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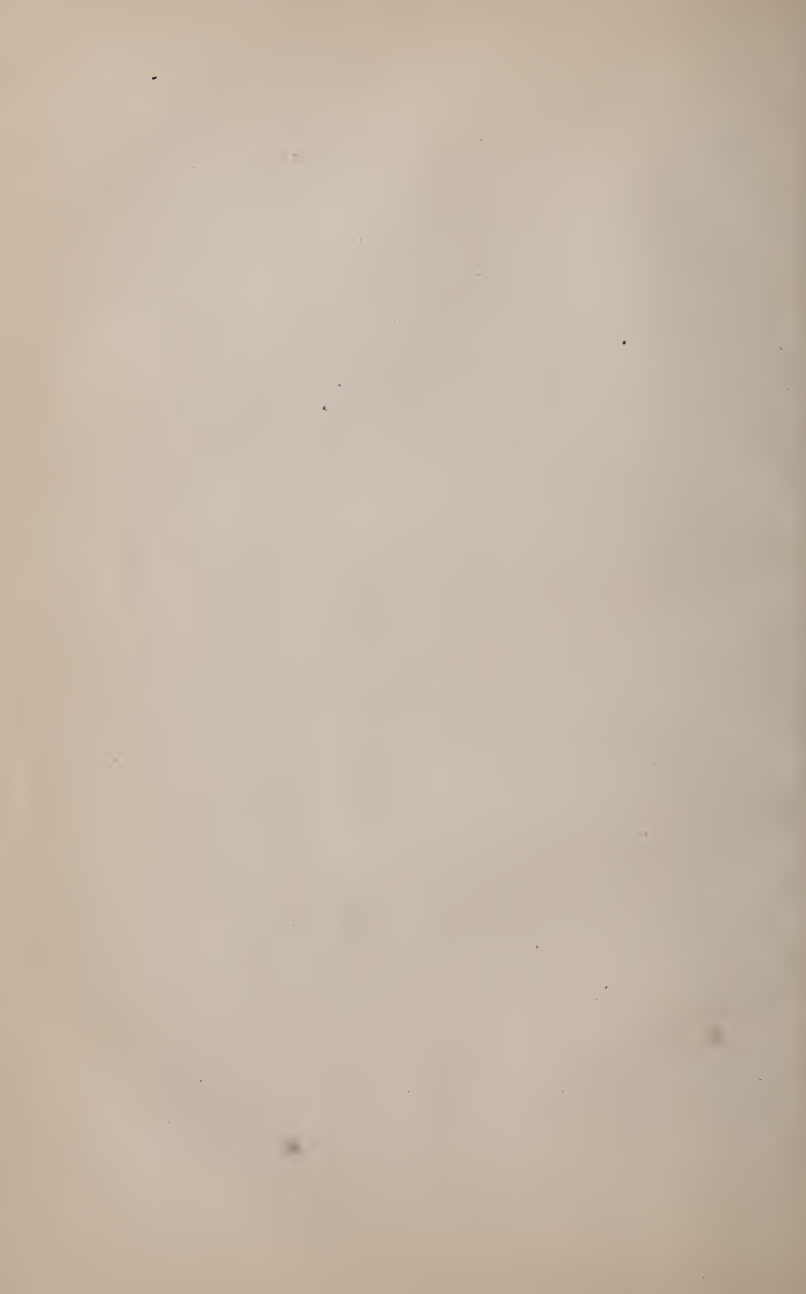
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UNITED STATES OF AMERICA.















# LIGHT OF THE AGE:

OR

## MIRACLES EXPLAINED.



By FRANKLIN B. ORCUTT.

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## PREFACE.

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MY object in this work is, that people should know the truth. The work I have written during a visit to the country, and is written in haste. It may contain some errors for want of time to give it a due consideration; but the work in the main expresses my views. I do not rely upon thirty to fifty years experience to present an embellished popular work, but I found my work upon argument, and by that it is to be received or rejected. Not believing ghost stories, witches, modern spiritualism, Mahomet, Jo. Smith, the Jews, or modern Christian claims to mysteries, wonders, dreams, visions or revelations from the Almighty, I write accordingly. My quotations are brief. I have excluded in several instances portions of a verse, but only the verboseness. I have not garbled any quotation; that is, taken only a part when the remainder, if given, would tell against me; but where part of a verse told one story and the remainder another, irrelevant to the subject, I have excluded the irrelevant parts, to bring to light the point direct, before the reader became lost in the superfluous language not relevant to the subject under consideration. I have had no desire to overlook the worst:

the Christians' bulwark is the thing aimed at; to fight the battle of light and truth from their own fortress, has been my object—to remove the veil that makes godliness a mystery. There are no mysteries when properly understood. I hope the reader will peruse this work, and profit by it.

# GIVE US THE TRUTH,

THOUGH THE HEAVENS FALL.

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## CHAPTER I.

WE call the attention of candid thinking men to the facts related in Scripture—that is, they are given us for facts—that in the beginning God formed the world from chaos, and created the universe (of which this world in proportion is not as much as a grain of sand), out of nothing, merely to alight the earth. Yes! this universe of a hundred millions of suns, covering an area of the heavens so vast that light, traveling at the prodigious speed of two hundred thousand miles, or eight times around this globe, in a second of time, would require five thousand years to reach us from the most remote star; and we are near the center of our cluster! But this is not all. Eternal space is filled with universes or clusters like our Milky Way! Lord Rosse's huge telescope has dissolved nebulas into universes like ours, in the eternal regions of space, through the awful gulf of thirty millions of years' travel for light to reach us. Eternity of space is evidently filled with suns. But discovery bewilders man; and by analogy we suppose these suns or stars have their worlds revolving around them, each world having its vegetable and animal life, like our own.

And the God of these dominions, we are told, came down on this planet, among the fig trees, in the cool of the day, hunting up Adam, (whom he had previously made out of dust, and upon find-

ing that he was lonesome, mutilated him of a rib, and made a companion.) Here he is represented as pronouncing eternal tribulation to his pair of lonely children, who were unable to withstand his power and obeyed the desires of the heart he gave them—which is as hard to understand as it would be to suppose that a kind father would torment eternally his two powerless infant children for crying, against his orders. Also, we find this Creator, on Mount Sinai, begging Moses, as related in Exodus xxxii, to let him alone, and Moses commanding him to repent of the evil he thought. And when we find him represented in angelic capacity, or some other, using Balaam's ass for a spiritual medium, to discover angels that Balaam could not see, and to talk to Balaam until the scales fell from his eyes, it is time we begun to look into the matter, to see how much divinity there is about such stories.

Again, we hear one of God's prophets (Jeremiah xx) crying out, that the Lord had deceived him, and had prevailed against him, being stronger than he; and all through the Scriptures we find God represented as doing tricks, as in the case of his withering up Jereboam's arm, and straightening it out again, (1 Kings, xiii), and his performing tricks that Pharaoh's sorcerers could do; and all through time he is represented as continually working miracles, contrary to the fixed laws of his own make, continually repenting, and continually angry.

Our purpose is to explain the miracles, Noah's flood, Pentecost scene, Moses' wonders, and remove the veil that has clouded the Bible, and not leave you in mystery, to grope your way in darkness and doubting, but to explain the mysteries of the New Testament, as well as the Old, clearly, and thus leave you free from superstition, with the consolation that the mystery is solved.

Our main attention will be paid to Moses in the Old, and Christ in the New Testament, as they are the chief actors. First, the history of the Patriarchs, including all previous to Moses' day, I think is an admitted fact: that Moses gathered from Egypt the histo-

ry of the creation ; of the first human parents ; of the primitive ages ; of the flood ; and he also learned from the Arabs, of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. He also learned from the Hebrews. That every nation on the globe had the history of the creation and ten generations to the flood, although somewhat veiled, before Moses was cradled in the rushes, every scholar is presumed to know. But Moses evidently visited many parts of the country of the Patriarchs, as the accuracy of his geographical sketches indicate, and made some interesting improvements, and read this history to the Israelites, and called it the Book of the Covenant. This is the opinion of Josephus and other eminent scholars. From this book he taught them that the land of Canaan was promised to them through Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, and how Abraham left Al Habor and went to Damascus, and from thence to Canaan, and occupying and taking formal possession, obeying what he esteemed to be a divine call to raise a nation of his own, free from the wickedness common to the world.

But, turning our attention to Moses and his connection with the children of Israel, the first we notice (as Moses' early history is generally understood) is, that he expressed great sorrow for his brethren, as is shown by his slaying an Egyptian, whom he found contending with one of his Hebrew brethren, and burying him in the sand. Pharaoh, upon hearing this, sought to kill him, and Moses fled to the land of Midian, in Arabia. Here for many years, he learned all about the country to which he afterward took the children of Israel. Here he conceived the plan, and was long doubting his success. He had no power but his own efforts, and he became aware that, in order to succeed, he must make Pharaoh believe it to be a divine call ; and Exodus iii, 1, reads, " Now Moses kept the flock of Jethro, his father-in-law, the priest of Midian ; and he led the flock to the back side of the desert, and came to the mountain of God, even to Horeb." The reader will remember that Horeb is a part of Mount Sinai, one of the lower bluffs of

that mount. Again, Exodus iv, 27, "And the Lord said unto Aaron, Go into the wilderness to meet Moses; and he met him in the Mount of God, and kissed him." Here we learn one thing of importance, and that is, that Arabians and Egyptians called Horeb the Mount of God. Now the query is, why was this called the Mount of God more than any other mount? It seems Moses left his flock at the back side of the desert, and came to the Mount of God, even to Horeb. Aaron was sent to the Mount of God, to meet him. Why all this effort to go to this mount? The secret is this: Sinai was a volcano, and the superstitious were taught that it was the Mount of God.

Josephus, as late as his day, taught in his Dissertation to the Greeks, that "Hades was a subterraneous region in the earth, not regularly finished, where the sun does not shine; for which reason it must be dark, and in one department is hell itself, where the wicked are driven by violence, and do not stand clear of the hot vapor itself." This shows us, beyond a doubt, that volcanic action suggested the idea of a hell in the earth; and as the righteous were in another department, of course God transacted business in the earth. Every scholar knows that in ancient times many, if not all, supposed that storms were sent by God directly, and not by his laws, which are fixed. Hence Elias' prayer for the rain to stop for three and a half years. But if God changed the law of evaporation and condensation, it would have been like taking out a wheel of a clock, which would destroy it; and so to destroy a law, would destroy the universe. But when the reader looks on our standard maps, and learns that that prayer was uttered in a rainless district, where it seldom or never rains, then his ideas are clear, and it becomes no longer a wonder that it did not rain sooner. But this was the view they took, that every phenomenon, especially a terrible one, like that of a volcanic blast, was God directly. Hence Sinai was the Mount of God, perhaps ages before Moses; for the expression comes to us not under any explanation that it was so



called from the fact that Moses found God there in the flaming bush, but he speaks as though the term was common; and Aaron was sent to the Mount of God, without its being named, showing that everybody knew it as the Mount of God before Moses found any God in a bush.

Covil's Bible Lexicon—and we shall quote from him mainly in this work, as he is undisputed Christian standard authority—speaking of Sinai, says: "The whole country has the appearance of volcanic action." We know that all mountains are the result of volcanic action. Consequently, his expression must mean of a modern geological date, showing signs of volcanic action within the historic period of volcanic rending. Besides, he speaks of the barren rugged rocks, and waves of rocks, and says plainly, "It looks like waves of lava that cooled in their present shape." This settles one point, and that is, that Sinai and its surrounding was not only the result of internal action, but it actually belched forth, like Vesuvius, covering a large portion of the country with waves of burning lava, as its appearance now indicates. So much is an established geological fact. And now, as the mount has long since been extinct, and no other than Moses' account left us of its appearance, we will notice the phenomenon as related by Moses or his representative (as the Pentateuch speaks of kings that reigned over Israel, showing that it must have been written not only after Moses' death, but after Joshua's, Moses' successor, and kings after him, Genesis xxxvi, 31.) Moses takes the children to the mount, and they behold the following scene: (Exodus xix) "And it came to pass on the third day in the morning, that there were thunderings and lightnings and a thick cloud upon the mount, and the voice of a trumpet exceeding loud, so all the people in the camp trembled. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, \* \* \* and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace, and the whole mount quaked greatly." Exodus, xx: "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings and the voice

of the trumpet and the mountain smoking." This needs no comment. A more sublime description of a volcano in full blast could not be written. The wise law-giver, knowing that these ignorant people could not be governed by law, and especially when they had no law except the advice of the patriarchs in the Book of the Covenant, lost no time in holding out to these mutinous people that God descended upon the mount in fire; and the whistling, louder, no doubt, than the whistling of the blasts of a hundred furnaces combined with as many steam-engine whistles, was God's trump. [Here we get the trumpet story of the last day.] Here we learn that the smoke ascended (not descended) like the smoke of a furnace. Can any one suppose for a moment that God would descend upon that mount and roar like thunder, send out his lightning, shake the mount, smoke like a blast furnace, blow his trump or horn, and tear himself around there for six days, all to accomplish nothing? Is the reader so devoid of good sense as to believe that God would exercise himself in this manner to show his power to such an ungodly set, that but two ever saw the promised land? What sport could this be for God? The idea is too ridiculous to contemplate for a moment.

Exodus xxiv, 17: "And the sight of the glory of God was like devouring fire on the top of Mount Sinai, in the eyes of the children of Israel." Of course it was. Fire looks alike to everybody. It looked to them just as it looked to others who named it the Mount of Fire or Mount of God. But, says the pious believer, God could have demonstrated himself just like a volcano; it is not impossible; you have not yet beat us very bad. Sure enough, taking the Christian view, that God found no better employment than to desert his dominions and sit on the top of Mount Sinai for weeks and months, expressly to direct Moses and scare his band, as the volcano did, so they "removed and stood afar off," or, in other words, run, when Moses was preaching to them. But the question is, whether he did or not. There is quite a difference

between a possibility and a probability; and even if a demonstration was necessary, is it probable that it would have been exactly like a volcano in every particular? If there had been any God about it, would there not likely have been as much as one thing about it not common to a volcano? But here God is represented as thundering like a volcano; lightning, or sending out streaks of fire like a volcano; blowing his trump like a volcano; the mount quaked greatly like a volcano; he smoked like a furnace or volcano; he looked like a sheet of devouring fire on top of the mount, and the cloud covered the mount like a volcano. Here ends the description of a volcano, and here ends God's demonstration with it. If this is a description of God, then God is a volcano, and a volcano is God; for a thing that looks like a man, acts like a man, talks like a man, is a man. Proofs might be multiplied, but there is no use of wasting time on this point. One-tenth of this evidence would hang a criminal, and if what is here given of direct, positive testimony does not make this point, no point can be made contrary to established dogmas.

But, turning to Moses, he goes to this mount of God, and finds God in a burning bush, lit by a spark from Sinai's top, if he saw the dead leaves burning from a dry bush at all. The blaze on the mountain's top suggested the idea that God was in the blazing bush, or rather, that the people would believe he was. But as we have the story, Moses finds him in a burning bush. This is a curious place to find God, to make the best of it. Was God ashamed to show himself like a man? There is something that looks rather suspicious in their stories that our Creator was never found openly, but in the bushes, and among the fig trees of the garden, and in clouds of fire and smoke. We are after an open, not a secret God, continually veiled in mystery. But God, out of the bush, says, (Exodus iii,) "I have seen the affliction of my people that are in Egypt, and have heard their cry by reason of their task-masters; for I know their sorrows, and I am come down to deliver them

out of the hand of the Egyptians, and to bring them up out of that land unto a good land flowing with milk and honey, unto the place of the Canaanites." Now the truth of this story is right here: God promises unconditionally, if Moses has not veiled the truth, that he would take that host of nearly two millions to Canaan. Did he do it? Two men, Caleb and Joshua, were not the host. That did not fulfill God's word; they were in no suffering in Egypt. That the people were rebellious, was no excuse for God's not fulfilling his promise. He knew that beforehand. He knew, when he made the promise, what they were and what they would do. They could not defeat the plans of the Almighty by their wickedness. Would God make promises to save them, when he knew he could not consistently do it, for the purpose of showing those ignorant people his power? What kind of amusement would this be for God? God never promised those people the land of Canaan, and that he would take them there, and then not do it, from any cause. It is blasphemy to say so.

But after Moses has a long argument with God, telling him that Pharaoh would not let the people go, and Moses' cane trick that God showed him to exhibit to Pharaoh to convince him, Moses gathers the elders to assist him, and the campaign begins. All the natural phenomena that occur are God's judgments on Pharaoh, even to boils, lice and hail-storms, for his not letting the people go. Well, (Exodus vii,) "Moses and Aaron went in unto Pharaoh, as the Lord had commanded, and Aaron cast down his rod before Pharaoh and his servants, and it became a serpent. Then Pharaoh called the wise men and sorcerers. Now the magicians of Egypt did in like manner with their enchantments. For they cast down every man his rod, and they became serpents. And he hardened Pharaoh's heart." Is it strange that God hardened Pharaoh's heart, when Pharaoh saw his own men do the same trick as Aaron did? But "Aaron's snake swallowed up the other snakes." This was a funny trick of God's, no mistake.

Exodus viii: "And Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of Egypt, and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs upon the land of Egypt." Here the magicians, by some kind of noise, called up frogs the same as Moses did, and the reason God hardens Pharaoh's heart is, that Pharaoh was too sharp for Moses. He calls in his wise men to explain, which Moses did not expect, and exposes Moses' snake trick. What earthly object could God have in hardening Pharaoh's heart? It is not a very likely story, that God would be playing with Pharaoh in this manner for the pleasure of exhibiting his power.

Passing on, we find Aaron smiting the dust, and behold, the hot dry weather had bred a swarm of lice, "so there were lice on man and on beast." The magicians could not breed lice, sure; so they tell Pharaoh, "it is the finger of God"—that is, it was a natural event, the same as the breeding of any pestilence brought about by God. There was no trick about it, and they are not bashful to tell Pharaoh so. What object could God have in allowing these sorcerers to counterfeit his tricks, as some later Bible writers say he did? Would they not have been more likely to have believed, if they were unable to do any of them? Curious way, they tell us, God has of converting people, flattering them that they can do as great wonders as himself! The fact is, Moses was caught, and it was only a dodge to shield him from the awkward dilemma into which Pharaoh's wise men had driven him. Eichenhorn remarks, that the plagues described in Exodus are common in Egypt, but it was their almost simultaneous appearance that terrified the people. H. Du Bois Ayme, one of the learned members of the French Expedition to Egypt, remarks: "In that part of Scripture treating on the epoch of the exod are found many facts which, although being uncommon, still are compatible to the records of profane authors and to the present state of the country." Eichenhorn de Egypti ano mirabili. Rosenmuller scholia in Exodum, cap. 7.

That Moses instigated the slaughter of all the first-born, and ordered its execution by his armies at Ramses, or Avaris, (as Allen Ezra thinks and as we believe,) Pharaoh's history, if it had been preserved, would clearly show, there is no doubt. Pharaoh thought the camp was getting too hot, and he had better let them go. When we read of the armies that destroyed the ancient cities, and claimed in every instance to be God's judgments, we might become acquainted with God's means of destroying, and refer this destruction to its true source, Moses' parties, and not lay the charge of innocent blood to God, but yield the fact that God works by means; and in all time the means have been men, in such cases. But in this case it was thought best to let the means remain a secret, the crime of innocent blood seemed so shocking; all to accomplish, as their history proved, but the misery of the people for whose benefit the murder was instituted. So they stole the kingdom poor, under the pretense of borrowing, (Exodus xii, 36,) "And they spoiled the Egyptians." They then left, and Pharaoh pursued. Moses maneuvers in the wilderness, instead of fighting his way through the isthmus. He steers for the crossing, with something like the pole Alexander used to give signals in the camp, from which smoke emitted by day and fire at night, that the divisions of the army might not become separated. It was resinous fuel, that made a dense smoke by day and blaze at night. See Curtis Rufus, lib. 5, c. 7. Some think it was the sacred fire of the priests; but this miraculous cloud was something of this kind, and under cover of darkness which keeps Pharaoh off, Moses knowing the tide, and that the wind was favorable, knew that they could cross during the night. But Moses, to make something of a demonstration, (see Exodus xiv) "stretched out his hand over the sea," which phrase sounds more poetical than real. It is no doubt an embellishment of the writer; but the verse ends, "And the Lord caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea dry land." This text shows, that by the

wind the dry land appeared; and if it was by the wind, it was not walled up, as some other Bible writers represent, who copy from this, and as our Sabbath school pictures show, to awe the child's mind with the wonderful. But a strong east or north-east wind blew back the waters, (as this was only a strait of three or four miles wide, being one of the prongs of the sea proper between Egypt and Sinai,) dry land appeared, looking, as they crossed the bar with the glimmering moon on the waters on either side, like a wall. But we will hear from Josephus on this subject; he says: "As for myself, I have delivered every part of this history as I have found it in the sacred books. Nor let any one wonder at the strangeness of the narrative; if a way were discovered to those men of old time, who were free from the wickedness of modern ages, whether it happened by the will of God, or whether it happened of its own accord, while, for the sakes of those who accompanied Alexander, King of Macedonia, the Pamphylian sea retired and afforded them a passage through itself, when they had no other way to go: I mean, when it was the will of God to destroy the monarchy of the Persians." This circumstance is narrated by Calesthenis, Strabo, Arian and Apian. Robinson says, where the crossing is, it is about three or four miles from shore to shore, and Arabs still cross with their camels. Some historians state that Napoleon Bonaparte crossed there, while others state that upon his arriving at the shore he found the tide setting back, and the wind unfavorable, and did not wait for an opportunity to cross (see Description of Arabia). "Herodotus already knew that this sea daily retires and returns again." But this is evidently a critical crossing, and not a very public road. But Pharaoh had no time to lose, he must immediately follow or he would forever fail, and follow he did, and as the wind had blown hard, driving back the sea more than common, when the reaction came it came with all its fury. Pharaoh heard the roaring and saw the rushing waters, with uncommon fury, surging over the bar. Being too much alarmed to

go ahead, when nearly over, being well schooled by Moses that God was against him, he returns, but, alas, before the other shore from whence he started was reached, the surging billows were from eight to sixteen feet over his head, as that is the height from several authors and surveyors of the tide. The Red sea is connected with the ocean by the Mediterranean, and is in sympathy with the ocean tides, and being so remote from the ocean and exposed to the sweeping winds, the tide is very irregular. Moses takes the advantage of Pharaoh's misfortune to convince the ignorant slaves he was leading from bondage that there was a God in it, working subservient to him. If God had stopped the action of the tide there would have been a God in it, but as he did not, Pharaoh was drowned. This run of good luck for Moses proved favorable, for the 31st verse reads: "And Israel saw the great work which the Lord had done, \* \* and the people feared the Lord and believed his servant Moses.

