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SPIRITUALISM AND THEOSOPHY.

BY COLONEL HENRY S. OLCOTT, PRESIDENT OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

(Concluded from page 23).

SPIRITUALISM AND THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

The handbills announce me as the President of the Theosophical Society, and you have gathered here to learn what Theosophy is and what are its relations with Spiritualism.

Let me say then, that in the sense given to it by those who first used it, the word means divine wisdom, or the knowledge of divine things. The lexicographers handicap the idea with the suggestion that it meant the knowledge of God, the Deity before their minds being a personal one; but such was not the intention of the early theosophists. Essentially, a theosophical society is one which favours man's original acquisition of knowledge about the hidden things of the universe, by the education and perfecting of his own latent powers. Theosophy differs as widely from philosophy as it does from theology. It has been truly said that in investigating the divine nature and attributes, philosophy proceeds entirely by the dialectic method, employing as the basis of its investigation the ideas derived from natural reason; theology, still employing the same method, superadds to the principles of natural reason those derived from authority and revelation. Theosophy, on the contrary, professes to exclude all dialectical process, and to derive all its knowledge of God from direct and immediate intuition and contemplation. This Theosophy dates from the highest antiquity of which we have preserved any records, and every original founder of a religion was a seeker after divine wisdom by the theosophic process of self-illumination. Where do we find in our day the facilities for pursuing this glorious study? Where are the training schools that are worthy to be called the successors of those of the Neo-Platonists of Alexandria, the Hierophants of Egypt, the Theodidakti of Greece, or—and especially—the Rishis of Aryavarta, noblest of all initiates, if we except the stainless, the illuminated Gautama Buddha?

Think for a moment of what this theosophical study exacts of a man who would really penetrate the mysteries and become a true *Illuminatus*. The lusts of the flesh, the pride of life, the prejudices of birth, race, creed (so far as it creates dogmatism)—must all be put aside. The body must be made the convenience instead of the despot of the higher self. The prison bars of sense that incarcerate the man of matter must be unlocked, and while living in, and being a factor in, the outer world, the theosophist must be able to look into, enter, act in, and return from the inner world, fraught with divine truths. Are there—were there ever—such men, such demigods, rather let us say? There were; there *are*. The legends of the past may seem to us tinged with error, wild and fantastic, even; but, nevertheless, such men as these existed and displayed their powers, in many countries, at various epochs. And nowhere more than in India, this blessed land of the sun—now so poor, so spiritless, so famished and degraded. This was the home of ancient Theosophy; here—upon these very Himalayan mountains that tower so high yonder—lived and taught the men who won the prize of divine knowledge, whose wisdom—a fertilising stream—flowed through Grecian and Egyptian channels towards the West. Believe me or not, as you will, I am fully persuaded that there still linger among these fastnesses, out of the poisoned moral atmosphere of the nineteenth century, social life, safe from the blight and persecution of bigotry and intolerant modern superstition, safe from the cruel malice of scepticism—those who are true theosophists. Neither pessimist nor optimist, I am not satisfied that our race is doomed to destruction, present or future, nor that the moral sense of society can be kept undiminished without constant refreshment from the parent fount. That fount I conceive to be theosophical study and personal illumination, and I regard him as a benefactor to his kind who points to the sceptical, the despairing, the world-weary, the heart-hungry, that the vanities of the world do not satisfy the soul's aspirations, and true happiness can only be acquired by interior self-development, purification and enlightenment. It is not in accord with the abstract principles of Justice that the world should be left entirely without such exemplars of spiritual wisdom. I do not believe it ever was, or ever will be.

THE VALUE OF MEDIUMSHIP.

To him who takes up this course of effort,

the phenomena of mediumship are transcendently important, for they usher him into the realm of the Unseen, and show him some of the weirdest secrets of our human nature. Along with mediumship he studies vital magnetism, its laws and phenomena, and the Odyle of Von Reichenbach, which together show us the real nature and polarities of this Force, and the fact that it seems to be akin to the one great force that pervades all nature. Further proof he draws from Buchanan's psychometry, and experiments with those whom he finds to be endowed with the psychometrical faculty. If there are any here to whom this is a new word, I will say that this is a name given by the modern discoverer to a certain power possessed by about one person in four, to receive intuitive impressions of the character of the writer of a letter or the painter of a picture, by direct contact with the manuscript or the painting. Every one of us is constantly leaving the impress of his character upon everything we touch, as the loadstone imparts some of its properties to every needle it is rubbed against. A subtle something—magnetism, or vital fluid, or psychic force—constantly exudes from us. We leave it on the ground and our dog finds us; on our clothing, and the slaver's bloodhound sniffs the scent and tracks the poor runaway to his hiding place. We saturate with it the walls of our houses, and a sensitive psychometer upon entering our drawing-room can unerringly tell before seeing the family, whether that is a happy home or one of strife. We are surrounded by it as a sensitive vapour, and when we meet each other we silently take in our impressions of our mutual congeniality or antipathy. Women have this sense more than men, and many are the instances where a wife's prophetic intuition, unheeded and ridiculed by the husband in the case of some new acquaintance, has afterwards been recalled with regret that it should have been disregarded. Good psychometers can even take from any fragment of inanimate matter, such as a bit of an old building, or a shred of an old garment, a vivid impression of all the scenes of its history. In its highest manifestation psychometry becomes true clairvoyance, and, when that soul-sight is indeed opened, the eye within us that never grows lustreless shows us the arcana of the Unseen Universe.

MINOR PSYCHICAL TYPES.

