



Advanced Study Group of Spiritism

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HEAD QUOTATION

We behold electricity in the form of lightning riving the solid oak, throwing down lofty towers and steeples, or destroying man and beast, sometimes without a wound. And these manifestations of force are produced by a form of matter so impalpable, that only by its effects does it become known to us. With such phenomena everywhere around us, we must admit that if intelligences of what we may call an ethereal nature do exist, we have no reason to deny them the use of those ethereal forces which are the overflowing fountain from which all force, all motion, all life upon the earth originate. Our limited senses and intellects enable us to receive impressions from, and to trace some of the varied manifestations of ethereal motion under phases so distinct as light, heat, electricity, and gravity; but no thinker will for a moment assert that there can be no other possible modes of action of this primal element. To a race of blind men, how utterly inconceivable would be the faculty of vision, how absolutely unknowable the very existence of light and its myriad manifestations of form, color, and beauty. Without this one sense, our knowledge of nature and of the universe could not be a thousandth part of what it is. By its absence our very intellect would have been dwarfed, we cannot say to what extent; and we must almost believe that our moral nature could never have been fully developed without it, and that we could hardly have attained to the dignity and supremacy of man. Yet it is possible and even probable that there may be modes of sensation as superior to all ours as is sight to that of touch and hearing.

Extract from **The Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural** by **Alfred Russel Wallace**

EDITORIAL

Spiritism and Spiritualism

One can hardly imagine how happy I am in seeing my good friends gathered together. I am among you, in a congenial and benevolent atmosphere that pleases my spirit and my heart.

For quite some time I have heartily desired the establishment of a regular

relationship between the French school and the American one. In order for us to understand one another, it would be sufficient to meet and exchange ideas. I have always considered your hall, dear lady, as a bridge launched between Europe and America, between France and England, destined to suppress the divergences that separate us, and to establish a chain of common ideas from which a union would result in the future.

Dear Mr. Peebles, allow me to congratulate you for your sincere desire to communicate with us. We should not be concerned if we are spiritists or spiritualists. We truly are individuals and Spirits that conscientiously search for the truth and that will acknowledge it with recognition, whether it is a result of French or American studies.

Spirits conserve in Space their affinities and their earthly habits. The Spirits of deceased Americans remain Americans, as the discarnates that lived in France remain French in the spirit world. From this results the difference of education in some centers. Each group of Spirits, due to its own nature, its nationality, makes its instructions suitable to the character, the special genius of those to whom it addresses itself. But in the same manner that on Earth the barriers that separate the nationalities tend to disappear, in Space the distinctive characters disappear, the nuances mix with one another, and in a future time, closer than you think, there will be no more French, English or American on Earth or in Space, but only Individuals and Spirits, all children of God, dedicated, due to all their faculties, to progress and universal regeneration.

Ladies and gentlemen, tonight at this meeting I salute the dawn of a future union of the diverse spiritist schools, and I am glad to count Mr. Peebles among those without bias, whose assistance and goodwill will assure the heartiness of our teachings in the future and their universal dissemination.

Translate my works! Only the arguments against reincarnation are known in America. When the demonstrations in favor of this principle become popular, Spiritism and Spiritualism will walk hand in hand and will become, as a result of their union, the natural Philosophy embraced by all.

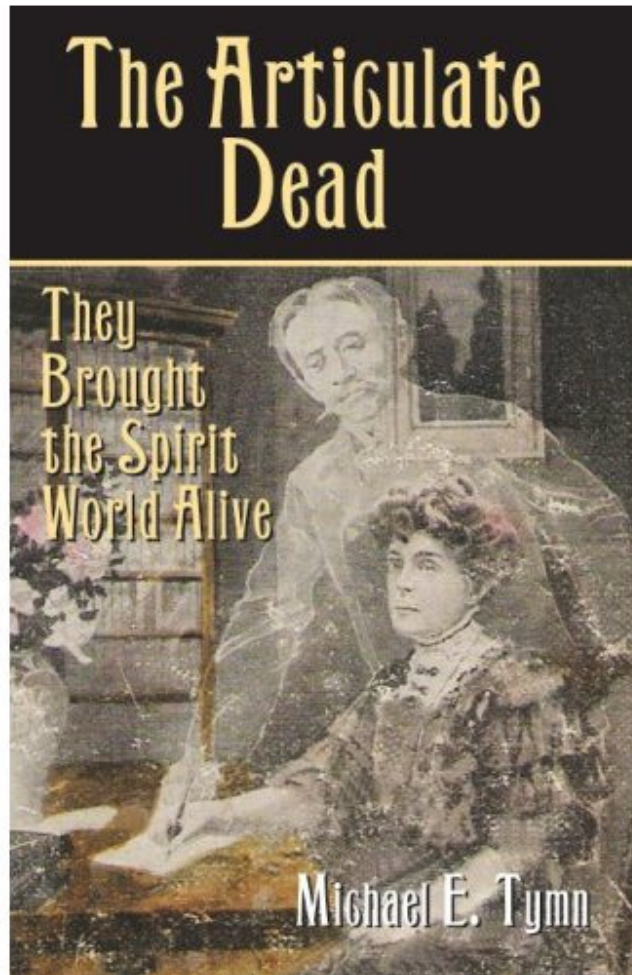
Source: *Revista Espírita*, p. 460-1, 1869 – FEB – "Communications of Allan Kardec

Note: Dr. James Martin Peebles was born in Vermont, USA. He was a journalist, physician, medium, speaker and great spiritualist activist of the 19th and 20th centuries. Dr. Peebles wrote more than thirty books. He was present at the above mentioned meeting at Anna Blackwell's home when Allan Kardec (spirit) brought this message through a medium. [The Spiritist Magazine, English Edition N. 7 – April-June, 2009]

ARTICLES

An Interview with the author of "The Articulate Dead"

Michael E. Tymn



My book, *The Articulate Dead*, was released during December by Galde Press. I have had numerous questions concerning the book from friends, correspondents, and from a half-dozen Internet radio stations. Thus, I decided to put these questions together in something of a self-interview in an attempt to explain what the book is about and why I wrote it.

So, Mike, what's the book about?

It's about psychical research that took place between 1850 and 1940 - research aimed primarily at proving that humans survive physical death and continue on in other realms of existence.

Yuck, sounds like a pretty dull read.

It probably is for those who prefer to escape reality by reading fiction, or for those who find spiritual enlightenment in reading Harry Potter.

Who is your audience?

Anyone who expects to die, but primarily people suffering from "GR-10 Syndrome."

