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## AND JOURNAL OF PSYCHOLOGICAL SCIENCE.

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## ORIGINAL RESEARCH IN SPIRITUALISM.

The valuable article by Dr. John Purdon, published in this number of *The Spiritualist*, gives the result of experiments indicating that during a *séance* with a physical medium there was a falling-off in the normal amount of one of the products of slow combustion in his body, to the extent of thirty per cent. Force cannot be created or destroyed by man, although it may be transformed or guided by him, consequently when a locomotive draws a heavy train more fuel is burnt in running the same distance than when no carriages are attached to the engine, more of the potential energy of coal being necessarily consumed to produce the additional mechanical motion. So is it in the human body; when more work is done more food is consumed. And if during a given journey by a locomotive there were a large falling-off in one of the usual products of combustion, such an unexpected fact would furnish matter for research, and its cause would be before long discovered. Dr. Purdon’s discovery in relation to mediumship is surprising, because, although scarcely any muscular energy may be exercised in the body of an entranced physical medium during a *séance*, great muscular energy is sometimes exercised by temporarily materialised hands, arms, and occasionally whole bodies\* at a distance from him, and in these evanescent organisms all the ordinary processes of life seem to be at work; the temporary hands, for instance, have warm blood and a beating pulse. The substance of these fugitive organisms returns to the body of the medium, consequently one would expect that all the products resulting from work done by the muscles would return with it. If not, what becomes of those which are missing? Are they dissipated in the room in the form of ammonia or volatile ammoniacal salts, or where are they? One series of experiments is not enough to warrant drawing an absolute conclusion, so

\* Very often what are called “materialised forms” are nothing but the mediums in a state of dream or trance, after being freed from bonds by spirit power. At other times, while the medium is held by both hands, hands and arms materialised from his body busy at a distance from him.

it is to be hoped that Dr. Purdon's investigations will be continued. The publication of the full details of the analyses on which he bases his present conclusions would be of value. The physiological line of research is likely to greatly benefit mediums, because it may be expected that particular changes in the pulse, the temperature of the blood, and so on, accompany particular manifestations, and when these are known and systematised no impostor will be able to imitate the symptoms at will, consequently genuine mediums will be less harassed than at present by the unjust suspicions of the ignorant.

In the middle of a strong physical *séance*, when a break is made in the proceedings, it is possible that much energy, in some unappreciable form, is outside the body of the medium, which consequently is only apparently in its normal state. The instant the *séance* is resumed, materialised hands and arms can usually present themselves; there is not a moment's delay. Whereas, at the beginning of a *séance*, it may take fifteen or twenty minutes to obtain a display of a similar amount of power.

NEXT Tuesday, at 6.30 p.m., the Annual General Meeting of the members of the National Association of Spiritualists, will be held at 38, Great Russell Street, London. In response to a memorial asking that the members might be permitted to express an opinion by vote whether they would like the Council reduced to twenty persons, voting papers have been issued allowing the members to say whether they would like the Council reduced to thirty-six.

A GERMAN PROFESSOR NONPLUSSED.—Herr Christian Reimers, of 47, Mornington Road, London, writes to us:—"A German Professor in Munich, got hold of Dr. Friese's book, *Voices from the Spirit-land*, and tossed it aside in disgust, after reading only the title. Immediately raps round the book startled the (evidently mediumistic) savant, and he removed it to another place, but the raps again called his attention in same manner. Then he carefully read the book, was converted, and is now a confirmed champion of Spiritualism."

DEATH OF AN AUSTRIAN MEDIUM.—"E. G." informs us that continental Spiritualists have just sustained a great loss in the death of Mr. Anton Procházka, Secretary to the *Spiriter Forscher*, at Budápest, of which association he was also one of the chief media. The nature of his mediumship, which comprised trance-speaking and writing, may best be judged of by a perusal of *Reformwrende Blatter*, a monthly periodical, in which messages through the mediumship of the Baroness Von Vay frequently appear. The deceased not only allowed himself to be the channel for regular and frequent spirit-intercourse of a high order, but he, notwithstanding his worldly vocation, found time for the fulfilment of his duties as secretary and correspondent of his association, as well as for the revision and publishing of his own and other medial writings, and without any pecuniary remuneration. Mr. Anton Procházka died on the 18th of April, in the midst of his work, to the great sorrow of his friends, more especially to those at Budápest, among whom his departure from this sphere of action will be severely felt.

## THE PHYSIOLOGY AND PHILOSOPHY OF MEDIUMSHIP.

BY JOHN E. PURDON, M.B.

In thinking some years ago over the problem of work effected during mediumistic manifestations, when the muscular system of the medium was prevented from entering as a factor into its production, it appeared to me advisable to gain, if possible, some knowledge of the tissue changes taking place within the body of the medium. An opportunity having offered, when two powerful male mediums were staying in my house on a short professional visit, I collected and submitted to chemical analysis through the assistance of an expert chemist, eight specimens with the view of obtaining differential data. One truly remarkable result was obtained, namely, the fact that the specimen which corresponded to the *séance* which was held on the day selected, showed a very marked fall, to the extent of about thirty per cent. in the quantity of urea excreted, and this only in the instance of the medium who was in full power, the other suffering at the time from a slight febrile cold which prevented the usual display of his mediumistic abilities. The specimens corresponding to the intervals before and after the *séance* showed nothing that could be regarded as striking. It was therefore evident that during the *séance* conditions obtained which were unfavourable to the elimination of urea, if the results of the analyses were to be depended upon, an objection against which I endeavoured to guard, by having the analyses made by an old university friend, upon whose ability I had complete reliance, so that no preconceived notion of my own interfered as a disturbing element; a precaution all the more important as the result had been anticipated by me. I give this experiment for what it is worth, in the hope that others who have good opportunities may confirm or correct my statement. One experiment or set of experiments is simply suggestive, no more.