Theosophy shows the student that evolution is a fact, but that it has not been partial and incomplete as Darwin's theory makes it. As

there has been an evolution in physical nature the crown and flower of which is physical man, so there has been a parallel evolution in the realm of spirit. The outcome of this is the psychic, or inner man; and, just as in this visible nature about us we see myriads of forms lower than ourselves, so the Theosophist finds in the *terra incognita* of the physicist—the realm of the “Unknowable”—countless minor psychical types, with man at the top of the ascending series. Physicists know of the elements only in their chemical or dynamic relations and properties; but he who has mastered the Occult Sciences finds dwelling in fire, air, earth, and water, sub-human orders of being, some inimical, some favourable to man. He not only comes to a knowledge of them, but also to the power of controlling them. The folk-lore of the world has embalmed many truths about this power, which is none the less a fact because the modern biologist turns up his nose at it. You who come from Ireland or the Scottish Highlands know that these beings exist. I do not surmise this, I *know* it. I speak thus calmly and boldly about the subject, because I have met these proficient Asiatic Occultists and seen them exercise their power. This is why I ceased to call myself a Spiritualist in 1874, and why, in 1875, I united with others to found a Theosophical Society to promote the study of these natural phenomena. The most wonderful facts of mediumship I have seen produced at will and in full daylight by one who had learnt the secret sciences in India and Egypt. Under such circumstances I have seen showers of roses made to fall in a room; letters from people in far countries to drop from space into my lap; heard sweet music coming from afar upon the air, grow louder and louder until it was in the room, and then die away again out in the still atmosphere until it was no more. I have seen writing made to appear upon paper and slates laid upon the floor, drawings upon the ceiling beyond any one's reach, pictures upon paper without the employment of pencil or colour, articles duplicated before my very eyes, a living person instantly disappear before my sight, jet-black hair cut from a fair-haired person's head, had absent friends and distant scenes shown me in a crystal, and in America more than an hundred times, upon opening letters upon various subjects coming to me by the common post from my correspondents in all parts of the world, have found inside, written in their own familiar hand, messages to me from men in India who

possess the theosophical knowledge of natural law. Nay, upon one occasion I even saw summoned before me as perfectly ‘materialised’ a figure as any that ever stalked out of William Eddy's cabinet of marvels. If it is not strange that the Spiritualist who sees mediumistic phenomena, but knows nothing of occult science, should believe in the intervention of spirits of the dead, is it any stranger that I, after receiving so many proofs of what the trained human will can accomplish, should be a theosophist and no longer a Spiritualist? I have not even half exhausted the catalogue of the proofs that have been vouchsafed to me during the last five years as to the reality of Asiatic psychological science. But I hope I have enumerated enough to show you that there are mysteries in India worth seeking, and men here who are far more acquainted with nature's occult forces than any of those much-initiated gentlemen who set themselves up for professors and biologists.

SPIRIT IDENTITY.

It will be asked what evidence I offer that the intelligent phenomena of the mediums are not to be ascribed to our departed friends. In reply, I ask what unimpeachable evidence there is that they are. If it can be shown that the soul of the living medium can, unconsciously to his physical self, ooze out, and by its elastic and protean nature take on the appearance of any deceased person whose image it sees in a visitor's memory; if all the phenomena can be produced at will by an educated psychologist; if, in the ether of science—the *Akása* of the Hindus, the *Anima Mundi* of the theosophists, the Astral Light of the cabalists—the images of all persons and events, and the vibration of every sound, are eternally preserved—as these occultists affirm and experimentally prove—if all this is true, then why is it necessary to call in the spirits of the dead to explain what may be done by the living? So long as no alternative theory was accessible, the Spiritualists held impregnable ground against materialistic science; theirs was the only possible way to account for what they saw. But, given the alternative, and shown the resources of psychology and the nature of the Unseen Universe, you see the Spiritualists are at once thrown upon the defensive without the ability to silence their critics. The casual observer would say it is impossible, for instance, for that aged Quaker lady's figure to be anything but her own returning soul—that her son could not have been mistaken, and that if there were any doubt otherwise, her familiar knowledge of

their family matters, and even her old habit of alternately plaiting and smoothing-out her lawn apron, identify her amply. But the figure did nothing and said nothing that was not fixed in the son's memory—indelibly stamped there, however the long dormant pictures might have been obscured by fresher images. And the medium's body being entranced and his active vitality transferred to his inner self, or 'double,' that double could make itself appear under the guise of the dead lady, and catch and comment upon the familiar incidents it found in the son's magnetic atmosphere. This will be hard for you to comprehend, for our Western scientific discoveries have not as yet crossed the threshold of this hidden world of Force. But progress is the law of human thought, and we are now so near the verge of the chasm that divides physical from spiritual science, that it will not be long before we will bridge it. Let this stand as a prophecy; if you bide patiently you will see it fulfilled. This then is the present attitude of parties. The promulgation of our views and of many reports by eye-witnesses of things done by members of the Theosophical Society has been causing great talk all over the world. A large body of the most intelligent Spiritualists have joined us and are giving their countenance to our work. Groups of sympathisers have organised themselves into branches in many different countries. Even here in Simla there has sprung up the nucleus of what will be an Anglo-Indian branch. No country in the world affords so wide a field as India for psychological study. What we Europeans call Animal Magnetism has been known here and practised in its highest perfection for countless centuries. The Hindus know equally well the life-principle in man, animals and plants. All over India, if search were but made, you would find in the possession of the natives many facts that it is most important for Europe and America to know. And you, gentlemen, of the civil and military branches of the public service, are the proper ones to undertake the work with the Hindu help. Be just and kind to them and they will tell you a thousand things they now keep profound secrets among themselves. Our policy is one of general conciliation and co-operation for the discovery of truth. Some tale-bearer has started the report that our Society is preaching a new religion. This is false: the Society has no more a religion of its own than the Royal Asiatic, the Geographical, the Royal, or the Astronomical. As those societies

