



Advanced Study Group of Spiritism

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"Unshakable faith is only that which can face reason face to face in every Humankind epoch."

Allan Kardec

HEAD QUOTATION

"Before a man condemns Nero as a different species of being from himself, he should examine his own secret thoughts very carefully". [H. G. Wells In "The Outline of History"]

"Death is the ultimate statistic – one out of one of us dies."
[George Bernard Shaw]

"To doubt everything or to believe everything are two equally convenient solutions; both dispense with the need for thought." [Jules Henri Poincaré]

"If Religion refuses to accompany Science, she is left alone. Stationary religions can alone dread scientific discoveries. Scientific truths are only destructive to the systems of those who allow themselves to be distanced by progressive ideas by wrapping themselves in the absolutism of old beliefs. A religion which would be in no one point contradictory to the laws of nature would have nothing to fear from progress, and would be invulnerable."
[Allan Kardec]

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EDITORIAL

THE INDIVIDUAL QUEST TO OVERCOME THE BARRIER OF SKEPTICISM

Since the dawn of the appearance of a massive volume of communications allegedly coming from the dead in the middle of the nineteenth century, a phenomenon which the late Conan Doyle pinned as the "organized invasion of the spirit world," the link connecting our world of the flesh and the spirit world has become stronger day after day. It is important to emphasize that we are alluding to the messages that were delivered in a clear and sound manner, those that enabled scrutiny and a rational approach either by a lay person as well as the mainstream of philosophic, religious or scientific thought. This in truth happened only in the secondary stage of the appearance of these phenomena, as one will learn when studying the field of *Psychical Research*. This is the stage which gave birth to organizations such as the Society for Psychical Research and the movements of Modern Spiritualism and Spiritism.

When the phenomena began, the whole issue was seen as a mean of entertainment or another miraculous wonder capable of admiration, amazement, or awe. This is in part due to the natural inclination men had towards the latter, the lack of knowledge on the matter, and the unconventional medium through which the phenomena was introduced (rapping, tapping, table tilting, table turning, ouija board, planchette, etc.).

After surpassing the difficulties of this first stage of wonder and the uncompromising attitude of those who would approach the phenomena in the first place, we have had a plethora of evidence and proof which is capable of driving each one of us to a safe and secure mindset, one more adjusted with our natural inclination to reject annihilation and accept the afterlife. The voluminous amount of information brought to us from the spirit world then and now, flows like the waters of a torrential river of overwhelming wide. So, the claim that mediumship has declined in our days, which would benefit the increase in skepticism, does not sound accurate. A simple look at the media in general and the outpouring of new books in regard to the matter of mediums and the afterlife that appear daily is proof enough to denounce the inaccuracy of that claim.

The type of mediumship practice that took place in the period when *Psychical Research* flourished the most and produced a multitude of phenomena which were studied in depth and cautiously scrutinized by great men of science and learned men and women from all walks of life, had a reason to take place then. However, we all know at what cost it happened, especially when one considers the harmful exposure to which the mediums had to experience in order to satisfy the never ending demand of skeptics, who would counter with ludicrous arguments and hypotheses serving only to fulfill their prideful attitude of denial, rather than to search for truth. Notwithstanding this seemingly paradoxical puzzle, the intelligence behind the "organized invasion" knew that there was a greater cause to be brought to light. Despite the attitude of the skeptics and the injurious exposure of those who ought to be considered the true martyrs of the era that spread the New Revelation, - the mediums, - the whole enterprise offered a great opportunity for many who, although bearing certain skepticism towards the phenomena, had an open mind, humility and furthermore, a great desire to seek out the truth for the benefit of humanity. The end result is that this research is comprised of a massive body of information collected through the work of scientists, philosophers, scholars and researchers from all walks of life, which enabled a strong foundation represented by the field of *Psychical Research* and the movements of *Modern Spiritualism* and *Spiritism*.

The specific type of mediumship mentioned above has not taken place lately. One may even wonder if it is necessary in our time. I would dare to believe that it is not. In this sense one has to admit that changes have occurred, which in no way translates to a decline in mediumship. The changes did not take place in detriment of the quality of the information continuously imparting from the spirit world, whose main objective is to help humanity to move forward in its journey towards spiritual progress, rather than satisfy vain curiosity or fulfill the expectations of prideful skepticism. After all, since the early appearance of these phenomena, the voices behind it were crystal clear in telling us that its sole goal was to awaken us to a new reality - the existence of the spiritual world and the afterlife - and to stir in us the desire to seek for truth and amelioration without ever interfering with our own free will.

There is no doubt that the scientific knowledge continually acquired through hard work and research ought to serve us as an indispensable tool in our struggle to seek truth and build a foundation for our convictions. However, as important as it really is in this regard, one should not put matters of conviction and hope in the shelves, waiting for the "blessed moment" in which the scientific establishment or skepticism would come to give the last word. It does not work this way. The idea that Science will one day establish immortality for the spiritually-challenged masses is a delusion. It will only come through persistence and dedication, and none of us will escape this fact. We all have the tools to walk on this path, as the late Aldous Huxley wisely warned us by assuring that "*Every man who knows how to read has it in his power to magnify himself, to multiply the ways in which he*

exists, to make his life full, significant and interesting".

Allan Kardec, the codifier of the Spiritist Doctrine, also gave us wise advice in regard to the complex matter regarding our duty to seek truth and acquire the conviction of immortality and the afterlife, touching upon the controversial aspect of the supposed right of scientific fundamentalist interference, by stating the following:

"Spiritist belief is the result of a personal conviction that scientific men may hold as individuals, and independent of their quality as scientists; but to submit the question to the decision of physical science would be much the same thing as to set a company of physicists and astronomers to decide the question of immortality."

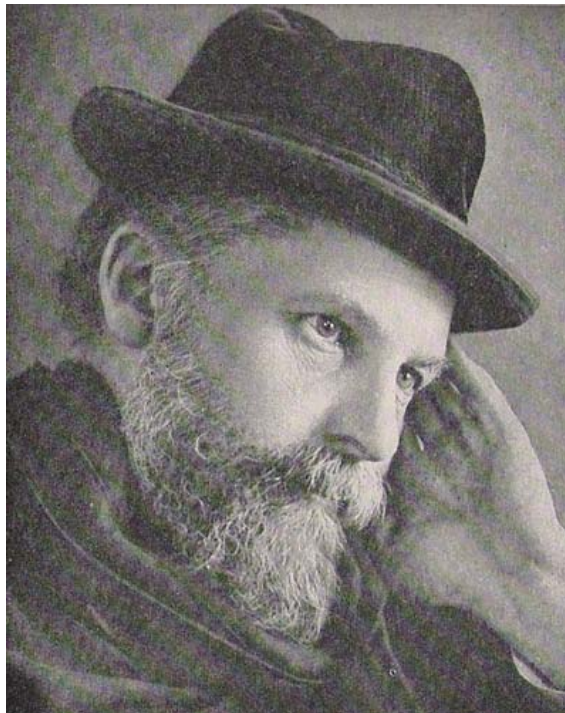
In conclusion, one could admit the hypothesis strongly hold by Spiritism and Modern Spiritualism, which assures that we are all immortal spirits, who are at this very moment in a journey for improvement and spiritual progress in this planet. As Goethe, the great master of poetry put it, *"Life is the childhood of our immortality."* Apart from this, one ought to surrender to common sense and a more rational point of view which impels us to the unavoidable imperative of doing our own homework, and hope with Immanuel Kant that *"At some future day it will be proved, I cannot say when and where, that the human soul is, while in earth life, already in an uninterrupted communication with those living in another world."*

The GEAE Editors

ARTICLES

REMEMBERING FREDERIC MYERS --- Frederic who?

By *Michael Tymn*



Frederic W. H. Myers

Theodor Flournoy, a world-renowned University of Geneva psychology professor, once opined that the name Frederic W. H. Myers should be joined to those of Copernicus and Darwin, completing "the triad of geniuses" who most profoundly revolutionized scientific thought.

