

Religio-Philosophical Journal

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Powers of Finite Spirits.

In the early history of modern Spiritualism, those who carped at the reported phenomena would often bring an objection like this: "If a spirit can move a table, why can't he move a meeting-house?"

The only reply that the scientific investigator is obliged to make to such questionings brought against a simple matter of fact, is: "I don't know."

The following is a summing-up of the objections, which Dr. E. H. Brittan brings against the common notion that spirits have it in their power to present, to our senses of sight and touch, visible and tangible (and therefore materialized) representations of parts of the human body—a hand, a foot, a bust, and sometimes what may appear to be the entire human person, appropriately clad:

Many Spiritualists who believe in the resurrection of the body, still believe that a spirit may at will be temporarily re-incarnated in a material form. It is all the work of one minute! Such a lively and all-embracing faith is rather calculated to put the believers in physical miracles to shame.

Dr. Brittan here assumes that a phenomenon that is contrary to all known natural and material processes, must be also contrary to all unknown natural and spiritual processes.

The fact of the visibility and tangibility of the spirit-hand, at a certain degree of "materialization," is not questioned. It is one verified by the senses and the common sense of any number of competent witnesses in their normal state.

Whether the matter presented to our sight and touch by this spirit-power belongs to the same order and degree of matter as that which composes our physical bodies, is a question that no human being can throw light on until he can answer the question that has puzzled the sages of all time, "What is matter?"

We have thus far only a limited collection of facts by which to be guided; and those facts confirm the common belief that this spirit-power can present materialized facsimiles of parts of the human body—and of parts, then inferentially, of the whole.

Obviously this is a question which cannot as yet be scientifically answered either in the negative or in the affirmative.

There is an important assumption adopted at the beginning of this sentence, but dropped toward the end of it. At first we have a "human intelligence" operating "on earth and in the higher spheres," and then we have the expression: "We may not generate the simplest organic form," etc.

Because the Supreme Power operates, as far as our limited experience can see, in this terrestrial sphere by slow, natural processes, have we a right to assume that he, or even a finite spirit, emancipated from mortal impediments, is incompetent to produce a stimulation of the results of slow material organization by an inconceivably rapid exercise of energy?

Here is the assumption that what may seem to our human faculties "spasmodic or miraculous" is really such, when exercised by a freed spirit or by divine energy.

The subject is one on which we do not pretend to dogmatize. All that we have attempted to show is, that Dr. Brittan presents no good and sufficient reason why we should not accept as "materializations" such forms as are visible and palpable, even though they leave no residuum of visible matter behind them when they disappear.

Before we can accept such a conclusion we must have it proved to us that we may be in a "psychologized" state even at the moment when we suppose that we are in the full exercise of our normal powers.

But what becomes of the matter when these momentary forms disappear? Dr. Brittan lays stress on this inquiry, as if it were all-essential in supporting the assumption that these fugitive forms which present themselves as material to our normal senses are, to all intents and purposes, just as material in degree as any corresponding object in nature.

Every thing that is inexplicable to us may be stigmatized with the same epithet; and yet all finite causes and effects may be strictly within the sphere of the natural.

We do not see, therefore, that we can fathom the nature of these materializations until we know what matter is, and what spirit is; and, perhaps, to know that, we ought to have the secret of the Infinite Spirit, and be able to solve the whole mystery of the universe.

The gist of the inquiry is, Shall we accept as palpable and material the forms which so present themselves to our senses? We see no escape from the conclusion that, with our present light, we are right in so accepting them, even though they may be transient in their stay and not subject to chemical analysis.

Dr. Brittan says: "While it is possible for human intelligence, on earth and in the higher spheres—by the concentrated application of subtle forces—to greatly accelerate the processes of the physical universe, we may not generate the simplest organic form by any means or methods outside of the established order of the natural world."

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E. V. Wilson.

One day last week we visited Bro. Wilson at his home in Lombard. We found the old veteran sadly changed, the stalwart form once pulsating with the vigor of perfect health, was reclining in an easy-chair, the head drooping forward on the breast, and the whole ensemble the very opposite of the fiery combative lecturer and seer whose striking appearance is familiar to tens of thousands.

