man upon earth!’

“As the Boy grew in years, the numerous errors of the Jewish faith professed by His parents caused Him many an inward struggle. All of these had been introduced in the course of time by the Jewish Church in the form of manmade doctrines and alleged amendments to the Divine commandments.

“When He had reached the point of being able to read and understand the original texts of the Old Testament, He began to question the interpretations given to Him by His Jewish instructors, but whenever, in His youthful enthusiasm, He expressed these views to His elders, He was severely rebuked. It was these convictions conflicting with the Jewish religious doctrines which at the age of twelve He laid before the priests in the temple at Jerusalem much to their amazement, putting questions to them and replying to theirs out of His own wisdom.

“Undoubtedly He was in this respect what you call a ‘child

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

marvel', such as you find in all branches of human endeavor. This Boy was a 'child marvel' in His knowledge of God's ways of salvation. But He was human, like all others. *At first He did not know who He was, nor what mission He was destined to fulfill as a mortal.*

However, soon after He had reached the years of discretion, He began to exhibit great mediumistic powers. These consisted of the gifts of clairvoyance and clairaudience, which, from small beginnings, rapidly attained great perfection, enabling Him to communicate with the spirit-world, to see the spirits as a clairvoyant, and as a clairaudient to hear the words spoken by them. This gift with which the adolescent youth was endowed was nothing new; it had been possessed by many others before Him, but in the case of this Envoy of God it was developed to the highest degree attainable by man.

"Through His communication with the Divine spirit-world He was taught, while on earth, everything which He needed for the execution of His task, for in these matters He, as a mortal, was as ignorant as all the rest. Recollection of His previous state as the highest of God's spirits he had none, because in every instance, the incarnation of a spirit in a material body destroys all memory of the past.

"Therefore, the things that Christ preached while He was on earth, were taught to Him by the spirit-world, as Moses was taught, by inquiring of God in the tent of testimony, all of those things which he later proclaimed to the people.

"Thus Jesus passed from boyhood, through adolescence, to manhood, and as He grew older, His wisdom increased, not only in the way in which this is the case with all people as they mature, but chiefly by reason of the teaching which He received from the Divine spirits. Hand in hand with this went the growth of His goodness, or, as your Bible expresses it: 'Jesus grew in wisdom and became day by day dearer to God and to men'. (*Luke 2 : 52.*)

"It was real progress and not merely a gradual disclosure of Himself, as your former religion maintains. As a mortal, Christ was not originally perfect, a thing which is impossible for any spirit incarnated in human form, since all matter is inherently base and full of imperfections. Even a spirit which enters, pure and flawless, into the garment of flesh, must, during its life as a human being, fight its way step by step toward perfection, through the debasing influence of evil.

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

“The weaknesses and failings of every human body react upon the spirit which it houses and which, however perfect, must constantly wrestle with them and can never quite free itself from them during its earthly existence. This is a part of human nature from which not even Christ was exempt. To His last breath He was compelled to fight against these failings and more than once succumbed to them in His battle with Evil. In the garden of Gethsemane even this mighty Conqueror turned faint and weak praying that the Father might let the cup pass away from Him, yet adding: ‘Nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt’. He knew that it was the Father’s will that He must suffer, and His outcry reveals the weak, imperfect mortal, whose nature, being human, quails and rebels at the thought of an agonizing death. A perfect being would have said: ‘Father, send whatsoever torments thou wilt and deemest best. I will endure them’. He would not have said: ‘Let this cup pass away from me’. And it was human frailty which spoke from Him from the Cross, when He uttered the plaint: ‘My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?’. This cry would never have been uttered by a human being perfect in every way, but such human beings do not exist. If they did, mortals would no longer be what they are, and the material body would cease to be.

“Saint Paul has recorded this truth in his Epistle to the Hebrews, in words which may offend those who regard Christ as a Deity, and hence deny the possibility on His part of sin or of rebellion against God. The passage in question reads: ‘In the days of his stay upon earth, Christ, amid loud lamentations and many tears sent up fervent prayers to Him, Who could save him from the spiritual death of apostasy, and was heard because of his piety. But although he was a Son of God he also had to learn through the sufferings that lay before him, and only after he had attained perfection did he become the author of the salvation’. (*Hebrews* 5, 7-9.)

“In these words you will find confirmation of everything I have told you, to the smallest particular.

“In my explanation of God’s Plan of Salvation I called your attention to the very important fact that even the highest of created spirits is exposed by incarnation to the danger of being overcome by Evil and to being persuaded to desert God. This danger threatened Christ Himself Who was fully aware of it. On more than one occasion He was on the point of succumbing to the

assaults of Satan, as Saint Paul intimates in the passage I have quoted by saying that Christ had called upon God amid loud lamentations and many tears to save Him from death. That it was not corporeal death from which He prayed to be saved is evident from the fact that Paul expressly says, that Christ's prayers were heard, and that God saved Him from the death which He so greatly feared. Did God then save Him from earthly death and its terrors? On the contrary; that was a cup which Christ was compelled to drain to the dregs, and therefore it must have been death of another kind from which Christ was saved in answer to His prayers. As you know, the word 'death' in almost all passages of the Bible, and above all, where it is used in the epistles of Paul, signifies 'spiritual death' or the abandonment of God. This was a danger at which Christ trembled even before He knew that He was fated to die on the Cross; such was the fierceness of Satan's assaults upon Him. Your Bible says nothing of Christ's daily battles with the Powers of Hell which spared no effort to break His will-power and thus to force Him to forsake God. From the fact that He raised His voice in tears to God praying for help as Satan and his hosts bore down upon Him, and that He trembled for fear that He might not prevail against Hell for long, from all this, you may gather that it was possible that even Christ might forsake God. Had there been no such possibility, He would have had no occasion to tremble before Hell's onset; still less, to call to be saved from death 'with strong crying and tears'. Furthermore, Satan, who knew exactly what manner of a foe he had before him in Christ, would have known better than to take the field against Him with all his forces, had he seen no prospect of victory. It is for this reason that he never directs his attacks upon God Himself, but against His creatures. If Lucifer, the highest but one of created spirits, had deserted God, why should not the highest of them all do likewise, particularly when, in the shape of a weak mortal, it found itself face with the Infernal Powers. Satan knows full well what he is doing, and undertakes nothing that does not offer at least a fair prospect of success.

"The further fact that Christ had human weaknesses and failings is indicated by Paul in the same passage, for he says that 'Christ, though he was a Son of God, yet *learned obedience* by the things which he had suffered'. Thus Christ, as a mortal, had to learn obedience. Not even He, on every occasion, gave heed to

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

the appeals to His better nature which came from without and within, but the penalties which He as a man suffered for even the most trifling act of disobedience, *taught* Him obedience little by little, when He stumbled. It is only he who is never weak that never stumbles.

“It is precisely this that constitutes Christ’s wonderful merit, that although He was the Son of God, He was compelled to battle with the human frailties and short-comings which He shared with other men, and in spite of which He held out against the Infernal Powers. He was called upon to sustain their most savage attacks, directed against Him as a vulnerable antagonist who, terrified at the threat of defeat, cried out to God in prayer. He therefore knows from experience how helpless you mortals feel in your feebleness. ‘For in him we have, not a high priest unable to feel for us in all our failings, but one who in the face of temptation all about him felt as we feel, and yet did not commit the sin of apostasy’. (*Hebrews 4 : 15.*)

“The word ‘sin’ is used here not to designate transgressions due to human infirmities from which not even Christ was free, but with reference to the iniquity which severs us from God, the sin whose wages is death. Christ was never one of the fallen spirits, and even as a mortal did not allow His loyalty to God to waver. The ‘mortal sin’ as the Apostle John calls it, was something of which He was never guilty, but in other ways He became as all men, even as to their infirmities, and like them, there were times until He achieved perfection, as proved by His consummate act of submission: — His death upon the Cross.

“The public appearance as a preacher of penitence of John the Baptist was destined to be a decisive event in the life of Christ Who until then had not known that He was the promised Messiah. When, however He went in search of John who hailed him before the people as the Lamb of God ‘that taketh away the sin of the world’ He knew Himself, and was confirmed in His knowledge by the voice of God saying: ‘This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased’.

“The moment had now arrived for the Divine spirit-world to reveal to Christ His mission in life. He was told that He was the highest of created spirits, God’s First-born; that it was His mission to proclaim the Divine truth; that He must stand firm against the attacks of Satan who would do battle against Him to ‘the utmost and bring about His death upon the Cross, as the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

Prophets had foretold. But only after His earthly body had died upon the Cross and His Spirit had departed from it, did Christ learn wherein the final victory over Satan lay.

"Hell recognized in Christ the Son and Emisary of God, Who was to lead humanity Godward by His teaching and Who was to be ready to die for the truth, but of the true connection between Christ's Crucifixion and a victory over Hell, not even Satan was aware. Had he been so, he would neither have tempted Christ, nor brought about His death. As it was, he sought only to render Christ, in Whom he saw only a herald of the truth, harmless, as speedily as possible. Should he be unable to induce Christ to forsake God, he hoped to discredit His teachings by preparing for Him a malefactor's death as the surest way of attaining that end. In this he reckoned upon the fact that men would naturally expect that a Son of God, such as Christ proclaimed Himself to be, would be endowed with Divine power sufficient to prevent so ignominious an end at the hands of His enemies. If He failed to prevent this, His teachings would be condemned. Such was the way in which Satan reasoned.

"Christ now knew Who He was, as well as the nature of his task, but before beginning with the execution of the same His powers of resistance must be tested, as had been those of all men who had previously served God as His instruments. He must prove Himself equal to His momentous, far-reaching Mission. It was to this end that the Spirit led Him into the wilderness.

"Here it was that He was called upon to face a terrific onset on the part of the Powers of Hell. No helper stood beside Him. No word of human consolation from His mother, His brothers or sisters, or His friends, could reach Him, at the very time when, torn by the conflict within His soul, He yearned for the sympathy and support of a friendly human heart. All this was denied Him in the wilderness; instead, he heard the howling of wild beasts, and His clairvoyant eyes saw shapes from Hell before Him, coming and going without cease. He could hear them enticing, promising, threatening. Every form of appeal to which men are amenable was employed against the Son of Man, for Satan has his specialists in every field of evil. Among them were spirits of despondency and timidity, and spirits of doubt, seeking to shake His belief in Himself as the Son of God, and in His Divinely assigned mission, and to drive Him to despair of Himself. Again, there appeared spirits of hatred, intent upon embittering Him against a God who would

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

drive Him forth into the desert to suffer. There also came the spirits of a sinful life of pleasure, drawing the most enticing pictures of human ease and enjoyment in contrast to the dreary waste about Him.

“The parts which these various spirits had to play were skillfully assigned. The ablest of them were the spirits of doubt which appeared upon the scene again and again. How, argued they, could any God send His Son into a desert to suffer hunger and unspeakable torture of the soul? After all, was not everything that He had heard from the allegedly good spirits, was not the utterance of the Baptist, was not the voice of God speaking to Him by the Jordan, merely a part of a great delusion? Was not His Sonship of God a great hallucination, to which He had fallen a victim?

“This was the point upon which Hell centered its main attack, seeking to destroy within this Son of Man His conviction that He was the Son of God. Once this end was accomplished, Satan had won the battle, for whoever loses faith in his mission, casts it aside.

“For forty days and forty nights this remorseless persecution was continued against a victim who stood helpless and defenseless, trembling at every limb from emotion and from physical exhaustion, brought on by hunger and sleeplessness. The desert offered no nourishment; Christ fasted, indeed; not voluntarily, however, but because there was no food. Nothing but sand and rock, as far as the eye could reach.

“Nevertheless, all the specialists of Hell labored in vain to overcome this fever-racked Jesus of Nazareth, in spite of the fact that what with bodily fatigue, hunger and thirst, He was at last no longer able to stand. Again and again, amidst tears, He cried to His Father for help, in order that He might be spared the mortal sin of desertion, and be given the strength to hold out victoriously against the assaults of the Evil Powers.

“Finally, on the very last day, when the other infernal powers with all their arts of seduction had failed to make headway against their tormented victim, the Prince of Darkness arrived in person. He, too, is a specialist in some branches and in particular as a worker of infernal miracles. As such he now stood before the famishing Jesus and said: “Thou callest thyself a Son of God. If this be true, thou needest not suffer hunger. Command that these stones become bread. That, however, is beyond thy power,

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

deluded man, and because of thy obsession, thou must die here of starvation. Thou art not able to work miracles. Thou never wert, and never wilt be, and yet thou imaginest thyself to be a Son of God! Look upon me! I am a son of God, Whom I have left, and Who in His cruelty leaves thee to suffer thus. I can work miracles, and turn these stones into bread, which I will give thee to eat. Thou wilt see that I am able to do this. Abandon Him, Who has abandoned thee to die of hunger! Worship me, and the choicest viands on earth will be thine.'

'Get thee away, Satan, I want not thy bread, nor would I want any could I make it out of these stones. I await the magic word that cometh from the mouth of God. That word will come at the hour appointed. By it I shall have food, and shall live'.

"Satan, however, was not so easily discouraged.

"So be it! he replied. 'If thou wilt work no miracle in my presence, nor accept the bread that I offer thee in pity, thou mayest choose another way to convince thyself whether thou are indeed a Son of God, for that thou art not, I would gladly prove to thee, and rid thee of thy delusion. Behold the pinnacle of the temple; I will take thee thither and do thou cast thyself down, for it is written, He shall give His angels charge concerning thee and on their hands they shall bear thee up. Make the trial, therefore. Thou knowest that I will not help thee, since it is my purpose to prove to thee that thou art not of the Sons of God, and I am certain that the fall will dash thee in pieces. Nevertheless, thou shouldst make the trial. Not even God may demand of thee a blind belief that thou art His Son. Unless thou art willing to put thy Sonship to but one single trial, thou must confess thyself lacking in understanding. If it be that thou survive thy fall unhurt, even I will believe in thee. But if thou perishest, be thankful that death hath relieved thee quickly of the deceit with which thou hast been beguiled, rather than thou shouldst waste thy life in such madness, to die at last, disappointed, and reviled by mankind'.

"Tortured though He was by weeks of suffering, Satan's Victim controlled Himself with a mighty effort and replied steadily:

'I will not make trial of the Lord. Not in this way will I seek to prove that I am His Son. In His hands I leave the proof. He will not fail me, as thou too shalt find'.

"At this speech Lucifer, the second, the fallen, son of God, quailed for a moment before his elder brother, the loyal. His

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

sorcery availed him nothing against One Who would accept no miracles nor presume to perform these on His own account.

“Not even then did Satan lose hope; he had still another lure to offer that in the past had always given brilliant results: the world was his, for everything material is under his sway. He could give the kingdoms of the earth to whomsoever he pleased; whether to the Babylonian, Nebuchadnezzar, or to the Roman, Tiberius, or to the Nazarens, Jesus, was for him to decide. All those to whom he had made such a gift heretofore, had become his vassals and had obeyed his orders. The kingdoms of the earth in all their entrancing splendor, passed as in a film before the fevered eyes of the Son of Man. ‘All these things will I give thee. If thou desirest them all, they shall be thine; if but one, thou hast but to choose. But thou must bow down to me as thy overlord. In the kingdoms which thou hast seen, I am, and will remain supreme. But thou shalt be next in power’. ‘Get thee hence, Satan, for it is written, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve’.

“Satan had lost the battle. In the days which had passed he had felt certain of his victim Whose prayers for help to the Father he had overheard and Whose signs of fear he had witnessed, and that at a time when only Lucifer’s subordinates had been engaged. Now he had come in person to reduce a fortress which seemed ready to yield to an assault and into which hunger had entered as his ally. He found that he had been mistaken: spiritual weapons and bribes had no effect upon this mortal. One implement of warfare remained untried; one before which all men tremble and grow pliant, namely, physical tortures, of which he resolved to use the most excruciating. To inflict these there was no lack of human minions, from the learned to the ignorant, from kings to peasants; authorities temporal and spiritual. In the end he could not fail; he need only bide his time, and await the most favorable moment. Therefore, as your Bible tells you: ‘When the devil had vainly exhausted his artifices and wiles in tempting Jesus, he withdrew from him to bide his time’. (*Luke 4 : 13.*)

“It was these terrific onsets of Evil upon Jesus which Saint Paul had in mind when he wrote that Jesus had ‘offered up prayers and supplications with strong crying and tears unto him that was able to save him’ from the mortal sin of abandonment of His God.

“As you see, God does not bestow His precious gifts without exacting something in return; those who receive them must prove

themselves worthy by standing severe trials. Even Christ as a man was compelled to earn painfully the strength which He would need for the mighty task before Him. He received nothing for the asking, but whenever He had fought victoriously with Evil, He was rewarded by an access of Divine power. The heavens opened and God's spirits flocked about Him, and so it was after the battle in the desert. '. . . and behold, angels came and ministered to him'. (*Matthew 4: 11.*) They also gave Him earthly food, after His fast of forty days. Now that the stones were turned into bread by Divine intercession, Jesus accepted it, giving thanks to God. When it had been offered to Him at the instigation of Satan, He had felt constrained to refuse it.

"After this first trial which He had met triumphantly, Jesus began His career of teaching the multitudes, collecting about Him a few men known to you as the Apostles, who though poor and obscure were willing to accept the truth. It had been His intention to initiate them into the mysteries of the Redemption but presently He found that even they were the weak product of their times and unable to endure more than a portion of His doctrine.

"The first step to be taken by Jesus was to convince not only His disciples, but the people as well, of the Divine nature of His mission. He must reveal Himself and His intentions, and prove His word with the aid of Him Whose emissary He proclaimed Himself to be.

"The same had been true of Moses, whose mission was in every respect the counterpart of that of the Messiah, whose coming he predicted in the words: the Lord thy God will raise unto thee a prophet from the midst of thee, like myself'. (*Deuteronomy 18: 15.*) Moses had been sent by the Lord to lead a people out of the land of bondage into the Promised Land; the bond slaves were the Israelites; their taskmasters, the Egyptians under Pharaoh.

"Those whom Christ came to deliver from bondage were all the spirits which had fallen from God; their taskmasters were the Powers of Hell, under Lucifer.

"Before Moses could succeed in solving the problem before him, two things had to be done. First, he must persuade his people to agree to leave the land of their bondage and to accept him as their leader. Next, and far more difficult, he must compel the Egyptians and their king to allow the Israelites to depart, for that Pharaoh and his subjects would not part *willingly* with the cheap labor of their serfs, male and female, went without saying.

CONCERNING CHRIST—HIS LIFE AND WORK

“In the same way the redemption through Christ depended in the first place upon His success in persuading the fallen spirits, which, having reached the level of incarnation in human form, were groaning under the bondage of Evil, to declare themselves ready to abandon its ways. With this accomplished, there remained the harder task of compelling Lucifer’s government to surrender all those of its subjects who desired to return to God.

“With Moses as with Christ, the task involved two clearly defined steps.

“As regarded Moses personally, it was incumbent on him above all to remain firm before Pharaoh, and to allow himself to be diverted from his God-given mission neither by threats nor by blandishments, lest God’s plan come to nought by reason of his lack of purpose. The people of Israel, on their part, must do their share by declaring themselves willing to leave and by holding themselves in readiness for the journey. It then rested with God to grant them a decisive victory over Pharaoh and to consummate their deliverance. The manner in which this was to be achieved did not concern either Moses or the people; that was for God alone to decide.

“So too it was with Christ. He had nothing to gain by telling the people how the redemption was to be accomplished. It was His duty only to proclaim to them that the hour of their deliverance was near; that they must strive to make themselves worthy of the gift, and that it was He Whom God had sent as their Savior.

“On His own part, He must beware of succumbing to the Princes of Darkness who left no stone unturned to induce Him to forsake His God and to abandon His Divine mission. Like Moses, Christ must guard against being vanquished by the foe whom He had come to conquer. If He could hold out in His entrenchments against the assaults of Evil, it was for God to determine how the defense could be turned into a successful attack, for obviously, as a mortal, Christ could not wage an offensive campaign against spirits. The most that mortals can do is to defend themselves against the attacks of the Evil Powers when these attempt to lead them astray by means of insinuations, suggestions, temptation and intimidation, or by apparitions, as well as with the aid of human agents. Hence Christ could advance for an attack upon Satan only as a spirit, and only after His earthly death. Not until then could it be said of Him that ‘He had descended to Hell’.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"As I have told you, the possibility existed that Christ, the man, could be overcome by Satan; had this happened, the Prince of the Lower World would have numbered the first Son of God also among his vassals. In that event, God would have brought about the incarnation of another of the highest of the celestial princes to accomplish the work of redemption which, because of human infirmities, His First-born Son had failed to perform.

"You may shudder at the thought that Christ could have fallen before Satan's attacks, and yet this is a fact. You mortals do not even faintly appreciate the love of your Heavenly Father, Who did not spare His First-born, but Who, for your sake, risked losing Him as He had lost His second son. Nor can you picture to yourselves how desperate was the battle which Christ was forced to wage against all of Hell, in order that men might be redeemed.

"The least of the devils can bring about your desertion of God in a very few moments. The victory is his, for the offering of a handful of money, earthly fame, or sensual pleasures. But Christ, your oldest Brother, was assailed by all of Hell's forces led by Lucifer in person, not once and for a few instants only, but again and again throughout the whole span of a human life. Column after column of those sinister warriors advanced, day in, day out, upon the Son of Man, resorting at last to the most fiendish physical torments, until their victim, bleeding upon the Cross, died, indeed, in the body, but did not waver in His loyalty to His God. Satan had proved powerless against Him, yet He, against Whom the full forces of Hell were marshalled, was as human as you are, and was in every way like you.

"This, then, is the true picture of the Redeemer, and such was the way in which He performed His mission.

"Like Moses, who had to make himself known to the Israelites as Divinely sent and prove his claim by means of miracles, Christ owed it to the people to tell them Who He was, and to accredit His mission of redemption by similar means.

"Who was Christ, and what did He profess to be? 'I am Christ, the Son of the living God'. Such is His testimony of Himself, substantiated by the words of God: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased'. Christ was therefore the Son of God, and claimed to be nothing more. He was not the Deity. Not once did He say: 'I am God'. Not once did He assert that

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

He was God's equal in any respect. Never does He weary of repeating explicitly that He can do nothing by His own power, that His words are not His own, that His miracles owe nothing to Him. It is the Father Who has sent Him; from Whom He has derived His teachings; from Whom He has received the power to heal the sick and to raise the dead. Whatever He does is as the Father wills, and at the hour appointed by the Father.

"Just as a viceroy may act only in the name and on behalf of his sovereign by whom he was appointed, and only within the limits of authority delegated to him, so is it with Christ. Even if a ruler confers full powers upon his lieutenant, the latter cannot call those powers his own, for he is merely the ruler's dependent and can be relieved of his place at any moment. Thus Joseph was set over all the land of Egypt by Pharaoh who 'took off his signet ring from his hand and put it upon Joseph's hand, and arrayed him in vestures of fine linen . . . and said to him 'without thee, shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt'. Nevertheless, it was not Joseph, but Pharaoh, who had been, and continued to be, the sovereign head of the State. Joseph was merely his governor, even though he was invested with full regal powers. He did not hold these by virtue of his own right, but by voluntary bestowal on the part of the king, who could restrict or withdraw them at pleasure, or confer them upon someone else.

"This is the simplest way of illustrating the relations of Christ to God. God is Lord and Creator of all things, not excepting His Son. God is of *Himself*, eternal, omnipotent, omniscient. Not so His Son. Upon Him the Father has conferred the government of Creation, and foremost of all, the task of redemption. But the Son has nothing *by virtue of His own initiative*, neither His existence, nor His viceregal office, nor His power. Everything was conferred upon Him by the Father. Although in Heaven the Son be arrayed like unto His Father and act with Divine authority, nevertheless, it is not He Who is God, any more than it was Joseph who was the monarch of Egypt.

"This fact is so clearly brought out in the Holy Writ that it is surprising to find that people could ever have regarded Christ as God's equal, in the face of God's solemn declaration; I am the Lord thy God. Thou shalt have no other gods besides me .

"Not even those Christian denominations which revere Christ as the Deity and would make Him the equal of His Father in all things, dare assert that He ever said: 'I am God', but base their

contention upon the fact that He called Himself the Son of God. They argue as did the high priests, the scribes, and the Pharisees, of whom the Bible says: 'Because of these words the Jews sought more intently than ever to take his life, holding him guilty not only of profaning the Sabbath, but also of making himself equal to God by calling God his true father'. (*John 5 : 18.*)

"Christ did not defend Himself against the charge of having called God His own Father, for He was a Son of God in a sense which was not true of the other Sons of God, the Divine spirits. He was not only the highest of created spirits, but the *only one* whose celestial body had been called into existence by God. Of the others, the *spiritual part* was God-created, whereas their celestial bodies owed their existence to His First-born Son. Christ was therefore not only God's First-born, but the only one whose *whole being* was by *direct Divine creation*. He was alone of His kind. He was His Father's '*sole offspring*'.

"In another respect also He was the Son of God in a sense which applied to Him alone. Upon Him, and upon no one else, had God conferred the rule over creation. It was the same position as that held by Joseph in the kingdom of Egypt, under Pharaoh.

"In this particular, then, the Jews were right: Christ did call Himself a Son of God in a specific sense. He was *the* Son of God.

"But against the charge brought by His Jewish enemies, that He made Himself equal with God, Christ defended Himself vigorously. Again and again He protested that He was not from Himself, and that by His own power He could do nothing. No one who makes such an admission freely lays claim to the attributes of a Deity, a conclusion so obvious that not even the high priests and the scribes could have failed to see it, but although they understood well enough what Jesus meant by the phrase 'the Son of God', they professed not to, for they were seeking a ground for His death and could find none better than to assert that Christ was making Himself equal with God by calling Himself His Son. Once they were committed to this pretext, they must adhere to it at all costs; nothing that Christ could have said in refutation would have been of any avail.

"It is true that Christ had full authority on earth and in Heaven, but not from Himself. As Joseph held his power in Egypt by the grace of Pharaoh, so Christ derived His power from His Father. Neither Joseph nor Christ was the sovereign master.

CONCERNING CHRIST—HIS LIFE AND WORK

"The Father alone, and none besides Him, is God. The power resides in the Father exclusively, and in no other being. At His own pleasure the Father can delegate this power to any spirit, in and through which He performs His works. That power which was conferred upon Christ, could have been conferred by the Father upon any created spirit other than His First-born Son, and the great miracles worked by Christ could have been performed by any other man had God given him the necessary power. Christ Himself says frankly that the things He had done could be done by any one who believed in Him. 'He who believes in me, shall have the power to do the same deeds that I do, and even greater deeds'. (*John 14:12.*) Belief in Christ is belief in God; not, however, because Christ Himself is God, but because He is the promulgator of God's teachings. 'The doctrine that I have taught is not my own; it was my Father, who sent me, that directed me what I should teach and in which words I should present my doctrine'. (*John 12:49.*)

"Between the Father and Christ there prevails a perfect unity of love, a unity to which each of God's creatures can attain and for which Christ prays to God on behalf of His disciples. '. . . that they may be one, as we are one. I, united with them, and Thou with me, so that they may attain to the highest perfection of unity'. (*John 17:22, 23.*)

"You see how illogical it is for your former religion to base its contention of the Divinity of Christ upon the phrase: 'I and the Father are one', in the face of the fact that the same oneness that exists between them is promised to all who believe.