have their separate sections, each devoted to some speciality of research, so have we. We take in persons of all religions and every race, and treat all with equal respect and impartiality. We have royal, noble, and plebeian blood among us. Edison is our member, and Wallace, and Camille Flammarion, and Lord Lindsay, and Baron du Potet and the octogenarian Cahagnet, and scores of men of that intellectual quality. We have but one passionate and consuming ambition—that of learning what man is, what nature. Are there any here who sympathise with these aspirations? Any who feel within their hearts the glow of true manhood—one that puts a higher value upon divine wisdom than upon the honours and rewards of the lower life? Come then, brother dreamers, and let us combine our efforts and our good will. Let us see if we cannot win happiness for ourselves in striving to benefit others. Let us do what we can to rescue from the oblivion of centuries that priceless knowledge of divine things which we call THEOSOPHY.*—*The Theosophist*. (Bombay.)

SPIRIT NAMES FROM A SWEDENBORGIAN POINT OF VIEW.

Mrs. Woodforde's article in *The Spiritualist* a few numbers back, has raised the interesting and important question of the cause of the names which spirits give themselves. Mrs. Woodforde says that "John King" appears to be a generic name, and of this there seems to be no reason for doubt. "John" implies spirit, or a spiritual teacher. Many highly developed clairvoyants give this interpretation of "John," and the many connections found by antiquarian scholars between Jone, Jonah, Jona, the Dove, and the Holy Spirit, indicate a radical spiritual meaning of the word. For we must remember that spiritual *names* imply *natures*, and when Zacharias wrote of the infant Baptist, "His name is John," he expressed the fact which his spiritual insight revealed to him. For the appellation, "King," there is plenty of reason: Malak, in Hebrew, is both king and messenger or angel. There is a difference in the vowel pointing, but the word is the same. Is John King a Prince of the Power of the Air, or does he belong to those principalities and powers of which Paul the Apostle

* Upon the conclusion of the lecture, Lieutenant-General W. Olpherts, C. B., rose and said that, however much those present might differ in religious opinion with the eloquent lecturer, or even in the matter of the phenomena he had described, yet he felt sure that the thanks of the meeting would be unanimously voted to him for the impartial and able address to which they had just listened. The motion was carried with marked signs of approbation, and the meeting then adjourned.

writes? He certainly always appears to be employed in physical manifestations, sometimes involving great power over matter.

The first appearance of John King was in America, at Mr. Koon's. I am not sure whether he announced himself through the Davenport's, but some years ago he appeared at one of Mr. Williams' *séances*, and then gave out that he had, when on earth, been Henry Morgan, the celebrated buccancer of the American seas. This pirate, whose history may be found in the *Lives of the Buccaneers*, lived about 300 years ago. A friend of mine found that Mr. Williams had read this book of *Lives*, and, without questioning the genuineness of the voice which gave the name, was led to believe that the Spirit or Influence assumes a name and character which is found in the medium's mind. When, sometime after, Katie King, who at first was said to be John's daughter, described (as narrated by Mr. Crookes) her early life in India, she evidently was talking of the *East Indies*, whereas, if she had been the daughter of the pirate, and with him on board ship, which is very unlikely, the *West Indies* would have been the scene of her adventures. A reference to the *Lives of the Buccaneers* would throw light on this. John King seems to have changed his name a little, but I do not hear whether he still claims to have been the notorious pirate.

I hear that the voice calling itself "Peter," (also a generic or symbolical name) says that he was a clown or acrobat, and, I think, broke his neck. At one of Miss Showers' *séances*, he declared that he had been a costermonger, and had choked himself with a carrot.

I have heard of other instances which seem to confirm the idea that any prominent name or character in the medium's mind is taken as the earthly designation of the spirit—if the manifestation is a genuine one. It would be useful to give a list of these, and to here trace the law which determines them. At present there seems no reason to give up the principle laid down by Swedenborg, that sympathy or antipathy determine nearness or distance among spirits. Strong affection and anxiety to communicate draw loving relations to us. Those who have intellectual sympathy with us give names of the writers with whose genius we are in harmony; thence, the Miltons, Shakespeares, Shelleys, Byrons, and others. But spirits not much raised from earth, who are commissioned to knock about furniture, lift objects, and make sounds, like the John Kings and Peters, probably have their generic or

official name as described, and for their earthly one take what they find in the mind of the medium. X.

MR. MACGINNIS'S SPECTRAL WAITER.

(From the "New York Times," December 11th, 1880.)

Lourdes is not the only place where strange things happen; neither are ghosts monopolised by Slade and his like. The spectral waiter of MacGinnis's restaurant in Sixteenth Street is as marvellous as the fashionably dressed Virgin that appeared to Marie Alacoque, or the athletic spirits that upset the tables of Professor Zöllner. As yet no eminent clergyman or German philosopher has investigated the spectral waiter, and this neglect ought not to be permitted to pass without rebuke.

The restaurant owned and managed by our esteemed fellow-citizen, Charles MacGinnis, is both well-known and deservedly popular. As many readers of *The Times* may remember, it is furnished with small tables, each affording room for four guests. There is, however, in the corner toward the avenue a small table just large enough for one man to use, and so situated that the diner is compelled to sit with his back to the rest of the room. This fact, together with the lack of sunlight in the corner, has made the table in question unpopular, and it is rarely used by the regular patrons of the restaurant.

