

1282

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# The Spiritualist, AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

The Oldest Newspaper connected with Spiritualism in Great Britain.

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A Record of the Progress of the Science and Ethics of Spiritualism.

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DREAMY SHADES.

Last week some strange speculations, uttered by Mr. Thomas Lake Harris, with the authority of the supposed possession of knowledge, were published in *The Spiritualist*. The substance of the statement was that at death a man splits into three parts, viz., the body which returns to mother earth, a spirit which “is taken by angels,” and a “geist.” The geist is a poor contemptible, helpless creature, easily mesmerised, who wanders about in a dreamy state in a shadowy, fantastic image-world, a kind of gigantic lunatic asylum peopled with countless millions of ghostly idiots, shades who have dreamy memories of their past lives clinging to them. Mr. Home once said in a court of law that he was not responsible for the undignified actions of certain spirits any more than he was responsible for the presence of monkeys in nature, but the inventor of a gigantic dreaming establishment for the prolonged accommodation of the whole human race must be in a more responsible position.

The idea is not without the support of some of the thinkers of past times, and perhaps originated in the dreamy and unsatisfactory character of the utterances of spirits through imperfect mediums. An able writer urges:—“These ‘remains’ of organic intelligence and memory will naturally offer tests of identity which will satisfy an investigator who is content to take what he can get and ask no questions. Spontaneous memory can be expressed without the effort which supposes the presence of original intelligence; but call upon the ‘spirit’ by your questions for intelligent reaction on your intelligence, and lo! ‘the power is exhausted.’ Are we not all familiar with the ever-recurring excuses? Poor geist! ‘If you fret him, he is gone.’ Many of the visions of Swedenborg seem to me thus explained. The great seer was in geist-land when he thought himself to be in spirit-land. So his geists did not know that they were out of the world. How could they, when they were only representations of the world-life of the men they were, or belonged to?”

Admitting that a sustained conversation on

Advertising terms on application.

critical points can scarcely ever be kept up with a spirit giving tests of personal identity through the organism of a medium, an easier solution of the difficulty can be found than inventing a whole universe of helpless, dreaming spectres. For instance, in communicating by means of the ordinary needle telegraph through a long wire in bad working order, the same phenomena, as the Postmaster General can testify, are commonly enough presented in the attempt to keep up a sustained conversation. A, in Liverpool, is sending a message to B, in London, which B by quietness and patience is able to read, despite erratic swings of the needle due to bad insulation and the disturbing action of currents passing through other wires. But if B be impatient, he puts a test question to A which A cannot read because his receiving instrument is less sensitive than B's; and as he is stopped in what he was saying he infers that something is wrong, he also very likely imagines that little he has previously uttered has correctly reached B. So there is a breakdown.

Now if B be a great trance medium, he may explain to admiring listeners that as A has been altogether upset and disconcerted by a solitary test question, the said A is not an intelligent human being, but one of a numberless multitude of geistly idiots living in a land of cloud and fog.

Common people might respond that perhaps the means of communication were imperfect; but such an utterly unphilosophical—shall we say untheosophical?—explanation would secure their instant condemnation in the eyes of all intelligent men. Obstinate people of this kind always will worry great philosophers, as in the case of the man of science who invented a most efficacious powder for killing fleas whenever some of it was pushed up the proboscis of the captured insect. An old woman asked him whether, if she smashed the flea, it would not do as well. The philosopher was so taken aback by the question of the vulgar person as to be unable to answer it, wherefore he concluded that the old woman was a witch, who had wrought a spell against the success of his powder. So far as the evidence before us gives data for a conclusion, we think that the learned philosopher's powder and Mr. Thomas Lake Harris's geist theory, may advantageously be stowed away upon the same shelf.

BABOO PEARY CHAND MITTRA writes from Calcutta, July 14th, 1880:—"Spiritualism is progressing here, and there is now a larger number of inquirers in the different districts of Bengal. The Theosophists are also advancing the cause of Spiritualism."

#### A STRANGE BUT TRUE INCIDENT.

To the Editor of the "*Religio-Philosophical Journal*"  
(Chicago.)

A friend of mine, a truthful, reliable gentleman, once related to me his experience, the substance of which I send you, though I have no authority to use his name in print. I will, therefore, call him Mr. N., though I do not know that he would have any objection to the publication of his name in full. The truthfulness of the story may be implicitly relied upon.

Several years ago, before railroads had been extended far beyond the Mississippi river, Mr. N. was then, as now, a merchant in a small town in the interior of Iowa. Desiring to replenish his stock, he started with teams for Keokuk, leaving his family in their usual good health. The trip required about three days' travel. Arriving at Keokuk, he set about buying his goods, and attending to his business. After retiring on, I think, the third evening after his arrival, he felt a deep impression that some of his loved ones at home were in trouble. With this influence upon him, he fell asleep.

Now comes the remarkable vision or experience. He seemed to be at home. As he passed into the house, the heavy breathing of his little son, aged, I think, six or eight years greeted his ears. He went to the sick child who seemed to have croup, or some serious affection of the throat and lungs. The village physician was there assisting his wife, the mother of the boy, in her efforts to relieve the little sufferer. Mr. N. says he saw and heard everything that transpired. The little fellow as he got breath to speak, would occasionally exclaim: "Oh I wish Papa would come: Why don't Papa come!"