"If you will study those of Christ's utterances in which He describes His relations with His Father, you will see the impiety of referring to Christ as God; of picturing Him as the giver whereas He is but the recipient Who can give to others only those things which He Himself receives from God. The same sacrilege with which the Jews charged Christ when they falsely asserted that He made Himself God's equal, is committed today by the people who today raise Christ to a level with the Deity, in spite of the fact that He Himself spurned any such pretensions.

"Christ's contention concerning His own person, concerning the source of His doctrine and the power which He possessed was, therefore, that He had received each and everything from the Father. From Himself He had nothing. *He is not God.*

"There were things which God withheld, even from Christ,

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

and which He reserved to Himself. Witness Christ's answer to the mother of the sons of Zebedee: '. . . but the places at my right and at my left are not mine to give, for they will be bestowed upon those to whom they are allotted by my Father'. (*Matthew 20 : 23.*)

"Again, nothing is known by the Son of the Day of Judgment, the knowledge of which is the Father's alone: 'The day and the hour of fulfillment are known to no one, neither to the angels of heaven, nor to the Son, but to my Father alone. (*Matthew 24 : 36.*)

"Nor was Christ allowed by God to evade the agony of death upon the Cross. Hence His prayer in the garden of Gethsemane that the cup be permitted to pass, was not answered.

"Christ's own family as well as the Apostles and those of the people who believed in Him, saw in Him nothing more than a 'prophet — 'God's emissary'. It is true that His mother knew that in Him was incarnated one of the 'Sons of God' for this had been revealed to her by the angel, before Christ was born. But she was also aware that He was human and that He had human infirmities. His conduct in public and the doctrines preached by Him did not meet with her approval. She had known that His creed differed materially from the doctrines held by the Jewish religion, but to see Him proclaim His views openly to the multitudes distressed her sorely. She had pictured to herself His mission on earth in a very different light, and when she heard that Jesus in His sermons had spoken strongly about the spiritual guides of the Jewish people and had publicly branded as false many of the tenets of her ancient faith, she, in company with her other sons, sought to restrain Him, and even tried to compel Him to return to His parental home, believing that in this way she could allay the ill will that His actions had aroused among the high priests, scribes and Pharisees. 'And when his family heard it, they went out to lay hold on him: for they said, He is out of his mind'. (*Mark 3 : 21.*) 'At that time, not even his brothers believed in him'. (*John 7 : 5.*)

"That His mother and brothers should have discountenanced His conduct in public is easy to understand. They believed that the doctrines of the Jewish religion were true. Their ancestors had lived and died in that faith, and the fact that now an own son and brother should preach publicly that this faith embodied many errors, was more than these simple and inexperienced people could bear. Whatever they were told by their own clergy was final so far as they were concerned. Moreover, they lived in fear of their

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

fellow men. They were pointed at as the relatives of a man who was assailing the faith of his fathers. They had frequently to listen to criticism of themselves on that score by the head of the synagogue of their native village. Their business interest suffered. Hardest of all to bear was the news that the supreme ecclesiastical council had excluded Jesus from the synagogue, and had threatened to do the like with all those who adhered to Him or acknowledged Him as the Messiah. 'For the Jewish leaders had already agreed, to put a ban on all who might acknowledge Jesus as the Messiah'. (*John 9 : 22.*)

"The Jewish priesthood warned the people against Jesus and His doctrines, resorting freely to slander as a weapon, and alluding to Him as a 'false prophet', 'a man possessed of the devil', 'an agitator', 'a wine-bibber', 'a profligate', who passed his time in the company of wayward women and sat down at table with publicans and sinners. There was no expedient so low that they did not avail themselves of it to render harmless Him Who was a menace to their hold over the people. They could not endure to see the great mass of the people accepting as a religious truth something that differed from what they themselves preached. It was to them that the people owed obedience. What the clergy did not believe, the people *must* not believe, under penalty of being damned. 'Is there a single one among the leading people or the Pharisees who has been brought to believe in him? Not a man; it is only the common herd which understands nothing of the law. Curses on it!' (*John 7 : 48.*)

"It is the old, old hymn, intoned by the clergy of all denominations, as soon as it sees its influence on the people threatened by an evangelist of the truth.

"You too will become better acquainted with that melody than you have been in the past, as soon as you have made public the truths imparted by me, when you will witness a repetition of everything that took place in those days. The servant is not greater than his master, and you will be called a renegade priest, a false prophet, a madman, a man obsessed of the devil, a degenerate. Even your friends will heap reproaches on you, and tell you that you should have left well enough alone, and that what was good enough for the rest of the cloth, was surely good enough for you also. But be not afraid! Trust in God! What have you to fear of men? And on the other hand, by disseminating the truth you will be of great benefit to many. More than one member of the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

clergy even on reading your book will become convinced that it contains the truth, even though they may not be disposed to admit this openly. Things were no different in the days of Christ. 'Nevertheless, among the leaders of the people many believed in Jesus although they dared not admit it openly for fear of being put under the ban by the Pharisees, for they loved the glory that is of men more than the glory that is of God'. (*John 12 : 42, 43.*)

"Even the Apostles on more than one occasion felt doubts as to their Master, for they also had formed a different conception of the Messiah. Not until the day when Simon Peter gave utterance to his conviction: 'You are the Messiah, the Son of God of our Saviour', (*Matthew 16 : 16*) did His Apostles know that in Jesus of Nazareth the 'Son of God' had come upon earth. This conviction, however, had not been reached by Peter by reason of Christ's words and acts nor by any process of reasoning of his own, but by virtue of a revelation from God. '. . . this was not revealed to you by men, but by my heavenly Father'. (*Matthew 16 : 17.*)

"As to the manner in which the Divine revelations reached Christ I have already intimated this to you, but I wish to go into the subject more fully because it is essential to an understanding of Christ's life and work, and in order to make it clear to you that in this particular the experiences of Christ offer nothing altogether new or previously unheard of.

"You have only to recall the way in which God had conveyed His revelations and commandments to His instruments in the past. How did He communicate with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob? With Moses and Joshua? With the judges, kings and prophets? With Zacharias, Mary and Joseph? In precisely the same way He now communicated with Jesus who in this respect was not favored above those who had preceded Him as Divine instruments and emissaries. God caused the spirit-world to enter into communication with Him as with all the others, and through it He revealed all things that Christ required for the fulfillment of the task before Him.

"The prerequisites for communicating with the spirit-world were the same with Him as those which apply to any other person. It was but natural that His mediumistic gifts were of the highest, for He was the highest and purest of spirits incarnated in human form, ever created by God. The ability to concentrate, and to 'submerge the spirit' of which I spoke to you in connection with

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

the development of mediums, was possessed by Christ to an extent never attained by man before or since. Moreover, no other human medium has ever possessed a physical od as pure as that of Christ. In Him then the prerequisites for communicating with the Divine spirits existed to a degree which no other mortal can hope to attain.

“The problem given to Christ to solve on behalf of the kingdom of God, was the greatest ever assigned to a mortal, hence it was necessary that God send Him spirits in abundance, not only as regarded their numbers, but also with respect to their strength and ability.

“Among them went spirits of fortitude, to infuse new strength into Him when His own began to fail in the battle with the evil powers. Often these spirits were accompanied by those of hope, joy, and peace of soul. Again, militant angels from Michael's Legion came to His side, when Satan marshalled his legions in full force, and when the fury of their assaults threatened to be more than human strength could bear. Spirits of truth and understanding instructed Him as to the best way of bringing the word of God before the multitudes or of answering questions concerning Himself or His teachings. Spirits of wisdom taught Him how to solve individual problems, but all this assistance came only after He had exhausted His own resources without avail. With Him as with all other mortals the motto holds good: ‘God helps those who help themselves’. If you would arrive at a goal, use your own strength first, and if this does not suffice, God will intercede with the aid of His spirit-world. God does not heedlessly distribute favor, and success. He demands that everyone exert himself to the utmost, and this He demanded of Christ also.

“When the sick required His attention, spirits of healing came to His rescue whenever His own native healing powers proved inadequate to cure the diseased od of the patient, although in many cases these powers sufficed to bring about the desired end without the help of the healing spirits.

“Nevertheless, Christ did not cure everyone who appealed to Him, for there are cases in which sickness is a punishment sent by God, to be suffered by the patient for a period commensurate with his offense. Christ's power of clairvoyance and clairsentience enabled Him in every instance to tell whether or not the supplicant's plea should be granted. Moreover, a belief in God and in Himself as God's envoy was exacted by Him in every cure which He effected.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"Not in all cases was the cure permanent, for many individuals relapsed into their former ailment as soon as they lost their faith in God and in Christ, the main purpose of His healing being to bear witness to the truth of His message.

"In connection with 'raising the dead', I am compelled to say something that may surprise you. In all cases so referred to, both those mentioned in the Old Testament and those ascribed to Christ, the spirits of those who were thus raised had not actually passed into the Hereafter. No one who has actually died can again come to life; his spirit can never again take possession of the body from which it departed at the moment of corporeal death. This is a Divine law which admits of no exceptions. His race on earth is run, without recall. Only by rebirth can his spirit ever again take human shape.

"All individuals recalled to life by Christ were those whose spirits had indeed emerged from their bodies but still remained connected with the same by a slender band of od. This was so feeble, that the spirit could not have returned to the body either by its own efforts or by virtue of any human assistance, and that, in consequence, death would have ensued very shortly by the rupture of the odic band. In the case of Lazarus, this had already become so weak that the vitality which could be conveyed to his body was insufficient to prevent the setting in of decay. Hence, neither the odor which accompanies that process nor the livid spots which appear at its inception are infallible symptoms of final decease.

"The fact that the 'dead' so raised were only cases of suspended animation is clearly indicated by the words of Christ when He raised the daughter of Jairus: 'The girl is not dead, but asleep'. (*Matthew 9:24*.) These words have been explained as a jest, but Christ did not jest in such matters, least of all when He was engaged in proving the Divine character of His mission to the people. In the case of Lazarus also He calls the attention of His Apostles to the fact that death had not taken place, for on hearing of the man's sickness, He said to them: 'This sickness will not end in his death, but will serve to glorify God'. (*John 11:4*), and when, as his friends thought, Lazarus had died, Jesus said again: 'Our friend Lazarus is fallen asleep; but I go, that I may awake him out of sleep'. But when once more His Apostles failed to understand Him, Christ, seeing the uselessness of further explanations which in any event they would have misunderstood, said:

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

'Lazarus is dead'. This was perhaps not a strictly accurate statement of the condition of Lazarus, but it was the only one that He could use, for at the time Lazarus was already in his tomb, and people thought of him as being dead. Had this really been the case, Christ would not have said a few days earlier: 'This sickness is not unto death', nor could He, after the entombment, have used the words: 'Our friend is fallen asleep'. On both occasions Christ stated the truth, since Lazarus was dead not in reality, but to all appearances.

"Nevertheless, nothing that I have said detracts from the merits of the case, for what Christ did could not have been accomplished by any human power, but only through the power of God. This is true of every instance in which Christ recalled the dead to life. Human power was of no avail, and the Divine spirits interceded, accomplishing whatever was needed to allow the return of the spirit into the body. Christ, by clairvoyance, observed the work of the spirit-world, and at His word, the spirit was reunited with its body and the seemingly deceased arose.

"It does not occur to you mortals that such things are done in accordance with Divine laws. This is true not only of the raising of the dead, but of all other miracles performed by Jesus. When He turned water into wine, this task also was accomplished by the Divine spirit-world, and for this reason not even He was able to bring about the transmutation instantly, as His mother wished. His 'hour was not yet come', because the spirit-world had not completed the necessary work, for time is required, even by spirits.

"It is because you do not understand these processes that you fail to grasp the meaning of certain words found in the Bible which, in consequence, have been incorrectly rendered into your several languages. Thus your version of the Scriptural account of the raising of Lazarus contains a sentence which must impress you as utterly incomprehensible: 'Seeing her weeping, and that the Jews who were with her, were likewise in tears, Jesus was so moved with indignation in the spirit and troubled himself'. (*John 11:33.*) Why indeed should Jesus be moved with indignation and trouble Himself at the sight of the weeping sister and friends of a man who had died? On the contrary, the original text reads: 'A shivering passed through his spirit and he was shaken', for when spirits come near you and allow their powerful odic radiations to act upon you, you too feel a sensation of shivering and actually begin to shake. The sensation is an agreeable one in the presence

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

of good spirit-beings, and unpleasant when it originates from the proximity of evil ones. It was the sensation produced by the nearness of good spirits which passed through Christ on this occasion; the powerful odic radiations of the spirits about Him, infusing Him with their strength, by virtue of which He consummated the work of the spirits with the summons: 'Lazarus, come forth'.

"To raise the dead was something that Christ could undertake only when He had been assured by messengers from God that such was the Divine will, for all signs which bore testimony to the power of God were manifested solely when they were of special service in promoting the aggrandisement of the kingdom of God or the sanction of His Emissary and the latter's teachings.

"In public Christ never mentioned His connection with the Divine spirit-world, of which He spoke only when compelled to do so. Thus He replied to the Jews who reproached Him with casting out demons with the aid of Beelzebub: 'But if I drive out the demons with the help of one of God's spirits, then indeed the spirit-world of God has already come to you'. (*Matthew 12 : 28.*)

"Associated with the gift of clairvoyance in its highest form which was peculiar to Jesus, was His ability to recognize the mental state of persons and to read their thoughts. In all times there have been people similarly gifted, although your age has no understanding of this matter and above all, does not realize that here also there are involved certain eternal laws governing these phenomena.

"Even in the case of Christ these laws applied in every particular, and were taken into account by Him in the sense that He always selected the time and place for communicating with spirits with a view to securing the conditions most favorable for the purpose. He Who counselled His adherents to withdraw to their inner chambers for prayer, Himself sought shady hillsides in the cool of the dusk and the night, for light and warmth and the noises of the day exert an exceedingly adverse effect upon the formation of the od required for communicating with the spirit-world. Hence He preferred the solitude of the woods and gardens, and the darkness and coolness of the night.

"Furthermore, all predictions of the future made by Christ had been learned by Him from the messengers sent to Him by His Father.

"You have been in the habit heretofore of regarding Christ's

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

miracles and prophecies as evidence of *His Divine nature*. This conclusion is entirely erroneous. You confuse the Workman with His implement. The Workman is God. His *visible implement* may be any being whatsoever, while His *invisible implements*, are the Divine spirits assigned to that being. A little reflection on your part would enable you to discover this fact for yourselves. When you, personally, used to preach on the 'Divinity of Christ' and tried to prove this by means of His miracles and prophecies, did it never occur to you to draw a comparison between Him and God's emissaries who had preceded Him? Did not they perform miracles similar to those performed by Christ? Were the miracles accomplished by Moses any less wonderful than those which Christ performed? Were the transformation of a rod into a serpent, and that of water into blood, the killing of the first-born of Egypt, the passage of the Red Sea, the flow of water, caused by the stroke of a rod and many other signs given by Moses of less account than the transformation of water into wine, walking upon the waves or conjuring the storm? If, then, you cite the acts of Jesus as evidence of His Divine status, you are bound to concede the same character to Moses. Were not the sick healed and the 'dead' raised by many mortals who were Divine instruments? Then these mortals also are entitled to be regarded as Divine, as are Joshua, Elijah, Elisha and other great prophets, not to mention the Apostles, since they performed miracles equal to those performed by Christ, and according to His word, 'greater works than these shall they do'. You can cite not a single miracle performed by Jesus which has not been performed in the same or in a similar manner by other mortals acting as envoys of God. You misunderstand completely God's purpose in bringing these miracles about. You do not pause to think that God must establish His instruments as such by the performance of the unusual, before He can expect humanity to recognize them as Divinely appointed.

"In the fulfillment of their mission, all of God's envoys have suffered greatly at the hands of men. Every one has had his Calvary. They have been the vessels from which radiated the Divine truth and light, a light which mankind, lying in the bonds of darkness, could not endure, as being too bright for eyes afflicted with sin. Men turned from the light and sought to destroy the human vessels which served as lamps. So it has always been; so it is today, and so it will remain while there are human eyes sore with

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

sin, which ache when the light of the truth is turned upon them. The Evil Powers, and all mortals enslaved by them, hate this light and its bearers, and do their utmost to encompass their destruction.

"How desperate, then, would be the efforts on the part of Evil to break the power of the greatest Light-Bearer Who ever came upon earth! How painful the road that Christ had to travel!

"His inner sufferings at the hands of Evil were hidden from human eyes, and therefore nothing is said about them by the Bible beyond the very casual account of His temptation in the wilderness. Yet the onslaughts made upon Him there by Satan were so savage, that any one of the earlier Divine emissaries would have abandoned God, if He had allowed the Powers of Hell to proceed against him with the same vigor as He permitted them to assail Christ. Moreover, the bodily tortures which Jesus had to undergo until His last breath were such, that His predecessors could not have held out against them, the less so as they had to be borne in addition to mental suffering equally severe.

"It is true that the sufferings of Christ had a higher significance than did those of any other of the Divine prophets. For them, death spelled the fulfillment of their tasks, if they had remained true to God. For Christ, however, the end of His earthly life marked only the fulfillment of a portion of His mission, the more important part of which was still to be completed thereafter, by gaining a victory over the Prince of Darkness. His crucifixion was a condition precedent to that victory, not indeed, crucifixion in itself, but His ability to endure it without faltering in His loyalty to His Master. He might, indeed, while yet alive upon the Cross, have lost faith in God at the last moment, and gone over to the Enemy. Had He done so, He would have died upon the Cross nevertheless, but defeated and apostate. Until that moment, He had stood upon the defensive against the terrific hail of missiles that Hell poured upon Him; had He yielded, all would have been lost. The effort at redemption would have failed and Christ would have been a prisoner of the Prince of Darkness.

"If, on the other hand Christ held out against the most dreadful anguish of soul and body inflicted on Him by the Infernal powers, the moment of His death on earth would mark also the beginning of the second part of the War of Redemption. He, Who as a mortal, had stood on the defensive against the Powers of Hell, would now, as a spirit, advance to attack them in order

to render His victory complete. To force the decision He would descend into Hell. 'He also descended into the lower parts of the universe'.

"However, I shall dwell a little longer upon the first stage of this war, the most important that was ever fought, and pass in review those hours of Christ's human suffering which you call the Passion, seeing that humanity appreciates far too little the unspeakable anguish which this Divinely-sent Bearer of the Cross was forced to endure in order that men might be saved.

"On the evening before His death Jesus was in the guest-chamber of a house, in company with His disciples. The feast of the passover which He was observing with them was also His farewell feast, but who among you can measure and realize the anguish of His soul? He knew from the Divine spirit-messengers that all preparations for His arrest and speedy execution had already been made. He knew that one of His disciples had had dealings with the high priests and for a traitor's reward of thirty pieces of silver had declared himself ready to deliver his Master to them. And at that very moment, the traitor was lying at table with Him. They were not seated about a long table, as you think, and as they are shown in your paintings, but were reclining upon the skins of animals, elevated, at the head by bolsters, gathered in groups of three about low taborets, their left elbows resting on the bolsters, their right hands serving to convey the food before them. At the same taboret with Christ reclined John and Judas, John to the left, his head close to his Master's breast, and on His right, Judas, who dared not meet his Master's eye and was anxiously awaiting the moment when he could leave the chamber without attracting attention.

"The Master's heart bled on seeing before Him His traitor in this youth, whose terrible end He foresaw. 'It had been good for that man if he had never been born'. As He looked upon him, Christ's eyes filled with tears, for His heart was filled with love for even this lost brother. In His mind arose a picture of what within a very few hours was to be a reality: Judas, despair in his soul, standing, rope in hand before the tree on which he was to end his own life, and beside him Lucifer, ready to take the spirit of him who he had led astray, into the Pit. Terrified at the vision, the Master trembled.

"As for the other Apostles, would they stand by Him and console Him in the hour of His martyrdom? The events that the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

next twelve hours were to bring forth passed before His mind's eye. He could see them all fleeing in terror for their own lives, and Peter, shaking with dread before a maid, denying all knowledge of his master with oaths and curses. He saw the devils crowding about the door of the guest-chamber, ready to seize upon His disciples as they went out, and in this very night fill their minds with doubt of their Master, in order that they might offer no support or help to One Who was doomed to die. 'Satan hath asked to have you, that he might sift you as wheat'. Why had Satan desired this? Only now it had been divinely revealed to him what he had at stake in this war. God's sense of justice did not permit Him to conceal any longer from Lucifer the fact that the battle which was now to open between him and Christ was to decide the sovereignty of Hell over the fallen spirits. God had revealed to Lucifer that Christ, should He remain steadfast throughout the death-agony which was at hand, would thereafter as a spirit advance to an attack upon Hell at the head of the celestial legions; that he, the Prince of Hell would be overcome and would be deprived of an essential part of his sovereignty. At this news, Satan trembled; then, appealing to that sense of the Divine justice which on one occasion had given him absolute sovereignty over the fallen spirits, he demanded that God observe strict neutrality in the decisive battle which was impending. What Satan asked was, that God withdraw His hand entirely from Jesus, leaving Him not even any human support, while allowing Hell to have a free hand. Should God accede to these demands, Lucifer hoped that by doing his utmost, he would succeed in breaking the spirit of this Jesus of Nazareth at the last moment, and in driving Him to despair of His cause.

"God granted the terms asked by Satan with the sole exception of reserving to Himself the right to strengthen Christ's purely physical vitality. Had He not done so, Christ would have died in the garden of Gethsemane, and His martyrdom would never have reached consummation.

"At Lucifer's desire, all the mental and physical anguish on earth, crowded into a few short hours, was to be concentrated upon his antagonist, coincidentally with an attack to be launched upon Him and His followers by the entire infernal hosts. For Jesus, alone, betrayed by one of His disciples, deserted by the others, denied any Divine aid against the forces of Hell, Lucifer hoped to prepare an end worthy of a Judas.

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

“After Judas had left the guest-chamber, and even as Jesus gave to His Apostles the wine and the bread symbolical of His approaching death, His heart was bleeding from a thousand wounds. He was human, as you are, and had no advantage over other mortals during this hour and those which were to follow. On the contrary, He lacked even those things which are most men’s, to fortify and console them in the hour of suffering.

“Picture Him now, going out into the dark of the night to the garden of Gethsemane. The night is no man’s friend, least of all his who is overwhelmed with sorrow. His disciples, on whom the evil spirit-forces are already at work, walk silently beside Him, in dread of what is to come. Under the burden of His mental torments, He too is silent.

“At the remote spot in the garden, chosen by Him as the place in which to offer prayer for strength, Lucifer is in wait with his ablest assistants, ready to break down their intended victim’s spiritual resistance by their united efforts. This is the very opportunity which God has conceded to the Prince of Darkness.

“Human words would fail to portray the terrors of the visions held up by Hell to its victim in this brief hour. As once the same Lucifer, when he tempted the Son of Man in the wilderness, had shown to Him the kingdoms of the world in all their splendor in order to cause His fall, so now and to the same end he exhibited to Christ all that is fearful and detestable in mankind, causing to pass before His eyes pictures of blaspheming, sinful humanity in its full viciousness and corruption, in a steady succession of hideous pictures. Next he showed to Jesus the supposed ‘fruits’ of His years of endeavor among the Jews as God’s people, pointing mockingly to His disciples, one of them actually approaching at the head of a multitude, the others fast asleep near by, with never a word of comfort for their Master and unwilling to sacrifice a single hour of sleep for His sake. ‘And wouldst thou die to prove thy gospel, for such as these?’ Lucifer’s mocking voice sounded in His ears, ‘for such as blaspheme thy Father and will condemn thee as a fool if that thou givest thy life for this perverse generation. And hast thou taken thought what thy end will be?’ Before the clairvoyant eyes of his trembling victim there now passed the scenes of the suffering in store for Him; His capture, the flight of His disciples, Peter’s denial, the roar of the multitude which but a few days earlier had hailed His entry into Jerusalem and which now thirsted for His blood, the death sentence, the flagellation,

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

His captors' brutality, the crown of thorns, Calvary, the Crucifixion, — everything painted in its most terrifying aspects, in order that He might give way to despair and abandon His resistance. All the while the spirits of hopelessness and desperation were driving the maddest of thoughts into the mind of this victim of theirs whom all had forsaken. His pulse throbbed, His whole body was shaken with fever, His heart threatened to burst. The terror of death seized upon Him, drops of blood oozing from His pores and trickling to the ground. Through it all, His disciples were sleeping peacefully.

"The meager outlines preserved by your Bible of the story of the Passion of Jesus fail utterly to convey to your minds the anguish of soul and body suffered by your Redeemer. Indeed, many of the worst tortures are not even mentioned in the Bible. Thus, nothing whatever is said there of the frightful hours which He was compelled to spend in the underground dungeons of the courthouse, fetid and swarming with vermin, into which the soldiers had thrust Jesus after they had scourged and mocked Him and crowned Him with thorns, and after they had rubbed salt into the countless deep gashes left by the lash upon His lacerated body and had bound His hands, lest by removing the salt He might find some relief from His unspeakable torments.

"Never did man endure such torture as did this Son of God incarnated. Through its human tools, Hell did its worst, for in Him it recognized its greatest foe who could ever appear on earth. But not even the physical sufferings which it prepared for Him could equal those which His soul had to endure; moreover, both forms of torment, mental and bodily, were applied to Him simultaneously. Add to this that to the last He was without any human consolation, and, what was still harder, without any Divine aid. God had withdrawn His protecting hand and had left Him helpless to the devices of Hell. The cry uttered by Jesus as He hung dying upon the Cross: 'My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?' reveals in full the mental agony which He felt on finding Himself forsaken by all in this hour of supreme physical suffering. Satan should never be able to allege the excuse that his failure to reduce this mortal to submission was due to the help received by his victim from external sources. He should be forced to confess that he had met his match in an unaided human being, who, in spite of the most excruciating torments of mind and body, could not be driven to desert His God. (*Matthew 27:46*) (*Mark 15:34*)

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

“The Biblical account, according to which the mother of Jesus stood by the Cross, accompanied by John, is incorrect. Even this consolation was denied Him. Not one of those dearest to Him was near, at the Crucifixion. They could not have borne the sight, as where, indeed, can you find a mother who would look on while her child was being crucified? Again, you go so far as to assume that Mary was *standing* by the Cross throughout; had she been present at all, she would surely not have remained standing, but would have fallen unconscious. Hence it is also untrue that Christ exclaimed from the Cross: ‘Woman, behold thy son!’ and to the disciple: ‘Behold thy mother’. He did, in fact, speak similar words to Mary and John as He was being led from the court after Pilate had pronounced the death-sentence and while His mother and John were clinging to Him in anguish until they were torn away by the soldiers. His mother had been present at the trial, as had the disciples, and had never lost hope that it would end in His favor, for there constantly recurred to her mind the story of Abraham, whose son was spared from sacrifice at the last instant, even as the knife with which he was to be slain was being bared. To this day there has not been a mother who would not attend a trial in which her child’s life hung in the balance, nor on the other hand is there a mother who would go to witness the execution of her own offspring.

