

Religio-Philosophical Journal

JOHN C. BUNDY, Editor. J. R. FRANCIS, Associate Editor

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Antiquity of Spiritualism.

The Popular Science Monthly for September, contains two allusions to Spiritualism, which are significant as tending to indicate, the one that modern Spiritualism is a very ancient affair, and the other that it is in truth that "most ancient church," the vision of which was so delightful to Swedenborg.

One who had learning enough in mathematics and astronomy to have discovered at that early date that the sun is the centre of our planetary system, would be likely to have left on record a volume of "spiritual transactions" of infinitely more worth than the theological subtleties of Thomas Aquinas, or the poetic phantasmagoria of Dante.

But it is to the Popular Science Monthly's own article on the "Science of Comparative Jurisprudence," that we designed chiefly to call attention, as it brings out the fact that Spiritualism, or spirit communion with deceased relatives, is historically the most ancient church as well as the most modern.

This point is one of great significance as showing both that civilization, law, morality and the progress of society, begin in spirit communion with the risen, and that no firm basis can be laid in sociology for accounting for any of these, save by dating them back to a phenomenon, which the Popular Science Monthly denies ever to have existed.

Another sign of the times, is the resolution endorsing the JOURNAL adopted by the Spiritualists at the camp meeting near Delphos, Kansas, an account of which appears on our sixth page.

Mr. Augustus Day, of Detroit, has our thanks for a list of new subscribers obtained at the late Lansing camp meeting.

Proved to be superior to all other social institutions, and which has been found to be a universal principle of all primitive peoples and the radical principle of all known religions.

A slight obscurity is thrown over the idea by using the word "worship" relative to the attitude of primitive races toward their dead, whereas the word "communion" or "intercourse" would be more correct.

This, of course, raises the question how came communion with the recently dead, or as Spencer imperfectly styles it, "ancestor worship," to have been so early and so universally the dominant form of belief.

Spencer undertakes to refer it to dreams; but animals dream. Have we any reason to believe they worship their dead? Besides, contempt for dreams is among the first and earliest lessons of infant civilization.

When Mrs. Emma Hardinge-Britten in her recent lectures in New Zealand, explained the spirit philosophy to the native Maoris, they answered, "This is not new. We were never without the means of communion with our dead."

Whether this is true or not, it is the universal testimony. The Jews sought to crush this out by forbidding it. "Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live," means thou shalt not suffer any one to live who communes with familiar demon spirits.

Since then our sociologists and antiquarians are driven to find the origin of society, law and civilization, in the universal belief of mankind in spirit communion, are they not also driven to account for the universality of this belief upon principles consistent with human experience?

The materialists allege that the belief in spirit phenomena creates the hallucination that they occur, and urge in proof of this, that with the decline in the belief in miracles, in Europe, the miracles ceased to occur.

Prof. Denton, in a communication in the Duluth Tribune, speaks as follows of Minnesota: "At Alexandria, Minnesota, I had an opportunity of seeing the heart of the remarkable lake region of Minnesota. There are in the State more than 7,000 lakes, which, it is calculated, cover an area of 2,700,000 acres.

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Christna and Christ.

We publish elsewhere a letter from "Scio," though it expressly disclaims the obligation to do that which we made a condition precedent to its publication, viz.: to back its assertions by historic proofs.

The chief claims upon which the Jew, Jesus, is worshipped by the Christian world as the Deity, are, that he is an incarnation of Jehovah, the Jewish God, through the services of a Jewish matron named Mary, called by some the Virgin, whose birth was miraculously announced, whose life was rescued from slaughter during infancy under the decree of a tyrant, by his mother being warned to flee into another country, who was born in a stable, who performed miracles, more especially the curing of lepers, who was crucified, descended into hell and rose into heaven.

We affirmed that all these and numerous other characteristics of the history of Jesus, were evidently borrowed from antecedent narratives, concerning various persons including Hercules, Mithras, Horus and others, but especially from those concerning Christna, of whom exactly these same tales were told in India many centuries before they were collected in Judea into the Gospels and applied to the biography of the Jew Jesus, and that there are strong reasons to suspect that the title itself of Christ might have followed or resulted from that of Christna, which had so long preceded it.