GR-10 Syndrome? What's that?

I'm glad you asked. It's something I identified after I retired and started coming in contact with other retired people. I call them the 10 G's of Retirement: *Graying, Grunting, Grumbling, Grimacing, Groaning, Growling, Gripping, Grieving, Groveling, and Groping.*

Far out! But how does your book deal with those things?

As I see it, most older people are suffering from a number of those GR's because they sense their lives winding down and they have nothing to look forward to. They see death as the grim reaper, nothing else. The material in my book suggests that there is something beyond death and that death is to be embraced.

'One life at a time' is my motto. Shouldn't we be living in the present rather than looking ahead to some future life, if there is one?

Definitely. But this life can be so much sweeter, especially in our final years, if we are assured that there is meaning to it and that we are not all just marching toward an abyss of nothingness or total extinction. Once we begin to see the bigger picture, we don't live in the past, nor do we live in the future. The best way to live in the present is to "live in eternity." To do that, you must accept this life as a small part of a much larger life.

But various polls say that 80-85 percent of the U.S. population believes in an afterlife.

I know quite a few of those people. They say they believe, but they really just *hope*. Some of them go to church on Sunday, but the rest of the week they strive to be "one with their toys," living the hedonistic lifestyle and envying people like Hugh Hefner and Britney Spears. Celebrities have become our gods. Blind faith based on religious dogma just doesn't do it for most people these days. A recently report study in the *Journal of American Medical Association* suggested that dying cancer patients who relied strongly on their religious faith to cope with their illnesses were three times more likely than others to receive intensive, invasive medical procedures, even during their final days. While there might be other explanations for that, one might infer that they are more afraid of dying than others.

I don't believe in an afterlife and I'm content.

William James, the renowned psychiatrist, said he had tried to adopt that frame of mind but called it all humbug - so much bravado that melts away as the person approaches death's door. I know some people who do a very good job of repressing the idea of death by escaping into mostly meaningless activities. Kierkegaard called it "Philistinism" - man fully concerned with the trivial, so focused on meaningless things that he has lost sight of the big picture. There may be some people who have no fear of extinction, of obliteration -

of their march toward nothingness - but few people are able to adopt such a "courageous" outlook on death. I don't think there is any question that the vast majority of people fear death and do everything possible to repress the idea of it. .

And how does your book play into all this?

It offers quite a bit of evidence that man survives death and lives in a spirit world. Seeing the evidence offered by the various researchers helps one move from disbelief or from blind faith to true faith or conviction.

Who are the researchers?

A number of distinguished scientists and scholars, including two British physicists, both knighted for their discoveries in mainstream science, a British chemist also knighted for his work in science, a world-renowned American chemist and inventor, a professor of logic and ethics at Columbia, a Cambridge classics scholar and poet, a New York Supreme Court chief justice, a biologist who was Darwin's collaborator in the theory of natural selection, a Pulitzer Prize-winning author, two Christian clergymen, and a French educator, to name the primary researchers I discuss in the book.

What did their research turn up?

They concluded that humans can communicate with the spirit world, and, concomitantly, that consciousness survives physical death.

How did they come to that conclusion?

By investigating mediums - intermediaries between other dimensions of reality and the material world. And I'm not talking about one or two observations. Consider that Dr. Richard Hodgson spent 18 years observing Leonora Piper of Boston, Mass. or that the Rev. William Drayton Thomas had well over 500 sittings with Gladys Osborne Leonard of England.

But isn't that all outdated science?

That's what the pseudo-skeptics and debunkers want you to believe. They say it was all pseudo-science and that those distinguished researchers were all victims of charlatans. The fact is that the methods used by those early researchers are the same methods used today when mediums of that quality are found. Unfortunately, though, we don't seem to have the quality of mediumship today that we did 75-150 years ago.

Why is that?

Those same pseudo-skeptics and debunkers will tell you that it is because the mediums on whom the research was based were all frauds and were exposed as such. No doubt there were a number of frauds, but there were clearly genuine mediums. There are two primary explanations for the lack of such mediumship today. For one, it involves a lot of quiet time, experimentation, and small harmonious groups. In those days before radio and television, people had the time to experiment and had the patience to wait for results. They gathered together in harmonious mediumship circles, sang and listened to music while waiting for the proper conditions. Sometimes they waited an hour or so before the spirits could draw

enough power from the medium and the sitters to come through. In today's fast-paced world, people don't have the patience for that type of thing. They'd rather watch television.

That's one explanation. What's the other?

Some of the early spirit communicators said that they had just learned to communicate with us on this side of the veil. It was reported that Benjamin Franklin and Emanuel Swedenborg, two of the world's greatest scientists when alive, figured out how to manipulate matter after many experiments on their side. However, they and all the other spirit communicators who joined in didn't anticipate the resistance they were to receive. They gave us all the evidence they could possibly give and saw no point in continuing, especially when seeing how innocent people were being hurt by being called fakes. Why should they have to go on reinventing the wheel? As they say in the engineering profession, efforts to keep reinventing the wheel eventually lead to a square wheel.

What resistance are you referring to?

On the one hand, there were the scientific fundamentalists - those scientists stuck in the muck and mire of scientism, unwilling and unable to accept things which could not be explained by strict scientific methods or mechanistic causes. One Columbia University professor tried to have Professor James Hyslop fired when he found out about Hyslop's interest in psychical research. In his defense, Hyslop, noting scientific efforts to find a species of useless fish to support Darwin's theory, asked "why is it so noble and respectable to find whence man came, and so suspicious and dishonorable to ask and ascertain whither he goes?"

Sir Oliver Lodge, one of the physicists involved in the research, put it this way: "It is not easy to unsettle minds thus fortified against the intrusion of unwelcome facts; and their strong faith is probably a salutary safeguard against that unbalanced and comparatively dangerous condition called 'open-mindedness,' which is ready to learn and investigate anything not manifestly self-contradictory and absurd."

And on the other hand?

On the other hand, there were the religious fundamentalists who saw that some of the things coming out of mediumship were in conflict with established dogma and doctrine. To protect themselves, the religious hierarchy brainwashed their flocks with the idea that it was all the work of the devil. And the press also played a big part in the resistance. They sided with either the scientific fundamentalists or the religious fundamentalists in attacking both the mediums and the researchers. They turned serious research into tongue-in-cheek spook stories, and that's how the media continues to treat it to this day.

But you mentioned two Christian clergymen among the researchers?

