



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

“With these words I indicate what seems to me the greatest danger of the present, the greatest threat of the future.

This danger has already taken shape in America, where, in the name of science, many thousands of young people are every year taught to believe that man is literally nothing more than a piece of mechanism, without power or influence on his destiny. Against this fatalistic dogma, so destructive of aspiration and so weakening to all higher effort, I have not ceased to wage war in my own little corner since I first began to write.”

William McDougall, Character and the Conduct of Life (1927)

“The scientific worker seizes upon the inexplicable phenomenon as he (or she) would upon a suddenly discovered treasure. The more unexplainable and mysterious it is, the more insight it will yield when eventually explained.”

J.B. Rhine (1947)

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NEWS, EVENTS, BOOK REVIEWS & MISCELLANEOUS

EDITORIAL

We could not have thought of a more appropriate message for the Season Holidays than this beautiful and inspiring poem by the great poetess and spiritualist *Ella Wheeler Wilcox*, which was extracted from the book ***Heart of the New Thought***, 1902, Kissinger Publishing, LLC. She died of cancer in 1919, a week before her 69th birthday.

In her autobiography, ***The Worlds and I***, She wrote the following: "From this mighty storehouse (of God, and the hierarchies of Spiritual Beings) we may gather wisdom and knowledge, and receive light and power, as we pass through this preparatory room of earth, which is only one of the innumerable mansions in our Father's house. Think on these."

LET THE PAST GO

By ***Ella Wheeler Wilcox***

Do not begin the new year by recounting to yourself or others all your losses and sorrows. Let the past go.

Should some good friend present you with material for a lovely garment, would you insult her by throwing it aside and describing the beautiful garments you had worn out in past times?

The new year has given you the fabric for fresh start in life; why dwell upon the events which have gone, the joys, blessings and advantages of the past!

Do not tell me it is too late to be successful or happy. Do not tell me you are sick or broken in spirit; the spirit cannot be sick or broken, because it is of God.

It is your mind which makes your body sick. Let the spirit assert itself and demand health and hope and happiness in this new year.

Forget the money you have lost, the mistakes you have made, the injuries you have received, the disappointments you have experienced.

Real sorrow, the sorrow which comes from the death of dear ones, or some great cross well borne, you need not forget. But think of these things as sent to enrich your nature, and to make you more human and sympathetic. You are missing them if you permit yourself instead to grow melancholy and irritable.

It is weak and unreasonable to imagine destiny has selected you for special suffering. Sorrow is no respecter of persons. Say to yourself with the beginning of this year that you are going to consider all your troubles as an education for your mind and soul; and that out of the experiences which you have passed through you are going to build a noble and splendid character, and a successful career.

Do not tell me you are too old. Age is all imagination. Ignore years and they will ignore you.

Eat moderately, and bathe freely in water as cold as nature's rainfall. Exercise thoroughly and regularly.

Be alive, from crown to toe. Breathe deeply, filling every cell of the lungs for at least five minutes, morning and night, and when you draw in long, full breaths, believe you are inhaling health, wisdom and success.

Anticipate good health. If it does not come at once, consider it a mere temporary delay, and continue to expect it.

Regard any physical ailment as a passing inconvenience, no more. Never for an instant believe you are permanently ill or disabled.

The young men of France are studying alchemy, hoping to learn the secret of the transmutation of gold. If you will study your own spirit and its limitless powers, you will gain a greater secret

than any alchemist ever held; a secret which shall give you whatever you desire.

Think of your body as the silver jewel box, your mind as the silver lining, your spirit as the gem. Keep the box burnished and clear of dust, but remember always that the jewel within is the precious part of it.

Think of yourself as on the threshold of unparalleled success. A whole, clear, glorious year lies before you! In a year you can regain health, fortune, restfulness, happiness!

Push on! Achieve, achieve!

GEAE Editors

ARTICLES

RHINE RESEARCH CENTER NEEDS YOUR HELP

The Brazilian spiritists authors Hermínio C. Miranda and J. Herculano Pires extensively praise and reinforce throughout many of their books the importance of the research initiated by the late scholars J. B. Rhine and his wife Louise in the field of Parapsychology, which are ongoing at Rhine Research Center.

The spiritists and the spiritualists in general are a somewhat impatient and dissatisfied with the pace and the lack of concrete results of the scientific research in the field of Parapsychology. They would rather see things unraveling more quickly and effectively in order to fulfill their demands of true believers. Unfortunately (or perhaps fortunately), things do not work this way in the field of scientific scrutiny, not even in the research related to the matters that are not considered metaphysical.

In regard to this complex and compelling matter, the author Hermínio C. Miranda¹ states the following in one of his many remarkable books:

"It is then necessary that doubt exist in order for criticism to work its way. When the latter is manifested, it will propel new facts and new arguments in favor of the spiritualists ideas, which increasingly becomes less contestable and more convincing. We need to recognize - not with a certain dose of Christian humility - that our unshakable faith on the evidence of the paranormal phenomena is not enough to make them acceptable to the rest of humankind. It is necessary to win over the resistance of preconceived ideas or the mere laziness which restrains people from thinking. It is not solely our century-old conviction, but also the official assurance of science that for many of our brothers and sisters will be the final word regarding the matter." [**Survival and Communicability of the Spirits**, Chapter 2: *The Science Searching for the Spirit*, 3rd Ed., FEB, 1975. pp.21-21].

In the same line of thinking J. Herculano Pires² explains the difficulties surrounding the research that is courageously undertaken by men and women of science at organizations such as the Rhine Research Center, whose work undoubtedly brings forth a great deal of help to humankind:

"Many people complain about the lack of scientific research regarding the spiritist phenomena in our time without realizing that research is ongoing in the way Kardec desired, that is, in the scientific labs of the great universities of the world, impelled by the force of the circumstances as Kardec predicted and the absolute need for scientific progress, without any kind of sectary or ideologic delimitation. And while the scientists fulfill their duties of researching without prejudice, the spiritists keep working in the practice of their doctrinal activities and helping the victims of scientific equivocal (the obsessed, the fascinated and the subjugated) through their simple, humble, fraternal and gratuitous sessions of spiritual assistance. This does not restrain the spiritists in the sphere of their doctrinal institutions from undertaking sessions of scientific research. However, in general, the spiritist's institutions do not have conditions to take charge of such specialized work, which requires expertise, expensive equipment and all the resources typical available in a university laboratory.

A few spiritist institutions ingenuously ventured into this research without having the necessary prerequisites. They still dabble with superstitions of the past, believing that the world of the Superior Spirits would make up for their deprivation of knowledge and culture in regard to spiritist matters. A few university graduates think that their academic diplomas will be sufficient to habilitate them for specializations that they do not possess. Thus they create domestic scientific institutes without resources of any kind in order to undertake such refined and complex research. They regard themselves as scientists who deserve attention and brag about their achievements in TV shows and the media in general. A shred of common sense would be enough to make them realize the ridicule that they have exposed themselves to.

Until we have well equipped universities with competent and specialized personnel as well as sufficient and technical apparatus, we cannot promote sessions of materialization, physical effects, diversified ectoplasm, direct voice and automatic writings which will provide positive results in the field of scientific interests. The examples of

Allan Kardec should serve as a warning to those who venture into this slippery terrain. He was living in a time when scientific problems were much less complex than today, even though he refused to get himself entangled with works that could divert him from the important task of the compilation and spread of the Spiritist Doctrine, which he knew would be of great help to mankind by preparing the minds of people to surpass superstitious conceptions of the past.