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## CHAPTER II.

Moses now being within ten days' journey, might have entered the promised land while his commissaries lasted, but he knew there was a gigantic race of warriors in Palestine, and that he could not take it with hornets, as he told the people God said he could (Exodus xxiii, 28), "And I will send hornets before thee, which shall drive out the Hivite, the Canaanite and the Hittite from before thee. I will not drive them out in one year lest the beasts of the field multiply against thee." This is a likely story, that God would resort to hornets to clear the land; and further, before they could enter the land, within ten days' journey, beasts would grow up that a million of men could not contend against, and that God could not keep out the beasts while the Canaanites



were marching out and the Israelites in; the hornets could sting the beasts as well as the men. So Moses stops where he is until the people murmur for want of food, and chastise Moses for bringing them from a land of plenty into the wilderness to starve.

Exodus xvi: Moses conceives the idea of their going out early in the morning to gather a small fungi, or mushroom, a small plant of a spongy nature, that grows up in the night and withers in the sun, and is about as large as a pea, perhaps. Moses says (Exodus xvi, 14): "And when the dew that lay was gone up, behold, upon the face of the wilderness there lay a small round thing, as small as the hoar frost on the ground." This is the size of these miraculous loaves that Moses tells them rains down nights for their bread. Mr. Covil, defining manna, relates, that "Josephus found manna in his day around Sinai, and that the same fact had also been abundantly ascertained by modern travelers." We hope this will settle the manna question, that its growth is common to that country.

Next, we hear of these people's sufferings (17th chapter of Exodus), they are nearly choked with thirst; water being very scarce in those parts, Moses conceives the idea of another miracle, as the people are becoming mutinous. Instead of taking the people to Horeb to see him smite the rock, he selects a few elders, and they are to report to the people that it was fairly done. Hear the Bible (Exodus xvii, 5, 6): and the Lord said unto Moses, go on before the people and take with thee of the elders of Israel and thy rod. \* \* Behold I will stand before thee there upon the rock in Horeb, and thou shalt smite the rock, and there shall come water out of it that the people may drink. And Moses did so in the sight of the elders of Israel." Why did he not do it in the sight of the people as well as the elders? Why did he keep the people nearly choked with thirst, without water, until they all traveled to Mount Horeb, if he could produce water where water was not? The answer is self-evident. Moses had been there

before; he knew the wet places. It has been suggested that he played the canard on the elders too, by having previously stopped the crevice where the water gushed out, then smote the rock until he gave vent to the water; but this is not probable, or he would have brought the people too, to witness his power; the elders, no doubt, were in the secret.

But the greatest "sell" these people ever suffered was his leading them out the third day to show them God. Moses knowing the intervals of the action of the mount, tells them beforehand that he would show them God on the third day. For fear the people would discover the plot, if they were allowed to come near the mount, Moses tells them that God says, Exodus xix, 12: "And thou shalt set bounds unto the people round about, saying, take heed to yourselves that ye go not up into the mount or touch the border of it; whosoever toucheth the mount shall surely be put to death." Well, after Moses tells them this, and the third day arrives, just as Moses expected, the mountain opens its awful crater with tremendous thundering, and Moses leads them out, as he says, to show them their God. "And Moses brought forth the people out of the camp to meet with God, and they stood at the nether part of the mount. And Mount Sinai was altogether on a smoke, because the Lord had descended upon it in fire, and the smoke thereof ascended as the smoke of a furnace," etc. As I gave before, here they saw their God taking a lively turn, no mistake; here they saw him puffing his smoke like a blast furnace, and sending out his lightning and thunderings, and blowing his horn tremendously. Moses goes up into the mountain, and God says to Moses (verse 21): "Go down, charge the people lest they break through unto the Lord." Verse 23d: Moses informs God, saying: "The people cannot come up to Mount Sinai, for thou chargest us, saying, set bounds about the mount." It seems that God had either forgotten what he told Moses about setting the bounds, or else he did not know that Moses had obeyed. But God

being anxious to know that no one was near the mount, says to Moses (verse 24): "Get thee down, and thou shalt come up, thou and Aaron, but let not the priests and the people break through to come up, lest he (God) break through upon them." It would seem that God was extremely desirous that no one should come up on the mount but Moses and Aaron, but I do not learn that Moses even took up Aaron. But Moses goes down (see Exodus xx) and begins to preach to the people what God had told him. He tells them the creation story, gives them the commandments verbally, and is just telling them "not to covet thy neighbor's wife;" verses 17, 18: "And all the people saw the thunderings and the lightnings, and the voice of the trumpet and the mountain smoking, and when the people saw it they removed and stood afar off." Or, in other words, the people get alarmed and run, right in the midst of Moses' sermon; and the people said unto Moses: "Let not God speak with us lest we die." They were so terribly alarmed. "And the people stood afar off, and Moses drew near unto the thick darkness where God was, and the Lord said unto Moses, thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, Ye have seen that I have talked with you from heaven." Curious heaven, certainly, in a cloud of ashes on Sinai. But Moses gets from this heaven another long message and delivers it verbally; the reader will find it in Exodus xxi, xxii, xxiii.

Again we find (Exodus xxiv, 2) "And Moses alone shall come near the Lord." So Moses goes alone again and is gone forty days. It took him some time to write out, in a rude manner, his long legal document. Of course the story is familiar with every one, that the people thought him dead, and with their stolen jewelry made a calf, the nearest representative of their intellect. Finally, Moses comes down, and in rage breaks the tables of the law upon learning that they had made a calf; and then tells them that God told him the whole affair, and what he said to God to appease his wrath. Now, if God did tell Moses that they had

corrupted themselves and made a calf, would he have waited until he came down from the mountain before he smashed the tables of stone? The dialogue between God and Moses is this (Exodus xxxii): "And the Lord said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and behold it is a stiff-necked people. Now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them, and I will make of thee a great nation." This is what God said, making a great I again of Moses. Now, this is what Moses said, by way of argument, to God, commencing at verse 11: "Why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power and a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians say, for mischief did he bring them out to slay them in the mountains and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swearest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it forever. And the Lord repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." This is the dialogue. If Moses' word is true, God begs Moses to let him alone. If his word is true, God listens to the order of Moses to turn from his fierce wrath, and to the harangue that he had a host of witnesses that would say he done it for mischief if he brought them out of Egypt to destroy them. If Moses tells the truth, God listened to hear Moses remind him of his promise, as though there was danger of God's forgetting it. If Moses' word is true, God intended evil and needed to repent. If Moses tells the truth, he ordered God to repent, and God, after hearing his argument, did repent. Can it be possible that any man can believe God ever acted the part of such an ignoramus as this, inferior to Moses, and swayed by his argument? God never sat in Moses' heaven, on top of Mount Sinai in a cloud of smoke, or out of it,

and listened to such a harangue of blasphemy as this from any man, to accomplish any purpose. The Christian dodge is, that God acted to the capacity of men in those days of ignorance, talking to Moses in nearly every line of his writings for forty years. Does Moses appear to be so much inferior to us as to require this specialty more than we?

But to the subject. Moses orders the slaughter of three thousand of the leaders in the calf worship that did not believe God was on the mountain. Then Moses is called upon the mount, alone again, of course, to get another set of tables of law, but this time Moses has to hew his own tables, God would do no more than to write them. But Moses is charged, (Exodus xxxiv, 3,) "And no man shall come up with thee, neither let any man be seen throughout all the mount." And to give it a good color that the mount would be defiled if anything touched it, Moses tells them that God ordered him to not let the herds eat before the mount, as though a few cows or camels would disturb God. This looks like suspicious play from beginning to end; no evidence but Moses' word for anything, and many of the people were wavering and were worshiping strange gods, and needed more evidence of divinity, but the moment the people saw as Moses saw there was no evidence; hence Moses kept them in profound ignorance, governing them by miracle, as far as his word and stratagem could induce a belief; further than that he took his chances.

We learn (Exodus xviii) that the priest of Midian, Moses' father-in-law, learned him how to govern them by putting rulers over tens, fifties and hundreds, instead of sitting himself from morning until night, and Moses adopted it. So it seems that really one of the most important things God, who was continually with Moses, neglected to instruct him, and the priest did not advise with, neither did Moses refer the matter to God. No, reader, I have no doubt but you understand that whatever Moses thought the people ought to do, or whatever he wished to accomplish, he considered it

the Divine will, and instructed the people accordingly, whether in war or in peace. Moses varied his stories to pass or satisfy the people; after telling them that God would clear the land of Canaan with hornets, (which were quite a pest in that country,) we find him again (Exodus xxxiii) telling the people an angel would drive out the Canaanites; so he held out to them the best he could that there was hope, notwithstanding his people feared, and would not fight the Anakims. Moses hoped to raise a young generation free from superstitious stories of the ancient giants and warriors in Canaan, and that he would be able to take it. Moses himself was a bloodthirsty warrior, as far as accomplishing his purposes, if no farther. Numbers xxxi: we learn that Moses' army took about thirty-two thousand prisoners, men, women and children. Verses 17, 18, hear Moses: "Now, therefore, kill every male among the little ones, and kill every woman that hath known man, but all the women children that have not known man keep alive for yourselves." Here is an order for the wholesale murder of innocent women and children, that never done him harm, which is but a repetition of the murder of the first born of Egypt. The true character of this man's deeds, tearing infant children from their mothers' arms and spilling innocent blood, only to be followed by murdering women that never done him harm, would make the blood run cold in the heart of a tyrant.



### CHAPTER III.

Numbers xi: we read of a wind from the Lord that blew upon the land a swarm of quails. We know that quails are plenty, or were of a modern date, in that country, but that they were two cubits, or several feet, high, upon the face of the earth, we will lay that story alongside of the story of Moses, in the 22nd chapter,

concerning the revelation Balaam's ass gave him about the angel, and leave the reader to believe or doubt it, just as he chooses, and turn back to the 16th chapter of Numbers, for the purpose of showing the volcanic state of the country there at that time. Here we find a case of the ground's opening and swallowing up all the men, houses and goods pertaining to Korah. "And there came out fire of the Lord and consumed two hundred and fifty men that offered incense." Here is a simple narrative of a terrible shock and opening of the earth, as in Mexico, in 1759, when the earth opened and swallowed up two rivers, Cuitembro and San Pedro; six mountains surged up from the gaping gulf, among which is the volcanic mountain Jorullo, 2,150 feet above the ancient plain; but of course Moses knew all about it beforehand, that the earth would swallow Korah, as he did the calf story, and it was sent for their wickedness. On such foundation as this is the Old Testament built.

I have heard men, when driven to the last extremity, endeavor to prove the divinity of Moses' writings by the sentiment of the ten commandments, as though they were superhuman. Although they are good, they bear evidence of being the result of human experience, and were lived by in the days of the Patriarchs, many hundreds of years before Moses. The reader will compare the ten commandments of Moses (Exodus xx) with the following (Genesis xv, 7): "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur to the land of the Chaldees." Second (Genesis xxxv, 2): "Jacob said, put away the strange gods that are among you." (4th verse): "And they gave unto Jacob all the strange gods." Fourth command: "Remember the Sabbath day and keep it-holy." Could only be remembered as having previously existed; the definite article *the* points to a particular day previously observed." Sixth command: "And Reuben said unto them, shed not blood." The seventh command, that "Thou shalt not commit adultery," is taught (Genesis xxxiv) in the case of Shechem and Jacob's daughter.

Theft was always a crime. The ninth command, that they should not bear false witness, was observed between Jacob and Laban, for seven years' labor for a wife. Promises were most scrupulously observed. The experience of the first Patriarch of an ordinary family ought to teach him all the divinity there is in these commands. It is astonishing how foolish men can talk.



#### CHAPTER IV.

Passing to Joshua, Moses' successor, we will notice his miracle, that was done on the day that he fought the five Amorite kings. When, in the heat of battle, minutes seemed like hours to anxious Joshua, he no doubt thought the sun had stood still, but the writer of Joshua's history, whoever he is, gets his account of this miracle from the book of Jasher. Joshua x, 12, 13, the writer says: "And he (Joshua) said, in the sight of Israel, sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Aijalon. And the sun stood still, and the moon stayed until the people had avenged themselves upon their enemies. Is not this written in the book of Jasher? So the sun stood still in the midst of the heavens about a whole day." Now we have learned from this writer the sun was in the midst of the heavens, on Mount Gibeon; but what is of the most importance, he gets this Bible that we have got as revelation, from the writings of Jasher. Who is Jasher, more than any other historian, recording events and giving theories and relating stories, true or false, as he finds them? Covil, defining Jasher, says, about his book: "In all probability it was a collection, formed by degrees, of poems in praise of the theocratic heroes." In the 1st chapter of 2nd Samuel is an elegy of David over Saul and Jonathan, and the 19th and 20th verses are noted texts for preachers, and



they are beautiful; hardly a preacher but what has given us a sublime sermon from this quotation of the profane historian Jasher, a poetical writer upon the beauties of great deeds of heroes. Theorizing and enlarging is a poet's license, and from such sources it appears came these miraculous stories. We learn from this how the Bible starts. A writer sits down and gathers up his scraps; among them are historians and poets like Jasher; he selects such as he wants from all that suit his ideas. If he find Jasher dwelling, in his poetical lines, on the beauties of miracles, that suits him, he takes it, and so on among the others, and when done it is translated several times, with alterations at each turn, and then voted on; and all that has gathered from these scraps, a story that corresponds with the doctrines and theories of the delegation, they vote it the word of God; and the book of Job, if one man had voted the other way it would have been a profane history, but now it is the true word of God. This is about the way our Bible is made up. Think of the idea of the writings of the poet Jasher given us for revelation.

Returning to the story, Jasher said the sun stood still; that we all admit. If Jasher had said the sun started, that would have been the miracle, but that the world stopped its revolution no one affirms. But the language is such as to imply the sun started after standing a day; if it did, then that was the miracle, not in its standing, but in its starting. Passing along, there is nothing particularly interesting, the same high-handed absurdity is kept up, from necessity, to govern these unruly people, that had to be governed by miracles for want of law or power to execute, until the book of Ruth, which is a simple love story; how she got in bed with Boaz. Then commences the reign of kings, and the age in which prophesying is in a high state of cultivation.

## CHAPTER V.

We will now turn our attention to the patriarchs, a portion of history attributed to Moses, but written by a writer who mentions the reign of kings that reigned over Israel (see Genesis xxxvi, 31). The story that we have got could not have been written less than five to eight hundred years after Moses was dead; but we will look at the history as we find it, no matter whether the writer was another poet like Jasher or some one else, our purpose is to learn whether the story bears evidence of a daily chat with God, or whether that part was their imagination in an ignorant age.

It seems the Bible writer was of a different genius than Josephus, as each give a different account of the same character. Josephus, although giving credit to miracles, speaking of Abraham, gives us a straight-forward, sensible account of him. Josephus, (vol 1, p. 49,) speaking of Abraham, says: "He was a person of great sagacity, both for persuading his hearers and not mistaken in his opinions, \* \* and he determined to renew and to change the opinion all men happened then to have concerning God, for he was the first that dared to publish this notion, that there was but one God, the creator of the universe; \* \* thus his opinion was derived from the irregular phenomena that were visible both at land and sea." This looks like sense, that Abraham came to his conclusions from argument, instead of a continued chat with God, as Moses' writer represents. If Abraham was the first man that found out there was but one God, and that by astronomy, is it likely that God ever revealed himself to man during the nineteen hundred years previous to Abraham? Is it likely that God ever revealed himself to Abraham and not inform him as to the number of gods, but leave him to figure it out by astronomy? If God did not reveal himself to Abraham, as the Bible writer in nearly every line says, have we any evidence that God did to any of

them? Josephus is quoted by all Christians, and they know that he had the sacred writings and other books, and is said by Joseph Sculiger to be the "greatest lover of truth of any writer, Greek or Latin, that ever lived, and more safe to believe him." Josephus tells us what Berosus says of Abraham. He tells us Hecateus wrote a book of Abraham, showing that Josephus had at hand the best authors, that are certainly as reliable as the poet Jasher, that the Bible writers quote from; which story shall we believe? Shall we believe a sensible story that agrees with the experience of the world for the last 1800 years, or believe God was his daily companion, as the Bible writer says? But, to decide this matter, we will look at the character Jacob. First (Genesis xxvii), Jacob steals his father's blessing from Esau by putting on hairy mittens and going to the old man, who was blind and lay sick, telling him that he was Esau, and, to prove it, reached the poor old dying man his hands for him to feel; the old man says, Art thou my very son Esau? Jacob says, I am, and gets the blessing from Esau, who is after game for his father, and is to be blest when he returns. Genesis xxix: Jacob tends cattle for his uncle Laban fourteen years, and buys two wives, named Leah and Rachel; he then tends cattle, and is to have those that are marked spotted, speckled or striped, according to their several and different agreements, so he put spotted, speckled and striped sticks in the watering place where the cattle drank when they conceived, until all the cattle except the poor, that he did not want their increase, fell to him; he then took away the sticks, that the increase of the poor cattle might fall to Laban. So he kept on gaining possession of all the good cattle, and Laban looked sorrowful and his sons mourned. Then Jacob ran away with them all. The Bible words are (Genesis xxxi, 20): "And Jacob stole away." Then Jacob, instead of telling his wives how he managed the affair to get all the cattle in his possession, lays this robbery to God. After telling them that "when he was to have the speckled, then they bear all speckled;

when his wages was to have the ring-streaked, then they bear ring-streaked; thus hath God taken away the cattle." This is what he told his wives, in the 31st chapter, while the 30th chapter, commencing at the 38th verse, tells us how he accomplished it by his rods in the water where they drank. But this is not all. In the meantime, God is in his domestic affairs. God is represented as assuming the whole domestic concern; when the wives are barren, God gives Jacob their handmaids. But the neatest thing about this is that Rachael begs for children, and Jacob raves around in a terrible rage. (Genesis xxx, 2): "And Jacob's anger was kindled against Rachael, and he said, Am I in God's stead, who hath withheld the fruit of the womb?" Sure enough, who had, for after she gave him her handmaid, she (Rachael) raised a son, and called his name Joseph (see 23rd and 24th verses); and after he declares Leah barren she hires him with mandrakes, and raises her fifth son (see Genesis xxx). This is what the Bible declares of this man of God, that all Christians pray to sit with at the right hand of God; as for me, I had rather be farther off, if I had any cattle or daughters with me, especially. It seems strange that we have got to argue that such men are not men of God, no matter who or what book says so; their votes did not make the Bible any more sacred than before they voted; then it was no more than a book of heroes, pretending, and no doubt but what they believed it, that God talked with man, telling him the result of listening to snakes' clamor that was trying to get his children from him. There is no use talking such stuff, God was never the antagonist of a snake or a louse, and it is blasphemy to say so; he never suffered his offspring to be deceived by a snake, an animal of his own creating, any more than he cast a giant into a mountain, and every time the giant turned over he belched forth fire and smoke; neither does he employ angels to ferry souls over hell because some ancient print says so. Open your eyes and look at things, not give credence to all ancient mythology, that teaches you absurdity and

ignorance, whether in the Bible or out of it. When you find such yarns as that God placed a rainbow in the heavens for a sign that he would no more drown the world, when, by the laws of refraction and reflection, that existed before the world was. There must have been a bow ever since rain fell and the sun shone. When you read of the sun turning back ten degrees, in Ahaz' or any other man's dial, or the world's stopping its revolution to accommodate Joshua, or any other man, to fight battles and kill more men. And when you read of God's repenting, as he did, that he made man, and in the case of Ninevah, and after hearing Moses' speech in defense of his brethren, and many other cases, when you read these things, remember that it is not theology, but mythology. For truth, look ahead; why turn to the dark, superstitious ages where theories came from the ignorant, in the dim background of time, where all was miracle, miracle, miracle?

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CHAPTER VI.

