



GEAE

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

Allan Kardec

HEAD QUOTATION

"The hypothesis of Spiritualism not only accounts for all the facts (and is the only one that does so), but it is further remarkable as being associated with a theory of a future state of existence, which is the only one yet given to the world that can at all commend itself to the modern philosophical mind. There is a general agreement and tone of harmony in the mass of facts and communications termed "spiritual," which has led to the growth of a new literature and to the establishment of a new religion. The main doctrines of this religion are: That after death man's spirit survives in an ethereal body, gifted with new powers, but mentally and morally the same individual as when clothed in flesh. That he commences from that moment a course of apparently endless progression, which is rapid just in proportion as his mental and moral faculties have been exercised and cultivated while on earth.

That his comparative happiness or misery will depend entirely on himself. Just in proportion as his higher human faculties have taken part in all his pleasures here, will he find himself contented and happy in a state of existence in which they will have the fullest exercise; while he who has depended more on the body than on the mind for his pleasures, will, when that body is no more, feel a grievous want, and must slowly and painfully develop his intellectual and moral nature till its exercise shall become easy and pleasurable. Neither punishments nor rewards are meted out by an external power, but each one's condition is the natural and inevitable sequence of his condition here. He starts again from the level of moral and intellectual development to which he had raised himself while on earth."

"I feel myself so confident of the truth and objective reality of many of the *facts* here narrated, that I would stake the whole question on the opinion of any man of science desirous of arriving at the truth, if he would only devote two or three hours a week for a few months to an examination of the phenomena *before pronouncing an opinion* for, I again repeat, not a single individual that I have heard of has done this without becoming convinced of the reality of these phenomena. I maintain, therefore, finally that whether we consider the vast number and the high character of its converts, the immense accumulation and the authenticity of its facts, or the noble doctrine of a future state which it has elaborated the so-called supernatural, as developed in the phenomena of animal magnetism, clairvoyance, and modern Spiritualism, is an experimental science, the study of which must add greatly to our knowledge of man's true nature and highest interests."

Alfred Russel Wallace

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EDITORIAL

THE CONTEMPLATION OF THE HEAVENS¹

Extract from the book Wonders of the Heavens
By *Camille Flammarion*

"How beautiful and worthy of the human mind is this contemplation of the visible splendours of creation! How much superior are these studies to the common preoccupations which occupy our days and pass away our years! How they elevate the soul towards real greatness! In the artificial world that we have formed for ourselves by our citizen habits, we have become so strange to nature that when we return to it we appear to enter into a new world. We have lost belief in its value, and thus deprive ourselves of the purest joy. By freeing ourselves from stormy life, by returning to peace, we undergo a hitherto unknown impression, as if the sphere of harmony into which we enter had always remained far from the labours of our minds.

Studies of nature possess this precious characteristic, that being applied to truth, they recall us to our origin, to our material cradle. Wordly life is a real exile for the soul. Imperceptibly we get accustomed to content ourselves with appearances, no longer to seek the bottom and the substance of things. Imperceptibly we lose our value and greatness, when rocked on the surface of this unfathomable ocean on which float human barks. The objects which surround us alone attract our attention and we forget the past like the future. But there are hours of solitude when the soul, returning to itself, feels the emptiness of all these appearances, when it discovers how little they can satisfy it, when it anxiously searches and returns with love to real greatness alone capable of giving firm ground for its repose, instead of the fluctuations which have agitated it. Then the soul has home sickness; it demands the truth; it wishes for the beautiful, and bids adieu to transient affections. If it is allowed at these hours of reflection to contemplate the beauties of nature; to admire and understand the wonders of creation; entirely giving itself up to the contemplation which captivates it, abandoning itself to the charm of the splendours studied, it devotes itself unreservedly to the spectacle which absorbs it, forgetful of the false joys of the Earth, and eager after the true and profound ones which Nature, that young mother whose age is unchangeable, pours into the souls of the children who cherish her. The beauties of the heavens will captivate it with their charms, it will demand that such a contemplation shall never cease, that the night shall reveal to it wonder upon wonder, and that it may be permitted not to leave that scene before its admiration is satisfied; as in the sweetest hours of life it will be induced to sing with the poet: **2**

*"Oh time, suspend your flight! and you, happy hours,
Suspend your race!
Let us savor the fleet delights
Of our fairest days!*

*But I ask in vain for a few more moments,
Time escapes me and flees;
I say to this night: Be slower; and dawn
comes to melt the night.*

When we give our minds up to these high and magnificent studies we soon feel the great harmony, the admirable unity in which all things are bound together; we feel that all creation is one, that we form a constituent part of it, and that an immense life, scarcely guessed at, envelopes us. Then all phenomena take their place in the universal concert.

The golden star which shines in the depths of the heavens and the little grain of crystallized sand which reflects the solar ray,

unite their light; the majestic sphere which revolves harmoniously in its gigantic orbit and the little bird which sings under the leaves; the immense nebula which arranges its system of suns in the vast expanse, and the beehive which receives the rhomboids of a republic in eternal concord; gravitation which bears up in space these formidable globes and these systems of worlds, and the humble zephyr which wafts beloved perfumes from one flower to another; great phenomena and imperceptible actions, unite with each other in the general movement, and the infinitely great and the infinitely small embrace each other. For the universe is the action of a single thought. (...)

Oh! how little is man if he does not rise above human things! There are regions above, without limits, which our soul is admitted to possess, provided that it carries away with it the least possible that is material, and that, being purified from all stain, and free from fetters, it is worthy of flying thither. As soon as it reaches there, it is nourished and developed; it is as if delivered from its irons, and returned to its source; it recognises itself to be a daughter of heaven from the delight it takes in celestial things; it enters there not as a stranger, but as if at home. An eager spectator, there is nothing but it sounds and interrogates. Ah! who could hinder it? Does it not know that all this is its domain? Man does not live on bread alone - he requires thought. It is on rising to these noble contemplations that he becomes worthy of his rank; it is by occupying his mind with these beautiful and fertile subjects of study that his countenance will preserve the divine expression of his destiny, and will shine more and more. Let us not forget the teachings of the night, but return sometimes to meditate under its silent gloom. Instead of a passing reverie, now that we have partly lifted the veil which hid the celestial mysteries from us, our minds will have an object better understood; we shall understand what we admire, and we shall better appreciate these distant creations. This nocturnal hours will have a double value in our eyes, as they will place us henceforth in communication with worlds whose natures are no longer unknown to us. And it is with greater intimacy that we shall address that salutation to the Night, with which we opened our interview with the heavens: - ²

*"Oh night, how sublime is your language for me,
While alone and thoughtful, as calm as you
Contemplating the suns with which your cloak is adorned,
I roam and meditate in peace under your sacred shadow"*

¹ The entire book from which the above extract was taken is available at: [Google Book Search](#).

² Translation by *Lotus Jin Yam*.

GEAE Editors

ARTICLES

FEUDS AND REGRETS IN THE AFTERLIFE

By *Michael Tymn*¹



Geraldine Cummins²

The story of the Ross sisters, as communicated through the mediumship of Geraldine Cummins, perhaps the most accomplished automatist of the 20th Century, suggests that family grudges and feuds carry over into the afterlife if not resolved before death. The story also suggests that we can have concerns and regrets relative to how things, such as wills, were left at the time of transition

from the physical world.

Beatrice Gibbes, Cummins' friend and assistant, described the method employed by Cummins. She would sit at a table, cover her eyes with her left hand and concentrate on "stillness." She would then fall into a light trance or dream state. Her hand would then begin to write. Usually, her "control," most often a spirit named Astor, said to be a pagan Greek when alive on earth, would make some introductory remarks and announce that another entity was waiting to speak. Because of Cummins' semi-trance condition and also because of the speed at which the writing would come, Gibbes would sit beside her and remove each sheet of paper as it was filled. Cummins' hand was quickly lifted by Gibbes to the top of the new page, and the writing would continue without break. The handwriting most often changed to that identified with the communicating spirit when alive.

From 1925 thru 1929, Molly Ross, the youngest of four sisters and the only surviving one (age 45 in 1925), had nine sittings with Geraldine Cummins (GC). Gibbes observed and recorded the story in a book titled *They Survive*. After the sittings, Gibbes would go over the scripts with Molly and have her comment on evidential points.

Molly had three sisters who had passed over. They were Audrey, who died in 1894 at age 21; Margaret, who died in 1925 at age 57, and Alice, the oldest of the four sisters, who died in 1928 at the age of 62.

Molly had had several evidential sittings with GC after Margaret's death in 1925. After Alice appeared on the brink of death while in a nursing home in York, Molly, who was living in London, was summoned to her sister's bedside. After Alice died on October 11, 1928, Molly wired GC in Dublin, Ireland, requesting that Astor find her oldest sister, Audrey, and to let her know that Alice had passed over.

Four days later, on October 15, Molly received a letter from GC, postmarked October 12, saying that Margaret had communicated and said that "Alice was not alone when she was slipping out of her body...that Audrey and Mater (their mother) came to her."