Urea is a nitrogenised principle derived from the incomplete combustion of albumenoid matter. Its origin in the body can hardly be attributed to other than retrograde metamorphosis of built up tissues, notwithstanding that its direct production by oxidation from nitrogenised food in the blood, is well within the limits of possibility, though Flint says, although our experimental knowledge does not warrant the unreserved conclusion that urea is produced primarily in the nitrogenised parts of the organism, particularly the muscular tissue, this view is exceedingly probable.

The indications offered by urea were misunderstood, until it was definitely settled by an appeal to experiment that the work done by the human body could not be measured by the amount of that principle excreted. It is quite true that if a man be fed on an exclusively vegetable fat and sugar diet, then the urea excreted will be entirely due to waste of formed material, principally muscle, consequent on its physiological activity, and so far urea will be a true indication that at the least, so much work has been done. But the excretion of urea is nearly in proportion to the quantity of nitrogen contained in the food after a certain standard quantity is reached, and therefore it must be remembered that if the amount excreted be supplied from two mediate sources, the cutting off of one of these sources of supply may greatly lower the rate of removal of urea from the system and yet leave a relatively large show of urea remaining, due to a cause of far less physiological importance than that which has for the time ceased to operate. Thus, in the case of my experiment, the mediums had been living on a mixed diet, which would certainly furnish more urea that could be due to oxidation of the muscles, and therefore a sudden and marked fall in the amount of urea could be attributed either to arrest of combustion in the blood, or to arrest of normal tissue change, or to both combined, or to an accumulation of urea in the blood. I will not attempt to justify my choice that the fall in the amount of urea was primarily due to some interference with the nervous supply of the voluntary muscles, having its origin in the central ganglia of the brain, whereby the muscular system was thrown out of gear, leaving the will free to externalise potential energy through some other agency. I only say that such a supposition, together with a fairly comprehensive grasp of the modern theory of sensation and perception, satisfy me that a rigid application of the principle of energy to hypothetical activities which cannot be consciously realised, will enable us to construct the foundations of a new science which is only for the present more properly metaphysic and metempiric, inasmuch as its generalisations being from matter of experience, will be assimilated in time through the reason, and so be in every respect similar to any other branch of science which, dealing with mysterious influences, as all the physical forces ultimately do, has taken time to force itself into public recognition.

## THE FUNCTION OF MUSCLE.

It is now an evident and well established fact that work is done beyond the reach of the medium's body, which, however, still remains the source from which potential energy locked up in the assimilated food contained in the blood is drawn, to be converted into mechanical power or actual energy of motion. A few remarks on the part played by muscle in the animal economy will render clearer the nature of the hypothesis I am about to advance, and which fact and experiment seem to justify. I select the following from the Croonian Lectures, on *Matter and Force*, delivered before the College of Physicians, by Dr. Bence Jones, F.R.S., in 1868, where Dr. Frankland, in summing up his views on the origin of muscular power, says at page 176:—

“The muscle is a machine for the conversion of potential energy into mechanical force.

“The mechanical force of the muscles is derived chiefly, if not entirely, from the oxidation of matters contained in the blood, and not from the oxidation of the muscles themselves.

“Like every other part of the body, the muscles are constantly being renewed; but this renewal is not perceptibly more rapid during great muscular exertion than during comparative quiescence.

“The transformation of potential energy into muscular power is necessarily accompanied by the production of heat within the body, even when the muscular power is exerted externally. This is doubtless the chief and, probably, the only source of animal heat.”

I may add finally, the destruction of muscular tissue is indicated by the presence of urea in the excretions.

If now, future experiments go to support my observation, that during mediumistic manifestations there is a marked relative deficit of urea, (a lessened amount of *all* solids excreted in a given time would convey no particular information, as such might be attributable to the lowered vitality of the trance state), the question arises, to what does this experimental datum point. In the light of the above facts as to the nature of muscle, I would say that the absence of urea points to the dissociation, to some extent of the muscular system and its complex of feelings underlying consciousness from the integrated whole of sense through which the universe, as we know it, is given stable and orderly, in obedience to laws which have their counterparts in our feeling and

thinking nature. Through the removal of a limiting condition, *i.e.*, one of the sense factors, a new universe is opened up just as in the inverse case of the born blind, to whom living in a universe parallel to, but not coincident with, ours, establishment of vision revolutionises pre-existing judgments, and enables the neophyte to accommodate himself by a process of education to an order of reality existing independent of him, but from an experience of which he was debarred through the existence of certain physical restraints. To us who realise in terms of the muscular consciousness, such a state of affairs as that hinted at above is not thinkable, but it is nevertheless possible to deal with it in general terms as a rational hypothesis.

“MUSCULAR” SCIENCE.

Cause, personal power, muscular contractility, force, are four notions that are very closely blended in the human mind, and the metaphysician knows that it is because of our obtrusively intimate knowledge of personal power and muscular activity, that our grasp of cause and force is so feeble and our vision of them so dim. An apology seems therefore to be needed, when it is proposed to account for the doing of work without the aid of the muscular system. But let the objector ask himself what it is that prevents him from moving a chair at the other side of the room. The answer, that the nature of his constitution is such that he cannot do work beyond the reach of his arm, contains a fallacy; *i.e.* the tacit assumption (an induction from previous experience) that it cannot be made long enough or otherwise modified, or that a something quite independent of the muscular system cannot be employed. The true answer to the question is, that he does not know how to do it. We who have studied Spiritualism practically, know that the appeal to the uniformity of nature so often advanced to controvert its wonders, is not logically put when the addendum, *sine qua non*, “the conditions remaining the same,” is forgotten or ignored by those who fail to make perfect examination into the changes taking place in the nature of the medium himself. But it must be remembered that we are in a position of advantage with regard to those who have not had our experience of these things, and that it is only from our point of view that such an answer as that objected to above is fallacious; experience alone is our guide as well as theirs, but our experience is the more extended.