We will now show how men prophesied, as the fulfillment of the predictions is the Christians' great bulwark. To illustrate, we will commence at a modern date and work back. Christ foretold the destruction of Jerusalem. Abraham Lincoln predicted the overthrow of American slavery, in 1848, when he said, "A house divided against itself cannot stand; this country cannot endure half slave and half free." So did Jackson and Harrison predict the same. Jo Smith said there would "be war between the North and the South, and it would commence in South Carolina." The fulfillment of these prophesies depends on the ability of the prophet to judge the future by the past, and judging from the present tide of circumstances.

But there is another mode from which more trouble or mystery

has arisen. It is this : a man predicts and another fulfills, thereby proving that his ancestors were favored with communion from God, and if their ancestors were, it would not seem strange to the people that they were too, that being the height of their ambition, a prophet of God; for example (1 Kings ii, 27), "So Solomon thrust out Abiathar from being priest unto the Lord, that he (Solomon, not God,) might fulfill the word of the Lord which he spake concerning the house of Eli, in Shiloh." This is the way men run the prophetic machine, one man to predict, another man to execute, and no God about it whatever. This game has extended over hundreds of years sometimes.

Rev. John Fletcher wrote a dissertation to substantiate the divine authority of the Scriptures; that is introduced in our large Bibles as a sort of prop. And I will try to sift his great miracle that he says converted the Earl of Rochester—a man who, no doubt, knew more of politics than bible. It appears that Jeroboam, to prevent the children of Israel from going up to Jerusalem to worship, fearing they would follow Rehoboam, king of Judah, who had a branch of the children of Israel and was of the house of David, set up some golden calves for worship, on an altar at Bethel.\* Very naturally, then, a man of God comes down from the tribe of Judah and cries against the altar (1 Kings xiii, 2); "And he cried against the altar in the word of the Lord, and said, O altar, altar, thus saith the Lord, behold a child shall be born unto the house of David, Josiah by name, and upon thee shall be offered the priests of the high places that burn incense upon thee, and men's bones shall be burnt upon thee." This is the prediction, simply a threat and boast what Judah's tribe of the regular order from David would accomplish. It appears, after an elapse of three hundred years, a child is born unto the house of David that they name Josiah. If there is anything strange about it so far, it is that three hundred years elapsed before the name Josiah

\* Jacob originally built this altar. (See Genesis xxxv.)

occurred in the family, it being a very common name, and it being so long he could not fulfill the threat of burning the priests on the altar, for they must have been all dead. But Josiah gets the law from the priests and submits it to Huldah, the prophetess, to know whether it is true or not (see 2 Kings xxii, 14); then he calls a council of the priests and the slaughter of property begins (see 2 Kings xxiii). "He break down the houses of the Sodomites." "The altars that were on the top of the upper chamber of Ahaz, which the kings of Judah had made, and the altars which Manasseh had made in the two courts of the house of the Lord, did he beat down and break them down from thence, and cast them into the brook Kidron. And the high places \* \* which Solomon built, \* \* did the king defile." Well, it seems he is destroying everything among his own tribe, believing Huldah, that the people had gone astray. But next he comes to the altar at Bethel that the miracle is figured from (vs. 15, 16), "Moreover, the altar that was at Bethel \* \* he break down, \* \* and sent and took the bones out of the sepulchres and burnt them upon the altar and polluted it, according to the word of the Lord, which the man of God proclaimed." There is the miracle. He burnt the bones on the altar, according to the word of the Lord. We believe he did, and if the priests had been alive he would have burnt them according to the word of the Lord too. Is it a miracle for a man to carry out the programme he has right before his eyes, given him by his ancestors? All of this destruction of his was to fulfill Moses' law, which the reader will see by reading the first four verses of the 23rd chapter of 2 Kings. There is not a shadow of a miracle here, and it is Fletcher's great bulwark. It is nothing strange that Josiah should destroy a host of altars; others destroyed altars; Josiah is trying to do God service. This writer of Kings says, "Josiah turned to the Lord with all his heart," speaking of these destructions, and Josiah represents God's heart in the following manner (23rd chapter, 26th verse): "The Lord

turned not from the fierceness of his great wrath wherewith his anger was kindled against Judah, because of all the provocations that Manasseh had provoked him withal." This is a pretty description of God's character; men that know no more about God than this, to suppose him provoked and raging mad, set before us now as our teachers about God. It is the height of presumption. If God was such an excitable character he would have swept us from the earth thousands of times. They judged God's disposition by man's; their whole story proves that they did; and knew no more about God than the ant that crawls upon the ground, except his works in the heavens. 1 Kings xiii: This man of God that proclaimed against the altar represents God as doing more tricks; verse 4, he says, "And it came to pass, when king Jeroboam heard the sayings of the man of God which had cried against the altar in Bethel, that he put forth his hand from the altar, saying, Lay hold on him. And his hand which he put forth was dried up, so he could not pull it in again." Well, this is another of God's funny tricks; we might have believed it, but it was a little too funny, he straightened it right out again. Verse 6: "And the man of God besought the Lord and the king's hand was restored him again." This sounds a little too much like boys' play to suit me. It seems, also, that an old prophet at Bethel — nothing before was ever brought against him — invited this man of God to eat with him, but the man of God declines, saying, God forbid him eating in the place, but the prophet says (verse 18), "I am a prophet also, as thou art, and an angel spake unto me by the word of the Lord, saying, bring him back into the house, that he might eat bread and drink water;" but the writer, knowing that when he had eaten and went away he met a lion and the lion killed him, and supposing God sent the lion to kill him for eating in Bethel, finishes the verse by saying, "But the prophet lied unto him." This shows the pivot on which prophets stood, to be handed to us whether they were lying prophets or true



prophets. It shows that all that claimed to be prophets were prophets, either true or false, but as no one claims God is in a false prophet, it shows that if a prophet does not get caught, as this Bethel prophet did by the lion accident, he is a true prophet, and we must believe his extravagant hornet stories as the true word of God. But some of these prophets have played sharp; for instance, Isaiah tells Hezekiah when he is sick that God says he is going to die (2 Kings xx), but some days after, when Hezekiah begins to get well, in spite of Isaiah's prediction, Isaiah tells him God heard his prayer and would lengthen his days fifteen years, and, for a sign, he caused the shadow to turn back ten degrees in Ahaz' dial. Here is a fair, plain, unconditional declaration of God, if Isaiah tells the truth, that Hezekiah should die, and Hezekiah did not die. Hezekiah's praying does not fulfill God's promise; if you tell a man you will kill a certain animal, it does not fulfill your word if you do not kill it because the animal moans; the animal will always do that, and it is known beforehand; but Hezekiah was already a praying man. 2 Kings xviii, 30: the Assyrian king said, "Neither let Hezekiah make you trust in the Lord." This shows what kind of mettle Hezekiah was. The truth is, Isaiah was caught in his prediction, and the quicker it can be shown he returned to Hezekiah after making the prediction and predicting his recovery, the quicker it shows he discovered his mistake; and as for the world turning back ten degrees, it needs no comment; the idea of this globe, rolling at the rate of over a thousand miles per hour, not only stopped but rolled back ten degrees, then went ahead again at its usual rate, and all this done to accomplish nothing—it shows how ignorant and presumptuous those men were. But the greatest miracle I see is, that men can be so ignorant at this age of the world as to ask us to believe such men knew anything about God.

But, passing along through time, we find some of the "holy men of God" in a terrible fix. If it was some of the false prophets

that were not shrewd enough to carry their play through, it would be of less consequence, but it is Jeremiah (see Jeremiah xx, 7). Hear him: "O, Lord, thou hast deceived me, and I am deceived; thou art stronger than I, and hast prevailed. I am in derision daily; every one mocketh me." Well, sure enough, the Almighty is too much for him; Jeremiah is in trouble, and it arose from his telling the people many wondrous works God would do, and God deceived him, God was too strong for him. Jeremiah was the first true prophet but what had been able to conquer God, either by force, argument or prayer. These men certainly describe a different God from what we have any knowledge of now. Their God Moses uses the force of his authority and commands him to repent, he also argues with him, he informs him that bounds were set around the mount; Hezekiah prays to God and God changes his mind; this God repented that he had made man; he was a little stronger than Jeremiah and deceived him; but Jonah being better acquainted with their God, says (4th chapter, 2nd verse): "Was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore I fled before unto Tarshish, for I knew that thou art a gracious God, \* \* and repentest thee of the evil." This is plain talk; Jonah knew he would repent of the evil. Here Jonah judges God and pronounces it an evil he threatened to do, and says he knew God's business, that he would repent, and that's why he went to Tarshish. Now, this is not a description of the God we have. Jonah's God was this: in the first chapter, the word of the Lord came unto him, that is, a message from his superior, to threaten Nineveh; and the way God destroyed ancient cities was the same as now, by large armies, except volcanic action — that we are exposed to at all times; and Jonah knew by the political state of affairs that God would not destroy Nineveh, so he fled to Tarshish, and was shipwrecked or thrown overboard, and not being far from land, as the account shows, and the storm ceased, he swam or drifted ashore, what we call, in common speak-

ing, a miraculous escape, no doubt, and he makes a good joke of it about the fish swallowing him. Leave off the gourd and fish story and it becomes a reasonable piece of history, and not a novel story, as many suppose.

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## CHAPTER VII.

Let us now briefly notice the wonders of Daniel. We will turn to the book of Daniel and learn who he is and what he has done. First chapter, 3rd, 4th and 6th verses: "The king (Nebuchadnezzar) spake unto Ashpenaz, the master of his eunuchs, that he should bring certain of the children of Israel, and of the king's seed, and of the princes, children in whom was no blemish, but well favored, and skillful in all wisdom, cunning in knowledge and understanding science, and such as had ability in them to stand in the king's palace. \* \* \* Now among these were of the children of Judah: Daniel, Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah." 17th verse: "As for these four children God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and Daniel had understanding in all visions and dreams." Now, reader, I want to call your attention to the fact that he was skilled in dreams, he studied them his three years while being tutored by Nebuchadnezzar; we have found the secret of Daniel's knowledge of dreams, he was skilled in them as a profession. Their symbols were many; *lion* represented courage; *ram*, a fighting nature; *kid*, harmlessness; *iron*, strength; *gold*, purity; *clay*, brittleness, and so on to almost infinity. So, if a man had a dream and told it, Daniel and all the wise men and astrologers of the land could interpret it by rule, the same as old ladies will all tell the same story from the same cup. Now bear in mind, reader, our motto, we are not hunting miracles, but are endeavoring to explain without the necessity of acknowledging one.

In the second chapter, it seems Nebuchadnezzar has a dream, and calls his astrologers, but they say (see 4th verse): "O king, live for ever; tell thy servants the dream and we will show the interpretation. The king answered, the thing is gone from me, if ye will not make known unto me the dream and interpretation thereof, ye shall be cut in pieces." (See 10th verse): "The Chaldeans answered before the king and said, There is not a man upon the earth that can show the king's matter." This shows us that they interpreted by rule; they did not claim any power to divine, but to interpret. But verses 11 to 16 say, "And there is none other that can show it before the king except the gods, whose dwelling is not with flesh. For this cause the king was angry, \*

\* and the decree went forth that the wise men should be slain, and they sought Daniel and his fellows to be slain." Daniel says to the king's captain, "Why is the decree of the king so hasty? Then Daniel went in and desired the king that he would give him time and that he would show the king the dream and the interpretation." How was Daniel so sure he would show the dream if he depended on more than his own abilities? God deceived Jeremiah, and if he had not, Daniel could not tell for a certainty what God would do in this matter. God's ideas might have been different from Daniel's, but Daniel says he (not God) will show the dream. Verse 17 says: "Then Daniel went to his house and made the thing known to Hananiah, Mishael and Azariah, his companions." Here, reader, is the story so far. 1st. You have learned that Daniel is skilled in dreams. 2nd. That the king has forgotten the dream; he tells the astrologers so twice (verses 5 and 8). 3rd. You have learned that the captain told Daniel the story, and of course the whole story. 4th. Daniel is to be killed unless he makes known the dream. 5th. Daniel says positively he will make known the dream, give him time. 6th. He went directly to his companions, of course, to help him seek the thing out during the night. Here is our case, the young, ambi-

tious Daniel doomed to be cut in pieces or divine the dream, and he knows the king had forgotten the dream, and Daniel is skilled in dreams. Daniel felt that self-protection was the first law of nature, that he was bound to obey. A man would be a very unnatural brute to suffer himself and his comrades, and all the wise men of the land, to be hewn in pieces by the rising of the next sun rather than deceive the man that issued the inhuman order. It would seem that a man that would not protect himself and comrades under such circumstances wanted to die; he certainly would have more restraint of conscience than Abraham had, when he told the king that his wife was his sister, and his life was not at stake either. There is no use of talking, of course Daniel would do the best he could for his life, and did. The next morning he goes before the king, who had forgotten his dream, and says: "Then was the secret revealed unto Daniel in a night vision." Of course it had to be revealed. Verse 27: "The secret that the king has demanded, the wise men, the astrologers cannot show unto thee, but there is a God in heaven that revealeth secrets." Daniel says (verse 30): "This secret is not revealed to me for any wisdom that I have, \* \* \* but that thou mightest know the thoughts of thy heart." Now what could Daniel, under the circumstances, care about that king's heart, any farther than his own interests were concerned, with the decree over his head, reveal or you shall be cut in pieces? But Daniel tells him a splendid dream; it would seem very much like a miracle that a man should happen to dream such a beautiful story, hear it: "Thou, O king, sawest and behold a great image: this great image, whose brightness was excellent, stood before thee, and the form was terrible. This image's head was of fine gold, his breast and his arms of silver, his belly and his thighs of brass, his legs of iron, his feet part of iron and part of clay." This pleased the king; it was a pretty image, no mistake, but Daniel hitches a little more on to this image so as to give him a chance to tell the king (what several prophets had

said before in different words,) that "God should set up a kingdom which shall never be destroyed, and that it should break in pieces and consume all these kingdoms;" and that God hath made it known to the king, being anxious to flatter him, (as the result shows that he was made ruler of Babylon for it, and Daniel was not reluctant to accept the office.) What he hitches on to the image is this: "Then was the iron, the clay, the brass, the silver and the gold broken to pieces together, and became like the chaff of a summer's threshing floor, and the wind carried them away and no place was found for them, and the stone that smote them became a great mountain and filled the whole earth." Now, if he was speaking of Christ's coming and setting up his kingdom on the ruins of all the others, Christ has not done it; his doctrine was so unpopular he did not destroy a kingdom. But, returning to the first part of Daniel's interpretation, he says: "Thou, O king, art a king of kings, for the God of heaven hath given thee a kingdom, power and strength and glory; and wheresoever the children of men dwell, the beasts of the field and the fowls of the heaven hath he given into thine hand, and hath made thee ruler over them all. Thou art this head of gold. And after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee," and so on. I wish to call attention to the last I quoted, "That after thee shall arise another kingdom inferior to thee," signifying, if he means anything, that his days through should be mighty. But this story pleased the king highly. The king was not only that head of gold, but was fine gold. What Daniel told him about his being king of kings, and the extent of his dominions, of course the king knew all about that affair before without any dreaming, but of course Daniel knew the king would feel highly flattered to hear that his power was highly appreciated, even beyond all expectation he ever had himself, and the result proves it so. Verse 48: "Then the king made Daniel a mighty man, and gave him many great gifts, and made him ruler over the whole province of Baby-

lon." Could not most any man get a revelation, when it was as easily obtained as this, when his life was at stake if he did not, and eternal glory if he did? If the reader even wants to believe a miracle (which applies to anything done out of the order of nature), in this case he has got to believe, first, that the king dreamed that pretty dream; 2nd, that God revealed it to Daniel; 3rd, that it was revealed for the benefit of the king, and not to save Daniel and all the wisdom of the land; 4th, that God would do business in that round-about way, instead of directly to the king; 5th, that there was some object in God's doing it which no man can discover; 6th, that, as the king was fine gold, he could or would not corrupt; 7th, that his kingdom was a powerful kingdom throughout his days, that there might be one after him inferior to his. Now, if a man was hungry enough for a miracle to swallow all this stretch of credulity, he might find something superhuman about this thing, but I certainly cannot see it; it looks to me as though Daniel could accomplish it all. And if Daniel could tell a dream, being skilled in them, as the king had forgotten his and would not know the difference, it ceases to be a miracle, for a thing is not a miracle that can be done on natural principles, no matter how many men say there is a God in it. In this case, before we had any evidence of a revelation to Daniel we would need one to show us that Daniel did not make up the dream, and, under the circumstances, it ought to be apparent to any reasonable man that he did. But there is one circumstance connected with this matter that settles the question beyond dispute, and that is, in a few years this golden king is driven by a conspiracy from his kingdom, to eat grass with the beasts of the field, and Daniel is the man that pronounces the sentence, under the color of interpreting another dream (4th chapter, 24th and 25th verses), hear him: "This is the interpretation, O king, and this is the decree of the Most High, which is come upon my lord the king, that they shall drive thee from men, and thy dwelling shall be with the beasts of

the field, and they shall make thee to eat grass as oxen." Verse 33: "The same hour was the thing fulfilled upon Nebuchadnezzar, and he was driven from men and did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles' feathers and his nails like birds' claws." Reader, how changed is this story of Daniel's as soon as he has power and an army to execute his prediction is at hand, than it was when his life hung on the beauty of his story. The king had changed from gold to filthy clay, in Daniel's estimation. It does not look to me as though the king would change so much in so little time, from the finest golden monarch of earth to a beast of the field; it looks to me as though Daniel's divinity was to serve his own ends and not the king's.

But in Daniel's history God does another little trick, he shuts the lions' mouths, so they do not harm Daniel during a night. It seems Darius was flattered to pass a decree that all that prayed to any other god but him should be cast into the den of lions. Daniel continued to pray as before, and was reported, and the king was sorry the decree had gone forth; but they tell him the law of the Medes and Persians changeth not, and, of course, he had to execute the order, and Daniel was cast in, and the king did not sleep all night; this shows his deep interest in Daniel, and he could do as much as to feed the lions well before Daniel was cast in and while he was there, and if they were well fed they would not harm a kid, God would shut their mouths so tight, especially after devouring Daniel's assailants, they were satisfied. The little school book tells us the danger is in crossing the path of a hungry lion, not one that is well fed. The reader will see by this how they labored to prove God was with them, to resort to such foolish tricks as this for evidence of their divinity.