"Scio" denies these allegations in toto. We open our proofs quoting from Sir Wm. Jones and Mr. Milman. Mr. Milman shows that the doctrine of incarnation underlay the Buddhist and Zoroastrian religions, thus antedating Jesus by at least 2,000 years; that from these oriental sources it passed into Platonism and into the Judaism of the Alexandrine school. Sir Wm. Jones proves that Christna dates 900 years before Jesus; that he was regarded by his devotees as an incarnation of Deity; was born of a virgin and escaped in his infancy from a tyrant, as Jesus is described as escaping from Herod. We then show that a slaughter of the innocents, such as is narrated in one of the gospels, could never have been ordered by a person in Herod's position, both from lack of motive and lack of power; that at Jesus's birth Herod being seventy-six years old, and dying, could not have stood in much fear of an event which could not happen until Jesus should arrive at manhood, by which period Herod, if he lived, would be about one hundred years old.

The Reverend "Scio" warns us to discard Higgins, because he states that the mother of Christna was Maia instead of Devaci. Does "Scio" discard Jesus because he makes historical blunders? Not at all. Jesus tells the Jews (Matt. v. 43), "Ye have heard that it hath been said thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy. But I say unto you, love your enemies," etc.

Again, "Scio" does not reject "Matthew" as a historian, though among his numerous errors is that of alleging in ch. 2, v. 23, that the infant Jesus was brought to Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the prophets, "He shall be called a Nazarene."

a "Nazareth" meaning thereby an ascetic of a certain stripe—not a person born at Nazareth. Matthew made a dead and flat mistake, but "Scio" still reads Matthew.

Pausing to consider our progress, we find "Scio" does not deny that the doctrine of the Incarnation of a Savior God through a Virgin, is much older than Christianity, or that it pervaded Buddhism from its earliest periods. This is no insignificant point gained. For when the story of Christna first became known to Europe, the resemblance both in the jingle of the name and the facts of history, was so striking that Christian theologians angrily denounced this new found Christna as a copy of Christ, and an astronomer named Bentley, a contemporary, we believe, of Newton, achieved great popularity at the hands of the Church, by entering into an astronomical calculation of the birth of Christna, so as to make it in the 6th century after Christ, and so the Church militant was enabled to assume for a brief season the graceful dignity of the Church triumphant.

Our correspondent, "Scio," is at fault in quoting from Mr. Arnold's poem as an authority concerning the origin of Buddhism, as that relates to the ninth incarnation of Vishnu in Buddha Sakya-muni, while Buddhism itself dates from the first incarnation of Vishnu in the original black Buddha, at least 2,000 years anterior to the birth of Christ. The former stands associated with the origin of the cult. The latter merely gave emphasis to the principle of self-renunciation, but in so doing he anticipated by at least five centuries the essential teachings of Jesus. He was hardly an incarnation at all in our sense of the word, as he is reputed to have been born of Suddhodana, king of Kapilavastu, and Maia a virgin, while the first or black Buddha is claimed to have been born of the virgin Maia, in whom conception was produced immaculately by a ray of heavenly light.

Thus we trace back to astrology, which is the cradle of all religions, that splendid myth of the incarnation of the unknown God in a known man, which was first told of the black Buddha of India, who was an impersonation of the sun, and which after permeating all the religions of Asia, was at last told of Jesus, in which form the myth is now a source of comfort and consolation to our correspondent "Scio."

It devolves on us to prove that the particular form of the myth which has been copied into the gospels, is that taken from the Hindoo stories of Christna. To this end we continue our citations. Sir Wm. Jones further says of Christna:

"Christna was the person of Vishnu (God) himself in a human form. He was believed to have been born from the left intercostal space of a virgin of the royal line of Devaci. He passed a life of a most incomprehensible nature. His birth was concealed through fear of the tyrant Cass, as he had been predicted that one born at that time in such a family would destroy him. He was fostered, therefore, in Mathura by an honest herdsman named Amalaka. Christna was a boy loved by the terrible serpent Calyaga, with a number of other serpents and monsters. He saved multitudes partly by his arms and partly by his miraculous power. He raised the dead, descending for that purpose to the lowest regions. He watched the feet of the Brahmins and preached very nobly and sublimely, but always in their favor. ("Asiatic Researches.")

Mr. Higgins on page 180 of the Anacalypsis, writes:

"The Christna of India is always represented as the Savior and preserver of mankind; he is also represented as the Supreme Being, taking upon himself the state of man. (Parallel Nigene and Athionian creeds.)

"He was cradled among shepherds to whom was first made known the terrible serpent Calyaga, as shepherds watched their flocks by night." (Dr. Watts.)

"Soon after Christna's birth he was carried away by night and concealed in a region remote from his natal place, for fear of a tyrant, whose destroyer it was foretold he would become, and who had for that reason ordered all the male children born at that period to be slain. This story is the subject of an immense scripture in the cave of Elephanta, the date of which is lost in antiquity. (Parallel Mathew, ch. 11.)