During manifestations the store of potential

energy in the blood is called upon as in other modes of work, the medium not knowing how it is that the call is responded to; but neither does he know how it is that he is enabled to call upon the same store through the familiar fact of a voluntary effort. The latter is simply a more familiar fact, for the ordinary and the extraordinary are equally mysterious in a last analysis; a truth lost sight of by those who concentrate their powers on the denial of the extraordinary as matter of fact, in a mistaken zeal for the honor of the laws of nature and their Maker, when it is merely an alteration of sense machinery with its attendant consequence, the opening up of new possibilities, which they are ignoring. Experimental examination alone is adequate to furnish the data from which to reason out the nature of the mechanical change, for the problem is one in vital dynamics, and is not confined to wordy metaphysics—or metempirics, if the word be preferred.

DR. S. HAUGHTON'S EXPERIMENTS.

The Rev. Professor Haughton, M.D., F.R.S., of the University of Dublin, has endeavoured to prove experimentally that a certain minimum excretion of urea is constantly demanded for the preservation of health and the functional stability of the human body. He proves that this minimum is related to the weight of the individual, according to the rule that for every pound of body weight there is an excretion of two grains of urea in the twenty-four hours. The work or exhaustion of potential energy corresponding to the destruction of tissue which this excretion represents, he regards as vital work and practically constant; he might have added, *if* the mode through which work is done and the world is given remains unaltered. This vital expenditure has corresponding to it a condition of tension of potentiality or muscular preparedness, so to say, representing a position of advantage from which work is done with the greatest economy of time, such, for instance, as would follow from the use of a “head” of energy, from the transformation of which work would immediately follow on the transmission of an order from the directing centre. But it by no means follows that other mechanical contrivances, involving their own conditions, may not, at times, be adopted by nature for the consummation of extraordinary work in obedience to the dictates of a Designing Intelligence; hence the hypothesis of partial dissociation of the muscular system when supported by its corresponding indication—absence of urea—is justifiable, or at any rate deserving

of some consideration in face of the fact that work is actually done without the intervention of the medium's muscular apparatus as a rigid system between design and performance. This dissociation of the stream of feelings accompanying activity of the muscular system to a greater or less extent would run parallel to, and be accounted for by, changes in the supply of blood, and in the strength of electric and nervous currents circulating in the nervous centres, but whether resulting in special inhibitory or stimulating influences it would be mere guess-work to speculate upon. Experiment gives a good deal of information as to the behaviour of the brain under the influence of various stimulating and destructive agencies, and from analogy it requires no great stretch of imagination to picture extraordinary phenomena as the result of an interference, during an effort of memory or volition, with the ordinary routine of physical changes taking place within the brain of a medium or sensitive, under the influence of a predisposition developed through exercise into an actual physical factor. We are fortunately not called on to forecast or anticipate the actualisation of such vague possibilities, for they exist, have long existed, and now call loudly for a rational explanation, in such terms as may permit men of sober judgment, to give them their place in a record of matter of fact relating to events occurring in what is commonly called the border land.

It would be going beyond the limit of such an article as this if I attempted to give reasons for my belief that the extraordinary functional activity suggested above, has its central organic counterpart in certain definite parts of the brain, but I will remark that it appears necessary to the adoption of my theory of mediumship to allow that particular cortical areas and those parts of the brain where sign co-ordination is localised, must be very materially influenced.

HUMAN INTELLECT NECESSARY FOR THE DISPLAY OF INTELLIGENT MANIFESTATIONS.

It is a matter of fact that no animal but man ever has been or ever can be, with the full consciousness of his office, a medium for the display of intelligent manifestations involving a process of thought up to the level of an ordinary child's capacity, and for the simple reason that no other animal possesses the highly specialised brain necessary to the production of such a result as that of a general notion, conception or abstract idea. It may be possible to train a parrot to imitate human speech, but then the words will have passed almost directly to his tongue through his ears, and the discourse,

as far as the bird is concerned, is nothing but a reflected motion. I do say that it is impossible, in the strictest sense of the word, that one of the lower animals could absorb from me anything but lowly organized feelings through their corresponding motions, and use the same as determinative to a definite activity, and therefore I say that, provided I could eliminate my own brain as a producing factor, a sermon, if preached by a wild animal, would have, to my mind, an incalculably greater claim to be regarded as inspired *ab extra* than the same discourse would have when coming from the lips of the most learned and virtuous prelate in the flesh; and by parity of reasoning, I would feel myself compelled to study the psychical side of mediumship in a very young infant, in preference to calling in the assistance of the most truthful adult of my acquaintance; for though the infant possesses the organs in a high state of development, the want of their exercise would leave them practically a *tabula rasa* as regards the ideas which hang together through the instrumentality of a system of signs, arbitrary in the first instance and artificial to the end. I cannot help thinking that a riper knowledge of this mysterious subject will go far to show that man alone exhibits himself as what is understood by the term medium, because man alone uses artificial combinations as symbols of real existence, and regards them as unvarying during a process of cerebral activity in the submental state, corresponding to which they are combined and manipulated, as in algebra, but according to unwritten and instinctive laws. The error having been made with the symbols, the underlying reality pays the penalty by being misrepresented when the conclusion arrived at is retranslated into terms of real existence.

MEDIUMSHIP CONSIDERED IN RELATION TO THE MORAL SENSE.

