

## TEST EXACTIONS.

being thrust, until the lowest level of membership is reached, his powers becoming but a commodity to be bartered for a certain amount of lucre per hour; still at last—and worst of all—his former spirit guides, flouting their efforts fruitless to penetrate the dense atmosphere of mistrust surrounding their instrument with whom they had hoped to accomplish great and noble results, reluctantly abandon their charge for other fields of activities, and leave their medium to the mercies of less scrupulous spirit operators; and the result of all this is seen

the disgraceful exposures which are  
being so gloriously and so authoritatively  
announced by the daily press  
and the cover all the world over.

My experiences of nearly twenty years  
with phenomenal phases of Spiritism  
have convinced me that the mental  
status of the sitters at a seance, deter-  
mines the purity or impurity of the  
manifestation, and have an influence  
on the mental or immoral tendency of  
the medium.

We do not ask crucial "test condi-  
tions" of mediums because of our over-  
flowing and implicit confidence in their  
integrity; nor can it be said that we do  
so on so account of a great respect we en-  
tertain for their person or powers  
because they are well known, and even  
familiar, to us. We are, therefore, in-  
clined, to subject the following ques-  
tions to self-testing conditions in order to sat-  
isfy ourselves as to that person's hon-  
esty, which we have arbitrarily pre-  
sented, precludes the possibility of re-  
spect, confidence, or even a care for the  
present welfare of such person, having  
the spiritual house room with the investi-  
gator.

Spiritual senses, my experience  
teaches me, do not always constitute  
the happiest hours of the medium of  
elucidating, even when no test conditions  
are required. Often these hours—which  
should be looked forward to by the me-  
dium as the most agreeable and most  
pleasurable—become an eternity of torture  
mentally and physically. And when  
under such conditions the manifesta-  
tions are not in accord with the expec-  
tations of the investigator, the sensitive  
is doubly punished, and to the tortures  
of the sense are added insinuations  
of the nature of "test conditions"; and  
under unfavorable conditions these  
manifestations may be of the best.

Nature expresses itself best when left  
untrammelled and free. Attempt to en-  
force "test conditions" on the varied  
avenues through which Nature seeks  
expression in myriad forms of beauty,  
and the result is sure, and interference  
would be disastrous in the extreme.

malformations and imperfections of a multifarious variety would result from such interference.

Man, in order to produce the highest and best possible results in the varied and manifold duties of his station, must be fettered in his operations by so-called "test conditions" in order to prove his ability in a particular calling; and this would lessen the power of productivity to the extent of such applied tests.

The "flour and rice tests" been applied to the mental and physical hands of Edison, Roentgen, or Tesla, would the useful inventions and discoveries, humanity enjoys to-day, have materialized in as perfect form as we know them? No! Nature, in her wisdom, would not have permitted us to know that we should attempt to do so, she promptly rescues our presumption by refusing to accede to our demands.

Spiritual phenomena can occur only along lines of least resistance, and consistently within the realm of natural law. We must first lift up our hands, our ears, to abstract the varied conditions through which spiritual intelligences seek to express themselves with crucial test conditions and presume to enforce conditions other than those which these intelligences find best adapted to their own nature and needs. We that are intelligent and rational beings we ought not to expect any other result than utter failure, or, at best, but a poor travesty, in the products of unshackled Nature.

