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THE SPIRIT IN MAN.

SALT LAKE CITY, April 20, 1893.—For some weeks past, the agents of a religious sect known as the Adventists have been diligently and regularly distributing a series of tracts among the citizens of Salt Lake for their perusal. It is with the view, as we understand it, of securing a reasonable share of the religious patronage of the community, prior to their intended speculation in this especial vineyard. That would appear to be a very safe and cautious proceeding, although not an usual one in a business sense; for it is generally the case that a person who invests his money opens up his stand before he tries to do business.

But let that pass. What I wish to call attention to is their latest circulating tract, bearing the title of "The Intermediate State," and that which it attempts to prove as one of the fundamental doctrines of their faith. It seeks to prove by the holy Scriptures that there is no intermediate state between death and the resurrection—except in the grave as inanimate, ordinary dust; and that not only is it unscriptural but contrary to reason, to think that "when the body dies the real man does not die, but lives on, either in heaven or hell, thinking, acting, loving or hating, just as actually as while in the body upon earth."

Now, the writer of this tract does not recognize any possibility of an alternative to, or a different idea of, either heaven or hell other than that commonly accepted: not a spirit world of any other description can he conceive. In his treatment of the subject before him he is, therefore, bound by his doctrine of eternal torment on the one hand or the eternal felicity on the other, beginning immediately from death, as is almost universally accepted and taught by the Protestant world; and, such being the case, it is not difficult to understand, in view of the horrors of the doctrine of eternal torment, that men will resort to every device to annihilate, to their own satisfaction, so heartenish a belief. But from one dilemma they rush into another; probably not so grievous or unpleasant, but nevertheless as untenable and as much opposed to divine economy as the other.

And I do not hold that when a man dies his soul is consigned to hell fire or to celestial glory, at once and forever, according to whether he be good or bad, I will pass over the writer's com-

ments on the justice of God, in relation to the sinner, in such a summary transposition. But he asks:

How can a man think without brains, walk without feet, see without eyes, hear without ears?

If his conception of a "man" is confined to one without brains, feet, eyes or ears, his own imagination must surely be on crutches, or else some unfortunate association with idiots or cripples has left its mark. Still that is not his idea of a man at all, but of a man's soul or spirit. He, however, does not give any reasons why he believes that a "man"—meaning a spirit—has no brains (intelligence?), feet, eyes or ears, and, therefore, it is not worth noticing further than to show the childishness of the question asked.

"Again, if the soul, or spirit, can live just as well out of the body as in the body, or perhaps even better; if it can be like an angel, can fly rapidly from place to place, can live, and think, and act, and be so exceedingly happy without the body; and if the body, as so many preach, is only a prison house, a cage and a clog to the soul,—what is the use of a resurrection of this body?"

Now, that is not such an apparently absurd question as the former, but it is evidently considered a clincher. It must be borne in mind that this sect believe thoroughly in the resurrection of the body "at the last day," but their position is that "the doctrine of the conscious state of the dead" "destroys the fundamental doctrines of the Bible—the resurrection, the judgment and the second death."

Let us consider, then, this clinging question: If the spirit (they admit there is a spirit in man) exists out of the body, and if the body is simply a prison house, why resurrect it?

If the spirit existed in the body, as the tract writer admits, was it buried at death with the body? If spirit and matter are equally tangible to him, we would like to know how the spirit was hauled. In the first place, however, I would like to know whether he really believes the spirit was the deformed object he has before described, viz: minus brains (intelligence), feet, eyes or ears. I take it, rather, that his idea of it is simply nothing more than "the breath of life," as some of his school believe; that it has no more form, intelligence, nor separate existence than has a

breath that is diffused with the surrounding atmosphere. It is, then, the proof of the existence of the spirit or soul—not the breath of life—after death that is the principal point at issue; and that being proved, wherefor the necessity for the body's resurrection.

Now, while the Scriptures contain but little positive teaching as to the immortality of the soul, that great truth is everywhere implied, and the whole Christian world has received it. Our Adventist friend says the Bible does not imply any such thing; that the very opposite is taught. In support of this he quotes as follows: "For Naboth is not alive, but dead;" "you fathers did eat manna in the wilderness and are dead;" David . . . is both dead and buried;" "The dead in Christ shall rise first;" "He being dead yet speaketh;" "Abraham is dead and the prophets;" Lazarus is dead." According to Webster, death is "the extinction of bodily life," he says, and the declaration of the Bible, as quoted, state that all these men are dead and not alive. Then, again, "they are in the grave." Not simply the body, but the man, the person himself is there.

It does not say a part of man goes there, or that the house in which the man lived goes there, but it says that he himself, the man, is there. Notice carefully the Scripture: "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return"—Gen. 3: 19.

Now men are not spirits, and the quotations as to so and so being dead have no bearing on the point at issue. The fact that the body of anyone suffered dissolution is no proof for or against the continued existence of the spirit. But, says he, the quotations do not say that only a part of the man goes to the grave. Do they say that a part of the man does not go to the grave? Do the Scriptures not say that "the spirit returns to God who gave it?"

But what is more, the Scriptures do not state that "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return." "Dust thou art" is not found in the Hebrew Bible. The verb *art* is an addition made by translation, and the original words read: *Dust, thou to dust shalt return.* This is somewhat different to "Dust thou art." The facts are that man is a compound of body and spirit: We are agreed upon that. Now when this compound is dissolved, the body returns to dust, but what becomes of the other parts? The Adventist practically preaches annihilation; they cease to exist, he states. In the grave man