The primary task of a conscious spiritist - then as well as now - was one of setting the basis for a new edifice to be constructed. The scientific scenery of our time has already reached the elevation such that the materialistic taboos have been overthrown by atomic explosions. Today the spiritual reality imposes itself in such a fashion that the materialists are forced to appeal for sophistry and even disguise their most advanced scientific accomplishments in order not to surrender to the implacable truth. History, Philosophy, Psychology, Anthropology, Physics and Astronomy – they have all crossed into the domain of the Spiritual World and can no longer return. Research regarding reincarnation and the paranormal phenomena, especially those called theta phenomena (manifestations and communications of spirits) are already discussed at the most advanced universities of the world, not excluding even those done in the Soviet orbit, where the bioplasmic-body is the new phantom, now constituted of physical plasma and terrorizes the remaining disciples of Materialism, which is slaughtered by asphyxia and reduced to ashes in the crematory stakes of the Truth. Let us think about this reality and analyze these queries before venturing as pioneers into the bleeding edge of scientific and technological advancement, which we are clearly not in any condition to reach." [The Spirit and Time - Anthropological Introduction to Spiritism - IV Part - The Mediumistic Practice: *Scientific Research on Mediumship* - 1. Experimental Sessions, Editora Paidéia, 8th Edition, January 2003, pp.188-190].

We would like to encourage our readers to read the articles and watch the videos on the [Rhine Research Center](#) website, especially the following two: [70 Years at Rhine](#) - [Sy Mauskopf Talks About the History of Research at the Rhine](#)

This is an initiative that deserves our appreciation and help, which is possible to be done in many ways, not solely financial.

Antonio Leite
Editor GEAE

¹ Translation by the Editor.

² Idem.

The History of the Rhine Research Center



The changing face of the Rhine Research Center. The East Duke building housed the Duke Parapsychology Laboratory that was home to the Foundation for Research on the Nature of Man (FRNM) and the Institute for Parapsychology from 1965 to 2002. The new building on Campus Walk Avenue, currently houses the Rhine Research Center.

When Joseph B. and Louisa Rhine joined Professor William McDougall at the newly founded Duke University in 1927, the field of investigation into psychic phenomena was known as psychical research. At that time psychical research was mainly concerned with working with mediums in the search for evidence of an afterlife. J.B. Rhine recognized that answering the survival question depended first on investigating the ability of the living to gain psychic or psi information by other than sensory means (telepathy and clairvoyance), an ability for which he used the term extrasensory perception (ESP). Rhine began testing Duke students with specially designed cards to study ESP and later used dice machines to study psychokinesis (PK), the movement of objects by mental intention alone.

By 1935 Rhine's experiments into the unexplained powers of the mind had shown sufficient promise to justify the creation of a special unit, the Duke Parapsychology Laboratory, where under his guidance and with help of a growing team of graduate students and colleagues, a new science was born, the experimental science of parapsychology. In 1937 the Journal of Parapsychology was founded as an independent peer-reviewed professional journal to provide an outlet for reporting the

findings from the Duke research as well as from other laboratories at home and abroad.



For the past 70 years, we've been researching and studying the experimental science of parapsychology. Now in the 21st century, the Rhine Center continues the mission and work of its founder J.B. Rhine with a broadened scope directed deeper into the Study of Consciousness.

ESP cards and dice games have long since been replaced by modern techniques that allow more subtle measurements of psi, such as by looking at the physiological changes or bioenergy characteristics of psychics and healers, or by measuring the telepathic awareness of emotional targets in a simulated dream-like situation. Efforts are made to detect clues that come directly from the psi experiencers themselves, whether they are healers, intuitives, or simply ordinary people who have these extraordinary experiences.

The Rhine Center expands its search for knowledge by an active give-and-take between the psychic experimenter and the scientist with educational programs and discussion groups available for the general public. This is a collaboration that stems back to the late 1940's when Louisa E. Rhine began her original collection of spontaneous psi experiences from the general public, a case collection and analysis that extended and amplified the findings that were continuously emerging from the solid experimental research that is more closely identified with her lifelong collaborator and husband J.B. Rhine.



**Dr. Joseph Banks Rhine &
Dr. Louisa Rhine**

A Letter From Dr. Sally Rhine Feather

Dear Friend,

Can some people really see the future? Read other people's minds? Observe events unfold - as they happen - even when they take place hundreds or thousands of miles away from them? Indeed they can!!!

Popularly called ESP or extrasensory perception, it is the firmly established ability of the human mind to perceive or to experience without the help of the five senses. A 2001 Gallup Poll found that half of all Americans believe ESP is real, and 65 million Americans have personally experienced it. The scientific evidence is substantial and continually growing. In fact we could be on the verge of breakthroughs in our understanding that may surpass in importance the breakthroughs in aviation made by the Wright brothers at Kitty Hawk in 1903.

We are no longer working to show that ESP exists, but now we are focusing on how it works, and how it can be used to help the human condition. Moreover, we now recognize that our minds can interact at a distance with other minds and that our minds can help influence the health of others at a distance. And some of our "near death" and other experiences suggest the survival of our consciousness after death.

I grew up in a world of parapsychology. The Rhine Research Center is named after my father, the late Dr. JB Rhine, who, with my mother, Dr. Louisa Rhine, pioneered the scientific study of ESP in the

United States starting in the 1930s at Duke University. My father applied scientific methods to establish the reality of ESP in the laboratory setting. This work has been duplicated around the world and has had an enormous impact on our understanding about the workings and the reach of the mind.

The implications of the results of consciousness research are nothing short of astounding and one must wonder why they have not yet become national priorities. Sadly, they have not. Virtually no government or corporate funds are available for continued research into ESP.

Now, after more than fifty years of superb research, and at a time when humanity cannot afford to discontinue its work in understanding the nature of the mind, our work is on very shaky financial footing. Nonetheless, we have developed a strategy to maintain and intensify our work. Yet we must turn to our many friends for help.

In 2003, we published an aggressive research agenda for probing more deeply into consciousness that will further explain our place in the universe and enhance our lives in the most practical ways, including how ESP can be used in healing and even in business applications. Inspired by the Wright brothers' breakthrough in aviation, we called our agenda "Taking Flight."

Today, we are launching the Taking Flight Society for friends who want to be a part of our effort to create a revolution in understanding far more thrilling even than aviation has been. Asking for you to join us in our work at this critical junction is really the only way we can ensure our work and the future of the Rhine Research Center. The Taking Flight Society asks for a five-year financial commitment at a level with which individuals and couples are most comfortable. We are hoping that a minimum commitment of \$100 a year for five years will be possible for you. Of course we will appreciate your gift in whatever amount. At the \$100 per year level, the commitment would be only \$8.33 per month. While this amount may seem relatively modest, over the next five years, the total commitment would be \$500. And this amount will make all the difference in the world in how The Rhine plans for its future.

Those of you who know me personally -- and the thousands of you who have written to me about your ESP experiences -- know that we have rarely asked our friends for financial support. For years we have lived off the generosity of only a few individuals and the independent grants that our researchers have received. At this point, as funding is drying up, we have no choice but to ask our friends for help.

We at The Rhine are all working as volunteers and have only one paid office worker. So we are counting on your help now and trust you will respond to this urgent and sincere appeal for help. Your gift to the Rhine Research Center is tax-deductible.
Thank you!