“To see His mother on the verge of swooning from agony and terror cut Jesus to the soul, and all He thought of was to spare her any further sight of His own suffering. He therefore begged John to take her to his home until everything was over, and spoke lovingly to her, urging her to go with John and to implore God for strength in this hour of tribulation, and telling her that the things which He must now suffer were as the Heavenly Father had willed and that after three days she would see Him again (*John 19:25-27*)

“John willingly acceded to his Master’s request and took the mother, pierced by a thousand sorrows and keeping to her feet only with the utmost effort, to his home; not permanently, as might be gathered from the text of your Bible, but for the time being, to remove her from these harrowing surroundings. At that home also foregathered others, who had remained faithful to Jesus. Some time later, when it was fair to assume that the crucifixion had been carried out, some of them, among whom was Mary Magdalene, went to a spot whence the site of the execution could be seen, and returned to relate the death of Jesus. (*Mark 15:40*)

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

“His mother staid at the home of John only so long as she lingered in Jerusalem. In the end she returned to Nazareth, the home of her other children and her own. Naturally, she often revisited Jerusalem to see the Apostles, in particular John, as long as they continued their sojourn there.

“As during His life Christ had been confirmed as God’s envoy by signs, so was He in the hour of His death. The sun’s light failed for three hours, and a darkness came over the land, not by reason of natural causes but as a sign from God. At the moment when Jesus gave up the ghost, the veil of the temple was rent in the midst, as a token that the wall dividing the realm of God from that of Satan had been shattered by His death. The earth shook and the rocks were rent, but the story recorded in your version of the Gospel of Saint Matthew that the dead had arisen from their tombs and had been seen by many in Jerusalem is a falsification of one of the original, accurate texts, which reads: ‘The veil in the temple was rent in two from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake; and the rocks were rent; and the tombs were opened; and many bodies of those who had fallen asleep were cast forth. Many, who had come from the holy city, did see the bodies lying there’. This text which is accurate, therefore records what naturally would, and did happen, namely that the tombs carved into the rocks were opened by the earthquake shocks and that the bodies were cast out upon the surface, and were, of course, in plain sight of the many who had come from the city to witness the crucifixion and who would have to pass close to the shattered tombs.

“Here you have merely another of the many instances of the falsifications introduced in the past into the Sacred Texts, for very particular reasons. The false doctrine had been set up that the earthly bodies of men will be resurrected on some future day, and in order to sustain this doctrine with passages from the Bible, this particular passage, in addition to others, was distorted by altering the original text which read: ‘The bodies of those who had fallen asleep were cast forth’, into: ‘Many bodies of the *saints* that had fallen asleep were *raised*’. The word ‘*saints*’ had to be interpolated if only for the reason that it would never do to say that the bodies of the *unsaintly* also had been raised at the death of Christ. Still greater a difficulty remained to be overcome in falsifying this passage, inasmuch as the Church holds that there could have been no resurrection prior to that of Christ, Who was

CONCERNING CHRIST — HIS LIFE AND WORK

the first of the dead to arise. Hence it was necessary to insert the sentence: 'after his resurrection they entered into the holy city and appeared to many'. They who committed this falsification did not pause to consider that it had already been expressly stated that the bodies were raised on Good Friday, or three days before Christ's resurrection and whether they appeared to the people of Jerusalem on that same day or on Easter Sunday in no way enters into the question. Besides, where did these bodies which allegedly had risen on Good Friday pass the intervening days? Where were they after Easter Sunday? Did they return to their tombs and if not, where did they go? It is strange that not one of the other three Evangelists speaks of this resurrection on Good Friday, and as a matter of fact, Matthew did not say the things that are attributed to him, as you have seen from my explanation.

"Christ was dead. His earthly death had released His spirit from its material vesture. As a mortal He had withstood all the onslaughts of Hell and had thereby performed the first part of His Messianic mission successfully. He had not been conquered by Hell. Nevertheless, this alone did not insure His victory over the Enemy whom He had repelled, for in a battle between two opponents, he who acts wholly on the defensive, is not truly the victor, even if he succeeds in defending himself against the other's attacks. In order to claim a victory he must overpower his antagonist and force him to acknowledge himself beaten.

"This was true of Christ as well. As a man He had repelled all the attacks of His mighty opponent; He had done all that man can do. Now, however, that He was freed from the flesh, He could, as a spirit, advance upon His enemy, the Prince of Darkness, and descended into Hell relying upon the all-conquering Divine power, which as a mortal He had earned by His loyalty to God, Who now sent to Him the Heavenly hosts as His comrades in arms. Now began a struggle like that which had occurred when Lucifer with his adherents had battled with the Heavenly Legions in the days of the great Revolt of God's spirit-kingdom. The present battle was waged in Lucifer's realm and was a duel between him and Christ, as well as a general engagement between the legions of Heaven and those of Darkness. This mighty conflict raged until it had invaded the lowest depths of Hell into which Lucifer and his followers had been forced to retreat. Then, when the defeat of the Powers of Hell was no longer in doubt, many of those who had formerly served it but who, never-

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

theless, repented of their disloyalty to God, went over to the side of the Heavenly hosts and fought with them against their former oppressors. The number of those who thus deserted grew from moment to moment.

"When Lucifer saw that all was lost he begged for mercy. He who in the desert had tried to tempt the Son of God by offering Him the kingdoms of the world, now stood quaking before Him Whose faith in His Sonship of God he had then sought to undermine and trembled at the thought that this same Jesus of Nazareth intended to deprive him of all his sovereign power, and that the moment had arrived when he himself with all his followers would be doomed forever to the Pit of Darkness. He was but too familiar with the prophecy which foretold that the time was coming when he, as the Prince of the kingdom of the dead would be hurled into the uttermost depths, shorn of all his power and deprived of his sovereignty over God's fallen children.

"Christ however disclosed to him that he was not to be deprived of his sovereignty entirely, but that this was to be restricted to apply to those of his subjects who were whole-heartedly devoted to him, but that any who desired to leave his kingdom and to return to God must be released unconditionally. They were no longer to be regarded as his subjects. He might, if so disposed, bind them to himself by artifice and guile, but not by force, as heretofore.

"Satan accepted these terms. He had no other choice, and had, in fact, expected much harder conditions. The title by which he held his sovereignty and which God Himself had once issued to him was changed to suit the wishes of his conqueror, Christ, and God, in Whose name the Victor made terms with Lucifer is the just and almighty Protector Who warrants the exact observance of these peace-stipulations. To His power everything, even Hell, is subject. His commands must be obeyed even by those who are His enemies.

"Thus was concluded the mighty task of redemption. In all of its important aspects, God's Plan of Salvation had been realized. The gulf that yawns between the Realm of Darkness and the kingdom of God had been spanned by a bridge which could be crossed freely by all who desired to leave Satan's Foreign Legion and to return to their old home in the land of God. No sentinel in the service of Hell could prevent them from passing the frontier.

CONCERNING CHRIST—HIS LIFE AND WORK

“Surrounded by His triumphant hosts, Christ returned from Satan’s stronghold to the sphere that once had been the Paradise, and the cherubim who had since stood on guard at its entrance lowered their flaming swords in salute to their Lord and Master and His victorious spirit-legions. In Paradise a halt was made until the day on which, with Christ at its head, the great procession re-entered the portals of Heaven.

“During this time, however, neither Christ nor His host of spirits had been idle. Their stay in Paradise must be utilized to spread throughout all Creation the news of the Redeemer’s triumph and to urge all who were minded thereto that they begin their homeward journey. Especial pains were taken to seek out the countless sufferers in the lower spirit-spheres in order that they might be instructed, admonished, cheered and consoled, and incited to arouse themselves to set out upon the road to the Father’s house which Christ had laid open. Christ Himself was foremost in counselling these unhappy spirits and in seeing to it that as many as possible of them should take the homeward path without delay. This is indicated in the words of Saint Peter: ‘. . . in which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison, that aforetime were disobedient, when the long suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing. . .’ (*1st Peter 3 : 19, 20.*)

“Materialized in human form, Christ appeared to those who had been closest to Him in life and had borne much sorrow with Him and on His behalf: His mother, the Apostles and His friends.

“The day arrived on which He returned to the spirit-hosts which were awaiting Him in Paradise, after He had said farewell to His friends on earth and had assigned to each his task. This was the day of the Ascension, on which, as a conquering hero, He led His army back into the kingdom of God.

“From the time at which the Redemption was achieved by Christ it has been free to those who have fallen from God to make use of the opportunity thus offered to them. Satan’s prison-camps have been thrown open by Christ’s victory, and their inmates are free to leave; whether or not they avail themselves of the opportunity, rests with them.

“Christ has indeed built the bridge, but whether it is used in returning home is left to the decision of each individual, who must not shirk the hardships attendant upon the journey. Consider what the prisoners taken in the World War were ready to under-

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

go after peace had released them from their captivity, wandering from the furthest steppes of Siberia with bleeding feet, week after week, in their efforts to make their way back to their native land.

“The prisoners of Satan must do likewise if they would find their way back to God. Christ will be beside them ready to help them to overcome the hardships they will face in their wanderings. His messengers show them the way, strengthen, cheer and console the travellers, and raise to their feet those who have stumbled and fallen from exhaustion. But the homeward bound traveller may not turn back and re-enter the ranks of the enemy by deserting God; if he does, the longer it will be before he can again come to the resolution: ‘I will arise and go to my Father’. But every one, without exception, will see the day on which he can no longer appease his hunger for peace and happiness with the husks of evil, and will resolutely set out on the homeward path.

“For some, the span of a single human life will be sufficient. Others must suffer for hundreds, and still others, for thousands of years, sundered from God in their race for the gold of happiness which they seek in the counterfeiters’ dens of iniquity, and led by Satan’s will-o’-the-wisps from one delusion into another. It is by their own fault that they must pass through repeated incarnations, and that they were so slow to find the Road of Light which the loving care of their Father and of His Son, the Redeemer of the fallen, has built for them.



Christ's Teachings and Modern Christianity

"See to it, that no man captivates you by means of so-called science or by the foolish and vain theories grounded on the traditions of men; for they have their source in the evil powers that rule the world, but have nothing in common with the teaching of Christ." *Colossians 2 : 8.*

DURING the first spiritistic *seance* which I attended, I had asked of the spirit which was speaking through the medium: "Why is it that the teachings of Christ no longer seem to exert any influence upon the people of today?" and had been told in reply that we no longer possess Christ's precepts in their pristine purity and clearness, but that in the course of time, many human errors had crept into the Christian religion. Later on, I received a detailed exposition, in which the true teachings of Christ were compared with the doctrines of the Christian churches of today, and particularly with those of the Catholic faith, of which I was a priest. On that occasion I was told as follows:

"At what point in a brook do you find the purest and clearest water: near the source or near the mouth? Most assuredly, near the source, for as the spring-water flows on as a streamlet, it loses its coolness, and with it, its purity and clearness. Turbid rills, coming into it from either bank, mingle their waters with its current. Further down it receives the drainage from human habitations, human and animal refuse, and waste from mills and factories. It no longer refreshes, and those who must drink its waters to quench their thirst, do so only when forced to and when no spring-water is to be had.

"The same may be said of the truth. Taken at its source, it is a refreshing, life-infusing draft, but when drawn from the stream which has been flowing for a distance through the lowlands of human error and worldly passions, its purity and coolness are gone. The admixture of untruth and error has given it an ill flavor. The thirsty truth-seeker drinks of it with inner repugnance, and only when denied the clear water of the fountain head of truth.

"The teaching of Christ met with a fate like that of the water from a spring which, as a brook, flows by the haunts of men. It also was defiled when it flowed through human channels. The evil that is in men, and the Powers of Evil which surround them,

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

have so sullied and rendered unpalatable Christ's pure precepts, that they have lost their life-giving power.

"The source of all truth is God, a source to which man cannot ascend in his terrestrial shape. He must therefore depend upon the bearers of the truth who draw from that source. These are God's spirit-messengers, and only they are admitted to that source. Only they possess the clean vessels in which the truth can be brought fresh and unsullied to mankind.

"The first and the greatest of truth-bearers was Christ as a *spirit*, in the days preceding His incarnation. It was He Who, partly in person, partly through His subordinates in the spirit-world, brought the first draft of truth to humanity. Hence the active intercourse with spirits in the case of the sick and exhausted world of the time of the Old Testament. Hence the coming and going, in the early days of the Christian era, of truth-bearing spirits, constantly drawing upon God's fountain-head and bringing the water of truth, at Christ's behest, to the parched souls of men.

"It is, therefore, one of the fundamental precepts of the true Christian faith, that men cannot promulgate the truth out of their own consciousness. They can do so only as instruments of God's spirit-world.

"Even Christ as a *mortal* could not of His own volition ascend to the source of the truth. As a man, He had no more inherent knowledge of the truth than had others. What He had known in the days when, as the first-created spirit He abode with God, had been obliterated from His memory by His entry into a material body as completely as the knowledge of a previous existence is obliterated from the recollection of other men, although the time was, when they too had abode with the Father. The property of substance by which the recollection of a previous existence is wiped out, exerted the same action upon the incarnated Christ that it exerts upon every other spirit incarnated in human form.

"Thus Christ after His incarnation was dependent upon the spirit messengers sent to Him by the Father, as He acknowledged when He said: 'You shall see the heaven opened, and the angels of God ascending and descending upon the Son of man'. (*John 1 : 51.*) He was but God's envoy, and had no advantage over the Divine envoys who had preceded Him, for they, too, had been instructed by God's spirits. Neither Enoch, Abraham, Moses, nor any of the Old Testamentary prophets uttered things evolved in

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

their own minds, but all, in the words of Saint Peter 'preached the gospel by a *holy spirit* sent forth from heaven'.

"Christ repeatedly assures His hearers that He speaks not of his own knowledge, but only as He had heard from the Father. It was the Father Who directed Him as the occasion required, by means of His spirit-messengers 'constantly ascending and descending above the Son of Man' '. . . then you will know, that I do nothing of myself but only speak as my Father has taught me'. (*John 8 : 28.*) '. . . I speak to the world only those things, that I have heard from Him'. (*John 8 : 26.*)

"The same fountain-head of truth from which Christ had drawn was to serve all those who came to spread His gospel after Him. The first of these would be the Apostles, who were not merely to repeat the words which they had heard Christ utter, as they interpreted them, since it is a common human failing to quote inaccurately when called upon to repeat what someone else has said. Of a hundred listeners to the same speaker, no two, when asked to repeat his remarks, will agree precisely as to his words or his meaning. Hence the Apostles were to be instructed anew by the spirits of the truth, concerning those things that Christ had spoken to them as a man, in order that His words might suffer no distortion from their erroneous interpretation. They were to receive from God's spirits confirmation of the teachings proclaimed by Christ, as well as certain new truths which He had withheld from them, either because under God's plan of Salvation these truths could not be announced before the Redeemer's death, or because the Apostles themselves were not yet qualified to receive, and hence, to understand them.

"You will find this statement of mine confirmed in Christ's own words: 'Then will I ask the Father, and He will give you another helper, who will be with you henceforth. That helper are the spirits of truth'. (*John 14 : 16.*) 'I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when the spirits of truth have come, they shall guide you into all the truth'. (*John 16 : 12, 13.*) '. . . after me will come the helper, holy spirits, whom the Father will send in my name, to teach you whatever else there may be and to recall to you what I have said'. (*John 14 : 26.*) According to these words, then, the spirits of truth had a twofold task before them. First, it was their duty to *bring to the remembrance* of the faithful all that Christ, while on earth, had told them, and to confirm its truth. After that, they were to

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

continue the teaching which Christ had begun, and to proclaim those further truths which He had purposely withheld for reasons which I have already stated. Moreover, the spirits of God were to be with the faithful forever, since, what with the power of evil and the weakness of man, the fear of error was ever present. The living must not be dependent upon the religious traditions of their ancestors, for such human traditions would bear no warrant of truthfulness, nor could those, to whom they would be handed down, be expected to be able to know what part of them was derived from God's well-spring of truth and how much was attributable to human error.

"Thus after Christ's corporeal death, God's messengers arrived constantly as spirits of truth, according to His promise. The Apostles continually call upon them when exhorting their hearers to faith. Saint Paul's writings especially, abound in references to these messengers. 'The things that I have said and preached I did not lay before you in the winning words of human wisdom, but it was God's spirit-world and God's power, that spoke through me, so that your faith should rest not on the wisdom of men, but on a divine power . . . but to us, God has revealed them through his spirit-world. . . Now the spirits which we have received are none of the evil spirits, which rule the world, but spirits coming from God, that we may know the things that God in his grace has bestowed upon us. Of this we preach also, not in the words taught by human wisdom, but in words which are taught to us by God's spirits; thus we deliver the message of a spirit in the same words in which the spirits gave it to us. True, a worldly-minded man does not accept things brought by a spirit of God, for he looks upon communication with God's spirit-world as madness; neither is he fit for an understanding of such matters, because only those, who understand the laws, by which spirit communication is governed, can form a proper judgment'. (*1st Corinthians 2:4-14.*) ' . . . you are an epistle of Christ, written by us as servants of Christ, not in ink, but in a spirit of the living God'. (*2nd Corinthians 3:2-3.*) 'Let me say to you, brothers, that the gospel which I preached, is not the word of men. I neither received it from men, nor was it taught to me by men, but it came to me through a revelation of Jesus Christ'. (*Galatians 1:11, 12.*)

"Not only the Apostles received their teaching from God's spirits, but also the 'mediums' who were to be found in every community. As you already know, they were called 'prophets'. Saint

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

Paul writes that the mystery of Christ 'hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and '*prophets*' by a spirit of God. (*Ephesians* 3 : 5.) It was through these mediums as the instruments of the good spirits that the faithful could at any time ascertain, whether a doctrine was true and how it was to be understood. Hence Paul writes to the Philippians: "if in any matter your belief should differ, that also God will make clear to you'. (*Philippians* 3 : 15.) They had the privilege of inquiring of God at their religious gatherings, and were answered by His spirits speaking through the mediums.

"Speaking of the earlier prophets as well as of those who preached the gospel in his own day, Saint Peter says that they 'preached the gospel by a holy spirit, sent forth from heaven'. (*1st Peter* 1 : 12) to which he adds in another epistle: '. . . no prophecy of scripture is of private interpretation, for no prophecy ever came by the will of man: but men spoke from God, being moved by a holy spirit'. (*2nd Peter* 1 : 20, 21.) The word 'prophecy' which occurs so often in the Bible does not mean, as you believe, the prediction of an event to come, but all speech by a spirit of God through a human medium.

"In the Old Testament God exhorted men to seek the truth of Him: 'Inquire of me'! — and revealed the truth through His spirit-messengers. By His own confession, Christ, as a mortal, received the truth from spirits of God. He promises His Apostles that they too shall learn the truth from the spirits of truth. The Apostles testify that this promise of Christ was fulfilled, and that they received their teachings from God's spirits.

"But whence does Christianity of today draw the truth? Can the ministers of the various Christian denominations say of themselves that a spirit of God is speaking from them? Can they testify, as did Saint Paul, that they 'speak not in words which man's wisdom teacheth' . . . but that they have the mind of Christ?' They can not. They are in the employ of their churches, whose respective creeds they studied under human instruction at schools, seminaries and universities. What they absorbed there was 'man's wisdom', professorial wisdom, with all of its errors, and that is what they preach to their congregations. Of spirits as messengers from God and as heralds of the truth they know nothing. In their eyes it is, to use one of Saint Paul's terms, foolishness, to expect any further teachings from a spirit of God at this late day. According to modern ideas, no further teachings

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

are needed. In their opinion, such teachings may have been necessary in the days when men were supposedly much more ignorant than they are in your enlightened age. A man like Moses may have felt that he must communicate with God's spirit-world and to 'inquire of God' in order to learn the truth. So also the great prophets, Christ Himself, as well as His Apostles, but nowadays all that is considered as old-fashioned and as a thing of the past. To be sure, you have made great progress in science, you can all read and write, and have millions of books to which you can refer. And in addition you have no end of learned theologians, doctors of divinity and professors. They can surely tell you what the truth is.

"As a matter of fact it is precisely these doctors and professors of the 'sacred theology' who are responsible for the introduction of those doctrines against which Saint Paul utters these words of warning: 'See to it, that no man captivates you by means of so-called science or by the foolish and vain theories grounded on these traditions of men; for they have their source in the evil powers that rule the world, but have nothing in common with the teaching of Christ'. (*Colossians 2 : 8.*) 'Wishing to be regarded as versed in the law although they do not understand the meaning of the terms which they use or the things of which they speak with so much assurance'. (*1st Timothy 1 : 7.*) 'These are they who make separations, sensual, having not a spirit of God'. (*Jude 19.*)

"The spirit-world of God has long since been eliminated from the Christian creeds; the heads of the churches have exiled the holy spirit. But wherever spirits of God have been forced to yield, spirits of another nature presented themselves, like those of which Saint Paul writes to Timothy: 'God's spirits declare expressly, that in times to come, many will fall away from the faith and, turning to spirits of deceit, will spread doctrines inspired by demons'. (*1st Timothy 4 : 1-2.*)

"Into the places of the good spirits stepped the Powers of Evil, whose chief concern it is, to obscure and to reverse the truth, an end which they seek to accomplish by playing upon every human weakness, such as vanity and arrogance of learning, or the greed for power, distinction, money and luxury. All of these motives are utilized by them to tamper with the truths of God's wisdom, love and mercy, and to forge these into chains with which the heads of the churches manacle their poor, inexperienced adherents and render them subservient to themselves.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

"The root of all evil is greed, — the love of money. Even in your Christian churches money plays an important role. Satan knew what he was about when he made a bait of money in the field of religion. He knew that this was the surest way of binding the spiritual leaders fast to error. He knew that none of them would be unduly ready to give up a well-paid position for life as the servant of a church, even after they had recognized the error-ousness of the doctrines they had been preaching.

"Thus it came that since the time when communication with God's spirit-world as the sole road to the truth was dispensed with, errors of the most varied and far-reaching nature have crept into Christianity. Century by century conditions grew worse. Truth after truth was contaminated by error and rendered unpalatable. And what has been the result? *Today you have before you a Christianity split into a hundred parts, into countless creeds each one of which proclaims a separate truth and each one of which contends that its doctrines alone represent the true teachings of Christ.* Do you wonder that a Christianity so adulterated and disfigured has ceased to exert an influence on mankind? Restore to humanity the faith of the early Christians! Remove from its shoulders those spiritual burdens imposed by manmade dogmas and out of motives of ambition; let men have access once more to God's messengers of the truth, and you will be amazed to see how much influence true Christianity can have, even on the people of today.

"The Catholic Church seeks to explain this breaking up into so many Christian 'sects' as it calls them, by the fact that all other Christian denominations have fallen away from it, the only true faith and the one which alone leads to salvation, but I shall show you that even the Catholic Church retains scarcely any part of the Christianity of Christ and His Apostles.

"It has, true enough, succeeded in finding a human substitute for the Divine spirits so much in evidence in the early days of the Christian era, by introducing the doctrine of the 'Papal infallibility'. This solved the problem of the truth in the simplest way, for thenceforth Christ would be spared the labor of sending the spirits of truth to erring humanity as He had promised. He would likewise be relieved of His promise to be with the faithful, even unto the end of the world', now that there was a 'Vicar of Christ' on earth, since the presence of a vicar renders the appearance of his principal unnecessary.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

“Under this doctrine of an ‘infallible vicar of Christ on earth’, the source from which the Divine truths could be derived was placed wholly into the hands of erring, sinful mortals, to the exclusion of God’s messengers, thus opening the door to human caprice and the lust for temporal power. You may claim that the Papal elections are held under the guidance of the ‘Holy Spirit’, but you cannot cite a single instance in which a Pope was chosen to office by a Divine spirit, nor has it ever happened that a Divine spirit, speaking through one of the electors present, has announced who was to be chosen for that office, as was done by God’s spirits in the early Christian churches whenever an elder or a bishop was to be ordained. Consider the whole history of the Papal elections; were they not at times conducted in a manner positively diabolical? Was not intrigue of all kind and even armed force, resorted to, in order to place the tiara upon the head of adherents and favorites of certain families? Were not a succession of Popes instruments of Hell in their actions and their daily lives, rather than ‘vicars of Christ’?

“In order to evade this issue you have resorted to the strange expedient of distinguishing between the Pope as a man and the Pope as the ‘vicar of Christ’, maintaining that even the most evil of men, as soon as he becomes Pope, represents Christ and acquires infallibility. This means that he can be a tool of Satan and at the same time the representative of Christ! Could there be any greater blasphemy of Christ and of God? Would any human being allow his greatest enemy to act as his representative for an hour? Assuredly not. Would God and Christ allow it? Would God entrust the highest gift that is His to bestow to a laborer in the field of salvation to a servant of Hell? Common sense should teach you that this is impossible. God’s spirits bring their gifts only to the righteous, and remain with them only while they retain their righteousness. This is demonstrated by the history of Saul. As long as that Divinely favored monarch remained obedient to God, he was in daily communication with the Divine spirit-world and could ‘inquire of God’ whenever he felt the need of enlightenment, invariably receiving his answer from the spirits of truth. When, however, he broke faith with God, this communication was instantly interrupted. His inquiries addressed to God remained unanswered, and in the place of the Divine spirits, evil spirits took possession of him. At a stroke he was deprived of his gifts.

“No wicked man can ever be the holder of God’s sacred gifts,

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

not even if he is the Pope. It follows that among the Popes, the wicked ones at least could never have been infallible, and since you have no means of knowing whether a Pope, or indeed any man, is at heart friendly or hostile to God, you can never be sure whether a Pope's doctrines are true or erroneous.

"God alone chooses those among men to whom He sends His spirits of truth, and no human choice can establish a mortal as the bearer of the Divine tidings. Not even Christ selected His Apostles according to His own judgment, for it is expressly stated in the Acts that He selected them through a holy spirit'. It follows that God cannot make the gift of infallibility contingent upon any office held by the grace of man, as is the Papacy.

"Consequently, also, the interpretations given to many parts of the New Testament in support of Papal infallibility, are wholly erroneous. Among the passages so cited are the words addressed to Peter by Jesus: 'Thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of Hell shall not prevail against it. I will give unto thee the keys to the kingdom of Heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven'. (*Matthew 16 : 18, 19.*) From these words you deduce that Peter, the man, was the foundation of the church of Christ; that as the leader of that church he could not err, and that moreover he had been invested with the power to bind and to loose the members of the church; that this power had descended upon his successors, the Popes of the Church of Rome, who, in consequence, it is claimed, had the same gifts and powers that once were Peter's.