Margaret explained that Audrey presented herself to Alice as Alice remembered her in 1894, not as she was in 1925. She further explained that because Alice and Mater had quarreled before Mater's death three years earlier, and because Audrey had much more experience on that side, Audrey was the first to appear to Alice while Mater remained in the background. Because Alice was so restless, Audrey put a dream of old days about her soul. When Alice saw these old memories, her fear left her.

Margaret said that she had not yet approached Alice because she was not yet fit to draw near the newly dead. Besides, Margaret added, she would not have been received kindly by Alice as they constantly quarreled when they were alive. *This point was particularly evidential to Molly, since it was true and she was certain that GC had no way of knowing of the friction between the two sisters.*

On November 10, 1928, Mollie sat with GC in London. A request was made to Astor to find Margaret. After a pause, Margaret took hold of GC's hand and told Molly that she had talked with Alice. "I had quite a shock when I found out that we didn't disagree with each other," Margaret wrote. "She is so much gentler than she was." Margaret then said that Alice would attempt to communicate directly, although it might be too soon and her words might be muddled. Mollie observed the writing change to a big scrawl and become very labored.

"Mo, Mo, Molly. I am here. I see you," Alice wrote. "It's all true. I am alive. The pain went at once. I felt suffocating. Then, just after I got that awful choking, I felt things were breaking up all about me. I heard crackling like fire and then dimness. I saw you bending down with such a white face and you were looking at me, and I wasn't there." Alice added that she regretted that her husband, John, and her son, Ronald, were not there when she left the body. *Molly confirmed the deathbed scene as accurate and pointed out that John and Ronald arrived several hours after the death. Here again, Mollie saw this as very evidential since GC had no way of knowing what took place in Alice's final hours.*

Alice said that she regretted not having treated her second son, who was living in East Africa, as an equal to Ronald. *Molly confirmed that Ronald was the favorite son and noted that Ronald was favored in Alice's will, another fact which GC could not have known.* As the writing became fainter, Margaret took back the pencil and explained that Alice found it hard to write at the end as she didn't understand how to manage the words. However, she got through most of what she wanted to say. Margaret added that Alice also regretted treating her husband badly. *Molly noted that this was also very evidential as Alice "bullied her husband dreadfully."*

Margaret then mentioned that Alice still resented the fact that Margaret cut her out of her will

and left her share to Charles, their brother, who had no need of the money. *This was another very evidential fact to Molly.* "She hasn't forgotten yet the way I left my money," Margaret wrote. "She feels it would have made a difference in her last days."

Molly told Margaret that Alice's family was managing financially. "Good," Margaret replied. "I will tell her that, then she won't bother about things. The fact of the matter is, she came out of the world with a dark cloud of years of troubled thought about money. It all accumulated and clung about her. But I think now it will be slowly dissipated...All that worrying before her death left her in a very scattered state of mind."

When Margaret told Molly that Alice had it easier than she (Margaret) did, Molly requested an explanation. "I never cared much for anyone," Margaret responded. "One pays for that over here."

Margaret went on to say that she was now "quite clear" of her worldly longings and had built herself a house with her thoughts. Moreover, she was sharing the house with someone. "Oh! I don't think that sounds quite nice," Molly reacted. "Who are you sharing it with? A MAN?" Margaret said she was not prepared to tell Molly of her companion, but, apparently in jest, wrote that she should tell Charles (their brother) that she had dragged the Ross name into the mud. *Mollie noted that it was a family joke that Charles took life too seriously and was always afraid of a family scandal.*

On November 11, 1928, Molly again sat with GC. After GC went into a trance, Molly asked Astor if he could bring her sister, meaning Margaret. "Yes, I will call her," Astor responded, apparently thinking of Alice. "She is quite near. Her new body is now almost formed. When it is complete she can face the new world and this life. Wait (pause).

"Funny old man called me," Alice wrote, "Who is your grey-bearded admirer, Molly?"

Molly explained that the man was Astor, GC's guide. Alice replied that her mind was still in tatters and that she was confused. Alice then wrote that her men were no good. Molly replied that there were many men she liked in her younger days. "They were nice to flirt with but not any use otherwise," Alice wrote. *Molly noted that Alice, when alive, frequently referred to herself as a "flirt."*

Alice then said that Mater sends her love to Molly and talks about her (horseback) riding. Alice then recalled a quarrel that she had had with Mater over Molly's ability to ride a particular horse. *Another evidential fact.*

Alice mentioned that Margaret had been around. "You know I never could stand her," Alice said, "but you would have laughed to see us together. We were so polite. She was trying so hard to avoid giving offence... I put Margaret in her place all right. She told me how sorry she was about her will and the money she didn't leave to me. I told her that being sorry didn't make up for the thoughtlessness, that there was more thought in your little finger than in her whole body. Do you know, she took it quite quietly, and would you believe it, kissed me! My word, I was never so taken back in my life. I couldn't say anything more to her then."

At one point, Alice said, "And in those last months I used to keep saying to myself, 'if only this or that had happened.'" *Molly recalled her saying those exact words.*

Alice also mentioned having talked with their father (Pater) and his making reference to some "numbskull" relatives. *This was a word that Alice sometimes used when alive, Molly noted, while Beatrice Gibbes could not recall GC ever having used the word before.*

Alice asked Molly if she had seen John (Alice's husband) recently. Molly said she had. "Tell him I see more and more how patient and good he was to me," Alice wrote. "I feel so sorry now because I know I spoke harshly to him sometimes." *Molly noted that "harshly" was a very mild way of putting it.*

After a few more comments the writing changed to Margaret's quick style. Molly asked Margaret if she was aware that Alice was just communicating. "Yes, she has quite blossomed out," Margaret replied. *Molly noted that Margaret frequently spoke of people "blossoming out" when she was alive in the flesh.*

Margaret mentioned that she and Alice had had a "fusillade" (i.e., shoot-out, outburst) when they last met. *Molly recalled that the word "fusillade" was often used by Margaret before she passed.*

On the following day, November 12, Molly returned for another sitting with GC. Astor announced that both Margaret and Alice were there. "You mustn't mind too much what Alice says to you," Margaret opened the dialogue. "She is still very much in the cloud of her memories. She feels, however, that things are not so bad here now. At first she found fault with so many different aspects

of life in this place between the worlds. There is a kind of intermediate state, you know. If only human beings would talk to their people when they are in that state it would give such comfort...I had a difficult time, but it is over now. You did help me."

Molly again asked Alice about her housemate. "You would laugh at me if I explained," Margaret replied. "We have to go through certain essential experiences, and if we miss them in the earth-life we may have to face them here. I have actually to share a house - not a bed - with a man (laughter). Quite true."

Molly asked if she were joking. "No, I am not," Margaret answered. "I don't mean anything improper. I merely mean I have to put up with a companion of another type of mind. Here we talk of men and women, but we really mean male and female minds. I have to put up with the masculine type of mentality in my home. Heavens! It is trying sometimes!"

Margaret said that her masculine companion has a "very untidy mind," which she was having a hard time adjusting to. "You know we make our homes out of our memories. I like a nice little house. He wants a house that is quite unlike anything that was ever built or imagined. You can't imagine all his absurd, impossible ideas. How would you like to come home to your cozy little sitting room and find that it had been turned into a great hall; that it has curious lights in it, and no ordinary furniture?"

The writing changed and the pencil tapped the paper in an agitated manner. "I get so impatient," Alice communicated after fumbling with the pencil.

Alice told Molly that Audrey had taken her on a trip to the south of France. "I was hungry for it," Alice explained. *Molly noted that Alice, when alive, had longed to get away from England and spoke of getting away to the South of France.*

Alice also wrote about being approached by a man who claimed to be her brother. However, Alice was confused as she had, to her knowledge, no brothers on that side. When Molly reminded her that their mother had a stillborn baby before she (Alice) was born, Alice recalled the story.

"Oh! I understand now," Alice said. "Audrey left me with him and didn't explain. He said he was living quite close to Margaret, that she didn't know he was her brother. He explained that he had charge of some man who came over to this life, not so very long ago, and his punishment was to live with her. Her punishment was to live with him. Did you know that there was a kind of twist in poor Margaret's soul and so she had to get it straightened out by living with her opposite?"

Alice added: "You don't have sex business over here. It is something different. Margaret has to learn to live with some other people."