Pioneering psychiatrist William James, wrote that Frederic Myers "will always be remembered in psychology as the pioneer who staked out a vast tract of mental wilderness and planted the flag of genuine science upon it."

"Frederic Who?" you ask. Put Frederic William Henry Myers into a Google search and the first thing that pops up is a *Wikipedia* entry identifying him as an English poet and essayist, hardly a reason to justify the glorious comments by Professors Flournoy and James.

Everyone knows the name of Sigmund Freud, but very few know that of Frederic Myers, a man who seems to have been ahead of Freud in developing a systematic conception of the subconscious mind.

Although not educated as a psychologist, Myers, a Cambridge classical scholar was a *de facto* psychologist who referred to the subconscious as the "subliminal." When, in 1911, Freud joined the Society for Psychical Research, which was co-founded by Myers in 1882, he wrote an article making it clear that Myers' "subliminal" was not the same as his "unconscious." Essentially, the difference

was that Myers saw a soul enveloped in the subconscious, while Freud accepted atomic materialism, which denied the existence of a soul.

Why isn't Myers remembered today? Perhaps, because, as Aldous Huxley saw it, Freud was focused on the "rats and beetles in the cellarage," while Myers was more interested in the treasures and birds in the attic, something Freud, who was a mere teenager when Myers began developing his ideas of the subconscious, ignored.

In a newly-released biography of Myers, *Immortal Longings*, author Trevor Hamilton explains that Myers is not remembered today because the prevailing paradigm in those early years of psychology, as it remains today, was the Wundtian approach, which holds that the only things that make sense are those which can be scientifically measured and quantified. The soul was not subject to scientific measurement, so was rejected.

Huxley saw Myers as a classical scholar, a minor poet, a conscientious observer, and a platonic philosopher, someone who "was free to pay more attention to the positive aspects of the subliminal self than to its negative and destructive aspects," as with psychologists and psychiatrists of then and now. Hamilton quotes Huxley as saying that Myers' "unconscious" was superior to Freud's in that it was more comprehensive and truer to the data of experience. How much Myers influenced Freud is not clear, but there is little doubt that Myers' ideas significantly influenced William James and Carl Jung.

Sir Oliver Lodge, the esteemed physicist and electricity pioneer, stated that Myers had, before his death in 1901, been "laying the foundation for a cosmic philosophy, a scheme of existence as large and comprehensive and well founded as any that have appeared."

In his autobiography Lodge wrote that Myers had a remarkable interest in science and a portentous memory. He knew the *Æneid* by heart and could recite many of the *Bab Ballads* without difficulty. Lodge remembered attending one of Myers' lectures on the poet Crabbe, calling it a remarkable *tour de force*. "He had no notes," Lodge recalled, "but after speaking of Crabbe and his poetry in unexpectedly eulogistic terms, he recited from memory whole reams of Crabbe's poetry, which I had never heard before, and was ignorant of."

It was Myers, Lodge explained, who broke down his skepticism and showed him the reasonableness of the survival hypothesis. "He it was who put evidence in my way such as gradually convinced me of the truth of the doctrine."

Dr. Charles Richet, the 1913 Nobel Prize winner in medicine, said: "If Myers was not a mystic, he had all the faith of a mystic and the ardour of an apostle, in conjunction with the sagacity and precision of a savant."

The latter part of the 19th Century was a time of despair and hopelessness for many. "We were all in the first flush of triumphant Darwinism, when terrene evolution had explained so much that men hardly cared to look beyond," Myers is quoted by Hamilton in explaining why he set out in search of the soul.

As with so many other educated people, Myers, the son of a minister, had lost his faith, and life had become a march toward an abyss into nothingness. He recognized that there were many who were "willing to let earthly activities and pleasures gradually dissipate and obscure the larger hope" during life's death march, but, perhaps because he was a deep thinker, Myers was unable to effectively use the defense mechanism called repression to overcome his death anxiety and his concomitant fear of extinction.

Subtitled "FWH Myers and the Victorian Search for Life after Death," Hamilton's book details the efforts of Myers and several of his colleagues to make sense out of various paranormal phenomena which seemed to suggest that the world is not totally mechanistic and that consciousness does survive physical death.

Although Professor William Barrett, a physicist, is recognized as the prime mover in setting up the Society for Psychical Research (SPR) in 1882, he relinquished the leadership roles to Myers and his two Cambridge friends, Edmund Gurney, and Professor Henry Sidgwick. Their objective was to scientifically study the phenomena, including hypnotism, telepathy, multiple personalities, and mediumship, to see if they offered any evidence that mind was not totally dependent on brain and that there is something beyond the five senses. But they had to do it discreetly, cautiously, and indirectly. "To admit the literal reality of the ghost was to move back to the dark ages," Hamilton explains their dilemma. There were simply too many "newly enlightened" people in the upper echelons of society who could not make a distinction between matters of the spirit and the superstitions of the church they had left behind and now scoffed at.

"It is too simple to represent Victorian England as a pious, fundamentalist land shaken by the advances of a materialistic and iconoclastic science," Hamilton states, pointing out that the census of 1851 revealed that well over five million people did not attend church on Sunday, March 30, 1851. However, it was clear, Hamilton adds, that the educated middle classes and upper-middle classes were emancipating themselves from their evangelical roots as a result of the scientific and scholarly advances. Darwinism might have been the crowning blow, but this emancipation had begun well before Darwin, during the "Age of Reason."

Drawing from Myers' diary, a short autobiography written only for his friends, and other references, Hamilton explores Myers' early life and the influences which shaped his beliefs and disbeliefs. He acquaints us with his days at Cambridge, when he was called, "Myers the superb," and then discusses his conflicting love interests as well as other trials and tribulations. He tells how Myers hooked up with Gurney and Sidgwick and how the three intellectuals complemented each other in various ways - Myers often brash and assertive, Sidgwick reserved and cautious, Gurney meticulous and somewhere in between Myers and Sidgwick in his enthusiasm for their mission.

The SPR exposed many fraudulent mediums, although there is controversy over some of the exposures, including that of Madame Blavatsky. The mediumship of Eusapia Palladino was also very controversial, some members of the SPR convinced that she was a charlatan and other that she was a genuine medium, whereas the truth seems to be that she was a "mixed" medium - producing genuine phenomena at times and faking some at those times when her powers failed her. Theosophists, in the case of Blavatsky, and Spiritualists, in the case of various other mediums, argued that the researchers simply didn't understand the phenomena and were applying terrestrial science to celestial matters which they didn't understand.

As Hamilton sees it, Myers was caught in a Victorian dilemma. "One set of desires, the yearning for the immortal, spiritual universe, was opposed by another set, which was the wish for privacy and the hiding of any evidence that breached the unimpeachable façade of familial and moral behaviour," he writes. "His need to prove and even preach survival was counterbalanced by his reticence over intimate evidence."

That "intimate evidence" involved a number of evidential messages coming to him through different mediums from Annie Marshall, his great love of the early 1870s (although apparently a platonic affair because of her marriage to Myers' cousin). When Annie killed herself because of her many frustrations, Myers grieved deeply. When he later married the beautiful and wealthy Eveleen Tennant, their marriage was troubled somewhat because of Annie's communications with Myers from beyond the veil - communications which Myers kept private and which were destroyed by his wife after his death.

Myers died at age 57 of Bright's disease, a kidney disorder. William James, who was present in Rome when Myers, his friend, died, wrote that "his serenity, in fact, his eagerness to go, and his extraordinary intellectual vitality up to the very time the death agony began, and even in the midst of it, were a superb spectacle and deeply impressed the doctors, as well as ourselves."

After Myers' death, various mediums began receiving messages purportedly coming from Myers. Some of these messages were very fragmented and made no sense until they were collected and pieced together to make complete ideas. "The whole process seemed at times like a giant Victorian word game (anagrams, cryptic puzzles, strange puns and rhymes), of which, in fact, Myers and his colleagues...were inordinately fond," Hamilton explains. These so-called "cross-correspondences" were interpreted by other researchers as attempts by Myers, as well as by Gurney and Sidgwick, both of whom preceded him in death, to overcome some of the objections to mediumship, including fraud and telepathy. "[They suggested] a high level of collective design and purpose, implying character, intention and personality," Hamilton states.