He has a fine farm of 240 acres under a high state of cultivation and returning a yearly net profit of ten per cent. on its value of \$20,000. But, unfortunately, the farm is encumbered with a \$10,000 mortgage, drawing ten per cent. interest.

Mr. Wilson, as our readers know, has published a good sized volume, entitled "Immortality Proved Beyond a Doubt by Living Witnesses," compiled from twenty-five years' experience of what he has seen and heard, and making a most interesting and valuable addition to the history of Spiritualism.

The old readers of the JOURNAL know that in years past there were serious differences between this paper and Mr. Wilson. Those things are of the past, and, as we said on assuming editorial charge, we have no feuds to perpetuate nor animosities to cherish.

Who will say that the Chinese Government is not progressive in some respects? Recent news from China proves that the antagonism of the Chinese Government to the opium vice, is still active.

And the same paper for June 1st gives amongst the Shanghai news the following: "The provincial Governor, Tan, seems determined to continue his fight against opium smoking."

The Chinese Government Fighting Against Opium.

Who will say that the Chinese Government is not progressive in some respects? Recent news from China proves that the antagonism of the Chinese Government to the opium vice, is still active.

Col. Ingersoll fights shy of Woman Suffrage because he fears it will unite church and state. Let Mrs. Saxon and other workers, turn their attention toward the disenfranchisement of woman from religious bigotry, if they feel they need the infidel Ingersoll's eloquent tongue to plead for the ballot, or convince the gallant Colonel that it is not manly to withhold a right through fear of the use that will be made of it.

The Publisher's Statement, which should be Carefully Read and Heeded.

When this paper was started, in 1865, it was considered best by Mr. Jones to adopt the credit system, allowing subscribers, after the first payment to have as long a time thereafter on credit as suited their convenience.

The credit system of the JOURNAL is not one of our adoption; it comes to us with the paper and requires time, patience and the earnest co-operation of our constituency to change.

To the many who have within the past few weeks promptly responded to our request for payment of past dues and renewal, we return our warmest thanks.

Meetings in the public hall at Cedar Rapids, Iowa, have been adjourned until September. Dr. Hamilton Warren and his estimable wife will hold meetings, however, for inspirational speaking, circles, etc., at their own residence, on Sunday evenings.

Dr. Warren writes: "I procured Allen Kardec's books on Mediums and Spirits, and you see the result. I would recommend any one wishing to investigate Spiritualism to purchase those books and study them and follow the directions, and I am confident they will make better mediums and in a shorter time, than by taking Tom's, Dick's or Harry's instructions, who, as a general thing, just know enough to know nothing at all about the subject."

The Thirteenth Day of Dr. Tanner's Fast.

We learn from a special dispatch to the Chicago Tribune that Dr. Tanner passed a quiet and uneventful Sunday without apparent change in his condition, and there are no indications of a collapse or of his being nearer to starvation's fatal point than he was Saturday.

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Voices from the People.

AND INFORMATION ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS PERTAINING TO THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

Bride of the Celestial.

Adown the archway of the azure air, There crept a silence, slumberously sweet; And mellow with moist radiance; dewy fair, Where tears of earth and smiles of heaven meet.

The Harmonical Association.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: Now that the lectures of the Harmonical Association are closed for the season, will you make room for a brief report of the efficacy of that philosophy of which those discourses were the exposition?

"Rest Day" and Mourning Customs.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: I would like very much to know what nations keep the different days of the week, as days of rest.

We doubt if every day of the week has been some- where kept as a day of rest. We are not aware that the Sabbath law extends beyond the Jews who keep Saturday, the Christians who keep Sunday, and the Mohammedans who keep Friday.

The fact that the Hindu calendar made Friday the first day of the week, probably caused it to be so regarded throughout Southern Asia and influenced the selection of this day as the Mohammedan sacred day.

