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HEAD QUOTATION

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.

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

EDITORIAL

Reincarnation Means Hope

The rational doctrine of reincarnation increasingly wins the hearts and minds of people throughout the world. Despite the systematic resistance from sectors of the scientific establishment, as well as from orthodox religions, it slowly imposes itself with the irresistible power of facts. The evidences and the facts collected through serious and persistent research undertaken by courageous men of science amounts greatly in favor of the hypothesis of reincarnation.

Although the concept of reincarnation has a strong appeal to one's mind due to its undeniable rationality, it will take time to win over the minds of the wide majority of mankind. It is understandable that this is so, for the great ideas which change people's way of thinking does not happen on impulse. There is enormous resistance to change, interests at stake, and, after all, the inertia in which men stand is a great one, who prefer to drift in this world with trivial concerns, rather than accepting the unavoidable responsibilities that

will eventually propel them in the direction of spiritual progress. Nevertheless, the facts regarding reincarnation possess in themselves an irresistible power, and neither men's idleness, nor any philosophical, scientific or religious dogma are capable of obstructing the acceptance of such a powerful idea, which is supported by an enormous set of facts observed carefully for centuries.

It is important emphasize here that reincarnation was not a creation of any religious or philosophical movement, it is rather a natural law that since immemorial times has appealed to mankind's mind, and men of the rank of Socrates, Plato and Pythagoras, to mention a few, have surrendered to its rational charm. As is always the case with great ideas rooted in the true Universal Spiritual Laws, the concept of reincarnation has suffered the intrusion of man's ideas and prejudices, who from time to time fabricates his own erroneous interpretations, resulting in misconception and superstition.

Neither Allan Kardec, the codifier of the Spiritist Doctrine, nor Spiritism discovered or invent reincarnation. On the contrary, the codifier did not accept it initially, but changed his mind after a careful study and persistent research. The teachings conveyed by the superior spirits who presided the works of the Codification were responsible for the introduction of the concept of reincarnation in the context of the western world, in a clear and reasonable way, detaching it from the misconception and the superstition that once prevailed. In addition, these teachings made it clear that the concept of reincarnation, instead of challenging the basic tenets of true Christianity, rather clarifies certain aspects of it, which would be obscure in the context of the message of Christ if these teachings were to be lack.

Regardless of all the resistance that still obstructs the way for many to accept reincarnation and make the world a better one, let us not lose focus of our responsibilities, for the Creator gives each and every one of us the time we will need to surrender to the Truth. For those of us who already have surrendered to the magnanimity of the Creator for such a blessing, let us do our best in order to help our brothers and sisters in our way, not losing sight that we always ought to respect one another's free will.

Much peace,
The GEAE Editors

ARTICLES

Children's Reports of Past-Lives Memories: A Review

TUCKER JB

Division of Perceptual Studies, Department of Psychiatry and Neurobehavioral Sciences,
University of Virginia, Charlottesville, VA.

ABSTRACT

Researchers have studied young children's reports of past-life memories for the last 45 Years. The children usually describe a recent, ordinary life, and many of them have given enough details so that one particular deceased individual has been identified to match the children's statements. These cases occur worldwide, and while they are easiest to find in cultures with a belief in reincarnation, many cases have been found in the West as well. This review explores the facets of this phenomenon and presents several recent American cases.

INTRODUCTION

In 1960, Ian Stevenson, then chairman of the Department of Psychiatry at the University of Virginia, wrote a review of 44 previously-published cases of individuals who had reported memories of previous lives.(1) He then began to hear of new cases and the following year took a trip to India after learning of five cases. He was there for four weeks and found 25. He achieved similar results in Ceylon (Sri Lanka) and realized that the phenomenon was much more common than anyone had known.

He took an analytical approach to the cases. Psychiatrist Harold Lief later described him as "a methodical, careful, even cautious, investigator, whose personality is on the obsessive side."(2) He never assumed he knew the cause of the cases but instead simply worked to determine precisely what the facts of each case were. He made no grand claims about the work, as indicated by the title of his first book on the phenomenon, *Twenty Cases Suggestive of Reincarnation*.(3)

Though Stevenson's efforts did not produce mainstream acceptance of his work, it did garner some respect in mainstream circles. *JAMA*, the journal of the American Medical Association, reviewed one of his books in 1975 and stated that "in regard to reincarnation he has painstakingly and unemotionally collected a detailed series of cases...in which the evidence is difficult to explain on any other grounds."(4) In addition, Carl Sagan, the late astronomer, was very skeptical of non-mainstream work but wrote, "There are three claims in the [parapsychology] field which, in my opinion, deserve serious study," with the third being "that young children sometimes report details of a previous life, which upon checking turn out to be accurate and which they could not have known about in any other way than reincarnation."(5)

Stevenson retired in 2002 but continued to write, including a final paper summarizing his career.(6) He died in 2007, but several researchers are continuing the study of this phenomenon that he began more than 45 years ago.(7-9)

TYPICAL FEATURES

The subjects in these cases tend to be young children. They typically begin describing a previous life when they are two or three years old, and they usually stop by the age of 6-7. They make the statements spontaneously without the use of hypnotic regression. They describe recent lives, with the median interval between the death of the previous individual and the birth of the child being only 16 months. They also describe ordinary lives, usually in the same country. The one part of the life that is often out of the ordinary is the mode of death, as 70% of the deaths are by unnatural means.

Some subjects report having been deceased family members, while others say they were strangers in another location. If they give enough details, such as the name of that location, then people have often gone there and identified a deceased individual, the *previous personality*, whose life appears to match the statements the child made.

Over 2500 cases have been investigated worldwide. They are easiest to find in cultures with a belief in reincarnation, and the places that have produced the most cases include India, Sri Lanka, Turkey, Lebanon, Thailand, and Burma (Myanmar). Cases have been found wherever anyone has looked for them, including all continents except Antarctica. Stevenson published a book of European cases,(10) and numerous cases have been found in the U.S. as well.(11, 12). Several of these will be reviewed in a later section. Cases in the West seem to be less common, but this may be because they are harder to find, as some parents are reluctant to disclose, even to close friends and family at times, what their children have said.

When cases are investigated, history is obtained from as many people as possible. This includes the subjects, if the children are willing and able to tell investigators about the purported memories, as well as their parents and others who have heard the children describing past-life memories. The other side of the case is then investigated, as the previous family is interviewed to determine how accurate the child's statements are for the life of the previous personality. Attempts are made to obtain autopsies or medical records of the previous personality if they are relevant. If the two families have not yet met, tests can also be conducted to see if the subject can recognize people from the previous life.

BIRTHMARKS AND BIRTH DEFECTS

In addition to the purported memories, a number of the children have had birthmarks or birth defects that appeared to match wounds, usually fatal ones, suffered by the previous personalities. Stevenson published a 2,200-page work that documented over 200 such cases,(13) as well as a shorter synopsis.(14) Examples include a girl, born with markedly malformed fingers, who seemed to remember being a man whose fingers were cut off and a boy, born with stubs for fingers on his right hand, who seemed to remember the life of a boy in another village who lost the fingers of his right hand in a fodder-chopping machine.

Another example is Chanai Choomalaiwong, a boy from Thailand. When he was three years old, he began saying that he had been a teacher named Bua Kai who had been shot and killed one day as he rode his bicycle to school. He begged to be taken to his parents, that is, Bua Kai's parents, and he named the village where he said they lived. Eventually, he and his grandmother took a bus that stopped in a town near that village. His grandmother reported that after they got off the bus, Chanai led her to a house where an older couple lived. Chanai appeared to recognize the couple, who were the parents of Bua Kai Lawnak, a teacher who had been shot and killed on the way to school five years before Chanai was born.

No autopsy report was available for Bua Kai Lawnak, so Stevenson interviewed witnesses who saw the body. His widow reported that the doctor involved in the case said that her husband had been shot from behind because the small, round wound on the back of his head was a typical entry wound while the larger, more-irregularly shaped wound on his forehead was typical of an exit wound.

Chanai was born with two birthmarks, a small, round birthmark on the back of his head, and a larger, more irregularly-shaped one toward the front.

PAST-LIFE STATEMENTS

The average age when subjects begin reporting a past life is 35 months. Some make their statements with detachment, but many show strong emotional involvement in their claims. Some cry and beg to be taken to what they say is their previous family. Others show intense anger, particularly toward killers in cases in which the previous personality was murdered. In general, the stronger the evidence for a connection to the previous life, the more emotion the child shows when talking about that life.(15) Even when the children do show strong emotion, many of them show great intensity one moment, followed by

ordinary play a few minutes later. Many seem to need to be in a certain frame of mind to access the memories, and although some are able to recall them on demand, others are not.