"These deductions are mere fallacies.

"It was not Peter the man to whom Christ referred as the rock upon which His church was to be built, but the faith which Peter had professed. *Peter's belief in Christ* as the Divinely-sent Messiah is the eternal, everlasting rock against which Hell cannot prevail, — *not the person of Peter*, who very soon afterwards was utterly vanquished by Hell as he proved by thrice denying his Master, thus proving how little dependence God can place upon men, and that no institution for the saving of souls can rest upon them. It would be a house built upon sand. One thing only endures: truth, and the faith in the truth conveyed by the spirits of God, as they, too, had revealed to Peter the truth that Christ was the Messiah, for as Christ said: 'Flesh and blood has not revealed it unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven'. It was because Peter

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

had received this revelation from the Divine spirits that he believed it and in this belief he stood upon unyielding rock, for God's spirits do not lie. Whoever does as Peter did, stands upon the same rock upon which Peter rested his faith; whoever is ready to receive the Divine truth from the hands of God's messengers and to believe in it, belongs to the church of Christ. *It is a church of the spirit*, recognizing no membership as that term is understood by the organized religions of mankind. It knows of no bishops and priests, with the broad powers assumed by the clergy of the Catholic church. It knows of no infallible Pope. *Christ has no vicar on earth*. Among the adherents of the church of Christ are people of every creed in the world.

"This spiritual church of Christ can never be overcome by Evil, for it is the source of the truth, and truth is unconquerable. It derives its doctrines not from men, — not from Popes, bishops or priests, — but from spirits sent by God.

"The '*keys to the kingdom of Heaven*' which Christ promised to give to Peter because of his faith, are the Divine truths. By means of them he was to 'bind and to loose' by passing them on to those who lay bound in the chains of error. Whoever rejected those keys by opposing truth with unbelief, would be bound closer than ever to his error, but the bonds of those who eagerly accepted the proffered key would be loosed. The power to bind and loose applied to terrestrial existence and in particular, to the life in the Hereafter.

"The same metaphor of the '*keys to the kingdom of Heaven*' is used by Christ in speaking of the spiritual leaders of the Jewish people of His day, who, by the false doctrines which they preached, had given to the Jewish people keys with which the doors of the kingdom of Heaven could not be opened. The right key, which was offered by John the Baptist and by Christ Himself and which the people were ready to receive, was torn from his hand by the Jewish clergy, drawing from Christ the exclamation: 'Woe to you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites that you are! You closed God's spirit-world to others. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who would'. (*Matthew 23 : 13.*)

"The words: '*Feed my lambs, feed my sheep*', which Christ after His resurrection addressed to Peter, are also interpreted by you as indicative of preference. This is not the case. Peter had thrice denied his Master under oath, and according to all human standards it was to be expected that Christ would dismiss the un-

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

faithful disciple from His service and relieve him of his apostolic office. Peter himself fully expected this, remembering Christ's words: ' . . . whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven'. This would have been the natural course for men to take under the circumstances, but Christ had mercy on the repentant Peter, and was willing to permit him, in spite of his breach of faith, to lead his fellow men to the pastures of truth on an equal footing with the other Apostles. Christ's question to Peter, thrice repeated: 'Lovest thou me?' was intended to remind Peter of his thrice repeated denial, and to bring home to him God's infinite goodness in overlooking the past and retaining him as an evangelist of the faith and as an instrument of the Divine spirits.

"You may see how mistaken are the interpretations given by your former Church, of the passages in question, and that these cannot be construed to support a preferential status for Peter or the doctrine of the Papal infallibility. That Church has long since fallen a victim to Hell, which is also the author of that doctrine, for inasmuch as most of the doctrines of that Church are wholly erroneous, Hell is intent upon perpetuating them among men as long as possible. This end is best achieved by means of the coercive measure of the infallibility, for the Church, having taught its errors under the sanction of infallibility, cannot now retract them. To surrender them would be to commit self-destruction.

"Your Papal doctrine is a succession of untruths. Thus it is historically untrue that the Bishop of Rome is the direct successor to Saint Peter in the Apostolic office, for the bishops of the first Christian churches were not elected as such by their fellowmen, nor appointed by the Apostles, but were appointed exclusively by the manifestant Divine spirits. If it occasionally happened that an Apostle or the disciple of an Apostle ordained someone as bishop, this was done only after a Divine spirit had announced the name of the person to be so ordained. Moreover, no bishop is another's superior nor has any Apostle any greater powers than have his fellows. 'Whatsoever they were', says Saint Paul, 'it makes no matter to me: God accepts not man's person'. (*Galatians 2 : 6.*) At the same place he relates how on one occasion he had opposed the Apostle Peter vigorously and had reproached him before the entire community with departing from the true gospel.

"Had it sufficed for God to reveal the gospel to Peter as the first infallible Pope, the early Christian churches would have had

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

no need of the visits of the Divine spirits, since in Peter they would have had an infallible source of the truth. Moreover, why was Saint Paul not sent to Peter in order that he might receive the truth from him? The distance between them was not great. Why was he taught by Christ Himself, according to his own words?

"I shall now lay before you in their broad outlines certain individual doctrines of the gospel of Christ, comparing them with the doctrines of modern Christianity and in particular with those which you have heretofore preached as a member of the Catholic clergy. In so doing I shall fulfill the wish which you have long cherished, and shall at the same time demonstrate the falsity of those doctrines which depart from the teachings of Christ and which are held by other Christian churches.

1. Christ taught a *unipersonalist God*, the Creator of Heaven and Earth. He knows of no triune God of Whom the Catholic and other Christian denominations teach. Only the Father is God. None other is His equal, neither the Son, nor what you call the 'Holy Ghost'. After His resurrection, Christ said: 'I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and *my God* and your God'. (*John 20 : 17.*) 'My Father who gave me the sheep is above all, and no one can snatch anything out of the Father's hand'. (*John 10 : 29.*) According to those words, the Father is *above all*. If this is true, there is nothing equal to Him, and He is *greater than the Son*, a truth which Christ confirms with the words: '. . . for the Father is greater than I'. (*John 14 : 28.*) Also, whenever Jesus was addressed as 'good Master', he would reply: 'Why callest thou me good, since no one is good save *God alone*'.

"Inasmuch as God is above everything, He can confer power upon whomsoever He will, as He did to His Son, Whom He invested with the fullest powers. "Thou hast given him power over all creation in order that all creatures which thou hast entrusted to him may have life hereafter'. (*John 17 : 2.*)

"That Christ is not God I proved to you by the Scriptures and in greater detail, when I taught you concerning His life and His work.

"The truth that only the Father, but not the Son, is God, is furthermore sustained by the teachings of the Apostles. Thus Paul writes: '. . . there is no God, but one. For although there may be such as are called gods in the heavens and on earth — and indeed there are many such 'gods' and many such 'lords' —, there is

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

for us Christians but one God, the Father, from Whom all things are and to Whom we shall return'. (*1st Corinthians 8 : 4-6.*)

"Furthermore, Paul calls the Father the 'God of Jesus Christ'. 'That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ . . . may give unto you a spirit of wisdom'. (*Ephesians 1 : 17.*) According to Paul also, Christ's appearance will come at the will of Him 'who is the blessed and only Potentate, the King of kings, and Lord of lords; who only has immortality, dwelling in light unapproachable. (*1st Timothy 6 : 15, 16.*) If the Father alone has immortality, the Son has not. If the Father is the only Potentate, the Son cannot be such, and hence cannot be almighty by virtue of His own power. It follows that the Son is not God, but is, as He calls Himself and as the Apostles unanimously proclaim Him to be, the 'Son of God', less than the Father, Whose creature He is.

"The entire Bible, both the Old and the New Testaments, recognizes only *one God in one person*. The Father is God, and He only. Not one of His Sons, neither the First-born nor any of the others, is God.

"It is because you have raised Christ to the rank of God that you find insuperable difficulties in understanding His personality, His life, His sufferings, and His death. You are prevented by your misconception, from accepting His clear statement of His relation to the Father in its true sense, namely that of a Divinely created Being, albeit the highest, to its Maker.

"The result has been the most absurd theories invented by your theologians, for the purpose of bringing the undeniable facts in the life of Jesus as well as His own words, into harmony with His alleged Divinity. They have reconstructed the person of Jesus, claiming that in Him as a man there were present two spirits: one Divine, the other human. Hence Christ is alleged to have possessed a twofold intellect and a twofold volition, Divine and human; nevertheless, both spirits are regarded as having constituted but a *single personality*. This is sheer madness. Every spirit possesses an independent personality, and not even God can fuse two spirits into a single personality, any more than He can fuse two human beings into one; omnipotent though He be, since it is inherently contradictory that two should be equal to one. Common sense should tell you that if Christ had been God, He would not have cried out from the Cross: 'My God, why hast thou forsaken me'. Could God forsake Himself, then? When furthermore it is related in the Scriptures that Christ was raised

from the dead by the hand of the Father, what need was there of the Father's help if Christ Himself was God? After His death upon earth, had He not divested Himself of all human limitations, becoming a God, and as such, in every respect His Father's equal according to your doctrine? If so, He had the same power as His Father, and possessing that power, why need He have depended upon that held by another? These contradictions are irreconcilable. And again, how, do you explain the fact that Christ does not once assert: 'I am God, my Father's equal in all things', and this despite the fact that on innumerable occasions He spoke of His relation to God. Is it reasonable to assume that He never once spoke the truth and admitted that He was God? On the contrary, he calls Himself only the 'Son of God', and protests that He is dependent upon the Father for all things. He solemnly declares: 'And this is the life eternal, that they should know thee *the only true God*, and him whom thou didst send, even Jesus Christ'. He is but God's envoy; He is not God. Paul calls Him the Firstling of creation; He was, therefore, created by God and hence God's creature, and is no more God than are His fellow-creatures.

"Inasmuch as nothing could be found in the New Testament to support the false doctrine that Christ is God, resort was had to the forgery of several Scriptural passages in order that the desired evidence might be forthcoming. Several of these I shall cite.

"In his Epistle to the Romans, Saint Paul writes: "Willingly would I be banished from my fellowship with Christ in the place of my brothers, men of my own race according to the flesh, who are Israelites. Time was, when they were God's people. They witnessed the glorious deeds of God; it was with them that He made His covenant; it was they to whom He gave the law, the true form of worship, the promises. Theirs are the patriarchs and from them in his mortal body sprang Christ, for which the allruling God be praised forever. Amen'. (*Roman 9:3-5.*) In this passage as elsewhere in his epistles, Paul voices his heartfelt thanks to God for the fact that the Messiah is sprung from a race of which he himself is one, but the text has been altered to read: 'and of whom is Christ concerning the flesh, who is God over all, blessed for ever'. By means of this falsification, the Messiah has been accorded the status of a Deity.

"A similar case of misrepresentation occurs in the Epistle to Titus (*Titus 2:13.*) '. . . looking for the blessed hope and ap-

pearing of the glory of the great God and of our Savior Jesus Christ'. In this place Paul speaks of the glory of the great God, the attainment of which is the aim of all material creation, and also of the glory of our Savior, Jesus Christ, through which we shall arrive at God according to the Redeemer's words: '. . . no one cometh unto the Father, but by me'. Thus Paul here distinguishes between the glory of the Father and the glory of Christ. The sense of this passage also has been distorted by its current rendering: '. . . looking for the blessed hope and appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. . .' This version is intended to convey to the reader the impression that Christ is the great God for Whose appearance we must look.

"Of course, alterations of this sort will immediately attract the notice of anyone who is familiar with Saint Paul's Epistles and who knows the sharp lines of distinction which that Apostle draws in all of his writings between the person of Christ and the person of God, referring to the Father as the 'God of Christ', and to Christ as the 'Lord' appointed by God; teaching that God will put all His enemies under the Son's feet, the last enemy to be abolished being Lucifer, the Prince of Death; and that when all things have been subjected unto Him, then shall the Son also himself be subjected unto Him, that God may be all in all. (*1st Corinthians 15 : 27, 28.*)

"Paul's salutation always runs: 'Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. He never says 'God the Son'. If therefore there is any part of your present Bible which can be construed into something else than the truth that only the Father is God, then the fault lies either in the translation, or in a falsification of the Greek text from which that translation was made, and in some cases in a combination of both. Of this last you will find an instance in Paul's letter to the Philippians (2 : 5, 6) in the passage which reads according to your version: 'Have this in mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: who, existing in the form of God, counted not *the being on an equality with God* a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, taking the form of a servant'. The unaltered text read: 'Have this in mind in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, although in form like unto a God, counted it not a thing to be grasped to humble himself before God, but emptied himself, taking the form of a bond servant'. It is true that the celestial body of Christ as a Spirit resembled a God, and that all spirits on seeing Him for the first

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

time think they are seeing God — so gloriously has God endowed His First-born. The original text has been crudely falsified by substituting the words: 'the being on an equality with God', for the words: 'to humble himself before God'.

"Inasmuch as I have just had occasion to use the words 'resembling a God', I shall make mention of the opening passage of the Gospel of Saint John, also cited in proof of the Divinity of Christ. 'In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God'. (*John, 1 : 1*)

"First and foremost the text should read: '. . . the Word was a God'; and not: 'the Word was God' for at this passage John uses the term 'a God' as it was applied in his day to all who were God's special instruments and who as His envoys stood in particular communication with Him. The same usage was employed by God when speaking to Moses, Christ's prototype, to whom He said on that occasion: 'And he (Aaron) shall be thy spokesman unto the people; and it shall come to pass that he to thee shall be a mouth, and thou shalt be a God to him'. (*Exodus 4 : 16.*) Christ, also, when reproached by the Jews with making Himself the equal of God by calling Himself the 'Son of God' retorted with the question: 'Is it not written in your law, I said, Ye are gods? If he called them gods, unto whom the word of God came (and the scripture cannot be broken), say ye of him whom the Father sanctified and sent into the world, Thou blasphemest; because I said, I am the Son of God?' What Christ intends to express in these words is: 'How can you accuse me of wishing to make myself God's equal by calling myself His Son? Even if I had called myself a god, I would not have committed blasphemy, for those who have heretofore appeared as God's envoys were called gods, because they came to proclaim the Divine word. With how much better right, then would not I call myself a god, since to me has been entrusted the greatest task ever assigned to a Divine emissary! But I purposely refrain from calling myself a god, in order to prevent any misinterpretation of the word, and call myself what I truly am, the Son of God'. So, also, we find in the writings of Saint Paul: 'For though there be that are called gods, whether in the heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, . . . and one Lord, Jesus Christ. . .' (*1st Corinthians 8 : 5. 6.*) Paul here indicates that Christians should not continue to use the term 'god' in its improper sense, but should speak of God only when meaning the true

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

God, the Father, and that Christ, and He only, should be known to them as the 'Lord'. They might not therefore speak of Jesus Christ as 'God'.

"Another falsification is found in the Epistle of John, the passage in question reading in its correct version: 'We know that the Son of God is come and has given us an understanding, that we know him that is true, and we are in him that is true, even in his Son, Jesus Christ. It is he that is true, and eternal life'. (*1st Epistle of John, 5 : 20.*) In addition to other inaccuracies which this passage contains, its last sentence has been altered to read: 'This is the true God, and eternal life'. What John teaches here is the same as that which was uttered so often by Christ and by the Apostles, namely: God is He that is true, but the Son also is true, for He utters His Father's words, teaching only as the Father has directed Him. In everything that He reveals He is therefore as true as is the Father Himself, hence those who are in communion with the Son are thereby also in communion with the true God. And since God has granted to His Son eternal life, the Son also is eternal life for those who are in communion with Him.

"The doctrine that three persons are united in one Godhead finds its main support in the grossly falsified passage in the Epistle of John, the correct version of which reads: 'For there are three that bear witness, the Spirit, the water, and the blood: and the three of them are in accord'. (*1st John 5:8.*) To this has been added the spurious sentence: 'And there are three who bear witness in Heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Spirit, and these three are one'. That this entire last sentence is a spurious interpolation is a fact of which your Catholic theologians are well aware. Nevertheless it is retained in the Catholic editions of the Bible, although certain other Christian denominations have eliminated it.

"Except for the passage I have mentioned, there is not in the entire New Testament even the most far-fetched evidence to support the doctrine that what you call the 'Holy Ghost' is a Deity equal to the Father. The term 'Holy Ghost' as used in that part of the Scriptures refers to the good spirit-world as a whole. God is a Holy Ghost. He is the highest and most sacred of *all* spirits. The Son of God is a Holy Ghost; He is the highest and most sacred of *all created* spirits. The princes of Heaven like Michael, Gabriel, Raphael, and many others, are holy spirits. All of the celestial legions are holy spirits. So too was Lucifer before his fall, and so too were all men as well as the entire material creation.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

The great misunderstanding that has arisen from the term 'the Holy Ghost', is due to inaccurate translations of the Greek texts of the New Testament, for wherever the words 'a holy spirit' occur, they have been translated for some unknown reason as '*the* holy spirit'. This is all the more surprising, since the translators were men who had a command of the Greek language and who knew well enough how strictly the distinction between the definite and the indefinite article is observed in that tongue of all others.

"You yourself while at school studied Greek, the language in which the New Testament has come down to you, and you will probably remember enough of what you learned then to be able to confirm my statement by referring to the Greek version of the same. I shall cite only a few passages out of many.

"Let us take the Gospel according to Matthew. In its very opening lines it is stated that Mary was with child of a holy spirit, not of *the* Holy Spirit. A few lines further down you find: 'that which is conceived in her is of a holy spirit', not of *the* Holy Spirit, as though there were but one.

"If you will now turn to the Gospel according to Luke you will find the same thing. Here also the text should read: 'A Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of a Most High shall overshadow thee', and not, as your rendering has it: '*The* Holy Spirit shall come upon thee and the power of *The* Most High shall overshadow thee', for it was not *the* Most High, but one of the most high spirits of God Whose power overshadowed Mary. So also in the preceding lines with reference to the birth of John, the correct reading is: 'He shall be filled with a holy spirit, even from his mother's womb'. This also is true of the passage referring to Elizabeth which should read: 'She was filled with a holy spirit', as well as of that relating to Zacharias, which should read: 'He was filled with a holy spirit'. Christ says: 'But if I, by a spirit of God cast out demons. . .' (*Matthew 12 : 28*) and John the Baptist declares: 'There comes after me . . . that shall baptize you in a holy spirit. (*Mark 1 : 8.*) In the first lines of the Acts it is related that Jesus had chosen His Apostles by commandment of a holy spirit, and in the second chapter, that on the day of Pentecost all those who were gathered were filled with a holy spirit.

"When explaining the 12th and the 14th Chapters of the First Epistle to the Corinthians I called your attention to this far-reaching error of translation which has led to the belief that there is

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

but one holy spirit, a Divine person, forming one Godhead with the Father, as your former faith teaches.

"Wherever the original Greek texts read 'a' spirit, one of many is meant. You therefore distort the meaning entirely by substituting: 'the' holy spirit. There are certain passages, it is true, where reference is made to 'the' holy spirit or to 'the' spirit, but in those cases the term either connotes a distinction between the spirit and matter, as in the sentence: 'The spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak', or else the reference is to the Spirit of God, namely God Himself, or to spirits of a certain kind such as the 'spirit of light', the 'spirit of truth', the 'spirit of comfort' and others. This does not mean that there is only one spirit of each kind, but is merely an instance in which the singular is employed in place of the plural. You have the same usage in your modern languages, for when you say to a sick person: 'I will get *the* doctor', you do not mean to imply that there is only one physician in the world, and when you speak of the farmer having had a prosperous year, you are referring to all farmers collectively. So too you use the terms: 'the' workman, 'the' lawyer, 'the' artist, you mean all those who are engaged in the respective callings.

"When therefore Christ says: 'I will send the spirit of truth', He means *spirits* of truth, for as you already know, the Divine spirits are assigned to various callings according to their respective tasks. There are spirits of protection, spirits of battle, spirits of strength, spirits of wisdom and innumerable others. A spirit of truth has tasks of a very different nature to perform than has a spirit of Michael's legions, and hence possesses different qualifications. Neither one can take over the work of the other. Every spirit has its definite calling, and is gifted accordingly. Similarly, Lucifer has marshalled his hosts according to their specific work. He too has his fighting forces, his spirits of lying, of despondency, of avarice, pride, envy, revenge, lust, and of every other vice. The different kinds of spirits, good or bad, are specialists in their various callings and are well qualified to influence those on whom they work, either for good or for evil within their respective provinces.

"As you see, the doctrine of a triune Godhead is not only contrary to common sense, but is entirely unsupported by the Scriptures.

"Yet, although only the Father is God, while the Son and all the other spirits are His creatures, nevertheless a most intimate harmony and unity obtains between the Father, the Son and the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

good spirit-world, a harmony of will and deed. The Father's will is also the Son's, and that of the spirit-hosts under His command. God is the master and owner of all creation, spiritual and material; everything belongs to Him. The management of creation has been conferred upon the Son, in a way similar to that in vogue among men, as when a factory-owner places the management of his factory in the hands of his oldest son and puts the entire working force under his orders. In cases of this kind the son in question receives his instructions and orders from his father, upon whom he remains dependent in all things, since the father continues to be the master and owner of the factory, while the son may act within the instructions received from him. But so far as the workmen and employees are concerned, the son is the 'master', whose orders they must obey, and whatever wants they wish to make known to the father as the owner of the factory must go through the son as his agent and representative. Translate this example taken from human experience into the relation existing between God and His Son, and all utterances of Christ upon that subject will at once be clear to you. He has been given all the authority over creation required as His Father's lieutenant. This He holds, not by virtue of His own power, but as a gift from His Father. Everything is subordinate to the Son, subject, however to the Father's will. Whatever the Father desires to perform in the universe, He does through the agency of the Son, and only through the Son can the Father be reached. Hence, as Christ says: ' . . . no one comes unto the Father, but by me'. The Son receives His Father's directions, and those which are not to be executed by Him personally, are transmitted to the spirits best fitted for the task in question, who perform it at the direct command of the Son and at the indirect command of the Father. This also is the meaning of the words which were addressed by Christ to the Apostles when He sent them forth, and which are somewhat incorrectly repeated in your Bible: 'Go you therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son, in a holy spirit'. (*Matthew 28 : 19.*) The mission on which Christ sent the Apostles had been assigned to Him by the Father; consequently, the Apostles were acting indirectly in the Father's name, but inasmuch as they had been sent directly by the Son, it was in His name that their mission was carried out, and since this could be done only with the aid of the power of one of God's spirits, it was said to be performed 'in a holy spirit'. The spirits which the

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

Apostles needed for their tasks were assigned to them by Christ Himself. They are therefore constantly invoked by the Apostles in their preachings, who emphasize that the truth has been revealed to them by a holy spirit. So it is in everything that you do, that is pleasing to God — you are acting in the fulfillment of His will, and consequently in the name of the Father; but the will of God is revealed to you through the Son, so that you are acting also in the name of the Son; and the power which you need is lent to you by a holy spirit. Hence you are performing your task in a holy spirit.

2. There is little to be found in the New Testament concerning *God's Creation and its vicissitudes*, for the facts relating to the creation of the spirits, to the defection of a part of the spirit-world under Lucifer's leadership, to the Divinely created spheres of progress by which the fallen spirits are led Godward, to the investiture of the spirits in matter, were things which the people of those times found as difficult to understand as do the people of today. The Epistles of the Apostles likewise have little to say upon the subject which lends itself but poorly to instruction by means of letters, and could be brought home to the faithful only by oral message.

"Nevertheless, Paul at least hints at these truths in several passages of his writings, even if you fail to discover them because they no longer fit in with your religious views. Thus he writes: 'For the earnest expectation of the creation waits for the unveiling of the sons of God. For the creation was subjected to vanity, not of its own will, but by reason of him who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself also shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groans and travails in pain with us. And not only so, but ourselves also, who have the first-fruits of the spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for our adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body'. (*Romans 8 : 19-24.*) In this passage Paul says that the *whole* creation is waiting to be delivered from the bondage of corruption, meaning thereby the stones, plants, flowers, animals and men. Such 'earnest expectation' is possible only where a spirit exists in the state of incarnation, hence throughout creation there are spirits, clothed in matter of various sorts. They are the rebellious spirits, which in the beginning resided in glory and splendor as God's obedient children and as His holy spirits, but

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

which later became disobedient and were therefore exiled from their Father's house. But exiled though they be, they remain God's children to this day. They long to return to the home of their Father and strive to rid themselves of the vesture of substance in which they are clothed, as during the birth-pangs a child struggles to escape from the confines of its mother's womb. Those spirits were not subjected to that garment of flesh by their own will, but by reason of the will of God, Who so clothed them in His mercy, in order that by trial and purification they might prove themselves worthy of being saved. All material beings long for such salvation, even though they may not know the way to it nor the end in view, and pine for the day on which, purified and freed from the bondage of corruption, they shall once more be called the children of God. This longing abides, foremost of all, in the righteous, for although, as was the case with the early Christians, they may be in daily communion with the spirit-messengers from their Father's home and from them have received the first-fruits and a foretaste of the kingdom of God, they are still far from having attained to that kingdom so long as they still live in the flesh.

3. *The upward evolution in Nature* is indicated by Paul in his epistle to the Ephesians, in which he says: '. . . making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to *sum up all things* in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth. . .' (*Ephesians 1 : 9, 10.*) There are however, many things upon earth besides men, who form only a small fraction of what exists thereon. If, then, God purposes to sum up *all things* upon earth in Christ, it follows that in all things there are spirits which in the evolution ordained by God progress steadily, until they return as pure spirits into that great community under Christ to which they belonged before their fall.

"The fact that everything, not mankind alone but all the rest of creation, is included in God's Plan of Salvation, is apparent from the following passage in Paul's epistle to the Romans (*11 : 25-32*): 'For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant of this mystery, lest you be wise in your own conceits, that a hardening in part has befallen Israel, until the *fulness* of the Gentiles be come in; and so *all Israel* shall be saved. . . For God has shut up *all things* by reason of their disobedience, for he purposes to have mercy on all'.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

"I have given you this passage as it should be. If the last sentence in the translation before you runs: 'For God hath shut up all unto disobedience, that he might have mercy upon all', it is because the translator has made two mistakes. First, he has written 'all' whereas the Greek text says: 'all things'. Secondly, he has said: 'God hath shut up all unto disobedience', when he should have said: 'God hath shut up all things by reason of their disobedience', meaning that all things were clothed by Him in matter which corresponds to the various stages of progress. God shuts up no one unto disobedience; on the contrary, He desires the return of all who were once exiled from His kingdom because of their disobedience. The Israel of the millenniums that had gone before was the people to whom the pure faith had been revealed and who were to spread this faith to the other nations of the earth, acting as a leaven of truth. Had Israel accomplished this duty faithfully, it would have been the first to reenter God's kingdom after the Redemption had been consummated, but the greater part of Israel showed itself unworthy of the high mission with which it had been charged. Consequently, the first to be saved will be the non-Israelites, the very ones who in the past had known nothing of God, and only when 'the fulness of these be come in', will those be saved who had once possessed the true faith, but who had failed to observe its precepts. 'The first shall be last'. But all, without exception, will be saved.