If we are unwilling to entertain speculative considerations, let us meditate upon the great sensitiveness should we withhold them; let us at least treat them with that respect we accord to all other members of our common brother and sisterhood, until by some volitional act of their own, uninfluenced by lustful

"HONORABLE OR NOT," they shall have forfeited our esteem as  
 members of the community.  
 CALUMPN. H. HERMAN DEIRSH.  
 A HELPER FOR THE OBSESSED.  
 To the Editor:—I am happy to lay be-  
 fore those readers of The Progressive  
 Thinker who are suffering from the  
 torment of evil spirits the following let-  
 ter from a veteran medium, who has  
 reached the heights and has been in-  
 fluenced with power to cast out demoniac  
 spirits.  
 CHAS. BETTS.  
 "Brother Betts: Any person or per-  
 sons, suffering from obsession, no mat-  
 ter if they have to be bound and  
 gagged, no matter if they are in the  
 throes of a legion of devils, if they will  
 come to me I will cure them. I have  
 been given the power to cast out devils,  
 and in the future I intend to use it. I  
 am too poor to go to the people; they  
 must come to me.  
 Without money, and without price,  
 shall these devils be cast out and sent  
 to their reward. The power is with me,  
 and cannot send it to relieve those ob-  
 sessed, hence they must come to me.  
 The more desperate the case the bet-  
 ter. I say this, that the world may  
 know that the power that Jesus pos-  
 sessed is again upon the earth, though  
 the people know it not. Truth will  
 again be offered to the inhabitants of  
 earth, and, yea, will it be if they accept  
 it. Jesus is coming in Spirit and in  
 flesh, to finish his work, and vye upon  
 those who shall do violence under his  
 name, or his truth." G. H. MILLER.  
 537 Monroe St., Springfield, Mo.

HIS IDEA OF HADES.  
 A Michigan evangelist is inspiring un-  
 limited zeal for salvation among his  
 multitude of hearers. He portrays hell  
 as a large hall, at one end of which a  
 walking match is going on, while at the  
 other "Bob" Ingersoll is delivering a  
 lecture on "Genesis."—New York Tri-  
 bune.



















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# QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

This department is under the management of the distinguished author, speaker and medium.

Hudson Tuttle.  
Address him at Berlin Heights, Ohio.

R. M. M., Maple Creek, Cal.: Q. I am deeply interested in the query column, and would like an answer to the following which perplexes me: What is the difference between dependent and independent clairvoyance?

A. Independent clairvoyance is the freedom of the spirit from all material constraints, to that degree that it has the use of its spiritual senses and perceptions. Of course the only absolutely independent clairvoyance is that of the freed spirit. Dependent clairvoyance is the lower form of this state, when the physical body, the surrounding matter and the persons near exert an influence more or less perceptible. A magnetizer finds that he is able to control his subject. He makes that subject see and hear whatever he pleases. The subject is in a dependent, magnetic or clairvoyant state. If instead of a magnetizer, spirit operated, the subject would depend for his knowledge on the spirit. He could know no more than the spirit impressed on his mind. This is passive or dependent clairvoyance. As this state deepens, a manifestation every experienced clairvoyant observes subject passes from control, and his perceptions are quickened. He no longer depends on anyone for his knowledge. His spiritual faculties are alert. He sees to great distances, gains knowledge by observation, and this grows stronger and clearer until the sensation from the physical body is completed. This is the independent state. It is a very sensitive condition, and often the subject freely converses with the departed, whom he sees and hears as he would were he like them detached from the body.

There is an arbitrary line between these two states, and to properly place any manifestation that may arise may appear difficult. It is yet more difficult for even the clairvoyant to distinguish what is observed by himself from what is impressed or given to him by spirit intelligences.

A. M. M. Davis: Q. Is there any other Bible than the Christian Bible?

A. It is difficult to determine exactly what the Christian Bible took the permanent form it has since retained, but certainly until the reign of Constantine, called the Great. No one can claim that it existed before Christ. There are some Bibles of date not less than 500 years previous to that era, and by some authors estimated at ten thousand. The Zend Avesta contains the doctrines of the founder of the ancient religions of the Persians, and his birth has been placed 6,000 years before Plato, and by others, and by others a more recent date is ascribed. The Zend Avesta, like the Old Testament, is made up of fragments of various ages, but the oldest portions are in the Vedic form of the Sanskrit language, and hence are specimens of the oldest known writings.