The doctrine of evolution maintains that the moral sense and instincts are the crown to the process of development of man as we find him at present on the earth. Comparative anatomy and psychology prove that as an intelligent being there is no comparison possible between man and the highest of the lower animals, their thought processes (however purposive their actions) being probably inconceivable, as such, to us from their crudeness and simplicity. In the great theatre of sensation, we are probably, as in that of motion, on the same platform, though on a lower level in certain obvious respects. Now in the case of mediumship regarded as a derangement of the organism, motor

disturbances, including under that term those of the circulation of the blood and its varied apparatus, are the foundation of all those subsequent developments which in some exhibit themselves as psychical and in others as physiological peculiarities, so that while that phase of human activity is essentially distinct from disease, we cannot shut our eyes to the fact that there is a certain parallelism or relationship existing between them. In fact my observations go to show that mediumship is a means of escape from disease in the case of those of its possessors who have not, through cultivation, established a natural healthful outlet, and that if the individual had not this gift or faculty of energising externally, the outcome of the source or spring of work-doing power confined to the body would be destructive in its tendency through mischievous degradation of energy. Hence the intimate relation between mediumship on the one side and hysteria, with all functional nervous disorders, on the other. Mediumship is a misfortune, and implies a distinct diathesis, in my opinion related to the hystero-gouty, which demands a compensatory eliminative activity for the preservation of health.

The best established fact as to the nature of physical mediums is unquestionably the inferior development of (or destructive change induced in) that highest part of human nature, the moral and social instinctive impulse towards right doing for its own sake. As a rule these people are not to be trusted, and it is quite certain that if mediumship became more general, the moral tone of its professors remaining as it is, mediums would be stamped out by the rest of mankind in self defence; and there would be nothing new in this, as the history of witchcraft amply shows. The possession of indefinite physical power and the attainment of an ideal standard of perfection in morals, sum up the common notion of an angel; indefinite power added to intense moral obliquity are attributes enough to define a devil. Somewhere between the two the medium must be content to take his place, the attribute of indefinite physical power alone differentiating him from his fellow men. This being granted, for it cannot be consistently denied by those who draw the above distinctions, common sense will oblige them to couple the moral imperfection with the physical *peculiarity* which is therefore an *imperfection* as well, if the attainment of the highest morality is the final goal of human effort. This inference is sound on evolutionary

principles, and it clearly shows that it would be wrong and immoral to put any man in the position of being able to rob his neighbour's pocket or read his thoughts without being found out. Apart from the great and necessary scientific interest attaching to the subject, which the consciousness of the part it is to play in the philosophy of the future impresses upon me, I often ask myself, what else can the so-called development of mediumship accomplish for its possessor. There may be certain exceptions, as in the case of artistic mediums, but I fear the advantages are dearly bought. Our powers are adapted to our legitimate wants, neither more nor less, and increased opportunities mean increased temptations. We are not in a sufficient state of advancement to wield indefinite physical powers. The moral to be drawn from this true statement of the case is, that mediums' words and sayings, and so-called teachings, should be judged on their merits, while their actions and manifestations should be jealously tested, no one individual act or manifestation being permitted to stand sponsor for another.

#### THE INFLUENCE OF WILL UPON THE MUSCULAR SYSTEM.

The importance of considering the muscular system regarded as the last instrument of will and design in the theoretical consideration of mediumship, cannot be too strongly urged. It is only where counters or symbols of thought and feeling are used, that attempts at deception are possible, and it is not difficult to imagine a state of existence where attempts to deceive would be ridiculous, and only to be understood in joke from the illogical nature of any more serious interpretation. But then the communication of mind with mind, or spirit with spirit would be direct, the objective fact of their reciprocal relationship being the subjective fact of their identity of feeling. Muscle, the interposed medium between two thinking beings, may be the medium of deception as well as of communication of truth; for are not words said to be used for the concealment of thoughts by certain astute members of the community? But further, muscle may become the instrument of misrepresentation in self-communion, where the lie of design is the mistake of involuntary deception. The outcome however, is the same when a false belief is first rendered possible, and is ultimately established through the breach of continuity resulting from the introduction of a non-homogeneous element. Conscious sensibility and mental activity through the medium of words and vital activities externalised through

the contraction of muscles, cannot be regarded as homogeneous with the same processes in beings unencumbered with the purely physical instruments called muscles, though when all goes right and no error creeps in at the points of junction, the processes may be strictly analogous, and present results rigidly identical.

It is in the close relationship and possible ultimate identity of sensation and motion, that the reconciliation of spiritualistic departures from the ordinary course of nature is to be looked for. All that we have given us in the primitive physiological datum, is the influence of an external stimulus reacted to and answered by a message transmitted along a set of nerves different from those which conveyed the original molecular disturbance to the interior of the organism. Physiology is quite silent as to the reception, absorption, disintegration and ultimate redistribution of the combined elements which enter the nerve centres as messages from without, creating a commotion which results in readjustment, accomplished by the agency of motion; the muscular system constituting the special instrument of that in one sense highest, because most completely transformable, type of energy, that of permanent matter moving in space.

It is not contended that any other than a sensori-motor process is elemental in the nervous activity of a medium; in fact quite the contrary. It is suggested however that sensori-motor elements are so grouped as to result in something quite different from a muscular contraction, as seen and felt, with the ordinary subjective consequences attending such a manifestation of feeling and energy; for consciousness itself requiring muscle as an integral factor, the consequence of an interference with the muscular system cannot be subjectively followed by the being in whom such change obtains, though the physical change in his organs can become a possible object to an observer to whom they may be said, as a quite new physiological combination, to represent an unique physical experience. In fine, existence in terms of both the external order of nature and internal order of thought, though given to us consciously or subconsciously by the aid of signs and forms into the construction of which the muscular system essentially enters, may yet have a counterpart in terms of altered functional activities of that which to our vulgar everyday experience is the nervous system, the underlying reality corresponding to which, though beyond our ken, we may safely assume in face of our extended knowledge of

human powers, to be available as substratum to any possible experience.