About a year ago, Mr. MacGinnis began to be troubled with complaints of the inefficiency of his waiters. He had always prided himself on employing the very best men in the business, and had insisted upon strict observance of rules and careful attention to guests. The waiters were provided with paper and pencils, and were directed to receive only written orders for food and beverages, and to avoid speaking except when answering questions. So well were the waiters trained that any well-founded complaint against them was almost unknown until the beginning of last year, when a stranger, evidently an Englishman, came to Mr. MacGinnis and complained that a waiter had taken his order for ham and eggs and had never brought those appetising delicacies. Strict inquiry by Mr. MacGinnis was met by a denial on the part of every waiter that the Englishman had given any order whatever. One waiter deposed that he had presented paper and pencil to him, but that the Englishman had repulsed him with the remark that he "'ad hordered." Failing to discover the culprit, Mr. MacGinnis told the waiters collectively not to do it again, and dismissed the matter from his mind.

This, however, proved to be only the first of a long series of complaints of precisely the same character. Men came to Mr. MacGinnis in great exasperation, complaining that a waiter had taken their orders and vanished. Several times Mr. MacGinnis caused the whole force of waiters to be summoned, and requested the aggrieved guest to point out the guilty man, but in every case the guest failed to do it. It gradually dawned upon Mr. MacGinnis's mind that there was something very mysterious about the matter, and he set himself to watch every strange face that entered his establishment, in order to perceive any possible shortcomings on the part of the waiters. He soon found that the stereotyped complaint was made by men whom he had seen in the act of sending away waiters without giving them any orders whatever. It really began to look as if there was a band of conspirators who had combined to harass him with false complaints, but if so they were admirable actors and feigned anger to perfection. Mr. MacGinnis also noticed that whenever a complaint was made it was uniformly made by a man who had occupied the little corner table. Other men sitting at other tables were daily waited upon and went away satisfied, but it was seldom that any man sat down at the corner table, without afterwards getting up in a rage and abusing Mr. MacGinnis's waiters to his perplexed face.

One day there entered the restaurant an athletic middle-aged retired sea Captain, who finding the room somewhat crowded, sat down in the fatal corner. He seemed to be an eccentric man, for he began to talk apparently to the wall, to which he remarked, "Let's see your manifest, will you? Got any pork and beans?" Presently the sea Captain sprang to his feet, and, striking a violent blow at vacancy, fell into a basket of empty dishes with a terrific crash.

After undergoing various applications of rum and water, the unfortunate man made an explanation which thrilled Mr. MacGinnis with horror. He said that on sitting down he was approached by a melancholy waiter, who silently laid a pencil and bit of paper before him. To several polite questions asked him the waiter made no reply. This angered the Captain, and conceiving himself to be grossly insulted, he rose up and undertook to knock the waiter down. "That there fist," continued the Captain, "has laid out the whole bilin' of a Black Ball crew before now, but when I hit that waiter he never seemed to feel it, and no

more did I." When the blow was aimed at him the waiter melted into air, and vanished instantly and completely. There could be no longer any doubt that the corner table was haunted by a disembodied waiter who silently took orders which never reached any earthly cook. Since the adventure of the sea Captain, the fact that the corner table is haunted has become so notorious that no one ever seats himself at it, and men stand and gaze at it from afar with an awe that they cannot overcome.

The attention of Dr. Tyng, Jr., and of Prof. Zöllner, is respectfully called to the spectral waiter of MacGinnis's restaurant.

ADVICE TO THOSE ABOUT TO INVESTIGATE THE PHENOMENA OF SPIRITUALISM.

I.

Find out a number of people who give *séances*, particularly those enthusiastic and confiding Spiritualists, who are known to be anxious to make converts. Get introduced to them and say you wish to ascertain the truth, the whole truth and nothing but the truth, yet at the same time let it be fully understood that you consider it a great piece of condescension on your part, even to notice so unpopular a subject. Having obtained an invitation to a *séance*, enter the room, looking very important and critical; this may at once impress the giver of the *séance* that you are somewhat of a "scientist," and therefore worth convincing, as, if converted, it would at once settle the whole question. Try to get placed next to the medium, and suggest that he should be securely tied as well as held. If this be objected to, take particular care to hold and twist the medium's little finger so tightly, and to tread on his foot so heavily, as to make him supremely uncomfortable. This is quite safe when the medium is one of "the fair sex," as she cannot by a return of the pressure *hurt you*. Should anything occur that evidently could not have been done by the medium, mildly *hint* that it *might* have been done by someone else. This is also safe, because not actually personal, and you will be paying a delicate compliment to your host, on the respectability of his friends. You will consider yourself at liberty to break conditions at any time by grasping objects moving near you, but if others do so you should at once accuse them of complicity or breach of faith, just as it may suit you. The plea of being in search of truth will always cover any breach of manners at a "spiritualistic *séance*."

II.

Do not be very much surprised, should you

yourself be suspected of collusion—rather annoying certainly to a self constituted judge, but it *might* happen. If really convinced at the end of a *séance* that things had occurred which could not be ascribed to human trickery, beware of acknowledging it, for if you do, you may possibly be considered as one of the initiated, and not worth further trouble; but also take care never to insinuate that you consider it all imposture, for then you will excite indignation, and equally cut yourself off from further invitations. You will find it answer to affect an unbelief if you wish to be considered of great importance, and to be spoken of as “that hard-headed Mr. — who is not likely to be deceived.” However, so cautiously express yourself as to leave the impression that you may eventually be convinced, provided you are asked to many more *séances*.

III.

Should any one of the sitters, a lady for instance, express a wish for some particular manifestation, immediately ask for something very different, and contrive almost in the same breath to ask for three or four other manifestations; this will show what a suggestive mind you have, and if successful in your demands, you will go far to prove that “spirits,” like Sir Boyle Roche’s bird, can be in two or more different places at the same time. In short, so act, as if people had come from a distance expressly to witness your own particular experiments.

IV.