The subjects usually stop making their pastlife statements by the age of 6-7, and most seem to lose the purported memories. This is the age when children start school and begin having more experiences in the current life, as well as when they tend to lose their early childhood memories. The purported past-life memories often last longer in cases in which the previous personality has been identified, as contact between the two families appears to keep them going longer.

An example of a case with prominent statements is one Stevenson studied in India, that of Kumkum Verma.(16) She lived in a village, but when she was 3 ½ years old, she began saying that she had lived in Darbhanga, a city of 200,000 people that was 25 miles away. She named the district of the city where she said she had lived. It was one of artisans and craftsmen, and her family did not know anyone from there. An aunt recorded a number of her statements before anyone attempted to verify them, and though some of her notes were lost, Stevenson was able to get a copy of 18 statements that Kumkum had made. They included her son's name in the life she was describing and the fact that he worked with a hammer, her grandson's name, the town where her father had lived, and personal details such as having an iron safe at home, a sword hanging near the cot where she slept, and a pet snake to which she fed milk.

An employee of a friend of Kumkum's father was from the district in Darbhanga that Kumkum had named, and he went there to search for the previous personality. He found that a woman had died five years before Kumkum was born whose life matched all of the details listed above. Kumkum's father, a landowner and homeopathic physician, visited the family in Darbhanga once but never allowed Kumkum to go, apparently in part because he was not proud that his daughter seemed to remember the life of a blacksmith's wife.

THEMES OF THE PAST-LIFE STATEMENTS

When the subjects talk about a previous life, they tend to discuss events at the end of the life. Almost 75% give details of the death, and even more if the death was violent. (17) They are also more likely to talk about people from the end of that life than from earlier, so a child who describes dying as an adult is more likely to talk about a spouse or children than about parents.

In addition, 20% of the subjects report memories of events between lives.(12) Some say they stayed near to where the previous personality lived or died, and they may describe a funeral or other events involving the family. One subject in Thailand, Ratana Wongsombat, complained that "her" ashes had been scattered rather than buried. In fact, the previous personality had requested that her ashes be buried under the Bo Tree at her temple. Her daughter found the tree's root system so extensive that she was unable to bury the remains, so she scattered them instead.(18) Another subject, Bongkuch Promsin, said he spent seven years over a bamboo tree near where the previous personality's body had been dumped after he was killed, before following his future father home in the rain. Bongkuch's father had in fact attended a meeting in that area on a rainy day during the month when Bongkuch was conceived.(18) Other children have talked of going to other realms and seeing other entities there, but those reports are unverifiable.

PAST-LIFE BEHAVIORS

Many subjects display behaviors that appear connected to the lives they describe. Some show emotions toward various members of the previous family that are appropriate for the relationships that the previous personality had with them, so the children may be deferential toward the previous parents or husband but bossy toward younger siblings of

the previous personality, even though they are much older than the subject. These emotions usually dissipate as the children grow older, but there are exceptions. In at least one case, Maung Aye Kyaw of Burma, the child grew up to marry the widow of the previous personality.(13)

Another common behavioral feature is a phobia toward the mode of death of the previous personality. Over 35% of subjects show such phobias in cases involving deaths by unnatural means. These are particularly prevalent in drowning cases, with 31 out of 53 showing a fear of being in water.(12)

Some subjects display likes and dislikes that are similar to those of the previous personality. For example, Stevenson and Keil studied 24 cases of Burmese children who claimed they were Japanese soldiers killed in Burma during World War II, and some of them complained about the spicy Burmese food and asked for raw fish instead.(19) Some subjects also show an unfortunate interest in addictive substances such as alcohol and tobacco if the previous personality consumed them, including one, Sujith Jayaratne, whose neighbor obliged the young boy's requests for alcohol until his grandmother intervened.(20)

Children often engage in play that appears connected to their past-life reports, particularly play that involves the occupation of the previous personality.(21) One boy, Parmod Sharma, became preoccupied with his play as a biscuit shopkeeper and neglected his schoolwork so much that his academic performance never seemed to recover.(3) Occasionally, children also reenact the death scene of the previous personality, appearing to show posttraumatic play.

In cases in which children report past lives as members of the opposite sex, the subjects often show behaviors appropriate for that sex. At times, they are extreme enough to warrant a diagnosis of gender identity disorder.(22) The cross-gender behavior may continue even into adulthood, but overall, most of the subjects go on to lead perfectly normal lives.

RECENT AMERICAN CASES

Since the Division of Perceptual Studies set up its website at the University of Virginia, dozens of American parents have sent in reports about their children, usually by e-mail. Most of the cases have not been investigated, and very limited information is available on some of them. Nonetheless, they provide a view of what American cases of this type involve.

The subjects have been boys in 57% of the cases, compared to 54% of American cases reported previously(11) and 61% of cases worldwide. 86% of the subjects were 4 years of age or younger when they began describing a previous life. Of those who have described a mode of death, 90% reported unnatural ones. A previous personality has been identified in only 16 cases, and in 14 of those, he or she was a deceased family member. In cases in which the parents' views about reincarnation are known, only 42% believed in it before their children began talking about past-life experiences. Below are three cases that serve as examples of the phenomenon in the U.S.

The case of PM

PM is a boy born with three birthmarks that appeared to match lesions on his half-brother, who had died with neuroblastoma twelve years before PM's birth. The illness was diagnosed after the half-brother began limping and then suffered a pathological fracture of his left tibia. He underwent a biopsy of a nodule on his scalp above his right ear and received chemotherapy through a central line in his right external jugular vein. At the time of his death at two years of age, he was blind in his left eye.

PM was born with a swelling 1 cm in diameter above his right ear and a dark, slanting mark on the lower right anterior surface of his neck. He also had a corneal leukoma that caused

him to be virtually blind in his left eye. In addition, he limped when he learned to walk, as if sparing his left leg. At around the age of 4 ½, PM talked to his mother about wanting to return to the family's previous home, which he described accurately, and he also told of the scalp surgery that his half-brother had undergone.(9)

The case of Sam Taylor

Sam Taylor was born 18 months after his paternal grandfather died. When he was 1 ½ years old, he looked up as his father was changing his diaper one day and said, "When I was your age, I used to change your diapers." He began talking more about having been his grandfather. He eventually told details of his grandfather's life that his parents felt certain he could not have learned through normal means, such as the fact that his grandfather's sister had been murdered and that his grandmother had used a food processor to make milkshakes for his grandfather every day at the end of his life.

When Sam was 4 ½ years old, his grandmother died, and his father went out to take care of her estate and then returned home with a group of family pictures. Sam's mother had them spread out one evening when Sam began pointing at pictures of his grandfather and saying, "That's me!" To test him, his mother showed him a class picture that included 16 boys, and Sam was able to pick his grandfather out of the group.(12)

The case of Kendra Carter

Kendra Carter began swimming lessons when she was 4 ½ years old and seemed to attach immediately to her coach. She began saying that the coach's baby had died and that she had been sick and pushed her baby out. Kendra's mother had always been with her at the lessons, and when she asked Kendra how she knew these things, Kendra replied, "I'm the baby that was in her tummy." She went on to describe an abortion, and her mother found out later that the coach had had an abortion nine years before Kendra was born.

Kendra became happy and bubbly when she was with the coach but quiet otherwise, and her mother let her spend more and more time with the coach until she was staying with her three nights a week. Eventually, the coach had a falling out with Kendra's mother and cut off contact with the family. Kendra then went into a depression and did not speak for 4 ½ months. The coach reestablished more limited contact at that point, and Kendra slowly began talking again and participating in activities.(12)

The American cases demonstrate that children's reports of past-life memories are not purely a cultural phenomenon. They occur in a culture without a general belief in reincarnation and often in families without a belief either. Kendra Carter's mother, a conservative Christian, was appalled by the idea of reincarnation and felt she was committing a sin to even buy a book on the topic.

The American cases have features in common with those from other places. The age of speaking and the content of the statements about the previous life, such as a focus on the end of that life, are the same, and the cases can include birthmarks or birth defects and the emotional and behavioral features that the others do. One difference is that even though American subjects make as many statements on average about the life they report as do subjects from other countries, they tend to give few names from it. This is the likely cause for the fact that a previous personality has rarely been identified in the American cases, except when the children have claimed to have been deceased relatives. Overall, however, the American cases appear to be examples of the same phenomenon as those from other parts of the world.

QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CASES

Some have challenged this work and suggested that the children's purported memories are simply fantasies that their parents misinterpret, something particularly likely to occur in regions of the world with a general belief in reincarnation. This possibility warrants serious consideration in cases in which a previous personality was not found, either because the child's statements were not specific enough to produce an identification or because they did not seem to fit the life of any actual person who had died. The cases in which a previous personality has been identified require other explanations. Brody suggested a scenario in which children from cultures with a belief in reincarnation have fantasies of previous lives that are encouraged by their parents, who then find families with a deceased member of the same general description, exchange information with the families, and end up crediting the children with more specific and more accurate information about the previous personality than the children actually possessed.(23) Such a process would not explain the birthmarks and birth defects some subjects have, cases in which written records were made of the children's statements before the families met, or the strong emotional ties to the previous families that many of the children evince before those families have been found. In addition, two studies that addressed this possibility did not find evidence to support it.(24, 25)

Other questions exist. Since the purported past-life memories often involve recent, unnatural deaths, those features appear to be associated either with the carryover of memories from previous lives through unknown mechanisms or with the process whereby children develop a delusion about having had a previous life. If the memories are genuine, the cases suggest that unnatural deaths increase the likelihood of a rapid return with intact memories. They say little, however, about the possibilities for individuals who do not have such memories. The characteristics seen in the cases, such as the short interval between lives, may not generalize to other people. In fact, the possible past-life memories in these cases do not indicate whether other individuals reincarnate at all, even though they do contribute to the body of evidence for the survival of consciousness after death in at least some instances.

CONCLUSION

Stevenson wrote that he had become persuaded that "reincarnation is the best—even though not the only—explanation for the stronger cases we have investigated."(17, p. 254) Reincarnation is a word that has various associations connected to it, but regardless of the terminology used, the cases do seem to provide evidence that memories, emotions, and even physical traumas can, at least under certain circumstances, carry over from one life to another. The processes that would be involved in such a transfer of consciousness are completely unknown, and they await further elucidation.

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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**

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THE SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF THE SUPERNATURAL

IV

OD-FORCE, ANIMAL MAGNETISM, AND CLAIRVOYANCE

Before proceeding to adduce the evidence of those persons who have witnessed phenomena which, if real, can only be attributed to preter-human intelligences, it will be well to take note of a series of curious observations on human beings, which prove that certain individuals are gifted with unusual powers of perception, sometimes by the ordinary senses leading to the discovery of new forces in nature, sometimes in a manner which no abnormal power of the ordinary senses will account for, but which imply the existence of faculties in the human mind of a nature analogous to those which are generally termed supernatural, and are attributed to the action of disembodied intelligences. It will be seen that we are thus naturally led up to higher phenomena, and are enabled, to some extent, to bridge over the great gulf between the so-called natural and supernatural.

I wish first to call my reader's attention to the researches of Baron Reichenbach, as detailed in Dr. Gregory's translation of his elaborate work. He observed that persons in a peculiar nervous condition experienced well-marked and definite sensations on contact with magnets and crystals, and in total darkness saw luminous emanations from them. He afterwards found that numbers of persons in perfect health and of superior intellect could perceive the same phenomena. As an example, I may mention that among the numerous persons experimented on by Baron Reichenbach were :

Dr. ENDLICHER, Professor of Botany and Director of the Botanic Garden of Vienna.
Dr. NIED, a Physician at Vienna, in extensive practice, very active and healthy.

M. WILHELM HOCHSTETTER, son of Professor Hochstetter of Esslingen.
M. THEODORE KOTSCHY, a Clergyman, Botanist, and well known traveler in Africa and Persia; a powerful, vigorous, perfectly healthy man.
Dr. Huss, Professor of Clinical Medicine, Stockholm, and Physician to the King of Sweden.
Dr. RAGSKY, Professor of Chemistry in the Medical and Surgical Josephakademie in Vienna.
M. CONSTANTIN DELHEZ, a French Philologist, residing in Vienna.
M. ERNEST PAUER, Consistorial Councilor, Vienna.
M. GUSTAV AUSCHNETZ, Artist, Vienna.
BARON VON OBERLAENDER, Forest Superintendent in Moravia.

All these saw the lights and flames on magnets, and described the various details of their comparative size, form, and color, their relative magnitude on the positive and negative poles, and their appearance under various conditions, such as combinations of several magnets, images formed by lenses, &c.; and their evidence exactly confirmed the descriptions already given by the "sensitive" patients of a lower class, whose testimony had been objected to, when the observations were first published.

In addition to these, Dr. Diesing, Curator in the Imperial Academy of Natural History at Vienna, and the Chevalier Hubert von Rainer, Barrister of Klagenfurt, did not see the luminous phenomena, but were highly sensitive to the various sensations excited by magnets and crystals. About fifty other persons in all conditions of life, of all ages, and of both sexes, saw and felt the same phenomena. In an elaborate review of Reichenbach's work in the *British and Foreign Medico-Chirurgical Review*, the evidence of these twelve gentlemen, men of position and science, and three of them medical men, is *completely ignored*, and it is again and again asserted that the phenomena are *subjective*, or purely imaginary. The only particle of argument to support this view is, that a mesmeric patient was *by suggestion* made to see "lights" as well without as with a magnet. It appears to me that it would be as reasonable to tell Gordon Gumming or Dr. Livingstone that they had never seen a real lion, because, by suggestion, a score of mesmeric patients can be made to believe they see lions in a lecture-room. Unless it can be proved that Reichenbach and these twelve gentlemen have none of them sense enough to apply simple tests (which, however, the details of the experiments show were again and again applied), I do not see how the general objections made in the above-mentioned article, that Reichenbach is not a physiologist, and that he did not apply sufficient tests, can have the slightest weight against the mass of evidence he adduces. It is certainly not creditable to modern science that these elaborate investigations should be rejected without a particle of disproof; and we can only impute it to the distasteful character of some of the higher phenomena produced, and which it is still the fashion of professors of the physical sciences to ignore without examination. I have seen it stated also, that Reichenbach's theory has been disproved by the use of an electro-magnet, and that a patient could not tell whether the current was on or off. But there is the detail of this experiment published, and how often has it been confirmed, and under what conditions? And if true in one case, how does it affect the question when similar tests were applied to Reichenbach's patients, and how does it apply to facts like this, which Reichenbach gives literally by the hundred? "Prof. D. Endlicher saw on the poles of an electro-magnet flames forty inches high, unsteady, exhibiting a rich play of colors, and ending in a luminous smoke, which rose to the ceiling and illuminated it" (Gregory's Trans., p. 342). The least the deniers of the facts can do is to request these well-known individuals who gave their evidence to Reichenbach to repeat the experiments again under exactly similar conditions, as no doubt in the interests of science they would be willing to do. If then, by *suggestion*, they can all be led to describe equally well defined and varied appearances when only sham magnets are used, the odylic flames and other phenomena will have been fairly shown to be very doubtful. But as long as negative statements only are made, and the whole body of facts, testified to by men at least equal in scientific attainments to their opponents, are left untouched, no unprejudiced individual can fail to

acknowledge that the researches of Reichenbach have established the existence of a vast and connected series of new and important natural phenomena. Doctors Gregory and Ashburner in England state that they have repeated several of Reichenbach's experiments under test conditions, and have found them quite accurate.

The late Mr. Rutter, of Brighton, made, quite independently, a number of curious experiments, which he has detailed in his little work on *Magnetized Currents and the Magnetoscope*, and which were witnessed by hundreds of medical and scientific men. He showed that the various metals and other substances, the contact of a male or female hand, or even of a letter written by a male or female, each produced distinct effects on the magnetoscope. And a single drop of water from a glass in which a homoeopathic globule had been dissolved caused a characteristic motion of the instrument when dropped upon the hand of the operator, even when he did not know the substance employed. Dr. King corroborates these experiments, and states that he has seen a decillionth of a grain of silex and a billionth of a grain of quinine cause motion by means of this apparatus. Every caution was taken in conducting the experiments, which were equally successful when a third party was placed between Mr. E. and the magnetoscope. Magnets and crystals also produced powerful effects, as indicated by Reichenbach. Yet Mr. Rutter's experiments, like Reichenbach's, are ignored by our scientific men, although during several years he offered facility for their investigation. ¹