Alice also said that she doubted Molly, who had never married, would have to go through such an experience because she had not "grown inwards like a bad corn." *Molly noted that this was also a typical expression of Alice's when alive.*

The discussion returned to Charles, the brother who had received Alice's share of Margaret's money. "...I feel so furious with Charles still," Alice penciled. "I don't want to risk his ever knowing... He is an odious man." *Molly clearly recalled Alice referring to Charles as an "odious man" on numerous occasions when in the earth life, seeing this as extremely evidential.*

As the pencil rushed across the paper and the words became confusing, Astor broke in and said that lady was very excited. He told her to have patience. Alice complained that the "butler" was very rude, apparently referring to Astor. *Molly recalled that Alice had always been very impatient with her servants.*

Molly asked Alice what she had been doing with her time. "I was taken to a land like the earth in some ways but very different in others," Alice responded. "For instance, you see rocks, trees, houses, about you, but if you choose to close your outward eyes and use another part of you that can perceive, you see right through these rocks, trees, houses, and solid earth. They tell me here that even while you are on earth, if you practiced them from childhood closing the outer eyes and willing hard to see with the eyes of your inner body, everything also would become transparent to you. And you would see other strange things."

Molly asked about Margaret. "Oh! I've no patience with her," Alice wrote... My dear, she is so stupid, still." *Molly noted that Alice always complained of Margaret's stupidity.*

"She is just planted there in her wretched house, trying to pretend she is living just as she did on earth, which is such nonsense," Alice continued. "It is just as if I had pretended all my life I was a

baby in a nursery and kept on sucking a bottle. Margaret is still sucking her baby bottle and she whines for her baby comforter. Why, I am already far ahead of her, though I have been here such a short time."

Alice said that had she known what it was like on that side when she was on earth, she would not have bothered so much about dinners and overdrafts. *Molly recalled that Alice was frequently worried about overdrafts.*

The sisters began to discuss Alice's dog. As Alice tried to write the name of her dog, Patricia, she wrote "Patsey, Pitri-e-" and then "STUPID," after which the pencil was flung violently down. After things quieted down, Alice apologized and said she could not get the hand to write properly.

Molly's next sitting was on March 26, 1929. Astor asked Molly to wait while he found her sister. After fumbling with the pencil, Alice began writing in her broken and uneven calligraphy. She informed Mollie that Margaret was giving her a hard time and requested that she mediate. "She is just as mulish as ever," Alice wrote. *Molly recalled Alice using that word many times in describing Margaret.*

"You know what she's like," Alice continued. "She's just the same. Wants everything to be run in her way, by rules and regulations. I told her she was the real trouble. That her nagging about this and that was bad for the Mater." *Molly also recalled Alice's frequent use of the word "nagging."*

After a pause, Margaret communicated and complained about Alice. "She is just the same. She hasn't changed a bit. You remember how she used to carry all before her, sweep everything aside to suit herself; behave as though she were the only person in the house to be attended to. Of course, you were so young when we were together in the house you can't remember how spoiled and impossible she was. Well, she has simply taken possession of the Mater. She behaves as if she were mistress of everything. She tries to prevent my seeing her. She won't let me tell the Mater about my own little difficulties... And when she is coming out in the old colors again I think it is high time she was put in her place. *Molly recalled Margaret frequently saying "coming out in old colors again" with regard to Alice.*

Molly suggested that Margaret try to get on better with Alice and she might then gravitate to happier conditions. Margaret said that she would think it over, then wrote that she would say a few nice words to Alice, after which Alice would speak. "She is so silly, you know," Margaret ended. "She boasted to the mater that she had managed to get married and that I hadn't, and had done nothing with my life." *Molly noted that Alice used to taunt Margaret about not being married and doing nothing with her life.*

After a pause of about a half-minute, the pencil tapped and Alice's peculiar writing began. "I thought you would do it, Molly," Alice wrote. "She has apologized to me...she saw how much she was in the wrong. I shall get real peace and happiness now if Margaret really does leave the Mater to me..."

Alice went on to tell Molly that her new body has been growing and changing. "You would be surprised if you saw it. I have grown so much younger. It gives me pleasure to look and feel as if I were in the twenties again.... Perhaps Charles and I will have to live together. HOW HEAVENLY!" *Molly noted that Alice often used this expression in jest. It was written in extra large letters.*

On March 28, Molly again sat with GC. She asked Astor if she could speak to her two weird sisters. "They have, during their life on earth, impregnated their ever-growing etheric doubles with the spirit of antagonism for each other," Astor communicated. "My friend, you sow the seeds of another potential existence here. You need not be too troubled about them. Slowly this warp in their being will be straightened out. But at the moment, when they meet, they respond to old, deep antagonisms. I will summons them."

Margaret communicated first and said that she had told Mater she would not be seeing much of her in the future because Alice was jealous of her. "The Mater said the people one lives with can be the creation of our own minds; that I could make Alice a really lovable person by thinking her so all the time. Such nonsense, really." *Molly noted that this was a phrase frequently used by Margaret.*

Molly asked how Pater was coping with the situation. "He seems only to be amused at what's happened," Margaret responded. "He isn't interested in either of us. His whole mind is fixed on some work he has here. He always was that way. Didn't bother about people." *Molly confirmed this as correct.*

After some other comments by Margaret, there was a pause and Alice returned and wrote that

everything has been going well since Margaret left and that she has been visiting many old friends with Mater. She added that Margaret needed a "husband of the firm kind" to make her understand how to live. *Molly noted that Alice often remarked that women needed "firm husbands."*

The handwriting changed to that of Mater, who affectionately greeted Molly. Molly asked her what was going on with Alice and Margaret. "Oh yes, I was very upset about it," Mater replied. "It reminded me of the old days when they quarreled and I could do nothing with them...You know I didn't see much of Margaret till Alice came. Then she used to visit us a great deal. At first, I was very pleased. Then I saw it was partly not to let Alice be the one and only. So silly, really." *Mollie noted that Margaret was not particularly fond of her mother when alive, and it was very like her to try and upset arrangements under the circumstances as described.*

Mater explained to Molly that Alice, being newly arrived, needed her attention more than Margaret did. "I am happy because I know I am able, in this way, to help her to happiness. I don't mind her taking control of everything. I won't restrain her now. I will let her give her own nature full play. Later she will begin to learn, and will change. At present what is essential is that she should be content after her long discontent, as it would be fatal if she became warped or embittered."

Mater added that Margaret is much harder to help because she hates change, and she is naturally indolent.

Because of pressures of other work and also because GC had been in Ireland for several months, Molly did not sit with GC again until September 29, 1929. Molly told Astor that she would like to talk to her two strange sisters. After a pause, Margaret began writing. She mentioned that she had been around Molly several times during the summer and was glad that she was able to spend some time with John (Alice's husband). "You can be very sympathetic," Margaret wrote. "He never met with that in his married life anyway." *Molly noted that she had visited John several times and what Margaret said was for the most part true.*

Molly asked Margaret how she was doing. "Things are getting brighter for me," Margaret replied. "Alice taunted me about not having friends here, so I thought I would show her that I had my own circle. So, though I didn't like doing it at all, I looked up strangers. I tried to make the acquaintance of quite unprepossessing people. The result is, I have made my circle now, but it wouldn't have been made if it hadn't been for Stephen. You don't know him. He is the man I loathed so much, who had to live with me here. Well, he isn't so bad after all, though he does upset me still; he is so unmethodical and untidy. Anyway, he quite understood my point of view about Alice, and agreed that I must show her that I can manage very well for myself, and lead a happy, successful life. So first he brought in his friends. Some were dreadful people, and I would have had nothing to do with them if it hadn't been for the thought of Alice. But the finny thing was, that after I had got to know them, they didn't see so dreadful after all. Do you know, Molly, I believe I made a great mistake in life. I shut myself away from people too much. I am afraid I was rather self-centered. I have only just been getting to know how kind people can be, and though Stephen and I have rows sometimes still, I am beginning to see that he means very well and isn't out to deceive me or do me."

Margaret asked Molly if she would come to live with her when it was her time to cross over to the other side, but Molly said she would have to see what conditions are when she gets there. Molly then said that she would like to talk to Alice.

"May I say that I think you are very foolish to talk to Alice?" Margaret replied. She will only weary you with her temper, but of course, if you want to have a row with her, you can...I could tell you a great deal about travel here if you talk to me. Most interesting. The worlds you can visit, the states you can enter....."

But Molly rejected the offer and asked that Alice be allowed to take over the hand. There was a pause and the untidy broken handwriting of Alice began. "Stupid. This hand is idiotic," Alice wrote as she struggled to take control of GC's hand.

"Molly dear, I can't tell you how wonderful it is not to have to be cook, housekeeper, charwoman and nurse to John, all combined," Alice wrote. "Don't tell him I said that. I know he did his best."

Alice went on to say that when John comes over she will leave Mater and make a home with John since he would never be able to look after himself there. "He seems to be able to look after himself now at any rate," Molly told Alice. "I don't think you need bother."

But Alice insisted that she wanted to be with John again. When Molly said she didn't seem to appreciate him when she was on earth, Alice agreed. "I know I didn't. I have grown to want John

again. It was the reverse on earth."

When Alice attempted to ask about her dog, she again struggled with the hand. Beatrice Gibbes explained that GC did not like dogs and that any discussion of them somehow resulted in her organism being upset and thus difficulties arose.

