

# ASTRAL, PSYCHIC, AND SPIRITUAL MAN

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*Articles by H. P. Blavatsky*

ANIMATED STATUES

CHINESE SPIRITS

NATURE'S HUMAN MAGNETS

A PSYCHIC WARNING

THEOSOPHY AND SPIRITUALISM

AN ASTRAL PROPHET

MEMORY IN THE DYING

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## FOREWORD

THE articles here reprinted all give evidence of the importance of the Theosophical teaching of man's seven principles, especially the middle principles through which alone light can be thrown on the strange psychical phenomena which so puzzle and confuse the Western world.

"Animated Statues," which appeared in the *Theosophist* for November, 1886, deals with matters regarded as pure superstition by modern scholars. Few readers in our time are aware of the extent to which speaking images were known to the writers of antiquity. In gathering this testimony, and giving as much explanation as seemed appropriate, H.P.B. leads the reader through a maze of classical sources and authorities, offering occult commentary along the way, and defending "pagan antiquity and its grand philosophy." She is under the double necessity of vindicating certain ancient philosophies while refuting Roman Catholic writers who accepted the phenomena but attributed it to demons. Yet the reality of sorcery and black magic has attention, since indifference to such possibilities may bring tragic results to those of a sensitive nature. Five crucial questions and distinctions, illustrating the perspective of the occultist, are presented at the end of this article, which is in part a notice of F. Anstey's novel, *The Fallen Idol*. Anstey (Thomas Anstey Guthrie) had treated humorously matters that deserved, she said, more serious recognition.

"Chinese Spirits," posthumously published in *Lucifer* for November, 1891, shows from the testimony of H.P.B.'s learned Chinese informant that old temple teachings in China were well informed concerning the principles of man's nature. The Chinese names of the principles are given and explained in terms of their Theosophical equivalents. Here,

again, in correction of the reports and misrepresentations of Catholic missionaries, H.P.B. renders the meaning of the Chinese traditions according to occult philosophy.

In “Nature’s Human Magnets,” which appeared in the *Theosophist* for April, 1881, H.P.B. discusses reports of magnetic phenomena produced in the presence of peculiarly endowed individuals, using the researches of Baron von Reichenbach to show that magnetism is “a compound instead of a simple force.” The point of her explanation is that these strange happenings were not supernatural, but simply expressions of unknown laws of nature.

The mutual psychic influence existing between individuals joined by strong affinities is the subject of “A Psychic Warning,” H.P.B.’s long comment on a communication from a reader, printed in the *Theosophist* for June, 1881. The power of the last thought of a dying man to affect the decisions and behavior of one who has been close to him is illustrated and discussed.

Replying to a correspondent in the *Theosophist* for August, 1882, under the title, “Theosophy and Spiritualism,” H.P.B. distinguishes clearly between the two, at the same time showing friendly hospitality to Spiritualists who are interested in Theo-sophic conceptions.

The reality of communications from the Higher Ego is the content of “An Astral Prophet,” in which H.P.B. comments on the extraordinary experience of a Russian General who died in 1861. This article appeared in *Lucifer* for June, 1890.

There has been much discussion during the later years of the twentieth century of the feelings and states of mind of the dying. This subject would be greatly illuminated by investigation of the Theosophic teachings concerning death, which deal with the extraordinary transition experienced by the ego. At the time of death, “for a few seconds at least,” H.P.B. says at the close of “Memory in the Dying,” “our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one,” with the result that “the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein there is neither past nor future, but all is one. . . .” “Memory in the Dying” was published in *Lucifer* for October, 1889.

Theosophist, November, 1886

## ANIMATED STATUES

**T**O whatsoever cause it may be due matters little, but the word *fetich* is given in the dictionaries the restricted sense of “an object selected temporarily for worship,” “a small idol used by the African *savages*” etc., etc.

In his “Des Cultes Anterieurs a l’Idolatrie,” Dulaure defines Fetichism as “the adoration of an object considered by the ignorant and the weak-minded as the receptacle or the habitation of a god or genius.”