Yes, one Anglican and one Methodist minister. They were mavericks, just like the scientists and scholars were. There are always courageous people more interested in getting at the truth than in protecting their reputations among ignorant people.

Why isn't the research of those distinguished scientist better known today?

Because of the scientific and religious fundamentalism I just mentioned, as well as the ignorant media. The scientific fundamentalists are unable to accept anything that falls outside of the mechanistic paradigm, while the religious fundamentalists are unable to accept anything they see as conflicting with the Bible. And the media is more interested in sensationalism than it is in truth.

Why did it end in 1940?

It didn't really end then. It began to tail off around 1925, but there was still some good research going on during the 1930s. All of the distinguished researchers mentioned in the book had pretty much died off, Sir Oliver Lodge being the last, in 1940. Seeing all the flak they received from mainstream science, others weren't willing to subject themselves to the same criticism. A new field called parapsychology developed and most of its practitioners are more interested in examining extra-sensory perception while just beating around the bush on the subject of survival. It was as if they had to go back and work on the spokes of the wheel rather than the wheel itself.

Is the book like reading a bunch of scientific reports?

No, that's one of the reasons I wrote the book. The original reports are written in the usual academic manner. Academicians are very poor writers by journalistic standards. I've tried to convert the academic language to language that people can understand. A number of very interesting stories unfold, including spirits directing an archaeologist to the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, spirits leading a researcher to crosses buried by American Indians, a deceased author completing his book through a medium, a Titanic victim coming back to tell about his new environment, a lost hunter contacting his family to explain what happened to him, soldiers killed in the war telling what it was like to die and then cross over to the other side, and three of the researchers involved in the original research dying and then continuing their research on the other side, communicating with their fellow researchers left behind, to name just some of the stories.

But aren't there other books on the subject?

Quite a few have been written over the years, but most of them are out of circulation. There are a few fairly recent books dealing with the same subject. Deborah Blum, Victor Zammit, Michael Schmicker, Craig Hogan, Ray Stemman, and Archie Roy all have good books dealing with the basic subject. While there is some overlap in the books, we all approach it a little differently and hit upon different aspects of the research. Look at how many books there have been during the past two years on atheism. I can think of at least six, which all seem to say the same thing.

Is there any similar survival research going on today?

Dr. Gary Schwartz of the University of Arizona did some interesting research with clairvoyants and clairaudients a few years back and reported on it in a couple of books, but the pseudo-skeptics attacked him just as they did those distinguished scientists of yesteryear.

So why did you write the book?

Because I believe all the turmoil we are experiencing in the world today is a result of extreme materialism. Materialism in the extreme is really hedonism or Epicureanism. "Eat, drink, and be merry for tomorrow we die." As I see it, this attitude is a result of people not really believing in an afterlife, a larger life. I felt that in resurrecting some of the best evidence for the survival of consciousness I might prompt a few hedonists or Epicureans to rethink their philosophy of life.

And you expect your book to change all that?

Of course not. I'll be happy if a few thousand people read it. This type of book doesn't sell well. Most people would rather escape into some work of fiction. As they say, though, small streams eventually create large rivers. I just felt a need to add a drop of rain that might contribute to one small stream.

"*The Articulate Dead*" is available from Galde Press <http://www.galdepress.com/> or at Amazon.com

It Is Your Choice by **Yvonne Limoges**

I have heard many times the phrase "living in the moment" and have been contemplating what it means to me.

As imperfect humans, we all have done things in our PAST we are not proud of and have hurt individuals in various ways. For these, we should ask for forgiveness and make amends the best we can. Afterwards, we need to ask God's forgiveness and the necessary enlightenment and moral strength not to do it again. In the past, we have also personally been ill affected by people or events, possibly even traumatized. Yet, especially us Spiritists (since we know the just causes of suffering), should try to move forward as best we can because the past cannot be changed.

As for the FUTURE, we have aspirations, intuitions, desires and goals. Yet, are we *mindfully present* in taking action to meet these, or are we just marking time or doing nothing? What occurs is dependent on a person's actions or non-actions **in the present** (as well as the Will of God according to the Divine laws).

I believe if we choose not to be aware of it, the PRESENT can be very elusive, forgotten, unproductive, and even cause us to be neglectful of our responsibilities in life.

Why? It is because many times we still feel depressed, angry, resentful, regretful or upset about things or events that happened to us in our past, or we keep worrying about what is going to happen in the future. In addition, some people eat, sleep, go to work and do their general daily tasks, etc. seemingly as if on "automatic" and are not fully aware of what is going on around them.

If we are surrounded by a beautiful park, are we looking about slowly taking in all the lovely scenery that can help rejuvenate us, or are we worrying about something we can't do a thing about or thinking about petty or trivial matters? Do we cherish, *living in that present moment*, the precious time we spend with our children, our family and friends,

and our pets (knowing it's a possibility they may leave this earth before us)? Do we *really* look, listen and thoughtfully interact with concern for them? Do we go to a peaceful place to try and relax, but our mind is a million miles away? When we pray, do our thoughts seem to wander elsewhere? Search your heart...

We should not miss out on savoring the many wholesome sources of enrichment, satisfaction and joy that are possible to experience living here on earth. *We should take control of ourselves to do so.* My friends, many times we don't fully appreciate the people, things, places or opportunities until they are gone and it's too late!

I believe we need to try to "*live in the moment*" (I am trying). We should be aware of where we are, who we are with, what we are doing, and of our present thoughts and emotions. I believe it's a good way to be a better person as well as to try to make life more interesting. Also, we can feel and become more at peace, satisfied, responsible, and productive. Remember, having freewill means we *do have choices* about how we live here in the material world.

Yvonne Crespo Limoges is the Director of the
[Spiritist Society of Florida](#)
E-mail: ylimoges@aol.com

ELECTRONIC BOOKS

ON MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM

BY

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE,

D.C.L., LL.D., F.R.S.