"The reference to the course followed by God's work of redemption, in Saint Paul's first Epistle to the Corinthians is brief but clear: 'For as in Adam all died, so also in Christ all shall be made alive. But each in his own order: Christ the first fruits; then they that are Christ's, at his coming. Then comes the rest, when he shall deliver up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have abolished all rule, and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he has put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be abolished is 'death'. For, He put all things in subjection under his feet. But when he says, All things are put in subjection, it is evident that He (namely God) is excepted Who did subject all things unto him. And when all things have been subjected to Him (God), then shall the Son also himself be subjected to Him that did subject all things unto him, that God may be all in all'. (*1st Corinthians 15: 22-28.*) Thus all things will return to God which had been separated from Him and had been subjected as spiritually 'dead' to the Prince of the death of the spirit. Christ will lead back all things to God, for was He not

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the first to return from Hell, the realm of the Prince of Death, after having descended thither and vanquished Lucifer on his own ground? His was the first resurrection from the spiritually dead. As time passes, all who have died in spirit will follow Him, as they learn to know and to love God, but 'each in his own order', which depends upon the spirits themselves. Those which hasten and apply themselves to seeking unto God and to living as He would have them live, will come before those that give no thought at all to a return or show but little zeal. Everything depends upon their own initiative. He who fails repeatedly in his examinations will be late in reaching the goal. This is true of life on earth, as well as in the Hereafter. The last of all to return unto God will be the Prince of Death himself, Lucifer. Paul calls him 'death', for he is the cause of the exile from God's kingdom and hence, of spiritual death. He is the 'murderer from the beginning', guilty of the spiritual death of all those who are parted from God, and of having done his utmost throughout millions of years to prevent the return of his subjects to the Realm of Life in God. He is therefore the personification of separation from God, the *personification of death*. Thus when you read in the Revelation of John (20 : 13): 'And death gave up the dead', the meaning is, that Lucifer, the Prince of Death, was forced to give up the spiritually dead that were in his kingdom. As to what I said, that the order of the return of the fallen spirits depended upon the free will of each, I must qualify this statement by adding that *Lucifer himself* is the only one who cannot return to God until the last of his dupes has arrived at that goal. He cannot do so, not even if he were to attempt it by reason of a change of heart, nor may he, even if he should be the first to see the error of his ways, urge any of the fallen spirits to reform or even aid it with his advice, for the purpose of hastening his own return to God thereby. That is the just doom which rests upon him as the one-time ringleader, and which he cannot mitigate.

"The redemption of all of the fallen, even that of Lucifer, is the glad tidings not only announced in the Epistles of Saint Paul, but shown to the prophets of the pre-Christian era in their visions. It is that to which the Revelation of John alludes in the words: 'But in the days of the voice of the seventh angel, when he is about to sound, then is finished the mystery of God, according to the *good tidings* which he declared to his servants, the prophets'. (*Revelation 10 : 7.*) If it were true that there is an eternal Hell as is taught today, wherein would lie the gladness of the tidings

which God had promised at the completion of His Plan of Salvation? A completion which involved the eternal damnation of countless spirits would assuredly be no day of gladness, but a day of terror for all creation. What then would become of the redemption of all, preached so insistently by Saint Paul? What of the fulfillment of God's promise given through the mouth of the Prophet Isaiah: '. . . unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear. Only in the Lord it is said of me, is righteousness and strength; even to him shall men come; and all they that were incensed against him shall be put to shame?' What, further would become of the fulfillment of all the passages of which I had previously spoken to you? All of God's enemies will be put in subjection under His feet by Christ, not by force, but by a merciful love, against which not even Lucifer can hold out forever. God forces no fallen spirit into subjection; had He wished, He could have done so long ago, for even Hell must obey His omnipotent will, and if Hell ever humbles itself before Him, it must do so of its own free will in contrite acknowledgment of His justice, love, and patience.

"A doctrine to which you cling with astonishing tenacity although it was unknown to the early Christians is that of an 'eternal Hell'. This is a bogey which you seem unwilling to surrender. Do you perhaps imagine that you can accomplish more with poor humanity by preaching a barbarous untruth, than by preaching love and mercy? What pains you give yourselves to find support for this untruth! You say that a so-called 'mortal sin' must entail eternal punishment, seeing that it is an unforgiveable affront to God. That is a wholly mistaken, manmade idea. No creature can affront God unforgiveably and thereby incur unending punishment. The lower the standing of him who affronts you, the less attention you will pay to his insults. What is a miserable creature as compared with its Creator? A mere speck of dust! Your insults do not even touch God; they hurt not Him, but yourselves. Again, if a mortal sin were an unpardonable affront to God, it could not be forgiven on earth; on the other hand, if according to your doctrine, it can be forgiven in men, why should it not be forgiven the spirits of the Hereafter? They are, after all, the same spirits, whether they inhabit a mortal body or whether they have become separated from it by death on earth. The 'ego' with all its mental attributes, is the same in the Here and in the Hereafter. Hence a change of heart may occur in spirits in the Beyond as well as it can while they reside on earth.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"Proof that the tortures of Hell are everlasting is sought by invoking the Bible, by citing the word 'eternal' which is used in your translations of the New Testament in connection with punishment in the Hereafter. Let us see what the word is in the original Greek texts, translated by you as 'eternal', for the proof lies, not in your renderings, but in the sense of the word as it occurs in the original. It so happens that wherever your translators of the Scriptures use the word 'eternity' or 'eternal' the Greek text uses 'eon'. You have adopted this word to designate long periods of time, and this is correct, for in Greek the word 'eon' never signifies 'eternity' or the idea of anything everlasting, but merely an indefinite lapse of time. Antiquity was an 'eon', the Middle Ages were an 'eon', the Modern Age is an 'eon'. By the Romans, an 'eon' was regarded as equivalent to a hundred years.

"An 'eon' is therefore a period of time the limits of which are elastic. Even a man's lifetime is sometimes so designated. Never, however, can it be used to describe eternity, nor can the adjective derived therefrom be translated as 'eternal', the correct equivalents being 'time' and 'temporary'.

"I shall first call your attention to the interesting circumstance that in many passages of the Bible the word 'eon' and the corresponding adjective have been correctly translated as 'time' and 'temporary' because in those particular places the word 'eternal' would be nonsensical. Only when punishment in the Hereafter is involved, have the translators used that word, indicating clearly that they were influenced by denominations which preach eternal damnation.

"Let us consider a few of the numerous passages in the Bible in which the word 'eon' can be translated only as 'time' or something pertaining to time. Thus it is said that blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven, either in this 'eon' or in that which is to come. In this passage 'eon' has been correctly rendered, the translation reading: '. . . it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world (or age), nor in that which is to come. Inasmuch as there is only one eternity, you cannot rationally refer to 'this eternity' and the 'eternity that is to come'. In the parable of the sower, it is said that some of the seeds were choked with the cares of this 'eon' which again has been correctly translated as with the cares of this 'life'. Here also the rendering of the word as 'eternity' would be obviously meaningless. The same is true of the parable of the tares among the wheat, in which Christ explains that the harvest would be at the end of the 'eon', which you have

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

rendered as the 'end of the world', or the 'consummation of the age'. In this passage the word 'eon' occurs twice, both times in a limitative sense. Finally, I shall quote a passage from Saint Paul's Epistle to the Corinthians: 'We speak a wisdom not of this 'eon', nor of the rulers of this 'eon' . . . but we speak God's wisdom in a mystery . . . Which God foreordained before the 'eons' unto our glory'.

"From these passages which could be multiplied manifold you may see that the word 'eon' does not mean 'eternity', but an age of limited duration. Whence then do you derive the right to translate a word as 'eternal' when referring to damnation, if elsewhere you have rendered it as referring to a transitory stage? It would almost seem as though you took a particular delight in the thought of an everlasting Hell.

"According to your translation, Christ has said: 'It is good for thee to enter into life maimed or halt, rather than having two hands or two feet to be cast into the eternal fire'. What you here designate as the 'eternal' fire is also only a fire which will last throughout an 'eon' and hence be temporary; strangely enough, the original text did not even contain the word 'eon' in this passage, but read: 'into the hell of fire'. Similar spurious alterations have been committed elsewhere. Thus your present Bible says: 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the eternal fire . . .' whereas the authentic version was: 'Depart from me, ye cursed, into the outer darkness'. I hope I have convinced you with my explanations, that there is no authority in the Bible to support your inhuman and untrue doctrine of an everlasting Hell.

"The duration of the punishment meted out to the various spirits depends upon the spirits themselves. The longer they persist in their rebellious attitude, the longer their exile and the longer the penalty attached thereto. Not even God knows when the individual spirits will come back to Him, since their return depends upon their own free will, and as I have told you, all decisions at which spirits are free to arrive, lie outside of the scope of God's foreknowledge of events.

"Again, what you have incorrectly translated as the 'eternal life' by a mistaken rendering of the word 'eon' is merely a life in the 'eons' or 'ages' to come. How long this life may last depends upon yourselves. If you remain faithful to God, that life will be, in truth, eternal. But who can tell whether in the future there may not be another rebellion of the spirits, in which you will again

take part, as you did in the first revolt under Lucifer? Spirits in Heaven have the same freedom of choice now as formerly, and the possibility of a misuse of that freedom is as much a fact as it was at the time of the first revolt. Whether or not there will ever be another is something that even God does not know for the reasons which I have already indicated to you.

"You cannot, therefore, speak of an 'eternal' reward, any more than you can speak of an 'eternal' punishment.

"Wherever the Bible refers to the 'fires' of Hell, it does so symbolically of the excessive pain suffered by those condemned to that place. You too speak of a burning pain without having reference to actual fire. The tortures of Hell are beyond your conception. Christ says: 'For everyone shall be salted with fire', for as salt permeates everything, so does agony permeate the spirits of the damned, — but He adds: 'Salt is good. . .' So too the tortures of the spirits are in reality good for their salvation, however cruel the proceeding may seem and however incomprehensible to men, as not in accord with God's mercy. And yet the tortures of Hell are merely an evidence of the love of God. A mother, who subjects her child to the surgeon's knife in order that it may be cured of a dangerous illness, acts under the impulse of maternal love and is driven to expose her child to pain because there is no other remedy. Similarly, the disposition of the spirits of the Pit can be cured only by the pains which they have to endure; no other way exists. But to all, even to the most hardened, the hour will come when, by their tortures, they will be brought to see the error of their ways and will arise and go to their Father.

"It is because Christianity of today has no true conception of the great story of the Universe that it is so helpless in all the most important questions relating to the Hereafter. For the same reason it is unable to explain either the origin of the human soul, nor the sin of the revolt against God which rests upon that soul, nor the purpose of material creation. Its doctrines in regard to all of these questions are wholly erroneous.

"4. Whenever enlightenment is sought of the Christian denominations of the present age as to the *origin of the spirit of man*, the answer is: 'The human spirit is created by God at the moment of conception. It is, nevertheless, burdened with the so-called 'original sin', because the ancestor of all mankind sinned in Paradise and his sin has descended upon all of his progeny'.

"The exponents of such a doctrine do not stop to consider its

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

absurdity. They do not pause to think that everything created by God comes forth from under His hand pure and flawless, and that the contamination of a spirit can be due only to some fault incurred *personally*, and, consequently, that if the human spirit were created by God at the instant of conception, it would be entirely pure and spotless. In this case there could be no question of any 'original sin', for why should Adam's descendants be punished with the bondage of sin and exile from God's kingdom because of their ancestor's fault? And that, by a God who once said: 'The soul that sins, it shall die: the son shall not bear the iniquity of the father'. (*Ezekiel 18 : 20.*) In the face of this, Adam's descendants cannot be punished by God for Adam's fall, in which they took no part. As a matter of fact, they themselves fell — as I have already told you — by following the example set to them by Adam as a spirit, thereby like him incurring banishment from God's kingdom with all of its dire consequences'.

"It is true that the spirit of man bears from birth an iniquity which you call the 'original sin'. But it is false to assert, as you do, that the human spirit comes into existence only at the moment of human conception and that it bears an iniquity of which it has not itself been guilty.

"In the light of your false doctrine as to the origin of the human spirit, how do you seek to explain all the suffering that exists on earth? Do you imagine that God has brought forth His creatures to suffer through life and allows them to die in agony if they had never been personally guilty of any wrong? Think of the millions of children who die amidst suffering every year! What have they done to deserve such a fate? Have they by any chance so affronted God during their life on earth as to merit such a punishment? They were incapable of sinning, being unable to distinguish right from wrong. Would an infinitely good and just God torture innocent infants? Wherein, then, would lie His goodness, and above all, His justice? Not even the most brutal human father is so cruel and unjust as to maltreat a child which has done him no harm. Could God be capable of such a monstrosity? You may offer what explanations you will; you cannot explain away the hideous injustice that has been done to these children, assuming the correctness of your doctrine. The same thing may be said of the lot of humanity generally. But when you learn that your spirit came into this life bearing the iniquity of a former existence, the mystery of your lot on earth is solved in an instant. Then you are

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

made aware of the great revolt against God in which the spirits of mortals once participated, as well as of previous incarnations in human form, and of the commission therein of sins for which the present life must make atonement. If you will bear this in mind, you will be less often tempted to exclaim in the hour of deep distress: 'What have I done to deserve this?' If, in reply to this question, God were to show you a picture of your entire past, you would be struck speechless with horror.

"Moreover, in the light of your new knowledge you will be able to understand many parts of the Holy Writ which have heretofore been obscure. Thus you can, by your own efforts, solve the apparent contradiction contained in the Old Testament which in one passage says: 'The son shall not bear the iniquity of the father', and in another: 'For I will visit the iniquities of the fathers upon the children, upon the third and upon the fourth generation'. If God visits the sins of the fathers upon their children, it is not by allowing innocent children to suffer for their father's sins. That would be manifestly unjust. He does, however, incarnate in the sinful father's children spirits which have independently incurred a painful lot, and whose lot serves as a punishment to the father also. Now since a father seldom survives beyond the fourth generation of his descendants, this punishment is visited upon him unto the fourth generation.

"Again, how, in the face of your doctrine that the spirit of mortals comes into being at the moment of conception, do you explain the sentence from the Bible: 'God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham'? You may say that God in His omnipotence can turn stones into human beings, who, nevertheless, would not be children of Abraham, for human beings could become children of Abraham only by way of procreation and as his descendants through a line of human ancestors. But how can stones become Abraham's children through procreation? All your theological learning will not enable you to answer this question, but when you know that spirits exist in stones, as they do in all other matter, the explanation is obvious. Then you will realize that God is able to divest the spirits so incorporated of their garment of matter, and incorporate them in the bodies of those children that come into being as descendants of Abraham according to the established laws of procreation.

"The same thing is borne out by the words of Christ: 'I tell you that, if these shall hold their peace, the stones will cry out'.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

(*Luke 19 : 40.*) Obviously, stones cannot cry out unless they are the abode of spirits.

"5. Just as you have established a false doctrine as to original sin, your *entire conception of sin as a whole* is erroneous.

"The Bible draws a distinction between the sin of 'departing from God' and the sins of the faithful committed by reason of human infirmities.

"In the first Epistle of John occurs a passage, the explanation of which has offered you great difficulty and which reads: 'If any man see his brother sinning a sin not unto death, he shall ask and shall give him life even to them that sin not unto death. There is sin unto death: not concerning this do I say that he should make request. All unrighteousness is sin: and there is sin not unto death'. (*1st John 5 : 16, 17.*) John thus draws the distinction here between sin unto death and sin not unto death, and, what may strike you as quite incomprehensible, tells you that you need not even pray for those who have committed a sin unto death.

"The sense of these words is best explained by means of an example. Every soldier, on joining the colors, is required to take the oath of enlistment. Now it often happens that soldiers commit offenses for which they are punished by disciplinary measures, without therefor ceasing to be soldiers of their respective countries. There is, however, one sin which terminates a man's career as a soldier of his country and the punishment of which is death: desertion to the enemy in time of war. He is pronounced dead by the home authorities; from a military point of view, he has 'sinned unto death'. No mother's plea will avail to wrest a pardon from the Government of her country for her renegade son, seeing that he is no longer under the jurisdiction of his own Government but has entered that of a hostile state, to whose laws he is henceforth subject. That State will not surrender him, even if he should be willing to return, which, naturally, he has no desire to do. Hence any appeals for mercy addressed by his mother to the home Government are to no purpose whatever.

"Apply this example to your relations toward God. As mortals who acknowledge Him, you are subjects of His kingdom and even if, erring pilgrims that you are on earth, not a day passes on which you do not commit some trespass great or small for which you are duly punished, you do not on that account cease to be His subjects. If, however, you turn your back upon God by abandoning your belief in Him, by denying Him or by living as though there were

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

no God, you are guilty of desertion. This is the sin by which you sever yourselves from Him and go over into the camp of the evil, godless, powers. You abandon your allegiance to God completely, exactly as a deserter abandons his allegiance to his own sovereign. In the eyes of the kingdom of God, you are legally dead, having committed the 'sin unto death'. Of what avail, then would be the intercession on behalf of such a deserter by a fellow man? The traitor cares nothing for God and has no desire to return to Him, and, in order that your prayers might be granted, God would have to force him to do so. This He cannot do, because He has bestowed on all men the gift of freedom of will, and hence never employs force to compel the decisions of His creatures. It is left to the free determination of everyone to work out his salvation.

"The first treason was the great revolt of the spirits led by Lucifer. That was the first 'sin unto death'.

"6. *The Resurrection of the Dead* is therefore the return of the spiritually dead spirits from their exile into the kingdom of God. It is the homecoming of onetime deserters. For their permission to return and for their deliverance from constraint on the part of the ruler of the enemy's country, Lucifer, they are indebted to the Redeemer, Who by His victory over the hostile potentate secured the release of all those who sincerely repent of their ways and long to return to God. Christ was the first to descend to the dead inmates of Hell without being one of the number that had revolted against God. He also was the first to ascend to Heaven from thence. It had not been possible for any of the fallen spirits to do this before Him. Spirits, once they had entered Hell, were powerless to escape therefrom. Christ's ascent from the lower parts of the earth was the first 'resurrection of the dead', to which frequent reference is made by Paul in his Epistles, as in that to the Ephesians, in which he writes: 'Now, this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth?' (*Ephesians 4:9.*) By these Paul means the spheres of Hell, which, as I have told you, lie below the terrestrial spheres. To the Colossians he wrote: 'Having despoiled the principalities and the powers, he made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it'. (*Colossians 2:15.*) The powers and principalities to which Paul refers are those of Hell, against which Christ fought, aided by the celestial legions after His descent, and which he overcame, forcing Lucifer, their prince to surrender those of his subjects who

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

desired to escape from his rule. This fact is indicated in the same Epistle by the words: 'Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein you were also raised with him through faith in the working of God . . . and you, being dead, . . . you, I say, did he make alive together with him'. (*Colossians 2 : 12, 13.*) The Colossians to whom Paul's Epistle is addressed had also formerly been spiritually dead and subject to Lucifer, but in time they learned to believe in Christ and in the kingdom of God. By their faith they gave their allegiance to the Savior and shared in that kingdom, together with Him. Although it is said here of Christ that He was raised, this does not mean that He had been spiritually dead, but that He had visited the realm of those who had died in spirit and had, for the time being, gone beyond the boundaries of God's kingdom. In consequence He was, during His stay in Hell, spiritually dead to all appearances although not so in reality. God 'raised Him from the dead' insofar as He gave Christ power to overcome the forces of the realm of the dead, and thus brought Him back into the kingdom of celestial life.

"The 'resurrection of the dead' has therefore not the slightest reference to *the resurrection of the physical body*. There is *no resurrection of the 'flesh'* of which the catechisms of the various Christian creeds teach. These, in the early centuries of our era did not speak of the 'resurrection of the flesh', but of the 'resurrection of the dead', to convey the consoling message that all those who were dead in spirit, not excepting Lucifer, would ultimately come home to God. The false doctrine that the terrestrial bodies of those who had died would come back to life, is of later invention and is responsible for the alteration of the expression, in spite of the fact that Paul explicitly has given you the true doctrine in the words: 'It is sown a natural body; it is raised a spiritual body'. (*1st Corinthians 15 : 44.*)

"*Not even of Christ was the natural body raised*. Like the physical bodies of all mortals it had been created from the od of the earth and like them it returned to earth, with this exception, that it was not redissolved into terrestrial od by way of decay, but by dematerialization effected by the spirit-world. Similarly, the bodies of men like Enoch and Elijah had been dissolved into od. From the od of the earth are created all human bodies and into the od of the earth they are ultimately dissolved. This is a law which admits of no exceptions.

"To the Christians of today the 'resurrection of the dead' means

the making anew of the physical body, and Christ's resurrection on Easter Sunday is regarded by them as the reunion of His spirit with His body which had lain in its grave for three days. These are wholly mistaken ideas, for, to repeat it once more, Christ's resurrection from the dead merely signifies His return from the realm of the spiritually dead, His return from Hell, into which His Spirit had descended. The Apostolic catechism expresses this correctly in the words: 'Descended unto Hell, on the third day risen from the dead. . .'

"The term 'resurrection of the dead' confuses you as it does, because the word 'death' means to you only the cessation of life on earth, and 'the dead' only corpses, graves and churchyards. You do not consider the usage of the language of the Bible, according to which 'death' means severance from God, and 'the dead', those who are so severed.

"To this misunderstanding the incorrect translation of certain Biblical passages has contributed liberally, as in the case of the Book of Job (19 : 25, 26): 'I know that my Redeemer lives and at last he will stand upon the earth. Then shall I see God, though my skin is destroyed and my body without *flesh*'. These words have been completely distorted into the opposite meaning in the version: 'I know that my Redeemer lives and will at least *raise me from the dust, when I shall be covered with this my skin and in my flesh I shall see God*'.

"Another falsification, attributed to Saint Matthew, which speaks of the dead having risen on the day of the Crucifixion, whereas in reality it is related that an earthquake had cast bodies from their tombs, has already been pointed out to you.

"I should also mention a passage from the Gospel of Saint John (5 : 28) *reading*: 'For the hour comes, in which all that are in the *tombs* shall hear his voice, and shall come forth'. The word 'tombs' as here used signifies the same thing that Saint Peter calls 'prison' when he writes in his Epistle: 'In which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison', (1st Peter 3 : 19) and again: 'For God did not spare the angels when they sinned, but cast them into dungeons, and committed them to pits of darkness'. (2nd Peter 2 : 4.) That the word 'tombs' as used by John in the passage I have cited cannot mean places of interment, is sufficiently indicated by the words of Christ: 'The hour comes, *and now is*, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God', for if the reference had been to graves, the resurrection of the dead would

have begun then and there. What Christ meant by his words was the spiritually dead in Satan's dungeons, whom he intended to redeem on the occasion of His descent to Hell that He had in view, insofar as they might give heed to His voice.

"Furthermore, the fact that Christ after His death upon earth appeared to His followers in *material form* has led you to the erroneous conclusion that His spirit re-entered His former physical body. In reality He made Himself visible in the same manner in which all spirits do so, namely by the materialization of His spiritual body. Had not many spirits done this before Him? Did not three spirits, completely human in form, appear to Abraham, eating with him as Christ ate with His disciples after the Resurrection: Did not the archangel Raphael for many weeks accompany young Tobias, eating and drinking with him, until Tobias was convinced that he was dealing with an everyday man? Was it therefore anything unprecedented, that Christ should have shown Himself after His death to His disciples, and that He should have spoken with them or partaken of food and drink in their company? You have similar cases of materialization today. Evil spirits, also, are able to materialize themselves in the same manner.

"The true meaning of the 'resurrection of the dead' was made clear to the Apostles and the faithful by Divine spirits only after the Ascension, for whenever Christ during His stay on earth spoke to the Apostles upon the subject, they were unable to understand Him. 'And they kept the saying, questioning among themselves what the rising again from the dead should mean'. (*Mark 9:10.*) Concerning the views of the Jewish priesthood of the day as to the 'rising of the dead', the Acts tell you: 'For the Sadducees say that there is no resurrection, neither angel, nor spirit; but the Pharisees confess both'. (*Acts 23:8.*)

"For his ability to return from the kingdom of the dead in spirit to the kingdom of God no one need place his dependence upon any human institution, be this an organized religion or a clergy, as claimed by the denominations of today and in particular by the Catholic church. He who has strayed from God may at all times communicate in spirit with God, the Father, and from Him receive pardon and strength to live righteously, without the aid of human intermediaries.

"7. Your former religion, on the contrary, teaches the necessity of the so-called *Sacraments* as the means of achieving salvation, and since these sacraments can be dispensed only by priests

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

ordained by bishops, the Catholic Church possesses in that doctrine a perfect means of holding its followers to its organization, since according to its precepts, no one can attain unto God save through the mediation of a member of the priesthood.

“As you read the New Testament you will be struck by the fact that there is not one single word in the gospel of Christ and of His disciples on which the sacramental doctrine of yours can be based. Your sacraments, as interpreted by you, are institutions of human origin, as I am about to prove to you.

a. First and most important of the sacraments in your eyes, is that of *baptism*. You contend that baptism *per se*, or entirely independently of the attitude of the infant baptized, converts the same from an enemy of God into one of His children, by the effacement of the so-called original sin as well as by that of all personal sins. Hence you go so far as to baptize infants so young that they are utterly unaware that the rite is being performed. This shows a complete misconception of the significance of baptism, which, in the early days of Christianity, was merely an external rite emblematic of an attitude of mind. Baptism, therefore, wrought nothing new, as you preach, but was merely an external manifestation of the sentiments of him who received it. Thus the baptism administered by John was a public acknowledgement on the part of those whom he baptized, that they were ready to accept his gospel and to mend their ways. The essence of the rite lay in *its administration in public*, so that all men might know who those were that had been baptized.

“You may perhaps think that an attitude of mind requires no outward sign, but you mortals often deceive yourselves as to your own real sentiments and become quite sure of them only when called upon to manifest them in public. Then you frequently find that what you had considered the good within yourselves is not as great as you had imagined it to be.

“Among the multitudes that went out to hear the Baptist preach there were many who had *thought* that they were experiencing a change of heart, but when they were faced with *baptism in public* their courage failed them. The fear of man in them was stronger than the fear of God; they dreaded the taunts of their fellow men, and in particular, those of the Jewish priesthood which had not acknowledged John as Divinely sent. Because of this fear they therefore declined baptism. Had they not been faced with the choice between accepting or rejecting this *outward manifestation*.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

they would never have realized that as a matter of fact they were not yet ripe for the kingdom of God, for no dependence can be placed upon him who because of worldly considerations refuses to stand up in public for what he knows is true and right, and to accept all the worldly consequences of his action. He is of no service to the cause of God, for the things of the world mean more to him.