Sally Rhine

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

X

NOTES OF PERSONAL EVIDENCE

FIRST PART

In the first edition of this Essay I did not introduce any of my own observations, because I had not then witnessed any such facts in a private house, and without the intervention of paid mediums, as would be likely to satisfy my readers. Having now had the opportunity of investigating the subject under more favourable conditions, I will give some account of my early personal experience, which many of my friends are so polite and illogical as to say will have more weight with them than all the other witnesses whose evidence I have adduced. I will begin with what first led me to inquiries outside the pale of what is generally recognized as science.

My earliest experiences on any of the matters treated of in this little work was in 1844, at which time I was teaching in a school in one of the Midland Counties. Mr. Spencer Hall was then lecturing on Mesmerism, and visited our town, and I and many of my pupils attended his lectures. We were all greatly interested. Some of the elder boys tried to mesmerise the younger ones, and succeeded; and I myself found several who, under my influence, exhibited many of the most curious phenomena we had witnessed at the lectures. I was intensely interested in the subject, and pursued it with ardour, carrying out a number of experiments to guard against deception and to test the nature of the influence. Many of the details of these experiments are now stamped as vividly on my memory as if they were events of yesterday; and I will briefly give the substance of a few of the more remarkable.

1. *Phenomena during the Mesmeric Trance.* I produced the trance state in two or three boys, of twelve to sixteen years of age, with great ease, and could always be sure that it was genuine, first, by the turning of the eyeball in the orbit, so that the pupil was not visible when the eyelid was raised; secondly, by the characteristic change of countenance; and, thirdly, by the readiness with which I could produce catalepsy and loss of sensation in any part of the body. The most remarkable observations during this state were on phreno-mesmerism and sympathetic sensation. By placing my finger on the part of the head corresponding to any given phrenological organ, the corresponding faculty was manifested with wonderful and amusing perfection. For a long time I thought that the effects produced on the patient were caused by my wishing the particular manifestation; but I found by accident that when, by ignorance of the position of the organs, I placed my finger on a wrong part, the manifestation which followed was not that which I expected, but that which was due to the position touched. I was particularly interested in phenomena of this kind, and by experiments made alone and silently, completely satisfied myself that the effects were not due to suggestion or to the influence of my own mind. I had to buy a little phrenological bust for my own use, and none of the boys had the least knowledge of or taste for phrenology; yet, from the very first, almost all the organs touched, in however varied order and in perfect silence, were followed by manifestations too striking to be mistaken, and presenting more wonderful representations of varied phases of human feeling than the greatest actors are able to exhibit.

The sympathy of sensation between my patient and myself was to me the most mysterious phenomenon I had ever witnessed. I found that when I laid hold of his hand he felt, tasted, or smelt exactly the same as I did. I had already produced all the phenomena of suggestion, and could make him tipsy with a glass of water by calling it brandy, and cause him strip off all his clothes by telling him he was on fire; but this was quite another thing. I formed a chain of several persons, at one end of which was the patient, at the other myself. And when, in perfect silence, I was pinched or pricked, he would immediately put his hand to the corresponding part of his own body, and complain of being pinched or pricked too. If I put a lump of sugar or salt in my mouth, he immediately went through the action of sucking, and soon showed by gestures and words of the most expressive nature what it was I was tasting. I have never to this day been satisfied with any of the explanations given of this fact by our physiologists for they resolve themselves into this, that the boy neither felt nor tasted anything, but acquired a knowledge of what I was feeling and tasting by a preternatural acuteness of *hearing*. That he had any such preternatural acuteness was, however, contrary to all my experience, and the experiment was tried so as expressly to prevent his gaining any knowledge of what I felt or touched by means of the ordinary senses.

2. *Phenomena during the Waking State.* After I had induced the state of coma several times, some of the boys became very susceptible during their ordinary waking condition. I could induce catalepsy of any of the limbs with great ease; and some curious little facts showed that it was real, not imaginary, rigidity that was produced. Once a boy was in my room in a state of complete rigidity when the dinner-bell rang. I hastily made passes to relax the body and limbs, and we went down together. When his plate was before him, however, he found that he could not bend one of his arms, and, not liking to say anything, sat some time trying to catch my eye. I then had to go to him, and by two or three passes rendered him able to eat his dinner. This is a curious and important fact, because the boy went down *thinking* he was all right. The rigidity was therefore in no way caused by his "expectation," since it existed in opposition to it. In this boy and another one I could readily produce the temporary loss of any of the senses, as hearing or smelling; and could even so completely take away the memory that the patient could not tell his own name, greatly to his disgust and confusion, and this by nothing more than a simple pass across the face, and saying in an ordinary tone of voice, "Now, you can't tell me your name." And after he had remained utterly puzzled for some minutes, if I made a reverse pass, and said, "Now, you know your name again," his whole countenance would change a look of relief coming over it as the familiar words recurred suddenly to his memory.

Such facts as these were at that period generally imputed to acting and trick on the part of the patients. Now, most of our physiologists admit them to be genuine mental phenomena, and attempt to explain them by "abstraction" and "suggestion" denying any specific action of the operator on the patient. This appears to me to be really no explanation at all; and I am confirmed in this view when I find that those who put it forward deny the reality of all facts that do not square with it. All such phenomena as phreno-mesmerism, and sympathetic sensation, and true clairvoyance, which have been elaborately examined and tested by a score of good observers, are nevertheless denied a place in the repertory of established scientific facts by those who profess to study all the phenomena of the organism or of the mind of man. These personal experiences having enabled me to detect the more subtle indications of the mesmeric coma, I have since taken every opportunity of witnessing the phenomena in public and private, and am quite satisfied that, in the more remarkable manifestations, there is, or can be, very rarely any deception practiced.

As Dr. Carpenter and other men of science still maintain the view that all the higher phenomena of Spiritualism which are not imposture are due to subjective impressions, analogous to those produced in his patients by the mesmeriser, I will here point out certain characteristic differences between the two classes of facts, which I first adduced in reply to Mr. E. B. Tylor in a letter in *Nature* (1872, p. 364).

1. The mesmerized patient never has *doubts* of the reality of what he sees or hears. He is like a dreamer, to whom the most incongruous circumstances suggest no idea of incongruity, and he never inquires if what he thinks he perceives harmonises with his actual surroundings. He has, moreover, lost his memory of what and where he was a few moments before; and can give no account, for instance, of how he managed to get from a lecture-room in London, to which he came as a spectator half-an-hour ago, on to an Atlantic steamer in a hurricane, or into the presence of a tiger in a tropical jungle. The assistants at the *séances* of Mr. Home or Mrs. Guppy are not in this state, as even our opponents will admit, and as the almost invariable *suspicion of fraud* with which the phenomena are at first regarded clearly demonstrates. They do not lose all memory of immediately preceding events; they criticize; they examine; they take notes; they suggest tests none of which things the mesmerised patient ever does.

2. The mesmerizer has the power of acting on certain sensitive individuals (not on assemblies of people, as Mr. Tylor assumes), and all experience shows that those who are thus sensitive to any one operator are but a small proportion of any body of people, and even these almost always require previous manipulation, with an almost passive submission to the operator. The number who can be acted on without such previous manipulation is very small, probably less than one per cent. But there is no such limitation to the number of persons who simultaneously witness most of the mediumistic phenomena. The visitors to Mr. Home or Mrs. Guppy all see whatever occurs of a physical nature, as the records of hundreds of sittings, and even the evidence of sceptics, demonstrate.