Mr. N. says he seemed to go to the child and tried to raise him up, and spoke to him; he was astonished to notice that his little son did not hear him, and that he could not change the child's position. He saw what the doctor was doing, and the medicine he was giving, and he did not approve the treatment. He told his wife to go into the store, in the same building, and get a bottle of medicine standing on a certain shelf, (a medicine that in former and similar sickness had relieved the boy) but his wife heard him not. He rushed after the medicine himself, but found he was powerless to bring it. He now discovered that though he could see everything in the room, and could hear every word spoken, that he possessed no power to make his presence known. Rapidly the child's strength gave away, and soon the struggle was over, and the body lay motionless in death.

Mr. N's. next sensation was that of extreme chilliness. He opened his eyes in the dim light of his chamber in Keokuk. He was sitting upright. With difficulty he got out of bed, lighted a lamp, looked at his watch, and it was one o'clock. Every feature of his strange vision was vividly distinct to his mind. He *knew* his boy had passed to spirit life. He slept no more, but going below he said to the friend with whom he was stopping, "I have been at home, and my little boy died a few minutes before one o'clock this morning." Mr. N. started for home that day. When he was within a distance of about forty miles of his home, he met a neighbour in the highway. After the first greetings the neighbour said, "Mr. N., I have bad news for you." Mr. N. replied, "I know what it is; my little boy died the day before yesterday morning at a few minutes before one o'clock." Arriving at home he found that everything, even the smallest incidents, had transpired as he saw or heard them in vision or as a spirit.

It may not be out of place to add in conclusion, that Mr. N. now possesses, and has all his life possessed, medial power, though that fact is known to but few of his more intimate friends.

R. A. D.

—♦—  
SPIRITUAL PHENOMENA v. CONJURING.

Mr. T. Berks Hutchinson, Surgeon-Dentist, Capetown, South Africa, writes to us:—

"It is a *sine qua non* with every conjuror that he must have either three conditions, or at least one of them, viz., the free use of hands and feet, a trained confederate, and a properly constructed stage with scientific apparatus. But bring this so-called wizard into your own private *séance* room, and let him be held by his hands and feet by two responsible people, I will wager very little will occur.

"I have seen Mr. Eglinton in my private *séance* room in the full light of a gas jet, in the presence of eleven witnesses besides myself, held lightly by both hands and feet, by a person on each side of him, and in this position, while two or three feet away from an apparatus I had constructed for telegraphing with invisible intelligences, the apparatus was actually worked; and it spelt out a long message to me, the report of which I sent you some two years ago. Mr. Eglinton did not believe it possible to obtain satisfactory results, but knowing that I have studied the scientific aspects of phenomenal Spiritualism, he agreed to sit. Whilst the experiment was going on he was in a semi-unconscious condition, in which state he frequently had spasm-

dic and shivering attacks just before the pointer of the dial began to oscillate and to rapidly point to the letters which spelt out the messages. This shivering made me think that as heat was required to generate sufficient force to move the pointer to the different letters, and that as the force was supplied from the sensitive's body, the temperature of that body was naturally reduced, hence the shivering.

"I have also observed that after most *séances*, the sensitive always partook of a hearty repast, which I was informed by the spirits was necessary to supply the waste which had taken place while they were producing the manifestations. Any physiologist knows that the mere act of involuntary breathing consumes a certain amount of carbonaceous, nitrogenous, and other elements, which must be restored to the system at proper times, therefore if heat is required to produce motion in the one case, as in the act of breathing, it is required just the same for the purpose of moving the pointer of the dial."

—♦—  
THE LUNACY LAWS.

Mrs. Louisa Lowe has sent us the seventh annual report of [the Lunacy Law Reform Association, 79, Chancery Lane. It sets forth, among other things, that on the 23rd May, 1878, a young man named Daniel Thompson disappeared from home. Application for information was made by his mother to the Lunacy Commissioners, who replied on July 20th, 1878, that "no person of the name of Daniel Thompson has been admitted to any asylum, or other place for the care and detention of the insane, since May 23rd, 1878." Mrs. Lowe wrote to the Commissioners on September 11th, 1879, that the young man had been discovered by means of advertisements, and was in Brentwood Asylum at the time the Commissioners wrote the above letter. To this the Commissioners replied:—

"Office of Commissioners in Lunacy, 19, Whitehall Place, S. W., 3rd September, 1879.

"Madam,—The case to which you draw the Commissioners' attention in your letter of the 11th inst., is well known to them, and illustrates the impropriety of drawing hasty conclusions upon imperfect information. The actual facts, I am at liberty to tell you, absolutely contradict any deviations from the provisions of the Lunacy Laws, in regard to the admission or detention of the lunatic, and the statutory notices to this office. Beyond such explanation, the Commissioners do not deem it their duty to communicate their knowledge to a person not related in any way to the lunatic.—I am, Madam, your obedient servant, THOS. MARTIN, (*for the Secretary*).

"To Mrs. Louisa Lowe."

The Report adds that "seeing that the Act

referred to emphatically requires that copies of a patient's certificate and order should be sent to Whitehall within seven clear days of incarceration, that Daniel Thompson was incarcerated on the 23rd of May, 1878, and that on the 20th of July the Commissioners affirmed that no such person was in any asylum, it is clear, unless we admit the impossible idea of intentional official falsehood, that Daniel Thompson had been entered in a false name, which indeed other circumstances seem to indicate. On the danger of such a practice, and the desirableness of that danger being recognised by the Commissioners, it seems superfluous to dwell. The subject should be considered in connection with Dr. Mortimer Granville's remarks on the facility of false personations in Asylums, made before the select Committee of the House of Commons in 1877. Questions 8833 and seq."