**REVISED EDITION, WITH CHAPTERS ON
APPARITIONS AND PHANTASMS**

**LONDON
GEORGE REDWAY
1896**

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THE SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF THE SUPERNATURAL

III

MODERN MIRACLES VIEWED AS NATURAL PHENOMENA

One very powerful argument against miracles with men of intelligence (and especially with such as are acquainted with the full scope of the revelations of modern science), is derived from the prevalent assumption that, if real, they are the direct acts of the Deity. The nature of these acts is often such, that no cultivated mind can for a moment impute them to an infinite and supreme being. Few, if any, reputed miracles seem to us at all worthy of God; and it is the man of science who is best enabled to form a proper conception of the lofty and unapproachable nature of the attributes which must pertain to the supreme mind of the universe. Strange to say, however, he is in most cases illogical enough to consider the difficulties in the way of this assumption as a valid argument against the facts in question having ever occurred, instead of being merely an argument against the mode of interpreting them. He even carries this objection further, by the equally unfounded assumption that any beings who could possibly produce the asserted phenomena must be mentally of a high order, and therefore, if the phenomena do not accord with his ideas of the dignity of superior intelligences, he simply denies the facts without examination. Yet many of these objectors admit that the mind of man is probably not annihilated at death, and that therefore countless millions of beings are constantly passing into another mode of existence, who, unless a miracle of mental transformation takes place, must be very far inferior to himself. Any argument, therefore, against certain phenomena having been produced by preter-human intelligences, on account of the trivial or apparently useless nature of such phenomena, has really no logical bearing whatever upon the question. The assumption that all preter-human intelligences are more intellectual than the average of mankind is as utterly gratuitous, and as powerless to disprove facts, as that of the opponents of Galileo when they asserted that the planets could not exceed the perfect number, *seven*, and that therefore the satellites of Jupiter could not exist. Let us now return to the consideration of the probable nature and powers of these preter-human intelligences, whose possible existence only it is my object at present to maintain.

I have in the first part of this paper given reasons for supposing that there might be, and probably are, other (and perhaps infinitely varied) forms of matter and modes of ethereal motion, than those which our senses enable us to recognize. We must therefore admit that there may be and probably are organizations adapted to act upon and to receive impressions from them. In the infinite universe there may be infinite possibilities of sensation, each one as distinct from all the rest as sight is from smell or hearing, and as capable of extending the sphere of the possessor's knowledge and the development of his intellect as would the sense of sight when first added to the other senses we possess. Beings of an ethereal order, if such exist, would probably possess some sense or senses of the nature above indicated, giving them increased insight into the constitution of the universe, and proportionately increased intelligence to guide and direct for special ends

those new modes of ethereal motion with which they would in that case be able to deal. Their every faculty might be proportionate to the modes of action of the ether. They might have a power of motion as rapid as that of light or the electric current. They might have a power of vision as acute as that of our most powerful telescopes and microscopes. They might have a sense somewhat analogous to the powers of the last triumph of science, the spectroscope, and by it be enabled to perceive instantaneously, the intimate constitution of matter under every form, whether in organized beings or in stars and nebulas. Such existences, possessed of such, to us, inconceivable powers, would not be *supernatural*, except in a very limited and incorrect sense of the term. And if those powers were exerted in a manner to be perceived by us, the result would not be a *miracle*, in the sense in which the term is used by Hume or Tyndall. There would be no "violation of a law of nature;" there would be no "invasion of the law of conservation of energy." Neither matter nor force would be created or annihilated, even though it might appear so to us. In an infinite universe the great reservoir of matter and force must be infinite; and the fact that an ethereal being should be able to exert force, drawn perhaps from the boundless ether, perhaps from the vital energies of human beings, and make its effects visible to us as an apparent "creation," would be no more a real miracle than is the perpetual raising of millions of tons of water from the ocean, or the perpetual exertion of animal force upon the earth, both of which we have only recently traced immediately to the sun, and perhaps remotely to other and varied sources lost in the immensity of the universe. All would be still natural. The great laws of nature would still maintain their inviolable supremacy. We should simply have to confess with a modern man of science, that "our five senses are but clumsy instruments to investigate the imponderables," and might see a new and deeper meaning in the oft-quoted but little heeded words of the great poet, when he reminds us that "there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in our philosophy."

It would appear, then, if my argument has any weight, that there is nothing self-contradictory, nothing absolutely inconceivable, in the idea of intelligences un cognizable directly by our senses, and yet capable of acting more or less powerfully on matter. There is only to some minds a high improbability, arising from the supposed absence of all proof that there are such beings. Let direct proof be forthcoming, and there seems no reason why the most skeptical philosopher should refuse to accept it. It would be simply a matter to be investigated and tested like any other question of science. The evidence would have to be collected and examined. The results of the inquiries of different observers would have to be compared. The previous character of the observers for knowledge, accuracy, and honesty would have to be weighed, and some, at least, of the facts relied on would have to be re-observed. In this manner only could all sources of error be eliminated, and a doctrine of such overwhelming importance be established as truth. I propose now to inquire whether such proof has been given, and whether the evidence is attainable by any one who may wish to investigate the subject in the only manner by which truth can be reached by direct observation and experiment.

The first fact capable of proof is this: That during the last forty years, while physical science has been progressing with rapid strides, and the growing spirit of rationalism has led to a very general questioning of all facts of a supposed miraculous or supernatural character, a continually increasing number of persons maintain their belief in the existence of beings of the nature of those we have hitherto postulated as a bare possibility. All these persons declare that they have received direct and oft-repeated proofs of the existence of such beings. Most of them tell us they have been convinced against all their previous notions and prepossessions. Many of these persons have been materialists, not believing in the existence of any intelligences disconnected from a visible, tangible form, nor in the continued existence of the mind of man after death. At the present time there are probably

three millions of persons in the United States of America who have received to them satisfactory proofs of the existence of invisible intelligences; and in this country there are many thousands who declare the same thing. A large number of these persons continually receive fresh proofs in the privacy of their own homes, and so much interest is felt in the subject that four periodicals are published in this country, several on the Continent, and a very large number in America, which are exclusively devoted to disseminating information relating to the existence of these invisible intelligences and the means of communicating with them. A little inquiry into the literature of the subject, which is already very extensive, reveals the startling fact that this revival of so-called supernaturalism is not confined to the ignorant or superstitious, or to the lower classes of society. On the contrary, it is rather among the middle and upper classes that the larger proportion of its adherents are to be found; and among those who have declared themselves convinced of the reality of facts such as have been always classed as miracles, are numbers of literary, scientific, and professional men, who always have borne and still continue to bear high characters, are above the imputation either of falsehood or trickery, and have never manifested indications of insanity. Neither is the belief confined to any one religious sect or party. On the contrary, men of all religions and of no religion are alike to be found in the ranks of the believers; and, as already stated, many entire skeptics as to there being any superhuman intelligences in the universe have declared that by the force of direct evidence they have been, however unwillingly, compelled to believe that such intelligences do exist.