Should you happen to be a medical man, impress on the company that your knowledge of the anatomy of the human body necessarily constitutes you an authority on all that pertains to its departed spirit, as if “physiology and psychology” were synonymous terms.

V.

If you are a *very* young man, contrive to sit next to some young lady of your acquaintance, who is likely to appreciate cleverness. During the *séance* let go your neighbour’s hand, tilt the table and rap under it with your knuckles. The company will be delighted at this announcement of the presence of the spirits, and you may be pretty certain that on the following morning your fair friend will exclaim, “Oh! mamma! Mr. — was so amusing last night at the *séance*, he rapped under the table, and the people thought it came from the spirits.” You need not mind violating the laws of good breeding by so acting, for those laws were never intended to be observed towards “Spiritualists.”

VI.

Having witnessed almost every variety of phenomena yourself, you may begin to sneer at those who are sometimes facetiously termed “phenomenalists,” and to ignore the fact that the phenomena are the only actual and reliable proofs we have of the truths of what is commonly called “Spiritualism.” This piece of advice is somewhat brief but also rather suggestive, as it opens the question concerning what are called “the higher truths of Spiritualism,” a problem by the bye, which possibly neither you nor I may ever be able to solve.

VII.

Having obtained the *entré* to a good many circles, take the opportunity of occasionally bringing Mr., Mrs., or Miss—. It is not what people usually do when invited to a dinner party, but then, *séance* tables—unlike dinner tables—are often supposed to be extremely elastic, and according to the old saying “the more, the merrier,” and as merriment is conducive to harmony, you afford the best conditions for a successful *séance*. You will thus be able to oblige a number of your friends, and at the same time contrive to patronise your host, by increasing the number of his acquaintance; of course, taking it for granted that he has very few friends of *his own*.

VIII.

Be very jocose and satirical on the supposed want of information shown by “spirits” who manifest at physical *séances*. Ignore the fact that these “spirits” frequently exhibit quite as much shrewdness and sense in their answers to frivolous questions, as the questioners themselves display. Take it for granted, that immediately “clowns” and other uneducated persons quit this life, they are endowed with all knowledge, and in fact are philosophers, or at least ought to be, as you might fairly infer from your intimate acquaintance with the laws that govern “the unseen world.” Or, say you believe that these so-called “spirits of the dead” are elves, sprites, gnomes, or fairies. This idea has a spice of mediæval flavour about it, and you may quote “Shakespeare” to your heart’s content. Who can contradict you?

IX.

Should you eventually be convinced of the truth of the phenomena of “Spiritualism,” you must have a theory ready to account for them. Possibly, most of your friends might object to the idea that “the spirits of departed human beings,” have anything to do with the manifestations. You might then suggest that the

phenomena are due to some unknown law of nature, and as the unknown laws of nature may possibly amount to a considerable number, your supposition will be a very modest and cautious one, charmingly vague and quite safe, for without exciting the prejudices of your hearers, you will afford them a pretty wide field for speculation. Occasionally, you might hint at the existence of those queerly constituted people called "elementaries," who were discovered, or supposed to have been discovered, some years ago, by an enterprising traveller in "Greenland," or perhaps more likely in "dreamland." Those interesting denizens of the air, the "Calibans" of the spheres, with perchance some "tricksy, dainty Ariels" amongst them, who are supposed to haunt *seance* rooms and imitate the voices and appearance of departed human beings, are rather the fashion at the present time, and one advantage of their introduction is, that whatever nonsense may be uttered by them, poor human nature cannot be considered answerable for it. You will also be following the example of "Shakespeare," who "having exhausted worlds, then imagined new." However a theory you must have, for people will, logically or illogically, insist, that an effect being produced and recognised, therefore, the cause must be known, and they possibly may regard you as the "Bacon" or "Newton" who has already discovered it.

MEPHISTOPHELES.

MORE ABOUT BÖHME'S IDEAS ON SPIRIT LIFE.

BY A. J. PENNY.

In my last attempt at rendering some of Böhme's ideas, I reported that he taught us that will and desire were the spirit's magical factors of all substance, and imagination that which gives substance its form; by substance, meaning here, body, as distinguished from spirit; but of true substance I did not then speak, the substance which, as Swedenborg long ago explained, is quite different from matter with which it is so often confounded, for before *this* can come to life a very different requisite must be secured, and one most hard for human nature to supply. I have assumed in the teeth of our scientific materialists, that no possible combination of matter with matter, can originate spirit, though quite as far from agreeing with thinkers who, on the other hand, maintain that matter does not exist, and that all our impressions of material objects are phenomenal and due to subjective influences.

Nevertheless, as regards true being, I look not only upon our material bodies, but upon our spiritual lives as illusory and unreal in the highest degree. When T. Lake Harris says, "Man considered by himself is emptiness and nothingness; he is no more a form of real or substantive existence than is the human image projected on the surface of a mirror;" and again "we term man natural, but the phrase is used as a mere accommodation; he is not natural, he is phantastical, he is not man but the effigies of a man who has filled himself with animal interiors instead of divine interiors," my whole mind assents. Some forty years ago, before this great seer thus wrote, J. Pierrepoint Greaves, (our best expositor of Böhme's practical doctrines, though we never refer to him) had said, "The soul is at present while incarnated only an idea, and has to be wrought out into a full and substantial existence."