One of the more simple cross-correspondences came through on January 17, 1904, when Alice MacDonald Fleming, the sister of author Rudyard Kipling, received the biblical reference I Cor. xvi, 12 from Myers by means of automatic writing. Living in India at the time, Fleming was instructed by Myers to send the message to SPR headquarters in London. He further told the SPR that he tried to get the entire wording through in Greek but could not get Fleming's hand to form Greek characters, and so he gave only the reference. On the very same day, thousands of miles away in England, Mrs. Margaret Verrall, an automatic writing medium who was a member of the SPR, also received the same biblical reference from Myers by means of automatic writing. This biblical passage, "Watch ye, stand fast in the faith, quit you like men, be strong," was the wording inscribed in Greek over the gateway of Selwyn College, Cambridge, under which Myers frequently passed.

One message for Sidgwick's widow, Eleanor, who had been very active in the SPR, read, "Now, dear Mrs. Sidgwick, in future have no doubt or fear of so called death, as there is none."

In another communication, Myers gave this message about the afterlife: "The reality is infinitely more wonderful than our most daring conjectures. Indeed, no conjecture is sufficiently daring."

Myers was apparently ahead of the times in the area of physical fitness as well. His diary indicates that he ran two miles most days, one day finishing his run in 13 ½ minutes. "Beside the record of his time he added 'Inextricable sadness,'" Hamilton writes. "Through his life, while he was fit enough, one hazards that these runs, at times virtually every day, coincided with periods of intense spiritual and emotional disturbance."

On a trip to the United States in 1865, Myers decided to test himself by swimming across the Niagara River, from the Canadian side to immediately below the falls. "I plunged in; the cliffs, the cataract, the moon herself, were hidden in a tower of whirling spray; in the foamy rush I struck at air; waves from all sides beat me to and fro; I seemed immersed in thundering chaos, alone amid the roar of doom." Myers wrote in his diary.

Hamilton concludes the book by asking if Myers' quest had been successful. "In personal terms it was," he opines. "He became convinced, on the basis of the intimate sittings he had with both Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Thompson, that he had communicated with human beings (however different their nature and post-mortem existence) who had survived bodily death. This belief was underpinned by his wide ranging reading and research in paranormal and abnormal activity across Europe and in the United States. It led to him bearing the onset of death with a kind of joyous resilience, almost even insouciance..."

On the other hand, Myers obviously failed in his wider hope of establishing immortality for the spiritually-challenged masses. While the search for immortality continues today, more than a hundred years later, the foundation established by Myers and his colleagues seems to be slowly but increasingly appreciated.

Hamilton offers a very interesting, intriguing, informative, in-depth, and even inspirational look at one of history's most overlooked and unappreciated contributors. One wonders if or when modern psychology will ever escape from the muck and mire of scientific fundamentalism and catch up with Myers.

The book **Immortal Longings** by Trevor Hamilton is available at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)

ELECTRONIC BOOKS

ON MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM

BY

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REVISED EDITION, WITH CHAPTERS ON
APPARITIONS AND PHANTASMS

LONDON
GEORGE REDWAY
1896

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THE SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF THE SUPERNATURAL

MODERN SPIRITUALISM: EVIDENCE OF THE REALITY OF APPARITIONS

We have now come to the consideration of what is more especially termed "Modern Spiritualism," or those phenomena which occur only in the presence or through the influence of peculiarly constituted individuals, hence termed "mediums." The evidence is here so abundant, coming from various parts of the world, and from persons differing widely in education, tastes, and religion, that it is difficult to give any notion of its force and bearing by short extracts. I will first adduce that of three men of the highest eminence in their respective departments Professor De Morgan, Professor Hare, and Judge Edmonds.

The late AUGUSTUS DE MORGAN, many years Professor of Mathematics and afterwards Dean of University College London, was educated at Cambridge, where he took his degree as fourth wrangler. He studied for the bar, and was a voluminous writer on mathematics, logic, and biography. He was for eighteen years Secretary to the Royal Astronomical Society, and was a strong advocate for a decimal coinage. In 1863 a work appeared entitled *From Matter to Spirit, the Result of Ten Years' Experience in Spirit Manifestations*, by C. D., with a preface by A. B. It is very generally known that A. B. is Professor De Morgan, and C. D. Mrs. De Morgan. The internal evidence of the preface is sufficient to all who know the Professor's style; it has been frequently imputed to him in print without contradiction, and in the *Athenæum* for 1865, in the "Budget of Paradoxes," he notices the work in such a manner as to show that he accepts the imputation of the authorship, and still holds the opinions therein expressed.¹ From this preface, which is well worth reading for its vigorous and sarcastic style, I proceed to give a few extracts:

"I am satisfied from the evidence of my own senses of some of the facts narrated (in the body of the work), of some others I have evidence as good as testimony can give. I am perfectly convinced that I have both seen and heard, in a manner that should make unbelief impossible, things *called* spiritual, which cannot be taken by a rational being to be capable of explanation by imposture, coincidence, or mistake. So far I feel the ground firm under me" (p. 1).

"The Spiritualists, beyond a doubt, are in the track that has led to all advancement in physical science; their opponents are the representatives of those who have striven against progress." . . .

"I have said that the deluded spirit-rappers are on the right track: they have the spirit and the method of the grand times when those paths were cut through the uncleared forest in which it is now the daily routine to walk. What was that spirit? It was the spirit of universal examination wholly unchecked by fear of being detected in the investigation of nonsense.

"But to those who know the truth of facts, and who do not know what can and what cannot be, it will appear on reflection that the most probable direction of inquiry the best chance of eliciting a satisfactory result, is that which is suggested by the spirit hypothesis. I mean the hypothesis that some intelligence which is not that of any human being clothed in flesh and blood, has a direct share in the phenomena.

"Take the hypothesis on its own *à priori* probability, and compare it with that of attraction. Suppose a person wholly new to both subjects, wholly undrilled both in theology and physics. He is to choose between two assertions, one true and one false, and to lose his life if he choose the false one. The first assertion is that there are incorporeal intelligences in the universe, and that they sometimes communicate with men; the second is that the particles of the stars in the Milky Way give infinitesimal permanent pulls to the particles of our earth. I suppose that most men among those who have all-existing prepossessions would feel rather puzzled to know which they would have chosen had they been situated as above described." . . .

"My state of mind, which refers the whole either to some unseen intelligence, or something which man has never had any conception of, proves me to be out of the pale of the Royal Society." . . .

"Of the future state we are informed by some theologians, but quite out of their own heads, that all wants will be supplied without effort, and all doubts resolved without thought. This a *state!* not a bit of it; a mere phase of non-existence; annihilation with a consciousness of it. The rapping spirits know better than that; their views, should they really be human impostures, are very, very singular. In spite of the inconsistencies, the eccentricities, and the puerilities which some of them have exhibited, there is a uniform vein of description running through their accounts, which, supposing it to be laid down by a combination of impostors, is more than remarkable even marvelous. The

agreement is one part of the wonder, it being remembered that the 'mediums' are scattered through the world; but the other and greater part of it is, that the impostors, if impostors they be, have combined to oppose all the current ideas of a future state, in order to gain belief in the genuineness of their pretensions!"