"It would be difficult to attribute the production of the Ross scripts to the 'subconscious activity' of Miss Cummins," Gibbes offered in concluding the case. "Her mind contained no reminiscences or associations upon which it could draw in order to successfully dramatize these very original ladies. That language employed is purely colloquial and there is no attempt to emulate the style of a particular author known to us. But there is the precise building up of curious and mundane personalities which were characteristic of certain deceased persons unknown to the automatist, but definitely claimed to be recognized by their surviving relatives."

Gibbes added that the writing did not bear any resemblance to GC's normal script and the phraseology was much different than that used by GC in her conscious state. Moreover, she concluded that the individuality of the spirit communicators made such theories as telepathy and Universal Memory highly unlikely.

Notes from the Editor:

¹ Michael Tymn is a writer and the editor of [*The Searchlight*](#), a quarterly magazine published by the [**Academy of Spirituality and Paranormal Studies**](#). He is also the Chairman of the *Publications Committee* of the latter, runs his own Blog at <http://metgat.gaia.com/blog> and is the author of a recent published and well praised book on the field of Psychological Research: [**The articulate Dead**](#).

² This medium channeled other interesting books and among them we would like to mention: **Road to Immortality** and **Beyond Human Personality**. Both books were dictated by the spirit of *Frederic W. H. Myers*, the author of the classic book **Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death**, and one of the founders of the [**SPR-Society for Psychical Research**](#). These books open with the following message: "For it has been my lot to be concerned in a work more important and more successful than anything in my own capacity or character could have led me to expect. I have been one of the central group concerned in a great endeavour; the endeavour to pierce, by scientific methods, the world-old, never-penetrated veil. The movement which took overt shape in 1882, with the formation of the Society for Psychical Research, was aided indeed by help from other quarters, but in its essential character was the conception of a few minds, and was piloted through its early dangers by a small group of intimate friends. With this endeavour to learn the actual truth as to the destiny of man I have from the very first been identified and, so to say, incorporate. Edmund Gurney worked at the task with more conscientious energy; the Sidgwick with more unselfish wisdom; but no one more unreservedly than myself has staked his all upon that distant and growing hope. --Frederic Myers". The initiative known as [**Cross-Correspondence**](#) thoroughly examined at the SPR is alleged to be originated by the spirit of Mr. Myers, to eliminate the hypothesis of telepathy from spirit communications. The Brazilian spiritist writer *Hermínio C. Miranda* makes extensive references to the above books, in his excellent work of two volumes regarding mediumship and its practice, which bears the title of **Diversidade dos Carismas - Chapter IV-Semiologia da Comunicação** [Diversity of Charisms - Semantic of the Communications].

ELECTRONIC BOOKS

ON MIRACLES AND MODERN SPIRITUALISM

BY

ALFRED RUSSEL WALLACE,

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

REVISED EDITION, WITH CHAPTERS ON
APPARITIONS AND PHANTASMS

LONDON
GEORGE REDWAY
1896

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THE SCIENTIFIC ASPECT OF THE SUPERNATURAL

IX

THE MORAL TEACHINGS OF SPIRITUALISM

We have now to consider whether this vast array of phenomena which claims to put us into communication with beings who have passed into another phase of existence, teaches us anything which may make us wiser and better men. I myself believe that it does, and shall endeavor, as briefly as possible, to set forth what the doctrines of modern Spiritualism really are

The hypothesis of Spiritualism not only accounts for all the facts (and is the only one that does so), but it is further remarkable as being associated with a theory of a future state of existence, which is the only one yet given to the world that can at all commend itself to the modern philosophical mind. There is a general agreement and tone of harmony in the mass of facts and communications termed "spiritual," which has led to the growth of a new literature and to the establishment of a new religion. The main doctrines of this religion are: That after death man's spirit survives in an ethereal body, gifted with new powers, but mentally and morally the same individual as when clothed in flesh. That he commences from that moment a course of apparently endless progression, which is rapid just in proportion as his mental and moral faculties have been exercised and cultivated while on earth. That his comparative happiness or misery will depend entirely on himself. Just in proportion as his higher human faculties have taken part in all his pleasures here, will he find himself contented and happy in a state of existence in which they will have the fullest exercise; while he who has depended more on the body than on the mind for his pleasures, will, when that body is no more, feel a grievous want, and must slowly and painfully develop his intellectual and moral nature till its exercise shall become easy and pleasurable. Neither punishments nor rewards are meted out by an external power, but each one's condition is the natural and inevitable sequence of his condition here. He starts again from the level of moral and intellectual development to which he had raised himself while on earth.

Now here again we have a striking supplement to the doctrines of modern science. The organic world has been carried on to a high state of development, and has been ever kept in harmony with the forces of external nature, by the grand law of "survival of the fittest" acting upon ever-varying organizations. In the spiritual world, the law of the "progression of the fittest" takes its place, and carries on in unbroken continuity that development of the human mind which has been commenced here.

The communion of spirit with spirit is said to be by thought-reading and sympathy, and to be perfect between those whose beings are in harmony with each other. Those who differ widely have little or no power of intercommunion and thus are constituted "spheres," which are divisions, not merely of space, but of social and moral sympathetic organisation. Spirits of the higher "spheres" can, and do sometimes communicate with those below; but these latter cannot communicate at will with those above. But there is for all an eternal progress, a progress solely dependent on the power of will in the development of spirit nature. There are no evil spirits but the spirits of bad men, and even the worst are surely if slowly progressing. Life in the higher spheres has beauties and pleasures of which we have no conception. Ideas of beauty and power become realised by the will, and the infinite cosmos becomes a field where the highest developments of intellect may range in the acquisition of boundless knowledge.

It may be thought, perhaps, that I am here giving merely my own ideal of a future state, but it is not so. Every statement I have made is derived from those despised sources, the rapping table, the writing hand, or the entranced speaker. And to show that I have not done justice either to the ideas themselves, or to the manner in which they are often conveyed to us, I subjoin a few extracts from the spoken addresses of one of the most gifted "trance-mediums," Mrs Emma Hardinge, now Mrs. Hardinge Britten.

In her address on "Hades," she sums up in this passage her account of our progress through the spheres:- "Of the nature of those spheres and their inhabitants we have spoken from the knowledge of the spirits, dwellers still in Hades. Would you receive some immediate definition of your own condition, and learn how *you* shall dwell, and what your garments shall be, what your mansion, scenery, likeness, occupations? Turn your eyes within, and ask what have you learned, and what you have done in this, the school-house for the spheres of spirit-land. There there is an aristocracy, and even royal rank and varying degree, but the aristocracy is one of merit, and the royalty of soul. It is only the truly wise who govern, and as the wisest soul is he that is best, as the truest wisdom is the

highest love, so the royalty of soul is truth and love. And within the spirit-world all knowledge of this earth, all forms of science, all revelations of art, all mysteries of space must be understood. The exalted soul that is then fully ready for his departure to a higher state than Hades, must know all that earth can teach, and have practised all that Heaven requires. The spirit never quits the spheres of earth until he is fully possessed of all the life and knowledge of this planet and its spheres. And though the progress may be here commenced, and not one jot of what you learn, or think, or strive for here is lost, yet all achievements must be ultimated there, and no soul can wing its flight to that which you call, in view of its perfection, Heaven, till you have passed through Earth and Hades, and stand ready in your fully completed pilgrimage to enter on the new and unspeakable glories of the celestial realms beyond."

Could the philosopher or the man of science picture to himself a more perfect ideal of a future state than this? Does it not commend itself to him as what he could wish, if he could by his wish form the future for himself? Yet this is the teaching of that which he scouts as an imposture or a delusion - as the trickery of knaves or the ravings of madmen - modern Spiritualism. I quote another passage from the same address, and I would ask my readers to compare the modesty of the first paragraph with the claims of infallibility usually put forward by the teachers of new creeds or new philosophies:- "It is true that man is finite and imperfect; hence his utterances are too frequently the dictation of his own narrow perceptions, and his views are limited by his own finite capacity. But as you judge him, so also 'ye shall judge the angels.' Spirits only present you with the testimony of those who have advanced *one step* beyond humanity, and ask for no credence from man without the sanction of man's judgment and reason. Spirits, then, say that their world is as the soul or spiritual and sublimated essence of this human world of yours that, in locality, the spirit world extends around this planet, as all spirit spheres encircle in zones and belts all other planets, earths, and bodies in space, until the sphere of each impinges upon the other, and they form in connection one vast and harmonious system of natural and spiritual worlds throughout the universe."