"The soul as an earth-born half cannot apprehend Heavenly things; the Heavenly part of the soul is the new birth, the new creature, the half that is wanted to make a whole soul. The soul as a half-creation cannot know God, it can only make a god of itself, in some form or other, and worship it." Who that has over-lived the happy blindness of youth, and has had leisure to observe and think, will be able to deny his assertion? Ever since King David complained that the children of men are lighter than vanity itself, history, poetry, and fiction, have justified his verdict in full chorus; and to most of us I suppose, the conduct of associates, as well as what we know of ourselves, gives it emphatic confirmation. I need only refer to the frightful complicity of self-love, with the love we think our most unselfish feeling; to the too common transition from devout and humble thanksgiving, to bitter and indignant complaint. Which is real? The affection that would sacrifice all to the beloved,—till self-love was by him or her wounded,—or the egotism that can make conscious love part of the incense of self-worship? The penitence that feels God's least mercies undeserved, or the angry discontent that murmurs when the smallest is withdrawn? Surely Böhme may well call this fluctuating chaos of opposite impulse from which outward character emerges, man's "*imaginary self*." Surely, apart from all religious sense, the formation of a more stable personality, must be ardently desired. But for this, the indispensable condition is hard; hard to reason, which is wont to asso-

ciate pride with ideas of dignity; harder to the passions which urge to self-indulgence, for "the fiery soul's will, shall, and must be wholly transmitted and turned into meekness" (*Mysterium Magnum*, part 2, chap. 25, par. 15) if the new creature is to be. "Every angel and soul which will live in God's light, must die to the selfhood of the fire's dominion in the desire." (*Apology* 3, text 1, par. 58.) "We find also how the meekness is the virtue and the spirit, so that where the meekness is not, there the fierceness is nothing but a darkness and a death, where no growing can spring up." (*Three Principles*, chap. 21, Par. 14).

Whereas, on the contrary, "there is no meekness without the generating of being or substance." (*Treatise on the Incarnation*, cap. 2, part 4, par. 1).

Let us place in opposition to these sayings of Boehme's this other—"God is the eternal one, viz: the greatest meekness, so far as he is in himself, without, or beyond, or distinct from his moving and manifestation." (*Tract on Divine Vision*, chap. 3, par. 75,) and "God's Substance is Humility," (*Election of Grace*, chap. 7, par. 152.) Sayings which somewhat startle us, though He who manifested God's nature to man told us that He was meek and lowly. But is it not proved every minute of man's day. What other power that we can conceive of would yield itself so meekly to the smallest needs of the weakest creature? "He is even through all things, and giveth himself in an energetical working manner to every essence, as the powerful influence of the sun to the fruit, but worketh with the creature and its life, not from without into it, but from within out of it to his own manifestation." (*Mysterium Magnum*, chap. 43, par. 3).

This doctrine, that meekness is the *sine qua non* of true being is in exact correspondence with what has been already quoted regarding the beginning of corporeal life. "The crack of the fire killeth the fierce property, whereby it is overcome, and falleth back; from whence it cometh weight in nature and the matter of everything." A falling back from all the eager arrogant advance of self-centred life into the quiescence of humility, a total surrender of self-will that from the consuming of its pent in fiery matter blessed light may spring up, this is the mode by which the "noble image" of God in man is formed—this the spiritual transition which the corporeal so described foreshadows.

But the analogy does not end here. Boehme

tells us more of what follows upon the subsidence of self-will. And here I crave large indulgence for my utter inability to make clear that of which I have no *clair* understanding. I can only help myself to explanatory ideas by these words of *theirs*, "every solid formation has come out of water, as water has out of air,"—and these of *Berzelius*, "the living organism is to be regarded as a mass diffused in water." A fact of which our Teutonic philosopher seems to have been aware, for he says in his "Aurora," "in the water consisteth the body of every substance." (*Chap. 1, par. 2.*) With this clue I hope the bearings of the following quotations on my argument may be apprehensible.

"Light is a yielding fire, for it gives itself into all things, and in its giving *there is life and being, viz., air and spiritual water.*" (*Election of Grace*, chap. 2, par. 71.) "Out of the soul's fire the right divine air spirit goeth forth, out of the fire and light and brings forth its spiritual water out of itself, out of the light, which becometh substantial." (*Ibid*, chap. 8, par. 239) "The water of eternal life, viz., God's substantial meekness would soon drown and quench that false fiery life of the soul, and the soul would grow up out of the holy water in the meekness of God to a new life of light." (*Treatise on the Testaments*, chap. 2, par. 17.)

It is now explained to the reader who has at all followed Boehme's track, why rebellious spirits who resist the supreme will remain denuded of heavenly substantiality, *i.e.*, true substance, and why they are for ever simulating the corporeity they lack: to use his expression "they will to be creaturely and imagely; their greatest joy is that they can transmute themselves, and bring themselves into many images" (*10th Theosophic Question*, par. 1), but as "their imagination imageth a light out of the central fire which standeth on no ground,"—no true being which is only possible for partakers of divine nature—they have no more external fixity than internal rest. "The natural selfhood hath no true eus (being) wherein its light may remain steadfast, for it draweth not with its desire out of the eternal one, namely, out of the meekness of God, but draweth itself into substance; its light ariseth only in the ownhood of self." (*J. B.'s Sixth Epistle*, par. 36.)

How wildly fanciful all this appears to readers unversed in Boehme's lore I can well imagine: and those who do not turn from his sayings as nonsense may still think my deductions from them pointless. Let me explain my object: it is to show that what is

called regeneration is not attitude of mind or state of feeling, but an organic life, beginning as all bodily life begins, from minutest germs; and proceeding, if undamaged, or not stifled, to full grown perfectness. If this was believed I think much would be explained that is a scandal in the religious world, and much help won for those who desire a more vital spiritual progress. A devout state of mind may be very sincere, but if the "spirit of the will" has not got a form even in embryo of substantial life, that state is necessarily transient.