It has not been determined which is the older the "Old Testament" of the Zend Avesta, or the Sanskrit, and it is unessential to this question.

The vast antiquity of the sacred Vedas, the voluminous Bible of the Hindus, is undoubted; 1,500 years before Christ is among the lowest estimates. The exactitude of historical dates did not concern the Hindus and hence there is great confusion.

Confucius, who formulated the religion of China, lived about 500 years before Christ. The sacred writings existing before his time were glossed with his sayings, and the books of Kings, the Bible of the Chinese, was fully formed at least four hundred years before Christ. Thus, then, there are three Bibles—the Zend Avesta, the Vedas, the Book of Kings, all of them vastly older than the Christian Bible, each teaching a cosmology and a scheme of religion.

Aside from this, if by the Christian Bible is meant the Protestant Bible, there is a much older Bible right by its side—the Catholic Bible. They were once the same, but are now quite distinct, and if "new and revised" translations are allowed, they will become yet more separated.

"Student," Milan, O.: Q. If a spirit has an individual identity, etc., in the future must it not have had in the past? If it has a beginning, as you advocate, with the physical body, must it not have an end?

A. Since the first statement of this fundamental principle of the New Spiritualism, this has been a point of attack by critics, with reason from the old standpoint. The old metaphysical reasoning says: Whatever has a beginning must have an end; therefore when it is asserted that the spirit of man is immortal, it follows that he has always existed, that he has no end, and that his past. This is held to be unanswerable, except by the hypothesis of pre-existence and reincarnation, which maintains that the spirit is an indestructible entity, constantly rehabilitating itself in forms of flesh; but this hypothesis is only a supposition made in the child's head of the race to solve the problem. In an age of accurate thought it seems an anachronism. If we accept the doctrine of evolution—and, as the immediate explanation of the phenomena of living beings it is the only and complete explanation—their past and future are received as true the corollary that instinct and intelligence are evolved out of the transformations of living beings, and that individualized spirit, if there be such an entity, must be the last link in the vast organic series from which it has sprung into being. In other words, with an indeterminate future it has a determinate past.

If the spirit has existed for infinite time before its incarnation in this life, it has had infinite opportunities for progress, and logically should have attained perfection. The fact of its imperfection necessitates a beginning, and the degree of imperfection shows the nearness or remoteness of the starting point. If it be held that this apparent imperfection is the result of the spirit's connection with matter, it must be remembered that the theory of pre-existence has for its object to account for the evils of this life, and perfected spiritual beings, such as all would be after an infinite past, would have no need of incarnation to attain the purity and excellence already theirs. With the physical form given to the spirit by their parents is also given a spiritual entity which is capable of existence after the death of that body, as an independent being, the center of multitudinous forces.

In the first place we must accept the facts and affirm that the spirit begins its existence with that of the body. If

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The astral substance envelopes the earth body to an average depth of three feet, and like the atmosphere of the earth is constantly changing from the extremes of passions to the quietude of repose. At the change called death there is a complete separation of the earth body from the astral body, which serves as a body in the astral life.

When the astral body leaves the earth body in health, or while united to each other, there is sufficient astral substance remaining with the earth body to keep it functioning; also a thought current that connects the two bodies, no matter how far separated from each other.

An ego who has dreamed the sweet dream called death controls the ego of one in the earth body, can do so by standing a little distance behind the person being controlled, and using the hand on a level, or a little above the head, a current of thought passes directly to the head, and if successful, in spiritual thinking or speaking is the result, by the control of the brain and vital organs of the sensitive.

Obsession is a disembodied earth ego getting in the astral body aura, and controlling the earth body, causing much suffering until the victim is aided by some outside power. This obsession is stronger than the sensitive it has taken possession of, and can retain possession as long as it chooses, unless forced to cease the imprisonment of another.

Mesmerism produces somewhat similar results and is a dangerous power in the hands of the ignorant.