Here is certainly a phenomenon altogether unique in the history of the human mind. In examining the evidence of similar prodigies during past ages, we have to make much allowance for early education and the almost universal pre-existing belief in the possibility and frequent occurrence of miracles and supernatural appearances. In the present day it is a notorious fact that among the educated classes, and especially among students of medicine and science, the skepticism on such subjects is almost universal. But what seems the most extraordinary fact of all, and one that would appear to be absolutely inconsistent with any theory of fraud, imposture, or self-delusion, is, that during the forty-seven years which have elapsed since the revival of a belief in the supernatural in America, not one single individual has carefully investigated the subject without accepting the reality of the phenomena, and while thousands have been converted *to* the belief, not one adherent has ever been converted back *from it*. While the peculiarly constituted individuals who are the *media* of the phenomena may be counted by thousands, not one has ever exploded the imposture, if imposture it be. And of the few who receive payment for giving up their time to those who wish to witness the manifestations, it is remarkable that no one has yet tried to be first in the market with a full history of the wonderfully ingenious apparatus and extraordinary dexterity that must have been requisite to make dupes of many millions of people, and to establish a new literature and a new religion. They must be very blind not to see that such a work would be a most profitable speculation.

If there is any one thing which modern philosophy teaches more consistently than another, it is that we can have no *à priori* knowledge of natural phenomena or of natural laws. But to declare that any facts, testified to by several independent witnesses, are impossible, and to act upon this declaration so far as to refuse to examine these facts when opportunity offers, is to lay claim to this very *à priori* knowledge of nature which has been universally given up. One of our most celebrated modern men of science fell into the same error when he made his unfortunate statement that, "before we proceed to consider any question involving physical principles, we should set out with clear ideas of the naturally possible and impossible;" for no man can be sure that, however "clear" his ideas may be in this matter, they will be equally true ones. It was very "clearly impossible" to the minds of

the philosophers at Pisa that a great and a small weight could fall from the top of the heavy tower in the same time; and if this principle is of any use, they were right in disbelieving the evidence of their senses, which assured them that they did; and Galileo, who accepted that evidence, was, to use the words of the same eminent authority, "not only ignorant as respects the education of the judgment, but ignorant of his ignorance." Men who repeatedly, and under conditions which render doubt impossible to them, witness plain facts that their scientific teachers declare cannot be real, but yet decline to disprove by the only means possible, that of a full and impartial examination, may be excused for thinking that theirs is a parallel case to that of Galileo and his opponents.

In order that my readers may judge for themselves whether delusion or deception will best account for these facts, or whether we have indeed made a discovery more important and more extraordinary than any that has yet distinguished the nineteenth century, I propose to bring before them a few witnesses, whose evidence it will be well for them to hear before forming a hasty judgment. I shall call chiefly persons connected with science, art, or literature, and whose intelligence and truthfulness in narrating their own observations are above suspicion; and I would particularly insist that no objections of a general kind can have any weight against direct evidence to special facts, many of which are of such a nature that there is absolutely no choice between believing that they did occur, or imputing to all who declare they witnessed them willful and purposeless falsehood.

Next: IV – OD.FORCE, ANIMAL MAGNETISM, AND CLAIRVOYANCE

Note from the Editor: **The Scientific Aspect of the Supernatural**, was translated into Portuguese by Jäder dos Reis Sampaio and published by [Publicações Lachâtre](#), under the title of [O Aspecto Científico do Sobrenatural](#).

THE CODIFICATION

GENESIS: The Miracles and the Predictions According to Spiritism

BY **Allan Kardec**

Author of "The Spirits' Book," "The Mediums' Book," and "Heaven and Hell."

Translated By The Spirit-Guides of W. J. Colville

[Colby & Rich, Publishers - 1883 - Boston - USA]

The spiritual doctrine is the result of the collective and concordant teachings of spirits.

Science is called in to make the statements in Genesis agree with the laws of nature.

God proves his greatness and power by the immutability of his laws, and not by their suspension.

For God the past and the future are the present.

CHAPTER II

GOD – EXISTENCE OF GOD – THE DIVINE NATURE – PROVIDENCE –

VIEW OF GOD.

Part Three

View of God. – Since God is everywhere, why do we not see him? Upon leaving the earth, shall we see him? Such questions are daily proposed. The first is not difficult to solve. Our material organs have limited perceptions, which render them powerless to see certain things, sometimes even material objects. Thus certain fluids escape our view, as also that of our analytical instruments. However, we do not doubt their existence. We see the effects of the pestilence; but we do not see the fluid which transports it. We see bodies move under the influence of the force of gravitation; but we do not see this force. The spiritual essence of things cannot be perceived by material organs; it is only by the spiritual vision that we can see spirits, and the substances of the immaterial world. Our soul alone can then have perception of God. Does it see him immediately after death? Communications from beyond the tomb can alone inform us. By them we learn that the privilege of seeing him is granted only to the purest souls, and thus very few possess the necessary degree of ethereality upon leaving their terrestrial trial envelope. Some common comparisons will make this the more easily comprehended. He who is in the depth of a valley surrounded by a thick fog does not see the sun; but at a higher point, by aid of the increased light, he judges that the sun is shining. If he climbs the mountain, in proportion as he rises the fog becomes thinner, the light more and more brilliant; but he does not as yet see the sun. When he commences to see it, it is as yet veiled; for the least vapor suffices to conceal its splendor. It is only after rising above the lowering mist, only in and atmosphere of perfect purity, that he sees it in all its brightness.

It is the same with him whose head is enveloped in many veils. At first he sees nothing at all. With every veil which is withdrawn, the light becomes more and more clear; but it is only when the last veil is taken away that he perceives clearly all things. It is still the same with a liquor charged with foreign substances. It becomes turbid at first. At every distillation its transparency is augmented, until, becoming completely purified, it acquires a perfect limpidity, and presents no obstacle to the sight. Thus it is with the soul. The peri-spiritual covering, although invisible and impalpable to us, who are still too gross for certain perceptions, is, in truth, a veritable substance. This covering becomes spiritualized itself in proportion as the soul becomes elevated by morality. The imperfections of the soul are like veils which obscure its light. Every imperfection when removed leaves one veil less; but it is only after becoming completely purified that it enjoys the full plenitude of its faculties. God, being pre-eminently the divine essence, can be perceived in all his splendor only by spirits who have arrived at the highest degree of ethereality.