I shall probably be told that this line of thought is a very superfluous incentive, that the simplicity of Christian obedience is far "safer" than a recondite search for its justification. Undoubtedly it is for those who will render a simple obedience; but in these days when reason demands proof of the validity of every claim, will any thoughtful person deny that it is great gain to be convinced that the "thou shalt not" of religious authority is only the merciful translation of "thou canst not" for which our ignorance is still unprepared? I know that far into elder years I regarded self-denial and humility, to which we are so constantly exhorted, as most desirable, and suitable, nay as indispensable to the true Christian, but as optional nevertheless, as a matter of self discipline and sentiment, as what one could fail in and yet only lose degrees of spiritual good. But Bœhme has for ever convinced me that they are conditions of being for which omnipotence can find no substitute,—that to expect a true substantial spiritual body without death to self-will, and meek self surrender to God's still creative operations, is as utterly foolish as to expect the surgeon to apply his remedies to a body that would not lie still, or a candle to give light without being consumed in affording it.

I have now finished this very crude and imperfect account of the ideas I gather from Bœhme as to the difference of soul and spirit, but to my thinking the most important deduction from these is the necessity of spiritual substance, for in that alone does man attain his spiritual senses. The clearest intelligence of how things are—things still *unfelt*, is, we know, very ineffective compared to sensation. Now we were originally, and still are destined to an infinitude of blissful sensations resulting from eternal realities, and inconceivably more exquisite than any we can know in our present coarsely sheathing bodies. While we persist in thinking of spiritual joy as only a state of mind and heart, we rob ourselves of the great

help a wiser hope would give, in the life-long combat between flesh and spirit. What we call our natural will,—our first glorious nature being too degenerate to perceive how unnatural this will is—our natural will is "so long separated from God as it possesseth the estranged heterogene thing, viz, the earthliness;" but, "that will which flyeth from the earthly desire burneth in the inward fire, and is divine." (*Third Small Point, pars. 55, 57.*) "If it uniteth itself to God, and letteth its will break and sink down; then it is one spirit in and with God; and God shineth out of that very substance" (*Six Points, chap. 5, par. 13.*)

"Therefore the image or nature of man should be well understood, and how the new birth cometh to pass." (*Of Regeneration, chap. 1, par. 14.*)

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this Journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

THE AUTHORITY OF SPIRIT?

Sir,—I thank Mr. Bryan for his letter. As I understand him the only creation is the creation of ideas, which are created by the elemental substance—will (or wills)—which puts itself (themselves) into the shape of the objects we see around us in order to impress us, through those, with the ideas it is seeking to communicate to us. That is to say, his theory substitutes a system of personation for the system of nature, while unable to free itself from the methods of nature, since its teaching is carried on through the natural.

He admits, however, that this system of personation is inadequate for its purposes, since this will, these wills, as gods or deific intelligences, is (are) developing him in some way whether as spirit guides, controls or otherwise, through which he is enabled to realize not only that natural objects are unreal but that those who so teach him are deific intelligences.

I will not ask him how he has convinced himself that his habitual personators are not personating deific nature simply to give him an idea of what deific nature is, without being deific themselves—though it would be instructive to know how this idea was imparted and in what it consisted—for I have already trespassed too much on his good nature.

The question that underlies the form this correspondence has taken, is of far deeper import than any theoretic view of the reality or unreality of nature; though even as it has been represented to Mr. Bryan, nature, whether real or unreal, must be real to us, as the channel through which we are formed or receive our ideas, if the deific intelligences are obliged to act through or personate it in order to impart their ideas to us.

The real question is, since that which is outside nature can act through nature and personate nature, and, as it would appear, so acts and personates in order to teach those who have been placed by the laws of their being in natural relations—by what authority does it so act, and personate, and teach?

This is a grave question for those who place themselves in the hands of spirit guides or controls.

These have of course, satisfied themselves that their

controls are not the agents of a spiritual deluder working out some subtle design, and therefore ought to have it in their power to throw light on a point where more light is greatly needed. Will they deign to impart their light to those who, though not less earnest than themselves in their desire to know and follow the leading of the truth, have been left by the deific intelligences in the hands of nature?

Bishop Berkeley did not deny the reality of nature. What he denied was the existence of what philosophers termed "matter"—an undemonstrable universal substance underlying the structure of all natural objects.

The "matter" of the physicists of the present day is the reverse of this: for it consists in the elements, or the one element to which the ultimate structure of all natural objects can by analytical processes, be reduced—to synthetical combinations of which, by natural process carried on under natural law, they attribute the existence of all natural objects, without entering into the vexed questions of the how or why, the by, what, or whom they were called into being.

Spiritualists should remember that there is a large class of persons who are neither Spiritualists nor Materialists, although firm believers in the reality of nature, and the intention of the Author of nature, as revealed through its workings, that all teaching should reach them through natural channels influencing them during, by, and through, the uses they make of their natural lives.

It seems to me that so far Spiritualists have thrown themselves too exclusively into one side of their work, the establishment of their facts, which they have done with a success of the extent of which they must be daily becoming more conscious. They ought now to take up its other side, the teaching value of those facts; and, having proved the existence of spirit-action, should concentrate their efforts on the demonstration, not of the identity of individual spirits—which is wholly beside the question—but on the authority of spirits as teaching guides.

Spirits may be immortal; may have a right to teach, and to claim that their teachings are divine. But so far, as it appears to me, it has not even been attempted to prove either of these positions.

M.D.

15th January, 1881.

THE weather of the last few days has probably prevented some news from reaching us in time for this week's issue. The high wind has drifted the snow into railway cuttings over a large section of the country, and delayed or stopped some of the mails.

Mrs. BLANDY, sister of the "Davenport Brothers," is a powerful physical medium, and she is now giving *séances* in America. Mediumship runs in particular families, and is hereditary. The late Mr. Guppy was of opinion that the children of very young parents have a special tendency to mediumship.