"It was for this very reason that Christ accepted baptism from John: He too wanted all men to see that He was making Himself a sponsor for the truth of the Baptist's gospel.

"As a sign of the acceptance of his gospel, John chose baptism by immersion. He might indeed have chosen any other symbol, but immersion in water was the most beautiful one indicative of the purpose of his preachings. He taught the cleansing from sin by virtue of an abandonment of previous evil-mindedness, and as the neophyte was cleansed physically by immersion and, in a manner, emerged from the water as a new being, so the acceptance of the truth would cleanse his soul and enable him as a new man to lead a life of obedience to God.

"It was because of the symbolic nature of the rite that Christ retained baptism with water as an outward sign of the acceptance of His gospel.

"You of today can form but little conception of the consequences drawn upon themselves by the early Christians by reason of the acceptance of baptism, in token of their conversion to Christianity. By it the Jewish converts exposed themselves to hatred and persecution on the part of their former co-religionists and particularly on the part of the Jewish priesthood. They were insulted in the streets, dragged to prison, stoned. The story of Paul and the fate of Stephen shows you the fanaticism with which the Jewry of the times persecuted those of their race who had become Christians. Their persecution by the Gentiles was equally savage. The pagan religion was that of the State, the worship of the gods, the festivals held in honor of the idols and the sacrifices offered to them being prescribed by law. It was therefore considered as a most serious offense against the State and its ruler, to fail in attendance at such acts of worship and sacrificial ceremonies, and was punishable with death and confiscation of property. On the other hand, no Christian could continue to lend his presence to such occasions, although he knew that if he were denounced, he must be prepared for the worst. The horrors that attended the

persecution of the Christians by paganism are but too well known to you.

"How many so-called Christians of today do you think would be willing to accept a baptism involving such consequences to their lives and property? Yet he who lacks the courage to testify to his faith in the face of such sacrifices, is no true Christian.

"Baptism was therefore not regarded as dispensing inner grace, but as a mere symbol that the neophyte was ready to accept all consequences attendant upon the open confession of his belief.

"What, then, is the logical deduction? First and foremost, it follows that *the baptism of infant children is of no value*, since they are utterly incapable of recognizing the truth or of expressing a belief therein. For this reason the Christians of the earlier centuries never dispensed baptism to children, and hence, also, Christ commanded His Apostles that they should *first preach* the gospel and only *thereafter baptize* those who were ready to accept it. The second conclusion is the utter falsity of the doctrine of those Christian churches which teach that baptism purges a child of the original sin and that the souls of children who die unbaptized are forever lost. A cleansing from sin can be effected only by a determined effort to abandon the ways of evil, and not by any action that comes from without.

"Paul relates of some of the Christians of his day that they caused themselves to be baptized on behalf of persons who had already died. This was merely an exhibition of a neophyte's excess of zeal. No one can be baptized in another's place. Everyone must work out his own salvation, for in this there can be no substitution of persons. Nevertheless, the intentions of these converts were good: they merely sought to signify, that the deceased, were they alive, would also have accepted Christ's teaching and would have allowed themselves to be baptized in testimony thereof. It was a gesture of love for the departed.

"b. The second sacrament recognized by your Church is that of '*confirmation*', on the occasion of which the bishop lays his hand upon the confirmed, whom he anoints and for whom he then offers a prayer. It is held that by virtue of this act the '*Holy Spirit*' comes upon the confirmed, as it descended upon the Apostles on the day of Pentecost.

"It is true that Christ promised that after His resurrection He would send His Father's spirits to the faithful, but He did not make their sending contingent upon any ceremonies conducted by

a bishop. The messengers from God were promised to all who were worthy to receive them, and even if there is, in the Acts, a reference to the laying on of the hands in connection with the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit, the interrelation between the two things was quite different from the construction placed upon it today. The Elder laid his hand upon the person newly baptized or converted, in token of his admission to the community, and since the elders possessed mediumistic power to a high degree, the odic power of mediumistically gifted neophytes was so greatly increased by that act, that the messages of the spirits were frequently communicated through these neophytes. For this, a state of trance, properly speaking, was not necessary, the influence of the spirit-world being often the same as that which you have seen in the case of so-called 'inspirational mediums'. Persons under the spell of this influence uttered words of prayer or glorification of God, a manifestation known to you in connection with the early history of Christianity as 'praying in the spirit'. Frequently also they spoke words of admonition or advice which moved their hearers profoundly. Furthermore, the laying on of the hands was performed in the case of those to whom some special task had been assigned on behalf of the community, to signify that they were to be regarded as instruments of God after having been appointed as such by the Divine spirit-messengers.

"If therefore the Apostle Paul warns his fellow-worker Timothy to 'lay hands hastily on no man', he has two things in mind: one of these is, that Timothy must not assist anyone to become a medium unless he has first made sure of his disposition and loyalty to the faith, lest the medium should later devote his powers to evil ends and thereby cause serious harm to spiritual welfare of the community. The second reason is, that no one should be sanctioned by the laying on of hands as an instrument for a given mission unless specifically assigned to that mission by a Divine spirit. A person on whom the power of healing had been bestowed could be employed only as a healer, and not, for instance, as a teacher, a duty for which he was neither called nor qualified. 'Are all apostles?' asks Paul in his Epistle to the Corinthians, 'Are all prophets? are all teachers? are all workers of miracles? have all gifts of healings? do all speak with tongues? do all interpret?' (*1st Corinthians 12 : 29, 30.*) And when Paul admonishes Timothy to 'stir up the gift of God which is in thee through the laying on of my hands', he is referring to the gift of teaching, for, under

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the direction of a Divine spirit Timothy had been commissioned by Paul, through the laying on of hands, to teach the gospel of salvation and had been sent forth on that mission, but because of the many difficulties which he had encountered in the performance of his mission as a teacher, he had become listless and despondent.

"If you will compare the workings of the spirits in the early days of the Christian era with the doctrines on the subject that obtain today, you will see how widely in this matter also you have strayed from the truth. The Spirit of God will not submit to being dispensed by mortals through outward gestures and according to human whim. It comes, without the intervention of bishops and episcopal rites, to those whose inner lives have rendered them worthy of it and who desire it with heart and soul. The Spirit of God 'bloweth where it listeth', not where man listeth that it should blow.

"Before Christ brought redemption, the spirit of darkness pervaded all mankind, exerting thereon its sinister influence. This you can see from the many cases of mental obsession recorded in the Scriptures in connection with the cures effected by Christ. In other cases the victims suffered physical injury at the hands of the evil spirits; thus you read in the Gospels of people who had been struck dumb, deaf, blind, or epileptic under their influence. At times it was a single demon that fell upon his victim, at other times a host of demons. 'My name is Legion; for we are many', was the admission of one of them.

"Even if the majority of men were not so palpably affected by the Powers of Evil as were those who suffered bodily torments at the hands of demons, nevertheless even in their case the influence of evil was such as to prevent them from seeing the truth and the path of righteousness, and to harden their hearts.

"However, not even the Redemption has wrought any change in the influence of the evil spirits upon those people who by reason of their lack of faith continue, voluntarily, to expose themselves to such influence. Satan exerts his power, now as then, upon all *who belong to him at heart*. In this present age also there are many cases of persons possessed of demons, incorrectly classed by you with the mentally deranged whose madness is due to a diseased condition of the brain.

"The power of evil over those who return to a faith in God and to obedience to His word was broken by the Redemption, but even they must continue to fight, and require, as Paul says, 'the

whole armor of God, that they may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the universe'. (*Ephesians 6 : 11, 12.*)

"c. The third sacrament recognized by the Catholic Church is known as the '*Eucharist*'. Other creeds call it the '*Communion*'; Paul refers to it as '*the Lord's Supper*'. This also has been converted in the course of centuries into something quite different from that which Christ intended that it should be.

"Sacrificial feasts were common features in the religious rites of both Jews and pagans, and constituted an essential part of their ceremonies. Animals were slaughtered in consecrated places, their blood was poured out to the deity in whose honor also certain parts of the flesh were burned, while the rest was eaten by the worshippers at a communal feast. Not only animals, but fruit, bread, wine, oil and the like were offered in sacrifice. A part of these things was destroyed in honor of the deity, the rest being consumed as an act of devotion. The portion which was burned or poured out to the gods served, as you know, to prepare the power-current required for spirit-communications.

"But even the part which was consumed by the worshippers was regarded as sacred and as sanctified by the gods. The eating and drinking of the sacrificial remnants was a *symbol* of inner communion with the deity itself, for just as the consecrated food and drink became united to the body of him who consumed them, so the participants at the feast were supposed to become united to the deity as instruments to perform its wishes. Such was the significance of the sacrificial feasts held by Jews and pagans alike.

"The feast of the Passover of the Jews on the anniversary of the exodus from Egypt was emblematic of their wish to remain in communion with the God Who had manifested Himself to them through Moses, their savior, and to abide by His commandments for all time. It was therefore the symbol of their redemption from the bondage of Egypt under the leadership of Moses as their God-given leader.

"Christ was the great Emissary of God, foreshadowed and foretold by Moses, and destined to lead mankind out of the bondage of Satan, the Pharaoh of Hell. On the eve of the day on which He was to consummate the deliverance of mankind by His death and His victory over Hell, He celebrated in the company

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

of His disciples the same feast that had once been celebrated by Moses on the eve of the deliverance of the Jewish people. This feast was intended to have a twofold significance: His impending departure from earth by the death of His body, and His intention to remain united with His followers in spirit.

"In token of these things He selected bread and wine. Taking the bread, He broke it, and gave it to His disciples with the words: 'This is the symbol of my body which is given for you. This do in remembrance of me!' As He now broke the bread into pieces, so upon the day to follow was His earthly body to be broken in death and divorced from life.

"Likewise He took a cup of wine and let all drink thereof, saying: 'This cup is the new covenant in my blood, even that which is poured out for you. As often as ye do drink of it, remember me!'. As the wine flowed from the cup, so on the day of His death was the blood to flow from His body.

"In its essence, however, this meal was symbolical of the spiritual communion which Christ meant to maintain with His followers despite the fact that He would be parted from them on earth. As the bread which He distributed to the disciples had been a single loaf, and as the wine which they drank had been a single cupful, so the disciples were to constitute thenceforth but a single unit in spirit with Christ as well as among themselves. It was for this unity that Christ prayed so fervently and touchingly on this evening. He admonished them to preserve their love for their Master in their hearts and by it to remain united with Him in a spiritual body of which Christ would be the head and they the members. This they were besought to remember as often as they came together in order to repeat the meal in memory of the one of which He had partaken with them in farewell. Nor must they forget that it was a feast of love which their Lord and Master had held with them and that only those might take part in the observance of this meal who were united with God and men by bonds of love. Whoever does not feel this love in his heart is not fit to receive the rite commemorative of love, for whosoever harbors within him hatred, enmity, anger, envy and other forms of spite against his neighbor would be guilty of the greatest hypocrisy by receiving communion. It would be an insult of the most flagrant kind to Him Who instituted this rite in commemoration of His love, wherefore all who contemplate receiving it should search their hearts, to know whether they truly love the Lord and their

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

neighbors, since otherwise the communion would be a mockery of Christ.

"That is the real significance of the Lord's Supper and of its observance in commemoration of Him.

"What, however, has been done to this rite in the course of the centuries? The doctrine has been established that Christ, by virtue of the words which He spoke in the act of distributing the bread and the wine, had converted the bread into His actual body and the wine into His actual blood; that therefore the bread and the wine had not been mere symbols, but that the bread had turned into Christ's living body and the wine into His living blood, although the transsubstantiation was not perceptible to the human senses. It is further asserted that the same transsubstantiation takes place even today, whenever a priest pronounces the words of Christ over the bread and the wine.

"This is perhaps the most preposterous doctrine which the human mind has ever been asked to accept. It would signify that on the occasion of the Last Supper in the guest chamber at Jerusalem Christ's person had been present twenty-three-fold at the same instant; He was present before the Apostles in body; every morsel of the bread eaten by the eleven disciples is supposed to have been the living person of Christ, and every sip of the wine which they drank is likewise supposed to have been Christ, body and soul, flesh and blood.

"It is inconceivable that human beings could invent such a chimera. No man and no spirit can multiply himself. Not even God can do so. No one, — not even God, — can be present in body in more places than one at the same time. No one can convert himself into another form and yet remain what he really is. Christ could not sit before His Apostles as a man while they were partaking of Him in the shape of bread and wine. Christ could not eat Himself, for inasmuch as He also partook of the bread of which He gave to His disciples, He was eating His own body, according to your view.

"I can find no words in your language adequate to brand this doctrine as the supreme exhibition of human delusion.

"Furthermore, you teach that the same transsubstantiation is effected daily by your priests and that when they pronounce the words: 'This is my body; this is my blood', every crumb of bread and every drop of wine consecrated by them are changed into the person of Christ. On this assumption, your priests presume to a

power which not God Himself possesses, because not even He can bring about the inherently impossible.

"You may protest all you will that this is an unfathomable mystery; you may call it a mystery of the faith; the fact of the untruth of this doctrine remains. The word 'mystery' can be used to cover any human fallacy. Words are always available, even if they convey no sense.

"There is one thing in connection with this doctrine at which I never cease to wonder. You surely read the Bible; has it never occurred to you that in the entire New Testament there is not a shred of evidence to support your preposterous view? If, at the Lord's Supper, the bread and wine had been changed into the true Christ, the Apostles certainly would never have wearied of pointing to this incomprehensible miracle. It would have been recorded minutely in the Gospels, in addition to which the Apostles would have referred to this supper of leavetaking again and again in their Epistles to the early Christians. On the contrary, you cannot find one single reference to it. The Apostle John who reclined beside his Master during the supper and who was the first to receive a morsel of the consecrated bread, says nothing whatever in his Gospel of the distribution by Christ of the bread and wine. He relates that Jesus washed the disciples' feet. He relates His betrayal by Judas. Is it reasonable that he should have said nothing of the most mysterious and mightiest event in the life of Jesus? The Epistles make no mention of the Supper. In the Acts it is recorded only that the early Christians 'continued steadfastly in the apostles' teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers'. Here therefore the observances of the Supper is described as 'breaking of bread', and not as the ceremony which you have made out of it today. The bread was broken as a symbol of the death of Christ and of the love which they bore to one another and to Him. It was bread that they broke and ate, but while so doing, their thoughts and their prayers were directed to Him Who had promised them: 'For where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them'. The partaking of the bread and wine meant to them a sacred token of their spiritual fellowship with the Redeemer.

"The Apostle Paul who wrote numerous Epistles to the churches is the only one to refer to the Lord's Supper, as he does in his first letter to the Corinthians, but not even he would have mentioned it, had he not been compelled to do so by circumstances,

having learned that the observance of the Supper by the Corinthian community was often marked by unseemly conduct.

"Among the early Christians the observance of the communion included partaking of a complete meal, as indeed had been true of Christ's supper in Jerusalem, for before He gave His disciples bread and wine in remembrance of Him, He had eaten of the paschal lamb and of the other dishes, and drunk wine together with them. So too the early Christians, when observing the communion, began with meats and other dishes, and partook of wine. Not until the end of the feast did they break bread, and drank from a common chalice in remembrance of Christ.

"They were, however, human, and had the same human failings that all men have, as unfortunately was made evident during the communion service in Corinth. This was held in private dwellings, and since the owners of these dwellings were in no position to supply the meal for the entire community — most of the early Christians belonging to the poor, — it was necessary for all who participated to bring with them their own food and drink for the meal that preceded the rite. Under the circumstances it sometimes happened that the very poor brought little or nothing at all, contenting themselves with partaking only of the communion-service proper after the conclusion of the feast. Too often they had to witness how the more affluent members of the community consumed plentiful repasts accompanied by copious drafts of wine, and how, upon occasion, they exceeded the bounds of discretion and became drunk. Conditions of this kind could not be tolerated, not alone because they gave offense to the poor who were obliged to observe them, but chiefly because they were entirely out of keeping with the solemnity of the occasion.

"When, therefore, Paul had heard of occurrences of this sort in the Corinthian community, he stepped in and called the Corinthians sharply to task for their behavior, and in so doing he could scarcely avoid speaking to them of the true significance of the communion. He opens the subject by criticising their conduct at the Lord's table. 'When therefore you assemble yourselves together, it is not possible to eat the Lord's supper: for in your eating each one takes before others his own supper; and one is hungry, and another is drunken. What, have you not houses to eat and to drink in? or do you despise the congregation of God, and put them to shame that have not? What shall I say to you? shall I praise you? In this I praise you not'. (*1st Corinthians 11 : 20-22.*)

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"He next proceeded to point out to them the significance of the rite, although in their case no lengthy explanations were necessary, since he had already taught them of the subject orally. Citing the words uttered by Christ at the supper in Jerusalem, he thus summarized their import: 'As often as ye eat this bread and drink the cup, ye proclaim the Lord's death till he come'. The Lord's Supper is therefore a partaking of bread and wine in token of the death of Christ, Who gave His life out of love for the fallen spirits, and those who during a rite observed in His memory treated the symbols of the Redeemer's body in so unworthy a manner as did some of the Corinthians, sinned not only against those symbols, but against Christ Himself, as he who misbehaves at a festival given in honor of his sovereign, commits an offense against the sovereign's person, and is punished accordingly. 'Wherefore whosoever shall eat the bread or drink the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner, shall be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord'. Paul now exhorts his hearers to search their souls before receiving the communion, in order to make sure that his thoughts are as the Savior would them be. 'But let a man prove himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup. For he that eateth and drinketh, eateth and drinketh judgment unto himself, if he discern not the body'. But whosoever treats bread and wine, when administered as the tokens of the highest and holiest act of love in all creation, with indifference or contempt, whoever partakes of them while he is drunk or in some other equally objectionable state, draws upon himself the Divine ire, for even men will resent the slighting of a gift which they have made in memory of themselves. Lack of respect for the tokens of Christ's death and of His love manifests itself above all things in the communicant's frame of mind. At a rite held in commemoration of love, it is eminently unfitting that the hearts of the participants be filled with feelings of an opposite kind. The Lord's Supper is not a rite to be received when the heart is full of rancor, enmity, bitterness and other sentiments that offend against the love for one's neighbor. On this score also the Corinthians had sinned heavily, for as Paul says '. . . ye come together not for the better but for the worse. For first of all . . . I hear that divisions exist among you', indicating that they had sinned against the precept of neighborly love.

"Under these circumstances it is not to be wondered at that the Apostle stigmatized many of the Corinthian Christians as

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

'weak and sickly, and not a few sleep', by which he meant that they had gone to the length of becoming indifferent to God.

"As you see, nothing in Paul's Epistles indicates that he regarded bread and wine in any other light than as symbols of Christ's body and blood. Had the bread ceased to be bread, as you teach, and had it been changed into the body of Christ, Paul would have said so very clearly. How much more emphatically would this fiery disciple have spoken to the Corinthians, had he believed in the transubstantiation of the bread!

"Already, in an earlier part of the same Epistle, Paul had mentioned the communion in connection with his discussion of idolatrous festivals. In that passage he compares these with the Christian observance of the communion-rite. The meaning of his words is as follows: By eating the flesh of beasts sacrificed to the idols, the Gentiles have communion with the demons. The flesh itself is nothing out of the ordinary; it is flesh, and remains such, like any other flesh. But the intention with which it is offered and eaten by the Gentiles is the factor which allows them to hold communion with the evil spirits. On the other hand, Christians have communion with Christ by receiving bread and wine, which do not change their nature by virtue of this rite, but remain what they were. It is only the intention with which they partake of the consecrated bread and wine that enables them to have communion with Him. Because of this, Christians are forbidden to take part in pagan sacrificial feasts, since thereby they would be in communion with the evil spirits. 'You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of the demons; you cannot partake of the table of the Lord, and of the table of the demons'. (*1st Corinthians 10 : 21.*) The bread and the wine partaken of by the Christians are changed by virtue of the rite into the body of Christ as little as the flesh eaten by the Gentiles underwent any change whatever. In both cases it is true that communication is established with the spirit-world: in the case of the heathens this was a communication with the demons accompanied by the symbolical consumption of flesh and wine, while with the Christians it was a communication with Christ, symbolized by bread and wine. Furthermore, just as the heathens at their festivals came into communication not only with the particular demon in whose honor the feast was held, but with the entire world of evil spirits, which constitutes a single unit, so the Christians by receiving the bread and wine had communion not alone with the individual Spirit of Christ, but with all the spirits in God's kingdom whose ruler He is. Paul describes this great

community by the term 'the Lord's body'. Christ is its head, and all created spirits of good, including all men who believe in God are its members. Whoever, therefore, is in communion with Christ, is in communion with the members of His spiritual body also. This communion is particularly symbolized at the Lord's Supper by single loaf; as this, prior to its distribution constituted a whole, so the many among whom it is distributed are held to constitute one unit in love. 'Seeing that we, who are many, are one bread, one body; for we all partake of the one bread'. (*1st Corinthians 10 : 17.*)

"The image, that all who belong to Christ form one spiritual body with Him is frequently employed by Paul in his Epistles. It is the same thing as that which you call the 'communion of the saints' in your creed.

"In support of your false doctrine of the transsubstantiation of bread and wine into the person of Christ, you quote the words allegedly used by Him: 'This is my body — this is my blood', emphasizing that in both cases He said 'is' and not 'signifies'. How do you know that in the language which He spoke He used a word corresponding to your word 'is'? You know nothing whatever of the Aramaic tongue spoken by Him and you no longer have the original Greek text of the New Testament. In reality, Christ at the Last Supper said nothing to indicate anything beyond a reference to the bread and the wine as symbolizing His impending death on behalf of the Redemption of the world.

"Let us assume, however, that He really said: 'This is my body — this is my blood'. Everyone familiar with the Bible knows that Christ prevailingly spoke allegorically, as He himself says: "These things have I spoken unto you in parables: the hour comes, when I shall no more speak unto you in parables. . . ." (*John 16 : 25.*) Do you recall when it was that He spoke these words? As you will find, it was on the occasion of the Last Supper, but a few hours before His death. As a man He spoke only in allegory. 'All these things spoke Jesus in parables unto the multitudes; and without a parable spoke he nothing unto them'. (*Matthew 13 : 34.*) Moreover, on the eve of His death He spoke not only of bread and wine as symbolical of His approaching end, but in another allegory he pictured His relation to the disciples: 'I am the vine, you are the branches'. (*John 15 : 5.*) If therefore you are not willing to accept the bread and the wine in a figurative sense, you cannot assign an allegorical meaning to His words of the vine

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

and its branches, and are forced to admit that by speaking these words, Christ became a vine and His disciples became its branches. The mode of expression is the same in both cases, and one metamorphosis is no more difficult to conceive than the other, both being equally impossible.

"It is easy to understand why the Catholic Church should collect even the most far-fetched evidence contained in the Bible to support its preposterous doctrine. Thus it accepts other figurative expressions literally, as where Christ says of Himself that He is the bread that came down from heaven, and that His flesh is 'meat indeed' and His blood is 'drink indeed'. These sayings are to be taken in a spiritual sense, as Christ never wearies of repeating. It is the Spirit that gives life; the flesh profits nothing: the words that I have spoken unto you are spirit, and are life'. (*John* 6 : 63.) Speaking of Himself, He says: 'My meat is to do the will of him that sent me and to accomplish his work'. To the Samaritan woman at the well of Jacob He promises that the 'water' which He will give shall become a well of water springing up unto eternal life'. All of these sayings are allegories and can never be taken literally without involving the sheerest absurdities. Christ is not truly a vine nor are His disciples truly branches thereof. The bread and the wine at the Lord's table are not actually His body nor His blood. These expressions were meant in a figurative, spiritual, sense, and were so understood by the Apostles and by the Christians of the early centuries.

"The service which centers about the alleged transubstantiation of bread and wine into the person of Christ is known to Catholics as the 'Mass'. It is also referred to as the re-enactment of the Crucifixion. There is no such thing as a re-enactment of the death of Christ, not even a bloodless re-enactment. Just how, do you imagine, Christ's death on the Cross would be re-enacted bloodlessly? You probably do not think at all, because the subject admits of no rational thinking.

"The Mass has come about by an amplification of the prayers offered at the Lord's Supper in early Christian times, but in the course of the centuries it has lost those features which made of it a communion rite and a rite commemorative of the Lord. Thus the present-day Mass retains nothing good except a series of prayers which can as well be said in private by anyone without the assistance of any priest. The faith placed by Catholics in the efficacy of paid-for Masses is unfortunately a great delusion.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

"Restore to the people the communion-service of the Apostolic days, which was a sacred and beneficent rite! It should be observed frequently, the most appropriate occasion therefor being the eve or the day itself of your more important church-festivals. Other days also, which are of special significance to you, are appropriate times for observing this rite. You may do so without outside help, if you will, at home in your own family circle. No priests nor clericals of any other kind, no churches, are necessary. In every gathering of the faithful there will be someone qualified to conduct the communion-service in a becoming manner.

"Because of the importance of the subject I shall give you a brief outline of the ritual to be followed.

"The bread to be used had best be unleavened, or what you know as 'matzoth'. The wine, which may be either red or white, is contained in a chalice of glass or crystal. Both are placed upon a table covered with a white cloth, the vessel containing the wine being kept covered until it is used, in order to prevent any contamination of its contents. Similarly, the bread may be covered with a clean napkin. In addition, you may follow the custom of the early Christians by placing upon the table a simple cross, not a crucifix. Behind the cross are ranged seven candles, so placed that the center one is directly behind the cross, and close to the same.

"When you have met at the appointed hour, open the service with a song appropriate to the occasion. After this, prayer is offered by the person officiating as leader, in his words, followed by the recital of some Psalm suited to the hour. He may, if he likes, select such verses from a number of different Psalms as he likes, considers most fitting. Next in order is a selected reading from the Holy Writ, and if, furthermore, anyone present is qualified to deliver a short address, this also will be of value.

"Thereupon the congregation devotes several minutes to silent reflection, each member thinking of his sins and short-comings and contritely asking pardon of God. This is followed by the recital by the leader, or by the whole congregation in unison, of the 130th Psalm: 'Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O God!' At the conclusion of this psalm, the leader approaches the table and in words of his own choosing prays that the Lord may bless the bread and wine, in order that they may conduce to the welfare of all who partake thereof. He thereupon breaks morsels from the loaf and hands them, one by one, to each worshipper present, with the words: 'Take, eat; this is in token of the body of Christ,

our Redeemer, Who died upon the Cross in order that we might be saved!' These words are pronounced once only, and very slowly, during the distribution of the bread, which the worshippers eat as soon as they receive it, the last in order to eat being the officiating member himself. In the like manner he then passes the cup from member to member, saying: 'Drink ye all of it; this is in token of the blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, which was poured out for us unto the remission of our sins!' Again, the leader is the last to drink of the cup. He then offers a prayer of thanksgiving and the rite is closed with a song.

"If a deep-trance medium should be present, the spirit which speaks through him will take charge of the service and give the needful directions.