"Ten years ago Mrs. Hayden, the well-known American medium, came to my house *alone*. The sitting began immediately after her arrival. Eight or nine persons were present, of all ages and of all degrees of belief and unbelief in the whole thing being imposture. The raps began in the usual way. They were to my ear clear, clean, faint sounds such as would be said to *ring* had they lasted. I likened them at the time to the noise which the ends of knitting-needles would make if dropped from a small distance upon a marble slab, and instantly checked by a damper of some kind. . . . Mrs. Hayden was seated at some distance from the table, and her feet were watched. . . . On being asked to put a question to the first spirit, I begged that I might be allowed to put my question mentally that is, without speaking it, or writing it, or pointing it out to myself on an alphabet and that Mrs. Hayden might hold both arms extended while the answer was in progress. Both demands were instantly granted by a couple of raps. I put the question, and desired the answer might be in one word, which I assigned, all mentally. I then took the printed alphabet, put a book upright before it, and bending my eyes upon it, proceeded to point to the letters in the usual way. The word *chess* was given by a rap at each letter. I had now reasonable certainty of the following alternative: either some *thought-reading* of a character wholly inexplicable, or such superhuman acuteness on the part of Mrs. Hayden that she could detect the letter I wanted by my bearing, though she (seated six feet from the book which hid my alphabet) could see neither my hand nor my eye, nor at what rate I was going through the letters. I was fated to be driven out of the second alternative before the evening was done.

"At a later period of the evening, when another spirit was under examination, I asked him whether he remembered a certain review which was published soon after his death, and whether he could give me the initials of an epithet (which happened to be in five words) therein applied to himself. Consent having been given, I began my way through the alphabet as above; the only difference of circumstances being that a bright table-lamp was now between me and the medium. I expected to be brought up at, say, the letter F; and when my pencil passed that letter without any signal, I was surprised, and by the time I came to K or thereabouts, I paused, intending to announce a failure. But some one called out, 'You have passed it; I heard a rap long ago. 'I began again, and distinct raps came first at C, then at D. I was now satisfied that the spirit had failed; but stopping to consider a little more, it flashed into my mind that C. D. were his own initials, and that he had chosen to *commence the clause which contained the epithet*. I then said nothing but 'I see what you are at; pray go on,' and I then got T (for The), then the E I wanted of which not a word had been said and then the remaining four initials. I was now satisfied that the contents of my mind had been read, which could not have been detected by my method of pointing to the alphabet, even supposing that could have been seen. . . . The things which I have set down were the beginning of a long series of experiences, many as remarkable as what I have given." *From Matter to Spirit*, Preface, pp. xli., xlii.

From the body of the same work I give one short extract: "The most remarkable instance of *table-moving* with a purpose which ever came under my notice occurred at the house of a friend, whose family, like my own, were staying at the seaside. My friend's family consisted of six persons, and a gentleman, now the husband of one of the daughters, joined them, and I was accompanied by a young member of my own family. No paid person was present. A gentleman who had been expressing himself in a very skeptical manner, not only with reference to spirit manifestations, but on the subject of spiritual existence generally, sat on a sofa two or three feet from the dining room table, round which we were placed. After sitting some time we were directed by the rapping to join hands and stand up round the table *without touching* it. All did so for a quarter of an hour; wondering whether anything would happen, or whether we were hoaxed by the unseen power. Just as one or two of the party talked of sitting down, the old table, which was large enough for eight or ten persons, moved *entirely by itself* as we surrounded and followed it with our hands joined, went towards the gentleman out of the circle, and literally pushed him up to the back of the sofa till he called out 'Hold, enough.'" - *From Matter to Spirit*, p. 26.

J. W. EDMONDS, commonly called Judge EDMONDS, was a man of considerable eminence. He was elected a member of both branches of the State Legislature of New York, and was for some time President of the Senate. He was at one time Inspector of Prisons, and made great improvements in the penitentiary system. After passing through various lower offices, he was made a Judge of the Supreme Court of New York. This is the highest judicial office in the State; he held it for six years, and then resigned, solely on account of the outcry raised against him on its being known that he had become convinced on the subject of Spiritualism. He then resumed his practice at the bar, and was elected to the important office of Recorder of New York, which, however, he declined to accept.

The Judge was first induced by some friends to visit a medium, and being astonished at what he saw, determined to investigate the matter, and discover and expose what he then believed to be a great imposture. The following are some of his experiences given in his work on *Spirit Manifestations*:"

"On the 23rd April 1851, I was one of a party of nine who sat round a center table, on which a lamp was burning, and another lamp was burning on the mantelpiece. And then, in plain sight of us all, that table was lifted at least a foot from the floor, and shaken backwards and forwards as easily as I could shake a goblet in my hand. Some of the party tried to stop it by the exercise of their strength, but in vain; *so we all drew back from the table*, and by the light of those two burning lamps we saw the heavy mahogany table suspended in the air."

At the next *séance* a variety of extraordinary phenomena occurred to him. "As I stood in a corner where no one could reach my pocket, I felt a hand thrust into it, and found afterwards that six knots had been tied in my handkerchief. A bass viol was put into my hand, and rested on my foot, and then played upon. My person was repeatedly touched, and a chair pulled from under me. I felt on one of my arms what seemed to be the grip of an iron hand. I felt distinctly the thumb and fingers, the palm of the hand, and the ball of the thumb, and it held me fast by a power which I struggled to escape from in vain. With my other hand I felt all round where the pressure was, and satisfied myself that it was no earthly hand that was thus holding me fast, nor indeed could it be, for I was as powerless in that grip as a fly would be in the grasp of my hand. It continued with me till I thoroughly felt how powerless I was, and had tried every means to get rid of it." Again, as instances of the intelligence and knowledge of the unseen power, he says that during his journey to Central America, his friends in New York were almost daily informed of his condition. On returning, he compared his own journal with their notes, and found that they had accurately known the day he landed, days on which he was unwell or well; and on one occasion it was said he had a headache, and at the very hour he was confined to his bed by a sick headache 2000 miles away. As another example he says, "My daughter had gone with her little son to visit some relatives 400 miles from New York. During her absence, about four o'clock in the morning, I was told through this spiritual intercourse that the little fellow was very sick. I went after him, and found that at the very hour I received that intelligence he was very sick; his mother and aunt were sitting up with him, and were alarmed for the result." . . . "This will give a general idea of what I was witnessing two or three times a week for more than a year. I was not a believer seeking confirmation of my own notions. I was struggling against conviction. I have not stopped to detail the precautions which I took to guard against deception, self or otherwise. Suffice it to say that in that respect I omitted nothing which my ingenuity could devise. There was no cavil too captious for me to resort to, no scrutiny too rigid or impertinent for me to institute, no inquiry too intrusive for me to make."

In a letter published in the *New York Herald*, August 6, 1853, after giving an abstract of his investigations, he says: "I went into the investigation originally thinking it a deception, and intending to make public my exposure of it. Having, from my researches, come to a different conclusion, I feel that the obligation to make known the result is just as strong. Therefore it is, mainly, that I give the result to the world. I say mainly, because there is another consideration which influences me, and that is, the desire to extend to others a knowledge which I am conscious cannot but make them happier and better."

I would now ask whether it is possible that Judge Edmonds can have been deceived as to these facts, and not be insane. Yet he practiced at the bar, and was in the highest repute as a lawyer till his death, about twenty years ago.

ROBERT HARE, M.D., Emeritus Professor of Chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania, was one of the most eminent scientific men of America. He distinguished himself by a number of important discoveries (among which may be mentioned the oxy-hydrogen blowpipe), and was the author of more than 150 papers on scientific subjects, besides others on political and moral questions. In 1853 his attention was first directed to table-turning and allied phenomena, and finding that the explanation of Faraday, which he had at first received as sufficient, would not account for the facts, he set himself to work to devise apparatus which would, as he expected, conclusively prove that no force was exerted but that of the persons at the table. The result was not as he expected, for however he varied his experiments, he was in every case only able to obtain results which proved that there was a *power* at work not that of any human being present. But in addition to the power there was an *intelligence*, and he was thus compelled to believe that existences not human did communicate with him.