The effects of vice and ungoverned passions are thus depicted:- "Those spirits have engraved themselves with a fatal passion for vice, but, alas! they dwell in a world where there is no means for its gratification. There is the gambler, who has burnt into his soul the fire of the love of gain; he hovers around earth's gamblers, and, as an unseen tempter, seeks to repeat the now lost joys of the fatal game. The sensualist, the man of violence, the cruel and angry spirit; all who have steeped themselves in crime, or painted their souls with those dark stain-spots which they vainly think are of the body only - all these are there, no longer able to enact their lives of earthly vice, but retaining on their souls the deadly mark, and the fatal though ungratified desire for habitual sin; and so these imprisoned spirits, chained by their own fell passions in the slavery of hopeless criminal desires, hover round those who attract them as magnets draw the needle, by vicious inclinations similar to their own. But you say, the soul, by tempting others, must thus sink deeper into crime. Ay, but remember that another point of the spiritual doctrine is the universal teaching of eternal progress." And then she goes on to depict in glowing language how these spirits too, in time, lose their fierce passions, and learn how to begin the upward path of knowledge and virtue. But I must leave the subject, as I wish to give one extract from the address of the same gifted lady on the question, "What is Spirit?" as an example of the high eloquence and moral beauty with which all her discourses are inspired:- "Small, and to some of us even insignificant, as seems the witness of the spirit-circle, its phenomenal gleams are lights which reveal, in their aggregate, these solemn truths to us. There we behold foregleams of the powers of soul. which so vastly do transcend the laws of matter. That soul's continued existence and triumph over death; our own embodied spirit's power of communication with the invisible world around us, and its various occult forces. Clairvoyance, clairaudience, prophecy, trance, vision, psychometry, and magnetic healing; how grand and wonderful appears the soul, invested even in its earthly prison house with all these gleams of powers so full of glorious promise of what we shall be, when the prison gates of matter open wide and set the spirit free! Oh! Fair young girls, whose forms of supremest loveliness are nature's crowning gems, forget not, when the great Creator's bounteous hand adorned your blooming spring with the radiance of summer flowers, that He shrined within that casket of tinted beauty a soul whose glory shall survive the decay of all earthly things, and live in weal or woe as your generation stamps it with beauty or stains it with sinful ugliness, when springs shall no more return, nor summers melt in the vast and changeless evermore. Lift up your eyes from the beautiful dust of to-day, which to-morrow shall be foul in death's corruption, to the everliving soul which *you*, not *destiny*, must adorn with immortal beauty. Remember you are spirits, and that the hours of your earthly life are only granted you to shape and form those spirits for eternity. Young men, who love to expand the muscles of mind, and wrestle in mental gladiatorial combats for the triumphant crowns of science, what are all these to the eternal conquests to be won in fields of illimitable science in the realms of immortality? Press on through earth as a means, but only to attain to the nobler, higher colleges of the never-dying life, and use mortal aims as instruments to gild your souls with the splendour that never fades, but which yourselves must win here or hereafter, ere you are fit to pass as graduates in the halls of eternal science. To understand that we are spirits, and that we live for immortality, to know and ensure its issues; is not this, to Spiritualists, the noblest though last bright page which God has revealed to us?

Is not to read and comprehend this page the true mission of modern Spiritualism? All else is but the phenomenal basis of the science which gives us the assurance that spirit lives. This is one great aim and purpose of modern Spiritualism, to know what the spirit is, and what it must do how best to live, so that it may most surely array itself in the pure white robes of an immortality which is purged of all mortal sin and earthly grossness."

The teachings of Mrs. Hardinge agree in substance with those of all the more developed mediums, and I would ask whether it is probable that these teachings have been evolved from the conflicting dogmas of a set of impostors? Neither does it seem a more probable solution that they have been produced "unconsciously" from the minds of self-deluded men and weak women, since it is palpable to every reader that these doctrines are essentially different in every detail from those taught and believed by any school of modern philosophers or any sect of modern Christians.

This is well shown by their opposing statements as to the condition of mankind after death. In the accounts of a future state given by or through the best mediums, and in the visions of deceased persons by clairvoyants, spirits are uniformly represented in the form of *human* beings, and their occupations as analogous to those of earth. But in most religious descriptions or pictures of heaven they are represented as *winged* beings, as resting on or surrounded by clouds, and their occupations to be playing on golden harps, or perpetual singing, prayer, and adoration before the throne of God. How is it, if these visions and communications are but the remodelling of pre-existing or preconceived ideas by a diseased imagination, that the popular notions are *never* reproduced? How is it that, whether the medium be man, woman, or child, whether ignorant or educated, whether English, German, or American, there should be one and the same consistent representation of these preterhuman beings, at variance with popular notions of them, but such as strikingly to accord with the modern scientific doctrine of "continuity"? I submit that this little fact is of itself a strong corroborative argument that there is some objective truth in these communications.

All popular religions, all received notions of a future state of existence, alike ignore one important side of human nature, and one which has a large share in the happiness of our present existence. Laughter, and the ideas that produce it, are never contemplated as continuing to exist in the spirit world. Every form of jovial merriment, of sparkling wit, and of that humour which is often akin to pathos and many of the higher feelings of our nature, are alike banished from the Christian's Heaven. Yet if these and all the allied feelings vanish from our natures when we "shuffle off this mortal coil," how shall we know ourselves, how retain our identity? A poet, writing on the death of Artemus Ward in the *Spectator*, well asks:

"Is he gone to the land of no laughter,
This man who made mirth for us all ?
Proves death but a silence hereafter,
From the sounds that delight and appal ?
Once closed, have the lips no more duty,
No more pleasure the exquisite ears,
Has the heart done o'erflowing with beauty,
As the eyes have with tears?"

Now it is noteworthy that the communications which the spiritualist believes to be verily the words of our departed friends give us full assurance that their individual characters remain unchanged; that mirth, and wit, and laughter, and every other human emotion and source of human pleasure are still retained by them; and that even those small incidents of the domestic circle which had become a source of innocent mirth when they were with us in the body are still capable of exciting pleasurable feelings. And this has been held by some to be an objection to the reality of these communications, instead of being, as it really is, a striking confirmation of them. Continuity has been pre-eminently the law of our mental development, and it rests with those who would abruptly sever this continuity to prove their case. They have never even attempted to show that it accords with the facts or with the analogies of nature.

Equally at variance with each other are the popular and the spiritualistic doctrines as regards the Deity. Our modern religious teachers maintain that they know a great deal about God. They define minutely and critically His various attributes; they enter into His motives, His feelings, and His opinions; they explain exactly what He has done, and why He has done it; and they declare that after death we shall be with Him, and shall see and know Him. In the teaching of the "spirits" there is not a word of all this. They tell us that they commune with higher intelligences than themselves, but of God they *really* know no more than we do. They say that above these higher intelligences are others higher and higher in apparently endless gradation, but as far as they know, no absolute knowledge of the Deity Himself is claimed by any of them. Is it possible, if these "spiritual" communications are but the workings of the minds of weak, superstitious, or deluded human beings, that they should so completely contradict one of the strongest and most cherished beliefs both of the superstitious and

the religious, and should agree with that highest philosophy (of which most mediums have certainly never heard), which maintains that we can know nothing of the Almighty, the Eternal, the Infinite, the *absolute* Being, who must necessarily be not only unknown and unknowable, but even *unthinkable* by infinite intelligences.

It is often asked, "What has Spiritualism done what new facts, or what useful information have the supposed spirits ever given to man?" The true answer to this demand probably is, that it is no part of their mission to give knowledge to man which his faculties enable him to acquire for himself, and the very effort to acquire which is part of his education and preparation for the spiritual life. Direct information on matters of fact is however occasionally given, as the records of Spiritualism abundantly show. I prefer, however, to rest the claims of Spiritualism on its moral uses. I would point to the thousands it has convinced of the reality of another world, to the many it has led to devote their lives to works of philanthropy, to the eloquence and the poetry it has given us, and to the grand doctrine of an ever-progressive future state which it teaches. Those who will examine its literature will acknowledge these facts. Those who will not examine for themselves either the literature or the phenomena of Spiritualism, should at least refrain from passing judgment on a matter of which they are confessedly and willfully ignorant.

The subject, of which I have here endeavoured to sketch the outlines in a few pages which may perhaps be read when larger volumes would lie unopened, is far too wide and too important for this mode of treatment to do any justice to it. I have been obliged entirely to leave out all mention of the historical proofs of similar phenomena occurring in unbroken succession from the earliest ages to the present day. I could not allude to the spread of Spiritualism on the Continent with its numbers of eminent converts. I could not refer to the numbers of scientific and medical men who have been convinced of its truth, but have not made public their belief. But I claim to have shown cause for investigation; to have proved that it is not a subject that can any longer be contemptuously sneered at as unworthy of a moment's inquiry. I feel myself so confident of the truth and objective reality of many of the *facts* here narrated, that I would stake the whole question on the opinion of any man of science desirous of arriving at the truth, if he would only devote two or three hours a week for a few months to an examination of the phenomena *before pronouncing an opinion* for, I again repeat, not a single individual that I have heard of has done this without becoming convinced of the reality of these phenomena. I maintain, therefore, finally that whether we consider the vast number and the high character of its converts, the immense accumulation and the authenticity of its facts, or the noble doctrine of a future state which it has elaborated the so-called supernatural, as developed in the phenomena of animal magnetism, clairvoyance, and modern Spiritualism, is an experimental science, the study of which must add greatly to our knowledge of man's true nature and highest interests.