The case of Jacques Aymar, whose powers were imputed by himself and others to the divining-rod, but which were evidently personal, is one of the best attested on record, and one which indisputably proves the possession by him of a new sense in some degree resembling that of many other clairvoyants. Mr. Baring-Gould, in his *Curious Myths of the Middle Ages*, gives a full account of the case with a reference to the original authorities. These are, M. Chauvin, a doctor of medicine, who was an eye-witness, and who published his narrative; the Sieur Pauthot, Dean of the College of Medicine at Lyons; and the Procès-verbal of the Procureur du Eoi. The facts of the case are briefly as follows. On the 5th of July 1692, a wine-seller and his wife were murdered and the bodies found in their cellar in Lyons, their money having been carried off. A bloody hedging bill was found by the side of the bodies, but no trace of the murderers was discovered. The officers of justice were completely at fault, when they were told of a man named Jacques Aymar, who, four years before, had discovered a thief at Grenoble who was quite unsuspected of the crime. The man was sent for and taken to the cellar, where his divining-rod became violently agitated, and his pulse rose as though he were in a fever. He then went out of the house, and walked along the streets like a hound following a scent. He crossed the court of the Archbishop's palace and down to the gate of the Rhone, when, it being night, the quest was relinquished. The next day, accompanied by three officers, he followed the track down the bank of the river to a gardener's cottage. He had declared that so far he had followed three murderers, but here two only entered the cottage, where he declared, they had seated themselves at a table and had drunk wine from a particular bottle. The owner declared positively no one had been there, but Aymar, on testing each individual in the house, found two children who had been in contact with the murderers, and these reluctantly confessed that on Sunday morning when they were alone, two men had suddenly entered and had seated themselves and taken wine from the very bottle which had been pointed out. He then followed them down the river and discovered the places where they slept, and the particular chairs or benches they had used. After a time he reached the military camp of Sablon, and ultimately reached Beaucaire, where the murderers had parted company, but he traced one of them into the prison, and among fourteen or fifteen prisoners pointed out a hunchback (who had only been an hour in the prison) as the murderer. He protested his innocence, but on being taken back along the road, was recognized in every house where Aymar had previously

traced him. This so confounded him that he confessed, and was ultimately executed for the murder.

During the process of this wonderful experiment, which occupied several days, Aymar was subjected to other tests by the Procurator-General. The hedging bill with which the murder was committed, with three others exactly like it, were secretly buried in different places in a garden. The diviner was then brought in; and his rod indicated where the blood-stained weapon was buried, but showed no movement over the others. Again they were all exhumed and reinterred, and the Comptroller of the Province himself bandaged Aymar's eyes and led him into the garden, with the same result. The two other murderers were afterwards traced, but they had escaped out of France. Pierre Gamier, Physician of the Medical College of Montpellier, has also given an account of various tests to which Aymar was subjected by himself, the Lieutenant-General, and two other gentlemen, to detect imposture; but they failed to discover any sign of deception, and he traced the course of a man who had robbed the Lieutenant-General some months before, pointing out the exact side of a bed on which he had slept with another man.

Here is a case which one would think was demonstrated; the investigation having been carried on under the eyes of magistrates, officers, and physicians, and resulting in the discovery of a murder and the tracking out of his course with more minute accuracy than ever bloodhound tracked a fugitive slave; yet Mr. Baring-Gould calls the man an "impostor," and speaks of his "exposé and downfall." And what are the grounds on which these harsh terms are used? Merely that at a later period, when brought to Paris to satisfy the curiosity of the great and learned, his power left him, and he seems to have either had totally false impressions or to have told lies to conceal his want of power. But how does this in the least affect the question? The fact that he was so easily found out at Paris, or rather that he there possessed no extraordinary powers, would surely prove rather that there could not possibly have been any imposture in the former case when he stood every test, and instead of failing, succeeded. He can only be proved an impostor by proving all the witnesses to be also impostors, or by showing that no such crime was ever committed or ever discovered. This, however, neither Mr. Baring-Gould nor any one else has ever attempted to do; and we must therefore conclude that the murder was really discovered by Jacques Aymar in the manner described, and that he undoubtedly possessed the equivalent of a new sense in many respects resembling the powers of some modern clairvoyants.

The subject of Animal Magnetism is still so much a disputed one among scientific men, and many of its alleged phenomena so closely border on, if they do not actually reach, what is classed as supernatural, that I wish to give a few illustrations of the kind of facts by which it is supported. I will first quote the evidence of Dr. William Gregory, late Professor of Chemistry in the University of Edinburgh, who for many years made continued personal investigations into this subject, and has recorded them in his *Letters on Animal Magnetism*, published in 1851. The simpler phenomena of what are usually termed "Hypnotism" and "Electro-Biology" are now universally admitted to be real; though it must never be forgotten that they too had to fight their way through the same denials, accusations, and imputations that are now made against clairvoyance and phreno-mesmerism. The same men who advocated, tested, and established the truth of the more simple facts, claim that they have done the same for the higher phenomena; the same class of scientific and medical men who once denied the former, now deny the latter. Let us see, then, if the evidence for the one is as good as it was for the other.

Dr. Gregory defines several stages of clairvoyance, sometimes existing in the same, sometimes in different patients. The chief division, however, is into 1. Sympathy or thought-reading, and 2. True clairvoyance. The evidence for the first is so overwhelming, it is to be

met with almost everywhere, and is so generally admitted, that I shall not occupy space by giving examples, although it is, I believe, still denied by the more materialistic physiologists. We will, therefore, confine our attention to the various phases of true clairvoyance.

Dr. Haddock, residing at Bolton, had a very remarkable clairvoyant (E.) under his care. Dr. Gregory says, "After I returned to Edinburgh, I had very frequent communication with Dr. H., and tried many experiments with this remarkable subject, sending specimens of writing, locks of hair, and other objects, the origin of which was perfectly unknown to Dr. H., and in every case, without exception, E. saw and described with accuracy the persons concerned" (p. 403).

Sir Walter C. Trevelyan, Bart., received a letter from a lady in London, in which the loss of a gold watch was mentioned. He sent the letter to Dr. H. to see if E. could trace the watch. She described the lady accurately, and her house and furniture minutely, and described the watch and chain, and described the person who had it, who, she said, was not a habitual thief, and said further that she could tell her handwriting. The lady, to whom these accounts were sent, acknowledged their perfect accuracy, but said the description of the thief applied to one of her maids whom she did not suspect, so she sent several pieces of handwriting, including that of both her maids. The clairvoyant immediately selected that of the one she had described, and said "she was thinking of restoring the watch, saying she had found it." Sir W. Trevelyan wrote with this information, but a letter from the lady crossed his, saying the girl mentioned before by the clairvoyant *had restored the watch and said she had found it* (p. 405).

Sir W. Trevelyan communicated to Dr. Gregory another experiment he had made. He requested the Secretary of the Geographical Society to send him the writing of several persons abroad, not known to him, and without their names. Three were sent. E. discovered in each case where they were; in two of them described their persons accurately; described in all three cases the cities and countries in which they were, so that they could be easily recognized, and told the time by the clocks, which verified the place by difference of longitude (p. 407).

¹ Dr. Carpenter (*Mental Physiology*, p. 287) states that Mr. Rutter's experiments were shown to be fallacies by Dr. Madden, who found that unless he knew the substance operated on, no definite indications were given. But this only proves that different operators have different degrees of power. And Dr. Carpenter very unfairly omits to notice three very important classes of test experiments made by Mr. Rutter. In one a crystal is placed on a stand altogether detached from the instrument or the table on which it stands. Yet when this is touched, it sets the pendulum in motion; and the direction of the motion changes as the direction of the axis of the crystal is changed (Rutter's *Human Electricity* p. 151). Again, when the pendulum has acquired its full momentum, either rotary or oscillatory, it takes from 7 to 10 *minutes* to come to a state of rest. But if any piece of bone or other dead animal matter is placed in the operator's hand, the pendulum comes to a dead stop in from 5 to 20 *seconds*; a feat which cannot be performed voluntarily or by any amount of "expectant attention" (op. cit., p. 147, and App. p. lv.). Again, knowledge of the substance operated on is *not necessary* with all operators, to produce definite and correct results (loc. cit. App. p. lvi.). What are we to think of a writer who comes forward as a master to teach the public, and 'sets before them such a partial and one-sided account of the evidence as this?

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

[Continuation]

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 III

GOOD AND EVIL – SOURCE OF GOOD AND EVIL – INSTINCT AND INTELLIGENCE – DESTRUCTION OF LIVING BEINGS BY ONE ANOTHER

Part One

Source of Goodness and Wickedness. – God being the origin of all things, and his nature being all wisdom, justice, and goodness, all which proceeds from him must be imbued with these attributes; for that which is infinitely wise, just, and good, can produce nothing unreasonable, wicked, or wrong. The wickedness which we observe cannot then be derived from him. If wickedness was the province of a special being who is called Satan, he must be either equal to God, and for all eternity as powerful, or he must be his inferior. In the first case, there would be two rival powers in constant contention, each one seeking to overthrow the work of the other, and constantly thwarting each other. This hypothesis is irreconcilable with that unity of purpose which reveals itself in the arrangement of the universe.