"It is in no sense out of place that the communion-service be followed by a social occasion which may include a supper and an evening spent in enjoyable conversation, for it is right that you should feel happy and manifest that feeling outwardly. It is right that you should enjoy not only the spiritual gifts of God, but also His temporal blessings joyously and cheerfully, without exceeding the bounds of propriety.

"d. The Catholic Church has a *Sacrament of Penance*. According to the precepts of the New Testament, 'penance' signifies a change of heart. John the Baptist preached repentance as a means to obtain forgiveness for sins, and of Christ it is related: 'From that time began Jesus to preach, and to say, Repent you; for the kingdom of heaven is at hand'. (*Matthew 4 : 17.*) The words: 'Repent ye', literally translated, read: 'Change your manner of thinking'. Repentance is therefore a spiritual change, by which the mind ceases to harbor evil thoughts and turns to God. Whoever lays aside a former evil habit and acquires a good one, gives evidence of a change of heart, and numbers among the penitent.

"The Catholics give a far wider scope to the sacrament of penance. They do not regard reformation in thought and conduct as sufficient, but their Church demands rather, as unconditional for such reformation and reconciliation with God, the confession of each individual grave sin before a Catholic priest, who alone, according to its teachings, has the power to act in God's place in granting pardon. For Catholics, there can be no pardon without priestly absolution, and in this way the Church binds its adherents fast to the priesthood and to the churchly organization. This is the spiritual club by which it exercises unrestricted domination over their souls.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

“ ‘Who can forgive sins, save God alone?’ In addressing this question to Christ, the scribes were in the right. No mortal, and no priest, can grant absolution; even Christ could not. It is true that God can commission a mortal as His instrument to tell a sinner that his sins are forgiven. An instruction of this kind was given by Him to the prophet, Nathan, whom God sent to David to say that He had pardoned him for the sins of adultery and murder. Similarly, Christ had been specially empowered by God to remit sin in the individual cases in which He told the sinners that they had been forgiven. He did not grant this pardon as coming from Himself nor at His own discretion, but announced it only to those whom God, through His spirit-messengers, had designated as being worthy of it. This is confirmed by Christ, in that He expressly tells His opponents that He has been given authority on earth to forgive sins, not an authority to cover all cases at His own pleasure, but special authority in each individual instance.

“The Catholic priest, however, asserts that he has been invested by his bishop with the power to grant or deny absolution according to his own human judgment. How can he tell whether God has pardoned the sins in one case and not in another? Or does he delude himself into thinking that God will pardon one sinner because he has been absolved by a priest, and deny pardon to another because a priest has refused to absolve him? Or do the Divine spirit-messengers direct the priest when to grant and when to deny absolution? Has the priest any other supernatural gifts to guide him in this decision? Can he read in the hearts of his confessants whether God has forgiven their sins? The Catholic priesthood must admit that it is not so gifted. How can they assure a fellow man that God has pardoned his sins, when they have not the slightest grounds for knowing whether they are telling him the truth? The priest can neither read the heart of his confessant, nor know the will of God, and if you reply that absolution is given only on condition that the confessant truly repents of his sin and strives earnestly to mend his ways, the futility of priestly absolution lies in the very fact that the priest is never in a position to know whether his confessant is sincere. He cannot, therefore, in any instance say: ‘I absolve thee’, but at the most he may say: ‘May God absolve thee!’ One need not be a priest in order to utter a wish of this kind, which is merely the expression of a desire that exerts no effect and may be spoken by anyone. However, the priest says, ‘I absolve thee’, and thereby pronounces a sentence of whose validity in the eyes of God he knows nothing.

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

What would be thought of a judge of your temporal courts who pronounced sentences without knowing whether they were legally valid? His proceeding would be considered farcical. This applies to the Catholic doctrine of the remission of sins through a priest, as your common sense will tell you. The truth of the matter is this: whoever sincerely repents of his sins and turns to God, will be forgiven by Him, regardless of whether or not he has received the forgiveness of a priest, and whoever does not repent, will not be forgiven by God, no matter how often he may have received priestly absolution. Your doctrine of the remission of sins by priests is therefore one of the great human fallacies which have crept into religion in the course of time.

"In support of its contention that its priests have the power of granting absolution, the Catholic Church invokes a spurious Biblical passage, to which I called your attention on the occasion of our first meeting. This reads: 'Whose soever sins you forgive, they are forgiven unto them; whose soever sins you retain, they are retained. (*John 20 : 23.*) As you already know, a slight alteration of the Greek text has been made at this place, thereby completely changing the sense of the passage. Instead of 'unto them' the original text read 'unto you' whence the passage would read: 'Whose soever sins you forgive, they are forgiven unto you. Whose soever sins you retain (or do not forgive), they shall be retained unto you'. In these words Christ voices the same precept that is contained in the words of the Lord's prayer: 'Forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us', and in the words that He uttered immediately thereafter: 'For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But if you forgive not men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses'. (*Matthew 6 : 14.*)

"Inasmuch as the faculty of remitting sins, such as is claimed by the Catholic Church, does not and cannot exist, it was never either taught nor exercised in the early days of Christianity. Hence the Christians of those times were never required to confess their sins to a priest, but were urged, in accordance with the precepts of Christ, to confess their sins to *one another*, namely those sins which one of them had committed against his fellow-Christian. They were expected to acknowledge those wrongs which they had committed against their neighbors to the neighbors themselves and thereby effect a reconciliation, for this, after all, is the only and the quickest way of making atonement. If a person who has offended you comes to you and admits that he was in the wrong,

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

you will gladly make up with him. It is this that Christ means when He says: 'If therefore thou art offering thy gift at the altar, and there remembered that thy brother hath aught against thee, leave there thy gift before the altar, and go thy way, first be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift'. (*Matthew 5 : 23, 24.*)

"If confession before a priest and absolution by him were necessary for the remission of sins, Christ would not have neglected to point this fact out to the Apostles, inasmuch as it would have constituted the most important part of the Gospel, since without forgiveness no one can enter the kingdom of Heaven. Nevertheless, neither Christ nor the Apostles make any mention of confession before a priest, nor of absolution by the same.

"Confession and absolution by a priest are human institutions which do not make the road to God any easier for the believer, but render it more difficult for him by lulling him into a false sense of security. He confesses, receives absolution, and goes his way, thinking that he has made his peace with God, and thereby suffers a great deception. Every error incurred on the road to salvation is like the wrong path taken by the wanderer, leading him away from, rather than toward his goal.

"No little importance is attached by your one-time religion to penitential exercises. This creed prescribes abstinence from certain kinds of food on certain days, considers physical castigation in the light of a high degree of excellence, recommends pilgrimages, and demands celibacy of its priests and monks. None of these things have any connection with the true idea of repentance and inner perfection. Christ never fasted voluntarily and never mortified the flesh. When He fasted in the wilderness it was because of necessity, since the desert offered no nourishment. Consequently you will not find a word in the teachings of Christ or in the Epistles of the disciples enjoining abstinence from given kinds of food, or physical castigation. On the contrary, matters of this kind are described as being of no value; thus Paul writes to the Corinthians: 'The food which we eat in no way affects us in the eyes of God'. (*1st Corinthians 8 : 8*), and to the Colossians: 'If, then, being members of Christ, you have freed yourselves wholly from the spirit powers that rule the world, why do you still submit to its ordinances, as though you were worldly? Among these ordinances I might mention: 'Do not touch this, do not eat that, — do not handle this'. According to the laws and

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

doctrines of men, whoever violates these ordinances shall perish. It is true, that all such ordinances are reputed as wise; that they acquire the standing of religious precepts and are regarded as a sign of humility and as serving to subdue the flesh, but they have no real value whatever, and serve only to make men self-sufficient'. (*Colossians 2 : 20-23.*)

"All of the ordinances imposed upon men by the various Christian denominations originated not with Christ, but, as Paul writes to Timothy, with those who have fallen away from the faith, 'God's spirit declares expressly that in times to come many will fall away from the faith, and, turning to the spirits of deceit, will spread doctrines inspired by demons. They will be led into this by lying preachers who stamp their own consciences with the brand of guilt. These men forbid marriage and exact abstinence from certain foods which God has created to be eaten with thankfulness by those who believe and by all who have come to a full knowledge of the truth. For all things created by God are good and nothing is to be reckoned among the things forbidden, if you can partake thereof with a prayer of thanks to God, seeing that it has been sanctified by the world by which God created it, and by your prayer'. (*1st Timothy 4 : 1-5.*)

"The Catholic Church is one of those which lays great stress upon abstinence from food on specified days, for which a single meal is prescribed by it. It forbids its clergy to marry and regards the monastic state as the most perfect. That church also has 'given heed to doctrines of demons', for these precepts are purely human ordinances, which according to the words of the Apostle, may 'have a show of wisdom', but are not of any value for the salvation of men, and consequently, no church has the right to force such ordinances upon its followers and to brand any infraction thereof as a grave sin.

"It is true that your Church maintains, as regards its ordinance of celibacy, that there is no compulsion in the matter, since no one is obliged to enter the priesthood or any of the orders. True enough, nobody is forced to become a priest, a monk, or a nun, but if anyone believes that he has been called to proclaim the Gospel in the capacity of a priest, that Church does compel him to vow celibacy, giving him the choice only between abandoning his chosen calling, or taking the vow to live a life ordained not by God but by ecclesiastical precept. He is, therefore, subjected to the greatest moral stress which can be exerted upon man, for

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

although the church openly compels no one to join a religious order and in consequence, to remain unmarried, it nevertheless exercises psychic pressure of the most powerful kind by picturing a monastic existence as the acme of perfection. Now it so happens that it is precisely the best who regard it as their duty to attain to this ideal, and since this has been falsely held up to them as a celibate life as the member of some order, they are ready to make this sacrifice, impelled as they are by an irresistible desire to become perfect.

“Let it not be said that God gives strength to those who feel called to join the priesthood or a religious order to lead a life of unblemished chastity. That is an utter delusion. God gives strength only for the fulfillment of His own will, not for the accomplishment of that which men impose upon themselves or on their fellows out of an outward show of voluntarily assumed saintliness, as they call it, and in violation of His laws. Goodness and perfection lie only in doing that which is in keeping with the will of God and the performance of which is at all times wholly voluntary. Nothing, however, can be good or perfect if done under compulsion, not even if the first step be voluntarily taken and subsequently involves lifelong compulsion. Not even God exercises compulsion upon any man to force him to do His will. How then can a church deprive man of his right of self-determination, a right upon which God Himself never encroaches? Compulsion and enslavement are the measures by which Evil governs; the rule of Goodness is based on liberty. Evil, and nothing else, has introduced oppression into religion. The mania for unrestricted power over others is responsible for the introduction into the Catholic Church of the suppression of personal liberty in the guise of achieving saintliness. The celibacy of the clergy as well as the monastic life with its vows of poverty, chastity, and implicit obedience to spiritual authority are the most powerful weapons of the Catholic religion for strengthening its internal organization. Neither Christ nor the Apostles have any knowledge of a priesthood such as the Catholic; they know nothing of any religious orders. They never taught nor founded anything of that nature. They did not proclaim that ideal perfection lay in taking vows of poverty and of chastity in the form of celibacy, and least of all, in blind obedience to ecclesiastical superiors.

“They know of no *voluntary poverty* as the Catholic Church defines the term. They founded no monastic orders, nor did they

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

teach that such should be founded for men to enter, and on entering, endow them with their worldly goods. Can the members of monastic orders truthfully be called poor? Are they not rather relieved for the rest of their days of all worry on the score of support? Is not the table set for them every day? Is that what you call poverty? If all men were as well off, there would be no poverty in the world. And if ideal perfection is to be found in poverty, how is it that so many monasteries are rich in worldly possessions? If poverty is the ideal condition for the individual, it must also be the ideal condition for the community. Again, why do not your clergy who preach voluntary poverty as the highest form of saintliness, practice it themselves? He who preaches an ideal should surely be the first to practice it himself. Or do you perhaps call your clergy poor? Is the Pope poor? Are the bishops? Are the priests? There would be no poor people on earth if every man were blessed with worldly goods possessed by those who preach poverty as a virtue.

“In order to prove that voluntary poverty is necessary to perfection, you invoke Christ's speech to the rich youth, but your interpretation of His words is quite incorrect. When Christ said: ‘One thing thou lackest yet: sell all that thou hast, and distribute unto the poor, and thou shalt have treasure in heaven: and come, follow me’, this advice was tendered to that particular youth whose heart was set upon his wealth, which had become a snare unto him and a hindrance on the road Godward. When, on receiving this advice, the youth turned away, the Lord said to His disciples: ‘How hardly shall they that have riches enter into the kingdom of God!’ Not all, however, who are blessed with worldly goods are rich in the sense in which Christ used the word, but only those whose hearts are set upon Mammon and who make a god of him. Abraham, Isaac, Job, and David were wealthy in the worldly sense, without belonging to that class of the rich to which Christ referred, for their wealth did not stand in their way on their road to God. Not men like them would He have counselled to sell all they had, in order to lay up treasures in heaven. It was a different matter in the case of the rich youth whose love of riches was such that it would not let him follow the call of God. Rather than renounce these, he renounced the kingdom of heaven.

“All men encounter obstacles when they attempt to come nearer to God, the nature of these obstacles varying with the individual. It is the task of everyone to remove the obstacle peculiar to himself,

as is indicated in the words of Christ: 'If thy eye causeth thee to stumble, pluck it out, and cast it from thee'. If there is anything in your life that hinders you from fulfilling the will of God, put it away, though it be as dear to you as your eye. In the case of the rich youth, that hindrance was his wealth, which he was invited to put away by selling all he had and giving the proceeds to the poor; if, however, wealth does not constitute a hindrance to progress Godward, its owner has no occasion for parting from it. Furthermore, if it were incumbent upon all to sell their property in order to attain perfection, it would be wrong for anyone to acquire property, for if the retention of wealth is an offense against righteousness, so, surely, would be its acquisition, and in that case the churches and monasteries would certainly be committing a wrong by holding and acquiring property.

"Christ Himself, before His appearance in public, was not abjectly poor. He owned several houses which He had acquired by dint of hard work and which He sold when He began to preach, giving the proceeds to those of His friends with whom He lodged while on His travels. Therefore, although He no longer owned property after He had entered upon His career as a teacher, He had no need to beg of anyone.

"Another of the ideals of saintliness according to the views of your former belief is that of *absolute chastity* in the form of celibacy. Absolute chastity is something that everyone should and can observe, but it has no connection with celibacy for there is nothing unchaste in matrimony. Married people can be perfectly chaste, and the unmarried ones quite the reverse, even if they do belong to the clergy.

"True chastity consists in exercising moderation in matters pertaining to the natural laws of sexual life. Just as moderation in eating and drinking does not lie in the forcible suppression of hunger and thirst, but in refraining from consuming food and drink to excess, so in the case of sex-life. The sexual impulse has been implanted in all created beings by the Maker, as one of Nature's laws, and since whatever He has created is good, it should not be forcibly suppressed by men, but should be used by them within the limits set by the Divine will.

"The law of procreation applies to all men, and the founding of families is a sacred duty which no one may shirk with impunity. Procreation on earth is the way by which the fallen spirits must progress through the stages of Nature, in order that they may

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

reach perfection. It is a manifestation of God's wisdom, that those of the fallen spirits which have progressed to a given terrestrial stage may, by way of procreation, assist their fellows to rise from the lower to the higher orders of Nature. If several brothers are precipitated into the same pit, the first one to succeed in climbing out of it will lend the others a hand, in order that they too may escape. That is a duty which brothers owe one another.

"It is from this viewpoint of God's wisdom and mercy that you should consider the law of sex-life. God has made the sexual instinct as strong as it is, because procreation is a part of His plan of salvation, and in order that His creatures may find it less easy to shirk their duty of collaborating with Him in carrying out that plan.

"Manifestly, therefore, the question involves a duty from the performance of which only the weightiest of reasons can absolve a man, and hence the vow of celibacy is a grave offense against the will of God. Neither the priests nor the members of the monastic orders of the Catholic Church have any adequate grounds in the eyes of God for their attitude toward marriage.

"I know that celibacy has been defended on grounds derived from the seventh chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, in which Paul alleges several reasons, because of which the single state is to be preferred, recommending that only those should marry for whom celibacy has perils.

"This attitude of the Apostle was a mistaken one, neither had he received any authority from Christ to preach such a doctrine. Of this Paul himself was well aware, as you will see if you will read that chapter carefully, for if you do, you will notice something that occurs nowhere else in any of his Epistles, namely, Paul's repeated insistence upon the fact that he is voicing his personal views only as regards celibacy, and that in this respect he is speaking under no mandate from the Lord. Hence the constant reiteration of the words: 'I say'. 'But *I say* to the unmarried and to widows. . .' 'But unto the married I give charge, yea, not I, but the Lord. . .' 'But to the rest say I, not the Lord. . .' 'Now concerning virgins I have no commandment of the Lord: but I give my judgment. . .' At the end of the chapter he again says: 'But she is happier if she abide as she is, after my judgment. . .' His judgment was mistaken, even if he closed his last sentence with the remark: 'and I think that I also have a spirit of God'.

"Paul himself was not married, a state which he justified by

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

the fact that his calling required him to make long and frequent journeys. Had he had a family, these would have been impossible, for he could neither have taken his wife and children with him nor have abandoned them for months and years at a time. Paul's own state of celibacy made him narrow-minded and fanatical upon this subject. All men have their faults, a fact for which allowance must be made even in the case of the Apostles.

"Paul was subsequently enlightened by Christ as to his misconception on the score of celibacy, and was directed to retract his views in a letter addressed to all of his communities. This is the letter of which I spoke to you on the evening of our first meeting and in which a number of other earlier mistakes are corrected. On that occasion I told you that this letter had afterwards been destroyed because a number of the explanations and amendments which it contained did not accord with the views of the Church of the later age.

"How radically Paul changed his views concerning celibacy, in consequence of the enlightenment he received from his Master, may be gathered from his writings to Timothy and to Titus. He who had written to the Corinthians that he wished all men were even as he himself, now no longer tolerates the appointment of the unmarried to any ecclesiastical office in the community. Judging from his Epistle to the Corinthians it might have been expected that he would have preferred these for the places in question, but the exact opposite is the case. 'The bishop therefore *must be . . .* the husband of one wife, temperate, sober-minded, orderly . . . one that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; but if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?' 'Let deacons be husbands of one wife, ruling their children and their houses well'. (1st Timothy 3:2, 13.) A similar injunction is addressed to Titus: 'That thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and appoint elders in every city as I give thee charge; if any man is blameless, the husband of one wife, having children that believe. . .' (Titus 1:6.) Whereas he writes to the Corinthians that a widow is happier to abide as she is, he writes to Timothy: 'I desire therefore that the younger widows marry, bear children, rule the household. . .' (1st Timothy 5:14.)

"When Paul stresses the point that bishops and deacons must be 'husbands of one wife' he is not referring to men who have contracted a second marriage, for if he recommends that widows

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

remarry, as he does in his letter to Titus, then surely he concedes the same right to widowers. The term 'husbands of one wife' is used because several men who became converted from paganism to Christianity had concubines in addition to their wedded wives, a fact which was generally known, and because of the scandal to which it gave rise, Paul would not tolerate their appointment to positions of responsibility in the religious communities. For such offices he desired only men in good repute among both Christians and non-Christians, as he writes to Timothy: 'Moreover he must have good testimony from them that are without, lest he fall into reproach and the snare of the devil'. (*1st Timothy 3 : 7.*)

"For a thousand years, matrimony, which Paul enjoined upon the elders, bishops and deacons was permitted to Catholic priests also, and if the Papacy forced celibacy upon the clergy eventually, its motives for so doing were not based on any lofty religious grounds, for such could hardly have existed, since otherwise they would have led to the enactment of the rule of celibacy in the first days of the Christian Church. The determining factor in the matter was a purely worldly one, namely, a desire to increase the powers of the Pope, for a clergyman who is bound by no family ties is a far more pliable tool of his ecclesiastical organization than is a priest who enjoys the moral and material support of a wife and children. It might be added that the celibate priest bequeathed his property to the Church.

"The dangers of celibacy which caused a man like Saint Paul to discriminate against unmarried collaborators as servants of the church are the same in all ages. They were no greater then than they are today. The alleged gain in purity of morals and devotion to the cause of God in the case of a celibate clergy is a mere pretext which has ever proved fallacious.

"What has been said concerning the vows of absolute poverty and perfect chastity at all times applies to the same extent to the vow of *unquestioning obedience to human superiors*. This also is contrary to the will of God, being merely an invention of man's lust for power.

"To every spirit at the moment of its creation, God gave as His greatest gift that of freedom of will. The liberty accorded to men to govern their actions by their own personal decision is something which God does not restrict in the case of anyone, nor is it His will that it should be restricted by man, since all must answer throughout life for all acts committed by them. It is a responsi-

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

bility which no one can evade. No one can justify himself before God by alleging that he subordinated his will to that of another. As soon as a person has reached the age of discretion, he may never subordinate his will blindly to that of a fellow-man, whether that fellow-man be his ecclesiastic or a temporal authority. Blind obedience is due to God only. 'To obey is better than sacrifice', refers to obedience to God, never to obedience to men, in spite of the fact that people in authority, and in particular, ecclesiastics, are prone to quote this passage from the Bible in order to secure the blind obedience of their subordinates. The doctrine has also been set up that blind obedience to an ecclesiastic superior relieves the person that renders it of all responsibility as to the action involved, except insofar as he may not carry his obedience to the extent of committing a sin. This is a sheer fallacy, for man is personally responsible not only for such wrongs as he may commit, but equally so for any good acts which he fails to perform. In fact, the sins of omission may often be more serious than those of commission. According to your doctrine, if an ecclesiastical superior orders a subordinate to commit theft, that order must not be obeyed; if, on the other hand the superior forbids his subordinate, for example, to aid a fellowman when it is in the subordinate's power to do so, the latter must refrain from giving help, despite the fact that in the eyes of God the refusal to extend assistance might be a far greater sin than theft. In such a case the subordinate could not justify himself before God by contending that his duty toward his superior prevented him from doing a good act which he would have performed had he been free to follow the dictates of his own conscience. On the contrary, it is his duty to obey those dictates under all circumstances; a man's own conscience can never be replaced by that of another. To every man God has allotted a given task, which he must fulfill, without allowing himself to be diverted by human orders or manmade ordinances. It follows that no man should subordinate his own will to that of another by virtue of a vow of obedience. This vow which is rendered by your priests and monastics is therefore in opposition to the Divine will.

"In the case of temporal authorities also, obedience is due them only to the extent that their laws do not conflict with those of God.

"You cite the words of the Apostle Paul found in the opening lines of the 13th Chapter of the Epistle to the Romans, as a basis for your doctrine that man owes obedience to his human superiors,

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

but you have completely misunderstood the sense of these words and have translated them quite incorrectly. Paul is not speaking here of temporal authorities but of the spiritual ones which God assigns to every man. To each of you God has allotted His spirits for your guidance in greater or smaller numbers, according to the individual and depending upon the scope of the task Divinely set. These spirits are sent not only to protect, admonish, warn, and direct you and to incite you to do good, but they also have the right to punish you. They bear God's sword of vengeance, for the punishments which He inflicts are executed by His spirits, as you know from numerous passages of the Bible.

"I shall now give you the correct rendering of the words of Paul:

'Let every soul be in subjection to the spirit-powers under whose guidance it is: for there are no spirit-powers but of God and the spirit powers that are ordained of God. Therefore he that resisteth these powers withstandeth the ordinance of God: and they that withstand shall receive to themselves judgment. For these powers are not a terror to the good work, but to the evil. And wouldst thou have no fear of the power? do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise from the same: for it is a minister of God to thee for good. But if thou do that which is evil, be afraid; for it beareth not the sword in vain: for it is a minister of God, an avenger of wrath for him that doeth evil. Wherefore ye must needs be in subjection, not only because of the wrath, but for your conscience's sake. For this cause ye make sacrifice also; for they are ministers of God's service, attending continually upon this very thing. Render to all their dues: sacrifice to whom sacrifice is due; custom to whom custom; fear to whom fear; honor to whom honor. Owe to no man anything, save to love one another: for he that loveth his neighbor hath fulfilled the law'.

"How can you interpret these words as referring to your temporal rulers? Do you seriously believe that every temporal authority is appointed by God? Were by any chance the countless kings and princes of history, who in many cases were instruments of evil, rulers 'by the grace of God', or were they not rather rulers by the 'grace of the Devil?' Do the words from the passage I have quoted: 'for they are ministers of God to thee for good', apply to those rulers also who committed the greatest acts of cruelty, injustice and oppression against their wretched subjects? It is you mortals who put your temporal and spiritual rulers into

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

power by virtue of manmade ordinances — it is not God who does so. No Divine spirit functions either at your coronations nor at the election of your Popes and bishops.

“When in the text in question you speak of ‘tribute’ and ‘custom’ and arrive at the conclusion that the passage refers to the temporal rulers to whom these are due, you forget that there is a spiritual tribute which you owe to God. This tribute is the fruit of your spirit. Just as the annual tribute paid by a tree consists of the fruit it bears, so you too are called upon to render as tribute to God the fruit which the spirits Divinely assigned to you are constantly endeavoring to bring to maturity.

“As you may see, the Catholic ideals of saintliness: voluntary poverty of the members of the orders, chastity in the form of celibacy and blind obedience to ecclesiastical superiors are in reality great fallacies, entirely unknown to Christianity in its early days.

“In connection with the doctrine of your previous creed concerning penance and the remission of sins, I shall mention one strange doctrine held by that church, namely that of *indulgence*. This is a corollary of the doctrine of the remission of sins, for if it lies within the power of a church to forgive offenses, why should it not also have the power to remit the punishment therefor? By virtue of this doctrine the church therefore lays claim to a pardoning power, but inasmuch as only God can pardon sins, so only God can remit the punishment of the same. Strangest of all is the reason advanced by the Catholic Church in support of this particular claim, namely that it rests upon the application of the merits of Christ and of His saints to the contrite soul through the Church. Upon this fund of merits the Church draws in the shape of an indulgence to the extent required to compensate for the lack of merits on the part of the sinner, in order that his punishment may be remitted wholly or in part, according to whether the indulgence is plenary or otherwise.

“On various grounds this doctrine is contrary to all reason.

“In the first place, no creature of God’s, whether man or spirit, can render to Him more than is due Him. In the eyes of a God of whom it has been said: ‘Yea, the heavens are not clean in his sight’, even the most perfect of spirits is but a servant who is doing no more than his duty, even when exerting himself to the utmost. *God recognizes no surplus of merit*. Not even Christ had performed more than in duty bound, for had He done less than He

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

did, He would not have accomplished His exalted mission; He would have succumbed to Hell, and have fallen from God. No one can do more than fulfill the will of God, and even if he does this, he is doing no more than his duty. He has no merits to spare for others who may fail to do theirs. Everyone must work out his own salvation, another reason because of which the merits of one may not be applied on behalf of another. A thing that is inadmissible in your courts of justice on earth, is equally inadmissible in the court of God. Precisely as your judges would never think of tempering the severity of the punishment of a law-breaker on the ground that other citizens have observed the law, so no remission of punishment can be made to a sinner by virtue of the merits of the righteous. If it could, wherein would God's justice lie?