#### EATING AND HANDLING FIRE.

To hold a very large white hot coal on the bare palm of the hand until the coal cools to blackness, is a feat which can be performed neither by scientific men nor conjurers, yet we and others have seen it done by Mr. Home, when he was under the influence of spirit power.

Anybody can lick red hot iron or touch it for a moment with impunity, if it be sufficiently hot, and the finger may be dipped for an instant into molten iron. The reason is that the moisture on the skin is suddenly transformed into vapour by the heat, and this thin layer of vapour encases the hand or finger for a few moments like a glove, so that at first the metal cannot touch the skin. Variations from bold tricks of this kind are dangerous when tried by men devoid of scientific knowledge. Only a few days ago, according to the newspapers, a "Negro Fire Eater" brought on himself terrible sufferings at Leighton-Buzzard. He was getting on swimmingly with his performances, licking red-hot iron, bending heated pokers with his naked foot, and burning tow in his mouth. Had he been content with his triumphs in this way all might have been well. But in an evil moment he decided on filling his mouth with benzoline, declaring he would burn it as he allowed it to escape. But he soon learned that benzoline was not so to be trifled with; for no sooner had he applied the lighted match to it than the whole mouthful took fire, causing the poor foolish man terrible torture. The fiery oil ran all over his face, neck, and chest, and he rushed about like a

man mad, howling and tearing his garments. He was taken to a chemist's shop, and some remedies applied, but afterwards escaped from a lodging-house naked, and in a state of frenzy. The police ultimately conveyed him to the workhouse infirmary, where he still remains in a very pitiable condition.

#### FLOWERS.

*From "The Dhammapada," By Buddha.*

VERSIFIED BY JAMES KINNERSLEY LEWIS.

Who knows the body fades like frothy flakes,  
Or as an unsubstantial mirror—breaks,  
Plucks Mara's flowery pointed dart, and he  
The frowning King of Death will never see!

As sips the bee the nectar from the flower  
Destroying not the beauty of its dower,  
Nor sweet perfume, that fills each waving bell,  
So let the sage mid earthly beauties dwell.

Attractive as a flower of beauteous hues  
Whose coloured cups no fragranciness diffuse,  
Appears the eloquent, but fruitless speech  
Of him, whose practice is not as he preach.

Like to a flower, the fairest of the fair,  
(And full of fragrance wafted everywhere),  
Appear the fruitful words of him, whose deeds  
Reveal their root in wisdom's verdant meads.

As on a highway heap of rubbish, grows  
The thriving lily, which unspotted glows,  
The traveller delighting with its scent,  
(Which ever spending, still is never spent)—

Truly enlightened Buddha's followers shine,  
His thoughts reflecting—full of light divine—  
Among the people who in darkness dwell  
Like wayside rubbish in the ditch or dell.

#### "WHEN CONSCIOUSNESS RETURNS IT WILL BE MORNING."

The following curious lines are extracted from *The Cambrian*, the chief newspaper published in Swansea:—

Our dear ones send strange whisperings from the  
"Border Land;"

The "Border Land" is where  
Our tender darlings grope with their white hands,  
While we bend low in prayer,  
And watch, not knowing when the mists may part  
And leave us yearning with e'en sadder heart.

There is some mystic meaning running through  
Each disconnected word;  
We watched from dusk till daybreak with white lip,  
Whose quivering nerves were stirred  
Because the one toward whom our love so yearned  
Said "she would sleep, when consciousness re-  
turned."

"It would be morning:" yet she only ran  
 The words o'er the thin lips;  
 Mists of the "Border Land" enwrapped her soul.  
 The tears e'en now eclipse  
 Our eyes to think what silver web of thought  
 Into the word so whispered was enwrought:  
 It would be morning with her here or there?  
 We watched with straining eyes,  
 And thought most tenderly of meaning sweet  
 That surely underlies  
 These words so faintly spoken, "When I wake  
 Again, the morning on my eyes will break."  
 We kissed the wan lips that had spoken so,  
 And forced back welling tears.  
 Soul, when the mists of even gather fast  
 Put by thy haunting fears!  
 For "Morning" unto every soul is sent;  
 The mists by God's own tender hand are rent.  
 When consciousness came back to her who slept  
 Her broken speech came true—  
 'Twas morning o'er the earth, and morning in her  
 soul,  
 For reason glimmered through  
 "The mists" as doth a star through its cloud veil.  
 When "night" comes on let not dark fears assail;  
 Because these words have meaning very deep  
 We cannot miss God's day!  
 We lose our consciousness—we fall asleep  
 In God's most gracious way,  
 And when we waken it is morning time—  
 It is the morning with its peace sublime.  
 We do not know why darkness comes at all—  
 The stupor we call death;  
 God folds our face close in His arms awhile,  
 So all within us saith!  
 We hide the wee child in our bosom thus  
 When with a fear its lips are tremulous.

"SOCIETY" NEWSPAPERS.