But we notice, also, that Daniel begins to dream and see visions himself, and interprets them himself, and thus he runs the whole machine to suit himself. And we learn that after he had a vision, in one case, he was sick, it hurt him so (see 8th chapter); after



another, 10th chapter, 8th verse reads: "Therefore I was left alone and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me." This shows the great struggle with the mesmeric forces of the body; he, perhaps, entered the psychological state, and saw the same as Swedenborg and many others, things that they could not if awake, but all the visions were human, not superhuman, and are produced by the same philosophy as dreams, a portion of the brain or faculties of the mind being awake while the remainder is paralyzed or asleep, but with a proper combination may see passing events truly, and even past events, but never future with any more liability than dreaming; they cannot see what never was, although there are instances of that kind related of Joan of Arc, and others, but not well enough attested to become a fact. It is not my purpose, in this little work, to show all the results throughout the permutation of the faculties, being a certain portion awake while others are paralyzed by natural sleep or mesmeric force. But to illustrate Daniel's case and spiritualism, imagine the faculties all dormant, from whatever cause, but size, color, form, individuality and weight, the vision will be spirits or folks, and with language active they will hear them talk, and with veneration, hope and wonder active, the person will fairly pass into the spirit world with ecstasy and delight. All the scenes are modified by the condition of the brain, whether partially or totally paralyzed. These facts are well attested in Combs' and Dr. Spurzheim's phrenologies, where they have witnessed in several patients a diseased brain, causing a great rush of blood to the diseased or excited portions, until its activity overpowered the remaining portions, producing a variety of these singular phenomena. Whether produced by disease or mesmeric force, to see visions depends upon the paralyzation of a portion of the brain while the remainder is active, and sometimes in the cataleptic state, being the nearest state to death. It is not our design to enter this subject of the philosophy of mysterious agents, it would make a volume of itself,

but suffice to say, that magnetism, electricity, force of human will, condition of the system, are the agents in producing all the mysteries we behold in this line. The operation of these laws upon the human system is a subject but imperfectly understood, but the main difference, if not the only, between a vision and a dream is, that the former is a harder struggle with the forces of the system, and from the activity of a different class of organs, the subject is able to see present and past events, and perhaps future, as is recorded of Swedenborg, in our day, and of the Witch of Endor, and Huldah the prophetess, and all through time. Moses warns his people against the evil of divination and having familiar spirits; and again, in our day, we have from Peter Cartwright, a Methodist preacher, through a storm of excitement they had what he termed the jerks, and one man he mentions broke his neck, and (page 51) he says: "From these wild exercises another great evil arose from the heated imaginations of some; they professed to fall into a trance and see visions, they would fall at meeting, sometimes at home, and lay apparently powerless and motionless for days, and sometimes for a week, without food or drink, and when they came to, they professed to have seen heaven and hell, to have seen God, angels, the devil and the damned; they would prophesy under the pretense of divine inspiration, predict the time of the end of the world and the ushering in of the great millenium. This was the most troublesome delusion of all, it made such an appeal to the ignorance of the people, even saints as well as sinners." This shows us the mysteries of our own person, but the great enthusiast, Cartwright, did not look any farther than the heated imagination producing this phenomenon, and yet here were visions, and these men that lay powerless a week without food and told these visions, is it likely they meant to lie? There is no doubt but what they thought they saw these things, as we do in our dreams; they saw just as Peter saw when he saw a sheet let down three times from heaven, with a four-footed beast upon it, and

fowls, as related Acts 10. This passed before Peter's mind as a reality, while it was but a dream; God never let down a four-cornered sheet, no one claims so; visions or dreams passed before Daniel's mind, he never saw a ram pushing to the north, south and west, but the scene passed before his eyes as curious dreams do before ours, only Daniel and Peter were in a trance, like Cartwright's subjects, and when he came out he was sick. God would not make a man sick to give him a revelation; if he did, such revelations would soon be dreaded. But this is one branch of the same power that has in all time claimed to divine, but I very much doubt whether man, from any cause whatever, ever divined, farther than his judgment would tell him a thing would come about; that some curious dreams might be construed to apply to some event that afterwards came about, we know has been done, and looked upon as revelation. It is hard to believe that God would show Daniel, or any other man, the rise and fall of empires by rams and mongrel images, that could be applied to any condition of the country that might afterwards turn up. Daniel knew that the Mede and Persian empires were in a tottering condition, and by the political factions he formed some idea of what would be, some parties weak, others strong, and by the portions of the country where the factions were the strongest he would naturally, when in a trance, see them triumph; he would see the direction the ram was pushing, and the chain of events would pass before his mind picturing brilliantly his imagination when awake. His prediction of great princes that should arise and do wonders is nothing strange for a man like him; he dwelt in the wonderful, and labored like every one else to make the people believe him a wonderful man. Hear what he says (10th chapter, 11th and 12th verses): "And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, \* \* unto thee am I now sent. Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel, for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand and to chasten thyself before God, thy words were heard, and I am

come for thy words." The fact is, if God or his angels loved Daniel as well as he represents, they would not very likely be telling him such flattery, and if they did, Daniel must have been in a dearth for praise to praise himself in this manner. 8th chapter, 1st verse, he says: "A vision appeared unto me, even unto me, Daniel." I quote these passages to show that Daniel, like other men, had love for praise, and was pleased to think that he, even he, as he represents to the people, could have and was honored with a vision from the Lord, and should be ranked with the highest, as communion with God was the highest of earthly honors. Without detracting, or wishing to, anything from Daniel, we want the truth; if this was the height (as the passages show) of Daniel's ambition, to gain esteem and be reckoned one of God's prophets, like all men, he would labor for that end, and being skilled in dreams and visions he could accomplish that end, even if he never had a trance or a dream, but we suppose he did have both. But as his visions of princes and powers are such as to apply to almost any age or condition of the world, there is no revelation about it, because nothing is revealed. The passage that theologians apply to Christ will generally apply to Cæsar, Bonaparte, Alexander, or a score of others, with more consistency, for they did accomplish something, but Christ did not destroy a power or establish one; but Daniel might have supposed a powerful prince was coming that would break in pieces all other kingdoms; there is no doubt they all looked for such a prince from the Lord from the days of Abraham, and all the prophets sang the same song, but Christ was not the prince they had been looking for, and the Jews would not receive him. The prophets, like Daniel, predicted a Saviour that should come with power and great glory, and Christ, that could or would not protect himself against the Jews, but ran several times for fear they would kill him, was not what they expected. It looks to us as though if Christ was revealed he would have been properly revealed; when he came, the people

would have known him. That the prophets, Daniel included, expected a Saviour, is probable, but that does not prove that they had any revelation that one was coming; a man may expect to be transformed into a comet, but that does not make it so. There is quite a difference between faith and reality; we may believe an innocent man guilty and hang him, and so admitting that a powerful prince was predicted and looked for, as there is reason to believe, is no evidence that they knew anything about it, further than human opinion or human speculation. And even admitting that Christ was of divine origin, and they foretold that in the course of time, before the end of the world, a man of divine origin should come, does not prove their foreknowledge of the fact any more than of mine if I predict the death of a man a certain day, and he falls and breaks his neck that day. In the history of man many similitudes of that have occurred; it is only a singular coincidence. If God, from any cause, saw fit to send his Son for the benefit of man, and men, from the same cause, felt their need and had faith to believe that God would heed their desires and send them a righteous teacher, a great prince, and God did not disappoint them, being, as Jonah said, a gracious God, and sent his Son, then we would be destitute of any evidence that they knew of any certainty that a great prince was coming.

But, to close this train of reasoning, there has been no superhuman man or prince on this globe within our historic period; that is what we will make appear before you leave us. Truth is what we are after, not the wonderful and miraculous. Daniel tells us that the time of the fulfillment of his vision should be "time, times and half a time." Now, if there is any revelation about any part of the dream this is a portion of it, and scholars, like so many idiots, have figured and racked their brains over this dream and learned nothing. They have fixed the time, but the world rolls on as before, and have cried, O Daniel, great is the mystery of thy dreams; yes, Daniel, thy dreams. It seems that with but a little

reason mankind could see there was nothing revealed or they could figure it, and if they cannot figure it there is nothing revealed to figure from; if nothing is revealed to figure from, then it is not revelation, no divinity about it, but simply a vision or dream.



## CHAPTER VIII.

We have passed briefly through the Old Testament, and have shown you the arguments, or a part of them, upon which Moses' divinity was claimed. We have shown, by a few examples, how men prophesied and fulfilled the same, and we now propose to show you that Christ is the result of prophesy, that is, that he was brought through what we might term a prophetic machine—was God because he was prophesied as such, and claimed to be God from the fact that he was brought about as the prophets predicted he would be, while we hope to be able to show you that the people fulfilled the prediction as Solomon did when he thrust out Abiathar, that he (Solomon) might fulfill the word of the Lord spoken in Shiloh. We expect to show you that men fulfilled prediction to prove the divinity of Christ, and in this foolish manner made a God by rule. We will then explain his miracles, and notice the divinity of his doctrine.

Our purpose now is to prove by Christ's own witnesses his human origin, and that he possessed human powers, and no more. We call Christ's own witnesses, it being a rule of law that a man cannot impeach his own testimony. We will first call St. Luke. Luke says (first chapter, 5th verse): "There was, in the days of Herod the king, a certain priest named Zacharias." Verse 11: "And there appeared unto him an angel of the Lord, standing on the right side of the altar of incense." Verse 13: "The angel said unto him, Fear not, Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy

wife Elizabeth shall bear thee a son, and thou shalt call his name John." Verse 14: "And thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth, for he shall be great in the sight of the Lord." Verse 16: "And many of the children of Israel shall he turn to the Lord their God." Verse 17: "And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord." Verse 19: "And the angel, answering, said, I am Gabriel." Verse 24: "And after those days his wife Elizabeth conceived." Reader, we have now got John under way, and have had a long course of instruction as to what John should do; does it not look as though they were making out his programme for him to work by when he comes, as the priests and Huldah gave Josiah his, and as Solomon turned out Abiathar that he might fulfill the word of the Lord that was spoken in Shiloh (1 Kings ii, 27)? Does it not look as though they were prescribing a course for John to follow, and to get up an excitement at his birth to give him character and influence, just as the result proved? Well, we have learned for a fact, at any rate, that this thing starts with a priest, and that the angel's name is Gabriel, and that the people should rejoice at his birth, and we expect the whole priesthood will obey the prediction. But, passing on six months, this same angel starts Christ, and we will show you that the mothers of both John and Christ are relatives, and that when Mary conceives she goes to salute her cousin Elizabeth, that is bringing John, showing the whole transaction was cooked up in the same family, by the same angel, which we will prove to be a man, by several Bible witnesses. Luke resumes his testimony and says (vs. 26, 27): "And in the sixth month the angel Gabriel was sent from God unto a city of Galilee, named Nazareth, to a virgin espoused to a man whose name was Joseph, of the house of David, and the virgin's name was Mary." Of course he must be of the house of David, to fulfill the Scriptures; they must work strictly by

rule, or his divinity would be disputed. Verse 28: "And the angel came in unto her and said, Hail, thou art highly favored. The Lord is with thee; blessed art thou among women." Verse 29: "And when she saw him she was troubled at his saying, and cast in her mind what manner of salutation this should be." The reader will bear in mind that she is so familiar with this angel that she is not troubled or alarmed at his appearance, but at his saying, which we term indecent to talk to a virgin. Verse 31: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name Jesus; he shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest." Verse 33: "And he shall reign over the house of Jacob forever, and of his kingdom there shall be no end." Verse 34: "Then said Mary unto the angel, how shall this thing be, seeing I know not a man?" Verse 35: "And the angel answered and said unto her, the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee." But, to encourage her a little farther, he says (verse 36): "And, behold, thy cousin Elizabeth, she hath conceived a son in her old age, and this is the sixth month with her." This was sufficient, the honest virgin was excited and said (verse 38): "Behold the handmaid of the Lord, be it unto me according to thy word." Now, what was that word? We have just read it; it was that the power of the Highest should overshadow her and produce that miraculous son. Verse 39: "And Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, \* \* and entered the house of Zacharias and saluted Elizabeth." Now we have Christ under way, who is to be of divine origin, of course must be born of a virtuous virgin; John could be brought by a married pair. We have now shown you what we declared, first, that it was the same angel in both cases; second, that it was a family arrangement among relatives and acquaintances; third, it commenced with the priest; fourth, the visits were six months apart, to bring John first in birth as well as in preaching, and Christ to follow and come from the house of David. This was a



nice arrangement, sure. This story would not need any farther argument, if you had not been taught from infancy that the Holy Ghost could generate with woman, which is as ridiculous as to suppose an alligator could generate with a comet—two opposite natures: think of it!

The question now arises, Who is this angel Gabriel? Rev. Mr. Covil says, in his Bible Lexicon, "Gabriel, man of God;" also he says, "One of the principal angels of heaven; an archangel." This is what we believe; he was a man of God, in those days occupying a high rank or position in the church. Daniel says (ix, 21): "Yea, while I was speaking in prayer, even the man Gabriel, whom I had seen in a vision at the beginning, being caused to fly swiftly, touched me about the time of the evening oblation." Here Daniel evidently prayed himself into a trance, or electro-psychological state, for he supposed he saw this angel and got a revelation from him. But the term *man* signifies human, pertaining to earth. Genesis i: "God made man." Gen. vi: "Man is flesh." This is the first we hear of man, and signifies a human being. Now whatever might have been Daniel's theory about the origin of these men, whether born of women by generating with gods, as is taught in Genesis vi, producing "men of renown," or some other; one thing is certain, he calls them men. Again (Rev. xxii), when John saw, as he thought, the most interesting part of God's dominions, he fell down to worship the angel that showed him those things, and that angel was one of his brethren. But Gen. xix, settles this question: "And there came two angels to Sodom at even; and Lot seeing them rose up to meet them. And he said, Now, my lords, turn in, I pray you, into your servant's house and tarry all night, and wash your feet, and ye shall rise up early and go on your ways. And they said, Nay, but we will abide in the street all night. And he pressed upon them greatly, and they turned in unto him, \* \* and they did eat. But before they lay down, the men of the city compassed the house round, both

old and young. \* \* And they called unto Lot and said, "Where are the men which came in to thee?" This needs no comment; it tells us who angels were in those days. These angels had fled for some cause and were afraid to take shelter in Lot's house, but being his old acquaintances, as his going to meet them shows, he urged them to turn in, and go their way early in the morning. They turned in, washed their feet, and eat the feast Lot prepared for them, showing that they were men in their habits; and the men who were after them also call them men. It does not make out that they were not men because the story goes on that they smote the people with darkness, so they could not find the door. It was in the night, and might have been very dark; no account states that these men lost their eyesight, but Lot begged for them, and the people, who only wanted to see them out of curiosity, perhaps, went away. Neither does it prove that they were not men because they saw the threatened condition of the country by volcanic action, hearing the thunderings in the earth, and advised Lot to leave, as no doubt many were doing. And after Lot left, "Abraham got up early in the morning and looked toward the land of the plain, and lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." This shows that the smoke going up as the smoke of a furnace was volcanic action, that destroyed Sodom and the adjacent cities, the same as Pompeii and others; there is no mystery about it; and it was one of these angels that Zacharias and Mary saw, that is, one of the same nature (called, in the church, an angel; out of it, men,) that went to see Mary, and the circumstances are strong that it was one of her acquaintances. If the Bible does not prove this angel to be a man of some tribe or station, it does not prove anything. When it describes a man, and says it is a man, as in this case of Lot, it ought to be sufficient to every one, especially those that reverence the Book above all others, that men of some order were called angels, even if disembodied spirits or celestial beings were termed angels too. Again, we

have angels that ministered unto the churches. Paul says (1 Cor. vi, 3), "Know ye not that we shall judge angels?" This would argue that they were inferior to Paul's brethren, and that one that visited the virgin Mary I think was.

It is needless to state that Elizabeth's time came, and she brought a son, and called his name John, and the babe praised God as all babies do. Excitement being part of the play, every sound the babe made of course was interpreted to be blessing God—a wonderful babe indeed. Isaac Wise, the great christian historian, in his history of the Israelitish nation, vol. 1, page 57, speaking of the extravagant stories told by different legends of the birth of Moses, of his being previously predicted, refusing any nurse but his mother, and so on, believing himself that Moses' birth was as simple as any man's, remarks: "There is no great man in history whose birth is not surrounded with the most extraordinary stories, announcing to the world that a great event has taken place." Turning to Mary, she brings a son too. If perchance these two children had been girls, we should have heard of Gabriel around some other ladies at another time. Now of course all the demonstration possible is to be made at the birth of Christ; his star is seen in the east by some wise men, who come to worship him; "and the star went before them, and came and stood over where the child was." This star story sounds rather poetical or mythological. But to create the wildest excitement the priests no doubt appear disguised as angels in the dark to a few shepherds, knowing that they would do just as they did—noise abroad what they had seen and heard, and the people would believe the story of honest-hearted shepherds, who had no object or interest in the matter to deceive them. Luke ii: "And there were shepherds keeping their flocks by night; and lo the angel of the Lord came upon them, and the glory of the Lord shone round about them, and they were sore afraid. And the angel said unto them, Fear not, for behold I bring you good tidings of great joy which shall

be unto all people, for unto you is born this day, in the city of David, a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord. \* \* And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God, and saying, Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." Verses 15 to 19: "And it came to pass when the angels were gone away from them, they came with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger; and when they had seen it, they made known abroad the saying which was told them concerning this child; and all that heard it wondered at those things which were told them by the shepherds. But Mary kept all these things, and pondered them in her heart." Yes, Mary pondered these things in her heart. She was too honest to give credit to such a story, even about her own son; she knew that the priests had fixed themselves, as did king Agrippa, with silver mantles, or something white, and went to the shepherds, knowing that they would spread it, and people would believe them and wonder. Would God send a host from heaven in the dark to scare two or three poor shepherds, and to publish his Son? Can a man of ordinary sense believe God does business in this manner in the dark? If God's object was to publish his Son, would he not publish him in large assemblies, and cities, and in open daylight? If it was not his object to publish him, why did he send a great host of angels to one or two shepherds in the night? The angels could do their shouting somewhere else. If God's object was only to benefit the shepherds that he made the communication, why did he not show himself to all the shepherds at different parts? There is no use of talking: God is impartial; he never revealed himself by a star to one or two wise men, and by the word of angels to a few shepherds, and call upon the world with but one witness afterward that claimed to have any sign to tell Christ from any other man, and that was the alighting on him of the Holy Ghost, which alighted on other men too.

We will notice next how they worked by rule to fulfill the contradictory predictions of Scripture relative to Christ's birthplace. Matt. i: Herod demanded of them where Christ should be born. They answer (4th verse): "In Bethlehem of Judea, for thus it is written by the prophet." Verses 14, 15: "He (Joseph) took the young child by night, and departed into Egypt. That it might be fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, Out of Egypt have I called my Son." Verse 23: "And he (Joseph) came and dwelt in a city called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spoken by the prophet, He shall be called a Nazarene." This was their ridiculous mode of fulfilling Scripture, making a flimsy excuse for his shift of places, as though God brought it about, but declaring at every turn it was done to fulfill Scripture, just as it was done, of course, to prevent the trouble Jeremiah ran into when God deceived him. This shows how they labored; going from Palestine to Egypt, from Egypt to Palestine, again traveling several hundred miles to bring the birthplaces all right—a thing they had to do as they were making a God by rule, and this proves, as much as any other circumstance, that Christ was the result of prophecy, a God was made by the predictions, the same that we would build a house after a plan. The angel gives Zacharias his part to perform; leaves a programme how John shall perform, crying in the wilderness, according to the prophet Esaias, turning the people unto the Lord. The angel gives Mary her part to perform. The priests give the wise men and the shepherds their part to perform. And the prophets give Joseph his part, through the instructions of the priest, to perform, and they all work, and it is not strange they all make a wonderful man. It seems as though a man must be more stupid than a Hottentot that cannot see how this thing is cooked up.

## CHAPTER IX.

Next we hear of Christ he is twelve years old, and propounds some interesting smart questions to some doctors and lawyers, for a boy of his age, and tells his parents the wonderful saying, that he must be "about his Father's business." He was then subject to his father, who was a carpenter, and Christ is supposed to have worked at the trade with him until he commenced his public career. But soon a voice is heard in the wilderness; it is John. Being old enough to act his part in this great drama, he fixes himself in a camel skin, with a leather girdle to hold his traps together, and eats locusts and wild honey, to represent a wild man, corresponding with the predictions of Esaias, of a voice that should be heard in the wilderness. Then he begins to cry (Matt. iii): "Repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Prepare ye the way of the Lord, and make his paths straight." This is the speech that John tells us, by and by, that Esaias told him to deliver. But when a few came to him to learn what was up, John salutes them in the following affectionate manner: "O ye generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?" He puts on a mighty air, so that Luke, in telling the story (iii, 15), says: "And as the people were in expectation, all men mused whether he were the Christ or not." This shows us that the people were in the greatest enthusiasm, ready to believe John, or any other man, was Christ, if John tells them so. But John says to them: "I baptize you with water, but one *mightier* than I cometh after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose; he shall baptize you with Holy Ghost and with fire." You will see that this was sharp play. John being the first man in all history that acknowledged a superior, and by putting on such an important air, and then comparing himself with Christ, that he was not worthy to unloose his shoe strings, in fact, of no

account at all, but sounded it loud, a *mighty man* comes after me, fired the people, so that John only had, as we will soon see, to show them Christ, and it was sufficient.

We will call the apostle John, and take his testimony. After Christ was baptized, John introduces Christ, and gives his sign for telling Christ from any other man. The apostle John gives John's words, (i, 31 to 37): "And I knew him not, but that he should be made manifest unto Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." Now mark John's sign for telling Christ. John says: "And I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not, but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost. \* \* Again the next day after, John stood and two of his disciples, and looking upon Jesus as he walked, he said, Behold the Lamb of God; and the two disciples heard him speak, and they followed Jesus." Here we learn that John had, taking his own word for it, no other earthly sign of telling Christ from any other man, except that the Spirit or Holy Ghost descended upon him. Luke (chap. iii) says, it was in "bodily shape like a dove upon him." But John claims his sign that was first given him, was, "upon whom he saw the Spirit descending" — no dove about it. But John says, it was like a dove. Luke says, it was a bodily shape like a dove; Matthew (chap. iii) says, it descended like a dove; Mark (chap. ii) says, the Spirit was like a dove. And they all agree it lit upon him like a dove. From these stories I should believe, if anything lit upon him, it was a dove, for I do not think, as we have not seen any of the material for eighteen hundred years, that it was so plenty then that everything that looked like a dove was the Holy Ghost. But suppose it was the Holy Ghost; it lit upon men, showered down upon the day of Pentecost, and Luke ii, 25 reads, "And behold there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and

the same man was just and devout, waiting for the consolation of Israel, and the Holy Ghost was upon him." Now by John's own testimony, if he had seen Simeon first, Simeon would have been the Lord, by John's own sign of telling Christ from any other man.

It seems John is introducing Christ; he shows him to two of his disciples, they then follow Christ, and he does not want them to know that Christ is his cousin, and that he has known him from boyhood, for fear they will look behind the curtain, so he tells them he did not know him, when Matthew (chap. iii) tells us, that John said to Christ, when he wanted John to baptize him, "I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?" But of course, John says this for a blind, to keep up the idea what a mighty man Christ was; for on him depended the success of them all. The apostle John (chap. i) says, the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to inquire who John was. They said, "Art thou Elias?" John says, I am not. Art thou that prophet? He said, No. Then they said, Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself? He said, I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness, make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias." They next ask him why he baptized then, if he be not Christ, Elias, or that prophet. This shows us how sharp the Jews looked into this thing, and they saw by John's answer that he had stepped into a prediction to fulfill it; that that was his part of the play. *They* were looking for a Christ that could establish his own divinity, revolutionize the world, destroy and break in pieces all the kingdoms of the earth, and set up an everlasting kingdom on their ruins, by his influence and God-like character and power; but in this case they found an ephemeral man, endeavoring to bring about a God through a prophetic machine, and they were completely disgusted.