It is often asserted by the disbelievers in these phenomena that no scientific man has fully investigated them. This is not true. No one who has not himself inquired into the facts has a right

even to give an opinion on the subject till he knows what has been done by others in the investigation; and to know this it will be necessary for him to read carefully, among other works, Hare's *Experimental Investigations of the Spirit Manifestations*, which has passed through five editions. It is a volume of 460 closely-printed 8vo pages, and contains, besides the details of his experiments, numerous discussions on philosophical, moral, and theological questions, which manifest great acuteness and logical power. The experiments he made were all through private mediums, and his apparatus was so contrived that the medium could not possibly, under the test condition, either produce the motions or direct the communications that ensued. For example, the table by its movements caused an index to revolve over an alphabet on a disc; yet, when the medium could not see the disc, the index moved to such letters as to spell out intelligent and accurate communications. And when the medium's hands were placed upon a truly plane metal plate, supported on accurately turned metal balls, so that not the slightest impulse could be communicated by her to the table, yet the table still moved easily and intelligently. In another case a medium's hands were suspended in water, so as to have no connection with the board on which the water vessel was placed, and yet, at request, a force of 18 lbs. was exerted on the boards, as indicated by a spring balance (see pages 40 to 50). A considerable space is devoted to communications received through the means of the above-named apparatus, describing the future life of human beings; and, as far as my own judgment goes, these descriptions, taken as a whole, give us a far more exalted, and at the same time more rational and connected, view of spirit life than do the doctrines of any other religion or philosophy; while they are certainly more conducive to morality, and inculcate most strongly the importance of cultivating to the uttermost every mental faculty with which we are endowed. Even if it be possible to prove that the supposed superhuman source of these communications is a delusion, I would still maintain that, standing on their own merits, they give us the best, the highest, the most rational, and the most acceptable ideas of a future state, and must prove the best incentive to intellectual and moral advancement; and I would call upon every thinker to examine the work on this account alone before deciding against it.

I shall next adduce, very briefly, the testimony of a number of well-known and intelligent Englishmen to facts of a similar nature witnessed by themselves.

¹ The work has been since advertised as by *Professor and Mrs. De Morgan*.

Next: VII – EVIDENCE OF LITERARY AND PROFESSIONAL MEN TO THE FACTS OF MODERN SPIRITUALISM

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 CODIFICTION

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 IV

THE SCIENTIFIC NOTE IN GENESIS.

THE history of the origin of nearly all ancient nations is mingled with that of their religion: that is why their first books have been religious works; and as all religions are allied to the spirit of things, which is allied to that of humanity, they have founded upon the arrangement and formation of the universe explanations limited by the knowledge of the times, and the founders of their systems. The result is, that the first religious books have been the first scientific treatises, as they have also been the only code of civil laws. Religion was then a powerful rein in government. The people bent willingly under the invisible power by the name of which they were subjugated, and from whom the government was said to have received and to hold its power. If they would not obey their equals, they would bend to this power.

In order to give greater force to religion, it was necessary to present it as absolute, infallible, and immutable, without which it would have lost its ascendancy over beings well-nigh brutal and scarcely endowed with reason. It was not necessary that it should be discussed, any more than were the orders of a sovereign. With this condition of the human mind, the principle of blind belief and passive obedience had its origin and utility. The veneration they had for sacred books, nearly always looked upon as revelations from heaven or as inspired by divinity, forbade all criticism. In primitive times, means of observation being very imperfect, the first theories upon the system of the universe were stained with grave errors; but, if opportunities for investigation had been as complete as they are today, men would not have known how to take advantage of them. They could only be the fruit of successive developments, and repeated studies of the laws of nature. By measure, as man has advanced in the knowledge of these laws, he has penetrated the mysteries of nature, and rectified ideas which he had conceived concerning the origin of things. It is the same as learning and defining the correlative movements of the hands of a clock. It is necessary to know the laws controlling its mechanism; that is, to appreciate the nature of its works, and calculate the power of its agitating forces. To comprehend the mechanism it is necessary to be familiar with all the laws which set in motion the complex whole.

Man has been impotent to solve the problem of creation until science has given him the key to it. It has been necessary that astronomy should open the doors of boundless space, and permit him to gaze into its infinite depths, that by the power of calculation he could determine with rigorous precision the movement, the position, the volume, the nature, and the *role* of the celestial bodies; that natural philosophy should reveal to him the laws of gravitation, of heat, of light, and of electricity, the power of these agents over entire nature, and the cause of the innumerable phenomena which result from it; that chemistry should teach of the transformations of metal, and mineralogy of the materials which form the surface of the globe; that geology should teach man to read in terrestrial beds the gradual formation of this same globe; and that botany, zoology, paleontology, anthropology, should come to initiate him into the science of the affiliation and succession of organized beings. By the aid of archeology he has been able to trace the progress of humanity through the ages. All sciences, in a word, complete one another: they carry their indispensable contingent for the knowledge of the history of the world. Without them man would have for his guide only his first hypotheses.

Before man was in possession of these means of investigation, all commentators on Genesis whose reason rebelled at material impossibilities, continued to revolve in the same circle of ideas, with no power to depart from them. Science has come to the rescue by attacking the old edifice of belief, opening a way whereby the whole aspect has changed entirely. Once the conducting thread is found, the difficulties are promptly met. In place of an imaginary Genesis, we have a positive, and in some respects an experimental, Genesis. The field of the universe is extended into the infinite. We behold the earth and the stars form themselves gradually in obedience to the eternal and immutable law, which testifies far more fully to the grandeur of the Deity than a miraculous creation suddenly originating from nothing by a sudden act of divinity after ages of inaction.

Since it is impossible to comprehend Genesis without the help of science, one can say most truthfully that it is she who has been elected to constitute the true Genesis according to the laws of nature. Have we reached in this nineteenth century a sufficient power of scientific attainment to solve all the difficulties of the problem of Genesis? No, assuredly not; but one thing is certain, that all the principal errors are destroyed, and the most essential foundation laid for undeniable principles. The yet uncertain points are, properly speaking, only minute portions, which, whatever the future may bring forth, cannot impair the whole. Notwithstanding all the resources of which it has been able to avail itself, there is an important element still wanting, without which the work can never be complete.

Of all ancient histories of the creation of the world and the human race, that which approaches nearest to modern scientific revelation, notwithstanding the errors which it contains, - some of the latter being now distinctly pointed out by the finger of science, - is incontestably that of Moses. Some of these errors are such more in appearance than in reality, as they spring from false interpretation of certain words, whose primitive signification is lost as they pass from language to language by means of translation into different tongues, or whose meaning is changed with the customs of the nations, particularly the allegorical form peculiar to the Oriental style, of which the literal sense was taken, to the exclusion of the spiritual. The Bible contains statements that our reason, which has been developed by science, will not allow us to accept; and also others which seem strange and repugnant to us, because connected with customs which are not ours. But, notwithstanding this, it would be wrong not to recognize the grand and beautiful thoughts which it contains. Allegory holds a conspicuous place in it, and under its veil conceals sublime truths, which appear, if one seeks for them, in the foundations of the ideas contained in them. Why has this veil not been sooner lifted? On one side it has been for the want of light which science and a healthy philosophy alone could give, and, on the other, the belief in the absolute immutability of a creed, consequent upon a too blind respect for the letter, to which reason bent blindly, fearing that science might not accord with the lattice-work of beliefs which were built upon their literal sense.

On account of the antiquity of these beliefs, it has been feared, that, if the first ring of the chain should be broken, all the meshes of the network would at length separate. Commentators, therefore, have shut their eyes when doubts arose; but we cannot evade danger by shutting our eyes to it. When a building totters, is it not more prudent to immediately replace defective stones by good ones, rather than to wait out of respect for the age of the edifice until there is no remedy for the evil other than its reconstruction from the foundation? In pursuing our investigations, even into the bowels of the earth, and into the blue depths of the sky above us, science has demonstrated in an undeniable manner the errors of the Mosaic Genesis taken in its literal sense, and the material impossibility of things having taken place literally as they are there represented to have done. It has thus given severe shocks to some ancient doctrines. The orthodox faith is disturbed: it believes that its very cornerstone is removed by the adoption of these new ideas. But which is most likely to be right, Science marching prudently and progressively over the solid ground of figures and observation, without affirming any thing before the proof of it is at hand, or History written at an epoch when means of observation were absolutely lacking? Should we believe the person who affirms that two and two make five, and refuses to verify it, or he who says two and two make four, and proves it?