The two classes of phenomena, therefore, differ fundamentally; yet there is a connection between them, but in an opposite direction to that suggested. It is the mediums, not the assistants, who are "sensitives." They are almost always persons who are subject to the mesmeric influence, and they often exhibit all the characteristic phenomena of coma, trance, rigidity, and abnormal sensepower. Conversely, the most sensitive mesmeric patients are almost always mediums.

The differences now pointed out are so radical and so important that it does not say much for the logical clearness of those who persist in classing the two phenomena as identical. But the manner in

which men of great eminence fail to see the bearing of facts when that bearing is against their pet theories will be further illustrated by a few examples in the appendix to this volume.

3. *Experiences and Tests of Modern Spiritual Phenomena.* During twelve years of tropical wanderings between the years 1848 and 1862, occupied in the study of natural history, I heard occasionally of the strange phenomena said to be occurring in America and Europe under the general names of "table-turning" and "spirit-rapping;" and being aware, from my own knowledge of Mesmerism, that there were mysteries connected with the human mind which modern science ignored because it could not explain, I determined to seize the first opportunity on my return home to examine into these matters. It is true, perhaps, that I ought to state that for twenty-five years I had been an utter sceptic as to the existence of any preter-human or super-human intelligences, and that I never for a moment contemplated the possibility that the marvels related by Spiritualists could be literally true. If I have now changed my opinion, it is simply by the force of evidence. It is from no dread of annihilation that I have gone into this subject; it is from no inordinate longing for eternal existence that I have come to believe in facts which render this highly probable, if they do not actually prove it. At least three times during my travels I have had to face death as imminent or probable within a few hours, and what I felt on those occasions was at most a gentle melancholy at the thought of quitting this wonderful and beautiful earth to enter on a sleep which might know no waking. In a state of ordinary health I did not feel even this. I knew that the great problem of conscious existence was one beyond man's grasp, and this fact alone gave some hope that existence might be independent of the organised body. I came to the inquiry, therefore, utterly unbiassed by hopes or fears, because I knew that my belief could not affect the reality, and with an ingrained prejudice against even such a word as "spirit," which I have hardly yet overcome.

It was in the summer of 1865 that I first witnessed any of the phenomena of what is called Spiritualism, in the house of a friend a sceptic, a man of science, and a lawyer, with none but members of his own family present. Sitting at a good-sized round table, with our hands placed upon it, after a short time slight movements would commence not often "turnings" or "tiltings," but a gentle intermittent movement, like steps, which after a time would bring the table quite across the room. Slight but distinct tapping sounds were also heard. The following notes made at the time were intended to describe exactly what took place:- "July 22nd, 1865. Sat with my friend, his wife, and two daughters, at a large loo table, by daylight. In about half-an-hour some faint motions were perceived, and some faint taps heard. They gradually increased; the taps became very distinct, and the table moved considerably, obliging us all to shift our chairs. Then a curious vibratory motion of the table commenced, almost like the shivering of a living animal. I could feel it up to my elbows. These phenomena were variously repeated for two hours. On trying afterwards, we found the table could not be voluntarily moved in the same manner without a great exertion of force, and we could discover no possible way of producing the taps when our hands were upon the table."

On other occasions we tried the experiment of each person in succession leaving the table, and found that the phenomena continued as the same as before, both taps and the table movement. Once I requested one after another to leave the table; the phenomena continued, but as the number of sitters diminished with decreasing vigor, and just after the last person had drawn back leaving me alone at the table, there were two dull taps or blows, as with a fist on the pillar or foot of the table, the vibration of which I could feel as well as hear. No one present but myself could have made these, and I certainly did not make them. These experiments clearly indicated that all were concerned in producing the sounds and movements, and that if there was any wilful deception the whole party were engaged in deceiving me. Another time we sat half-an-hour at the large table, but had no manifestations whatever. We then removed to the small table, where taps immediately commenced and the table moved. After some time we returned to the large table, and after a few minutes the taps and movements took place as at the small one.

The movement of the table was almost always in curves, as if turning on one of the claws, so as to give a progressive motion. This was frequently reversed, and sometimes regularly alternate, so that the table would travel across the room in a zigzag manner. This gives an idea of what took place with more or less regularity during more than a dozen sittings. Now there can be no doubt that the whole of the *movements* of the table could have been produced by any of the persons present if not counteracted by the others, but our experiments showed that this could not *always* be the case, and we have therefore no right to conclude that it was *ever* the case. The taps, on the other hand, we could not make at all. They were of about the quality that would be produced by a long finger-nail tapping underneath the leaf of the table. As all hands were on the table, and my eyes at least always open, I know they were not produced by the hands of any one present. They might possibly have been produced by the feet if properly armed with some small hard point to strike with; but if so, the experiments already related show that *all* must have

practiced the deception. And the fact that we often sat half an hour in one position without a single sound, and that the phenomena never progressed further than I have related, weighs I think very strongly against the supposition that a family of four highly intelligent and well educated persons should occupy themselves for so many weary hours in carrying out what would be so poor and unmeaning a deception. The following remark occurs at the end of my notes made at the time: "These experiments have satisfied me that there is an unknown power developed from the bodies of a number of persons placed in connection by sitting round a table with all their hands upon it."

Some time before these observations I had met a gentleman who had told me of most wonderful phenomena occurring in his own family among them the palpable motion of solid bodies when no person was touching them or near them; and he had recommended me to go to a public medium in London (Mrs. Marshall), where I might see things equally wonderful. Accordingly, in September 1865, I began a series of visits to Mrs. Marshall, generally accompanied by a friend - a good chemist and mechanic, and of a thoroughly sceptical mind. What we witnessed may be divided into two classes of phenomena physical and mental. Both were very numerous and varied; but I shall only select from each a few which are of a clear and definite nature.

1st. A small table, on which the hands of four persons were placed (including my own and Mrs. Marshall's), rose up vertically about a foot from the floor, and remained suspended for about twenty seconds, while my friend, who was sitting looking on, could see the lower part of the table with the feet freely suspended above the floor.

2nd. While sitting at a large table, with Miss T. on my left and Mr. R. on my right, a guitar which had been placed in Miss T.'s hand slid down on to the floor, passed over my feet, and came to Mr. R., against whose legs it raised itself up till it appeared above the table. I and Mr. R. were watching it carefully the whole time, and it behaved as if alive itself, or rather as if a small invisible child were by great exertions moving it and raising it up. These two phenomena were witnessed in bright gaslight.

3rd. A chair, on which a relation of Mr. R.'s sat, was lifted up with her on it. Afterwards, when she returned to the table from the piano, where she had been playing, her chair moved away just as she was going to sit down; on drawing it up, it moved away again. After this had happened three times, it became apparently fixed to the floor, so that she could not raise it. Mr. E. then took hold of it, and found that it was only by a great exertion he could lift it off the floor. This sitting took place in broad daylight, on a bright day, and in a room on the first floor with two windows.

However strange and unreal these few phenomena may seem to readers who have seen nothing of the kind, I positively affirm that they are facts which really happened just as I have narrated them, and that there was no room for any possible trick or deception. In each case, before we began, we turned up the tables and chairs, and saw that they were ordinary pieces of furniture, and that there was no connection between them and the floor, and we placed them where we pleased before we sat down. Several of the phenomena occurred entirely under our own hands, and quite disconnected from the "medium." They were as much realities as the motion of nails towards a magnet, and, it may be added, not in themselves more improbable or more incomprehensible.