## CHAPTER X.

We will now look at a few of Christ's miracles. We must make due allowance, in looking at these mysterious wonders, for an excited people; not excited from anything Christ had done, but what they expected him to do. The whole story so far shows that through the combined power of the church, they had got the people in the wildest excitement about Christ before they saw him. When people are so excited as to follow anybody for a God that a man like John would point out, we must expect that every move Christ makes is a miracle to such men as these. St. John (chap. i), tells us, that Philip, one of Christ's disciples, sets about to find Nathaniel, and brings him to Christ, and Christ knows him, and tells him his nativity, which astonishes Nathaniel, and he remarks, I see that thou art a prophet. Christ answers, "Greater miracles than this will I show thee." Christ knew this was no miracle, or would not be as soon as Nathaniel learned that Philip who brought him was Christ's disciple, and most likely suggested to Christ who he was going after. It appears they were just introducing in these days the wonder of the world, and every time Christ speaks they expect it to be something supernatural, from the fact as they suppose it come from a supernatural being it could not be common. If this was not Nathaniel's view of Christ he might have spoken in a complimentary manner, that he noticed Christ was a prophet, as all great men were prophets in those days.

Next we hear of Christ he is to a marriage feast of revelry and drinking, and does his wine miracle, and if pious believers will read their Bible carefully they will find no miracle here. Every one is supposed to know that a marriage feast in those days, as well as now, was not a place of long faces but exuberant spirits, hilarity and mirth, where wine was freely drank, and the guests consequently would be incompetent judges (when they had "well

drunk," as the ruler of the feast declares,) of a miracle of this kind. John ii, 9, 10: "And when the ruler of the feast had tasted the water that was made wine, and knew not whence it was, the governor of the feast called the bridegroom, and said unto him, Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk, then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now." Here is the ruler's story, and we must consider that it is a marriage feast, where it would be singular if some jokes were not cracked off, and as Christ, no doubt, was the man that evening, when their wine was gone he sends in his wine that corresponded with his teaching, pure cold water, and its coming under the name of Christ's wine the ruler makes an appropriate joke of it, that it was even better than the first wine. This is the probable solution, as Christ taught sobriety and not wine drinking. But to take a christian view, that that feast was a rather serious affair, we will look at it and see how it appears. The ruler of the feast gives the custom and says: "Every man at the beginning doth set forth good wine, and when men have well drunk (that is, have drunk until they cannot tell good wine from poor,) then that which is worse; but thou hast kept the good wine until now." This is so plain that it needs no comment, that Christ's wine was not the first wine—that it was not drunk in the place of the first wine which by the custom was good, but "was kept until now," when men drink that which is worse; but the ruler says Christ's wine was the best, that is, even better than the first wine. How could the ruler of the feast say that Christ's wine was "kept until now," the time that men had poor wine, if Christ's wine was the first on the feast? The text says that the ruler "knew not from whence the water that was made wine came." If this was the fact, and Christ's wine came on first, what was the necessity of the ruler's giving the custom that men brought on the best wine first? Christ's being the best in his estimation this would be all straight, nothing queer or uncommon about it,

but this is not the case. The ruler says it was kept until the time when men drank that which was worse, and was the best wine; this was the mystery to the ruler, not understanding why it was done so, as the text shows. This is as clear as the mid-day sun, but christians have run over it, supposing that Christ's wine was the first and only wine at the feast, from a preceding verse which reads, "And when they wanted wine, the mother of Jesus said, They have no wine." This is plain to me that they were out of wine—it was all drank up, and when they sent for more, the mother of Jesus very naturally replied, We have none, have no wine, are out, all natural equivalent expressions. The ruler would not send for wine when he knew they had no wine from the start, neither would those whose business it was to bring on the wine call for what they knew they had not got; hence the evidence is clear, including both circumstantial and the ruler's evidence, amounting to positive evidence that they had well drunk. If this is a fact that the ruler states, that Christ's wine was kept until now when men were so drunk that poor wine answered as well as any, and even if he thought, as he says, that Christ's was the best, better than the first, it shows us their incompetency to judge. Mr. Covil tells us that in those days they had concentrated wine, that is, it was made about the consistency of honey, and before drinking it they reduced it with water. So by the christian's own authority we notice that this wonder was easily done. We notice they came to Christ's mother for wine, showing she superintended that department, and by the force of a clique of priests she might in a degree have yielded the honesty of youth, not daring to resent the sweeping tide that was in favor of her son, and labored with the rest for his greatness. But let that be as it may: when we see all the chances they needed to put, as we might say, the seeds of wine in the jars, and call the servants to fill them with water, and when we learn also the condition of the men to judge even if it had been colored water, filled with fine aromatics, such as they

put into their best wine, it could have been so flavored as to taste better no doubt than their poor wine; and being well drunk, as the text impliedly informs us, thought it was the best, the miracle disappears. But to go back, and suppose it to be one of the most singular feasts in the world, no wine to make men drunk until Christ made some, we see that the wine department was under the control of Christ's nearest friends, they could arrange it just as they pleased, and we notice how eager John is to relate the wonderful event by opening the chapter with this miraculous story. All these things are to be considered. We are after truth, and if Christ is God and man both, as the pious believer supposes, we want to see the God as well as the man; we want to see him superhuman. This wine miracle is within the reach of men—an appearance of miracle that man can bring about. We are not to take it as a miracle because John, or some other man, believed it was fairly done, and not a trick; we want to know that it was not a trick; that is the evidence of divinity we are after.

Christians only claim that God formed the earth from chaos; he did not create, he formed man and animals from the dust of the earth; and we, as well as Moses, have learned the truth of that, that man is of the elements. But here is a miracle that transcends all power heretofore given to God. Christ creates properties or elements; he makes wine out of water that does not contain the elements of wine. Christ outdoes his father, in this respect, according to John's story. And I ask, would God take this way to publish himself? Does this look like God here to this feast doing such flimsy tricks? If God wanted to establish his doctrine, could he not do it? Could he not move the mountains, shake the earth, annihilate the inhabitants and restore them again, rend the earth to atoms and replace it again, and settle his supremacy in five minutes, as well as to be striving with his Spirit eternally and let the majority go to perdition at last? A God with such creative powers as christians believe, that makes worlds and universes out of nothing, could do this consistently, and why don't he?

But passing along, Christ preaches some. Knowing his inability to defend himself, he informs the people that God has changed his mind ; it is not an eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth, but "I tell ye nay, resist not evil." This gives him a chance to run when the Jews press him, as he several times did. John v, 18 : "Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the Sabbath, but said also that God was his Father, making himself equal with God ;" and Christ, knowing that John was his only witness that he was God, says, (verse 36), "I have greater witness than John ; the works that I do, bear witness of me that the Father hath sent me." The reader will notice that the only witness he claims is his cousin John, except his works, and that is what we are looking at now. That he was kind to the sick we all know, and it was his interest to be. He cures a blind man with spittle and clay ; there is no evidence of divinity about that, because a simple remedy helped his eyes ; most astonishing simple remedies often perform the greatest cures. A man is often said to be born blind that has an imperfect sight, and it was an easy matter to make the man acknowledge his eyesight was improved when faith was the element taught that would do wonders, and he had confidence in the ability of Christ to do what he said. There have been men in all ages—one in Chicago in 1866—that pretended to cure by a touch, and made hundreds believe it. Stories from an excited populace of ignorant people prove nothing ; it was very few learned men that believed Christ ; he chose ignorant fishermen ; they were more easily persuaded, while the scientific world moved on as before, historians barely mentioning his existence. Even Josephus, (although a Jew by birth, he favored the Roman army) speaks of a man they called Christ, but speaks more highly of James, Christ's brother.

## CHAPTER XI.

Christ continues yet to do miracles. John vi, 17-21: "And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come to them. And the sea arose by reason of a great wind that blew. So when they had rowed about five and twenty or thirty furlongs, they see Jesus walking on the sea, and drawing nigh unto the ship." Here is a miracle sure, but it is most too good a one. That Christ should walk on the water that is all proper, but that they should see him coming almost two miles in a dark night and a high gale! They could not have seen him walking if his legs had been two blazes of fire, but Christ was not a blaze, nor a blaze around his face or body, as some pictures represent, to stamp awe in the minds of children, but was man—man in appearance, so that he stood in the midst of men unknown, and was introduced by John that the people who wished might follow him—man in every respect, and could not be seen, in a dark, windy night, when the ship was tossing and the sea raging, one single rod. But verse 21 says: "And they willingly received him into the ship, and immediately the ship was at the land whither they went." This no doubt reveals the secret. The words "immediately at land" mean something, if the ship was immediately at land when he got into it, as they say; Christ went over some other way and met them at the shore and came on board the ship, or else he by such power as he never exhibited to the world set the ship from midst the ocean to land, for the text is plain that when they received him into the ship the ship *was immediately* at land. There was no immediately going to land about it, but was immediately *at* land; making it plain that Christ met them there. These miracles done in the dark I have but little confidence in, at the best, men's eyes are so apt to deceive them, even if they mean to be honest in what they report.

Well, passing on, John (chap. vii) says: "Jesus walked in Galilee because the Jews sought to kill him. His brethren said unto him, Depart hence and go into Judea, that thy disciples also may see the works that thou doest, for there is no man that doeth anything in secret, and seeketh to be known openly. If thou do these things, show thyself to the world. For neither did his brethren believe in him." Is it not strange that Christ was afraid the Jews would kill him, looking at him in the light of being a God? Is it not strange that Christ's own brothers that were brought up with him, could not in any manner find anything about him that showed him to be superior to man? Is it not strange that men who believed him by report, but upon following him found out to their satisfaction that he was not God, and left him? The Jews say unto him, (chap. x): "If thou be the Christ, tell us plainly." Christ answers, "I and my Father are one." "Then the Jews took up stones to stone him; and said, for a good work we stone thee not, but for blasphemy; being man, and calling thyself God." (Verses 30, 31): "They sought to take him, but he escaped out of their hand, and went away beyond Jordan, into the place where John first began to baptize." Who knew Christ better than these learned Jews? They peer into the matter sharp. Some say, he hath a devil; others say, he heals the sick, and doeth many wondrous works; others say, nay, he deceiveth the people. They probe the matter, like men of sense, not wanting to be deceived by every enthusiast that turns up; and after careful examination, these learned men decide that it is all deception and delusion. So they seek to take him, but he fled into the wilderness, where John began to baptize. Does it not seem strange that men will flee to a person to protect them against the wiles of the devil, that cannot protect himself against the Jews? This was a singular mode of proving his divinity. We can exclaim, Great is the mystery of Godliness! In these hasty retreats, we do not understand it.

But Christ, not being content with this Cruso life, feeling his mortification, sees plainly that he has got to make a desperate effort or sink into disgrace and oblivion, ventures out to raise a dead man, which, if real, would look something like doing business. A man not only dead, but partially decayed, that had been buried four days, as they claim. In John (chap. xi), we learn that it was not a mere happen-so, but this was an affair of family acquaintance again. Now one thing we know, God is impartial; if Christ raised a dead man, it was his God nature and not his man's, of course, (as christians claim two natures in the same person); then if it was his divine nature, that divine nature knows no sympathy for one more than another, but sends rain on the just and unjust alike, and would not resort to a family acquaintance to do a convincing miracle; besides, it would not be policy to do so, for the circumstances are plain that it was done not for a favor to a friend, but Christ says, (4th verse): "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God, that the Son of God might be glorified thereby." This is what we believe, just what he says, that the sickness was not unto death, but that he might be glorified. The words "not unto death" were well put in, if the thing proved a failure. Well, to begin: "Now a certain man lay sick, named Lazarus of Bethany, the town of Mary and her sister Martha. It was that Mary which anointed the Lord with ointment, and wiped his feet with her hair, whose brother Lazarus was sick. \* \* Now Jesus loved Martha, and her sister and Lazarus." Here we learn where it was, and who it was, and their love for each other, and of course Christ's friends, and not only friends but lovers, will do what they can to extricate him from the dilemma into which the Jews had driven him. But, "When he had heard therefore that he was sick, he abode two days still in the same place where he was." This shows that Christ was in no haste to relieve his friend from the pains and distress of a death-bed scene, but waited a couple of days to let his friend suffer and die, and after he had gone



to his rest bring him back to this world, which is a "poor dung-hill of probationary life;" that would be a likely story. Verse 7: "Then after that he said to his disciples, Let us go into Judea again." It appears they were afraid that Christ would get stoned, but after some argument, Christ said, (verse 11): "Our friend Lazarus sleepeth, but I go that I may awake him out of sleep. Then said his disciples, Lord, if he sleep he doeth well." Christ being outdone this time in his three-fold language that he always uses, as in this case would apply to sleep, trance or death, was forced to say in a short manner, "Lazarus is dead; but I am glad for your sakes that I was not there, to the intent ye may believe." This shows how anxious he was that they should believe, and how glad he was that he was not there, so as he thought they would not think it a farce of his getting up, but would believe it a real resurrection. Verse 16: Thomas called unto his fellow disciples, "Let us also go, that we may die with him." Verse 17: "And when Jesus came, he found he had lain in the grave four days already." But Martha lets out the secret. Hear her, in the presence of many Jews that had gathered to comfort her, and witness the resurrection, which most likely she intimated by what she says to Christ in their presence. She says, (verses 21, 22): "Lord if thou hadst been here, my brother had not died. But I know, even now, whatsoever thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee." How did she know Christ would raise him, or could do it? But she knew that Christ would raise her brother and Christ understood her to mean that too, and answers her in the next verse, "Thy brother shall rise again." This is plain talk, and she afterward talking blind about his arising in the last day does not mitigate in the least her words that "If Christ had been there he would not have died, but I know now that what thou wilt ask of God, God will give it thee," and Christ understood her just as we claim, and answered her accordingly. "Jesus, therefore, again groaning in himself, cometh to

the grave; it was a cave, and a stone lay upon it. Jesus said, "Take away the stone." This is enough for me. Lazarus, instead of being put in the ground where dead men were put, was nicely laid away in a cave or crevice in some rock, that the top could be covered over with a stone. Would they bury a dead man in this way, that any one might roll away the stone, and the body become the prey of dogs? No, Sir; this was not the way they done business. Says Covil: "They sometimes used large caverns for sepulchres, and had heavy stone doors, and were decorated and whitewashed." This would look like doing business, doorway ornamented and marked, and heavy stone doors whitewashed, making a sacred place of it. And where they did not have these opportunities, they sometimes excavated sepulchres, but more generally buried in the ground. There was a cave at Engedi, that David hid in the sides of it six hundred men, and Saul entered the mouth of the cave without perceiving that any one was there; (1 Samuel, xxiv). Similar to this was the cave of Machpelah, which Abraham bought and paid his money for, to bury the dead; (see Genesis xxiii). The 8th verse reads, "That I should bury my dead out of my sight." This looks as though they were buried in those large caves—not laid away in there. A man who enters the mammoth cave of Kentucky is not buried. Miners are not said to be buried, unless the earth falls in upon them. Even if a dead man was found in the mines, we could not say he was buried there, unless he was covered up. A man laid in a vault is not buried. David, with his six hundred men, in the cave, was not buried. This shows that merely being in a cave, dead or alive, is nor never was understood to be a burial. But suppose in this case of Lazarus we call it a burial, it was such a burial as we never heard of before or since. If they were not convenient to a proper sepulchre, why did they not bury him in the ground where everybody else did—not lay him in a small cave or crack of a rock, that they could cover over with a stone? such a place is where we

bury dogs, not men. But they roll away the stone. Christ has not power, of course, or he would have done the most convincing part that there certainly could be no trick about, and as Christ in the outset said that it was that he might be glorified. But he groans and weeps, to give it an awful solemnity, and Martha, to help the thing on, says, Lazarus stinks already, having been dead four days. Christ says, "Have I not said unto thee if thou wouldest believe I would show thee the glory of God?" He then cried with a loud voice, "*Lazarus, come forth.*" And of course Lazarus jumps up, with all the habiliments of a corpse; and the miracle is complete. Some such men as we will find everywhere were astonished, believed it then, and such ones believe it now; but those who exercised judgment, went to the Pharisees and reported, and they saw that Christ was doing many miracles, and would destroy their nation if they allowed it. The 48th verse reads: "If we let him alone, all men will believe on him, and the Romans will come and take away our nation." This was what they feared, that many would believe and make trouble. The words "all men" is their expression, and means a large number, as it did "when all men came to John to be baptized," there did not one-tenth come, but a large number; this was what they feared, that many would believe and join the Romans, and they would be overpowered. Because they said he done many miracles does not even indicate that they thought they were genuine, as christians pretend. When we speak of a man's peddling nutmegs, we cannot infer that they are genuine, for the country has been flooded with wooden ones. On the contrary, they always denied his divinity, and every man knows it, and it is the height of folly to declare that the Jews believed his miracles. John, (chap. i), says: "He came unto his own, and his own received him not." But a few would believe anybody to be Christ that showed them a mystery. But the chief priests and Pharisees called a council and determined to put a stop to these proceedings, claiming to be

of God, and did. This proves that there was no divinity about it. Verses 53, 54: "Then from that day forth they took council together to put him to death. Jesus, therefore, walked no more openly among the Jews, but went thence unto a country near to the wilderness."

John (chap. i) tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word was made flesh, and we beheld his glory." This agrees with Christ's teaching, that "I and my Father are one; he that hath seen me hath seen the Father," etc. If I understand this language, Christ was God, not man; if he was man too, so much addition; if he was God and man both, as they tell us, we expect to see both in him. But when he runs for his life, and his apostles tell us that he fled because the Jews sought to kill him, we can see the man very plain, but where is the God? Would God run too?

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## CHAPTER XII.

Many miracles that they claim Christ did, we have not enough of their history to enable us to detect the fraud. It seems he and a few of his disciples in Capernaum went to a city called Nain, and there they reported wonderful success. He brought a widow's son to life, and performed several cures, but the disciples have reported so many times about certain ones being dead, and Christ rebukes them, as he did in the case of Jairus' daughter that they thought was dead, (Christ says, "the maid is not dead"), that we cannot tell by their testimony whether a person was dead or alive; they were too anxious. But it seems that Christ made it his business to heal the sick, lame and blind, everywhere he traveled, and this made him more famous than anything else he done; and as far as

this goes he is entitled to the greatest praise; and in his travels that he found one or two in a trance or cataleptic state, or fainted, supposed to be dead, is not strange. We do know, if we know anything, that everything pertaining to Christ was looked at as a miracle by a few that followed him, and what Christ did not know, they supposed it for him, and gave it to us for Bible. For instance, John vi: "When Jesus then lifted up his eyes and saw a great company come unto him, he saith unto Philip, Whence shall we buy bread that these may eat?" This shows Christ did not know, unless he was playing deception without any object, and christians ought not to believe Christ would do such a thing with an object. But John, to keep Christ's divinity good, says, in the next verse, "And this he said to prove him, for he himself knew what he would do." Now the fact is, and we can say it boldly, John did not know what Christ knew, or what he did not know; it is made-up revelation, to cover up Christ's thoughtless expressions, and there are many such instances as this. But the feeding thousands with a little bread, and telling them they are full, is too simple to need any remarks. The reader must keep in mind that we only have Christ's witnesses as to his wonderful cures; if we had the other side—the stories of those he did not neither could cure, that he told them had not enough faith—it would look different. We figure by analogy that many were not cured. He tells them their faith has made them whole, showing if they, like many, had not believed they could not have been cured. There are men through the country late years, curing in the same way: first get up an excitement, tell the person he is well; the lame throw away their canes, and through faith in the physician strain every nerve and believe they are better. He says, God bless you, and home they go, thinking they are cured. Another comes along, throws his cane and falls down; the physician says, O ye of little faith, Christ could not cure you; and so on, from morning until night for several days this was carried on in the city of Chi-

cago and other places at this age, winter of 1866, and fools were made more foolish by one Dr. Newton. These faith cures are of the most dangerous character in the world; scientific cures suit me best. But these wonders that Christ done in Capernaum that we have got no clue to, except their bare word, we have to judge by what we can find out.

It seems when Christ gets back from Capernaum, where he restored the widow's son to life, he has lost his power. He says (Luke iv): "Ye will surely say unto me this proverb, Physician heal thyself; whatsoever we have heard done in Capernaum, do also here in thy country. Verily I say unto you, no prophet is without honor except in his own country; but I tell you of a truth many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months. But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto a woman that was a widow." This was well said; he took the words out of their mouth about his doing wonders as he had done in Capernaum. What difference does the country make about his raising a dead man, if he was God? Why does he so freely talk about Elias' prayer stopping the rain for three years and six months, when he knew that prayer was to stop rain from falling in a rainless district where it seldom or never rains in some parts of Egypt, whether he prayed or not. A hail-storm was looked upon by Pharaoh and claimed by Moses to be a miracle. This was a high strain of his about God's sending Elias to none of them except a widow woman. Soon as the people listened to this strain, Luke says (verses 28, 29): "And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, and rose up and thrust him out of the city."

It seems as though it was unnecessary to follow this character any further. Here we find his weakness displayed so foolishly as would shame a child, and the people became disgusted and mobbed him out of the city; and Luke goes on that the people "led him on top the hill that they might cast him down headlong, but he

passed through them and went his way to a city in Galilee." This was evidently a narrow escape from his own countrymen. Through the contention and strife he rushed through them and fled. Here we have to look very sharp to see the God, but a man is very apparent. The Jews had no fear of the power of Christ; the only trouble they had was to catch him.