The novel introduction into English life of "society" newspapers, is in some cases a decided evil, whatever good may otherwise appertain to the journals. Anything more outrageous than that even truthful reports of the occurrences in private homes should be paraded in print, without the consent of the host or hostess, cannot well be imagined; but if, in addition, any spy or common informer can attack character under veiled names which the public can guess at, yet without giving the injured individuals the power of prosecution at law, the evil is crying in its extent. If private families wish some of their larger social proceedings published, there is no harm in doing it, but if scandals are to be invented and circulated by individuals connected with the shady side of the literary world, the only

thing to be done is to excommunicate such creatures, and sometimes with more or less corporal chastisement, according to the circumstances of the case. A man who reveals what is told him in confidence is considered unfit for any decent society; but how much worse is the man who without authority prints private events in newspapers, and adds foul insinuations of his own to his questionable version of the actual facts?

AN IRISH VISION.

The *Munster News*, a Limerick paper, describes an apparition alleged to have been witnessed on Sunday last at the convent of Mount Saint Vincent, in Limerick. Children were playing in the grounds near the convent in the evening of that day, we are told, while thunder rolled and lightning flashed with much vividness. They were bade not to be afraid, but to pray for protection to the Blessed Virgin. They prayed as they were told to do, and sung the hymn. "Look down, O Mother Mary." "While the beautiful music of their young fresh voices was ascending," it is reported that "one of the children suddenly called out, 'Oh, look there!' and instantly the eyes of two hundred others, her companions, were turned towards the belt of trees to the north of the convent, and in the air above them the figure of the Blessed Virgin was beheld by all, attired in a white robe, with a blue sash round her waist. The Infant Saviour was borne on her right arm, and a rosary depended from her left. She seemed to rest on a white cloud, upheld by two angels, who carried in their disengaged hands branches of some description covered with foliage. The children were spell-bound, and involuntarily offered prayers to the Blessed Virgin. After they had gazed on the vision for about ten minutes, some of them ran to the convent to acquaint the nuns. But before the good ladies had arrived at the spot the divine apparition had gone, the Virgin disappearing in the heavens. The children were found in a pale, terrified, trembling state, but all tallied in their account of what was seen, even to the description of the rosary, which they stated was large and white, and the beads of which were far asunder from each other. More startling still was it to find that children distant from them in another part of the premises had also seen the vision. There was no wavering or contradiction amongst them. Several were from thirteen to fourteen years of age, and it was impossible not to be convinced of their truth-

fulness. So much for Sunday evening; but on Monday evening the manifestation was still more decisive. Whilst the children were again at play, one of their number called out to look at the Blessed Virgin, and instantly almost fainted. All eyes were directed towards the statue on the top of the building, and above it in the air the children saw the Immaculate Mother, vested altogether in white, her hands raised as if in the attitude of invoking or expressing a blessing or prayer, her eyes cast down, and a silvery light surrounding the beatific figure. Some of the children again hastened to the convent to communicate what they saw, and one of the nuns who arrived first on the spot beheld the Virgin also."—*Echo*.

#### THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION AT SWANSEA.

The proceedings of the British Association for the Advancement of Science began at Swansea on Wednesday night last, when Dr. Allman resigned the presidency, and his successor, Professor Ramsay, delivered his opening address. Professor Ramsay is one of the chief of English geologists, who by his ability has risen into eminence, since the time when Sir Roderick Murchison recognised his merits in connection with his work as a young man in relation to the geology of the Isle of Arran.

As yet, there is no symptom that Spiritualism, or anything connected with Spiritualism, will come up at the British Association. In fact the managers were so frightened by the sensation caused at Glasgow by its introduction by Professor Barrett, that they subsequently increased the stringency of the regulations by which authors of papers were compelled to send them in before the British Association meetings begin. But authors cannot be thus tied down, however much the managers may desire it, and at the present moment the chief officers of the Association are as ignorant as any outsider, of the titles and contents of many papers which will be read during the coming week.

Yet, when the managers conducted their *previous* meeting in the same town, of Swansea, in the year 1848, as much popular obloquy was showered upon them, as they now help to shower upon religious people who try to prove by scientific matter-of-fact methods, that man has an immortal soul. In the early days of the British Association, Charles Dickens joined in the public ridicule of its managers, in his papers on "The Mudfog Association" published in *Bentley's Miscellany*, when he told about the scientific man who at last explained the principles of his fire-escape, after irritating

the listeners by his long delay in discovering which was the top and which the bottom of his own working model before him. But now the British Association has won its spurs, yet with true meanness has cried "Cock-a-doodle-doo" over those of its own members who wish to advance transcendental physics.

Mr. Crookes is unable to be at the British Association in consequence of a domestic affliction. Dr. Allman, who has often attended (as reported at the time in these pages) some *séances* in the house of Mrs Makdougall Gregory, reached Swansea on Tuesday night, by which time Mr. Walter Weldon, who spoke manfully at the Glasgow meeting as to his experience in spiritual phenomena, had also arrived.

Swansea contains a population of English, Welsh, Irish, and Belgians, numbering in all about 65,000, according to a recent careful estimate. At the last census, in 1871, its actual population was 51,702. It is thus not only a somewhat small town for the Association to visit, but, as a very large proportion of the population consists of workpeople, the number of those who take an active interest in receiving it is still more limited. The heavy work of the preliminary arrangements falls as usual on the two local secretaries, who in this instance are Mr. James Strick and Mr. William Morgan, both of whom have been working most earnestly, to make all the guests from a distance as comfortable as they can with the means at their disposal. Swansea is the chief intellectual centre in Wales; indeed none but men of good administrative capacity could organise and manage the extensive works in the locality. Art has little hold in the town as yet, but it very greatly needs an influx of the artistic and non-commercial element. The native Welsh in the locality are helplessly under the thumbs of voluble preachers more or less fresh from the farmyard, but the British Association always has the good effect of weakening the paralysing influence of such men on the thoughts and lives of their subjects.