THE RELATION OF DREAM LIFE TO MATERIALISED FORMS  
AT SÉANCES.

Our bodies are, to use Clifford's words, merely complicated examples of practically universal rules, and I will add that I know no law or principle which would prevent dreams from being expressed in terms of matter and motion and demonstrated as such to the unrelated observer. The man who moves about and holds converse with me in my dream is supplied with his pseudo personality by me the dreamer. The materialized figure that moves before my waking eyes under the magic power of a medium is compelled by that medium and, as an object before my eyes, is merely a manifestation of energy, abnormal and out of the common it may be, yet still obedient to physical laws if we only knew them; but from its quasi-subjective side it can only be regarded as the medium's ego out of joint in the guise of a dreamself. Let it be well remembered that the word dream is not confined to incoherent nonsensical presentation, but may also stand for organized truth-bearing experience, in which latter sense I here use it, though in an extended application to the space reals of matter and motion so familiar to the student of modern Spiritualism. In the absurd and chaotic manifestations which are furnished by undeveloped mediums we have the homologue of the nonsensical dream, but as the dreamself becomes moulded into a definite something we have a corresponding order introduced into its phenomenal manifestations, and finally when we have such a wonderful exhibition of energy under the control of will as that furnished by a figure moving about apart and apparently separate from the medium's body, yet displaying intelligence and a play of thought indistinguishable from that of the medium, we are driven to adopt the dreamself theory to save the psychological method which will not permit the introduction of an entity into the organism that was not there before. We believe on the strongest ground of analogy that the store of energy possessed by the medium is called upon to supply, and that (generally) it alone does supply, the purely physical and objective side of the manifestation. We believe too on the strongest ground of analogy that the nervous and cerebral mechanism of the medium is instrumental and necessary in the display of intelligence not wholly different from that of the medium, however the personality may be modified, and consequently we are driven to conclude that

a relation exists between the new subject of sensation, thought and volition, and its agent, analogous to that existing between the old subject and the unmodified human body. We thus find that the logical justification of the hypothesis of the dreamself lies in the acknowledgment of the establishment to our satisfaction of the reality of extraordinary phenomena, while we still maintain the inviolability of the principle of the conservation of energy.

It may be said that what I call the dreamself is only the medium's own ego, transformed or transfigured. No: such an expression is to me meaningless. My theory implies that for a definite change in the body of the medium a corresponding definite change has taken place in the apparatus of feeling, and woven feelings which we call thought.

It appears to me that the difficulties of modern Spiritualism are more easily approached from the side of feeling and thought than from that of motion and action, for we wonder not so much to see extraordinary powers of doing as extraordinary powers of knowing displayed by mediums, hence the charm in the study of clairvoyance. My theory of mediumship while essentially based on changes relating to motion,—while in fact a generalisation from the indications of physical mediumship—aims at constructing, by the application of the psychological method, the foundation of the rational application of clairvoyance, regarded as a psychical fact as real as memory or imagination, in a new method by which light will be thrown on questions hitherto unmanageable.

The dreamself is advanced as the link between any possible phenomenon and its underlying reality, just as the ego and its forms constitute the link between the actual, as presented in consciousness, and its underlying reality. The living human body subject to practically universal rules, (and more particularly so as long as their variations are not looked for or are blatantly ignored,) has in correspondence with its thinking machinery an inflexible ego, whereby it always regards itself as a practically unalterable phenomenon, this holding through the fact of its unaltered functional activities, *i.e.*, through the limitations of its possible experience. Dreamself, on the contrary, is in correspondence with the modified thinking machinery of the human body, the practically universal rules of which are relaxed. From the objective side it is an output of that fluid physical reality, emerging

from which all bodies take form according to particular laws; from its subjective side, it is a state or condition when (and perhaps whereby) a greater range is permitted to man's powers of representation. Dreamself is essentially an inference forced upon us when we endeavour to account rationally for certain powers possessed by another. I cannot picture a dreamself in my own case, because in every act of thought I know my ego to be unchanged, but I can grant you as good a right to think of me as so changed as I claim to think of you in similar case. There is here the reverse of that process whereby I acknowledge another to possess a personality similar to my own. I argue from myself in the latter case, and I return to myself in the former, allowing as a legitimate inference that of which I can never possess direct knowledge, namely, a changed subjectivity wherein myself becomes dreamself.

Dreamself is the term I use to cover the entire subjectivity of medium plus extraordinary phenomenon, whether that substantial feeling be manifested through the motions and words of a dressed figure, beautiful as a Grecian statue, or through alphabetical knocks given by the leg of a deal table. Dreamself implies feeling, and we are forced to the belief that that feeling covers a more varied order of existence than we can picture to ourselves, but there is no evidence to show that it represents anything higher than passes through the mind of man; rather the contrary. The mesmeric patient exhibits the phenomena of dreamself in a typical manner. There is in such a case manifestly an extension of feeling beyond the usual limit. This may or may not occur with an unaltered personality; the patient or sensitive may feel himself changed in some way from his old and familiar self, or he may merely recognise the fact that the old self is in an exalted state, or finally he may appear to the observer to be an entirely changed being, *himself* having been entirely displaced by *dreamself*. On this question of feeling the observer can form no direct judgment; he can only infer from evidence brought before him that some change is produced in the apparatus of thought, through which feeling is presented as object, since it is unthinkable to him how he could reproduce the phenomena under similar circumstances. But when the sensitive furnishes his evidence of the extraordinary not in words only, but in acts which may be left to speak for themselves in the shape of rational inference, forced on