Next: X – NOTES OF PERSONAL EVIDENCE

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 VI

GENERAL URANOGRAPHY - SPACE AND TIME - MATTER - LAWS AND FORCES - FIRST CREATION - UNIVERSAL CREATION - SUNS AND PLANETS - SATELLITES - COMETS - THE MILKY WAY - THE FIXED STARS - THE DESERTS OF SPACE - ETERNAL SUCCESSION OF THE WORLDS - UNIVERSAL LIFE - SCIENCE - MORAL CONSIDERATIONS.

PART TWO

Laws and Forces. - If one of those unknown beings who spend their ephemeral existence in the depths of the dark regions of the ocean, if one of these polygrastic animals, one of the Nereids, miserable animalcules, who are known as ichthyophagous fish in the submarine forests, received suddenly the gift of intelligence, the faculty of studying their world, and of establishing a reasonable idea of that living nature which develops in their midst, and of the terrestrial world which is not now include in the field of their observation; if by the marvelous effect of some new power this strange race of beings should be lifted out of their unbroken darkness to the surface of the sea, not far from the fertile banks of an isle covered with luxuriant vegetation, to the genial sun, dispenser of a beneficent warmth, - what judgment they will pass? What theories of universal creation would be theirs, - theories soon effaced by larger appreciation, but by theories still as relatively incomplete as the first? Such is, O man! An image of all your speculative science. ¹

Now as I come to treat of the laws and forces which rule the universe, I who am, like you, a being relatively ignorant of real science, notwithstanding the apparent superiority which is given me over my earthly brothers, the opportunity which is mine of studying questions in nature which is withheld from them in their position, my object is only to expose to you a general idea of universal laws, without explaining in detail the methods of operation, and nature of the special forces dependent upon them. There is an ethereal fluid which pervades space and penetrates bodies. This fluid is ether, or primitive cosmic matter, generatrix of the world and beings. Forces inhere in ether which preside at the metamorphoses of matter, - the necessary and immutable laws which rule the world. These multiple forces, indefinitely varied according to the combinations of matter, localized according to masses or bulk, diversified in their modes of action according to circumstances and places, are known upon earth under the names of weight, cohesion, affinity, attraction, magnetism, and active electricity; the agent of the vibratory movements, those of sound, light, heat, etc. In other worlds they are presented under other aspects, offer other characters unknown in this, and in the immense extent of the heavens an indefinite numbers of forces are developed upon an unimaginable ladder, the grandeur of which we are as incapable of estimating as the crustacean animal in the depth of the ocean is of understanding the universality of terrestrial phenomena. ²

Now, just as there is but one simple primitive substance generatrix of all bodies, but diversified in its combinations, even as all forces depend upon a universal law diversified in its effects, and which exists from the beginning, and which in the eternal decrees has been everywhere imposed upon creation in order to constitute harmony and permanent stability, nature is never opposed to itself. The coat-of-arms of the universe of the universe has for its only device unity. In climbing the ladder of the worlds, one finds unity in harmony in all creation. At the same time there is an infinite variety in this immense parterre of stars. In passing through the degrees of life from the lowest being even to God, the great law of continuity is recognizable. In considering the forces in themselves, one can find a series whose result, mingling with the generatrix, is the universal law. You cannot appreciate this law to the full extent, since the forces which represent it in your field of observation are restrained and limited. However, gravitation and electricity can be regarded as a large application of the primordial law which reigns beyond the heavens. All these forces are eternal, - we will explain this word, - universal as the creation. Being inherent in the cosmic fluid, they necessarily act in all things everywhere, modifying their action by their simultaneous working or their succession, predominating here, effacing themselves farther on; powerful and active at certain points, latent or secret at others, but finally preparing, directing, preserving and destroying worlds in their diverse periods of life, governing marvelous works of nature, wherever they are exerted, assuring to creation eternal splendor.

The First Creation. After having considered the universe under general points of view, its composition, its laws, and its properties, we can extend our studies to the mode of formation which gave light to worlds and beings. We would descend then to the creation of the earth particularly, and to its actual state in the universality of things, and from whence, taking the globe as a starting-point and for relative unity, we would proceed with our planetary and sidereal studies. If we have well considered the connection, or rather the opposition, of eternity to time, - if we are familiar with the idea that time is only a relative measure in the succession of transitory things, whilst eternity is

essentially immovable and permanent, and that it is susceptible of no measurement as regards duration of time, - we should comprehend that there is no commencement or end to it. On the other side, if we could form a just idea - although necessarily a very feeble one - of the infinitude of divine power, we could comprehend how it is possible that the universe has always been, and always will be; how God's eternal perfections always spoke of him before worlds were born. Before time was born, immeasurable eternity received the divine word, and impregnated space eternal as itself. God, who has always existed, has created all eternity, which could not be otherwise; for at some distant epoch, from which our imagination recoils (the supposed limits of creation), there will remain always beyond this limit an eternity. Weigh well this thought, - an eternity during which the divine hypothesis, the infinite volition, had been absorbed in a mute, inactive, and unfruitful lethargy, an eternity of apparent death for the eternal Father who gives life to beings; of indifferent speechlessness for the Word which governs them, of cold and selfish sterility for the spirit of love and of vivification. Let us better comprehend the grandeur of divine action, and its perpetuity under the semblance of an absolute being! God is the sun of beings; he is the light of the worlds. Now, the appearance of the sun gives birth instantaneously to floods of light, which fill all space. So does the universe, born of the Eternal, raise us in thought to unimaginable periods of infinite duration, even to the time of the "*Fiat lux*" in the beginning. The contemplation of the absolute beginning of objects raises us to their Creator. Their successive appearances in the domain of existence constitute the order of perpetual creation.

What mortal is there who knows how to reveal the unknown and superbly veiled magnificence which lay under the darkness of the ages, which was developed in those ancient times when none of the marvels of the present universe existed? At this primitive epoch, where the voice of the Lord was making itself heard, the materials which were in the future to assemble symmetrically to form themselves into the temple of nature were found on the bosom of the infinite void, when at the sound of this mysterious voice, which every creature venerates as a mother's, when the morning stars harmoniously sang together! The world was in its cradle; it was not yet established in its strength and plenitude of life. No; the creative power never contradicts itself; and, like all things, the universe was born a child. Invested with laws previously framed, and by initial impulsion inherent in its formation, primitive, cosmic matter, gave birth successively to whirlwinds, to agglomerations of diffuse fluid, to masses of nebulous matter, infinitely modified and divided, in order to form in the immeasurable regions of space different centers of simultaneous or successive creations, by reason of forces which predominate over each other, and by ulterior circumstances which presided at their developments. These primitive centers became each the focus of a special life. Those least disseminated in space, and richest in acting forces and principles, commenced from that time their particular astral life. Others occupying unlimited space grew very slowly, or divided themselves anew into other secondary centers. In carrying ourselves back only a few millions of centuries beyond this present epoch, our earth did not exist. Our solar system had not yet commenced the evolutions of planetary life; and yet splendid suns illuminated the ether. Already inhabited planets gave life and existence to a multitude of beings who have preceded us in our earthly career. Opulent productions of an unknown nature, and marvelous heavenly phenomena, had developed, under the gaze of other eyes, pictures of a boundless creation, and even more. Already some splendors, which had caused the hearts of other mortals ere then to palpitate with the thought of infinite power, were effaced; and we poor little beings who come after an eternity of life has passed, we believe ourselves contemporaneous with creation. Yet again let us comprehend nature better. Let us know that eternity is both before and behind us, that space is the theater of an unimaginable succession and simultaneity of creations. the nebulae we scarcely distinguish in the far-distant heavens are agglomerations of suns in process of formation; others are milky ways of inhabited worlds; others the seat of catastrophe and decay. Let us know that even as we are placed in the midst of an infinitude of worlds, even as we are in a double infinitude of anterior and ulterior durations, that universal creation is not for us alone, and that we must not consider this, our little globule, as an isolated formation.

¹ Such is the state of those who deny the spiritual world, when, after having been despoiled of their fleshly envelope, the horizons of this world are revealed to their vision, they comprehend the emptiness of the theories whereby they attempted to explain every thing by matter alone. However, these horizons hold yet for them mysteries which are successively unveiled as they are raised to greater heights of wisdom by purification; but on their entrance into this new world they are first to recognize their blindness, and how far they were from the truth.

² Should we bring to this all that we know, we should not comprehend more fully that which escapes our senses than the blind man so born comprehends the effects of light and the use of eyes. There can then be in other places properties of cosmic fluid and combinations, of which we have no idea; of effects appropriated to needs unknown to us, giving place to new and other modes of perception. We do not, for example, comprehend how we can see without bodily eyes and without light; but who says that there exist not other agents than the light affecting special organisms, the somnambulist sight, which neither distance, material obstacles, nor darkness can arrest, offers us an example? Let us suppose that in some world the inhabitants are normally that which our somnambulists are exceptionally; they will have no need of the light or of eyes like ours, and they will see that which we cannot see. It is the same with all other sensations; the conditions of vitality and perceptibility, sensations, and needs vary according to places.