Next: X – NOTES OF PERSONAL EVIDENCE - SECOND PART

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

THE CODIFICTION

GENESIS: THE MIRACLES AND THE PREDICTIONS ACCORDING TO SPIRITISM

BY **Allan Kardec**

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

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

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

The spiritual doctrine is the result of the collective and concordant teachings of spirits.
Science is called in to make the statements in Genesis agree with the laws of nature.
God proves his greatness and power by the immutability of his laws, and not by their suspension.
For God the past and the future are the present.

CHAPTER 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 THREE

Universal Creation. - After mounting as high as we can, despite our weakness, toward the concealed source whence worlds flow like drops of water in a river, let us consider the march of successive creations, and their serial developments. Primitive cosmic matter comprises the material fluid and vital elements which unroll the magnificence of all the universes throughout eternity. She is the fruitful mother of all things, the first grandmother, and, still more, the eternal generatrix. She has not disappeared, this substance from which sidereal spheres are produced; she is not dead, this power, for she brings incessantly new creations into light, and incessantly receives the reconstituted principles of worlds which are effaced from the eternal book of life. Ethereal matter more or less rarefied, which descends among the inter-planetary spaces, - this cosmic fluid which fills the world more or less rarefied in immeasurable regions, rich in agglomerations or stars more or less condensed, where astral heavens do not yet shine forth more or less modified by diverse combinations according to locality in space, - is none other than the primal substance in which primitive forces reside, from which nature draws all things. ¹

This fluid which penetrates bodies is like an immense ocean. In it resides the vital principle which gives birth and life to beings, perpetuating it upon every globe according to its condition. It is a principle in a latent state, which slumbers when no existence calls for it. Every mineral, vegetable, animal, or other - for many other natural kingdoms exist, the existence of which you do not suspect - knows how, by virtue of this universal vital principle, to appropriate the conditions of its existence and of its duration. The molecules of the mineral have their share of this life, as well as the seed and the germ, and group themselves, like an organized being, into symmetrical forms, which constitute individualities. It is very important to comprehend this idea; that primitive cosmic matter was invested not only with laws which assure the stability of worlds, but also with the universal vital principle which causes spontaneous generations upon every world, in proportion as conditions for the successive existence of beings manifest themselves, when the time comes for the appearance of children of life, during the creative period. Thus universal creation is accomplished.

It is then true to say, that, the operations of nature being the expression of the divine will, God has always created, and creates unceasingly, and always will create.

Until now we have passed over in silence the subject of the spiritual world, which also is a part of creation, and accomplishes its destiny in accordance with the august decrees of the Master. I can give only very limited information concerning the mode of the creation of spirits, on account of my own ignorance; and I must still keep silent upon some matters into which I have been permitted to search. To those who are religiously desirous of obtaining knowledge, and who are humble before God, I will say (While I implore them not to base any one system prematurely on my words), that the spirit does not receive divine illumination until the time when free will and conscience are given him to grasp the idea of his high destiny; i.e., until he has passed through a series of inferior existences, during which the realization of his individuality is slowly elaborated. This only dates from the day when the Lord impresses upon his forehead his august seal; then the spirit takes rank as human. Again, I beg of you, do not build upon my words dogmatic theories like those so sadly celebrated in the history of metaphysics. I would a thousand times prefer to keep silent forever concerning questions so far above our ordinary meditations, than expose you to a misconstruction of the sense of my teachings, and so engulf you through my imperfection in the inextricable labyrinths of deism or fatalism.

The Suns and the Planets. - Once upon a time in the history of the universe, lost among the

myriad of worlds, cosmic matter was condensed into the form of an immense nebulous cloud. This nebula was animated by the universal laws which govern matter. By virtue of these laws, and notably by the molecular force of attraction, it took the form of a spheroid, the only one which can originally be taken by a mass of isolated matter in space. The circular movement, produced by gravitation exactly equal in all the molecular zones toward the center, soon modified the primitive sphere in order to conduct it from movement to movement toward the lenticular form. We speak of the whole of the nebula. New forces surged in the train of this rotary movement, - centripetal and centrifugal force, - the first tending to draw every particle to the center, the second tending to cause the recession of every atom from it. Now, the movement accelerating itself, according to the condensation of the nebula and its radius, augmenting as it approaches the lenticular form, the centrifugal force, incessantly developed by these two causes, soon predominated over the central attraction the same as a too rapid movement of a sling breaks the cord, and throws the projectile to a distance. Thus the predominance of centrifugal force detached the equatorial circle of the nebula, and with this ring formed a new mass, isolated from the first, but nevertheless in submission to its empire.

This mass has conserved its equatorial movement, which, modified, became its movement of translation around the solar body. Moreover, its new state gave to it a rotary movement around its proper center. The nebulous generatrix which gave birth to this new world is condensed, and has resumed the spherical form; but the primitive heat developed by its different movements weakening it only by very slow degrees, the phenomenon we have just described will reproduce itself often during a long period, while this nebulous mass will not become dense or solid enough to oppose an efficacious resistance to the modifications of form, which successively impress its rotary movement. It will then not have given birth simply to one astral body, but to hundreds of worlds detached from the central focus, issued from it by the mode of formation already presented. Now, each one of these worlds, invested like the primitive world with natural forces presiding at the creation of the universe, will engender in succession new globes gravitating henceforth around it, as it gravitates in concurrence with its brothers around the focus of their existence and life. Each one of these worlds will be a sun, a center of a whirling body of planets, successively escaped from its equator. These planets will each receive a particular life, although dependent upon their astral generator. Planets are thus formed of masses of condensed matter, but not yet solidified, detached from the central mass by the action of centrifugal force, and taking, by virtue of the laws of motion, the spheroidal form more or less elliptic, according to the degree of fluidity they have maintained. One of these planets is the earth, which, before being cooled and invested with a solid crust, must have given birth to the moon by the same mode of astral formation to which it owes its own existence. The earth henceforth inscribed in the book of life a cradle of creatures whose feebleness is protected under the wing of Divine Providence, a new cord in the infinite harp which must vibrate in its place in the universal concert of worlds.

The Satellites. - Before the planetary bodies have attained a degree of coolness sufficient for solidification, smaller bodies, veritable liquid globules, are detached from some in the equatorial plane, - a plane in which the centrifugal force is the greatest, - and which by virtue of the same laws have acquired a movement of translation around their planetary generatrix, like theirs around their central astral generator. Thus the earth has given birth to the moon, the body of which, being smaller, has cooled in a shorter time. Now the laws and forces which presided at its detachment from the terrestrial equator and its movement of translation in this same plane, act in such a way, that this world, in place of being invested with the spheroidal form, takes that of an ovoid globe; that is to say, having the elongated form of an egg, the center of gravity being in the inferior part. The conditions by which the distinctive form of the moon was effected would permit it scarcely to quit the earth, and constrain it to remain perpetually suspended in its sky like an ovoid figure, of which the heaviest parts form the lower face turned toward the earth, and of which the least dense parts occupy the summit, which is the side opposed to the earth, elevating itself towards the heavens. This is the reason that this body presents continually the same face to us. It can be likened, in order to better comprehend its geological state, to a globe composed of cork, of which the base, turned towards the earth, is formed of lead.