But then it is objected, if the Bible is a divine revelation from God, how can it contain mistakes? While, if it be not a divine revelation, then has it no authority? Religious beliefs may thus be destroyed for want of a foundation. It must be one thing or the other; either Science is wrong, or Theology is right. If Theology is right, then an opinion contrary to hers cannot be a true one. There is no revelation superior to the authority of facts. If God, who is truth, could seduce men from the path of rectitude either knowingly or unconsciously, he would no more be God. If, then, facts contradict the words which are attributed to him, the logical conclusion is, that he has not pronounced them, or that they have been misconstrued. If Religion suffers in some respects by these contradictions, the wrong must not be ascribed to Science, which cannot agree with unreasonable statements, but to men for having prematurely founded absolute dogmas, which have been made a question of life and death, upon hypotheses susceptible of being overthrown by experience. We must resign ourselves to the sacrifice of some things, whether we desire to or not; we cannot do otherwise. As the world progresses, the will of a few persons cannot arrest it in its onward march. The wiser way is to follow it, and accommodate ourselves to the new state of things, rather than to cling to old beliefs which are crumbling to pieces, at the risk of falling with them. Were it desirable to impose silence upon Science out of respect to texts of Scripture regarded as sacred, it would be as impossible to do so as to stop the movement of the earth. No religious systems have ever gained any thing by sustaining manifest errors. The mission of Science is to discover the laws of nature. Now, as these laws are the work of God, they cannot be contrary to religions founded upon truth. Religion accomplishes its mission by means of these same principles; and, as a natural consequence, human intelligence is developed, which is also a divine work, advancing only with the permission of God by virtue of progressive laws which he has established. To hurl anathemas at progress, calling it a hindrance to religion, is to go contrary to the will of God. There is scarcely any thing so useless; for all the anathemas in the world will not hinder Science in her progressive work of bringing truth to light. If *Religion refuses to accompany Science*, she is left alone. Stationary religions can alone dread scientific discoveries. Scientific truths are only destructive to the systems of those who allow themselves to be distanced by progressive ideas by wrapping themselves in the absolutism of old beliefs. These persons have such a narrow idea of divinity, that they do not comprehend that to assimilate themselves with the laws of nature revealed by Science is to glorify God in his works; but in their blindness they prefer to do homage to the spirit of evil.

A religion which would be in no one point contradictory to the laws of nature would have nothing to fear from progress, and would be invulnerable. Genesis comprises two divisions, - the history of

the formation of the material world, and that of humanity in its dual (corporal and spiritual) principle. Science is limited in its researches by laws which rule matter. In dealing with man it has ever studied only his bodily envelope. And concerning this it has been enabled to give an account with incontestable precision of the principle parts of the mechanism of the universe and of the human organism. This important point attained, it has been further able to complete the Genesis of Moses, and to rectify the defective parts of it. But the history of man, considered as a spiritual being, is attached to a special order of ideas, which is not, properly speaking, in the domain of science, and which the latter, for this reason, has not made the subject of its investigations. It belongs more particularly to philosophy, which has formulated upon this point only contradictory systems, from genuine spirituality to the denial of the spiritual principle, and even God, without other foundation than the personal ideas of human authors. It has thus left the question undecided for want of sufficient light to answer it. This, however, is the most important question for man; for it is the problem of his past and future; that of the material world touches it only indirectly. It is the most important of all knowledge to learn of man's origin, - what becomes of him, if he has lived before, if he will continue to live on forever, and what end is in store for him .

Upon all these questions science is mute. Philosophy gives opinions only, and these often diametrically opposed to each other; but at least she permits such questions to be discussed, which induces many people to range themselves on her side in preference to that of dogmatic theology, which allows of no discussion on the subject. All religions are in accord with each other in the acknowledgment of such first principles as the existence of the soul, at the same time not demonstrating it. They agree neither in belief concerning its origin, its past history, or its future destiny, and above all, in that which is the most essential, the conditions upon which its future happiness depends. The greater part of them accept pictures of the future imposed on them by the belief of their adepts, which can be supported only by blind faith, unable to endure a serious examination; the destiny which they accord to the soul being allied in their dogmas to ideas of the material world, and the mechanism of the universe universally entertained in primitive times, irreconcilable with the actual state of knowledge. Being able to lose only by examination and discussion, their devotees deem it better to proscribe both.

From these different faiths touching the future of man, doubts and incredulity arises. It is not possible that it should be otherwise. Every religion pretending to possess in exclusive measure all the truth, without making sufficiently powerful assertions to convince the majority, has left man in indecision regarding it. However, incredulity leaves a painful void. Man regards with anxiety the unknown future upon which he must sooner or later enter. The idea of nonentity chills him. His conscience says to him, that beyond the present there is something for him; but what? His developed reason forbids him any longer to accept the histories which have quieted his early days, which have put conscience to sleep by his taking the allegory for a reality. What is the meaning of this allegory? Science has torn away the corner of the veil; but she has not revealed that which it is most important for man to know. He interrogates her, but in vain; she answers nothing in a convincing way to calm his apprehensions. He finds everywhere affirmation hurling itself against negation, without more positive proofs on one side than on the other. Incertitude concerning things of the future life has made many men reject the duties of the material life with a kind of frenzy. Such is the inevitable effect in transitional epochs. The edifice of the past is crumbling away, and that of the future is not yet constructed. Man is like a lad who has lost the innocent belief of his earliest years, and has not yet obtained the knowledge of a riper age; he has only vague aspirations, which he knows not how to define. If the spiritual question regarding man has remained till our day in a theoretical condition, it is because direct means of observation have failed to establish the material theory of the world, and the field has remained open to the varying conceptions of the human mind; while man has not known the laws which rule matter, and has not been able to apply the experimental method, he has erred from system to system concerning the mechanism of the universe and the formation of the earth. It has been in the moral as in the physical order of things; in the attempt to establish ideas, men have failed in the essential element, - the knowledge of the laws of the spiritual principle.

This knowledge was reserved for our epoch, as the discovery of the laws of matter has been the work of the last two centuries. Until now the study of the spiritual principle (the study of metaphysics) has been purely speculative and theoretic. In Spiritism it is all experimental. By the aid of the mediumistic faculty, more developed in our day, - far more generalized and better studied, - man is found possessed of a new instrument of observation. Mediumship has been for the spiritual world that which the telescope has been for the astral, and the microscope for the world of infinitesimal. It has allowed exploration of it, study, and one might say vision, of its connection with the corporeal world, - of the distinction in the living man between the intelligent and the material being; for they can now be seen to act separately. On in relation with the inhabitants of the spirit-world, one has been able to follow the soul in its ascending march, in its migrations, in its transformations. At length the study of the spiritual element is made practical; this was wanting to all preceding commentators on Genesis; thus their inability to comprehend it, and to rectify its errors. The spiritual and material worlds, being in constant contact, are inseparable from each other. Both

have their part to play in Genesis. Without the knowledge of laws which rule the former, it is as impossible to create a complete Genesis as it would be for a sculptor to give life to a statue. At this day only, though neither material nor spiritual science has said its last word, man possesses the two necessary elements to throw light upon this immense problem. These two keys are necessary in order to arrive at even an approximate solution. As to the perfect solution, it may never be given to man to find it upon the earth, as there are some things which must ever appear to us as secrets with God.

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 Five

Picture of the Christian Hell

"No demon ever yet tired, or ever will tire, of his hideous task. All the demons are, in regard to the work appointed them, thoroughly disciplined, and faithful in executing *the avenging orders* they have received; were it otherwise, what would become of hell? The victims would obtain relief, if their executioners quarreled among themselves or wearied of their work. But there is no relief for the former, because there is no quarreling among the latter; however wicked they are, however innumerable, the demons have a perfect understanding with one another throughout the length and breadth of the abyss, and there have never been seen, upon the earth, nations more docile to their princes, armies more obedient to their chiefs, monastic communities more humbly submissive to their superiors, than are the demons to their rulers, from one end of hell to the other.