In the second case this being, being inferior to God, would be subordinate to him. Not being able to exist for all eternity like him, without being his equal, he would have had a commencement. If he has been created, God must have been his creator. Thus God would have created a bad spirit, which is impossible if he be infinite goodness. According to one doctrine, the evil spirit, created good, became evil; and God, in order to punish him, condemned him to remain forever in a state of wickedness, with permission to seduce men from the right path, and lead them into an evil one. By one downward step they merited the

most cruel eternal punishment, without hope of pardon. In this supposed divine infliction there would have been more than a failure in goodness; it would exhibit premeditated cruelty; for, in order to render seduction more easy and better to conceal the snare, Satan would be authorized to transform himself into an angel of light, and to simulate the works of God so far as to be mistaken for him by many. There would be, moreover, iniquity and improvidence on the part of God; for all liberty being given to Satan to go away from the empire of darkness, and deliver himself to mundane pleasures, in order to tempt men thereby, the instigator to wickedness would be less punished than the victims of his plots, who should fall through weakness, since once in the abyss the latter could never more escape from it, God refusing them even a glass of water to quench their thirst; and during all eternity he and his angels hear their groaning without being moved thereby, whilst he leaves Satan to take all the enjoyment that he desires.

Of all doctrines upon the theory of evil, this is, without exception, the most irrational and the most destructive of all ideas of divinity. ("See Heaven and Hell, according to Spiritism," chap. X., "The Demons.") However, evil exists, and it has a cause. Evil is of many kinds. There are, firstly, physical and moral evils; then the evils that men can evade, and those which are independent of human will. Among the latter are classed natural plagues. Man, whose faculties are limited, cannot compass or understand all the designs of the Creator. He studies things at the point of view of his personality by artificial interests, and by conditions that he has created, and which are not in the order of nature. That is why he finds oftentimes wrong and injustice in that which he would know to be just and admirable if he could see its cause, its end, and definite results. In seeking the reason for being and utility of everything, he will surely discover that all bears the imprint of infinite wisdom, and he will bow before this wise power even in things which he fails to comprehend.

Man has received a share of intelligence by which he can avert, or at least greatly palliate, the effects of all natural plagues. The more knowledge he acquires, the farther he advances in civilization, the less disastrous these plagues will be. With a wisely provident social organization he will be able to neutralize the consequences of them, and in time evade them entirely. Thus for these plagues which annoy us now, but which have their use in the general order of nature, God has given to man, in the faculties by which he has endowed his mind, the means of paralyzing their effects in the future. It is thus that he renders healthy insalubrious countries; that he destroys pestilential miasma; that he fertilizes waste lands, and taxes his ingenuity to preserve them from inundation; that he constructs healthier habitations, stronger to resist winds so necessary to purification of the atmosphere; that he is sheltered from the inclemency of the weather. It is thus that necessity has created science by the aid of which he ameliorates the condition of the habitable parts of the globe, and augments the general well-being. The evils to which men are exposed by ignorance are a stimulant for the exercise of their intelligence, for all their moral and physical faculties, by including them to seek for means to shelter themselves from them. If man had nothing to fear, no necessity would incline him to seek for any thing better; he would become benumbed in the inactivity of his mind; he would invent nothing and discover nothing. Pain and suffering are the incentives which spur men onward in the march of progress. But the most numerous evils are those which men create by their own vices, - those which spring from their pride, from their egotism, from their ambition, from

their cupidity, from their excess in all things. They carry in their train wars, calamities, dissensions, injustice, oppression of the feeble by the strong, and induce the greater part of diseases. God has established laws full of wisdom, which are only for the good of men. All that is necessary to man's welfare is his obedience to them. His way is traced out for him by his conscience. The divine law is graven upon his heart. Moreover, God reminds him incessantly by his messiahs and prophets, by all embodied spirits who have received the mission of enlightening him, of moralizing him, of ameliorating his condition, and in these latter days by the multitude of disembodied spirits who manifest on all sides, - *if man conformed himself rigorously to the divine laws, he would evade, without doubt, the severest evils, and would live happily upon the earth.*

If he does not obey him, it is by virtue of his free will; and he must submit himself to the consequences. But God, full of goodness, has placed the remedy by the side of evil; that is to say, he brings good out of its opposite. There comes a time where an excess of moral wickedness becomes intolerable, and makes man realize the need of a change of life. Instructed by experience, he is impelled to seek a remedy in goodness, always by the effect of his free will. When he enters the better path, it is by the influence of his own desire, and because he recognizes the inconveniences of the other way. This necessity is a compulsion to improve himself morally, in view of being happier. This brings with it the natural consequence of bettering his material condition also. One can say, *that evil is the absence of good*, as cold is the absence of heat.

Wickedness is no more a distinct attribute than cold is a special fluid. One is the negative of the other. Where good exists not, there is necessarily evil. Not do wickedly is already the commencement of good. God desires only good; from man only comes evil. If there were in the universe a being charged with evil, man would not be able to evade him; but man, having the cause of wrong-doing within himself, having at the same time his free will, and for his guide the divine laws, he can avoid it if he desires to do so. Let us take a common fact as a comparison. A land-owner knows that at the extremity of his field is a dangerous place, and that those who might venture there would be wounded, or perish. What means does he employ to prevent accidents? He places near the place a notice forbidding people to pass there on account of danger. Such is the law; it is wise and provident. If, notwithstanding the warning, an imprudent person pays no heed, and passes beyond it, thereby injuring himself, whom can he blame if not himself? Thus is it with all evils; man could evade them if he would obey the divine laws. God, for example, has placed a limit to the gratification of wants; man is warned by satiety. If he passes beyond this limit, he does it voluntarily. The illness, infirmities, and death, which may be the consequence of it, are then occasioned by his fault, and not that of God.

Wickedness being the result of the imperfections of man, and man being created by God, will they not say that God has at least created, if not evil, the cause of evil? If he had made man perfect, how would he be carried by fate in the way of goodness. Now, by virtue of his free will he is carried by fate neither to the good nor bad; God having decreed that he should submit to the law of progress, and that this progress should be the fruit of his own labor, in order that he should have the merit of it, as well as be responsible for his evil deeds, which he can always avoid by the use of his will. The question, then, is to know what is in man the source of propensity to evil. If one studies all the passions, and even all vices,

one sees that they have their origin in the instinct of self-preservation. This instinct is strongest with animals, and with primitive men, who approached nearest the animal existence. It governed them entirely, because they had not the moral sense for a counterpoise, having not been born into the intellectual life. The instinct is weakened in proportion as intelligence is developed, because the latter rules matter.

With reason and knowledge is born freedom of will, which man employs to his liking. Then alone commences his responsibility for his acts. The spirit is destined for the spiritual life; but in the first phases of its corporeal existence it has only material needs to satisfy; and to this end the exercise of the passions is a necessity for the preservation of the species and of the individual, materially speaking. But, passed beyond this period, he has other needs, - needs at first partly moral and partly material, then exclusively moral. It is then that the spirit rules matter. If he throws off the yoke, he advances on his providential way; he approaches his final destiny. If, on the contrary, he allows himself to be ruled by the senses, he is retarded on his upward progress by assimilating himself with the brute. In this situation *that which was formerly good, because it was a necessity of his nature, becomes an evil, not only because it is no more a necessity, but because it has become hurtful to his spiritual well-being.* Evil is thus relative, and the responsibility therefore proportionate to the degree of advancement. All passions have thus their providential utility; if not so, God has made some things intrinsically useless and hurtful. It is only abuse which constitutes the evil, and man abuses by virtue of his free will. At length, awakened to the knowledge of his own share in it, he chooses freely between the good and the bad.

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 Two

Limbo

1. The Catholic Church admits, it is true, a special position of the soul in certain special cases. Children who have died in infancy, having committed no sin, cannot be condemned to eternal burning; on the other hand, having done nothing good, they have no right to the supreme felicity. They are, therefore, according to the doctrine of that Church, in *Limbo*, which is a mixed state (that has never been clearly defined), in which, although they do not suffer, they still do not enjoy perfect happiness. But, since their fate is irrevocably fixed at death, they are excluded from the enjoyment of *perfect happiness* to all eternity; and, consequently, this privation, though incurred through no fault of theirs, practically amounts to the undeserved infliction of an *eternal punishment*. It is the same with savages, who, having received neither the grace of baptism nor the light of religion, go wrong through ignorance, and through obeying their natural instincts, and who, consequently, can neither have incurred the guilt, nor acquired the merit, of those who have acted with a clear discernment of right and wrong. The simplest effort of reasoning suffices to repel such a doctrine as contrary to the justice of God. The justice of God, on the contrary, is summed up entirely in the words of Christ, "*To each, according to the deeds done in the body;*" but this law must be understood as referring to *deeds whether good or evil, that have been done freely and voluntarily*; those being the only ones for which we can justly be held responsible. There can be no responsibility on the part of a child, a savage, or any one else who, through no fault of his own, has failed to obtain enlightenment.