SIGNOR RONDI and DR. MACK have reached Boston, Massachusetts, and called upon the editor of *The Banner of Light*. Signor Rondi has visited the Lake Pleasant Spiritualists' Camp Meeting, but did not like the place in which it was held.

THE *Harbinger of Light*, received by last mail from Melbourne, says:—"We hear of some remarkable cures performed by mesmerism or laying on of hands by Mr. G. Milner Stephen, the well known Barrister. At Gundagai, a man named Peter Linnane, who had been blind fourteen years, is said to have received his sight."

## STRAY THOUGHTS ON SPIRITUALISM.\*

BY BABOO PEARY CHAND MITTRA.

Spiritualism is endemic in India. Egypt is no doubt another ancient country, and it is difficult to determine whether India or Egypt is the more ancient. It is supposed that colonies of Hindus came from the mouth of the Indus to the coast of Africa and thence to the Nile, and that Egypt owes her civilisation to India. Philosophy was cultivated by the sacerdotal class both in Egypt and India. The Egyptian priests believed in the transmigration of the soul which, it is conjectured, was imported from India; but the doctrine of the Egyptian priests, that the soul continues as long as the body continues, which led to greatest care being taken in the preparation of mummies, could not have been imported from India. The soul is in every human body, and it must manifest itself according to its freedom from fleshy bondage. It is from such freedom, partial in most cases, the ancient and modern nations have the knowledge of the soul. It is from such freedom, we have supernatural communications, oracles, dreams, trances, somnambulism, ecstacy and clairvoyance. The Chaldeans, like the Egyptian priests and Aryas, were given to divination and occultism. The higher an individual rose, or in other words, the greater his freedom from flesh, the purer was his illumination or internal knowledge, independently of the brain, and what he taught was generally received until another man, higher and purer in a soul point of view, appeared and taught truths more spiritual than the first teacher. In India we had several *Rishis* of different progressive souls, and they taught according to the light they possessed. In China, Lao-tse was a spiritual teacher. In Persia Zoroaster was a great teacher. In Greece, Socrates and Plato shed great light on the spiritual philosophy. But all these personages flourished long after the Hindu sages. If in any country Spiritualism was closely studied and its truths realised, it was in India. The precept of the Indian sages was,—“*If you wish to know God, know the soul.*” The *yoga* was discovered and practised to enable us to be in the *soul state*. Sakhya Muni, the great Buddhist teacher, aimed at the same object. The Arya and Buddhist sages, after all, are of the same opinion as regards the extinction of the carnality of the natural body and the development of the subtle body, *the*

*body of the soul*, that it may be followed by the *samadhi* or soul state.

The *samadhi* or soul state is rarely attainable here, but the partial development resulting in the exercise of certain psychic powers of the subtle body, is acquired, and we thus see mediums of different kinds. The psychic prayer resulting in efficacy, mesmeric cure, lucidity—past, present and future—and occultism of all kinds, come within the domain of the subtle body which is evolved in the cases of trance, dream, somnambulism, and clairvoyance, but may merge into a brain life unless the subtle body eventually displaces the natural body. Hence great care ought to be taken in receiving and accepting what is taught. What may be apparently *inspirational* may not be really *inspirational*, unless the teaching is entirely free from the grossness of the natural body. The medium is nothing but the channel. The controlling spirit is the real instructor. Now it is not every controlling spirit who can teach us alike. It is true that the spirit is not in the natural body, but the mere fact of the spirit being in the subtle body, does not raise him to a high sphere or guarantee high spiritual elevation. The more the subtle body approaches the soul, the more soul-essence it acquires. What the spirits of Bacon, Swedenborg, Newton, Theodore Parker, John Howard, Yajnavalkya, Sukadeva, Janaka and Astabakra may teach, will be of an ennobling nature; but we cannot expect that the same instruction will be obtained from undeveloped spirits whose terrestrial career has not been such as to have in any way freed their souls here from fleshy bondage.

Spiritualism is in opposition with materialism. We have first the brain life, which life is entirely for the body. The brain sends ramifications throughout the body, and is the nourisher and sustainer of its different parts. The brain is mental, inasmuch as it is the receptacle and diffuser of the different emotions for which it is departmentally fitted. The limited love and intellect which the brain shows, it borrows from the confined soul. The formation of character arises from the direction of this love and intellect to objects mundane or super-mundane. Whatever may be the object or pursuit in this life, the life to come must be always before us, without which the incentive to elevate ourselves is weakened. The more this life is assimilated to the life to come, the more we are prepared for that life.

Man possessing the brain life, moving and having his being in it, is naturally an external

\* Extract from a pamphlet just issued in Calcutta. Much of this pamphlet is devoted to giving Indian readers useful elementary information about Spiritualism and its literature. Messrs. Bose & Co., Calcutta, are the publishers.—Ed.

being. His knowledge and feeling are from his brain and the parts of the body dependent on it. He rises gradually. As thoughts are less *external* and more *internal*, he realises the spiritual element.