the mind of the observer, who remarks,—“You may or may not be a materialised spirit but at any rate you are a *thing*, for the time, visible and tangible,”—when such is the case, I say, is it not a mere misinterpretation of the phenomena, *qua* phenomena, if an attempt be made to divorce them from those presented by mesmeric sensitives in favourable cases? The theory of the dreamself is as applicable in the former, as it unquestionably is in the latter instance. Ego, or self, is a special experience in the case of each healthy man and not a thing, any more than heat or cold. Let it be once understood that it is a special experience in some way related to the body, which is the agent and instrument of feeling and motion (a sign, it may be, of a higher and more substantial reality), and the difficulty of acknowledging the dreamself theory as affording a more scientific expression for the subjective change than that offered by the “spirits” hypothesis will be overcome at once. It introduces a working formula in contradistinction to a dogmatic explanation, preserving at the same time an elasticity which permits it to be adapted to an indefinite psychological advance.

The careful reader will perceive that the philosophic difference between the two theories lies not alone in the substitution of the singular for the plural, but far more in the recognition of the substantial importance of Spirit, to the rejection of spirits as causal factors, be they angels, glorified bodies, or what not; Spirit being the reality underlying even feeling itself, in continuity with, and inseparable from itself, and, although in plastic correspondence with physical changes, yet that of which the universe of the senses is only a sign and a changing vesture. The key to the whole mystery lies in the knowledge of the fact that while we contemplate ego we are still outside and apart from spirit which yet dwells within us, which though I cannot well prove it, is an inference as thoroughly sound and valid as that my neighbour too can feel as well as say *cogito et sum*.

The possibility of Spiritualism and the justification of its claim to a place in the history of man lie in the character of the logical movement from within outward, viz., myself, ourself, himself and finally dreamself, the last term affording a glimpse of the process in which spirit hides itself in what we call inanimate matter, but were the occlusion is not complete and the irreversible consummation is not finally established.

## SPIRITUALISM.\*

BY THE HON. PERCY WYNDHAM, M.P.

I cannot bring these desultory remarks to a close without a passing allusion to modern Spiritualism, and I had better at once put myself right with my audience by announcing my belief in the reality of the phenomena; an avowal I am not ashamed to make in company with such men as Mr. William Crookes, Mr. Varley, Professor Zöllner, Mr. Wallace, Lords Lindsay and Rayleigh. If asked to define and explain the ultimate cause of the phenomena, which I believe to be genuine, I should be obliged to confess my inability to do this, a confession which might be much more widely made in regard to other beliefs, with the same degree of truth. I have my own theories and inclinations towards convictions, but I should like all who may take an interest in these matters to admit that we have not yet reached the stage for enunciations of theories and systems. What people who are interested in the enquiry have to do is to register, sift, and catalogue the facts. With regard to the phenomena themselves, I accept the thesis which most Spiritualists would accept, namely, “that they have discovered a force unknown to science, governed by an intelligence outside a human body.” Let us assume, then, what is a fact, that the truth of the phenomena is attested, after careful examination, by numbers of intelligent men. What is there that should prevent us accepting their testimony? Instances of trickery and fraud, common in this as in other matters, do not affect those instances where a belief in their presence would necessitate an amount of credulity far greater than that which is inveighed against. The triviality of the manifestations does not shake it. Professor Huxley once said that even supposing Spiritualism were true he did not care to listen to spirits whose conversation never rose above the level of the gossip of a provincial town. A very fair remark, and one in which all frequenters of spirit circles must often have felt inclined to concur; but after all the question still is, are the phenomena genuine? and if this is attested by the evidence of credible witnesses, what is said or done at spirit circles is for the present at least of secondary importance. We are not, I suppose, to assume that we are, in virtue of our inner consciousness, perfectly acquainted with every possible condition of spirit

\* A portion of a presidential address delivered last week before the Cumberland Association for the Advancement of Literature and Science, Maryport, and extracted by us from the *Carlisle Patriot*, May 7th, 1880.

life, assuming its existence, and that everything that does not immediately square with these preconceived ideas is to be dismissed at once. We might remember that when a fresh vista of discovery is opened to our eyes we at first see but a portion of the realm of fact it may reveal to us.

What, then, is the value of the discoveries of Spiritualism, assuming them to be true? Trivial and perplexing as they are for the most part in themselves, their value lies in this, that once the existence of anything in the nature of spirit is admitted, the whole fabric of materialism as the only possible basis of our existence falls to the ground. With it goes much that is deduced from it, and beliefs that had been supposed to be laid at rest for ever begin to reassert the possibility of their truth. We are, however, told by men of science that we are not to believe the evidence of credible witnesses in certain cases, and according to Dr. Carpenter the standard by which they are to be tried is the standard of common sense. Thus, in paragraph 530 of his book on *Mental Physiology*, we are told that

"Every one who accepts as facts, merely on the evidence of his own senses, or on the testimony of others who partake of his beliefs, what common sense tells him to be much more probably the fiction of his own imagination, even though confirmed by the testimony of hundreds with the same epidemic delusion, must be regarded as the subject of a diluted insanity."

This is all very well, but the testimony of intelligent credible men has the same value in all time. Common sense is a constantly shifting standard. The common sense as to what is possible of the reign of Elizabeth, or of ten years ago, is the common nonsense of the reign of Victoria, and the present year. But Dr. Carpenter is reasonable compared with Dr. Beard, of New York.