We know, however, but little of the populace of Demondom, of the vile spirits who make up the legions of vampires, ghouls, toads, scorpions, crows, hydras, salamanders, and other beasts that have no name for us, and that constitute the fauna of the infernal regions; but we know, and have the names of many of the princes who command those legions, among others, Belphegor, the Demon of incontinence; Abaddon or Apollyon, the Demon of murder; Belzebu, the Demon of impure desires, Master of the flies that engender corruption; Mammon, of avarice; and Moloch, and Belial, and Baal, and Ashtaroth, and many others; and, above these, their universal chief, the sombre archangel who bore, in Heaven, the name of Lucifer, and who bears, in Hell, the name of Satan.

Such, in brief, is the idea which is given us of hell, considered from the point of view of its physical nature and of the physical sufferings of which it is the theater. Open the writings of the Fathers and of the ancient Doctors of the Church; interrogate our pious legends; examine the carvings and the paintings of our churches; listen to what is said in our pulpits, and you will learn many other particulars in regard to it."

13. The author from whom we are quoting follows up the foregoing picture with the following reflections, the importance of which will be easily perceived by the reader: -

"The resurrection of the body is in itself a miracle; but God will work a second miracle in giving to the mortal bodies thus raised - bodies that have already been worn out by the passing trials of life, that have already been annihilated - the power to subsist, without dissolving, in a furnace in which all the metals would be converted into vapor. If it be urged that the soul is its own executioner, that God does not persecute the sinner, but abandons him to the state of misery he has brought upon himself by his own choice, that statement may be admitted as true, although the eternal abandonment of a lost and suffering being would seem to be but little in conformity with the goodness of the Creator; but what may be admissible in regard to the soul and to spiritual sufferings cannot be, in any degree, admissible in regard to the resuscitated bodies and corporeal sufferings of the damned. In order that these sufferings may be perpetuated throughout eternity, it is not enough that God should withdraw His hand; it is necessary, on the contrary, that He should show His hand, that He should intervene, that He should act; for, without the constant action of His power in maintaining their existence, those bodies would be immediately destroyed.

Theologians, therefore, assume that God operates, after the resurrection, the second miracle to which we have just referred. He draws, in the first place, from the sepulcher which has devoured them, our bodies of clay; He raises them, from the grave, such as they were when they were committed to its keeping, with all their original infirmities and all the degradations they have successively

undergone from age, vice, and disease; He gives them back to us in that state, decrepit, shivering, gouty, full of physical needs, sensitive to the sting of the minutest insect, covered with the ignoble stains that our life and our death have left in them; this is the first miracle. Next, to these weak, wretched bodies, ready to crumble away into the dust from which they have been taken, He imparts a property which they never before possessed; and this is the second miracle; that is to say, *He inflicts upon them the gift of immortality*, that same gift which, in His anger - or, should we not rather say, in His mercy? - He withdrew from Adam when the latter was driven out from Eden.

While Adam remained immortal, he was invulnerable; and, when he ceased to be invulnerable, he became mortal; death followed close upon the heels of pain.

The resurrection, then, does not restore to us either the physical conditions of the innocent man or the physical conditions of the guilty man; it is a resurrection only of our miseries, but with the addition of new miseries, infinitely more horrible; it is, in fact, and as regards the immortality of the bodies thus raised, *a new creation*, and the most malicious act the human imagination has ever dared to conceive of. God alters His mind, and, in order to add, to the spiritual torments of sinners, fleshly torments that shall endure for ever, He suddenly changes, by an act of His power, the laws and properties which He, Himself, assigned, in the beginning, to all bodies formed from matter; He resuscitates diseased and rotten flesh, and joining, in an indestructible union, the material elements which tend spontaneously to separate from each other, He maintains and perpetuates this living rottenness; He throws it into the fire, not in order to purify it, but to preserve it just as it is, sensitive, suffering, burning, horrible, and, in this state, by His will, He renders it immortal.

By attributing such a miracle to God, Christian theologians represent Him as one of the executioners of Hell; for, although the damned can only attribute their spiritual sufferings to themselves, they can only attribute their fleshly sufferings to a direct exercise of His power. It is not enough, apparently, for God to abandon the souls of the guilty, after their death, to sorrow, to remorse, to the anguish of knowing that they have shut themselves out from happiness for ever; His power, according to the theologians, pursues them through the darkest recesses of this abyss of horror, seeks them out from this night of misery, and drags them back, for a moment, to the light of day, not to console them, but to clothe them with a hideous, putrid, flaming, but imperishable body, more pestiferous than the robe of Dejanira; and it is only when He has thus changed the action of the laws of His own ordaining in the realm of matter, that He abandons them to their fate.

But, no; He does not, even then, simply leave them to their fate; for Hell only subsists, like the earth, like Heaven, in virtue of a permanent action of His will, and, like them, would vanish into nothingness if He ceased to sustain its existence. His hand will therefore be laid upon the damned, throughout eternity, to prevent their fire from burning itself out and their bodies from being consumed; and He will do this, incessantly, in order that the sight of the perennial tortures of these wretched beings, thus cursed by Him with immortality, may intensify the happiness of the elect.

14. We have said, and with truth, that the Hell of the Christians is more hideous than that of the Pagans. In Tartarus, we see the souls of the guilty, tortured by remorse, perpetually confronted with their crimes and their victims; we see them fleeing from the light which trans-pierces them, and seeking in vain to hide themselves from the sight of those whose glance follows them wherever they go. Their pride is abased and mortified; each of them bears the stigma of his past; each is punished by the recoil of his own evil deeds, and so certainly, that, for a great number of them, it is judged to be quite enough to leave them to themselves, without adding any other chastisements to the misery caused them by their self-condemnation. But they are *shades*, that is to say, *souls clothed upon with their fluidic bodies only, image of their terrestrial existence*; we do not see, in the Pagan Hell, *men* re-clothed with their fleshly body, in order that they may be harrowed with the additional misery of physical suffering, nor any material fire "penetrating under their skin and saturating them with physical agony to the very marrow of their bones," nor the lavish variety and ingenious refinements of the tortures that constitute the basis of the Christian Hell. We find, in Tartarus, judges who are inflexible but *just*, and who apportion the severity of the punishment to the degree of the faultiness for which it is inflicted; whereas, in the empire of Satan, all are subjected to the same tortures, and all these tortures are based on physical suffering; everything else is banished, including equity.

Undoubtedly there are, at the present day, and even in the churches themselves, many sensible men who do not accept these descriptions of Hell as literally true, and who regard them as being only allegories which are to be interpreted in a spiritual sense; but the opinion of such persons is merely individual, and is not the rule. The belief in a physical Hell, with all the consequences implied in that belief, is none the less, even at the present day, an article of the Christian creed.

15. It may be asked, "If these horrors do not really exist, how can they have been seen by ecstasies, even in a state of trance?" This is not the place for explaining the source of the fantastic images that are sometimes produced to the consciousness of the spirit, with all the appearances of reality. * We can here only remark that the fact of their production proves the truth of the principle laid down by us ** viz., that trance is the least reliable of all the modes of revelation, because this state of super-excitement is not always the result of a complete disengagement of the soul from the body, but is often complicated with reflexes of the subjects with which the mind of the seer has been busied in his waking state. The ideas that have been assimilated by the spirit of the seer, and of which his physical brain, or, rather, the perispiritic envelope corresponding to the brain, has preserved the impress, are reproduced, in trance, but distorted, as though in a mirage, under vaporous and shadowy forms that cross each other, blend together, and make up unreal and fantastic pictures. The visions of ecstasies, of all religions, are always conformed to the religious belief with which they are imbued; and it is therefore not surprising that those who, like Saint Theresa, are strongly imbued with theological ideas of Hell, as conveyed by verbal or written descriptions and by paintings, should have visions which are, properly speaking, only the reproduction of these ideas, and which partake of the nature of nightmare. A Pagan ecstatic, if he believed in the creed of his day, would have seen, in trance, Tartarus and its Furies, just as, in a vision of Olympus, he would have seen Jupiter holding the thunderbolts in his had.