The love of the external is so predominant, that even many of those who believe in Spiritualism are forced to confine their study, in the first instance, to what is called *Phenomenal Spiritualism*, viz., communication with the spirits, with what their shape, drapery, weight are, what kind of force they exercise, what articles they bring, and what answers they give to the questions put to them. This is nothing but natural and quite in accordance with the order of things. We had here a Mahomedan medium named Hossain Khan, who could abstract diamond rings, however carefully concealed, could bring meat and confectionery in lonely places, place before us bottles of brandy all of a sudden, and give copies of letters hidden under a pillow. These phenomena were no doubt suggestive of higher ideas, but in many cases they were looked upon as *finalities*. Hence Spiritualism has been regarded as *Bhutvidyá* or magic and jugglery. Subjective Spiritualism refers only to the subtle body, and our progression through that body. Spirits have a diversity of occupation. Some spirits act on the nervous system and work on it to evolve the subtle body. This is very much like the *yoga* exercise, which consists in having control over the breath and in quiet meditation on God as the *Light of the Soul*. Other spirits by higher will-force develop the subtle body sooner, as is evidenced in the case of Andrew Jackson Davis. It takes longer time to evolve the subtle body by the *yoga* exercise. The action of spirit force on the nervous or natural body effects the object sooner. I have lately written a spiritual novel in Bengali, entitled *Adhyátmiká*, intended for the Hindu females, from which I will give a few extracts freely.\*

The real power requiring invigoration is the *will power*. *Yoga* is of two kinds, internal and external. The internal *yoga* consists in meditating quietly on the *invisible light* above and distinct from the brain in us. This gradually leads to the extinction of the external knowledge, the dispersion of the darkness inherent in the brain life, and the radiation of the inner light in the subtle body. The external *yoga* is the suppression of the breath and acquisition of supremacy over it. The one helps the other.

As we acquire greater power over the body, we approach the soul region, our thoughts are not confined to this world, nor do our motives proceed from the brain life—self, self, self, is absorbed in the inner life or subtle body, when externalism ceases. It may be asked what is the use of Spiritualism? I have already stated that as long as the brain life or external life exists, our knowledge and motives are from the senses and the limited power of the brain or mind. We are thus external beings. Our conception of God and his infinity is external or limited, and with reference to this limited knowledge, we form sects, propound dogmas, and operate on the fear of men to gain followers. Creeds cannot therefore be of material service in preparing us for the next world. The greatest object in this life is to *heighten our conception* of God as much as we can. Unfortunately we form our ideas of God by the human standard, and this we cannot help doing as long as we are in the brain life. As far as we can see, there is nothing but Spiritualism which can enable us to go on enhancing our conception of God. To think of God we must be on the platform from which we can rightly think of him,—that platform is not the *mind* but the *soul*. We have to raise ourselves to a non-molecular region—to a region distinct from this molecular world, where there is no desiring, no sorrowing, no mourning, no joying, no materialising; where there are no phenomenal states but *pure quietism* and *pure effulgence* ennobling the subtle body and brightening it up for the soul state. In this way our Rishis promoted their soul culture. In this way Fenelon and Madame Guyon reached *quietism*. The inner life is sometimes experienced all of a sudden. It was experienced by DeQuincy and Captain Marryat. The subtle body is not in every case free from mortal taint, and this constitutes the distinction between developed and undeveloped spirits. The Aryas say that those who abandon the society of mortals and live on God, are glorified and illuminated with divine light. Christ has said the same thing—"Verily, verily I say unto you, unless a man be born again, he cannot inherit the kingdom of Heaven." The second birth is the purified subtle body or the soul life. The attainment of the subtle body is our first education, and when this is done, let us prepare ourselves for the soul life. To be in the subtle body is tantamount to death, as we cease to receive whatever is sensational or emotional; but as the love principle goes on increasing, we think of those whom we leave

\* In this work will be found a brief exposition of the *yoga* culture.

behind when we die, and endeavour to help them spiritually if we are elevated, knowing that spiritual assistance is higher than any worldly aid, and though in certain cases the latter is rendered.

Spiritualism whether willingly studied and practised or not is forced on us through pain and affliction. The God of spirit is the God of infinite goodness. His providence is in raising every being and diffusing happiness to every one here and hereafter.

When God is in our soul as light—light of wisdom and light of love,—let us worship him “in truth and spirit.” Let us cease to pray in words, although this may be necessary to the uninitiated. Plotinus said, “To die is to live the true life.” Proclus said, “Know the divinity that is within you, that you may know the divine one of which your soul is but a ray.” The dying words of Plotinus are “I am striving to bring the God which is in us into harmony with the God which is in the universe.” What the Neoplatonists have taught was inculcated by the Indian sages. Our mission is to know God—not in words, not through the mind by its limited intellectual power, *but to realise God as the light of wisdom and the light of love* in the soul, the non-material and non-molecular substance, the mirror of divine effulgence.

To a person suffering from the pangs of bereavement, anything addressed to the soul must be soothing; but what can be more soothing than direct communication with the departed friend? Those who are shrouded in materialism and have not enquired, will naturally laugh at those who talk of communication with the dead. This was not only believed and taught in ancient India, but there are millions of persons who have accepted Spiritualism, and among them there are many eminent persons in several countries.

I have briefly shown the inestimable value of Spiritualism. It is the best education we can have for the after-life. The higher our conception of God, the higher is our conception of His infinitude, the higher is our conception of His wisdom and love, the higher is our light within. To appreciate and realise the divine light within us, it is of the greatest importance that the power of the soul shrouded by fleshy bondage should be developed. As we progress, we open our communication with the spirit world; as we progress towards the subtle body, by *yoga* or spiritual agency, mediumship is less needed. Being in the subtle body we see

our departed friends, but when the subtle body merges in the soul or divine essence, we are in the state described by Yagnavalkya and Manu.