"Again, just how do you picture to yourselves this fund of the surplus merits of others? Do you imagine by chance that spiritual life in God can be stored in a vault like the worldly treasures of your churches, to be drawn upon as needed? How irrational you mortals can be at times! And how unutterably absurd are the formalities observed by your former church in the granting of indulgence! Can you, as reasoning beings, believe it possible that the remission of punishment is contingent upon the observance of external trivialities? Do you think that your punishment will be remitted if you recite your prayers upon a consecrated rosary, but not, if you fail to take the rosary in hand? Do you think that you will receive plenary remission by virtue of reciting a certain prayer upon a certain day in a certain church, but not if you recite the same or even a better prayer in the privacy of your own room? Will all punishment for your sins be remitted at the hour of your death, merely because you are holding a crucifix in your hand or wearing a scapular, associated by your church with so-called plenary indulgence? Do you honestly believe that the crucifix or the scapular can save you, if without them you would have incurred God's chastisement? Or that there is any connection between remission of punishment as determined and regulated by the church, and certain prayers, pilgrimages to shrines, and similar rites? Is it not rather blasphemy against a great and holy God to regard His manifestations of love and mercy as being contingent upon such absurdities? No human being, not even a pope or a bishop, can grant remission of punishment. God alone can reward or punish according to merit.

"God pardons and remits punishment according to the measure

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

of the sinner's contrition and works of love. Whoever turns to God in repentance will be pardoned by Him for his sins, and if in addition, he strives to perform labors of love by forgiving the faults of his fellow men and by helping them to the extent of his ability, the punishment which he may have incurred will be remitted correspondingly, as Christ says of Mary Magdalene: 'Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little'. Naturally, the reference here is not to sexual love, but to love of God and one's neighbors. To him who gives evidence of abundant love for his fellow men, much of the punishment which he has incurred by his sins will be abated. In one scale are placed the penalties incurred through sin, in the other the sinner's works of love, and to the extent that the penalties outweigh the good deeds, to that extent will he be punished. Thus he to whom little is forgiven, has little to show in the way of good deeds.

"Mary Magdalene had sinned greatly, but she had always shown herself to be ready to help the suffering and those who were persecuted unjustly. On that account much was forgiven her after she had abandoned her life of sin.

"It is true that Christ speaks of one sin which will not be forgiven either in this world or in that which is to come. The word 'forgive' is used in this, as in so many other places in the Bible, in the sense of 'remit'. In the case of the sin which He had in mind, there is no remission; it must be expiated in full, 'paid for to the last farthing'. This is the sin referred to in the words: 'Every sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men; but the blasphemy against the Spirit shall not be forgiven. And whosoever shall speak a word against the Son of man, it shall be forgiven him; but whosoever shall speak against the Holy Spirit, it shall not be forgiven him, neither in this world, nor in that which is to come'. (*Matthew 12 : 31, 32.*) Whoever shall have been made aware of the workings of the Spirit of God and whose soul shall have been enlightened by the truth imparted to him by the Divine spirits under God's guidance, and who for worldly considerations shall nevertheless reject the truth, shall incur a penalty for which there is no commutation. The ground for the refusal to extend mercy in this case lies in the nature of the sin, for if the most convincing proofs of the truth which the Divine spirits can bring fail to induce a man to accept it, even though in his heart he recognizes it as such, what more can be done to force his acceptance? One thing only remains: he must be brought to terms by means of complete expia-

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

tion; he must suffer hunger and want, like the prodigal son. Only then will he be in a fit frame of mind to be offered the truth anew.

"This was the sin which was committed by the Jewish priesthood, the Pharisees and the scribes. Daily they had listened to the gospel preached by Christ and had seen with their own eyes its confirmation by the workings of the Divine spirits, through which He healed the sick and raised the dead, and performed other miracles. Surely more convincing proofs could not have been offered, but in spite of them, His enemies would not accept the truth. On the contrary, they blasphemed against the Divine spirits working in Christ by referring to them as 'devils'. In the same way you would sin against the Spirit if, in the face of the overwhelming proofs given to you by the good spirit-world you were to reject the truths that have been presented to you, out of fear of your fellow men or from any other reason.

"In the case of all other sins God shows far greater mercy than men deserve, provided they give evidence of good intentions, and strive to turn unto Him. All men and all sinful spirits have need of His mercy, for there is none who is without sin and enters spotless from this life into the Hereafter. There are no 'saints' in the sense taught by your former Church.

"By 'saint' the Catholic Church understands something far different from the meaning attached to the term by the early Christians. The Apostles make frequent use of the word in their Epistles, applying it to all who accept Christ's gospel as the Divine truth and who endeavor to live accordingly. Hence they address the members of the Christian communities as 'saints'. In so doing they are not implying that the early Christians were free from sin; on the contrary, they censure these in every epistle for their sins and their human infirmities. They knew that all men sin. 'If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us', writes John.

"Your Church takes a different view of the matter, maintaining that those whom it venerates as 'saints' were either entirely free from sin throughout life, like the Mother of Jesus, or that they committed no further sins after the day of their conversion. It preaches that these 'saints' went directly into the presence of God after their death, and that God had confirmed their standing as saints by means of miracles. It furthermore presumes to pronounce infallibly whether or not a given person is to be venerated as a 'saint'.

"Saintliness lies in a person's thought and disposition, and since

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

no man, even though he be a pope, can infallibly read and judge another's disposition, no further proof is needed of the fallaciousness of canonization by human agencies. God alone is the judge; there is no other. Only God knows the heart of man; it is not for men to say whether a fellow man has merited God's love or incurred His hatred. It is a piece of monstrous human presumption to claim the ability to decide infallibly the standing of this man or that in the eyes of God, for aside from true saintliness there is such a thing as sanctimoniousness, and often the two cannot be told apart.

"As for the alleged miracles which God is said to have performed through the saints, many of these can be relegated to the realm of fable out of hand. Other things in the lives of these saints which may appear miraculous to you rested on various mediumistic gifts, by which they stood in communication with the spirit-world, but whether it was the good or the evil spirits that manifested themselves is something which you have no means of knowing at this late day. The Egyptian sorcerers of the time of Moses, and the magician Simon of Samaria whom his contemporaries called 'the great power of God', performed more miracles than any saint in the Catholic calendar. Nevertheless, they worked under the spell of Evil, disguised though it was under a semblance of good.

"God is not interested in revealing to you by means of miracles whether or not a person is a saint, for He desires no veneration of saints or of their relics, no pilgrimages to the tombs of saints or to any other shrines. All these things are nothing but glorified idolatry. Why did the Devil dispute about the body of Moses? Because he wanted to deliver it to the people of Israel as an object of veneration of the same sort which you pay to the remains of your 'saints'. Again, why did Michael contend with Satan for the body of Moses? For the same reason for which it is wrong that you should continue to venerate saints and their relics and to hold pilgrimages, namely because the people of Israel would have diverted a large part of their worship from God to the body of Moses, and would have made this the object of a cult similar to that which you render today to the remains of your saints. You may say that you are worshipping God through the saints, but that is a mere pretext. In reality, a great part of the faith that should be placed only in God, is placed by the Catholics in the saints and in their images, statues and relics. If this is right, then God could have allowed the Israelites to have the body of Moses,

and have accepted the veneration paid to it as addressed to Himself.

"Nothing was known in the early days of the Christian era of the veneration of the saints or of the Virgin, to which, as you know yourself, more attention is given by your Church than to the veneration of God. The "Ave Maria" is recited far more often than the Lord's Prayer. Think of your Rosary, which is repeated in prayer on every possible occasion.

"Christ and His Apostles, as well as the early Christians worshipped God only; they recognized no worship of any of His spirits, despite the fact that even in their time there were mortals who died the death worthy of any saint, according to all human standards. Among these were John the Baptist whom Christ called the greatest of all born of women: Stephen, who died a martyr's death, and the Apostle James to mention only a few of those whose death took place in Biblical times. Nevertheless, it never occurred to the Apostles even to mention these men as saints, much less to make them the objects of devotional veneration as is the case today. Nor is Mary ever mentioned by them. The whole practice of the veneration of the saints is of human origin, and of a much later date. The Apostle Paul censures those who worship angels, meaning by the word all spirits residing with God, or what you designate as 'saints'.

"No holy spirit created by God possesses anything whatsoever in its own right, nor can it, of its own accord, surrender anything thereof to men. Hence let all glory be to God alone! This also is the reason why God's spirits, when they manifest themselves, invariably decline your thanks, for whenever you tried to thank them they would reply: 'Give thanks to God!'

e. The Catholic Church has a sacrament which you call the '*extreme unction*'. The early Christians also had the practice of anointing the sick with oil, but its significance was quite different from that now attached by you to the '*extreme unction*'. You anoint only in cases in which life is in imminent peril, and do so, primarily, to secure the forgiveness of the sufferer's sins, and incidentally, an alleviation of his sickness. Among the early Christians, however the anointment of the sick was practised as a physical remedy the value of which depended upon the patient's eradication of sin from his heart.

"In the Epistle of the disciple James you read: 'If any man of you is sick, let him send for the elders of the congregation and let them pray over him, anointing him with oil in the name of the Lord.

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

Their prayers, offered in faith, will bring aid to the sick man, and the Lord will raise him. If he has committed sins, they will be forgiven. Confess the wrongs that you have done to each other and pray for one another, that you may be cured of your diseases. A righteous man's insistent prayer is of great avail'. (*James 5: 14-16.*)

"The 'elders' as they were called, of the Christian communities were men who stood high in God's favor and were endowed with the power of healing, their visits to the sick being among the most important features of their work. By the unction which they administered, to the accompaniment of prayer, they transmitted their power to heal to the patient. By means of prayer, man comes into closer communion with God, Who is the source of all healing, and the closer that communion, the greater the power derived from that source by the supplicant.

"From the cures effected by Christ you know that certain sicknesses are punishments for sins, particularly for sins against the love of one's fellow man. Thus Christ repeatedly warns those whom He had cured: 'Sin no more, lest a worse thing befall thee!' Hence it was necessary to remove first of all the sin, which was the cause of the disease, and this was done by the confession on the part of the patient of the faults which he had committed against his neighbors. He would therefore cause any man whom he had wronged to come to the sick-bed, where a reconciliation would take place. It is for this reason that the Apostle James admonishes you: 'Confess therefore your sins to one another, that ye may be healed'. His hearers were not directed to confess their sins to any man indiscriminately, nor to a priest, but to those against whom they had sinned. After the reconciliation had taken place God forgave the sin and the patient's sickness left him by virtue of the elder's healing power, transmitted to the patient, as has been said, by anointment and prayer.

"The words of the Apostle describe the noblest form of healing offered to men. It was a cure for both body and soul.

"Today, what has become of this anointment and healing of the sick? According to your doctrine, the oil used must be consecrated by a bishop and may be applied only by a priest ordained by the same, who must recite a prescribed prayer while administering the unction. This, you believe, will bring about forgiveness of the sick man's sins, going so far as to administer the extreme unction to a person who has lost consciousness, in the belief that even though he be in that condition, the unction will effect

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

forgiveness. Common sense should tell you that the anointing of an unconscious person can in no way affect the state of his soul. Among the early Christians also it was not the anointing that brought about the forgiveness of sin, but forgiveness preceded the administration of the unction and thus paved the way to healing, allowing the oil to exert its curative properties upon the patient. Inasmuch as in the unction as practised today all of the prerequisite conditions which existed in the early Christian communities are generally lacking, the so-called 'extreme unction' is a purely external ceremony, of no inward effect whatever.

f. Early Christendom knew nothing of the *ordination of priests*. The word 'priest' which is derived from the Greek word 'presbyter' used by the early church, signifies the 'oldest'. As so used, however, it did not refer to age in years, but to maturity in the cause of God, in the case of the persons selected, to whom were applicable the words from the Wisdom of Solomon: 'For honorable age is not that which standeth in length of time, nor that which is measured by number of years. But wisdom is the gray hair unto men, and an unspotted life is old age'. (*Wisdom 4 : 8, 9.*) Hence the presbyters of the early Christian church were not selected for their office by men, since these are unable to judge of a fellow man's merits, but were appointed at the religious gatherings of the communities by the manifestant Divine spirits, as those chosen by God for His purposes. They were then solemnly recognized by the members of their communities as invested with their office by virtue of God's wish, by the laying on of hands.

"Wherein did their duties consist? Did they possess higher spiritual gifts than did the other Christians? Did they possess spiritual powers which they exercised over their fellow-Christians, making the latter dependent upon them in their relations toward God and for the attainment of salvation? By no means! There was no priesthood, such as you have today. In those times there were no priests, endowed with special spiritual powers which they alone could exercise. There were no priests to administer the so-called sacraments, to forgive sins, or to dispense other forms of spiritual grace. There were no bishops by whom others were ordained as priests and invested with spiritual powers. The office of an 'elder' or 'presbyter' involved duties of quite another nature.

"Wherever men unite and assemble for a given purpose there must be a leader to maintain order and to see to it that all formalities shall be carried out as required to achieve the end in view. This was true also of the early Christians. They met for the

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

purpose of worshipping God, of holding the communion-service, and of mutual fortification in the faith, and edification. Someone was needed to find quarters for these meetings, to prepare these quarters, to fix the hours, lead the service, and to see to it that all things should be done in order and harmony, for God is a God of order throughout all Creation. Just as He has appointed leaders and guides for the spirit-world to supervise the execution of His ordinances, so it is His will that there should be leaders and guides in religious communities on earth, who shall arrange all things in such a manner that all the members may derive the greatest possible benefit.

"This was the duty of the presbyters. First of all they attended to the practical details, determining the house at which the meetings were to be held, seeing to it that the premises were suitably arranged and provided with whatever might be needed, fixing the time of the meeting and, in general, looking after all requirements.

"However, they had even more important duties to perform in regard to the spiritual life of the community. During Divine worship many directions were given by the manifestant spirits conducive to the spiritual progress of the community, and it was the presbyter's task to see to it that these directions and orders were obeyed promptly and conscientiously.

"Inasmuch as true religion is one of service to one's neighbor, the early Christians laid great stress upon the assistance given to the truly needy of the community, and it was the presbyter whose task it was to keep in constant touch with the families of his congregation and who consulted with them about all their troubles of body and soul. He was everyone's best friend and everyone had unlimited confidence in him because he had been named by the Divine spirit-messengers as the one who was to share their sorrows and joys and to whom they could confide everything. In consequence of his selection by the spirit-world he also possessed the Divine gift of always giving them the best of everything in the way of help and advice. He found out who needed help, visited the sick and the lonely, the widows and orphans, and looked to it that they received help from the other Christian families.

"It was the custom of the early Christians to bring to the meetings numerous gifts of the most varied nature and to entrust them to the elder in order that he might distribute them among the needy.

"Since he also possessed the power of healing and was of great help to the sick, it naturally followed that he won the love and

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

affection of his fellow Christians on purely human grounds by virtue of his activities. Moreover, because of their perfect confidence in him, the members of the community confided to him all their mental troubles, frequently also confessing to him their sins and asking him for counsel. He on his part would advise, console and encourage them, pray with them, and be in every way a spiritual guide and a faithful shepherd.

"The early Christian congregations were composed of groups of neighbors, being formed of a given number of families living within a certain radius. They could not be very large, since otherwise the limited accommodations of a private house would not have held them, and for this reason the number of congregations in a large town or a populous district was often very considerable, each congregation having a presbyter of its own. Now it often happened that one congregation was composed prevaingly of families in fairly easy circumstances while another might consist almost entirely of the needy, and since the well-to-do families were eager to do as much good as possible with their wealth without having the opportunity therefor in their own circle, the following situation eventually arose: it was found necessary to establish an interrelation between the separate communities in the sense that someone was selected to keep in touch with all the presbyters of the district. It was that person's task to ascertain the number of those in need of help and the means available for supplying it. In this way a system of giving and reciprocating help could be inaugurated, for the presbyters kept an accurate record both of the number of the poor and of the means available for their relief in their respective communities.

"The person who took charge of the exchange and distribution of supplies and relief for the congregation of an entire district, was called the 'episcopos' the word from which your modern word 'bishop' is derived, and which signifies a supervisor. He had no dealings whatever with the members of the individual congregations, his duty being to meet the presbyters of his district, discuss with them the co-operation in the field of lending assistance to the Christians and to organize the same, and to forward supplies to the various presbyters for final distribution. That during the conferences between the presbyters and the episcopos or bishop, questions relating to the welfare of the soul should have been discussed, was but natural.

"Like the presbyters, the bishop was not elected by men, but

MESSAGES FROM THE SPIRIT-WORLD

was appointed by virtue of a manifestation from the spirits of God. As was natural, his influence upon the life of the Christian communities was very great, but it was an influence which rested upon his worth of character and his exemplary conduct. For this reason his opinion was sought on all matters of importance. In all questions affecting all of the Christian congregations of a given district, the spirit-world referred the presbyters to their respective bishop who was instructed as to his course of action by a spirit sent by God.

“However, you mortals are prone to abuse any influence which you may acquire over your fellow men, and the early Christian communities were no exception to this rule. In the course of time, God’s spirits were banished from the Christian religion, and thereafter, presbyters and bishops were no longer appointed by the spirit-world, but by men of influence. Lust of power and other human vices made their appearance, for where God’s spirits are absent, other spirits, concerned not with man’s salvation but with his perdition, are at work. Goodness governs through liberty, evil through compulsion. The original Church in which God’s spirits bore the scepter was a church of liberty for God’s children. The later Church which banished the Divine spirits became, under the influence of the Powers of Evil, a church of spiritual slavery in which the leaders arrogated to themselves an authority which clashed with the will of God, and by virtue of this authority, barred the direct path to God to the faithful. This is the situation in the Catholic Church today. Its adherents are tied fast to the skirts of the priesthood, for without the intercession of that priesthood, there can be, according to the doctrine of that church, no forgiveness for sins, no presence of the Spirit of God, no communion, no anointment of the sick, and no valid marriage. The last-mentioned has also been classed by your Church as a sacrament, concerning which, however, I need not speak further after what I have already told you about the subject.

“If Christ were to come back to earth today, He would again be forced to exclaim: ‘I have compassion on the multitude!’ If the Christian churches of today are to become once more the bearers of the true gospel of Christ, they must return to the form of service observed by the early Christian church. That a return to the Christianity as preached by Christ will be inaugurated by the leaders of the churches of this age, is not to be hoped; it is the people among whom the movement must originate. The people,

CONCERNING CHRIST'S TEACHING AND MODERN CHRISTIANITY

who have been burdened with so many manmade rules in the name of religion must learn anew to seek their God and to serve Him as did the early Christians under the guidance of the Divine spirits, for the words which the primitive Christian Church took as its axiom:

“ ‘Wherever God's spirits are, there, also, is the truth!’ hold good to the present day.”



Conclusion

WE are all prone to oppose any innovation that conflicts with our traditional views. This is a part of man's nature. Custom is the strongest of all forces in the life of the individual as in that of a nation. For this reason man clings so closely to habits and usages handed down to him by his parents and observed by him from childhood up.

This is particularly true of anything related to the religion of our forbears. Whatever a child's parents hold up to it as sacred and divine, whatever they practised as a religious duty and inculcated to the child as such, is difficult to eradicate completely, and even though most of us in after life do not guide our conduct in entire accordance with our early teachings, we continue to regard them as something to be held in veneration, as something of which we should stand in awe and which we are not ready to discard, outwardly at least. We still feel that our own funeral should be conducted as were those of our forefathers even if we have led lives not consistent with their faith, holding that we owe so much at least to family and religious tradition. We are all so strongly tinged with the colors of religious opinions and ways of the parental home and of our co-religionists, that something of the hue remains, no matter how often we may have bathed in the waters of an irreligious daily life.

This power of custom is the greatest enemy of truth in all fields and particularly in that of religion, not only discouraging men from seeking the truth by their own efforts, but driving them instinctively to reject without further investigation anything that may conflict with their previous ideas. For this there is only one remedy: a *personal witnessing of the truth*.

My own experience with respect to the truths related in this book was not very different.

My religion had taught me that there is a God and a spirit-world, and of so much I was convinced, but the fact that communication perceptible to the human senses could be established with that spirit-world conflicted with the doctrine of my church, and I regarded any such idea as mere folly. Consequently when I was called upon one day to investigate matters which were allegedly connected with spirit-messages I was inwardly convinced

CONCLUSION

that I would be able to expose the whole affair with ease as a fraud. True, I realized that any such investigation could be conclusive only if conducted on the same scientific principles as those which must be applied in all fields if the truth is to be discovered, namely, in the light of the laws of cause and effect which are valid in all things and admit of no exception. An effect without a corresponding cause is unthinkable in any field. Thus, wherever thoughts are uttered clearly and distinctly, there must be a bearer of these thoughts, a thinking "ego". Again, if a human being utters thoughts which are and always have been unfamiliar to him, if he speaks and writes in foreign languages whose very sound he has never before heard, then it cannot be that person's own "ego" which is the cause of the effect produced. This is all the more true if the speaking and writing are done during a state of utter unconsciousness, it being contrary to all reason to believe that a person in that condition can speak rationally for hours on the most difficult subjects and answer and discuss all questions and side issues in an intelligent manner. Still less would an unconscious person be able to speak and to write in a language which he had never heard or studied. In a case of this kind we cannot accept the "ego" of the person in question as the bearer of such messages and are driven to assume the presence of some other thinking entity which employs that person's body as an instrument for speech and writing. This conclusion is unescapable, even if we apply the principles of the exact sciences.

If, furthermore, these thinking entities, invisible to our eyes, assure us again and again that they are discarnate spirits, and if they give us a circumstantial account of the laws which enable them to communicate with mankind, we have the means of testing the truth of their statements. We need only to fulfill the conditions which, according to the spirit-world, are required for communicating with us. If now it develops that, subject to the observance of the said conditions, communication with the spirits actually does occur, and, what is more, everywhere and in every case, then spirit-communication is as undeniable as is the fact that by the observance of certain laws we can receive radio-messages from points at a far distance from us. The validity of the laws is the same in both instances. The laws governing transmission by radio were not created today; they are as old as the universe, but they have been discovered only recently. So too the laws governing communication between the spirit-world and mankind have always existed and are not even a recent discovery but have

CONCLUSION

been known to men of every country and of every age, and were used by them for communicating with the Beyond.

In the case of my own experiences in this field as in that of a thousand others, among whom were numerous scientific investigators, illusion, hallucination and similar deceptions of the senses did not enter into the problem in any way. The occurrences witnessed were of a purely objective kind. For my own part I was in the full possession of my senses while observing and testing the things I witnessed. I have no mediumistic gifts, being neither clairvoyant, clairaudient, nor sensitive on any other score. Personally, I have never experienced a state of trance. Blessed as I am with good health and steady nerves, I made my observations at the age of fifty, and after twenty-five years of service as a Catholic priest had familiarized me with the ups and downs of human existence. I had seen innumerable cases of symptoms of hysteria, extreme nervousness, insanity, epilepsy, and similar mental conditions in the daily discharge of my clerical duties, but what I saw in connection with spirit-communication as related in this book, was something utterly different, something that bore not even the remotest resemblance to the symptoms of psychic abnormality mentioned above.

The reflection that I had everything at stake was in itself enough to compel me to conduct my observations with the utmost seriousness and conscientiousness. As a clergyman I held a position which relieved me from all worldly care for the rest of my life, and it requires no proof to show that no one will surrender such a position to face the world without means of support except for reasons of the weightiest kind. But surrender it I must, if the things that I had learned through what I took to be communication with the spirit-world should prove to be true, for these were in conflict with the doctrines which I, as a Catholic priest, was called upon to preach to my co-religionists, and to uphold, as a part of my other duties as the guardian of their souls. If the messages brought to me by the spirit-world were based upon the truth, I would have to relinquish my position as a Catholic divine.

There is one more word which I wish to say to the reader of this book, in answer to the question whether it is *imperative* that everyone should strive to enter into communication with God's spirit-world in the manner herein described. It is not. Whoever believes in God and relies upon Him, whoever obeys God's will according to the best of his knowledge, will arrive at God. This end can be achieved without a palpable communication with His

CONCLUSION

spirit-world. But whoever harbors any doubt as to God's existence, whoever wishes to be assured whether or not the doctrines of his religion are true, whoever seeks enlightenment upon the great questions involving the Here and the Hereafter can learn the truth in one way only: by communicating with the world of good spirits.

To arrive at a firm conviction with regard to his relation to God and to the Hereafter is the duty of every man, according to the words of the Apostle Paul: 'You may have your own convictions in certain matters; well then, keep them to yourself and let them be known to God alone. Happy is the man whose conscience does not reproach him, but he who eats of a food despite the voice of his conscience has brought his punishment upon himself. He did not feel assured that he might eat of that food, and any act committed without a firm conviction of its lawfulness, is a sin'. (*Romans 14 : 22, 23.*)

For the sincere truth-seeker, truth is the treasure of which Christ says in a parable: 'The kingdom of heaven is like a treasure buried in a field, which someone found and buried it again, and rejoicing in his find, went home and sold everything that he had, and bought that field'. (*Matthew 13 : 44.*)



Another work by **JOHANNES GREBER**
Theologian and Biblical Scholar

THE NEW TESTAMENT

A new translation from ancient Greek manuscripts
into German and English

The Bible and the New Testament have probably been translated into more languages than any other book in the world. In its quest for the meaning of life, mankind at all times has sought the answer to this burning question in the Holy Scriptures.

However, throughout the ages, errors have crept in through carelessness, ignorance or political expediency. Specific references have been made to some of the falsifications in "Communication with the Spirit World of God." These errors are by no means confined to minor points. Indeed, they touch upon the very foundation of Christian belief today.

Through personal revelations received from the spirit world of God, Pastor Johannes Greber realized it was his mission to bring the Truth to mankind. For, in the words of Jesus Christ: "The Truth will make you free." (John 3:32)

Therefore, he began the painstaking work of collecting the oldest manuscripts in ancient Greek in order to translate a New Testament closer to the original text. This task was not simple. Many contradictions arose between the ancient texts and the existing versions. Only through constant prayer and guidance from the holy spirit world was he able to clarify these discrepancies and eliminate the erroneous material.

What remains is an inspired translation, written in a text so clear and simple that a child can understand. It is a work free of dogma or doctrinal prejudices and beliefs, revealing to the reader a truer understanding of God's magnificent plan of salvation for mankind, the real part played by Jesus Christ in that plan and the role of the holy spirit world. Its truths are relevant to the past, present and future destiny of mankind upon earth.

CPSIA information can be obtained at www.ICGtesting.com

Printed in the USA

BVOW05s0638280115

385329BV00001B/305/P



9 780974 807300



ISBN 0974807303



90000



9 780974 807300