### CHAPTER XIII.

We will briefly notice the doctrine that Christ preached, and see whether that was divine, or whether he preached the same doctrine the heathens did, that had no Bible. Christ's essential doctrine was, hell for the wicked, heaven for the righteous. Rev. Royal Robins says (vol. 1, page 189): "The literature of Greece was the glory of the whole earth; no nation, ancient or modern, has surpassed the Greeks in literary taste and genius." Page 181, he says: "The Greeks, who were heathens, worshiped a great number of gods." Page 189, he says: "Of hell they have drawn a picture in the most gloomy and horrific colors, where men who have been remarkable for their wickedness are tortured with a variety of miseries adapted to their crimes. And the prospect of Elysium is described by Homer, Hesiod, Pindar, and others, as beautiful and inviting in the highest degree." This is what a christian historian acknowledges, and every one knows that the Old Testament does not teach endless misery, but earthly judgments. Taking Daniel's dream or vision for authority, "that some should awake to shame and everlasting contempt," even if it could be proved to refer to the next state of existence, does not prove torture as Christ describes, where there would be wailing and gnashing of teeth. The expression that they would be "turned

into hell with all the nations that forget God," refers to the grave (*sheol*) or hell: temporal judgments of the Lord—destroy from the earth—turn into (*sheol*) the grave. There is no misery taught here beyond the grave. But before Christ, hundreds of years, the Greeks, who had no Bible, nor never did have, were preaching Christ's doctrine of misery to the wicked beyond the grave, and heaven to the righteous. These men were the light of the world in learning. In sculpture and architecture they were our superiors to-day, says Robins. Their Cadmus invented the alphabet, 1519 years B. C. Astronomy and oratory were carried to a high state of perfection. Here Demosthenes and Pericles awed the world by the power of their arguments. Here, on Mars Hill, the great Solon, 558 years B. C., instituted a tribunal of justice where the wise men of Greece dealt out justice and wisdom with such wonderful skill that the world looked on and wondered, but these men had no Bible, and Christ took their theories as the best of his day. Their number of gods, it is true, exceeded ours. Christ reduced them to less than half a dozen, perhaps: Father, Son, Holy Ghost, Spirit, etc. But with the Greeks, their opinions were theories, not realities; they were not chained to superstition, although they had many theories, but like the eagle, they soared higher and higher; they were not afraid of science; their Bible was the heavens and the earth. To them

The grass that grew,  
The trees that wave,  
The thunder's roar,  
And the mountain blaze,

Was not miracle, miracle, miracle, as to the children Moses led before the sulphurous blaze of Sinai's top.

But, turning to Christ, we find him expounding the doctrine or portions of it, modifying it in some respects, reducing their great number of gods to about four, but christians are loth to admit more than



three. Father, Son, Holy Ghost, and Spirit, are in the Scriptures as so many powers doing wonders, besides angels and archangels in heaven as well as earth; and the expression, "Let us make man," signifying a plurality of gods taught in Scripture, their number unknown. So it becomes evident that our Bible is as extravagant as the theories of the Greeks. But Christ preached this doctrine as reality, while with the Greeks it was only theories, and passed lightly over; they were not enslaved to ignorance, and asked to believe that the universes were created to light this earth, as Moses tells us, who evidently supposed that the stars were of no more account than so many candle blazes, all created expressly to light this earth by night.

Christ also preaches a resurrection. But it was preached in all time before him. And to carry out the play that he was God, he had to proclaim his last great miracle, a resurrection from the dead; and to prove by argument that he would arise, he tells them that a kernel does not sprout except it first die. Paul appeals to the same argument; while the fact is, a kernel that dies never sprouts, but rots in the ground. So if we had no other source but such teaching as this, we might feel certain that the ground would keep our bodies some time, as it undoubtedly will; but that the soul or spirit of man will triumph over the grave we all hope.

It is unnecessary to state the particulars—the history is familiar. That Judas being with Christ a long time could not possibly discover the God but only the man, betrayed him, and if Christ's time had come and he was ready, and knew Judas would betray him, as the apostles affirm, then Judas done the work of the Lord in betraying him, and ought not to be stigmatized as having a devil, for a devil would not do the work of the Lord in this manner; a devil would have sought to betray Christ when he was not ready. But reason, if we have any, tells us that Christ was ready when he could no longer escape from the Jews, judging from the circumstances, which speak truer than words. But it is not strange that

Christ might have been afraid of Judas, and mentioned it beforehand; also, Christ told his disciples that they would desert him. Such an expression as this would stimulate them more than any other, and he knew it, to stand by him; but he knew he had not the power to protect himself and his disciples, and they would on that account desert him, as they did, and then his prediction would become evidence of his divinity, and this circumstance will illustrate many similar ones that the apostles give as evidence of his divinity. But Christ is crucified, and his body given to Joseph, who put it into a new sepulchre, and departed. The following day, says Matthew, (chap. xxvii), the only man that speaks originally of this circumstance, "they set a watch over the sepulchre." This was waiting too long, but as he was to rise the third day, the Jews did not think it necessary to watch the sepulchre until about that time, but even the watch saw no one arise, and if the followers of Christ had believed themselves that he would arise, this would have been their last great test to the unbelieving Jews close to Jerusalem; they would have made a demonstration and called thousands to witness it. Their not doing it, shows that they knew better, for no one can believe they were so unconcerned in this matter as not to pay any attention to it whatever; but the facts are plain that they removed the body before the watch came. But Matthew says: "The priests hired the watch to report that they slept, so that the disciples could have stolen him away." This is not a very reasonable story for Matthew, when the penalty was death if the ruler heard they slept; but suppose they were men that could be hired to lie, and the priests could make it all right with the ruler, could not Christ's disciples hire this same set of liars to report to the Jews that they did not steal him away, if they found it necessary to do so. A poor rule that does not work both ways. Perhaps this watch made a good thing out of it, got money from both parties, if they were such a dishonest set as Matthew describes. But another idea. Matthew

says: "They took the money and did as they were taught, and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day." This expression, "until this day," signifies a great length of time, from the transpiration of all these wonders about Christ until he set down to record them. This must be considered, not only in this affair, but all others. Biblical scholars all admit that Matthew's time of writing is unknown. Covil admits that Mark wrote thirty years after Christ's death, and took his doctrine from Peter, who styled Mark his son, (see 1 Peter v, 13). And Peter was one of those unstable, fiery men that denied the Lord many times, or cursed him one hour and blessed him the next. But it is evident Mark collected Peter's ideas at the times that he believed Christ, and not when he was denying his divinity: if we had Peter's other gospel it would be a different picture. Covil tells us, defining Luke: "A physician (Col. iv, 14); the author of the gospel which bears his name, and of the Acts of the Apostles. \* \* His gospel most probably was written thirty or thirty-one years after Christ's death, and the Acts of the Apostles soon after." Mr. Covil tells us: "John wrote his gospel at Ephesus, to confirm the divinity of the Son, in opposition to heretics, after Christ's death sixty-four years, or A. D. 97." Astonishing as this may seem to some, these are the facts; pick up any Bible Dictionary of repute, reader, and you will find this same story that Mr. Covil tells you; it is no secret—all theologians know it. Think of Mark's gospel second-handed from Peter! This is very direct revelation!

But if Mark is good for one piece of revelation, he is for another, especially when confirmed by others. He says, when Christ was on the cross, he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Showing that Christ thought or wondered why God did not save him from his awful situation. Here hung a man in the agonies of death, struggling for life. Being an enthusiast from birth, he vainly expected that God would help

him in time of need. When he had exercised due caution to foil the enemy, but was at last overtaken, he, like all men, had but one hope, and that was in his God. When he saw there was no hopes of reprieve, that his life was fast ebbing away, in the last agonies of despair, about making his transit into that realm where all flesh is fast hastening, when this death scene passed before his mind, he became lost to the honors of this world, and laying aside assumption and presumption, like a man in hopeless despair when from his heart will emanate his secret thoughts, he cries, "Oh my God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" Like all men he acknowledges his dependence on one common Father of all mankind. If he was God and man too he would not have cried with a loud voice, inquiring why God had forsaken him. If he and his Father were one, as he had said, even allowing the christian view that they were one in spirit or business, he would have known why God had forsaken him. When Christ acknowledged that there is no God about him, but is forsaken, it looks to us like a foregone conclusion to suppose his divinity can be established against his own acknowledgment.

But we will remember that Matthew and Luke tell these same miraculous stories about the darkness and rending of the veil. The darkness was from the sixth to the ninth hour. There might have been an eclipse of the sun; or thick, cloudy, foggy weather; or a thunder-storm that shook the earth and rent the veil; and the superstitious spectators might have thought that they were hanging God; but this story comes either from John, or was among the rumors about the affair, and gathered up and given us for revelation; for Matthew, Mark and Luke knew nothing about the wonders of the crucifixion. They did not see it; there was no one present but John, and to him Christ commended his mother, (see John xix, 26). So these stories are second-hand to Matthew and Luke; and Mark's gospel sums up as follows: Mark says, Peter says, John or some one else says. And this is the way we have

got our news, and John wrote his work sixty-four years after Christ was dead, to convert heretics. Would he not write as good a story as he could, consistent with the truth, to say the least? Is it strange that he relates many wonders? When a man strives to gain his point, is it not likely that he will tell a good story? Would he not be like men in argument with heretics now a days? Do they not tell or bring up the arguments that favor them, and leave the remainder in the dark, untold? Would not John, writing against heretics, do the same thing?

It is hardly necessary to call attention to the circumstances of Christ appearing to the disciples after the resurrection. The reader will notice by referring to them that as the stories are related they hardly knew Christ. Matt. xxviii, 17: "And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted." Mark xvi, 11, 12, 13: "And when they had heard that he was alive, and had been seen of her, they believed not. After that he appeared in another form unto two of them. \* \* And they went and told it unto the residue; neither believed they them." The chapter goes on that Christ said unto them to preach the gospel to every creature, and those that believed should take up serpents, drink poisonous drink without harm, and speak with new tongues, etc. We know that believers cannot do any such thing, and are worshipping the same Christ that told them these things. But Mark says: "After the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God." This we understand is what Peter told Mark, that the Lord was received up and sat at the right hand of God. How did Peter know where or which side he sat, or whether he sat at all or not? The poetical, imaginative expressions spoil it all, for things that we know Peter or any other man knows nothing about are laid down with as much certainty as that Christ appeared to them, and more so, for they did express grave doubts whether it was Christ or not, and so do we. Luke xxiv: "Jesus appeared unto them, and they were terrified and

affrighted, and supposed they had seen a spirit." Christ has to argue with them some time to convince them that he is their Lord, and tells them that "a spirit has not flesh and bones as ye see me have." If everything was Christ that had flesh and bones, we have good reason to doubt their seeing him. But when Christ showed them his hands they believed. Does any one suppose that a mutilated God would appear unto men, scaring them frightfully? If Christ raised with his mutilated person as they claim, showing that he raised as he was buried, would they not have known him—men that had been with him for years? Could they not remember him three or four days without all this ado? He showed them his hands and his feet before they could recognize him, and only by that. Any other mutilated man, by this sign, would have been the resurrected Christ if he had told them so.

The next man that tells us the story is John. He says: "Mary Magdalene came and told the disciples that she had seen the Lord," (see John xx). John makes no mention but that they believed Mary, but Luke, (chap. xxiv, 11), speaking of Mary and other women telling them they had seen Christ, says: "And their words seemed like idle tales, and they believed them not." This would argue that they did not expect Christ would rise. But turning to John, he says: "In the evening when the doors were shut, and the disciples were assembled for fear of the Jews, Jesus stood in the midst and showed them his hands and his side; and he breathed on them, and said, Receive ye the Holy Ghost. But Thomas, not being present, declared he did not believe, neither would he, unless he should see in his hands the print of the nails, and thrust his hand in his side. And after eight days the disciples were within, and Thomas with them. Then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger and behold my hands, and reach hither thy hand and thrust it into my side. And Thomas answered and

said unto him, My Lord and my God." Here is an entirely different story from what the rest tell. Matthew tells us that some doubted, and does not tell us that they saw any signs that caused them to believe at any time after. Mark's divine revelation that Peter gave him informs us the two disciples would not believe Mary Magdalene, and after Christ appeared unto two disciples the rest would not believe them; so Christ appears again unto eleven, and upbraided them for their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was arisen. Here is no mention of the Holy Ghost, or the signs that they had seen the real Christ, or whether any or all eventually believed or not, but Mark insinuates they all believed (notwithstanding Matthew said they did not), for they saw him ascend and sit at the right hand of God. Mark gives us the most convincing revelation we have. If he had waited another generation, and got it from Peter's son, he would have established Christ's divinity beyond all doubt. Luke tells us nothing about the Holy Ghost, but says Christ began at Moses and the prophets to expound unto them; but says nothing about the serpents and poisonous drinks, and speaking with new tongues, but he exhibited his feet and hands, and was carried up into heaven; but they did not see him take his seat at the right hand of God. And John gives us the Thomas story, which is widely different from all the rest—another story entirely, and adds another still, that Jesus appeared to them at the sea of Tiberias. But here is the old song again. Chap. xxi: "Jesus stood on the shore, but the disciples knew not that it was Jesus. Jesus said, Bring of the fish ye have caught; and they drew the net to land full of great fishes, an hundred and fifty and three, and for all there were so many yet was not the net broken." It would seem that they were arguing that the stranger must be Christ because the net was not broken with so many fishes in it. I am something of a fisherman, and I know, so does every fisherman, that while the net is pulled carefully in the water if the

net is equally strong all over, one fish will break it, or is as liable to, as a hundred or two hundred, for only one fish can strike the same place; and a net in water is loose; a fish striking one spot does not make the meshes break any easier at other places where other fish are striking. The philosophy of fish in a net is different from almost anything else where numbers increase power. But this shows us how eager they were to prove the stranger was Christ, to resort to such foolish evidences. If they did not bring this net story as evidence, why did they mention it? It is nothing very interesting that their fish net did not break; no one supposed it would, if it was worth anything. "Jesus said unto them, Come and dine; and none of the disciples durst ask him, who art thou? knowing it was the Lord." What did they want to ask him for if they knew it was the Lord? This shows us plainly how the thing is: They, knowing that Christ did not rise, dare not come out boldly like men and assert it, but insinuate,—tell us that some women saw him and they did not believe it, to show us they wanted abundance of proof, so if they had seen enough to satisfy them, it ought to others; and after disputing women and two disciples, they did see a man that they were well satisfied was Christ. But Matthew says: "When they saw him they worshiped, but some doubted." Why did they doubt—those that saw him and worshiped? If Christ's disciples doubted, that were with him and would have known him if they had seen him, that is, when Matthew admits so much, I think it is unnecessary to argue against them to prove Christ did appear unto them—a thing so unnatural and still a thing they had to sustain to sustain their doctrine, and they who had all the evidence there was of a resurrection and then did not believe it, we will abide by it.

If any one appeared to them, it was a priest, or some one, to play that part in the drama, from the following reasons: 1st. Notwithstanding he had the marks of crucifixion, showing that he arose unchanged, and from his appearance, they did not know him,



and Thomas had to tell him by feeling and not by sight—a deception as easily played as was Jacob's trick to get Esau's blessing? 2nd. They played blind, denying that Christ had arisen and appeared to Mary Magdalene and two of the disciples, when they knew he would arise the third day, if they believed Christ was God, for he continually told them so; and if they did not believe this part of Christ's teachings, it is evident they had but little faith in his being God; and as his disciples kept continually dropping away, it is evident they believed God was so veiled in humanity that they could not see him, as theologians will tell you to-day, if you ask them to explain the mystery, why the people who fled to Christ, believing (by the extravagant stories that were being rumored by the ignorant) that he was God, upon acquaintance with him and being immediately with him, learned to their satisfaction that he was not what was reported, and left him, and declared he was an imposter. They will tell you that, or answer you by asking another question, why they do not all believe to-day. I ask, if God sent his Son, would he not make him visible to every one that beheld him when he was sent, that all (not part) of mankind might be saved? If we should see a mountain move from the land into the sea, as a car moves on the track, would we not believe there was an almighty in it; but if we record it, do we expect others to believe it that had not seen or heard of anything of the kind for nearly two thousand years? And if we record that a mountain moved, but that hosts of people hearing that the mountain was moving came to the mountain, tarried with the mountain, and declared that the mountain did not move, and we, contrary to the laws of eighteen hundred years, still declare the mountain did move, acknowledging that hosts examined it and declared it did not, do we expect people to believe our story? It is no argument to appeal to, that some will not believe. It is for those that saw the mountain move to decide that question; and when a hundred to one honest men,

that had no interest to blot the sun from the heavens that is for their benefit, tell us the mountain did not move, how presumptuous for us to argue it did.

But if Christ's divinity had not been denied by any at his day, the evidence that has come to us must establish to any reasonable mind that he was no more than man. One such passage as the following ought to settle the question. Christ is preaching to the Jews his greatness, and says (John viii, 51): "Verily, verily, I say unto you, If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." Verse 58: "Verily I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am." This is equivalent to acknowledging himself God. Again, verse 59, "Then took they up stones to cast at him, but Jesus hid himself, and went out of the temple."

The idea of this being, who claims that he lived before Abraham, hiding, think of it! Then think how God done business with Moses: slew three thousand in the matter of Baal Peor; swallowed Abiram and his men; with Joshua he destroyed the forces of the five Amorite kings, and slew everything that came in his way; and with Moses he even slew the men that brought the evil report from the promised land; and Moses, when the people were about electing a captain to return to Egypt, (Numbers xiii and xiv,) says to the people, that "the giants were their bread; God had taken away their defence." By this the people were encouraged to fight, but as they had rebelled against Moses, he tells them God will not help them (Moses knowing they would be whipped), but the people, believing Moses' word as to their weakness, make an attack. Verse 45: "Then the Amalekites came down, and the Canaanites which dwelt in that hill, and smote them and discomfited them even unto Hormah." This shows us how God renewed the strength of the enemy after they were but bread, (taking the Bible story), to whip the children of Israel for wanting to return from their miserable starving condition to Egypt, where they had plenty, against God's wishes. God is

represented as destroying everything ; his anger was kindled against his people, and they fell by thousands ; he was wroth and raging mad, destroying property and lives through Josiah's reign, and rulers that had power to execute. Millions of lives are laid to God's charge.

But how changed this character a few hundreds of years later. Why this change ? Had God discovered that he had misruled in all time before ? If he learned that fact, who informed him ? Experience ? Does God need that ? Did the people need killing for fearing the giants, and considering themselves to them but grasshoppers, and not need it for striking Christ in the face, as Luke xxii, 64, informs us ? Here they smite him when he is blindfolded, and ask him to tell who done it, but not a word does he say. They ask him if he is Christ ; he answers, "If I tell you, ye will not believe." This shows that he was willing to talk, and would tell them if they would believe, but he knew they would not believe his bare word, and answered accordingly, and Christ says, (next verse), "And if I also ask you, ye will not answer me nor let me go." What plainer evidence could we ask that Christ wanted to get away, but had no power ? "Then said they all, Art thou the Son of God ? And he said unto them, Ye say that I am." Why did he not give a direct answer to a direct question ? Simply because they were trying to get evidence against him, and he did not want to give it, hoping to be released. "And the people said, What need we further witness ?" So they took him to Pilate, who, as is afterward shown, was his friend, and declares he could find no cause of death against him, and asks Christ, saying, "Art thou the king of the Jews," Luke xxiii. Here we learn again, that Christ, not wishing to commit himself, says, "Thou sayest it." But in this examination Pilate declares in his next words, "I find no fault in this man," showing that he did not believe Christ guilty of that charge. But when Pilate learned he was from Galilee, he sent him to Herod,

being under Herod's jurisdiction, Herod being at Jerusalem at that time. "And when Herod saw Jesus he was glad, for he was desirous to see him of a long season, because he had heard many things about him, and he hoped to have seen some miracle done by him. Then he questioned with him in many words, but he answered nothing. And the chief priests and scribes stood and vehemently accused him, and Herod with his men of war set him at naught, and mocked him, and sent him again to Pilate."

This is plain that Herod was a believer and wished to see his power, to see a miracle, and Christ had evidently labored for his release, and if not he labored to convince the world he could do miracles, and claims he was sent for that purpose, and refers to his works to establish his divinity; and can any one imagine any more necessity for an exhibition of his power than on this occasion, when desired by the rulers of the land that were friendly to him, until they became disappointed in his ability? What did he want to die for? He had not established his doctrine. They were cuffing and mocking him: why did he not show them by his Godlike power that he was Lord of the universe—not talk of his greatness as he did when he said if he should ask them they would not let him go, "that the Son of Man should sit on the right hand of the power of God"? Why did he not act—not talk? Men could talk. Why did he not defend the majesty of God—not run and hide? Could he expect to satisfy the world by talking, and when they sought to stone him demonstrate his divinity by hiding? Was that evidence of his divinity that he allowed himself to be thrust out of the city, and run to prevent their pitching him headlong off a hill, as the Bible declares? Does it describe a God or a man?

There is no use of talking about this matter. Christ lost no opportunity that was in his power to establish his divinity: he claims that to be his mission. He "remained dumb like a sheep led to the slaughter," only where talk of his great power awed

no one ; and power to do a miracle before Herod, who was anxious to witness what he had heard, Christ evidently did not possess. This is the only reasonable conclusion we can arrive at, when we consider the circumstances, the necessity of a demonstration, the desire of the rulers that looked upon him favorably from report, and were all disappointed and disgusted and lost confidence in him and railed at him, leaving an unfavorable opinion that was so easily prevented, and a thing really demanded to sustain his divinity ; but physical, open tests were out of his power. The great fortress of evidence of his divinity is not in his annihilating the worlds and creating new ones, but his faith cures like men in every generation before and since.