"Christna was by the male line of royal descent, though he was actually born in a dungeon. Jesus's descent is (attempted to be traced to King David, though he is born in a stable.)

"The moment Christna was born, the whole place was illuminated, and the countenance of his father and mother emitted rays of glory. (Infancy of Christna, Parallel Gospel of the Infancy of Jesus, chap. 11.)

"Christna was carried to Mathura. He was foretold that he would be raised to restore the lost dead, and returned to Valcoonia-Paradise. Christna was called the Good Shepherd.

though not absolutely infallible, all the points made in our original article on "The Mistakes of a Bishop," and denied by "Scio." "Scio" in reply has continued his denials, but to the main point, viz., the identity of the characteristics of the histories of Christna and of Christ, he has quoted not a line of proof, nor cited a paragraph of history from any source. He denies that he is under any obligation to do so. Our proofs devolve upon him the obligation, which is as far as we can go. We can not supply him with the ability.

A Mississippi Horror Revealed from the Spirit-land Through a Medium.

It appears from the West Point, Miss., Times, that Mr. Borum and his whole household, consisting of his wife, two children and colored nurse, were burned about four years ago, together with the residence in which they resided, about a mile from Shannon, Lee county, Miss. It was believed at the time, and is yet, that Mr. Borum and his family were murdered, and the house was then burned to destroy all evidences of the crime. The whole country was scoured over at the time in search of the supposed murderers, and several arrests were made, but they were all turned loose, there being no evidence against them. Subsequently, Capt. William E. Thomas, of Baldwin, Miss., went to Jeffersonville, Indiana, accompanied by Mr. Garner Watson. On reaching the house of the medium—a lady—a servant met them at the door, and soon after they were seated the medium came in. Mr. Thomas told her at once without introducing himself or Mr. Watson, that they desired to hold communion with any friends they might have in the spirit-land, if any were present. In a short time the medium said that a lady desired to speak to Mr. Thomas. He told the medium to have her proceed, whereupon the usual writing table was put in position and in a moment he received a note of greeting from Mrs. Borum, who was a cousin of his. He then asked her about the loss of her life and of her family's. She stated that on the Saturday night when the terrible affair occurred, that she and the children had gone to bed when some one rapped at the door. That her husband opened the door and was struck in a moment by a negro who knocked him to the floor and then killed him with a knife. That almost immediately two negroes rushed in and killed her and her two children. That the house was then set on fire, after what money they had in it was obtained, and as stated.

A Sad Occurrence.

Rose A., daughter of Louis E. and Sarah A. Waterman, late of Boston, now of New York City, was accidentally killed on Saturday evening, August 14th, at the early age of fifteen years and five months. Being on the roof of the block in which her mother and sisters occupy a flat, with a number of children and their elders, as she was about to part from her friends and descend to the street, in some unaccountable way she passed over the rear edge of the roof, falling five stories and landing in the back yard, receiving fatal injuries; and half an hour later her young spirit had passed from earthly life to join her twin sister Lily, who went when but a year old. A large number of her associates were present at the funeral. Perry Lodge No. 134, Order of Good Templars, of which Rose was a member, brought an immense pillow of white rose-buds, in the centre of which in blush rose-buds was the name "Rose," and below it, in tea rose-buds, "We mourn our loss." The Lyceum of the Society of Progressive Spiritualists sent a large wreath with the letters, "C. P. L." in its centre, and at the bottom, in a profusion of delicate ferns, knotted together with ribbon, a large white lily and a blush rose, typical of herself and twin sister.

On our 6th page, C. A. Woodward expresses great admiration for Shakespeare; but Wendell Phillips in his lecture on "The Lost Arts," says: "Take the stories of Shakespeare, who has, perhaps, written his forty odd plays. Some are historical; the rest, two-thirds of them, he did not stop to invent, but found them. These he clutched, ready made to his hand, from the Italian novelists, who had taken them before from the East. Cinderella and her slipper is older than history, like half a dozen other baby legends. The annals of the world do not go back far enough to tell us from where they first came." Indeed, when an individual is carefully analyzed, weighed in the balance, and his value correctly estimated, he becomes only as a drop of water, as it were, to the mighty ocean—Shakespeare or any other man.

Harry Bastian having, since his refusal to give séances under test conditions in this city, found his occupation unprofitable in this country, is now entertaining our good natured English cousins. He took with him as manager Mr. Z. T. Griffin, a well-meaning gentleman with insane tendencies, who sometime since was taken violently insane, rendering his confinement in an asylum necessary. Bastian is undoubtedly a medium, but very tricky, and unless he experiences a "change of heart," will be of little use to Spiritualism.