MANIFESTATIONS IN THE LIGHT:—Mrs. Mary Marshall, the celebrated medium of years gone by, informs us that she is again about to sit for manifestations. Strong and varied manifestations in daylight used to be the chief characteristic of her mediumship; she informs us that her power is still as strong as ever. Last Wednesday evening we heard strong raps on the floor and elsewhere in her vicinity, in the light, while she was standing on the centre of a thick soft cushion. By those raps her "John King" said that he was not the same John King who communicates through any other medium; also that his name was a symbolical one, and not literally real.

THE DEMISE OF MR. EPES SARGENT.

In a letter received by us some weeks ago, Mr. Epes Sargent, that most faithful and valued worker in the cause of Spiritualism, informed us of the dangerous state of his health. We regret to learn that he has since departed this life. *The Banner of Light*, of January 8th, states that he passed from the sufferings of earth, on Thursday evening, Dec. 30th, closing his long and useful career in the body almost with the final hours of the departing year.

He was born in Gloucester, Mass., September 27th, 1813.

The disease which finally proved fatal to Mr. Sargent was a cancer which developed on his tongue, and defied all known remedial efforts by medicine or otherwise; all that could be done was accomplished for the alleviation of his sufferings.

His brother, Mr. James O. Sargent, states that the height of the disease was reached on Wednesday, Dec. 29th, and that after passing a painful and restless night, this dear friend of every friend of humanity fell into a sound and peaceful sleep, like that of childhood, a repose from which he never awakened, but which deepened on the evening of Thursday into the sleep of death—for the physical body.

He further states that on Sunday, December 26th, he saw the deceased for the last time. On that occasion, while the shadows of death were even then closing around him, the patient endeavoured to express a few words to his brother, and succeeded, but imperfectly, in enunciating: "*I wish I could tell you my thoughts.*" The brothers clasped hands, and then with a sad face the one turned from the bedside of the dying man to go his way, but as he was about leaving the house he was called back to the sick room by the nurse, who exhibited to him a paper whereon Mr. Sargent (touched by the evident sorrow of his relative, and desirous of informing him that he had no doubts for the future) had *written* a sentence to explain the meaning he had been unable orally to convey: "*I meant merry thoughts not sad ones!*"

On Sunday, January 2nd, at 1 p.m., the funeral services took place at Mr. Sargent's late residence, 68, Moreland Street, Boston; a large number of relatives and friends attended. The mortal remains—in an elegant casket of rosewood, which was choicely crowned with floral offerings—were disposed in the library near the spot where stood the desk at which Mr. Sargent had in past times accomplished so much excellent literary labor. The exercises were introduced by a chant from the well-trained choir of Dr. Brooke's church, wherein was expressed the Psalmist's trust, "Yea, though I walk through the valley and shadow of death I will fear no evil." The Rev. John Gorham Brooks, of the First Religious Society of Roxbury, then read selections from the Scriptures, setting forth the abounding love of God for all his children; after which he introduced the Rev. William Mountford, of Boston, a warm personal friend of the deceased, who proceeded to deliver a solemn address in respectful memory of him who had passed on.

PROF. WILLIAM DENTON is now lecturing in New York. MISS LOTTIE FOWLER is in Providence, Rhode Island, United States of America.

Answers to Correspondents.

B.—They last week sent statements detrimental to Mr. Harrison to newspapers, by which means he first heard of their action. They do public injury first and make inquiry afterwards. When the true facts of the case are before the public next week, he will not come off worst.

THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

FRONTISPIECE:—The room at Leipsic in which most of the Experiments were conducted.

PLATE I:—Experiments with an Endless String.

PLATE II:—Leather Bands Interlinked and Knotted under Professor Zöllner's Hands.

PLATE III:—Experiments with an Endless Bladder-band and Wooden Rings.

PLATE IV:—Result of the Experiment.

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Career after leaving England—Professor Zöllner's Polemic—Items relating to the English Translation.

PROFESSOR ZÖLLNER'S PREFACE (Dedication of the Work to Mr. William Crookes):—Workers in a New Field of Research—Thoroughness of the Labours of Mr. Crookes—The Moral Necessity of the Strife about Spiritualism—The Immortality of the Best Works of Human Genius.

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CHAPTER II:—Henry Slade's first visit to Leipsic—Professor Fechner's observations of the movements of a Magnetic Needle in proximity to Madame Ruf, a Mesmeric Sensitive—Professor Erdmann's observations of the Phenomenon—The Experiment repeated with Henry Slade—The Observations of Professors Braune, Fechner, Weber and Scheibner—A Spirit Apology—Destruction of a large Screen by Spirits—Experiments with a Compass—Apparition of a Living Hand—Experiments with a Bell and lighted Candles—Slade and the Grand Duke Constantine—Testimony of the Hon. Alexandro Aksakof—A Test Experiment in Slate-writing—Impartation of Permanent Magnetism to an Iron Needle by Medial Power.

CHAPTER III:—Permanent Impressions obtained of Temporarily Materialised Hands and Feet—A proposed Chemical Experiment—Slade's Abnormal Vision—Physical Impressions in a Closed Space—Enclosed Space of Three Dimensions, open to Four-dimensional Beings—The Muscular Power of a Spirit Hand—A Test with Flour—Experiments with a Polaroscope—Flight of Objects through the Air—A Clue to Research

CHAPTER IV:—Conditions of Investigation—The Knowledge of our Ignorance—Unscientific Men of Science—Herr Virchow's Precept and Practice—"The Martyrology of Mediums," a book of the Future—Slade's reply to Professor Barrett—A Medium's enunciation of the First Rules of Experimentation in Natural Science.

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Belief of Mankind—Obstruction of Truth by Scientific Men—The Testing of Evidence.

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