If imperfect spirits do not see him, it is not that they are farther away from him than others. They and all natural things are submerged in the divine fluid, as we are in the light, only their imperfections are veils which hide him from their sight. When the fog shall have disappeared, they will see him resplendently shine. To attain this vision, there will be no necessity for climbing, nor of seeking him in the depths of infinitude. The spiritual sight, being disembarassed of the moral taints which obscured it, they will see him in every

place; for he is everywhere to be found. He must be as truly upon the earth as elsewhere, if he is everywhere. It takes time for the spirit to purify itself; and the different incarnations are the alembics in the depths of which is left each time some impurity. In quitting his mortal envelope man is not instantaneously despoiled of his imperfections. That is the reason why some see no more of God after death than while living on earth; but, in proportion as spirits become purified, they have a more distinct intuition. If they do not see God, they comprehend him better; the light is less vague. Thus, when spirits say that God forbids them to respond to this question, it is not that God appears to them, or speaks to them, in order to direct them to do, or prohibit them from doing, such and such things. No; but they feel him; they receive the emanation of his thought, as we feel in respect to spirits who envelop us in their fluid, although we do not see them. No man can see God with fleshly eyes. If this favor were accorded any one, it would only be in that trance state when the soul is as much redeemed from the trammels of matter as is possible during incarnation. Such a privilege would only be accorded to advanced souls incarnated for a mission here, and not in expiation for sin.

But, as spirits of the most elevated order shine with a dazzling splendor, it is possible that spirits less elevated, embodied or disembodied, struck with the splendor which surrounds them, have believed that they have seen God himself, as one sees sometimes a minister taken for his sovereign. Under what appearance does God present himself to those who are rendered worthy of such a favor? Is it under any form, - as a human figure, or as a focus of beaming light? This is something that human language is powerless to describe, because there exists no point of comparison which can give an idea of it. We are like blind men whom men seek in vain to instruct concerning the appearance of the light of the sun. Our vocabulary of knowledge is limited to our needs, and to the circle of our ideas. Just as that of the savage could not possibly depict the marvels of civilization, so that of people of the highest culture is too poor to describe the splendors of the heavens, our intelligence too limited to comprehend them, while our too feeble sight would be dazzled by their brightness could we see them as they are.

SPIRITS' MESSAGES

HEAVEN AND HELL

Or

The Divine Justice Vindicated in the Plurality of Existence

Concerning

The passage from the earthly life to spirit-life,
future rewards and punishments,
angels and devils, etc.

Followed by numerous examples of the state of the soul,

during and after death.

BEING THE PRACTICAL CONFIRMATION OF "THE SPIRITS' BOOK"

BY Allan Kardec

Translated from the Sixtieth Thousand - By *Anna Blackwell*
[London: Trubner & Co., Ludgate Hill - 1878]

Part First - Doctrine

CHAPTER IV

HELL

Intuition of future punishments – The Christian Hell imitated from the Hell of the Pagans – Limbo – Picture of the Pagan Hell – Pictures of the Christian Heaven

Part One

Intuition of future punishments

1. In all ages, man has intuitively believed that his future life will be happy or unhappy *according to the good or the evil done by him in the earthly life; but the idea he forms to himself of that future state of existence is always in keeping with the development of his moral sense and with the more or less enlightened views of right and wrong at which he has arrived.* Thus his idea of the rewards and punishments of the future is always the reflex of his predominant tendencies. Warlike nations make the supreme felicity to consist in the honors done to valor; tribes who live by hunting, in an abundance of game; peoples addicted to sensuality, in voluptuous pleasures. While man remains under the dominion of materiality, he can have only an imperfect comprehension of spirit life; he supposes that he will eat and drink, in the other world, as he does in this one, but better things. ¹ At a later period, we find, in the beliefs of mankind concerning the future, a mixture of spirituality and materiality; and accordingly, beside a *heaven* of contemplative beatitude, man then places a *hell*, with its array of physical tortures.

2. Being unable to conceive of anything that he does not see, the man of the primitive period naturally formed his notion of the future upon the present; in order to comprehend the possibility of other modes of existence than those which he saw around him, he would have needed an intellectual development which he could only acquire in the course of ages. The picture which he imagined to himself of the chastisements of the future life was, therefore, only a reflex of the ills of human existence, but deepened and intensified. He brought together, into that picture, all the tortures, all the sufferings, all the afflictions that he saw upon the earth; in hot climates, he imagined a hell of fire, and, in cold ones, a hell of ice. The special sense which, at a later period, enables him to comprehend the spiritual world, not being yet developed, he could only conceive of physical

penalties; and for this reason, with the exception of some slight differences of form, the "hell" of all religions is the same.

The Christian Hell an imitated from the Hell of the Pagans

3. The "Hell" of the Pagans, described and dramatized by the poets of antiquity, is the grandest of the forms that have been assumed by the idea of a *place* of punishment for the souls of men, although its principal features have been perpetuated in the "Hell" of the Christians, which, also, has been sung by their poets. On comparing these two conceptions of the infernal regions, we find them to be closely allied, notwithstanding their differences of names and details; in both, physical fire is the basis of the tortures of the damned, because it is the cause of the most excruciating suffering. But, strange to say, the Christians have made their hell, in many respects, still more horrible than that of the Pagans. The latter had in their hell the Sieve of the Danäides, Ixion's Wheel, the Stone of Sisyphus, etc.; but these were merely the torments of individuals, whereas the Christian hell has its boiling cauldrons for the vast majority of the human race, and the Christian "angels" lift up the covers of those receptacles to feast their eyes with the contortions of the damned, ² which are also watched by the "elect" with lively satisfaction, ³ while their God hears, unmoved, the groans that will ascend, throughout eternity, from the bottomless pit! The Pagans never depicted the dwellers in the Elysian Fields as gloating over the horrors of Tartarus.

4. Like the Pagans, the Christians have their king of the Infernal Regions, Satan; with the difference, viz., that Pluto, while governing the gloomy realm which had fallen to his share, was not malicious; he retained as captive those who had done wickedly, because it was his mission to do so; but he did not seek to draw men into evil in order to give himself the pleasure of seeing them suffer; Whereas Satan recruits his victims everywhere, and takes pleasure in having them tortured by his legions of demons, who are armed with pitchforks for the purpose of stirring them about in the fire. Christian theologians have gravely discussed the nature of the "fire," which burns the damned incessantly, and yet does not consume them; some of them have even gone so far as to inquire whether that fire may not perhaps be of bitumen. ⁴

5. The same considerations which led the Ancients to localize the realm of felicity led them also to imagine a place of torment, like the former, fixed, localized, and circumscribed; and, having placed their heaven "on high," they naturally placed their hell "down below," that is to say, in the center of the earth, of which certain dark and gloomy caverns were supposed to be the entrance. The Christians, also, for a long time, placed the region of perdition in the center of the earth. Nor were these the only analogies between the Pagan and the Christian conceptions of hell.

