



THE INSPIRATION OF THE PAST.

'Tis well to look along the past,
 To mark the progress of the right;
 To feel the deep and earnest strife
 That shook the thrones of ancient
 might;
 To see each bold reformer's fall,
 And hear each burning word of truth,
 Which fell like lightning from the skies,
 To fire the heart of age and youth.

'Tis well to call again to mind
 The names of those immortal few
 Who reared the banners of reform,
 And fought with courage, strong and
 true;
 Who formed the vanguard of the race,
 And led the armies of the blest,
 Though far behind they hear their tread,
 As still their columns onward pressed.

'Tis well to count each upward step
 From Error's dark and fearful reign;
 To see the giant sweep of thoughts,
 On Reason's high, exalted plain;
 To feel the deep and tidal wave,
 Which rolls along the human sea,
 That bears upon its crested front
 The hopes of nations yet to be.

To hear the music of the beat,
 From out the ceaseless whirl of life,
 Which tells a brother's manly heart
 Is battling on amid the strife;
 It fires the crimsoned, rushing flood,
 That sweeps through artery, heart and
 vein;
 It snaps the trembling links of fear,
 And makes a man himself again.
 —Selected.

Science.

Aspiration is common to human-
 ity, and is as old as the race, while
 the Christian idea of prayer is of
 recent date. It may result in
 prayer, but it is a misuse of terms
 to use the words interchangeably,
 as if they meant one and the same
 thing. The christian definition of
 prayer is a petition addressed to
 one's idea of an infinite, invisible
 personage. And the answer to
 such a prayer is only when the
 mind offering it can persuade itself
 to believe that an infinite personal
 intelligence has done an act that
 it never would have done but for
 the "prayer" thus made "in faith."
 All this is a matter of faith; and,
 in the mind of the christian thus
 praying, there is no proof that
 mere faith is, or ever was, an
 executive power, outside of the mind
 by which it is exercised,—none
 whatever. As faith is the motive-
 power of prayer, so it is the same
 power that answers the prayers
 which are uttered by itself.

Aspire, aspiration, from as, or ad
 ("to," or "after"), and spiro, "to
 breathe," comprehends wishes
 and hopes that are common to
 humanity, without the slightest
 idea of christianity. Indeed,
 aspiration, hope, trust, and venerat-

ion all come from the filial relation;
 and these natural instincts of the
 human mind are abnormally
 crystallized into faith in mysticism
 and fanaticism. All we know of
 virtue—goodness, justice, and truth
 —comes from the relations of life,
 and is in no sense dependent upon
 christianity.

Science is classified ideas that
 recognize all the factors. "Science
 is trained and organized common
 sense."—Professor Huxley. "Sci-
 ence may be called an extension of
 the perceptions by the means of
 reasoning."—Herbert Spencer. It
 was of physical science that Professor
 Tyndall was speaking when he
 said that, "Inasmuch as evolution
 is in its hypothetical stage, the ban
 of seclusion ought to fall upon this
 theory." Christianity would col-
 lapse and fall to the ground like
 the rent balloon were its leading
 theologians to assume and maintain
 a similiar position in regard to all
 that is merely hypothetical in that
 theory of the unknown. Indeed,
 take all that we know to be human,
 all human ideas, from "modern
 Spiritualism" and Christianity,
 and nothing whatever would be left!
 But since physical science made its
 "new departure," a few years since,
 in substituting experiment for
 theory, no mere hypothetical law
 in the order of nature can be ad-
 mitted to the sum total of knowl-
 edge, till it has been proved by
 actual experiment. A law thus
 proved accounts for the phenom-
 ena, and thus it is that science be-
 comes an authority from which
 there can be no appeal.

And when the immortal Fara-
 day declared that the conservation
 and the correlation of all forms of
 force was the greatest discovery in
 physical science which the human
 mind had the capacity for making,
 it was not known to him that in
 America one human mind had
 made a discovery in mental science,
 in regard to selfhood, self-control,
 and self-involution and evolution,
 that should rank, perhaps, with
 any made in physical science. And,
 as psychology should certainly
 come within the range of theolog-
 ical studies, it may not be thought
 marvellous, perhaps, that a "revi-
 val minister," after having wit-
 nessed all the nervous and mental
 phenomena peculiar to "religious
 revivals," should, in 1836, have hit
 upon the truly scientific method
 of experiment, and determined this
 law of self-induction as supreme in
 the human mind.