On the whole we are disposed to think the reason for "one day and all in succession" is confined to the nations which have derived their astronomy from the Hindoos and Egyptians; that in those two peoples the days Friday and Saturday had some slight reverence, not resembling the sabbatic idea of the Jews.

The Juggler and the Medium.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: I have read with interest the account of the juggler and the medium, and am glad to see that the juggler's tricks are being investigated.

It is a pity that the juggler's tricks are not being investigated more thoroughly, and that the medium's powers are not being tested more carefully.

I declare, moreover, the published opinions of laymen, as to the "how" of this subject to be premature, and according to my view and experience, false and one-sided.

If any man can be regarded as an "expert" in investigating "tricks" performed in broad daylight, before our eyes, under conditions the most simple, it is surely the accomplished practitioner of mesmerism.

THE INDEPENDENT VOICE.

Given Through the Mediumship of Mrs. Clara A. Robinson, No. 2936 Michigan Avenue.

Well, father, the change of worlds has been a blessed one for your son. Now I am well, which I never was in earth life. I come back to tell you this, that you may rejoice with me that I suffer no more, but am happy.

I died about ten miles from De Graff, Ohio, but my home was in Dayton. I had no regrets for passing over, although I was comparatively a young man (about thirty years old).

I was an old man when I passed from your life to this. My name is Marcus Sherwood. I lived in Evansville, Ind., and was well known there. Although old, I was in no hurry to change worlds.

Orthodoxy here has been shocked, as you are aware, to its very centre, and would be still more so if some I know were true to themselves, but the car of progress moves onward.

The "Friends of Human Progress," Waterloo, N. Y.—this society for thirty-two years has had the freest of platforms. Instituted by the "Progressive Friends," it battled nobly for human freedom, and its constancy to the liberal ideas of the great and slavery reformers, is history to-day.

The Brittan-Tuttle Tilt.

Prof. Brittan is mistaken in supposing that he can use any of the catch-words of the Christian pulpit, such as "without God in the world," and "curse it at night over the Athenian's grave."

There is but little disposition among the masses of Spiritualists to retain the scornful catchwords of Christian bigotry, though many "vital" beliefs of Christianity are found to be "untrue."

It is very well for Christians to anathematize Athelstan, but for Spiritualists, no one of whom has ever received a communication from, or scientific proof of, the existence of a God, to attempt to hurl the anathemas of a church in which they are not even communicants, still less believers, is the height of English absurdity.

This will give you, dear JOURNAL, as lacking of the need of the Harmonical Philosophy to some of its students. A. B. C. New York, July 14. Van Wazeran.

Letter from Dr. A. L. Foreman.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: As I am an old reader of the JOURNAL I desire to occupy a short space in its columns.

As I am an old reader of the JOURNAL I desire to occupy a short space in its columns. While I have never made much noise about my experience with mediums and spiritual phenomena, yet it has been much greater than many that have said and written so much.

While in St. Louis a short time ago I had a sitting with Mrs. Eldridge, a slate-writing medium, located at room 45, Leclaire Hotel.

I desire to express through the columns of your paper, my entire satisfaction with the slate writing tests given by Dr. Slade. It was my pleasure to witness the conversion of several who were skeptical with regard to spirit communion.

Letter from Mrs. Florence F. Dickson.

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D. B. Edwards writes: I do not see why it is that none of the very many lecturers and mediums ever come to the east end of Long Island City, which is only sixty-five miles from New York City.

The vices we scoff at in others, laugh at us with in ourselves. The great world is moving on to a higher truth and a larger justice.

Make your example your leading form of teaching, and let your good living be the chief pillar of your work.

In the case of death-bed apparitions, in which the spirit appears to one or several persons at one place, at the time of the death of the body at another place a long way off.

In the long run fame finds deserving man. The lucky time may prosper for a day, but in good time true merit leads the van.

Dr. Fahnstock was reared among people who do not take kindly to Spiritualism, to say the least. He was at first bitterly opposed to the "delusion," but was fully convinced of its truth by means of experiments which he was led to make by reading the work of Dr. Hare.