Next: PART THREE – UNIVERSAL CREATION

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 VI

DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT

ORIGIN OF THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT - ARGUMENTS IN SUPPORT OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT
PHYSICAL IMPOSSIBILITY OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT - THE DOCTRINE OF ETERNAL PUNISHMENT
HAS BECOME OBSOLETE - DECLARATIONS OF EZECHIEL AGAINST ETERNAL
PUNISHMENT AND ORIGINAL SIN

Part One

Origin of the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment

1. THE belief in eternal punishment is losing ground so rapidly, from day to day, that the gift of prophecy is not needed to enable us to foresee its extinction at no distant time. It has been combated by arguments so powerful and so unanswerable that it seems almost a work of supererogation to trouble ourselves with disproving a fallacy that is dying out of itself. Nevertheless, we cannot close our eyes to the fact that this doctrine, moribund though it be, it still the rallying-point of the adversaries of progress, the article of their creed which they defend most obstinately, precisely because they feel it to be its most vulnerable side, and because they perceive how dangerous a breach its fall will make in the theological edifice. Regarded from this point of view, the doctrine in question may still be held to merit serious examination.

2. The doctrine of eternal punishment, like that of a physical Hell, was useful while the intellectual and moral backwardness of mankind required that they should be held in check by the fear of incurring the doom thus held up before their imagination. While they remained at too low a point of advancement to be efficaciously acted upon by the prospect of merely moral sufferings, it is evident that they would have been as little restrained by the idea of any merely temporary punishment; and it is equally evident that they would have been incapable of comprehending the justice of graduated and proportionate penalties, because they could not have appreciated the various shades of right or wrong action, or the relative importance of circumstances, whether as extenuating, or as aggravating, the culpability of the wrong-doer.

3. The nearer men are to the primitive state, the more closely are they allied to materiality; for the moral sense is precisely the faculty of the human mind which is the last developed. For this reason, the men of the primitive period could only form to themselves a very imperfect idea of the Divine nature and attributes, and an equally vague conception of the future life. They molded their idea of the Deity upon themselves. For them, God was an absolute sovereign, all the more formidable because invisible, like a despotic monarch who, hidden within his palace, never allows himself to be seen by his subjects. Having no conception of moral force, they could only conceive of His power as being of a physical nature; they imagined Him wielding the thunderbolt, moving in the midst of lightnings and tempests, and scattering ruin and desolation around Him after the fashion of earthly conquerors. A God of love and of mercy would not have seemed to them to be a God, but a feeble being unable to secure obedience. On the contrary, implacable vengeance, chastisements the most terrific and unending, were quite in harmony with the idea they had thus formed to themselves of the Divinity, and offered nothing repugnant to their minds. Being, themselves, implacable in their resentments, cruel to their enemies, pitiless for the vanquished, it appeared to them perfectly natural that God, whose power was superior to their own, should be still more implacable, cruel, and pitiless, than themselves.

For the influencing of such men, a religious belief in harmony with their rude and violent nature was necessary. A religion of spirituality, of love, and of charity, would have been incompatible with the brutality of their usages and passions. The Draconian legislation of Moses, which represented the Divine Being as a jealous and revengeful God, scarcely sufficed to keep within bounds the stiff-necked people committed to his charge; the gentle doctrine of Jesus would have awakened no echo in their hearts and would have been powerless to influence their action.

4. In proportion as the spiritual sense of mankind has become developed, the veil of materiality has become less opaque, and men have become better fitted to understand spiritual things; but this change has only taken place very gradually. At the time when Jesus came among them, it was possible for him to proclaim a merciful God, to speak of his "kingdom" as not being "of this world," to say to men, "Love one another," and "Return good for evil;" whereas, under the Mosaic dispensation, God was represented as sanctioning the principle of revenge summed up in the dictum, "An eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth.

What then, were the souls who were living upon the earth of the time of Jesus? Were they souls who had been newly created and were then incarnated for the first time? If so, God must have created, in the time of Jesus, souls of better quality than those

which He created in the time of Moses. But, if that were the case, what has become of those earlier-created souls? Have they been condemned to languish for ever in the brutishness of the primitive era? Simple common sense suffices to show us that such a supposition is untenable. No; the souls incarnated upon the earth, in the time of Jesus, were *the same souls* who, after having lived here under the empire of the law of Moses, had gradually acquired, in successive existences posterior to that period, a degree of development sufficient to enable them to understand a teaching of a higher nature, and who, at the present day, are sufficiently advanced to be able to receive the still higher teaching now being given, by Christ's command, in fulfilment of his promise. *

5. Owing to the backwardness of the human mind, at the time of Christ's appearance, it was impossible for him to reveal to men all the truth in regard to their future. He says, expressly, "I have many things to tell you, but you could not understand them; and I am therefore compelled to speak to you in parables." In regard to all points of morality, that is to say, all the duties of each man to his fellows, his teaching was explicit, because, as those duties refer to the relations of daily life, he knew that men would be able to understand him; in regard to all other matters, he confined himself to sowing, under the form of allegory, the germs of the truths that were destined to be developed at a later period.

The nature of future rewards and punishments was one of those points which were thus left by him in abeyance. He could not inculcate, especially in regard to future punishment, ideas so diametrically opposed to those held by the men of his time. He came to trace out new duties for the human race, to inculcate charity and the love of the neighbor in place of the spirit of hatred and vengeance, to substitute abnegation for selfishness, and such a change was, in itself, immense; he could not have gone farther without weakening the dread of the punishment in store for wrong-doing, because the minds of that day were not sufficiently advanced for the rational understanding of spiritual suffering, and, therefore, to have explained away the doctrine of a physical Hell would have been to weaken the sanction of duty in the minds of his hearers. He promised the Kingdom of Heaven to the righteous; that kingdom was, consequently, closed to the wicked. Whiter, then, did the wicked go? It was necessary to suggest an antithesis to the idea of "Heaven" of a nature capable of impressing a salutary terror on minds still too much under the influence of materiality to be able to assimilate the idea of spirit-life; for it should not be forgotten that Jesus addressed his teachings to the multitude, to the least enlightened portion of the society of his day, and that, in order to act upon the minds of those around him, it was necessary to present to them imagery that should be, so to say, *palpable*, and not subtle and refined statements that would have been beyond the reach of their thoughts and feelings. He therefore abstained from going, in reference to the nature of the future punishment of evil-doers, into details that could not have been appreciated in his day; he contented himself with holding up the opposite prospects of reward and of punishment; and this was all that he could usefully do at that period.

6. While Jesus threatened the wicked with "everlasting fire,"** he also threatened them with being thrown into "Gehenna;" but what was "Gehenna?" A place in the outskirts of Jerusalem, into which all the filth and rubbish of the city was habitually thrown. If we take the statement of "everlasting fire" as being a literal truth, why should we not also take the statement about being thrown "into Gehenna" as equally literal? No one has ever supposed the latter statement to be anything else than one of the energetic figures employed by Jesus to strike the imagination of the populace; Why should we give a different interpretation of the "fire" with which he threatens the guilty? If he had intended to represent their subjection to that "fire" as eternal, he would have been in contradiction with himself in exalting the goodness and the mercy of God; for mercy and inexorability are contraries that mutually annul each other. The whole teaching of Jesus is a proclamation of the goodness and mercy of the Creator; and it is therefore evident that it is only through entire misinterpretation of his utterances that the latter can be held to sanction the dogma of eternal punishment.

7. For men who had but a confused notion of the spiritual nature of the soul, there was nothing repugnant in the idea of Hell as a region of physical fire; nor was there, in the idea of punishment prolonged throughout eternity, anything calculated to shock the feelings of those who had been subjected, for centuries, to the penal code of the stern and terrible Jehovah. As employed by Jesus, the threat of "everlasting fire" could only be metaphorical. What did it matter that this metaphor would be understood literally, for a time, and during a period in which the intensity of human wickedness would render its terrors useful as a curb? He foresaw that time and progress would bring men on towards a comprehension of the true meaning of his allegory, and that this more correct apprehension of the real nature of the sufferings of spirit-life would be completed when, according to his prediction, "*The Spirit of Truth*" should come to enlighten mankind respecting "all things."

The essential characteristic of irrevocable condemnation is its implication of *the inefficacy of repentance*; but Jesus never said that repentance could fail to find favor in the sight of God. On the contrary, he always represents God as clement, merciful, ready to welcome back the returning prodigal to the paternal home. He never shows Him as inflexible excepting to the unrepentant sinner; but, even while insisting on the certainty of the punishment awaits the guilty, he holds out the prospect of forgiveness as soon as the wrong-doer shall have returned to the path of duty. Such, assuredly, is not the portrait of a pitiless God; and it should never be forgotten that Jesus never pronounced an irremissible sentence against any one, not even against the most wicked.