WANTED files of volumes four and five of this paper. We will give three years' subscription to the JOURNAL or send the paper one year to three persons, in payment for perfect copies of either of the above volumes. Readers who can supply them will please first correspond with us.

Voices from the People.

AND INFORMATION ON VARIOUS SUBJECTS PERTAINING TO THE HARMONIAL PHILOSOPHY.

REPORT OF CAMP MEETING.

Held near Delphos, Ottawa Co., Kan., from Aug. 13th to the 23d, 1880.

The 13th opened clear and brilliant, as Kansas days are at this season. The friends began to gather in the beautiful native woods near the banks of the Solomon...

with regard to the detection and weeding out of fraud. The above resolutions were unanimously adopted. On Sunday, the 22d, the grounds were covered with people...

The State Society of Spiritualists and Liberalists of Michigan.

CAMP MEETING AT LANING.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: Presuming that your readers would like a report of the late camp meeting at Lansing, held under the auspices of the State Society of Spiritualists and Liberalists of Michigan...

Shakespeare and Phenomenal Spiritualism.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: The following, from introduction to "A Shakespearean Dictionary, an alphabetical arrangement of the characters in Shakespeare's works..."

The Spirit-Body-Evil.

Something what the bird is to the shell - what the juicy pulp is to the orange, the spiritual body is to the organic man. The rind aptly symbolizes the outer physical body, and the orange seed the soul...

Letter from Mrs. Dr. Miller.

To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: I am so delighted with the views advanced by some of the leading minds connected with the work of progress, as set forth in the JOURNAL...

The speakers were listened to with the best of attention, by the large audience which convened at ten o'clock in the morning, and the subjects were generally elucidated by the speakers with clearness and force. It may be of interest to our friends to know what questions were asked, discussed and answered by the people...

Again, Liberalists as a class, do not enjoy the sweet inspirational appeals for a higher life upon a more spiritual plane, of such speakers as Mrs. Woodworth, who has a more spiritual nature, to meet the angels half way, by aspiring to a higher, purer life and more exalted aspirations for spirit communion...

Now my charms are all o'erthrown, And what strength I have's mine own, etc. Referring to this epilogue, an able writer writes: "Prospero's departure from the stage is the parting of Shakespeare from the theatre, the scene of his marvelous works..."

More Information Wanted, this time, about Special Providence. By DR. HOWLAND HAMILTON. Is this world, physical or mental in any sense, governed by special providence? Does God the Father, God the Christ, God the Holy Spirit, or God the Devil, (I speak reverently), ever hear or answer verbal prayer directly?

The above questions were responded to by Mrs. Duntun, Moody, Fitzgerald, Hibler, Blanchard, Ruggles, Durin, Page, Babcock, Smith, Boucher, Roberts, Bro. H. E. Page, J. C. Duntun and Chas. H. Moody. Bro. J. C. Duntun was chosen chairman of a committee for procuring a text medium for our next camp meeting...

Need I go further to account for a perfect failure (as to numbers) of this second camp meeting of the State Society of Spiritualists and Liberalists of Michigan? I think not. I expect to be severely criticised and censured for this plainy recording my observations, but I will not shrink upon me the responsibility of my own words...

The Creator and the Creature. To the Editor of the Religio-Philosophical Journal: For the past fifteen years I have devoted much of my leisure time in investigating the various theories advanced by theosophical writers...

Now, if we are to believe that God or the delict spirit is no respecter of persons, and that he governs the physical, mental and spiritual world by which Christians choose to represent themselves...

10th. We hold that the conscious spirit individually is naturally immortal, and has the power of returning to earth and communicating with its inhabitants. 11th. We hold that a harmony or balance between the soul and the physical body in connection with health is necessary to the highest development of the spirit...

Kalamazoo, Mich. A. P. Holden writes: I am more than pleased to attend my appreciation of your paper by renewal of subscription. Its evident improvement on the past is not only a flattering promise of its future, but a pledge of usefulness commensurate with its central and commanding position which are cogent reasons for its liberal support.

Wm. Skinner writes: I would not have you for one moment suppose that I had relinquished such a grand paper as the JOURNAL. I regard it as the true exponent of our spiritual philosophy. I wish to congratulate you on the noble stand you have taken...

N. W. Babcock writes: I have been a constant reader of the JOURNAL for several years, even before the JOURNAL office was burnt by the Chicago fire. I have been a Spiritualist for twenty-eight years...