Hence two essentially distinct natures are found upon the surface of the lunar world, - one without any possibly analogy with ours, for fluid and ethereal bodies are unknown to it; the other, relatively analogous to the earth, since all the least dense substances are found upon this hemisphere. The first, perpetually turned towards the earth, is without atmosphere or water; the other, rich in fluids, is perpetually opposed to our world. ²

The number and condition of the satellites of every planet have been varied according to the special conditions of their formation. Some have given birth to no secondary body, - Mercury, Venus, and Mars, for instance; whilst others have formed one or many, like the earth, Jupiter, Saturn, and others. In addition to its satellites, or moons, the planet Saturn presents a special phenomenon of the ring, which seems, seen from afar, to surround it like a white aureole. This formation is to us a new proof of the universality of the laws of nature. This ring is surely the result of a separation which took place in primitive times in the equator of Saturn, just as an equatorial zone has been thrown off from the earth, and formed its satellite. The difference consists in this that the ring of Saturn was found formed in all its parts of homogeneous molecules, probably already in a certain state of condensation, and enabled in this manner to continue its rotary movement in the same way, and in a time nearly equal, to that which revolves the planet. If one of the points of this ring had been denser than another, one or many agglomerations of substance would have been

suddenly expelled, and Saturn would have counted many satellites more. Since the time of its formation, this ring has been solidified, as well as the other planetary bodies.

1 If one inquires what is the principle of these forces, and how can it be even in the substance which produces it, we would reply that mechanism offers us numerous examples. The elasticity which makes a spring unbend, - is not that in the spring itself, and does it not depend upon the mode of the aggregation of molecules? The body which obeys centrifugal force receives its impulsion from the primitive movement which has been impressed upon it.

2 This entirely new theory of the moon explains, by the law of gravitation, the reason why this body always turns the same face towards the earth. Its center of gravity, instead of being in the center of the sphere, is to be found upon one of the points of its surface, and, consequently, attracted to the earth by a greater force than are the lighter parts. The moon produces the effect of figures called *Moussahs*, which constantly stand upright upon their base, while the planets, whose centers of gravity are at equal distances from the surface, turn regularly upon their axes. The vivifying fluids, gaseous or liquid, on account of their specific lightness, would be found accumulated in the superior hemisphere constantly opposed to the earth. The inferior hemisphere, the only one we see, must be destitute of them, and consequently incapable of sustaining life, whilst life would reign on the other. If, then, the upper hemisphere be inhabited, its inhabitants have never seen the earth, unless by excursions into the other hemisphere. However rational and scientific this opinion may be, as it has not yet been confirmed by any one direct observation, it can be accepted only as an hypothesis; and as such it serves as a beacon-star to science.

Next: PART FOUR – COMETS

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 Two

Arguments in Support of the Doctrine of Eternal Punishment

10. To return to the dogma of eternal punishment, the principal argument invoke in its favor is the following:-

It is admitted, among mankind, that the heinousness of an offense is proportioned to the quality of the offended party. An offense committed against a sovereign, being considered as more heinous than it would be if committed against a private person, is therefore punished more severely. God is greater than any earthly sovereign; since He is infinite, an offense against Him is infinite also, and must consequently incur an infinite (that is to say, an *eternal*) punishment.

Refutation. - The refutation of any argument is a reasoning which must have a definite starting-point, a basis on which it rests, in a word, a clear and stable premise. We take, as our premise in refuting the argument just stated, the necessary attributes of God, that is to say, the attributes without which He could not be God. *

God is unique, eternal, immutable, immaterial, all-powerful, sovereignly just and good, infinite in all His perfections .

It is impossible to conceive of God Otherwise than as possessing the infinity of His perfections; were He otherwise, He would not be God, for there might be some other Being possessing the quality which He lacked. In order for God to be above all other beings, He must necessarily be such that no other being can surpass or even equal Him in any respect. Consequently God must be infinite in all His attributes.

The attributes of God, being infinite, are not susceptible of increase or of diminution; otherwise, they would not be infinite, and God would not be perfect. If the smallest particle were taken from any one of His attributes, He would no longer be God, for there might be some other being more perfect than He.

The infinity of a quality excludes the possibility of the existence of any quality contrary thereto, or capable of annulling or of lessening it. A being that is *infinitely good* cannot possess the smallest particle of wickedness, any more than a being that was *infinitely bad* could possess the smallest particle of goodness; just as no object could be *absolutely black* if it had the slightest tint of white, or *absolutely white*, if it had the smallest speck of black.

This basis and starting-point being laid down, we oppose, to the proposition brought forward above, the following arguments:-

11. It is only an infinite being that can do anything infinite. Man, being limited in his virtues, in his knowledge, in his power, in his aptitudes, in his terrestrial existence, can produce only that which is limited.

If man could be infinite in what he does amiss, he could also be infinite in what he does aright, and, in that case, he would be equal with God. But, if man were infinite in that he does aright, he would do nothing wrong, for absolute goodness is the exclusion of all evil.

On the other hand, even if it were possible to admit that a temporary offense against the Divinity could be infinite, God, if He revenged Himself by the infliction of an *infinite* punishment, would be *infinite vindictive*; if He were infinitely vindictive, He could not be infinitely good and merciful, for the former attribute is the negation of the others. If He be not infinitely good, He is not perfect; and, if He be not perfect, He is not God.

If God be inexorable towards the repenting sinner, He is not merciful; if He be not merciful, He is not infinitely good.

Why should God impose on man the law of forgiveness, if He, Himself, do not forgive? If such were the case, it would follow that the man who forgives his enemies and returns good for evil is better than God, who remains deaf to the repentance of the weak creature that has sinned against Him, and who refuses to grant to that creature, *throughout eternity*, the slightest mitigation of the torments which his weakness and his inexperience have brought upon him!

Good, who is everywhere and sees everything, must see the tortures of the damned. If he remained insensible to their groans throughout eternity, He would be eternally devoid of pity; if He were devoid of pity, He would not be infinitely good.

12. To this argument it is replied that the sinner who repents before dying experiences the pity of God, and that, consequently, the very greatest sinner may find favor in His sight.

This is admitted on all hands, and it is but reasonable to assume that God forgives only those who repent, and that He remains inflexible towards the unrepentant; but, if He is full of pity for the soul who repents before quitting his fleshly body, why should He cease to be so for him who repents after death? Why should repentance be efficacious only during an earthly life-time, which is but an instant and inefficacious throughout eternity, which has no end? If the goodness and mercy of God are circumscribed *within a fixed time*, they are not infinite, and, if such be the case, God is not infinitely good.

13. God is supremely just. The most perfect justice is neither that which is utterly inexorable, nor that which leaves wrong-doing unpunished; it is that which keeps the most exact account of good and evil, which rewards the one and punishes the other with the most perfect equity, and which, in the apportioning of rewards and punishments, never makes the slightest mistake.

If, for a temporary fault - which is, *always*, a result of the imperfection of human nature, and, *often*, of the surroundings in which the wrong-doer has been placed - the soul were to be punished eternally, without hope of forgiveness or of any diminution of suffering, there would be no proportion between the fault and its punishment, and, consequently, no justice in the chastisements of the future.