“Delighted with meditating on the Supreme Spirit sitting fixed on such meditation, without needing anything earthly, let him live in this world seeking the bliss of the next.”—*Yagnavalkya*.

“Delighted with meditating on the Supreme Spirit, sitting fixed on such meditation, without needing anything earthly, without one sensual desire, without any companion but his own soul, let him live in this world seeking the bliss of the next.”—*Manu*.

“The truly wise, twice regenerated, who live in constant meditation of God, can be defiled by nothing in this world.

“Virtue is always pure, and he is virtue.

“Charity is always pure, and he is charity.

“Prayer is always pure, and he is always prayer.

“God is always pure, and he is good.

“The divine essence is always pure, and he is a portion of the divine essence.

“The sun’s ray is always pure, and he is like a sun that vivifies all around it.

“Even his death defiles not, for death is for the sage twice regenerated, a second birth in the bosom of Brahma.”

The state preceding the *samadhi* or soul state is thus described by Manu (vi.)—

“Let him thus by such suppression of breath, burn away his offences; by reflecting intensely on the steps of ascent to beatitude, let him destroy sin; by coercing his members, let him restrain all sensual attachments; by meditating on the intimate union of his own soul and the divine essence, let him extinguish all qualities repugnant to the nature of God. Thus having gradually abandoned all earthly attachments and indifferent to all pairs of opposite things as honor and dishonor and the like, he remains absorbed in the divine essence. Content, returning good for evil, resistance to sensual appetites, abstinence from illicit gain, purification, coercion of the organs, knowledge of scripture, knowledge of the Supreme Spirit, veracity, and freedom from wrath, form their tenfold system of duties.

“Alone, in some solitary place, let him constantly meditate on the divine nature of the soul, for by such meditation, he will attain happiness. Thus the man who perceives in his own soul the Supreme Soul present in all creatures, acquires equanimity towards them all, and shall be absorbed at last in the highest

essence even that of the Almighty himself."

This is the Hindu—this is the Arya—this is the Brahma Dharma, based on the soul illumination that God and God alone is the infinite Corrector, Educator, Purifier and Elevator and not the *Punisher*, and that our real saviour is our *soul*, through which we can only enlarge our knowledge of God. To understand the providence of God rightly, we must know the soul. Theosophy is therefore the end—*yoga* and Spiritualism are the means. They are allied to each other inasmuch as they both aim at the development of the subtle body or psychic powers. No human being can be godly without the development of the inner life.

I rejoice that my most esteemed friend, Debendronath Tagore, the *Pradhana Acharya* of the Adi Brahma Samaj, has been toiling for years to diffuse *Brahma Dharma* as taught in the Vedas, Upanishads and Darsanas. His discourses and works are mere expositions, but his highest teaching is like the teaching of the Rishis, the teaching of the soul. All honor be to him! All honor also be to Brother Colonel Olcott and the venerable Madame Blavatsky for their most praiseworthy labors to prove that the West should receive light from the East, and not the East from the West.

In the words of the Vrihad-Aranyakam Upanishad, let us pray. Lord! lead us from the unreal to the real region, from the dark to the bright region, from the mortal to the immortal region, that we may be blessed with thy benign effulgence within us.

#### ART AND THE SUPERNATURAL.

What are the relations between art and the supernatural? At first sight the two appear closely allied: like the supernatural, art is born of imagination; the supernatural, like art, conjures up unreal visions. The two have been intimately connected during the great ages of the supernatural, when instead of existing merely in a few disputed traditional dogmas, and in a little discredited traditional folklore, it constituted the whole of religion and a great part of philosophy. Gods and demons, saints and spectres, have afforded at least one-half of the subjects for art. The supernatural, in the shape of religious mythology, had art bound in its service in antiquity and the middle ages; the supernatural, in the shape of spectral fancies, regained its dominion over art with the advent of romanticism. From the gods of the *Iliad* down to the Commander in *Don Giovanni*, from the sylvan divinities of

Praxiteles to the fairies of Shakespeare, from the furies of Æschylus to the archangels of Perugino, the supernatural and the artistic have constantly appeared linked together. Yet, in reality, the hostility between the supernatural and the artistic is well-nigh as great as the hostility between the supernatural and the logical. Critical reason is a solvent, it reduces the phantoms of the imagination to their most prosaic elements; artistic power, on the other hand, moulds and solidifies them into distinct and palpable forms; the synthetic definiteness of art is as sceptical as the analytical definiteness of logic. For the supernatural is necessarily essentially vague, and art is necessarily essentially distinct: give shape to the vague, and it ceases to exist. The task set to the artist by the dreamer, the prophet, the priest, the ghost-seer of all times, is as difficult, though in the opposite sense, as that by which the little girl in the Venetian fairy tale sought to test the omnipotence of the emperor. She asked him for a very humble dish, quite simple and not costly—a pat of butter broiled on a gridiron. The emperor desired his cook to place the butter on the gridiron and light the fire; all was going well, when, behold! the butter began to melt trickled off, and vanished. The artists were asked to paint, or model, or narrate the supernatural; they set about the work in good conscience; but see, the supernatural became the natural, the gods turned into men, the madonnas into mere mothers, the angels into armed striplings, the phantoms into mere creatures of flesh and blood. If we would bring home to ourselves the action of art on the supernatural, we must examine the only species of supernatural which still retains vitality, and can still be deprived of it by art. That which remains to us of the imaginative workings of the past is traditional and well-nigh effete: we have poems and pictures, Vedic hymns, and Egyptian symbols; we have folklore and dogma; remnants of the supernatural, some labelled in our historic museums, where they are scrutinised, catalogue and eye-glass in hand; others dusty on altars and in chapels, before which we uncover our heads and cast down our eyes; relics of dead and dying faiths, of which some are daily being transferred from the church to the museum; art cannot deprive any of these of that imaginative life and power which they have long ceased to possess. We have forms of the supernatural in which we believe from acquiescence of habit, but they are not vital; we have a form of the super-