The hell of the Pagans contained, on the one hand, the Elysian Fields, on the other, Tartarus; Olympus, the dwelling-place of the gods and of deified men, was in the "upper regions." According to *the letter* of the Gospels, Jesus *descended* into Hades, into a region *below the surface of the earth*, on a mission to the souls who were awaiting his coming. The hell of the Christians, like that of the Pagans, was, therefore, in the beginning, not simply a place of torment, but, like the latter, included "the lower regions." And the Christian heaven, the abode of the angels and the saints, was also, like the Pagan Olympus, up "on high," somewhere beyond the region of the stars, which, as previously remarked, was supposed to be limited.

6. This mixture of Pagan and Christian ideas should cause us no surprise. Jesus could not, at once, destroy beliefs that had taken firm root in the human mind. The men of his day lacked the scientific knowledge which alone could enable them to conceive of the infinity of space and the infinity of worlds. The earth was, for them, the center of the

universe. They knew nothing of its form or of its internal structure; for them, the universe was limited to what they saw around them, and their notions, in regard to the future, could not extend beyond the narrow circle of their knowledge. It was consequently impossible for Jesus to initiate them into the truth of things; and being unwilling, on the other hand, to give the sanction of his authority to the prejudices of his hearers, he abstained from touching on subjects for which they were unprepared. Leaving to time the work of rectifying their ideas, he confined himself to vague allusions to the future happiness of the good, and to the punishments that awaited the wicked; but we nowhere find, in his teachings, the distinct pictures of corporeal tortures which the Christian churches have made an article of their creed.

We have seen how it is that the ideas of the Pagan hell have been perpetuated to the present day. The diffusion of knowledge, which is the characteristic of modern times, and the general development of human intelligence, were indispensable to the clearing away of those ideas, by showing them to be contrary both to reason and our intuitive sense of the wisdom and goodness of God, and to the discoveries of science. But as up to this time, no sound and rational basis of belief has been substituted in place of those old ideas, the long period of blind belief has been followed by a transitional period of unbelief, to which the new revelation, now being ushered in by spiritism, is destined to put an end. It was necessary to demolish the old belief before bringing in the new; for true ideas are more readily accepted by those who have no belief, and who feel the need of some sound basis of conviction, than by those who cherish a robust belief in absurdities.

7. Owing to their having localized their idea of "Heaven" and of "Hell," the various Christian sects have been led to admit the existence of only two situations for the souls of the departed – viz., *perfect happiness* and *utter misery*. Purgatory, according to the Catholic dogma, is only a temporary and intermediate position, on quitting which, the soul goes, without any other transition, into the abode of the Blest. It could not do otherwise, according to the belief which assumes that the fate of the soul is decided for ever at death. If there are but two abodes for souls, - viz., that of the elect and that of the damned, - and if the fate of the soul, as belonging to the one or the other category, is definitively settled at death, it is impossible to admit the existence of degrees in either of those abodes; for, if such degrees existed, it must be possible for the soul to pass through them, and, consequently, to progress; but, if the soul can progress after death, its state, on dying, is not definitive, since, if it were definitive, progress would be impossible. Jesus settled this weighty question when he said, "*In my Father's house are many mansions.*" 5

¹ A little Savoyard, to whom the village priest was describing the delights of the future life, asked him whether everybody "eat white bread there, as they do in Paris?"

² A sermon preached, in 1860, by an eminent Catholic divine, at Montpellier, *seat of a University Faculty*.

³ "The blessed, without quitting they occupy, will yet quit it in a certain manner – through the intelligence and the distinctness of vision with which they are endowed – in order to contemplate the tortures of the damned; and, on seeing these, they will not only *not feel any sorrow*, but they will be overwhelmed with joy and will give thanks to God for their own happiness in witnessing the unutterable misery of the impious. SAINT THOMAS AQUINAS.

⁴ In a sermon preached in Paris in 1861.

⁵ Vide *The Gospel Explained by Spirits*, chap. iii.

Part Second - Examples

CHAPTER VII

[**Obdurate Spirits**]

XUMÈNE.

[Bordeaux, 1862]

A spirit who presented himself spontaneously, to the medium, accustomed to manifestations of this nature on the part of inferior spirits brought to him, by his Guide, for his own instruction and for their amendment.

Q. Who are you? Is this name that of a man or a woman?

A. Of a man, and one who is utterly miserable. I am undergoing all the torments of hell.

Q. Hell has no existence. How, then, can you be undergoing its torments?

A. A useless question.

Q. If I understand what you mean, an explanation of your words may be useful for others.

A. I don't care for them.

Q. Is not selfishness among the causes of your sufferings?

A. Perhaps so.

Q. If you wish to be relieved from your misery, you must begin by getting rid of your evil tendencies.

A. Don't trouble yourself about them; they are no business of yours. Begin by praying for me, as you do for the others; we will see about the rest, by and by.

Q. If you do not help me by your repentance, prayer will avail you very little.

A. If you talk instead of praying, you will not do much towards helping me to advance.

Q. Do you really wish to advance?

A. Perhaps I do; I don't know. Let me see whether prayer relieves suffering; that's the essential thing.

Q. Well, then, join your mental action to mine, with the firm determination to obtain relief.

A. Go ahead.

(After a prayer by the Medium)

Q. Are you satisfied?

A. Not as I wish to be.

Q. A remedy, when first employed, cannot cure a disease of long standing.

A. May be so.

Q. Would you like to come again?

A. Yes; if you call me.

The Medium's Guide. – You will have a good deal of trouble with this hardened spirit; but there would not be much glory in saving those who are not lost. Courage! Persevere, and you will succeed. There are none so bad that they cannot be brought back into the right road by persuasion and example; for the most perverse must necessarily end by amending in course of time; if you do not succeed at once, in bringing them back to better sentiments (which is often impossible), the labor you have bestowed on them is never lost. The ideas you have suggested to them stir their minds and make them reflect, in spite of themselves; they are seeds that will grow and fructify, sooner or later. A rock is not broken down by the first stroke of the pickaxe.

And what I have just said is equally true of spirits incarnate, and explains how it is that spiritism, even among its firmest believers, does not always make people perfect all at once. Belief is the first step; the application of that belief comes next, and the transformation of character follows in its turn; but, in many cases, this transformation will only be accomplished, even by believers, after a new return into the spirit-world.