* Vide *The Medium's Book*, No. 113.

** Vide *The Spirits' Book*, Nos. 443, 444.

Part Second - Examples

CHAPTER VII

OB DURATE SPIRITS

ANGELA - A Useless Life

A Spirit who presented herself spontaneously to the medium.

- Q. Do you repent of your faults?
A. No.
Q. Then why do you come to me?
A. To try to do so.
Q. You are not happy?
A. No.
Q. What is wanting to you?
A. Peace.
Q. How can you fail to have peace in the spirit-life?
A. Regret for the past.
Q. Regret for the past is remorse; then, you *do* repent?
A. No; but I dread the future.
Q. What are you afraid of?
A. The Unknown.
Q. Will you tell me what you did in your last existence?
A. Nothing.
Q. What was your social position?
A. Middling.
Q. Were you married?
A. Yes; and I had children.
Q. Did you fulfill your duties as a wife and a mother?
A. No; my husband wearied me; my children, also.
Q. How did you employ your time?
A. In amusing myself, when I was a girl; in being tired of everything, when I grew up.
Q. What occupations had you?
A. None.
Q. Who, then, looked after your housekeeping?
A. The servant.
Q. Is not that uselessness the source of your present regrets and apprehensions?
a. Perhaps so.
Q. It is not enough to make that admission. Will you, to atone for the uselessness of your life, help the guilty and suffering spirits around you?
A. In what way?
Q. By aiding them to grow better, with the help of your counsels and your prayers.
A. I don't know how to pray.
Q. We will pray together; that will show you how. Will you try?
A. No.
Q. Why not?
A. Fatigue.

Commentary by the Medium's Guide

It is for the general instruction that we bring under your eyes the various degrees of suffering and of position of the spirits who are condemned to expiation, as the consequence of their faults.

Angela was one of those creatures devoid of initiative, whose life is as useless to others as to themselves. Caring only for pleasure, incapable of finding, in the accomplishment of her duties to her family and to society, the affectional satisfactions that alone can impart a charm to life (because they belong to all ages), she could only employ her youth in frivolous amusements; afterwards, when the time for serious duties had come, *she found emptiness around her, because there was only emptiness in her own heart*. Without any serious faults, but also without good qualities, she made her husband miserable, destroyed her children's comfort, and ruined their prospects, through her carelessness and negligence. She perverted their feelings and their judgment, both by her own bad example and by leaving them to the care of servants whom she did not even take the trouble to choose with care. Her life was fruitless of good and therefore guilty, for *evil comes from the absence of good*. You should all understand that it is not enough to abstain from committing faults; you must practice the virtues which are their opposites.

Evil is the opposite of good; he who would avoid it must therefore enter upon the opposite road, for, otherwise, his life will be a nullity, and he will have to begin it again until he has made it living and fruitful.

Q. May I inquire what was the existence of Angela previous to her last one? For the last one must have been the consequence of the preceding one.

A. She had lived in the stupid laziness and uselessness of a convent. Idle and selfish, she wished, in her last existence, to try family-life; but her spirit made very little progress. She constantly repelled the inner voice that warned her of her danger; the slope was easy, and she preferred to let herself slip into the gulf rather than make the effort to arrest her declension in time. Although she now sees the danger of this passivity, she has not yet acquired sufficient strength of purpose to make an earnest attempt to emerge from her slothful indifference. Pray for her; rouse her; force her to open her eyes to the light; it is a duty to do this; neglect nothing that can help to bring her into the right road.

Man was created for activity; mental activity is the essence of his nature; bodily activity is necessary to his well-being. Work, therefore, incessantly; fulfill all your duties with zeal and perseverance, and let your faith sustain you in everything that you have to do. He who conscientiously accomplishes the most modest task, even though it be classed as the lowest and meanest according to your social fictions, is a hundredfold nobler, in the sight of the Almighty, than he who leaves to others the work which is incumbent upon himself. Duties are the rungs of the ladder by which we ascend to the supreme degree. Be careful to miss none of them; and remember that you are always surrounded by friends who hold out a helping hand to those who put their trust in the almighty.

MONOD. *

* Formerly an eminent Protestant Pastor of Paris.

THERE ARE NO RANDOM VICTIMS

Spirit Communication received by Y. Limoges

One plane crashes and everyone lives, another one crashes and everyone dies. A person, for whatever reason, kills complete strangers at a work place, a school or other public place while others survive. A deadly illness breaks out and strikes down some people, while some get a mild case, and others never get sick.

The process of reincarnation fully explained is the only concept that can rationally and fairly account for the above scenarios. Spiritists understand that the Creator and the Divine laws are perfect and there is a *just cause* for all of these situations; **there is no such thing as a random victim of chance.**

(NOTE: As we have mentioned before, many spirits have communicated at our sessions and have explained to us that they chose their own fate to expiate, make atonement, and/or as a test. Rest assured; there is a perfect Divine Plan that includes supreme justice, mercy, and love. Y.L.)

NEWS, EVENTS, BOOK REVIEWS AND MISCELLANEOUS

PROGRAM FOR THE SPIRITIST STUDY AND PRACTICE

NEW CLASS START ON AUGUST 13, 2009

What is it?

The Roadmap Program for the Spiritist Study and Practice (RPSSP) focuses on the sole goal of promoting the study and practice of Spiritism, while contributing to the formation of Spiritist practitioners at the Spiritist Society of Baltimore, Inc. It welcomes everyone to take its courses without distinction to sex, race, religion or nationality. Each class comprises of a 1 1/2 minutes hour-study session and it is divided into three (3) phases.

DESCRIPTION:

PHASE I

Spiritism 101

It is a 9-week program on the main teachings of Spiritism. This course is a prerequisite for more advanced courses.

The Spiritist Science

Introduction to the Spiritist principles including a historical overview of the beginning of spiritism, and its codifier, Allan Kardec. The Spiritist movement in the US and worldwide.

Prerequisite: Spiritism 101.

Advancements in the Spiritist Science

Deep analysis of the Spiritist principles. Topics include: origin and nature of spirits, spiritual intervention in the corporeal world, divine justice, reincarnation, and different categories of inhabited worlds. *Prerequisite: The Spiritist Science.*

PHASE II

Spiritual Laws of the Spiritist Practice

Fundamental principles of the spiritual laws that govern the Spiritist Practice. *Prerequisite: Advancements in the Spiritist Science.*

The Spiritist Therapy I

Understanding the mechanisms of the passes and types of passes. *Prerequisite: Advancements in the Spiritist Science.*

Practice on the Spiritist Therapy I

Applications of the passes techniques under the light of the Spiritist Thought. This course is an essential tool for a serious spiritual treatment. *Prerequisite: The Spiritist Therapy I.*

PHASE III

Introduction to Mediumship

To learn the two basic fundamentals of Mediumship: knowledge of the Spiritist Thought and the moral ethical values related to it. *Prerequisite: Advancements in the Spiritist Science.*

Mediumship I

Educate mediumship through the study in depth of the Spiritist Thought. Topics include: the mediumship faculty, types of mediumship, obsession and disobsession. Second part of the course: educate and develop the psyche faculties of the participants through exercises of harmonization and psyche perception. *Prerequisite: Introduction to Mediumship.*

Practical Guidelines for Mediumship

Application of the concept of mediumship in the mediumship meetings, in a group setting. Topics include: moral development of the mediums, analysis of the messages received, the power of faith and hope. Second part of the course: practical guidelines in the exercise of mediumship in a group setting. *Prerequisite: Mediumship I*

Further [Information](#) and [Registration](#) at the homepage of the

[Spiritist Society of Baltimore](#)

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