Christ was not God, neither was he a medium, or machine, between God and man. God can deal with us, can talk with us, without a machine, half human and half God. If he walked in the garden, as Moses declares, and talked with Adam, he could with us. But God was never in the garden, walking among the brush and fig trees, hunting his two lonely children, and pronouncing eternal torment to those lonely creatures that had no power to withstand his vengeance, and had obeyed the desires of the heart he gave them. Would a kind father torment his infant child eternally that cried against his orders? O inhuman wretch ! Will you charge your God with such ingratitude? God is not against us, but his laws that brought us into being brought all things congenial for our happiness. This is not a world of trouble, but of pleasure ; we are not the ephemeral creatures or playthings that they tell us God made from a heap of dirt a few thousand years ago, and delights to torture if we obey even the lawful desires of our heart, but, according to Agassiz, Oken, Lyell, Wells, and all eminent geologists of the land, man is the head of an almost endless chain of animals that are found fossil deep in the rocks, the inhabitants of at least a million of years. The order of animals grow higher until man is the crowning form of created exist-

ences, and has himself been here at least thirty-five thousand years. Let whoever doubts this open a geological work, no matter whose. It is becoming, and already is, one of the standard branches of study of the day. And if you doubt, they will prove it to you, and will not leave a cloud in your mind. I care not how well you love the Bible, when truth is demonstrated you must believe it. I will give you an extract from a piece I cut from the Chicago Weekly, of Sept. 5, 1866:

“A HUMAN SKULL FOUND IN PLEIOCENE ROCK.—The State Geological Survey of California has recently made a discovery that will attract attention all over the world, and that will become a notable fact in the history of Geology. Every person of intelligence is supposed to know that the age of the earth, according to the unanimous opinion of geologists, is not less than a million of years; that there have been successive epochs of animal and vegetable life, the remains of which are found deep in the rocks; that the animals and plants of the earlier epochs differ from those now living on the earth. A few years since some human bones were found in England and France, showing that man lived in those lands in a former epoch contemporaneously with the hyena, the rhinoceros, the elephant, and numerous other animals which disappeared from Europe, long before the beginning of our historical records. This discovery made a great sensation in the learned world, and was the basis of Lyell’s great book on “The Antiquity of Mankind.” The ancient human bones in Europe were found in the formation known as the *lias*, but now a human skull has been found in California in the *pleiocene*, a much older formation. This skull is therefore the remnant not only of the earliest pioneer of this State, but the oldest known human being. \* \* \* We can now say unqualifiedly that man lived in California before Shasta and Mount Lassen and the Downieville Buttes and the numerous volcanic peaks of the Sierra raised their heads to the clouds; before the era of the glaciers which came after

the volcanoes and swept down the mountain sides in immense rivers of ice; before the great caverns were worn on the western slope of the Sierra Nevada, and when the rivers were still running on what are now the tops of the mountains." — *Alta California*.

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## CHAPTER XIV.

### LOGICAL QUESTIONS, AND SELF-EVIDENT ANSWERS.

Do you believe God, the prime mover of all things, was ever foiled in his undertaking, outdone by man, or deceived in his plans? If not, then it must have been God's original design to create countless millions of human beings, and a devil to make them miserable. If the devil is the result of creative power, that is by desiring what God brought about and by that means lost his state of holiness, then it is by God's means he became a devil. If the devil is a spirit, capable of entering and tearing human beings, and had not his origin with God, then he is from everlasting, coeval with God. If evil or the devil is eternal, or coeval with good or God, then change the Bible to read, In the beginning was God, and his antagonist the devil. It matters not which horn of the dilemma we take, whether the devil is eternal, or God made him, we cannot escape one or the other; they are both engaged in the same business, catching men, and the devil is the acknowledged victor. This is what the Christian problem, when solved, runs us into, and we cannot escape it.

Would it be more absurd to suppose a man would transform himself into an ass, than to suppose a holy angel would metamorphose himself into a devil?

Is it not as reasonable to suppose a benevolent father would

drive a mad dog among his children, as to believe God would drive a devil that tried to dethrone him among his ?

Would God create, damn, and then save ? What fun would this be for God ? But John tells us that Christ "came to his own, and his own received him not." The Jews rejected the Christian doctrine, and crucified its author ; and we will settle this right here, God was foiled in his attempt, deceived in his plans, outdone, and defied by man, or there was no God in Christ or his teachings.



## CHAPTER XV.

### MYSTERIOUS AGENTS.

Holy Ghost, what is it ? Acts ii : "And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were of one accord in one place. And suddenly there came a sound from heaven as of a mighty rushing wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them cloven tongues like as of fire, and it sat upon each of them. And they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and began to speak with other tongues." We will bear in mind that this story is what Luke says the visionary Peter says, (as Luke wrote the Acts). The spectators, looking at the scene, say, "These men are filled with new wine." This is the way the men appeared to outsiders, but Peter rose up and said : "These men are not drunk as ye suppose. But this is what was spoken by the prophet Joel. And it shall come to pass in the last days I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh," [not those few at Pentecost], "and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, and your old men shall dream dreams. And on my servants and on my handmaidens I will pour out in those days of my



Spirit, and they shall prophesy. And I will show wonders in heaven above and signs in the earth beneath, blood and fire and vapor of smoke; the sun shall be turned into blood before the great and notable day of the Lord come." This is what ignorant Peter — (I say *ignorant* because (Acts iii, 13) Luke tells us, speaking of Peter and John, that "the people perceived they were unlearned and ignorant men") — this is what Peter supposed the phenomena was, to fulfill Joel's prediction. Does Joel describe such a scene as this? Joel says the Spirit should be poured out upon all flesh, but those few at Pentecost were not all flesh, they saw no visions or dreams, they saw no dark sun or pillars of fire, they saw no wonders in the heavens or earth, they saw nothing that Joel describes, but acted like drunken men and Peter did not deny it, but said they were not drunk as ye suppose, being only the third hour of the day; as much as to say, if it had been later in the day they might have reason to think they were drunk; but we do not suppose they were drunk, but what was it? We will see if Rev. John Wesley knows anything about it. See Abel Stevens' History of Wesley, page 62. Speaking of mysterious phenomena, he says, giving Wesley's words, "They began usually with a loud whistling of the wind around the house; before it came into the room the latches were lifted up and the windows and doors would rattle, the sound often seemed in the air, the mastiff would bark violently, sometimes moans were heard as of a person dying," etc. Here is a mystery Wesley and others witnessed at different times, and usually commenced with a whistling of the wind around the house. It is not my purpose to explain these mysteries, as he, although believing it to be of divine origin, never claimed it to be the Holy Ghost, but an independent agent not commissioned by God, but superhuman. It would sometimes push them and throw things about the house, but harmed no one.

In this scene, we find the Pentecost gale, and sounds inside when

the visitor arrived. Now, if we look to the Salem witchcraft in the early settlement of the colonies, we have the remainder here. They supposed it was witches, and they were accused of bewitching others, until the excitement arose to such a degree that twenty people were executed and four hundred imprisoned, and the excitement increased until they abolished the law of executing in such cases, and emptied the prisons, and it lulled away; but in some cases they would be seized in churches, and one person seized an umbrella and jumped astride and hopped down the aisle, to the great merriment of some, and wonder of others. Others were seized with the mania and would hop around the floor; and in one instance at an out-door meeting, they would climb trees, and pray, and some would run on all-fours and bark like a dog, and all manner of such antics, some being very serious and shouting and prophesying, similar to Cartwright's subjects that we mentioned in our seventh chapter.

Mysterious phenomena have been common in all time. Deut. xviii: Moses says, "There shall not be found among you any one that maketh his son or his daughter to pass through fire, or that useth divination, or an observer of times, or an enchanter, or a witch, or a charmer, or a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer, for all these things are an abomination unto the Lord." Here Moses goes over the whole field, and he infers that they could go through fire in those days. That outstrips the Pentecost wonders or any since. But who thought that in this great variety of mysteries it was the Holy Ghost, before ignorant Peter and others who were inferior to Moses in judgment received it as a blessing from Christ, instead of an abomination to the Lord, as Moses declares? But Moses says, (Deut. xiii): "If there arise among you a prophet or a dreamer of dreams, and giveth thee a sign or a wonder, and the sign or wonder come to pass, thou shalt not hearken unto the words of that prophet." This would cut off Daniel and Peter too, as an abomination unto the Lord, for

they are both visionary dreamers. Here Moses warns his people not to believe them if they recommend the worship of other gods, notwithstanding they gave a sign or wonder and it came to pass. Moses knew that all these visions and dreams were a humbug; he was shrewd, or he never could have accomplished what he did; he had no confidence in these mysterious agents. There is nothing superhuman, no Spirit or Holy Ghost but man's own about it. Man may be in a condition to dream, a condition to see visions, a condition to prophesy as the result of his vision; he may be in a condition to see spirits and hear them talk, hear wind and other sounds about the house when really there are none. By the power of electricity, at the command of the will, we move our person and whatever we wish; the power of the will raises the chair, and our arm is the instrument the will uses to do it with. We may be in a condition that the electric forces of the body are the instruments that move bodies.

But again we ask, what does Peter mean by the Holy Ghost? (Acts x, 44-46: "While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all those which heard the word, for they heard them speak with tongues and magnify (enlarge) God." This is Peter's sign then that when they have the Holy Ghost he knows it, "For they magnify God." Now look at this figure and see what a small pivot the Third Person in the Trinity—the miraculous wonder of the whole book—the Holy Ghost—yes, the great thing that the apostles waited for with anxiety to assist them to work wonders—rests upon. Yes, when Peter preached to Cornelius, a gentile, and his house that had not heard the gospel, and they were or Cornelius was a devout, pious man, and Peter preached a storm, (as he always did either preach or deny Christ with zeal), they became excited at the chain of wonderful things he said, and they might have run wild with excitement as we see at any revival or camp meeting—probably they did, and shouted and praised God with new tongues, with such voices as they never did before, and really

fancied themselves entering the realms of heavenly bliss. Experience has taught us that many minds in unison is an awful power. When heated and overheated, whether in worship or in anger, every additional mind in unison adds fuel to the blaze; while one opposite mind may destroy a spiritual circle, where otherwise their combined power might have shaken the walls of the house. The power of a hundred overheated minds, or what is the same in effect, sitting in a circle or passive state, with united hands, all believing in a great demonstration of spirits—power of God, or firmly believing their own abilities to accomplish wonders, with enchanting music to aid the transition, may be able to enter the electro-psychological state, or a part of them, and see wonders, talk wonders, believe wonders, and the combined mesmeric forces of the circle may move tables, produce sounds, jar dishes, open doors, and astonish the multitude, and no Holy or unholy Ghost about it. Professor Dodds tell us, that “two men with united hands under the third man’s shoulders and hips, by moderate long lifting, will give off to him sufficient electrical force to raise fifty pounds of his weight, or make him fifty pounds lighter.” You may also enter a room where a person is sleeping, still as you please, fix your eyes and mind upon him, and in a few moments he will awake. We see nothing in Peter’s ghost stories supernatural, and will pass to notice what Joel means by the notable day of the Lord.

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## CHAPTER XVI.

We will now try to learn what Joel means by the words recorded in the book bearing his name, second chapter, where he says: “The earth shall quake before them; the heavens shall tremble; the sun and moon shall be dark, and the stars shall

withdraw their shining. \* \* \* And I will show wonders in the heavens and in the earth, blood, and fire, and pillars of smoke. The sun shall be turned into darkness, and the moon into blood, before the great and the terrible day of the Lord come." These are the most sublime words in the whole book. The same sentiment of a notable day is described by Isaiah, thirteenth chapter, in a similar strain nearly equal to this. Psalms xviii reads: "Then the earth shook and trembled; the foundations also of the hills moved and were shaken, because he was wroth. There went up a smoke out of his nostrils, and fire out of his mouth devoured: coals were kindled by it." The reader will notice that in the last quotation from Psalms, David speaks in the past tense, describing a similar day to the one Joel expects to come. It has been a common error with theologians, not understanding the nature of the day referred to, to torture all tenses into the future. Usually when the Bible writers, like all other men, tell us by using the past tense that the event is past, they mean what they say.

Let us see if we can find any days corresponding with these notable days. As long ago as the days of Ovid (Book XV) he tells us he had seen land formed at the expense of the sea, and marine shells lying dead far from the ocean; and, more than that, "an ancient anchor had been found on the very summit of a mountain." The great Saharan desert is covered with marine shells, proving that it has heaved from the ocean's bottom. In Eastern England is the delta of a once far flowing river that ran over regions now lying at the bottom of the Atlantic. The crust of this earth, although growing thicker, is estimated to be only as the thickness of thirty wafers overlapping each other, on a twelve inch globe, or the shell of an egg to its interior,—the earth's crust being only thirty miles thick, while it is four thousand miles to its centre. Here we stay floating on a fabric that might by the least convulsion, from whatever cause, engulf us beneath the ruins of eternal chaos. There are known causes that

produce these notable days. We have had many such days as they refer to.

It is a known fact to all astronomers, that the earth's parallelism is slowly, very slowly, destroyed by a movement which Arago compares to the inclined turning of a top. This movement has the effect of making the equinoctial points on the surface of the globe retrograde toward the east from year to year, in such a manner that at the end of 25,800 years by some astronomers, but 21,000 by Adhemar, the equinoctial point has literally made a tour of the globe and has returned to the same position which it occupied at the beginning of this immense period, which is called the great year. It is this motion in which the terrestrial axis describes around its own centre that revolution round a double conic surface, which is known as the procession of the equinoxes. It was observed 2,000 years ago by Hipparchus. Its cause was discovered by Newton, and its complete revolution explained by D'Alembert and Laplace. According to M. Adhemar, "in the year 1248 before the Christian era, the north pole attained its maximum summer duration; since then, for the last 3,112 years, it has been decreasing, and this will continue till the year 7388 of our era, before it attains its maximum winter duration." The reader will understand that the winters of the northern hemisphere will grow longer every year and the summers shorter, of course, for the next 5522 years, when the northern hemisphere will be an iceberg. These are known facts, that are as certain as the returning of comets, that astronomers tell us will come in so many hundred or thousand years, and they come.

The glacial epoch has moved rock of several hundred tons weight hundreds of miles, that swept down and cleared off the sides of mountains. Every person that has heard of geology is supposed to know that different portions of our globe at different times have been covered with glaziers. The northern and central parts of Europe seem of a sudden to have been seized with the temperature

of the glacial regions, and the great meadows where the elephant, active horses, great hippopotamus, and carniassiers roamed and grazed, were comparatively on a sudden covered with a mantle of ice, and only the bones left to tell the tale of the sudden annihilation of their race.

As the summers grow shorter in the north the fall of snow in winter is only settled by at last snow and rain in summer, and the immense body congeals and condenses by its own weight, until it becomes a solid block of ice; the rivers are frozen up, and nothing is heard but the cold winter's blast, until a voluminous crust is formed at the pole heavy enough to modify the spheroidal form of the earth. This, as a necessary consequence, changes the centre of gravity, the icebergs now melting as the summers are longest in the southern hemisphere, freely flow northward to restore the equilibrium and preserve the spheroidal form of the earth. As the waters leave the southern hemisphere in a measure, new continents appear, deluging the northern parts of the earth, sweeping man and animals from the face of the globe. As the earth is swaying, the molten mass, wishing to have a voice in the play, heaves up continents, deluges continents; he opens his awful mouth, and sounds his trumpet, shows the pillars of fire in the earth, hot vapor and steam from his awful geysers spout to the heavens showers of water. Fire, brimstone, and pillars of fire and smoke, as Joel says, are seen in the earth. The clouds of smoke darken the sun, and through smoke the moon looks like blood. God shakes the earth and the heavens fairly tremble, and from the darkness of smoke the stars withdraw their shining, mountains heave up from the surging gulf and look to the heavens, as on a small scale we beheld in Mexico, 28th of September, 1759. Earthquakes shook the earth for two months unceasingly, to give them warning (as it did Lot when the angels advised him to leave); then the earth began to rise until it reached the height of 500 feet; the earth undulated like the waves of the

sea in a tempest; thousands of small hills arose and disappeared in turn; and finally an immense gulf opened, from which fire, red-hot stones and ashes were violently discharged and darted to prodigious heights. Six mountains surged up from the raging gulf, among which the volcanic mountain of Jorullo, 2150 feet above the ancient plane. When the earth began to rise, the two rivers, Cuitimbo and San Pedro, flowed back, inundating all the plain now occupied by Jorullo, but in the upheaving region, while it continued to rise, a gulf opened and swallowed the rivers.\*

Herculaneum, Pompeii and Stadia witnessed on a small scale one of these notable days of the Lord. Whoever escaped the chaotic tomb could tell us something of the pillar of fire in the earth. They witnessed the wrath not of God, but of the earth's terrible blast. The people of those cities when they saw themselves being buried from Vesuvius' top, felt that the day of the Lord was at hand, as Isaiah describes: "Their hearts melted, and all hands were faint, for the day of the Lord is at hand. And they shall be afraid, pangs of sorrow shall take hold of them." Isaiah had heard of such days from the deepest antiquity, so had Joel; and Abraham witnessed one of those days, or a miniature of one, when he arose early in the morning and "looked toward Sodom and Gomorrah and toward all the land of the plain, and beheld, and lo the smoke of the country went up as the smoke of a furnace." Here the earth opened and vomited its molten contents into the heavens, falling in fire, ashes and red-hot stones, burning the cities thereabouts; and finally it collapsed, and sank, forming what is now the Dead Sea; but of course in that superstitious age it was God's judgments for sin.

There is a sufficient amount of evidence to satisfy geologists, of several deluges of modern date, geologically speaking. One occurred in the north of Europe, produced by the upheaval of the

\* See Lous Figure on deluges, in his History of the World before the Deluges.



mountains of Norway. Commencing in Scandinavia, the wave spread, and carried its ravages into those regions which constitute Sweden, Norway, European Russia, and the north of Germany, sweeping before it all the loose soil on the surface, and covering the whole of Scandinavia and all the plains of northern Europe. The physical proofs of this deluge of the north exist in the mantle of unstratified earth which covers all the plains and depressions of northern Europe, with the attendant phenomena of striated and dome-shaped rocks, and far transported erratic blocks, which become more characteristic as we ascend to higher latitudes, as in Norway, Sweden and Denmark. The southern borders of the Baltic are covered with marine fossil shells; and abundance of evidence that our space will not allow.

The second European deluge is supposed to have been the result of the formation and upheaval of the Alps, which has filled with debris and movable soil all the valleys of France, Germany and Italy, in a circumference which has the Alps for its centre.

The proofs of a great convulsion at a recent geological period are numerous, covering pages in geological works. Says Mr. Figuere: "The Asiatic deluge, of which sacred history has transmitted to us a few particulars, we know was the result of the upheaval of a part of the long chain of mountains which diverge from the Caucasus. The earth opening by one of these fissures left in its crust in course of cooling, an eruption of volcanic matter escaped through the crater. Masses of watery vapor or steam accompanied the lava discharged from the interior of the globe, which being dissipated in clouds, and condensing, descended in torrents of rain, and the plains were drowned under the volcanic mud." This same great author goes on to prove that we had this deluge, by quoting from Berosus and the sacred books of Hindus and the Ghebres, all mentioning this event near the time mentioned in Genesis. He also gives the geological evidences the same as in the other deluges, and says the deluge was local, and

quotes Mariel de Serres, and others, who say the words "all the earth" are translated from the Hebrew word *haarets*, which does not always mean all the earth, but is used in the sense of region or country, and Moses used it to represent the peopled portion within his knowledge.

These were the notable days of the Lord that our fathers referred to; they had not forgotten these days. They were more frequent when the crust of the earth was thinner. In early days they had traditions of these events; they feared them — the shock and destruction of continents of people; and as muttering and thundering are the monitors to warn them of danger, as observation teaches us before volcanic eruptions in our day, they were no doubt warned before a great catastrophe, as with Noah, many years beforehand, and he made an ark and warned the people to prepare; but they had not his head of philosophy, they did not believe any danger in their day; but as the signs grew louder and more frequent, Noah prepared for safety (although the story of his saving all the species of animals was no doubt conjectured from the fact they supposed the deluge was universal), he and his family entered the ship. These great events are not of a sudden; the greater the catastrophe the longer it is accumulating. This is a law of nature, applied to man as well as the earth. As I said before, geologists prove the deluge of Moses by evidence from the earth's appearance in that country, the same as the other great cataclysms of nature. They show us that great convulsions of nature put an end to the trilobites in the Silurian period, the great reptiles of the Lias, the mastodons of the Tertiary, the megatheriums of the Quaternary epoch, and numerous floods and great and notable days of the Lord occurred that our reverend ancestors describe; while the pious believer in the divinity of his book, like a hermit in the mountain, has only heard of one great rainstorm, and Noah's floating in a great ark, and a great day a-coming when men's decayed bodies will be restored and animated. With these

seeds of ignorance they are content. The sun shines and the moon quarters, is the extent of their inquiry of astronomical science, hardly conscious that the earth travels through space over eleven hundred miles per minute in its yearly motion, and the surface sixteen miles per minute in its diurnal. It is not a sloth creeping through space, liable to turn back at the will of man, as in the case related of its turning back in Ahaz' dial.