natural in which, from logic and habit, we disbelieve, but which is vital; and this form of the supernatural is the ghostly. We none of us believe in ghosts as logical possibilities, but we most of us conceive them as imaginative probabilities; we can still feel the ghostly, and thence it is that a ghost is the only thing which can in any respect replace for us the divinities of old, and enable us to understand, if only for a minute, the imaginative power which they possessed, and of which they were despoiled not only by logic, but by art. By *ghost* we do not mean the vulgar apparition which is seen or heard in told or written tales; we mean the ghost which slowly rises up in our mind; the haunter, not of corridors and staircases, but of our fancies.—*Cornhill Magazine*.

#### THE DECAY OF REVENGE.

“Man is a spiteful animal,” says Molière; but there are signs that man’s spitefulness is gradually wearing away. It may become a rudimentary thing, like his tail, or (in the shape of playful banter) a decorative survival, like his whiskers. Tails were useful, if Mr. Darwin is right, when our fathers lived up trees, and a hairy covering was serviceable when the ancestors of the race went as bare as Tam o’ the Linn in the old song. Spitefulness, in the same way, was necessary for self-preservation when every man’s hand was against his neighbour. Centuries of more peaceful years have modified this early ferocity, and we may trace the decay of spite in the decline of the passion for revenge. Revenge was once man’s highest duty; revenge became his choicest pleasure. Now it has sunk in the scale of enjoyments to the rank of wife-beating and skittles. No one (in civilised society) cares much for revenge, except the burglar, who throws his boot from the dock at a policeman, or the literary stabber, who libels his rivals or his reviewers in some journal of the town. The novelist, it is true, still keeps vindictive baronets and revengeful earls among his characters; but the earls and the baronets of the novelist are the noble savages of fictitious society. They have learned nothing, and forgotten nothing; they are still capable of designs on rural virtue, and of getting their nephews *lettres de cachet* in private lunatic asylums. It is not quite impossible to trace the moral history of revenge—a study which proves that human nature may be modified on its ethical side. In savage society—that is, in any society where law has no force, from Texas to Queensland—revenge takes the place

of faith, hope, charity, and justice. It is the virtue without which the social organisation would cease to exist. Tribes and families could scarcely have survived if the members of either association had good-naturedly abstained from revenging themselves. Nothing could have prevented the scores of rival families and tribes from exterminating people who did not resent an injury. Now it is imprudent to make a duty, which is universal, too difficult of accomplishment. It would have been difficult always to hit upon and slay the man who was guilty of each particular offence to person or property. Early custom, therefore, permitted revenge to be taken on any blood relations of the culprit within seven degrees. A man speared your grandmother because your uncle had devoured his nephew. Your duty was done if you tortured his second cousin to death over a slow fire. Honour and custom were satisfied for the moment. This does not seem a promising state of things, and yet it was full of the seeds of milder manners. Families became interested in preventing even their poor relations from using axe or bow too hastily. There was no satisfaction in being speared because some long-lost uncle or cousin with whom one was not on speaking terms had indulged himself in a manslaughter. Thus the members of all families found it convenient to keep an eye on each other’s movements, and to give up their culprits to be dealt with by a central authority. Gradually law came into existence, and revenge ceased to be the chief end of man.—*Pall Mall Gazette*.

MR. W. H. HARRISON is at the British Association at Swansea.

ASTROLOGICAL PATHOLOGY:—It appears that the planets Jupiter, Saturn, Uranus and Neptune will be in perihelion simultaneously in the fall of the year. This, we are told, has not happened before for more than 1,800 years. Moreover the “star of Bethlehem” will again make its appearance in the eastern horizon in the month of August. These celestial events will mark the completion of one great cycle of 1,800 years and the beginning of another; and we are warned that the first decennium of this coming cycle will be ushered in by disastrous outbreaks of pestilence—a veritable saturnalia of death. We are to anticipate, it seems, a recurrence of the terrible pestilences which concurred with the earlier years of the Christian era, and of which the recent irruptions of plague are alleged to be fore-runners. The astrological forecaster is an Irishman, and it is gratifying to learn that Ireland will probably suffer less from the evils presaged by this portentous conjunction of planets than other lands. Indeed, he anticipates that, knowing this, strangers will flock for safety to Ireland, and by the encouragement thus given to the commerce of the island help to raise her out of the unfortunate slough of distress in which she now finds herself.—*Lancet*.

# THE ENGLISH TRANSLATION OF PROFESSOR ZOLLNER'S EXPERIMENTS.

## LIST OF ENGRAVINGS.

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

PLATE I :—Experiments with an Endless String.

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