All phenomena alleged to have
 occurred by forms of force or laws

regarding which mankind are
 wholly in the dark are mystical,
 because we do not know the laws
 by which they are evolved. Hence,
 they are not so much to science as
 the fall of a meteor from the heavens.
 Christianity and modern medium-
 ship are both alike based upon
 faith in this class of phenomena.
 This faith is defined in Heb. xi. 1.
 It is the "evidence" that each
 mind creates for itself "of things
 unseen." And hence it is that no
 christian or spiritualist, under the
 control of this self-induced faith,
 can believe in the law of self-induc-
 tion. Always and everywhere, as
 the mind is more or less under the
 control of faith in the unknown, it
 ignores science and faith in hu-
 manity; and this is the reason why,
 as Professor Tyndall says, the
 "waves of science beat in vain"
 against the "spell" by which the
 faith, in exciting this law of self-
 induction, thus victimizes the hu-
 man mind. How powerful this
 "spell,"—this same "christian faith"
 —often becomes is shown in the
 cases of children who have been
 killed by christian parents in
 America: one by Freeman and his
 wife, in Pocasset, Mass.; three by
 Hemmell, a German, in Chicopee,
 Mass.; and one by Mrs. E. Deering,
 September 30, 1879, in Erie, Pa.
 These parents, whose hands are
 now dripping with the blood of
 their murdered children, were not
 insane; they were each of them good
 christians, and as pious as the Pope,
 or any bishop, or any christian
 now living. Yet these parents,
 when lifting their weapons of death
 in the act of murder, had "faith,"
 even "the faith of Abraham in God;"
 but, plainly enough, they had no
 faith in humanity's religion! And
 did not Jesus ignore faith in hu-
 manity when he commanded
 his followers to hate husband, wife,
 parent, child, brother, sister, and
 one's own life, also? And do not
 spiritualists ignore science and hu-
 manity when they abandon their
 own selfhood to the control of their
 faith in a nondescript invisibility?
 Thus, minds under the supreme
 control of faith in mystical phe-
 nomena withhold their assent to
 the maxim of Descartes, who
 says, "Give unqualified assent to
 no propositions but those the truth
 of which is so clear and distinct
 that they cannot be doubted."

I have a word only in regard to
 the statement of Carlyle, quoted by
 Professor Tyndall, "that the human
 soul has claims and yearnings
 which physical science cannot
 satisfy." To this I reply:

1. For all the normal and hy-
 genic wants of humanity the sup-
 ply is always at hand. All essen-
 tial is instinctive, and no knowl-
 edge absolutely beyond our sphere
 can be necessary for man's highest
 good.

2. The "yearnings" referred to
 by Carlyle are factitious, and they
 are created by dogmatism, by
 superstitious appeals made to hu-
 man credulity, ignorance, and fear!
 And nothing more is required of
 physical science than to show, as it
 has done effectually, that all such
 fear and "yearnings" are unneces-
 sary, and result in no permanent
 good.

3. Modern spiritualism and
 christianity heal no wounds which
 these isms of the unknown have
 not inflicted upon the human mind.
 The invisible nondescripts know
 nothing of us, except what they are
 able to learn by contact with hu-
 man "mediums." And what of a
 nondescript deity that saves us from
 no evil that his omniscience had
 not already got us into?

Jesus declared of himself, truly,
 when he told his followers that
 he had no power to work miracles
 except that with which he was in-
 vested by their "faith." And in
 Hebrews xi. 6, a similar statement
 is made of the christian God.

"It is not true that "prayer be-
 longs to the childhood of the race,"
 nor is it true that it belongs "more
 to manhood." To mature manhood
 it appertains to understand more
 of the laws of Nature and the con-
 stitution of things, and to find our
 highest aspirations gratified in
 their harmonious fulfillment, while
 we understand how it is in respect
 to prayer.

Psychological experiment has
 demonstrated that "saving faith" is
 no power beyond the human or-
 ganism in which it is exercised;
 that, when sensational appeals are
 made to credulity and wonder, it
 excites the law of self-induction,
 which is the greatest power, purely
 mental, known to the human mind.

Relief comes to the human mind
 from hygiene and psychology that
 physical science may not be com-
 petent to secure. And "faith"
 in mystical phenomena and all
 forms of superstition will disappear
 just as soon as theologians find out
 the scope of credulity and "faith."
 And all isms of the unknown
 would be wiped out from the face
 of our planet today, were a knowl-
 edge of psychology as common as
 the Sunday-school lessons taught
 to the children.—Dr. LaRoy Sun-
 derland.