"Other factors," writes Dr. Beard, "being the same, a common-place man without logic, or imagination, or education, or aspiration, would be less likely to be conquered by a delusion than a successful lawyer, or judge, or scientific discoverer; for logical, well-trained, truth-loving minds, the only security against spiritism is in hiding or running away. If they venture a fair and open attack and are true to their convictions and necessities of logic, they must unconditionally surrender. If Sir Isaac Newton were alive to-day he would not unlikely be a convert to spiritism: the amount of human testimony in favour of spiritualistic claims is a million-fold greater than that in favour of the theory of gravity. The late Judge Edmonds used to say that he sifted the evidence of spirit manipulations just as he sifted the evidence in cases of law, and in accordance with the same principles, and from the standard of the law books and the Universities, his position was impregnable."

I confess this takes my breath away; the only conclusion it seems to point to is that ignorance

and lack of knowledge are safer guides than their opposites. From Dr. Carpenter and Dr. Beard let us pass to a greater name, that of Professor Tyndall; in his well-known essay, *Science and the Spirits*, he writes as follows:—

"Belief in Spiritualism is a state perfectly compatible with extreme intellectual subtilty, and a capacity for devising hypotheses which only require the hardihood engendered by strong conviction to render them impregnable. The logical feebleness of science is not sufficiently borne in mind. It keeps down the weed of superstition, not by logic, but by slowly rendering the mental soil unfit for its cultivation."

This is sound and excellent, but danger lurks in its unqualified acceptance. Let us all beware of the impediments acquired knowledge places in the way of obtaining more. It has been said with truth that all women and most men generalise a great deal too much. Any flattering unctious the sterner sex may lay to their souls on the score of this saying is more than dissipated by the fact that as they for the most part think on more important matters, so their generalisations are the more mischievous in their consequences. An article by Lord Brougham in the *Edinburgh Review*, based on deductions drawn from acquired facts, postponed the recognition of the true undulatory theory of light for sixty years. To reason without generalising from acquired facts would be like refusing to use logarithms in a proposition of algebra. But the confidence we can repose in one process is not the same confidence we can place in the other. The deductions we may draw from facts acquired, or supposed to be acquired, should lead us only, never guide us. The word "impossible" should be sparingly used. "Highly improbable," "totally inconsistent with the recognised views of existing facts," are more philosophic. Nay, more, we may be called upon to allow two theories, each supported with evidence of the same value, and each absolutely irreconcilable with each other, to lie side by side in our minds till more extended knowledge establishes one and destroys the other, or shows that after all they are not irreconcilable. How easy for the amateur, how difficult for the discoverer and the man of science! His invention, his discovery, his recognised theory is not only true in itself, but look at it properly, and it is much more a key and compendium of the universe. With a slight tendency to look at only the affirmative side the conviction grows that it, and the deductions that can be logically drawn from it, explain everything. The next step is as certain, but not so innocent in its effects. Everything it cannot explain is nonsense, and

has no existence. Tiresome men make fresh discoveries, they are hushed for a time, or for their life, but others rise in their places. More strange still, facts discover themselves, they are shown to be the result of trickery or credulity, but, as Carlyle has said, they still stand there like questions waiting for an answer, and what is more, refuse altogether to go away till they get one. Let us ever keep our minds open to evidence, remembering that knowledge has a tendency to turn the key of her treasure house, lest a portion should be found on closer examination to be dross, and as the knowledge of yesterday is often the ignorance of to-day, so the human mind may still be only on the threshold of discovery.

#### PSYCHOGRAPHY.

On Wednesday night, last week, at a *séance* at 21, Green Street, Grosvenor Square, London, Mr. Rita was the medium; the witnesses present were Mrs. Makdougall Gregory and her guests, among whom were Mr. Annesley Mayne, of the Junior Carlton Club, Mrs. Wiseman, Archdeacon Dunbar, Mrs. Duncan, Mr. Long, and Mr. Harrison. Mr. Mayne placed a crumb of pencil between the leaves of a well-cleaned, newly bought book-slate, never previously seen or touched by the medium. He tied a string tightly round it, longitudinally, and sealed it at both ends of the slate, so that the wooden leaves were held together by the seals as well as by the string, the knot of which was also sealed over. During the dark sitting writing and flourishes were scrawled over one-fourth of the inside of the closed slate, and the words "Good night" were decipherable with difficulty. The fastenings of the slate had in no way been tampered with.

### 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.]

MR. SERJEANT COX.

Sir,—Is there reason to believe that any message has come from Mr. Serjeant Cox, about which there can be no doubt on the score of authenticity; we know that if he could he would communicate, and his knowledge of the phenomena would give him every advantage in such attempts. In the absence of such communication (if so it be) what are we to think?

J. HAWKINS SIMPSON.

May 4th, 1880.

ASTROLOGY.

Sir,—Since the publication of my letter on the astrological indications of insanity I have obtained the birthdays of two persons who have become insane to the knowledge of my correspondent, a well-known professional gentleman in Manchester. As he expressed an entire disbelief in the rule which it is my object to

test, we have security that the cases he forwards are not selected on account of their conformity to the rule. But what do we find? That in each of the cases Mercury is within 5° of conjunction with a malefic! The chances against this, supposing no natural connection between the affliction of Mercury and insanity, are, as already pointed out, more than 7 to 1. I hope, therefore, I shall not be thought unduly importunate in again asking for more cases. The day and year of birth are all I want.

C. C. MASSEY.

Temple, May 8th.

MUCH interesting matter is kept over till next week, in order to make room in this number of *The Spiritualist* for Dr. Purdon's record of experiments and Dream-self hypothesis.