Among obdurate spirits, all are not entirely perverted and actively wicked. A great many of them, without trying to do much harm, lag behind through pride, indifference, or apathy. They are none the less unhappy; for they suffer all the more from their inertia because they have not the interests of the earthly life. The prospect of infinity renders their position intolerable, and yet they have neither the strength, nor the will, to change it. It is the spirits of this class who, when incarnated, lead idle and aimless lives, useless alike to themselves and to others, and who often end by committing suicide, without any serious motive, and simply from weariness and disgust of life.

Spirits of this character are usually more difficult to bring back to the path of progress than those who are decidedly and actively bade, because these latter, at least, possess energy, and, when once they have been mad to see the truth, they are as ardent in the pursuit of goodness as they have been in the service of evil. Inactive spirits will doubtless need a good many existences before they can accomplish any marked amount of progress; but, little by little, vanquished by weariness, as others are vanquished by suffering, they will seek for sources of interest in active occupation which, in course of time, will become for them a need, and they will thus be brought, at length, into the spontaneous love of activity and usefulness that is the characteristic, and the source of the happiness, of the higher ranks of the spirit-world.

Death of the Physical Body

Silver Birch has answered several very interesting questions regarding the physical body after decease. One of the questions asked was, when is it considered that a person is dead? His reply was:-

"As you know, it is the spirit, which is the Divine Essence, that enables you to live. You have a physical body that exists only because it is animated by the spirit. When the spirit finally withdraws, and I stress finally, because temporarily it does so whilst you are asleep and returns when you awaken, when the spirit does finally withdraw, death comes to the physical body because the animation has gone.

"Therefore, when the cord connecting the spirit to the physical body is cut, when that severance takes place, death occurs and there is nothing, and nobody in Your World who can, by any means, enable the physical body to live again."

A question, that has been bothering a lot of people, was asked regarding the treatment of the body after physical death. Some people think that it is necessary to leave the body in a state of peace for a given amount of time before it is interfered with, and there is a great deal of concern because of the present-day tendency to rush people into operating theatres and laboratories, to open them up almost as soon as they have died, either for transplant, experimental or tutorial purposes. Silver Birch was asked if this was in any way harmful to the spirit if the body is interfered with so soon after death? He replied:-

"It depends on whether the individual has any knowledge of spiritual matters. If there is ignorance, there can be temporary harm affected to the spirit, because even when the cord connecting the physical and spirit bodies is cut, there is still a certain amount of interplay between the two forms of life. Generally it is considered advisable, where there is complete ignorance of spiritual knowledge, for an interval of three days to elapse before there is either burial or cremation.

"What happens after that is unimportant. If people wish to donate their bodies for purposes which can be of service to others, that is a matter for the individual to decide. But let me also say this, there is a time for you to be born and there is a time for you to die. If the time for you to die is reached, then transplants will never succeed in maintaining you in Your World beyond the time of your scheduled decease".

Mercian St George [Mercian Newsletter – 19th April, 2009]

NEWS, EVENTS & MISCELLANEOUS

NEW INTRODUCTORY STUDY GROUP ON SPIRITISM

Studying "The Spirits' Book"

MONDAYS – Starting on May 11th, 2009

Study Groups hosted by the Spiritist Society of San Diego are a wonderful opportunity to separate one evening of your busy week to talk about Spirituality.

In this specific group, we will study The Spirits' Book, which is the first and probably the most important book of the Spiritist Codification. It contains 1019 questions and answers that were compiled by Allan Kardec during the 1850's.

This study group is designed to cover all introductory aspects of Spiritism, allowing new students to understand why and how the philosophy evolved into today's format.

It is important to notice that experience has shown us that students who have already been exposed to the teachings also benefit a great deal of the discussions and quite often are able to broaden their awareness and the practical applications of Spirituality in their lives.

If you are interested about this study group, send an email to sssd@sssandiego.org including the subject "**Study Group**" or simply ask about it in one of our meetings.

The Study Group is offered at No Cost to our community, but you are extremely encouraged to buy a copy of The Spirits' Book (\$12.00 in our Bookstore). The typical study group lasts 5 to 7 months.

To give you a nice perspective about the kind of topics we will be talking about, we have included here a link to the website of the [Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia](#), which offers a description of the basics comprised in The Spirits' Book. Most of the concepts described there are in line with the teachings, although a few could be polished a little more. Anyway, the idea is to give you "food for thought".

[Spiritist Society of San Diego](#)

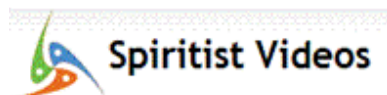
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FIRST "VIDEO TUBE" SPIRITIST WEBSITE

The [Spiritist Society of Baltimore](#) started another interesting initiative by launching the "Video Tube," a website with a variety of videos regarding spiritism.

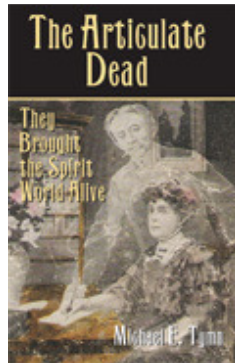
What is Spiritist Videos?

The [SpiritistVideos.com](#) (SV) is the first videotube Spiritist resources for those who want to learn more about the Spiritist Philosophy. All listed videos are from several events, that include: Workshops, Special Talks, Documentaries, Seminars, Symposium, etc. Weekly new videos are expected to be uploaded, please stay tuned!



"THE ARTICULATE DEAD"

An Interesting Book on Mediums and Psychical Research



During the late 19th and early 20th centuries, there were dynamic and evidential forms of spirit communication. A number of distinguished scientists and scholars studied some of the best mediums and concluded they were genuine. Unfortunately, there were also many charlatans and it was difficult for the general public to distinguish between the real mediums and the frauds. Scientific and religious fundamentalists along with a cynical press, were constantly on the attack, driving the genuine mediums underground or forcing them to abandon their gift.

In *The Articulate Dead*, Michael E. Tynn examines several of the best mediums of yesteryear and the scientific research surrounding them. A number of very intriguing stories unfold, including spirits directing an archaeologist in the uncovering of the ruins of Glastonbury Abbey, spirits leading a researcher to crosses buried by American Indians, a deceased author completing his books through a medium, a Titanic victim coming back to tell about his new environment, and an afterlife researcher continuing his work after dying, to name just a few.

Note from the Editor: The *Chapter Two* of this book – *The Epidemic Hits France* – is about Allan Kardec and his works on the codification of Spiritism. The book can be purchased either directly at its Publisher – [Galde Press, Inc.](http://GaldePress.com), or at the website of Amazon.com.

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