The objects of the five senses of the earth body are mostly of cause and effect, that result in the various thought-expressions of the individual, and the astral body has all these avenues for gaining knowledge in a far more acute sense, which vibrate to the objects and sensations in the substance of the astral body.

This double means of education is not generally understood at the present time. When properly comprehended by man, he will give the bodily senses rest for a time each day, that proper mental digestion may take place by the harmonious action of the senses.

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## ORTHODOX AMENITIES.

INGERSOLL, CALLED "A HEAP OF DIRT"—REFUSE TO SPEAK IN ANY BUILDING RENTED TO HIM—INGERSOLL IS REASONABLY ANGRY AT THE CLERICAL ABUSE HEARD UPON HIM.

The opponents of Colonel Robert G. Ingersoll have gone about on another tack, so it is alleged, and it may come to pass that certain evangelists will refuse in the future to speak in public buildings which have been or are to be rented to Colonel Ingersoll.

Although he will not admit it, there seems to be a suspicion that the Rev. A. C. Dixon, the well-known and eloquent Baptist revivalist of Brooklyn, is at the bottom of this alleged plan. There are circumstances which seem to lead color to the rumor.

For the last six weeks Mr. Dixon has been holding services each Sunday afternoon in the Academy of Music, this city. He had a contract with the management of the academy for six weeks, and, so it is said, was about to renew the lease last Thursday when he was charged to speak in the academy on the evening of Sunday, February 14.

"What is this?" he is said to have exclaimed to Manager Van Wagoner. "You rent your house to a Christian minister for the afternoon, and then turn it over to an infidel like Ingersoll for the evening?"

The manager responded that that was about the size of the matter. Mr. Dixon was careful not to admit that he refused the Academy because of the Colonel, yet does not hesitate to say some severe things about the noted agnostic as follows:

"I have no enmity for Colonel Ingersoll. Neither have I respect. He is a heap of dirt, and yet I want to see him a certain compass. That is all."

"Some time ago I spoke into a phonograph and said that he was 'paid to pollute the morals of the rising generation.'"

"This remark of mine was printed, and Colonel Ingersoll brought a \$5,000 libel suit against me. I went to an expense of over \$1,000 to thoroughly investigate the man's character, and I think I know all about him from his boyhood up to the present time. That is why I say that he is a heap of dirt. I might say more, only what is the use?"

Colonel Ingersoll was not a moderate in his expressions regarding the matter. He had been informed of Mr. Dixon's alleged refusal to rent the Academy on account of his (Colonel Ingersoll's) coming lecture, and when asked to reply he sat down in his drawing room and wrote the following:

"Do not wonder that Mr. Dixon objects to speaking in a theatre in which I am to speak. He is probably afraid that good sense is catching. An idea might force its way into his brain, and then he might stop preaching and go to thinking. His refusal to make his customary noise in the Academy because I am to speak there is laughable. The poor man has to live in the same city that I do, in the same world, breathe the same air, feel the same cold and see the same snow. How he must suffer."

A WORLD FOR HIMSELF.

His God ought to give him a little world just for himself. Now he is in danger of meeting other men—in danger of being corrupted by reason, by logic and demonstration. I am willing to speak in a building that he has preached in. I am not afraid. I have no pious malice, no salutary hatred, no Christian spite. But then I have never been converted, never lost my love for fairness or my natural generosity.

Poor Dixon! I pity him. He has plenty of pity, but he lacks good sense, good manners. R. G. INGERSOLL.

Replying to Mr. Dixon's other remarks, Mr. Ingersoll said:

"The good gentleman need not fear that I am about to join his church. When he says that I am edging toward the church because of certain statements attributed to me regarding a church in Michigan he gives himself unnecessary alarm. The church to which he probably refers is in Kalamazoo, and it has no creed other than 'Love your fellow men.' I did say that I would willingly join such a church, and I repeat the statement. As to his personalities, I have nothing whatever to say."

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