A PROPHECIC DREAM.—The police records of the city of New York show that on March 27th, while a tramp was eating a breakfast given him by Mrs. Sarah I. Harris, of No. 247, West 50th Street, in that city, a woman selling vegetables came in. The latter said to Mrs. Harris, "I had a dream last night in which I saw you murdered in cold blood by a person resembling this man." Mrs. Harris then endeavoured to get rid of the tramp, but he drew a pair of shears demanding money, and while Mrs. Harris hesitated he stabbed her in the abdomen, and then attacked the vegetable woman, driving her into the street, after which he escaped, but has now been finally arrested.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

THEATRICAL.—On Thursday, last week, at a morning performance at the Olympic Theatre, Miss Ella Dietz took the character of Juliet, in *Romeo and Juliet*, and displayed a fire and spirit in the part, which would have surprised those who have seen her only in her quiet and elegant drawing-room representations. In the balcony scene especially, she shone to advantage, and none the less that in this portion of the performance her distinct enunciation made every syllable audible to every listener in the house, a point which in itself is gratifying to the general public, who so often are aggravated in exerting themselves to discover what star actresses are saying, when—like *Daily Telegraph* leading articles upon divers jumping from bridges—they are "piling on the agony." Mr. Maude acted as Romeo, and was covered with bouquets by his admirers at the close of the performance. Miss Linda Dietz has for some time been acting with the best artists in London, namely, Mrs. Bancroft's company, at the Prince of Wales's Theatre, and at the Haymarket. In the first, the press generally testified to her ability; at the latter theatre she had a thankless part and little to do; it was that of a nonentity in society, whose parent was constantly, with her approbation, trying to sell her in marriage to the best social advantage, and ultimately she was so confused by the varying selfish schemes of her progenitor, that by the mistake of allying herself to the wrong man, she made all the honest persons in Lord Lytton's play happy ever afterwards. At the present time, at Sadler's Wells, Mrs. Bateman has placed an American company on the boards, who in a highly novel and sensational drama are trying to give the British public an idea of wild life "out West."

### To Correspondents.

B., VANCOUVER'S ISLAND.—You ask us to anathematise a particular medium for an exceptional circumstance. Years ago we might have done so, but greater experience shows that it would be quite as just to censure a mesmeric sensitive of a slightly different order, because under the influence of his mesmerist, he announces to a public audience that he believes himself to be an eight-day clock. Mediums are mesmeric sensitives, who pass some of their time in dream-life. They are not the prophets of a new dispensation, and the sooner the general public understand this the better.

## MESMERISM AND ITS PHENOMENA,

OR

## ANIMAL MAGNETISM.

By the late Wm. GREGORY, M.D., F.R.S.E., Professor of Chemistry at Edinburgh University.

Dedicated by the Author by Permission to His Grace the Duke of Argyll.

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The Dialectical Society, under the presidency of Sir John Lubbock, appointed a large committee, which for two years investigated the phenomena occurring in the presence of non-professional mediums, and finally reported that the facts were true, that the raps and other noises governed by intelligence were real, and that solid objects sometimes moved in the presence of mediums without being touched.

Mr. William Crookes, F.R.S., editor of the *Quarterly Journal of Science*, deviser of the radiometer, and discoverer of the new metal thallium, investigated the phenomena of Spiritualism in his own house, and reported them to be true. Mr. A. R. Wallace, Mr. Cromwell Varley, Prof. Zöllner, and a great number of intelligent professional men have done the same.

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The assertions of a few newspapers, conjurers, and men of science that the alleged phenomena are jugglery are proved to be untrue by the fact that manifestations are readily obtained by private families, with no stranger present, and without deception by any member of the family. At the present time there are only about half a dozen professional mediums for the physical phenomena in all Great Britain, consequently, if these were all tricksters (which they are not), they are so few in number as to be unable to bear out the imposture theory as the foundation of the great movement of modern Spiritualism. Readers should protect themselves against any impostors who may tell them that the phenomena are not real, by trying simple home experiments which cost nothing, thus showing how egregiously those are duped who trust in worthless authorities.

One or more persons possessing medial powers without knowing it are to be found in nearly every household, and about one new circle in three, formed according to the following instructions, obtains the phenomena:—

1. Let arrangements be made that there shall be no interruption for one hour during the sitting of the circle.
  2. Let the circle consist of four, five, or six individuals, about the same number of each sex. Sit in subdued light, but sufficient to allow everything to be seen clearly, round an uncovered wooden table, with all the palms of the hands in contact with its top surface. Whether the hands touch each other or not is of little importance. Any table will do.
  3. Belief or unbelief has no influence on the manifestations, but an acrid feeling against them is weakening.
  4. Before the manifestations begin, it is well to engage in general conversation or in singing, and it is best that neither should be of a frivolous nature.
  5. The first symptom of the invisible power at work is often a feeling like a cool wind sweeping over the hands. The first indications will probably be table-tilting or raps.
  6. When motions of the table or sounds are produced freely, to avoid confusion let one person only speak; he should talk to the table as to an intelligent being. Let him tell the table that three tilts or raps mean "Yes," one means "No," and two mean "Doubtful," and ask whether the arrangement is understood. If three raps be given in answer, then say, "If I speak the letters of the alphabet slowly, will you signal every time I come to the letter you want, and spell us out a message?" Should three signals be given, set to work on the plan proposed, and from this time an intelligent system of communication is established.
  7. Possibly symptoms of other forms of mediumship, such as trance or clairvoyance, may develop; the better class of messages, as judged by their religious and philosophical merits usually accompany such manifestations rather than the more objective phenomena. After the manifestations are obtained, the observers should not go to the other extreme and give way to an excess of credulity, but should believe no more about them or the contents of the messages than they are forced to do by undeniable proof.
  8. Should no results be obtained at the first two *séances* because no medium chances to be present, try again with other sitters. A medium is usually an impulsive individual, very sensitive to mesmeric influences.
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