

## OUR FATHER AND GOD.

THE present age is emphatically one of philosophy. Any subject, whether physics or metaphysics, whether it pertain to science or religion that cannot stand the crucial test of logical investigation—of calm and unbiased dissection is, by those most thoughtful, speedily discarded. There is, however, a large intermixture of error with scientific truths. Whenever the domain of demonstrated fact is abandoned and speculation substituted confusion is the result. Hence pantheism, evolution and kindred hypotheses find many earnest advocates.

The uninspired interpretation of Bible history, and particularly that portion relating to man's creation is, to the uninspired logician, inadequate to satisfy his cold intellectual nature, and man's existence is referred to natural results of extremely remote causes. In addition to the above named class of honest and earnest skeptics, there are two other classes that oppose the advance of *true* theological science. One of them is composed of individuals whom we might aptly style philosophical mimics, inasmuch as they ape the manners of philosophers and scientists. Circumstances may have cut them loose from the moorings of religious traditions and placed them within the influence of modern skepticism, and impelled by vanity (a frequent varnish to shallow minds) they desire to be regarded as "advanced thinkers," and swallow the gilded bait of false philosophy with the avidity of hungry goslings, never stopping to reason on the principles that underlie the superficial structure.

The other, or Sectarian class, composed of religious mopes, is entrenched behind a mass of erroneous traditions so dense as to defy alike the assaults of Divine Truth or the encroachments of science. There are millions of those that possess but the rudiments of an education, who are willing dupes of others scarcely less ignorant, because the forms of worship and articles of faith are hedged about by long established

superstitious veneration, so that, neither priest nor layman cares to look for greater light. "That which satisfied the spiritual cravings of the fathers is good enough for the children," is of course just as it should be, provided it is *truth*, which, however, cannot be to any individual without a positive demonstration—a patient following of all the lines of reasoning that point to an inevitable sequence.

Hence hundreds of millions of human beings cling to dead forms of faith and worship without being able to explain *why*. They have a very dim conception of the actual meaning of the phrase—"Our FATHER which art in Heaven." How familiar and affectionate it sounds, and yet how densely ignorant are the children of this world of the essence of that sentence. To the intelligent Latter-day Saint it emits a world of light and comfort. It enunciates a principle that indissolubly links the immortal past to the mortal present, and this life to the glorious and infinite future.

The Sectarian idea of God is, without doubt, largely responsible for the skepticism of the nineteenth century. Thoughtful men and women turn from the intangible nothing worshiped by the masses to the tangible universe, and take cold comfort in unceremoniously turning the bodyless and passionless god of modern so-called Christians completely out of doors. And when we take all things into consideration is not our respect for the skeptics increased by placing them in comparison with the average "pulpit shouters" of to-day? Put Ingersoll by the side of Talmage, place Herbert Spencer opposite the Sectarian donation of pulpit orators in this territory and mark the contrast.

Man's existence is shrouded in mystery so dense that it defies the penetration of all human wisdom. They witness his birth and see him grow to manhood; they know that every day is a step forward in the march of human progress until, in the full strength of physical

and intellectual manhood, he manifests those principles of greatness that stamp him as an eternally progressive being. The very elements bend to his intelligent will. The chained lightning flashes his thoughts to the limits of the civilized globe, will soon light his cities and propel the machinery which is the product of his almost infinite mind.

But what an humble ending to so sublime an existence. He grows old, his body and mind usually yielding to simultaneous decay until finally the force that once sustained his ambitious life departs and he is a clod. We look on the calm, white face of the dead and ask, "can it be possible that the invisible power that gave light to the eyes, that caused them to burn with anger, sparkle with pleasure or learn with love and benevolence, that gave animation to the whole frame and impelled the brain to work out some of the mighty problems of the universe, has gone out in darkness? Was it merely a complex combination of natures forces—gaseous vapors that have returned to elemental chaos?" Our inmost natures revolt at the idea that man is the result of blind fortuitous nature. It is almost an universal belief that man has an *immortal counterpart*, an individual invisible force that will exist forever. And this is the culmination of all human philosophy on the subject, whether of the scientist, Sectar-ian or savage. But why should it end here? All that we see in the animate or inanimate universe is governed by inexorable law. All animated nature is but the result of reproduction of forms of life exactly similar to the parent, and that they cannot vary is proven beyond the possibility of refutation. And it would be extremely unphilosophical to assert that the embryotic form of man during its ante-natal development could draw from the fountain of immortal life the elements necessary to formulate a distinct being—an immortal counterpart of the future man. It would be a transgression of every known law of reproduction or procreation. Hence we must assign to the spirit of man the honor of a distinct and separate parent-

age, an embryotic development and growth from an immortal germ and spiritual matter exactly similar to the laws that produce his mortal body.