8. All the primitive religions, in accordance with the character of the peoples among whom they took their rise, have made to themselves warrior-gods whom they supposed to fight for them at the head of the armies. The Jehovah of the Hebrews furnished his "chosen people," on innumerable occasions, with the means of exterminating their enemies; he rewarded them by giving them victories and punished them by allowing them to undergo defeat. Conformable with their idea of God, the primitive nations imagined that He was to be honored and appeased by the blood of animals or of men; hence the sanguinary sacrifices that have played so prominent a part in so many of the religions of antiquity. The Jews had abolished human sacrifices; the Christians, notwithstanding the teachings of Christ, believed, for many centuries, that they honored the Creator by giving up thousands, of those whom they styled heretics, to tortures and to the stake, thus continuing, under another form, the tradition of human sacrifices, for such were really the atrocities in question, since, according to the received formula, they were perpetrated "*for the greater glory of God*," and with an accompaniment of solemn religious ceremonial. Even at the present day, nations that call themselves "Christian" invoke "*the God of Armies*" before their battles and glorify him after their victories; and they do this even when the purpose of their fighting is as unjust and as antichristian as possible.

9. How slow is man in getting rid of his prejudices, of his habits, of his early ideas! We are separated from Moses by forty centuries, and yet our Christian generation still retains traces of the usages of his barbarian time, consecrated, or, at least, approved, by the religion of our day! To put an end to the use of the stake, and to give currency to a juster idea of the true greatness of God, has required all the force of the opinion of the non-orthodox, of those who are considered as heretics by the Church. But although the stake has been abolished, social and moral persecutions are still in full vigor, so deeply rooted in the human mind is the idea of a cruel God. Filled with the notions that have been instilled into them from their infancy, men naturally see nothing strange in the statement that God, who is represented to them as being honored by barbarous deeds, should condemn men to eternal tortures, and behold, without pity, the sufferings of the damned.

Yes, it is the philosophers, those who are qualified as "impious" by the Church, who have been scandalized at seeing the name of God profaned by being associated with deeds unworthy of His goodness; it is they who have presented to men a nobler idea of the greatness of the Divine Being, by stripping away from that idea the passions and pettiness attributed to Him by the unenlightened beliefs of the primitive ages. The religious sentiment has thereby gained in dignity what it has lost in external show; for, while there is a greater number of men who are sincerely religious in heart and feeling.

But, besides the latter, how many are there who, going no deeper than the surface, have been led, by their perception of the unreasonableness of the religious creeds of the day, to a negation of the idea of Providential action! Through its failure to harmonize its doctrines with the progress of the human mind, the Church has driven some to Deism, others, to absolute unbelief, others, again, to Pantheism; in other words, it has driven man to make a god of himself, the lack of any higher ideal.

* The population of the earth consists not merely of souls who have been successively incarnated in it since the earliest times, but also of souls from other worlds, to whom it offers the conditions suited to their needs. Planets are progressive, as well as the beings by which they are inhabited; but their progress is slower than that of human beings, and the most advanced spirits of a planet leave it, in course of time, and incarnate themselves in some planet of greater advancement. On the other hand, when a planet passes from a lower to a higher degree of the hierarchy of worlds, the obstinately evil among its human population are "cast out" from it and sent down into the "outer darkness" of a world of lower degree, where they continue the work of their reformation (*re-formation*) amidst the hard and painful conditions of existence alluded to by Christ as "weeping and gnashing of teeth."

All the worlds of the universe are destined, like all other material bodies, to come to an end. When a material world has finished its career, its component elements are disaggregated and disseminated in space; and such of its inhabitants as still require the discipline of planetary life are reincarnated in other planets. From these sources (and from another source, not treated of by the author), the population of a planet, during the ascending phase of its career, is constantly increased by the influx of souls from other worlds, and all the more rapidly as its physical and moral state becomes ameliorated. Vide THE SPIRITS' BOOK, *Book Second*, chp. iv.; THE MEDIMS' BOOK, chap. xxxi; THE GOSPEL EXPLAINED BY SPIRITS, chap. iii.; GENESIS, chap. xviii. - TR.

** Vide *The Spirits' Book*, No. 1003 et seq.; *The Gospel Explained by Spirits*, chap. x., xv.

Next: CHAPTER VI - Part Two - Arguments in Support of the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment

Part Second - Examples

CHAPTER II

HAPPY SPIRITS

MADEMOISELLE EMMA *

A lovely and charming young girl who died from the effects of an accident caused by fire, after excruciating suffering. One of the members of the Society had conceived the design of evoking her at a meeting of the Spiritist Society of Paris, when she spontaneously presented herself July 31, 1863, a short time after her death.

"Here I am again, on the stage of the world, I who thought myself buried for ever, wrapped in my veil of youth and innocence! The fire of earth will save me from the fire of Hell; I said to myself, according to my Catholic belief; and although I did not venture to hope for the splendours of Paradise, my soul, amidst the horrible suffering I underwent from my accident, took refuge in the thought that I was bearing, beforehand, the expiations of Purgatory, and I prayed, suffered, and wept, with patience and resignation. But who gave to my weakness the strength to bear such anguish? Who, in my long nights of sleepless and feverish torture, bent over the couch on which I underwent my martyrdom? Who cooled my parched lips? It was you, my Guardian Angel! You, whose shining whiteness enveloped me in blessing; it was you, also, dear Spirit Friends! Who came about me, murmuring in my ear your gentle words of hope and love!

"The flame which consumed my slight earthly body burnt away from my soul all sense of attachment to *the things that pass*; thus, when I died, I was already living the true life of the soul. I felt nothing of the confusion that usually accompanies dissolution, and I entered at once, serene and self-conscious, into the radiant daylight that surrounds those who, amidst suffering and trial, have held fast their confidence and hope. The thought of my mother, my beloved mother! was the last terrestrial image that vibrated in my soul. How much I wish she might become a spiritist!

"I dropped from the tree of the earthly life like a fruit ripened before its time. I had scarcely felt the touch of the demon of vanity so fatal to those who allow themselves to be carried away by the glitter of success and the intoxications of youth and beauty! I bless the flame; I bless my sufferings; I bless the trial which was an expiation. Like the filmy gossamer-threads of autumn, I float, as light and as shining as they, borne upon the luminous currents of the ether around me; and the jewels that adorn my brow are no longer composed of the inert diamonds of your lower sphere, but are the splendid and living scintillations of the purified soul.

EMMA."

In a spiritist center at Håvre, the same spirit also gave, spontaneously, the following communication, on the 30th July, 1863: -

"Those who suffer upon earth are rewarded in the other life; for God's justice and mercy are perfect. The happiness granted to them in the spirit-world is so pure, their felicity is so perfect, that none would shrink from suffering or from death, if it were possible for them to penetrate the designs of the Creator. The earth is the scene of trials that are often very severe, of sorrows that are often terribly keen; but let those who are thus tried be resigned to the infliction; let them bow before the will of God if, in His mercy, He calls them to bear a heavy load! When He summons them back to Himself after great suffering, they will see, in this other life, how small a matter they were, those pains and troubles of the earthly life, in comparison with the reward which is reserved for them, if no complaint, no murmuring, have found access to their heart!

"Very young have I quitted the earth; God has forgiven me,** and has granted me the life of those who have respected His ordination. Adore God in all things; love Him with all your heart; and, above all, pray to Him with unwavering confidence; for prayer is your true support in your life, your hope, your safety.***

EMMA."

* The adopted daughter and pupil of Madame Taglioni, Mademoiselle Emma Livry, who died in Paris, in 1863, of the injuries received from the igniting of her dress, when performing on the stage of the France Opera. - TR.

** A reference, probably, to the crime of an anterior life of which her painful departure was stated by her, in the preceding message, to have been an expiation. - TR.

NEWS, EVENTS, BOOK REVIEWS AND MISCELLANEOUS

OPPORTUNITY FOR THE SPIRIT

Author Unknown

During our daily lives, there are multiple opportunities that present themselves wherein we may cultivate tolerance, serenity, love, understanding and humility; all qualities that denote improvement of the human spirit.

We should not let ourselves become involved with the disharmonious energies of persons who have no control over their emotions. We are responsible for ours and we should exercise our conscious will to maintain harmony.

We should always ask for assistance from our spirit guides and superior spirits so they can help us to find the right word and the precise action, to obtain and maintain an ambiance of peace and harmony no matter where we go.

Acting in this manner, we can maintain always a correct perspective on things and we will see how this changes everything around us. Start to develop sentiments of cooperation and understanding, in living fraternally together, for this assists in the spiritual involvement and growth of all.

We are Spiritists, we should be true messengers of peace and fraternity wherever we are and this attracts others to practice the moral truths of Spiritism. And, we say *practice*, for remember that Spiritism should not only be known and studied, but also put into practice in daily life. Study, discipline and practice; these are the pillars needed in order to arrive at perfection.

(Note: Part of a dissertation found on the internet that gives very wise advice, that I translated from Spanish into English - Y.L.)

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