"Then shall wars and tumults cease, Then be banished grief and pain, Righteousness and joy and peace, Undisturbed shall ever reign." And the magnetic influence is good for the time, but not one thinks of doing anything but to go to Sunday school for an hour on Sabbath, and to prayer meeting for an hour during the week...

Brooklyn (N. Y.) Spiritual Fraternity. Our first meeting after the summer vacation was marked with the same earnestness and kind fraternal feeling, that has so eminently characterized our meetings since our organization...

Mr. C. C. Bowen said that he was in cordial sympathy with the remarks of the eloquent teacher who had preceded him, and that what Spiritualism needed was more earnest workers, and less talk. He was warmly greeted and frequently applauded, expressing much heart-felt pleasure in being able to meet with us.

W. F. Moore writes: I find it impossible to do without spiritual food, and am well pleased with that coming through your paper.

Louis Himes writes: I think the JOURNAL grows better and better. I hope to continue taking it while I live. Alfred Moore writes: I find it impossible to do without spiritual food, and am well pleased with that coming through your paper.

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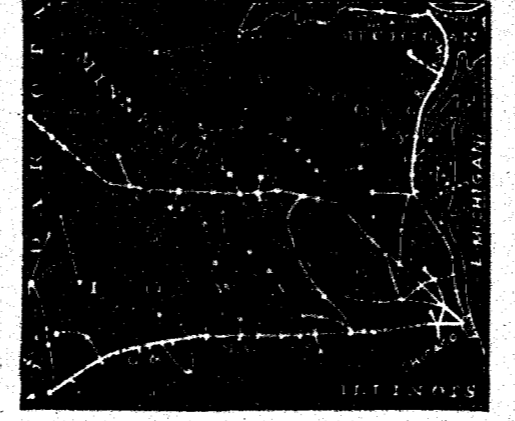
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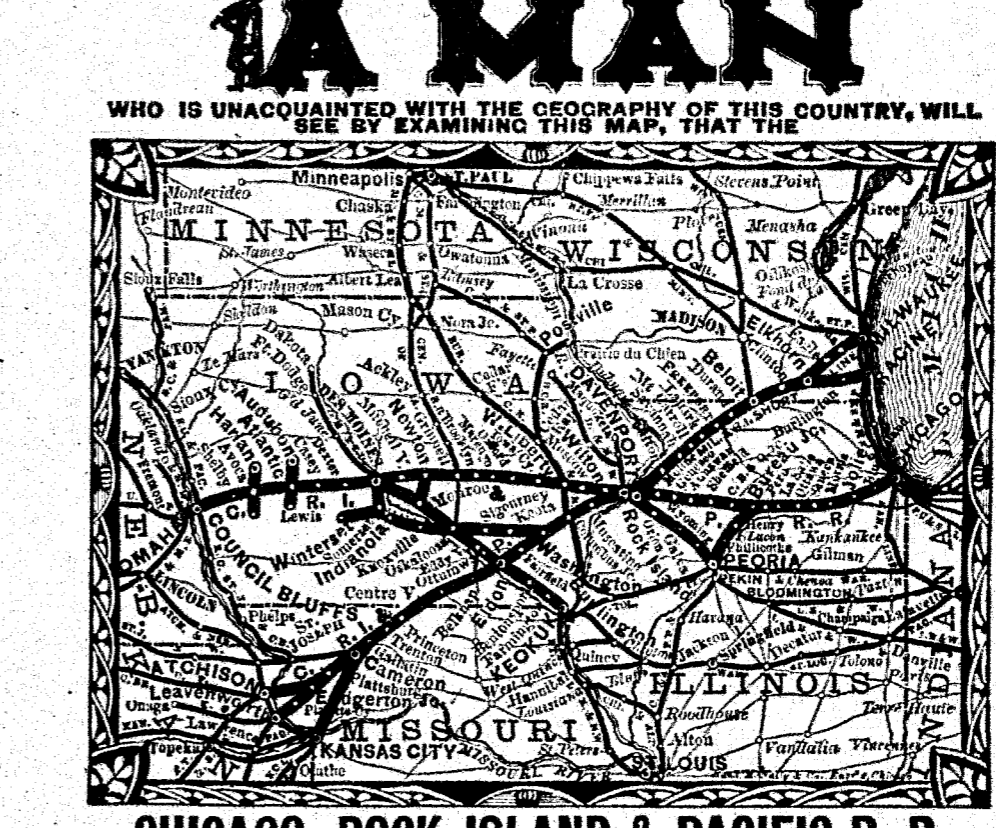
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