Picture of the Pagan Hell

9. We know little of the Pagan Hell excepting through the recitals of the ancient poets; the descriptions given by Homer and Virgil are the most complete, but, in these, we have to make allowance for the necessities imposed by the poetic form. On the contrary, the description of the infernal regions given by Fénelon, in his *Telemachus* – though drawn, as regards the fundamental beliefs of the Ancients, from the same sources – has the greater simplicity and precision of prose. Even while describing the lugubrious aspect of those regions, he takes care to show the *kind* of suffering endured by the guilty; and, if he gives special prominence to the fate of bad kings, he does so for the sake of impressing the mind

of his royal pupil with the gravity of the responsibility that will one day income upon him. However popular the work referred to, there are doubtless many who have not retained any clear remembrance of its details, or who have not reflected on them with sufficient attention to establish a comparison between the idea of "Hell" thus presented and the "Hell" of the Christians; and we therefore think it useful to reproduce the portions of the work referred to which treat directly of the subject we are considering, that is to say, *of the punishment of individuals in the other life.*

10. "On entering, Telemachus heard the groans of a shade who appeared to be inconsolable. 'What,' he inquired, 'is the cause of your unhappiness? Who were you when upon the earth?'

"I was Nabopharzam, king of proud Babylon,' replied the shade; 'all the people of the East trembled at the mere sound of my name. I caused myself to be adored by the Babylonians in a marble temple wherein I was represented by a statue of gold, before which were burned, night and day, the most precious perfumes of Ethiopia. Whoever dared to contradict me was immediately punished; and my servants invented new pleasures each day in order to render my life more and more delightful. I was still young and robust; alas! How many kinds of prosperity still remained for me to enjoy upon the throne! But a woman whom I loved, and who did not love me, has shown me very plainly that I was not a god; she has poisoned me; and I am reduced to nothingness. My ashes were placed, with great pomp, yesterday, in a golden urn; the people wept, and tore their hair; they made a pretence of longing to throw themselves into the flame of my funeral pyre, in order to die with me. They will come in crowds to groan and lament at the foot of the superb tomb in which my ashes have been deposited; but no one regrets my death; my memory is detested, even by my own family, and, down here, I am already undergoing horrible treatment.'

"Telemachus, touched by this spectacle, said to the shade, 'Were you really happy during your reign? Did you feel the inner peace without which the heart remains oppressed and blighted in the midst of pleasures?'

"No, replied the Babylonian; 'I know nothing of the sentiment of which you speak. The sages praise this peace as the only good; but I never felt it; my heart was incessantly agitated by new desires, new fears, new hopes. I sought to stun myself with the shock of my passions, and I did my utmost to render this sort of intoxication perpetual. The shortest interval of calm reason would have been too bitter an awaking. Such is the only peace I ever enjoyed; any other seems to me to be only a fable and a dream; such are the pleasures I regret.'

"While speaking thus, the Babylonian wept like a craven, who, weakened by prosperity, has not accustomed himself to support misfortune with equanimity. Near him were several slaves who had been put to death to honor his funeral; Mercury had delivered them over to Charon with their king, and had given them absolute power over this sovereign whom they had served upon the earth. *These shades of slaves no longer feared the shade of Nabopharzam; they kept him in chains, and wreaked upon him the most galling insults.* One of them said to him, 'Were we not men just as much as you? How could you be so insensate as to fancy yourself a god, and ought you not to have remembered that you were of the same race as other men?' Another, to mortify him, said to him, 'You were right in trying to make people believe that you were not a man; for you were a monster, with nothing human about you!' A third scornfully asked him, "Where are now your flatterers? Wretch! You have no longer anything to give. You can no longer do harm to any one. You have become the slave of your former slaves. The gods are slow to punish; *but they punish at last!*'

At these cruel words, Nabopharzam threw himself down with his face upon the ground, tearing his hair in a fit of rage and despair. But Charon said to the slaves, 'Pull him up by his chain; make him stand up in spite of himself; *he shall not even have the*

satisfaction of hiding his shame. All the shades on the banks of the Styx must witness his punishment in order that they may recognize the justice of the gods, who allowed this impious mortal to reign so long upon the earth.'

"Soon afterwards Telemachus perceived, near at hand, the gloomy realm of Tartarus, that exhaled a thick black smoke, the pestiferous smell of which would have caused death, had it penetrated into the abode of the living. This smoke rose from a river of fire, and was full of masses of flame, the roar of which, like that of the most impetuous torrents when they leap from the summit of the highest rocks into the deepest abysses, rendered it impossible to hear anything distinctly in the dreary place.

"Telemachus, secretly urged on by Minerva, entered fearlessly into the yawning gulf. He at once perceived in it a great number of men who had lived on earth in low conditions, and who were being punished for having sought to obtain wealth through frauds, treason, and cruelties. He remarked there many impious hypocrites who, feigning to love religion, had made their pretended piety a pretext for serving their ambition and deceiving the credulous; these men, who had thus insulted virtue itself, the greatest gift of the gods, were punished as being the very worst of criminals. Children who had murdered their parents, husbands who had killed their wives, traitors who, breaking their vows, had betrayed their country, underwent punishments less severe than those meted out to these hypocrites. The three judges of the infernal regions had thus ordered it, and for this reason, viz., that hypocrites are not satisfied with being wicked, like other impious people, but also seek to pass themselves off as being good, and thus, by their false virtue, make it impossible for men to trust the truest virtue. The gods, whom they have mocked, take pleasure in employing all their power to avenge the insults of these wretches.

"Near to these were the shades of other men whom the vulgar scarcely regard as guilty, but who are pitilessly pursued by the Divine vengeance, viz., those who are ungrateful, liars, flatterers of vice, malicious critics who have sought to malign the good, and those who have rashly pronounced judgment on matters of which they of which they had no clear and thorough knowledge, and who have thus injured the reputation of innocent persons.

"Telemachus, seeing the three judges seated at their tribunal, in the act of passing sentence on a shade, ventured to inquire of them what crimes he had committed, when the shade immediately exclaimed, 'I have never done anything wrong; all my pleasure was in doing good. I was magnificent, liberal, just, compassionate; with that then can I be reproached?' But Minos replied, "You are not reproached with any wrong-doing as regards men; but did you not owe yet more to the gods than to men? What is the justice of which you boast? You have not failed in any of your duties towards men, who are nothing; you were virtuous, but you took all the credit or your virtue to yourself, instead of attributing it to the gods, who had given it to you, for you wished to enjoy the fruit of your virtue as something of your own, and you thus shut yourself up in yourself; *you were your own divinity.* But the gods, who are the authors of all things, and to whom the honor of all things should revert, cannot renounce their rights; you forgot them, they will now forget you. They now give you over to yourself, since you chose to live for yourself instead of living for them. *You must now find your happiness, if you can, in your own heart.* You are separated, for ever, from those whom you sought to please, and you are left alone with yourself, the self which was your idol; for you have now to learn that there can be no true virtue without the respect and love of the gods, to whom all things are due. Your false virtue, which has so long deceived men, who are easily taken in, will now be seen in its true light. Men, judging of vices and virtues only according to the convenience or inconvenience caused to them thereby, are blind to the real nature both of good and of evil. Here, all their superficial judgments are overthrown by the Divine light; for that light often condemns what is admired by men, and shows the excellence of what is condemned by them.'

At these words, the vainglorious philosopher was struck, as though by the thunderbolt, with horror of himself. The pleasure which he had formerly felt in

contemplating his own moderation, his courage, and his generous tendencies, was changed into despair. The sight of his own heart, as an enemy of the gods, became a torture for him; he saw himself as a spectacle of which he could never escape the sight; he saw the worthlessness of the judgments of men, whose approbation had been the aim and motive of all his actions. An entire revolution took place in his inner being, as though his very entrails had been overturned. He seemed to himself to be no longer the same; his heart failed him; and his conscience – whose flatteries had hitherto been so agreeable to him – now raised its voice against him, reproaching him bitterly with the unsound and illusory nature of his imaginary virtues, that had not had the worship of the Divinity for their motive and aim; he was overwhelmed with confusion, consternation, shame, remorse, and despair. *The Furies exercised no torments upon him, because it sufficed, for his punishment, to abandon him to himself*, and because the action of his own heart was all that was needed to avenge the gods, whom he had forgotten. He tried to find some dark recess in which to hide himself, at least, from the shades about him, since he could no longer hide himself *from himself*. *He sought for darkness, but could not find it*, for an unwelcome and persistent light incessantly accompanied him; wherever he went, the piercing rays of truth went with him, avenging the truth which he had neglected to follow. ¹ All that he had formerly loved became odious to him, as being the source of his misery; - a misery that would have no end!