If the evil-doer retraces his steps, repents, and demands of God to be allowed to make reparation for his evil deeds, his change of mind constitutes a return to virtue, to rectitude of feeling. But if the punishment of the other life were irrevocable, such a return to virtuous sentiments would remain sterile; and as, in that case, God would take no account of his desire for amendment, He would not be just. Among men, the convict who repents and amends obtains a commutation of his punishment, or, sometimes, even a full pardon; so that, if God punished eternally, there would be more equity in human jurisprudence than in the penal code of the Divinity!

If the sentence passed on the sinner were irrevocable, repentance would be useless, and the sinner, being shut out for ever from virtue, would be forcible doomed to remain in evil; so that, if the doctrine of eternal punishment were true, God would not only condemn the sinner to suffer for ever, but would also compel him to remain for ever in his wickedness. But, in that case, God would be neither just nor good; in other words, He would not be God.

14. Being infinite in all things, God must know all things, past, present, and future; and He must therefore know, at the very moment when He created a soul, whether or not that soul will go widely enough astray to incur eternal damnation. If, when He creates a soul, He does not know whether it will go right or will go wrong, His knowledge is not infinite, in which case He is not God; if He knows that it will go wrong, and voluntarily creates a being that He foresees to be doomed, from its beginning, to the endurance of eternal misery, He is not good, and, consequently, He is not God.

If God can be touched by the repentance of the soul that has incurred the penalty of its wrong-doing, and can extend to him His pity and *take him out of Hell*, there is no such thing as eternal damnation, and the doctrine which inculcates that idea must be admitted to be of human invention.

15. The doctrine of eternal damnation, therefore, leads inevitably to the negation or the lessening of some of the attributes of God; it is irreconcilable with the infinity and perfection of those attributes, and we are, consequently, forced to the following conclusion:-

If God be perfect, there can be no such thing as eternal punishment; if eternal punishment exist, God is not perfect.

16. The advocates of eternal punishment bring forward the following argument:-

"The rewards accorded to the good, being eternal, must have their counterpart in an eternity of punishment. Justice demands that punishment should be proportioned to reward."

Refutation. - Does God create the soul with a view to rendering it happy or to rendering it unhappy? Evidently, the happiness of the creature must be the aim of its creation, as, were it otherwise, God would not be good. The soul attains to happiness as the consequence of its own worthiness; that worthiness once acquired, its fruition can never be lost by the soul, for such a loss would imply degeneracy on its part, and the soul that has become intrinsically good, being incapable of evil, cannot degenerate. The eternity of the happiness of the purified soul is therefore implied in its immortality.

But, before attaining to perfection, the soul had to wage a long struggle, to fight many a battle with its evil passions. God having created the soul, not perfect - *but susceptible of becoming such*, in order that it may possess the merits of its labors - the soul may err. Its lapses from the right road are the consequence of its natural weakness. If, for a single error, the soul is to be punished eternally, it might fairly be asked why God did not create it strong to begin with? The punishment which the soul brings upon itself, by its wrong-doing, gives it notice that it has done wrong, and should have for effect to bring it back to the path of duty. If its punishment were irremissible, any desire on its part to do better would be superfluous; and, in that case, the Providential aim of creation would be unattainable, since, although there would be some beings predestined to happiness, there would be other beings predestined to misery. But if we admit that a guilty soul can repent, we must also admit that it can become good; if it can become good, it may aspire to happiness; would God be just if he denied to it the means of rehabilitation?

God being the final aim of creation, happiness, which is the result and reward of goodness, must, in the nature of things, be eternal; but punishment, which is only a means for leading the soul to goodness and to happiness, must, in the nature of things, be only temporary. The most elementary notion of justice, even among men, suffices to show us that it would be unjust to inflict perpetual punishment on one who had the desire and the determination to amend.

17. Another argument in favor of eternal punishment is the following:-

"The fear of eternal punishment is a curb; if that fear were done away with, man, no longer restrained by his dread of the future, would give free course to all his evil tendencies.

Refutation. - This argument would have some weight if the non-eternity of future punishment implied the suppression of all penalty. But it is an inevitable consequence of the justice of God that some souls should be happy, and that other souls should be unhappy, in the future life; for, if the situation of the good and the evil were the same, such an identity of situation would be utterly unjust. The future punishment of the wicked, as long as they continue to be wicked, is therefore certain; and punishment is none the less painful for not being eternal. Moreover, the prospect of future punishment is efficacious in restraining men from wrong-doing in proportion to their belief in its reality; and this reality will necessarily be believed in, and consequently dreaded, in proportion to the reasonableness of the aspect under which it is presented. The threat of a penalty, in the reality of which men do not believe, has no restraining effect on their action; and the threat of eternal punishment is of this nature.

The doctrine of eternal punishment, as previously remarked, was natural and useful in the past; at the present day, it is not only inefficacious to restrain men from wrong-doing, but it causes them to disbelieve, altogether, in the reality of future retribution. Before holding up that doctrine before the eyes of men as a *necessity*, its advocates should demonstrate its *reality*, and they should also, as the most conclusive argument in its favor, show that it exercises a moralizing effect on those who hold it and who endeavor to uphold it. If it be powerless to restrain from wrong-doing those who say that they believe in it, what action can it exert over those who do not believe in it?

* Vide *The Spirits' Book*, chap. i.

Next: CHAPTER VI - **Part Three** - *Physical Impossibility of Eternal Punishment*

Part Second - Examples

CHAPTER IV

SUFFERING SPIRITS

PRINCE OURAN

Bordeaux, 1862

A suffering spirit who announced himself, spontaneously, as "*Ouran*, formerly a Russian Prince."

Q. Will you give us some details of your situation?

A. Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven!

Pray for me. Happy are they who, in humility of heart, choose, for the undergoing of their trials, a modest position! You know not, you who are devoured with envy, to what a state those are reduced whom you regard as the favorites of Fortune! You see not the coals of fire they heap upon their own heads; you know not what sacrifices riches impose upon those who would make them profitable to their advancement in the spirit-world! May the Master permit me, the proud despot, to come back and to expiate, among those whom I crushed by my tyranny, the crimes which pride caused me to commit! *Pride!* Repeat that word incessantly, and never forget that pride is the source of all our sufferings! Yes; I misused the power and favor I enjoyed; I was harsh and cruel to my inferiors, whom I forced to yield to all my caprices, to satisfy all my depravities. I had elected to possess rank, honors, fortune; and I succumbed under the weight of a trial beyond my strength.

Spirits who have succumbed under a trial are very apt to say that it was beyond their strength; but this is a way of excusing their failure and is generally prompted by pride, which makes them unwilling to confess that they failed through their own fault. The Divine Providence imposes on no one more than he can bear; but spirits have their free-will; and, if they bring their will to task, there is no evil tendency that they cannot vanquish. Unfortunately, it too often happens that, *the more strongly a spirit is naturally drawn to any given vice, the less does he, when incarnated as a man, exert himself to combat that tendency*; consequently, if he fails to surmount it, he has only his own want of will to thank for his failure.

Q. You are conscious of your faults; this is a first step towards amendment.

A. This consciousness is an additional suffering. For many spirits, suffering is almost physical, because being still influenced by

the materiality of their last existence, they have no perception of moral sensations. My spirit is now quite free from the influence of matter; but my moral perception has acquired all the horror of the sensations that are supposed to be physical.