Let me say to you, reader, look ahead. God is leading us onward. Do not turn to dark ages of deep antiquity for knowledge of God. Learn his laws, and you can do wonders. We have men that do, and they already command the lightning, the power that moves the worlds and sustains the universe, to be our servants, and with the lightning's speed this power tells us, and the ocean is no barrier, the news from continent to continent; the tide of markets is influenced from hour to hour; daily news from all parts of the globe lies on our desks, so closely does this almighty power yield obeisance to man. By the revelation of nature wonders in the heavens are revealed, miracles from the powers of the heavens and the earth are being performed; the mysteries of the formation of the globe are fast being solved; the nature and movements of the heavenly bodies are being understood; the laws of God are found to be immutable and never change, by thousands of years experience.

To understand the Almighty is to study his laws. They are divine, and from eternity; they are the roads leading to him. Eternity, what is eternity? It is space. What is space? It is an eternity of æriform, gaseous, invisible matter pervading all space. What pervades this matter? Power. What power? Attraction. Adhesion, cohesion, caloric, and so on, are dialects of this power. What does attraction do? Gathers particles and produces circular motion, as water running through an aperture in a vessel. What is produced? Caloric is emitted by the condensation and friction, emitting its latent heat. This process con-

tinues until millions of extent are accumulated, and a sun or world is formed in chaotic state. Friction and condensation, as I stated, produce great heat, and the greater the accumulation the greater the central attraction, the greater the condensation, and the greater the heat, and an uncontrollable mass of surging lava is the result. When its motion becomes of sufficient velocity to prevent any farther accumulation, that is, when the centripetal and centrifugal forces are exactly equal, condensation and cooling commences; thousands, perhaps millions, of years roll away, and the globe begins to crust. Then, the same laws that produced the world, in process of time produce plants.

Growth is one of the elements of matter. See Wood's Botany. Every man is supposed to know that barren earth from any depth in the ground, brought to the surface, will not lie many years without growing to grass and weeds, without sowing. Every one that has cleared new land and burned it over, and left it a few months, can tell you about the growth of weeds that are not in the surrounding woods or country. The alpine snows, the burning sands, the ocean's bottom, and hot boiling springs, all have their plants.

Growth is natural and progressive. Blot from earth all vegetable existences, and thousands of years would elapse before we would have the present variety of forests; first weeds, plants and shrubs, still upward to the towering oak, and the lofty pine. From the fact that as a rule they bear seed that produces their kind, we are not to infer that they never grew without that seed, or a providential creation. What is the seed? It is a composition of a certain number of the elements of the earth in certain proportions, and when that seed is in the ground it has an affinity for the elements congenial to its nature, and assumes form, which we term growth; and the seed contains on a minute scale the elements that compose the tree, and when those elements come in contact, whether in the seed or not, when there is a union of the

same elements that the seed contains, growth without the seed is the result. But these events are not as common as the growth of grass and weeds. Following the rule of nature previously stated, great events require time. Elephants are not as common as grasshoppers.

Animal life follows the rule of vegetable. The egg of a hen or a bird is composed of the elements of the earth in certain proportions; and with nothing but the application of caloric, those same elements assume the shape that a combination of elements in those proportions by the application of caloric must assume. The thing is forced just as much as the earth is forced around its centre of gravity by its own laws common to its properties. But we do not mean to be understood that a hen was first formed by a union of the elements that are found in an egg, but a low order of growth, both vegetable and animal, are common to the earth, and the march is not downward but upward. The oak is not the result, however, of a cabbage plant, but of its own species on a small scale, first shrubs of the oak species, then onward. The seed from a potatoe ball hardly produces potatoes the first year; they are extremely small and not the kind after the seed. The next year they are larger, and so on to their standard. So we find animals of the different classes beginning at or near nothing, and reaching a standard of perfection of their kind. These are facts that no informed man denies.

The fossils found deep in the rocks tell no tales. The growth from the first palenozoic fishes to man has been steadily upward, until man is the crowning form of created existences, and is at the end of an endless—so to speak—chain of animal life.

Some geologists feel some delicacy in acknowledging animals the ancestors of man, and still acknowledge that for a million of years the great archetype has been preparing by a continued higher order for man, from the first molusks of the Silurian period. But the fact must be acknowledged, that man came, like every-

thing else, from a lower order to be king of the land—sum total of the animal race.

The christian says, "We did not come from an animal, a chipmuck, or a flea; we have a God in our creation." Yes, you have a God in your creation, that made man out of dirt, with as small commencement as we claim, and he created animals at the same time six thousand years ago, and we know that animals have been here hundreds of thousands of years, and man, geologically speaking, but of yesterday, and that not less than thirty-five thousand years ago. These facts we know, and are as certain of it as you are that the sun shines; besides, we never came from any such source as that; we came in the middle of the current through the highest, not the lowest, order of animals.

Nature readily produces invisible and visible animal or nervous life. Who supposes the millions of small animals that we find in a tub of rain water that fell a short time previous pure from the heavens, had any ancestors? No, sir, the swarms of lice, insects and pests of many kinds that infest portions of the globe, are not created, or never was, but breed from the union of certain elements, when the weather is favorable, the result being life. What did God create them for? Answer the question. They are the result of law common with matter. Because some of the pests breed from eggs, it is no evidence that others do not without. But all living things that do not breed of themselves common with the elements, are derived from something lower that did. The order runs higher and higher, huge reptiles in the Oligitic system, but man came not from them. We travel up to the Tertiary epoch. We find higher order and a great variety of animals, but nothing at the lower stratas, Miocene and Eocene periods, that looks like man; but in the Post Pleocene there is. We find the man among the mammals; we find animals that resemble him. The wild Australian children of late in their line are the wonder of the world. They resemble animals, but more strongly the human species. The savage of

Aveyron in 1800 found in a wild state, could not talk, and had no intelligence, but showed signs of contemplation. The Parisian savans disputed whether he was an ape or a wild man, but the learned Dr. Isard pronounced him a man. "No ape," he says, "ever exhibited such signs of intelligence—such dreamy manifestations—vague conceptions of the ideal." But we find man with all shades down to the highest animal, and we must abide the facts. He is traced to the animals, and the animals to him. Here we are masters of the field, kings of the earth, too proud to acknowledge our true origin.

The creative power, whatever it is, that called the world into being, called man. Remember this maxim: a law cannot sustain what it does not create. The law that sustains us must be the law that creates us, to be in harmony with that law. But is this all? Age comes on; formation is a sure sign of destruction or decay. The king monarch of earth, like the animals, is bound to decay. The proud spirit of the noblest work of nature yields to the monarch of time. Insects are born in the morning and live their time and die at night. Some animals are born at new year, and live their days by the next. Man is longer gaining the meridian of life, his days are threescore and ten.

It is a universal law. Growth denotes decay. The towering oak, like the king of earth, droops at the bidding of time. That which is quickly formed, is quickly destroyed; slow in formation, slow in destruction. And the law is as certain as the sun shines, that formation denotes destruction. If it were not so, there would be no change, but a fixed monotony of eternal sameness without evidence of change and without evidence of formation; but this is not the case. We know it formed, and formation denotes activity of matter, and as the law of matter is the soul of matter and never changes, formation continues. Birth and meridian of our globe point to its end and its destruction, is but the continued process of formation of one picture into another.

Like all things of nature this and other worlds will return to the elements whence they came ; as the blood in the heart is thrown to all parts of the system, to be returned as before, so new worlds are formed, unceasing, unremitting, ever changing. Its permutation inexhaustible,—its variety of scene infinite, and this is eternity. It never began and will never end. This is the revealed God and the only one revealed to man, and the nature of this God we understand. But the idea of an intelligent mind or being that directs and organizes matter and fills eternity, is perfectly incomprehensible, consequently only an extravagant theory that bewilders the mind, and has always been a damp to the progress of science. Matter itself contains all the elements to produce the phenomena we behold. Matter exists, and must act, and when the present picture is defaced, some other is the inevitable result.



## CHAPTER XVII.

### CONCLUSION.

As we have given you an idea of our origin, it is our duty to give you an idea of our destiny. With the greatest enthusiasm have you grasped the idea, and it is a consoling one, that man is not all man, but when the man is through with the scenes of this life, still onward, still upward, still brighter is that light when un-sheathed from its mortal coil, its progress never ceasing, its course untrammelled, its capacity for enjoyment ever increasing and never ending ; disembodied spirits, angels, then archangels, still onward, no one knows its end. This is a beautiful theory and we all wish it a reality, but such is not the case, and we must abide by the facts. But these ideas arose from the perversion of one of our natural fac-



ulties, the organ of vitativeness, given us for self-preservation. It is an indispensable element in all animals for the same purpose. And with a strong desire to live here we know no ending, and predict an eternity of life as the result; but with the old person that falls like the leaf of a tree, when he has lived the fullness of his days he desires to die, he has seen enough of life, the organ of vitativeness has faded with his other faculties, and to die is pleasure. His desire for eternal life is weak, it fades as does his desire to live here, proving that his eternal air castle was founded upon the activity of that organ. This is invariably the case, making proper allowance for his training that may excite his mind, or somewhat modify his natural mind in his last moments upon this point. And the faculty of our mind that engenders filial love to our species, that prevents continual destruction and extermination of our race, that begets love for love, favor for favor—this faculty, I say, when through ignorance we suppose a heavenly parent to exist, that bestows upon us blessing and kindness with an unsparing hand, and hears our petitions, and has compassion upon our sorrows, and supplies our wants, placing God to us as a generous man to a suffering beggar; imagining a similar God to this, is why we worship him. Being as we suppose our greatest benefactor we worship him with the greatest zeal from our natural faculties, veneration, hope, ideality and wonder. But in modern ages we have learned that matter exists, and with matter laws, and are inseparably connected.

Law is matter, and matter is law. Strip matter of its laws of affinity and it is dissolved into the invisible, and its presence unknown. Sir Isaac Newton conjectures that this earth could not exceed one cubic inch of poreless matter. The earth is not so much matter, as many suppose, with a few laws from an overruling mind that directs it, sending rain on the just and unjust alike, because it is his pleasure so to do; but law is the principal element, life, soul and stimulant of the globe and universe. It is

law that produces these phenomena—no will about it. It knows no difference between the righteous and wicked, but does its work impartially. If this law is God, or an influence from God, then God is law and law is God, or, in other words, God is the universe and the universe is God; for to suppose a being that has some incomprehensible power of acting independently, as we behold the manifestations in what we term laws, and that manifestation not the being himself but an emanation from him, leads us into an incomprehensible theory, an uncalled-for supposition, and leads us to exclaim, Great is the mystery of Godliness, all from merely a supposition of an impossibility that makes it a mystery; but such is not the fact.

There is no mystery that we have to deal with. God is not the universe, nor the universe God. God is not the law that governs matter, nor the law God, or an incomprehensible emanation from him. We have no information concerning the origin of matter and its inseparable laws that fill eternal space with worlds; when we do, then is time to consider its author; but we are satisfied that matter is eternal, and if matter is eternal, as we have before indicated, its laws must be. We know by a union of certain elements a great additional degree of cold is produced, as snow and common salt; other elements, as quicklime and water, caloric is emitted; two colored fluids produce a colorless one; two colorless fluids a colored one; central attraction must produce a spheroidal form; friction, by interchange of particles, whether by condensation of solids or friction of particles, produces heat; and so on, almost to infinity—we term laws of matter and the laws may be said to be the thing itself. The only difference between law and matter, is bulk, laws make it bulk. A certain degree of heat destroys matter as a bulk, and it becomes as the invisible gases, its laws in effect destroyed with it, neither having a perceptible existence. And so with the globe. Give it a certain degree of rarefaction and its existence as matter, or its laws, are not known. Why?

Because it follows an inevitable rule of law, that there can be no increase or diminution of power; and when the same bulk occupies more space, its power at any given point is in proportion diminished; and the process continuing, the power at any one point becomes insensible and the matter invisible to such a degree that we say space is void, and yet there is a universe in it; and it is only by concentration that we are able to discover matter, and with it laws become perceptible.

This is the only God and eternity we have any knowledge of, and we are subject to that course of matter. There is not, neither can there be, anything produced from matter that can or will exist independent of matter. Hence, intelligence, whether in an ant or a man, being the result of matter, manifests itself through a certain organization of matter, and is the law of a certain mechanism of matter manifested in what we term instinct, thought, spirit, soul, intelligence, or whatever you please to denominate it, and is as matter eternal, and is a law of the elements, and its manifestation will cease or lose its identity when its mechanism does.

Man is not half temporal and half eternal, temporal body and eternal soul; the two natures are not compatible. He is all eternal. There is the same eternity of one as the other, and they are inseparable. Intelligence implies nervous life, and the result of nervous life is a manifestation of intelligence in some degree, and is the inevitable result of matter that by its inherent elements or laws of growth assumes that form. We are not part God inherent from birth, nor a part of him received at any subsequent time. These are but extravagant theories, invented to supply the want of knowledge upon that point.

We are after facts that can be demonstrated, believing no miracle or mystery. There is none, when the truth is understood that is within our reach. As Solomon says, "There is nothing new under the sun," although there has been an increase, for a few

hundred thousand years, of intelligence in the animal race from the lowest to man, and may continue until the decline of this globe; but like the globe its meridian and retrograde will be attained.

To suppose continued expansion of the human soul throughout eternity, is to suppose another impossibility; it must bring up somewhere, or space with any bounds, no matter how large, could not eventually contain one soul. This like many others is but an extravagant popular theory, without any foundation in fact. And to suppose that nothing of interest existed previous to a few thousand years ago, is equivalent to supposing that nothing will in a few thousand years hence. The past is the only record of the future.

But laying aside suppositions and dwelling upon facts. Eternity never began; eternity will never end. Eternity never changed; eternity never will. Though worlds are born, live and die, eternity never changes. Though suns and universes that we now behold in shining splendor fade and are no more, the matter and laws still unchanged continue to exist. New worlds, new systems, new orders of life congenial to the climate and state of the elements, under the different forms of their exhaustless permutation, is the inevitable result, but eternity never changes.

O'er the silvery waters of Lake George  
In boyhood I did roam,  
Where naught was seen but the mountains' gorge  
And the wild sea's raging foam.

Where hugh cliffs and tall mountains  
Looked down upon the storm,  
In the frail skiff beneath their base  
I trembled at their form.

Unconscious then was I  
That these huge mountain beds  
Teemed with fossil animals,  
From their base unto their heads.

O weak and timid mortal,  
Why was it I should fear,  
They are but the annals  
Of many a million year.

Unfold their leaves, and marvels read,  
Then look up to the skies,  
And exclaim, in language plain,  
Human theories are but lies.

Our bones are but atoms  
That enlarge the heap,  
And in their wild bosom  
All humanity must sleep.

There is but one power,  
To which potentates must nod,  
That power is nature ;  
And nature is our God.





THE

LIGHT OF THE AGE:

OR



MIRACLES EXPLAINED.

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By FRANKLIN B. ORCUTT.

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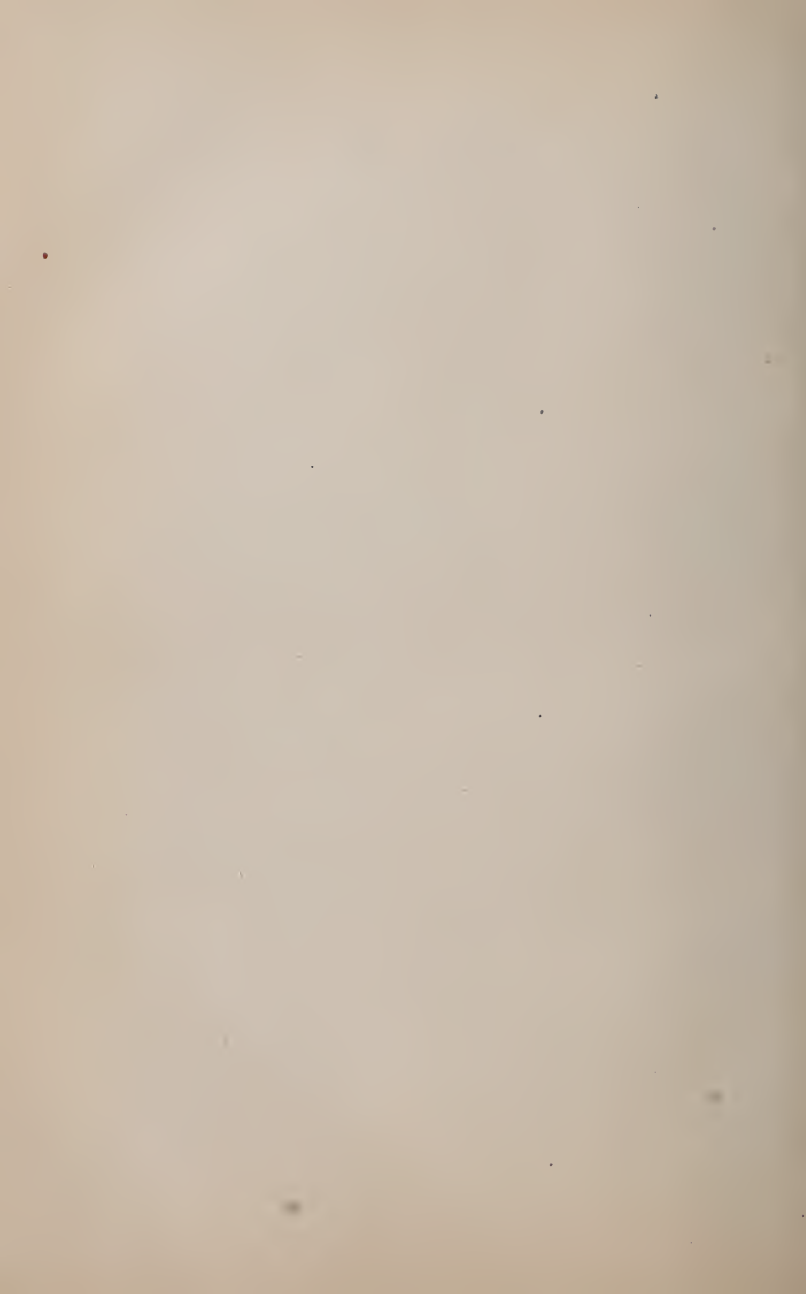
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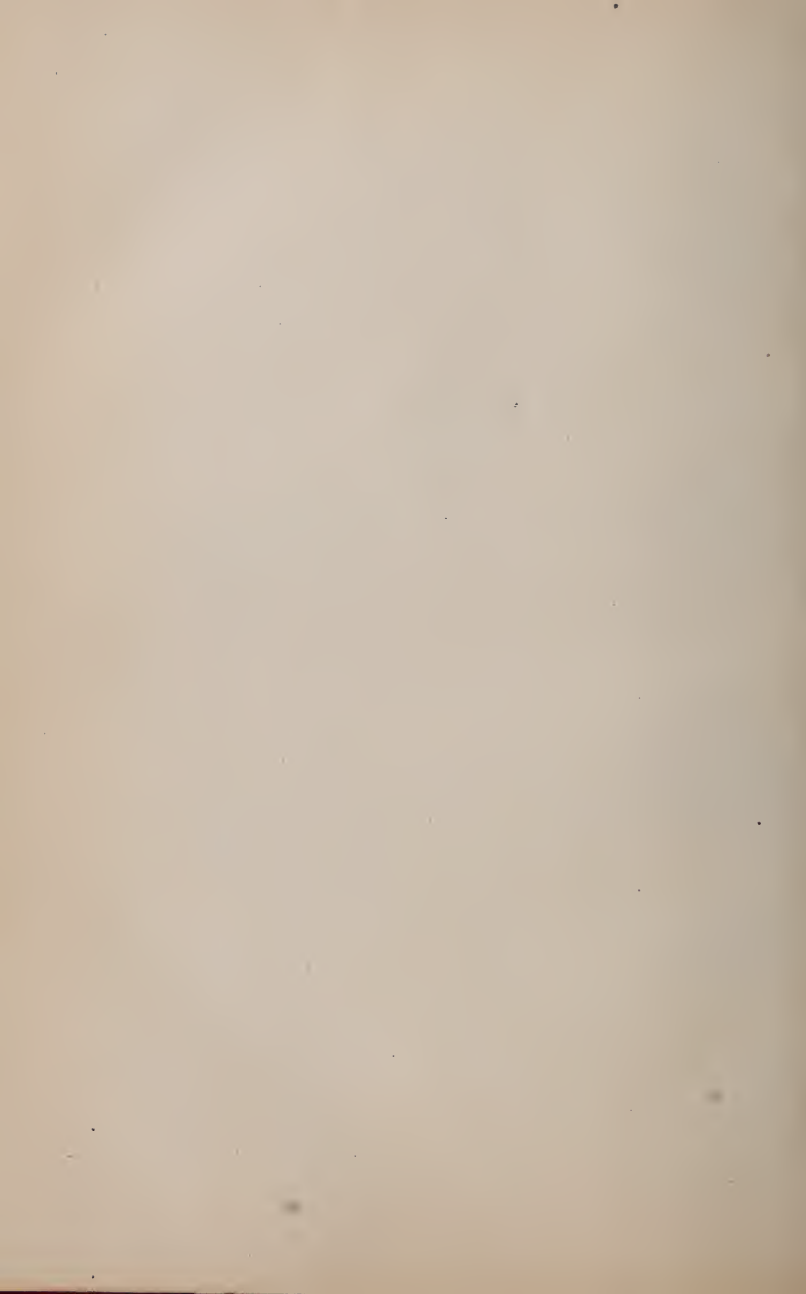












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