¹ Vide chap. VII., *The Punishment of Light*.

To be continued with "***Picture of the Pagan Hell***"

Part Second - Examples

CHAPTER V

[SUICIDES]

THE FATHER AND THE CONSCRIPT

[Bordeaux, 1862]

At the beginning of the war in Italy, in 1859, a tradesman of Paris, the father of a family, and much esteemed by all his neighbors, had an only son who had been taken by the conscription. Not having the money necessary for purchasing a substitute for him, he killed himself in order to procure, for the conscript, the exoneration from military service which is granted by French law to *only sons of widows*. He was evoked, a year afterwards, by the Spiritist Society of Paris, at the request of a person who had been acquainted with him, and who wished to learn his state in the spirit-world.

(To Saint Louis.) Pray tell us if we may evoke the spirit of whom our friend has been speaking?

A. Yes; he will be glad to reply, for it will be a relief to him.

(*Evocation.*) – Oh, thank you for speaking to me! I suffer greatly, but Is just. He will forgive me.

The spirit wrote with much difficulty. His writing was irregular and ill done; after the word *but*, he stopped, making vain efforts to write, but tracing only dots and illegible strokes. It was evidently the word *God* that he was unable to write.

Q. Fill up the gap you have left.

A. I am unworthy to do so.

Q. You say that you suffer; and you undoubtedly did very wrong in committing suicide. But has not the motive which led you to the act obtained for you some indulgence?

A. My punishment will be shortened on that account; but the action itself was none the less reprehensible.

Q. Can you describe to us the punishment you are undergoing?

A. I suffer doubly, in my soul and in my body; I suffer in the latter, although no longer possessing it, as one who has been amputated suffers in his absent limb.

Q. Was your anxiety for your son the sole motive of your deed? Were you tempted by no other cause?

A. Paternal affection was my sole guide, though a guide that led me astray; in consideration of my motive, my punishment will be abridged.

Q. Do you foresee the end of your suffering?

A. I do not know when its end will come; but I know that it will have an end, and this is a consolation for me.

Q. A few moments ago, you were unable to write the name of *God*; but we have seen it written by spirits who were very unhappy; is that inability part of your punishment?

A. I shall be able to write it when I have sufficiently repented.

Q. Well, then, make the effort to repent heartily, and try to write it; we are convinced that, if you succeed in doing this, you will find relief in it.

The spirit succeeded, at last, in writing, in very large, shaky, irregular letters, 'God is very good.'

Q. We thank you for having come at our call, and we will pray for you, in order to invoke upon you the mercy of God.

A. Yes; please do so.

Q. (To Saint Louis.) We beg to know your personal opinion of the act of the spirit we have just evoked.

A. He suffers justly, for he lacked confidence in God, which is a fault that always deserves punishment; his punishment would be terrible and very long, if he had not in his favor a praiseworthy motive, that of preventing his son from being sent to his death; God, who sees the bottom of the heart, and who is just, only punishes him according to the measure of his fault.

At the first glance, this suicide seems to be almost excusable, because it may be considered as an act of devotion; it was such, in fact, but not merely such. As was remarked by the spirit of Saint Louis, this man had lacked confidence in God. He may, also, by his action, have prevented his son's destiny from being accomplished. It is not certain that his son would have been killed in the war; and it is quite possible that the military career was intended to furnish him with the occasion of doing something that would have been useful for his advancement. The father's intention was undoubtedly good; and, accordingly, it is counted to him as such; the intention attenuates the fault and merits indulgence, but it cannot prevent what is wrong from being wrong; otherwise, all misdeeds might claim to be excused by the plea of good intentions, and men might murder one another under pretext of rendering a service by so doing. If a woman kills her child in the belief that she thus sends it straight to Heaven, is she less faulty because she has acted from a good motive? The plea of good intentions, if admitted, would justify all the crimes that have been committed by blind fanaticism in what are improperly termed "religious wars."

Man has no right to dispose of his life, because it has been given him in view of the duties which he ought to accomplish upon the earth; for which reason he should not shorten it voluntarily on any pretext whatsoever. As he has his free-will, he cannot be prevented from doing so if he will; but he has always to undergo the consequences of the deed. The suicide which is most severely punished is that which is prompted by despair and the hope of avoiding the troubles of life; because, these troubles being both trials and expiations, to shirk them is to draw back from a task which had been previously accepted, and, sometimes, from a mission which ought to have been fulfilled.

Suicide does not consist simply in the voluntary act which produces instantaneous death; it comprises everything that is done, knowingly, to bring about a premature extinction of the vital forces.

The devotion of him who exposes himself to a danger of death, in order to save the life of a fellow-creature, is not to be confounded with suicide; first, because, in such case, there is no premeditated intention to withdraw one's self from life, and, secondly, because there is no peril from which Providence cannot save us, if the hour appointed for our quitting the earth has not come. When death takes place under such circumstances, it is a meritorious sacrifice, for it is an act of abnegation for the good of others. (*The Gospel Explained by Spirits*, chap V., Nos. 53, 65, 66, 67.)

If Nothing Else, You Can Pray

Spirit Communication received by Alysia Pape

When it seems like everything is going wrong and you don't know what to do, look to God for help.

If it's a person that is causing you trouble, pray to their guides and guardian angels as well and to yours too, to help both of you resolve whatever is going on.

Pray to God for strength and fortitude, to keep yourself strong through it all. Keep a positive frame of mind or you will attract the negative spirits. Pray for the spirits that are causing trouble for you; they need prayer to help them realize what they do is not good for you OR them. Ask God to forgive them and you must forgive them as well and mean it. They do not know what they do and are blinded by anger or other emotions and maybe even the influence of other spirits. The more you pray for help for everyone involved, the more help you will receive as long as you are trying to help yourself.

Self-Analysis

Inspirationally received by Yvonne Limoges

We are the product of our particular level of evolution after a myriad of material existences; the result of the qualities we have acquired and the faults that we have still to rid ourselves of. In looking at ourselves regarding these, we must be extremely honest. We can fool ourselves regarding how good or how smart we are, but we cannot fool God.

In addition, our level of understanding regarding spiritual and moral truths is dependent upon our level of development so far. We are only capable of understanding certain amounts of TRUTH, but we *are* responsible for what we do know and comprehend.

My friends, we can read many, many books but if we do not study our own conscience and actions, we will not learn what is truly needed for us to progress.

We proactively need to seek out what faults we have and try to diminish them, and enhance the good qualities we have acquired. We have to truly admit to ourselves what human weaknesses we have and decide what we need to do to get rid of them. If we have some good qualities then we need to decide how to use them for our own good and for the good of others.

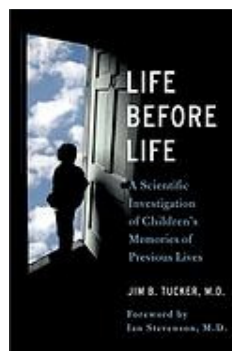
The problems in our life can make us feel at times as if we are drowning and that they are never ending. However, many of the problems we have are/were of our own creation because we have not analyzed ourselves enough to determine what we need to change, therefore we keep repeating the same things that have caused them. **As a result, examining what kind of person we are is extremely important because changing our inner self affects how we think, how we feel about things, and how we act.** God does not ask the impossible, but we should try and do the best we can.

Spiritism teaches that living in the material world is where the soul progresses the most. If we want to more advantageously utilize our time here, self-analysis is absolutely necessary. It is only then that we can make any changes. Earth is a backward world and if we want to make it a better place, we first have to better ourselves.

Editor's Note: The two messages above were published on the **April 2009 Newsletter** of the [Spiritist Society of Florida](#)

NEWS, EVENTS & MISCELLANEOUS

LIFE BEFORE LIFE



A Scientific Investigation of Children's Memories Of Previous Lives

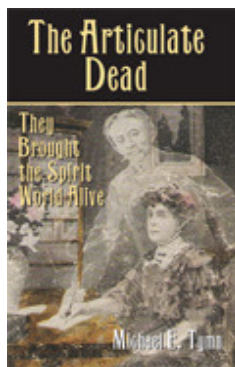
For the past forty years, doctors at the [University of Virginia Medical Center](#), beginning with Dr. Ian Stevenson, have conducted research into young children's reports of past-life memories. Now, in [Life Before Life](#), Dr. Jim B. Tucker shares these studies with the general public.

Children who report past-life memories typically begin talking about a previous life when they are two to three years old. The children tend to show a strong emotional involvement with the apparent memories and often cry to be taken to the previous family. In many cases, parents have taken their children to the places they named, where they found that an individual had died whose life matched the details given by the child. During the visits, some children have recognized family members or friends from that individual's life. Many children have also had birthmarks that matched wounds on the body of the deceased individual.

