

MISCELLANEOUS.

Written for this Paper

MATTER AND SPIRIT.

The creation perfected by the existence of Adam and Eve is supposed to have occurred 4004 years before the birth of Jesus. The earth was then in its pristine beauty. The seal of immortality was placed upon every animate being; the charming flower, expanding, drew from earth, air, water and sunlight the elements of a blessed immortality. No blast of evening air blighted the growth, or marred the life of a single tree, shrub or flower, in all that vast paradise of animate life and beauty.

The environments were perfect, adapted to the sustenance of eternal organisms, animate, vegetable and human. No sigh, no mourning, no tears, no corruption. Every breeze was freighted with life; every sunbeam was a messenger of gladness. The splendor of diamond truth, reflected from celestial realms down through a vast galaxy of sinless, shining orbs, inspired the life, quickened the thought and exalted righteous ambition. There was no death. Man conversed with his Maker with no dimming veil between. From Him, he learned the lessons of heavenly light and life, the lesson of his pre-existence. No doubt, he also was taught somewhat in the wonderful art of creative power, which was likewise understood by Lucifer, as forcibly demonstrated in his competition with Moses in the presence of the Egyptians.

Spiritual man, was with Jesus when the morning stars sang together and all the sons of God shouted for joy, the time when the nucleus was formed from which to construct the earth. He, like Jesus, of whom says the Douay Bible: "In his humiliation his memory was taken away," the memory of His spiritual existence with the Father, which, in all probability, embraced a very extended period but was completely lost on His taking an infant body of flesh and bones, in which act there was an entire suspension, not merely of the memory, but of the intellectual power.

That the period was great in which we held existence in the spiritual world may be very justly inferred from a portion of the words of that memorable prayer wherein Jesus said: "Father glorify me with the glory I had with thee before the world was." The word glory implies intelligence. The Lord says "The glory of God is intelligence." Jesus did not ask for an addition to the light and intelligence He had prior to His entrance into flesh, but for a restoration to that knowledge, which in Him, as in all infants, had been withheld upon his entrance into a mortal body, the veil between the visible and the invisible. By the exercise of our bodily eyes we discern only the things which are temporal. Paul understood this perfectly, when he said: "The invisible things of God from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made." Again, he says, "For the things that are seen are temporal, but the things that are not seen are eternal."

The physical world is the outside or visible representative of the invisible or

spiritual, a model of it, simply. Matter is, says the "Unseen Universe," the less important half of the material of the physical universe. On that principle the body of man is the less important half of the soul; for, in modern revelation, it takes both spirit and body to constitute the soul, the body being the visible, and the spirit, which is identical in form with the body, being the eternal or unseen. I am pleased that the conclusion recently reached by our greatest philosophers, is that matter is but the visible incarnation, in other words the vehicle through which the potencies of unseen energy are manifested. We see not the energy, the spiritual power which is behind and above, through and around all the physical manifestations of nature; we merely see its representative, known by the name of matter.

But, to return; our reference to the creation ended with the sentence "There was no death." But how suddenly was this paradise of happiness changed from immortal perfections. Adam fell. The earth doubtless fell also an immeasurable distance from the presence of its Maker, from the mansion or abode of Kolob. The lines of law reaching down from the abodes of bliss to the paradisaical abode of Eden were changed, and substituting them are the natural laws which carry downward to dissolution all the varied organisms of nature, whether of tree or shrub, reptile or fish, bird or man. The natural laws carry organisms to the death penalty. "Thou shalt die" is equally true of the gigantic forest tree and the fragrant rose. The environment of the entire creation is changed with death. In the language of Paul: "The whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain, waiting to be delivered." The removal of any one of the elements of environment is death. For instance remove the atmosphere and we die; take away the sunlight, we die. Not only is the life dependent on environment but on our food and drink. Water withheld a few days only is attended with death; a fish taken from its watery environment dies. Indeed, it is a question whether immortality itself is not largely dependent upon environment. God, himself, does not dwell in a vacuum. Heaven is not a realm of shadows or evanescences, but a tangibility. One of the environments of the Lord is that of eternal life. Says the Prophet Joseph: "God dwells in eternal burnings." When the angel Moroni visited Joseph Smith he brought with him his environment and took it away again and so visible was it to the eyes of Joseph that he continued to gaze upon it until he saw it reaching up like a conduit towards heaven. Earthly things typify the heavenly. But this subject would require an article itself to properly illustrate it. I must leave it to the reader's further thought.

It has always been a mystery to me why spiritual truths are ignored by so many. Life and immortality are brought to light in the Gospel. Amazing thought, yet clear to the spiritual sense! Can the body be resuscitated and brought back from the grave? In other words, can I have a tangible existence in immortal flesh and bones? The

spiritually minded man answers, most assuredly. I was astonished, years ago, at the views of a highly intelligent modern agnostic who lived in the town of Leeds, England, whose acquaintance I formed. His great argument, as it was then called, and one which he skillfully used against Christian ministers, namely, the physical impossibility of a literal resurrection of the body, had raised him very highly in the secular body to which he belonged. This gentleman, held to the doctrine that as all organic life is destroyed by death, whether vegetable, animal or human, it follows as a deductive law that there is an indiscriminate blending of the particles, which once held their places in organic forms; in other words that vegetable, animal and man become, by the death process, a common mass. As Shakespeare has it:

"Imperious Cæsar dead and turned to clay,
Might stop a hole to keep the wind away,
Strange, that the man who kept the world in awe,
Should stop a hole to expel the winter's flaw."

To this ipse dixit, for argument it was not, I replied by asking this question: Whence came all the organisms of this globe?

He answered, from chaos.

Then, I replied, some law, in the beginning, brought to order and organization the great globe itself, together with its countless life-forms. Will you therefore, please show why the law which produced all these organisms, at the first, cannot reproduce them from the self same elements after death.

He stood amazed and confounded, and confessed he had never been asked such a question before. He reminded me of a certain modern philosopher who wrote that, "Death is an unarranged condition." Who knows that? The writings of modern agnostics demonstrate very clearly their incapacity to deal with the absolute and the infinite, and after exhausting all their language in this effort, they fall back upon the trite, old saying of modern materialists, "Trust your reason;" a saying that has degenerated into monotony and become the parent of atheists and agnostics. Reason, unenlightened by the torch of Divine revelation, has been the source of eternal conflict. For centuries, universities have been discussing the great question of life causes with no more definite results than did the old schools of Grecian philosophy.

Says J. Hutchinson Sterling: "We are in the presence of the gulfs of all gulfs—the mighty gulf between death and life." Huxley says, "The present state of knowledge furnishes no link between the living and not living." I ask, where then is the standard of appeal? We have one only, "Jesus the resurrection and the life." "He that hath the Son hath life."

The fall of man which included universal death, is covered by universal resurrection in Christ Jesus. If so, what need of obedience to Divine law? The answer is because there are different degrees of resurrection, the highest being predicted on the conditions of obedience to the Gospel. "Christ, our life," is the old doctrine of the Christian churches, as much a truth now as ever. "Except a man be born again he cannot enter." Mark the word "cannot," not, may not. Water and spirit are indispensable. Jesus never taught non-essen-