Supposing that all the evidence of spirit identity could be swept away, the common phenomenon of a living hand or head, the duplicate in appearance of that of the medium, appearing at one part of the room while the medium is in a distant corner, as they often do, is a remarkably suggestive. While the living duplicate of him at the other, the question might well arise in the mind of the observer, whether when the dead body of a friend is in the coffin, the living counterpart may not be somewhere else.

The religious system which owes its origin to Zoroaster is probably as ancient as Judaism, and probably taught the immortality of the soul and a future state of rewards and punishments for centuries before these doctrines were prevalent among the Jews.

Though orthodox writers are in the habit of pretending that Jesus of Nazareth was the first and only incarnation of God in humanity for the purpose of teaching mankind the truth, we find that many "Messiahs" had appeared in the far East, ages before Christ. The parallel is not confined to this fact alone; we find that a close similarity exists between the teachings of Christ and the great religions of the ancient world.

The American young lady who believed that she had got a bristle of a tooth-brush fixed in her throat got worse and worse, though there was no bristle there. Till she was wanted by her doctor's ruse that he had extracted it, after which she recovered as rapidly. On the other hand there are very well attested cases, though none is quoted by the writer, in which mere fright, directed to the expected suffering of a diseased part, has caused a powerful but salutary revolution in the condition of the diseased organ.

LIST OF BOOKS FOR SALE BY THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL PUBLISHING HOUSE CHICAGO.

WE ARE ALSO PREPARED TO FURNISH MISCELLANEOUS BOOKS... We are also prepared to furnish miscellaneous books...

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Animal Magnetism, by W. Gregory...
Archaic of Nature, Philosophy of Spiritual Existence...

- Leaves from My Life, by J. J. Moore...
Life of Thomas Paine, with original and contemporary observations...
Life of Jesus, by George Van...
Life of William Penn, by J. J. Moore...

THE CHICAGO & NORTH-WESTERN RAILWAY - IS THE - Oldest, Best Constructed, Best Equipped, RAILWAY OF THE GREAT WEST.



Map of the Chicago and North-western Railway. It is the only road... The only road raising the Pullman Palace Sleeping Cars...

RAIL ROADS - TIME TABLE

CHICAGO AND NORTHWESTERN.

Table with columns for departure and arrival times for various routes like Chicago to St. Paul, Chicago to St. Louis, etc.

MILWAUKEE DIVISION.

Table with columns for departure and arrival times for routes to Milwaukee and other nearby cities.

WISCONSIN DIVISION.

Table with columns for departure and arrival times for routes to various Wisconsin cities.

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND AND PACIFIC.

Table with columns for departure and arrival times for routes to St. Louis, St. Paul, and other cities.

CHICAGO, ALTON & ST. LOUIS AND CHICAGO KANSAS CITY & DENVER SHORT LINE.

Table with columns for departure and arrival times for routes to Alton, St. Louis, Kansas City, and Denver.

NEWSPAPERS AND MAGAZINES

Table listing various newspapers and magazines with their respective prices and terms.

RATES OF ADVERTISING.

Each line in Agate type, twenty cents for the first, and fifteen cents for every subsequent insertion.

GILT-EDGE BUTTER-MAKER advertisement featuring an illustration of a woman with a butter churn and text describing the product's quality and benefits.

Map of the United States showing the Chicago and North-Western Railway routes connecting to various cities like St. Paul, St. Louis, and Kansas City.

CHICAGO, ROCK ISLAND & PACIFIC R. R. advertisement highlighting the 'PULLMAN PALACE CARS' and the 'GREAT ROCK ISLAND ROUTE'.

Dr. KEAN advertisement for a cure, located at 173 South Clark St., Chicago.

LESSONS For Children About Themselves advertisement by A. E. NEWTON.

Tobacco And Its Effects. A PRIZE ESSAY. Showing that the Use of Tobacco is a Physical, Mental, Moral and Social Evil.

THE GOSPEL OF NATURE advertisement by SHELDON & LITTLE.

After Dogmatic Theology, WHAT? advertisement by GILES B. STEBBINS, Editor and Compiler of 'Chapters from the Bible of the Ages'.