The blending of immortality with mortality must be for the purpose of working out some design of the Divine Will. The spirit could have remained in its celestial home if the body were of no future value. The spirit could not be perfect without the body—could not answer the great *object* of its existence, and therefore, this same infinite power that called it into being and provided for its occupation a tangible body will surely at the appointed time call the atoms that formed the mortal casket from their resting place, if it be from the bowels of the earth or the depths of the restless ocean, they will surely come pure and refined, providing for the spirit a habitation perfect in form and feature, and possessing, as Jesus after His resurrection, all the organs necessary to a mortal condition. The being thus organized, possessing, as He would, all the powers of body and mind in a perfect condition, as also of infinite power and action would advance so rapidly in comprehending the universe and its laws that the grand achievement of mortality would pale into insignificance as stars before the beams of the morning sun.

When we take into consideration the fact that space is illimitable, and that matter, finely diffused, occupies immensity, what a glorious field of usefulness spreads out in its vastness before the being once chained to earth and permitted to contemplate that portion of the universe only, within the range of his natural vision, and capable of merely speculating on its probable origin and hopelessly ignorant of the infinite beyond! The law of gravitation—once a tangible mystery, would be as simple to His understanding as were the effects of it on earth, and being permitted by the Father, he speeds out into space and far beyond the attracting influence of organized matter He deposits an attracting substance, or forms a nucleus capable of attracting the minute particles of ether, and the first act of organization

is completed. Having, while on earth complied with the requirements of the Father in relation to Celestial Marriage, he is thus qualified to become a "Father of spirits," and his immortal wives become the mothers of spirits, thus obeying the only and eternal law of reproduction.

In the mean time the intruding particles of ether have been accumulating around the nucleus, and by the force of friction it becomes a mass of living fire, and from out the mass of smoke and vapor emerges a new born system of worlds, and the elements having performed their part in preparing the world for plants and animals, and those also having served the purpose of fitting it for the presence of man, he is placed upon it and with his wives repeats the history of man on this and other planets.

The Being that has organized the world; and placed upon it the germs of animated nature; is the one most entitled to furnish mortal bodies for his spiritual children. And when the great drama of life is finished and he with his

children are redeemed and glorified, is he not entitled, as the head of an innumerable posterity, to be recognized as a Father and God to those that will rise up and call Him blessed? Is there anything inconsistent or unphilosophic in the doctrine that *eternal progression* will eventually exalt human beings to the godhead? The reverse would be illogical, no other reason for man's existence can be adduced. In this way only can he be of service in increasing the glory of his Father and God to whom forever he will be a grateful and venerating son and subject.

The doctrine invests mankind with a new and increased interest, and solves the problem of his mysterious existence. It inspires us to bear in meekness the stripes of our misguided Sectarian brothers. It inspires the sincere believer in the divinity of Joseph Smith's mission with the faith to persevere in doing the Father's will to the end that he may gain the reward of *Endless Life* in the mansions of "our Father and God."

J. F. Gibbs.

## HISTORICAL RECORD.

### NOVEMBER.

1. 1755—The city of Lisbon, Portugal, was destroyed by an earthquake. 1799—Thos. B. Marsh, once a member of the Twelve Apostles, was born in Acton, Massachusetts. 1808—President John Taylor was born in Milnthorpe, Westmoreland, England. 1833—The mob in Jackson County, Missouri, destroyed much property belonging to the Saints, threatened lives, etc. 1838—Hyrum Smith and Amasa M. Lyman, were brought as prisoners into the camp of the mob militia. All the prisoners were sentenced by court-martial to be shot, but were saved by the interference of General Doniphan. The Saints in Far West, Missouri, were compelled to give up their arms, after which, the town was pillaged by the troops. 1853—The first number of the *Journal of Discourses* was published in Liverpool, England.
2. 1795—James K. Polk, eleventh President of the United States, was born in North Carolina. 1833—The Saints in Independence, Missouri, fled from the town because of the persecutions. 1838—Joseph Smith, Jr., and fellow prisoners, were taken to Far West under a strong guard, and permitted to see their families, from whom they were rudely separated and started for Independence. 1880—The general election held in Utah for delegate to Congress, resulted in eighteen thousand, five hundred and sixty-eight votes for George Q. Cannon, and one thousand, three hundred and fifty-seven for Allen G. Campbell.
3. 1807—Luke Johnson, once a member of the Twelve Apostles, was born in Vermont. 1843—Knowlton F.