Life Before Life explores the various features of this worldwide phenomenon, describing numerous cases along the way. It is a landmark work—one that has the potential to challenge and ultimately change our understandings about life and death.

Book Review on "THE ARTICULATE DEAD"

By Michael Prescott



A Book on Mediums and Psychical Research

I was lucky enough to receive an advance copy of Michael Tynn's new book *The Articulate Dead*, which is now available at Amazon.com and can also be ordered direct from Galde Press. Regular readers of this blog know that Michael sometimes comments here; he also has [his own blog](#) in which he discusses evidence for life after death, concentrating on research done in the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

The same era is the focus of *The Articulate Dead*, an engaging, detailed, and persuasive look at the first scientific investigations of mediumship. It's unfortunate that much of this early evidence is routinely overlooked by modern-day afterlife enthusiasts. In many ways mediumship of that time was more robust than mediumship today. One reason is that

trance mediumship was more common back then. Today's mediums seem reluctant to go into trance, perhaps because they don't want to surrender control to that extent, or perhaps because they simply lack the patience to develop the necessary skill. As Michael points out, people at the turn of the last century didn't have television, video games, and the Internet to distract them; they were more willing to sit for a long time in the dark and wait patiently for phenomena to take place. He mentions psychical researcher Hamlin Garland, who reported on sitting silently in the darkened séance circle for as long as four hours before anything developed. Sophia Williams, one of the mediums investigated by [Hamlin] Garland, wrote a book on the subject of 1946. In it, she states that she sat quietly each day for four years to learn the art of relaxation and complete detachment before her own mediumship really began to develop.

How many people today have that kind of patience?

Some modern-day researchers may think their counterparts from a century ago lacked the necessary investigative skills or skeptical attitude. But Michael's book refutes this assumption. Again and again he shows that many of these early researchers were intelligently skeptical, highly knowledgeable about the tricks played by phony mediums, and capable of coming up with stringent precautions against fraud. And because some mediums -- notably Leonora Piper and Gladys Osborne Leonard -- submitted to research for years or even decades, a body of evidence was built up that went a long way toward convincing even the most hardheaded skeptics.

The Articulate Dead begins with early investigators who are little known today -- men like John W. Edmonds, chief justice of the New York State Supreme Court; Nathaniel Tallmadge, former senator; Robert Hare, emeritus professor of chemistry at the University of Pennsylvania; and James Mapes, professor of chemistry and natural philosophy. These men demonstrated remarkable courage and intellectual independence as they bucked the conventional wisdom of their day and risked their considerable reputations in the defense of unfashionable ideas.

We then read about Sir William Crookes's investigation of famed medium Daniel Home; the mediumship of William Stainton Moses, a church of England minister converted to spiritualism; Sir William Barrett's experiments with hypnotism, physical mediumship, and the Ouija board; and postmortem communications attributed to Frederick Myers, author of the classic work *Human Personality and Its Survival of Bodily Death*. Later chapters cover the Boston medium Leonora Piper (including an episode in which Augustus Martin, the late mayor of Boston, collaborated with his one-time secretary on a book titled *Both Sides of the Veil*); and the English medium Gladys Osborne Leonard, whose communicants included not only Raymond Lodge, son of physicist and psychical researcher Sir Oliver Lodge, but also Claude Kelway-Bamber who, like Raymond, had been killed in World War I.

Part Four of the book is perhaps the most interesting, because it deals with a variety of studies that are rarely discussed today. In one case, the author Frank Stockton communicated through Etta De Camp via automatic writing, dictating stories to her in his distinctive style. "I am very fortunate in finding you, my dear madam, as you are sensitive to my vibration, and so I will reach you easily," Stockton told her. "We are in perfect accord, and, together, will do a great work, and teach the old world what can be done even after the so-called end of man."

Michael Tymn has a particular interest in Hamlin Garland and devotes two chapters to this often overlooked researcher. Garland's precautions in dealing with materialization medium

Daniel Peters are as good as any we would expect from the most skeptical researcher in our time. Garland

tied Peters to a chair with a spool of dental floss, being sure his wrists were securely bound. As an extra precaution, Garland tied the sitter on Peters's right to Peters, while he (Garland) sat on his left. After the lights were turned out, Garland noticed a faint, bluish, smoke-like cloud developing in front of Peters. A hand darted out of the cloud and firmly grabbed Garland's left wrist. This spectral hand then darted to the center of the table and took hold of a glass, lifting it to Peters's mouth so that he could drink. All the while, Garland controlled Peters's left hand and the sitter on his right controlled his right hand. Garland was certain that Peters had no accomplice. There was enough light for Garland to see the phantasmal arm clothed in gray vapor.

At a third sitting with Peters, Garland nailed Peters's clothing to the chair and again bound him with dental floss. A phantom appeared that spoke to the man next to Garland in Polish. The man stated that it was his brother. When that spirit faded out, Evans, Peters's guide, materialized and offered Garland his hand. Garland observed that the hand was "cobwebby" in texture and appeared to melt away. He felt its bones for a moment and when he released his grip the figure vanished like a bubble.

Garland's greatest psychic adventure, however, was reported in his 1939 book, *The Mystery of the Buried Crosses*. Relying only on mediumistic communications, Garland was able to hunt down long-buried Indian artifacts in the California and Mexico desert. An earlier investigator, relying on his wife's mediumistic abilities, had dug up approximately 1500 relics of this kind; Garland, continuing to work, was able to find 16 more.

The spirits would tell them where to go, where to stop, which direction to walk, and then where to dig. They found sixteen artifacts, similar in substance and design to those collected by the Parents [the husband-and-wife team who began this research], in ten widely separated locations. Some were in deep gullies, others high on cactus-covered hills far from the highway. One was hidden in a ledge of sandstone behind a wall of cactus plants which Garland had to chop away before finding it. For the skeptic who might have claimed that [medium Sophia] Williams went all over the state planting the artifacts for Garland to find, Garland wrote that this would have been an impossible task. Moreover, it was clear that the grounds covering the artifacts, some buried more than two feet deep, had not been disturbed for many years.

From here we read about Patience Worth, whose literary productions drew rave reviews in their day (although I must admit that I personally find them almost unreadable). Chapter 19 involves another special interest of Michael's -- the excavation of the Glastonbury Abbey in southwest England by Frederick Bligh Bond, accomplished with the help of spirit communications that told Bond where to dig. Most of the information was provided by a deceased monk named Johannes Bryant who allegedly lived from 1497 to 1533. "He described himself as a fat, cheery man who preferred fishing to his regular duties." Bond believed that the information provided by Johannes and other monks allowed him to make great progress in excavating the Abbey, but his success came to a rude end when he published a book about his experiments with mediumship.

It was the beginning of the end for Bond. From 1918 until his death in 1945, "he was immersed in another kind of quest," wrote his biographer, William W. Kenawall, "an endeavor to prove to the church, his architectural associates, his family, and his beloved Somerset Archaeological Society that he was neither a fraud nor partly insane."

The remaining chapters deal with Baptist minister Charles Mundell, who became a spiritualist and medium; the spirit rescue work done by psychiatrist Carl Wickland, who believed that many severe psychological disorders could be traced to spirit obsession; and messages from survivors of the Lusitania and Titanic disasters.

As you can see, there is a wealth of material packed into the 254 pages of this volume -- which also includes a glossary, timeline, bibliography, and a foreword by Donald Morse of the Academy of Spirituality and Paranormal Studies. The fact that many of these stories have been inadequately treated in the literature of psychical research makes the book that much more important.

I have only a few minor regrets. One is that the publisher chose to simplify Michael's detailed footnotes, omitting page numbers and other identifying information; most of the books listed in the footnotes are included in the bibliography, but a few aren't, so when, for instance, "Brockris, 2005" or "Grossman, 2002" is cited in the text, there's no specific identification of the book or article that is meant. I've suggested that Mike might want to put his complete footnotes online for reference purposes.

Here and there you'll find a typo or two, not unusual in this day of rushed production schedules; Mike tells me he was particularly unhappy that a few words were dropped out of the text at the top of page 146, creating the unintended impression that William Barrett was "closed-minded and materialistic." (Mike meant to apply this description to Barrett's *opponents*, of course.)

These caveats are trivial. *The Articulate Dead* is an important contribution to the growing literature of afterlife studies. It's hard to see how any open-minded reader could come away from this book without taking the question of postmortem survival seriously. And like Deborah Blum's *Ghost Hunters*, Michael Tymn's *The Articulate Dead* should encourage new respect for the brave, lonely, and heretofore under-appreciated pioneers of psychical research.

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.](#), or at the website of [Amazon.com](#).

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