Q. Do you foresee the end of your sufferings?

A. I know that they will not be eternal; but I do not yet foresee their end; for that, I must undergo a new trial.

Q. Do you remember anything of your preceding existences? I ask you this in view of our instruction.

A. I had lived under Marcus Aurelius. In that life, also, I was in possession of power; and I succumbed to pride, the cause of all our failures. After having wandered for many centuries, I determined to try a life of obscurity. As a poor student, I begged my bread; but my innate pride was still with me; my spirit gained in knowledge, but not in virtue. Learned and ambitious, I sold myself to those who bid highest for my services, ministering to every hatred, to every revenge. I felt my wickedness; but the thirst of honors and of riches rendered me deaf to the voice of my conscience. The expiation of that life was long and terrible. At length I determined to undergo, anew, in my last incarnation, the temptations of luxury and power. Thinking myself strong enough to overcome the dangers of such a life, I refused to listen to the counsels of those who sought to dissuade me from the attempt. Pride led me once more to trust to my own judgment, instead of following the advice of the protecting friends who never cease to watch over us. You know the result of that last attempt.

I have, at last, come to a sense of my weakness and folly; and I place my hope in the help of the Almighty. I have laid down, at His feet, my miserable pride, and have besought Him to place on my shoulders the heaviest load of humility; with His help, that load will seem to me light. Pray with me and for me; pray also for yourselves that the demon of pride may never gain power over your minds. Brothers in suffering! let my example enlighten you. Forget not that pride is the enemy of happiness; for it is pride that causes all the ills that assail the human race and pursue it even in the spirit-world!

The Medium's Guide. - You have felt some doubt as to the sincerity of this spirit, because his language did not seem to you in harmony with the backwardness implied in his state of suffering. Be at ease on that score; what he has stated is true. However great his suffering, he is sufficiently advanced in intelligence to speak as he has done. All he has lacked has been the humility without which no spirit can ascend towards God. He has now achieved that humility; and we hope that, through perseverance in his new resolutions, he will issue, triumphant, from his next trial.

Our heavenly Judge takes account of every effort made by man to conquer his evil instincts. Every victory gained by you over yourselves takes you up another step of the ladder, of which one end is on your earth, and the other end is at the feet of the supreme Arbiter. Climb that ladder bravely; its rungs are of easy access to those whose will is in the work; but never look back, for you would be seized with dizziness, and, discouraged at seeing that your elevation is still so slight, you would be smitten with discouragement. Pride is deep in the human heart; make this sentiment serve to give you strength and courage for your ascension! Use it to obtain the mastery over your weaknesses, and mount steadily toward the eternal happiness that will abundantly overpay you for the efforts and renunciation of the way!

REINCARNATION - Second Chances

Inspirationally received by Y. Limoges

[November Newsletter 2009 of the [Spiritist Society of Florida](#)]

The most important principle Spiritism teaches is the *natural law of reincarnation*, and more and more people are coming around to this idea as a reasonable belief.

As parents, we see our children make mistakes as they grow, and we see them mature. If they don't get things right the first time, then they may get it, the second or the third time. How could we believe that the All Powerful Creator would only give our own souls **one chance**?

How can we only have one chance to grow, to learn things, to experience the many things in this world that we may want to do, and to make only one choice about the *many important things* in our lives that may have hurt others or given us terrible regrets, with never having that second, or even third chance to go in another direction in life or to make things right?

Much of the suffering we see in the world is the result of people who made poor choices, but they will all have as many chances as they need to get it eventually right, through other existences.

An All Loving and All Just Creator would give us *infinite chances* to grow, develop, better ourselves, and make all kind of choices, for as long as it takes, in order for us to evolve and mature to reach our highest potential.

And, evolving in the spirit world after death and only one life is not enough either.

It is here as a *human being* that our true evolution is accomplished. Obviously, this is a difficult process because we see suffering all around us (we are still imperfect, so our choices are imperfect) but this is the cause for it. Clearly, it is the consequences (for better or worse) of the Creator giving us our many freewill choices...as we continue to learn and progress.

How can the Creator deny those who died as a baby or as young children the opportunity to

fully experience material life? How can the Creator deny those who could not see or hear or walk, the opportunity to do so in the material world? I can't believe the Creator would deny them.

Some who go to college or learn a specialized skill enter the spirit world without having had the opportunity to use this knowledge. Some *material knowledge* can only be used in our world, but it is never lost. They can use it in another lifetime, or another! That is why, sometimes, certain studies come so easy to learn for some people, and why there are prodigies.

Reincarnation explains suffering, the *apparent* inequalities of life, and why there are people at different levels of morality and intellect on earth, but it also provides us the wonderful hope of a myriad of unlimited opportunities!

NEWS, EVENTS, BOOK REVIEWS AND MISCELLANEOUS

Rhine Research Center's *Journal of Parapsychology*

A good way to help the Rhine Research Center in its goal to continue this extraordinary research, which has been in progress for 70 years, is by subscribing to its Journal of Parapsychology.

We extracted the following from one of the videos on the above links [**70 Hears at Rhine**], which gives us an idea of how serious and unbiased the research undertaken at this organization is:

"It is hard to accept the reality of something phenomenal, because it raises big questions about who we are and what does it all mean. I believe that Science has the capability to address those basic questions that interest humanity in a step by step fashion, but you can't go from down here where we are to up here where people of strong religious persuasion are in one step. If we are going to document the existence of the spirit, for instance, or some grand power in the universe that animates us and our spirit, then it is going to take many life times of research done in incremental fashion, little steps, to get there. But that's the business of Science and good creative scientists to design experiments that can ask the right question so that you get a clean answer, and then ask the next right question and get another clean answer and make little steps and build upon that." [Research Associate and Board Member **Stephen Baumann**, Ph.D.].

From its beginning in 1937, the Journal of Parapsychology has been recognized worldwide as an authoritative resource for anyone interested in the scientific study of paranormal phenomena. J. B. Rhine and William McDougall of the famed Duke University Parapsychology Lab established the Journal of Parapsychology to share experimental research findings with the scientific community. Their strict criteria for evaluating research reports remain in place today through peer review. In addition to professionally scrutinized articles about original research, the Journal of Parapsychology includes theoretical discussions, book reviews, correspondence, and abstracts of papers from the Parapsychological Association's annual convention. Editor John Palmer and Managing Editor Dave Roberts maintain the tradition of thorough research and careful documentation in the Journal of Parapsychology today.



Sally Rhine Feather

Comments such as the following illustrate the importance of the Journal of Parapsychology to the global parapsychological community: "*The Journal of Parapsychology is the most consulted journal of parapsychology by researchers and students here for many research projects. Our library is similar to the ASPR's library, and these journals are vital for our studies.*" -- Alejandro Parra Facultad de Psicología, Universidad Abierta Interamericana, Buenos Aires, Argentina

"*The Journal of Parapsychology has a major role to play in general and also regarding parapsychology. . . . We periodically have research reviews and a major part of the evaluation is publication in international journals. . . . When [the reviewers] read the articles [published in the Journal of Parapsychology] they were happy with them. . . . Although we are all still encouraged to publish in mainstream interdisciplinary journals, certainly the Journal of Parapsychology will continue to get a lot of submissions from over here in the UK in particular and Europe in general.*" -- Robert L. Morris, Late Koestler Chair of Parapsychology, University of Edinburgh

"*In the minds of a lot of people, the Rhine Center still is the gold standard for scientific credibility in this field We continue to set a standard for very serious scientific work.*" -- James C. Carpenter, Department of Psychiatry, University of North Carolina, Former editor, American Academy of Clinical Psychology Bulletin, Member of Rhine Center Board of Directors

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