Now all this is extremely erudite and profound, no doubt; but it lacks the merit of being either true or correct. Fetich may be an *idol* among the negroes of Africa, according to Webster; and there are weak-minded and ignorant people certainly who are fetich worshippers. Yet the theory that certain objects—statues, images, and *amulets* for example—serve as a temporary or even constant habitation to a “god,” “genius” or *spirit* simply, has been shared by some of the most intellectual men known to history. It was *not* originated by the ignorant and weak-minded, since the majority of the world’s sages and philosophers, from *credulous* Pythagoras down to sceptical Lucian, believed in such a thing in antiquity; as in our highly civilized, cultured and learned century several hundred millions of Christians still believe in it, whether the above definitions be correct or the one we shall now give. The administration of the Sacrament, the mystery of Transubstantia-tion “in the *supposed* conversion of the bread and wine of the Eucharist into the body and blood of Christ,” would render the bread and wine and the communion cup along with them *fetiches*—no less than the tree or rag or stone of the savage African. Every miracle-working image, tomb and statue of a Saint,

Virgin or Christ, in the Roman Catholic and Greek Churches, have thus to be regarded as *fetiches*; because, whether the miracle is supposed to be wrought by God or an angel, by Christ or a saint, those images or statues *do* become—if the miracle be claimed as *genuine*—“the receptacle or dwelling” for a longer or shorter time of God or an “angel of God.”

It is only in the “Dictionnaire des Religions” (Article on *Fetichisme*) that, a pretty correct definition may be found: “The word *fetich* was derived from the Portuguese word *fetisso*, “enchanted,” “bewitched” or “charmed\*”; whence <sup>^</sup>w/w/ < destiny, <sup>^</sup>w < ,<sup>4</sup>fairy, etc.

Fetich, moreover, was and still ought to be identical with “idol”; and as the author of “The Teraphim of Idolatry” says, “Fetichism is the adoration of *any object*, whether inorganic or living, large or of minute proportions, *in which*, or, *in connection with which*,—any ‘spirit’—good or bad in short—an invisible intelligent power—has manifested its presence.”

Having collected for my “Secret Doctrine” a number of notes upon this subject, I may now give some of them *apropos* of the latest *theosophical* novel “A Fallen Idol,” and thus show that work of fiction based on some very occult truths of Esoteric Philosophy.

The images of all the gods of antiquity, from the earliest Aryans down to the latest Semites—the Jews,—were all idols and fetiches, whether called *Teraphim*, *Urim* and *Thummim*, Kabeiri, or cherubs, or the gods *Lares*. If, speaking of the *teraphim*—a word that Grotius translates as “angels,” an etymology authorized by Cornelius, who says that they “were the symbols of *angelic* presence” —the Christians are allowed to call them “the mediums through which *divine presence* was manifested,” why not apply the same to the idols of the “heathen”?

I am perfectly alive to the fact that the modern man of science, like the average sceptic, believes no more in an “animated” image of the Roman Church than he does in the “animated” fetich of a savage. But there is no question, at present, of belief or disbelief. It is simply the evidence of antiquity embracing a period of several thousands of

years, as against the denial of the sixth century—the century of Spiritualism and Spiritism, of Theosophy and Occultism, of Charcot and his hypnotism, of psychic “suggestion,” and of unrecognized BLACK MAGIC all round.

Let us Europeans honour the religion of our forefathers, by questioning it on its beliefs and their origin, before placing on its defence pagan antiquity and its grand philosophy; where do we find in Western sacred literature, so-called, the first mention of idols and fetiches? In chapter xxxi (*et seq*) of Genesis, in Ur of the Chaldees in Mesopotamia, wherein the ancestors of Abraham, Serug and Terah, worshipped little idols in clay which they

called their *gods*; and where also, in Haran, Rachel stole the images (*teraphim*) of her father Laban. Jacob may have forbidden the worship of those gods, yet one finds 325 years after that prohibition, the Mosaic Jews adoring “the gods of the Amorites” all the same (Joshua xxiv. 14, 15). The teraphim-gods of Laban exist to this day among certain tribes of Mussulmans on Persian territory. They are small statuettes of tutelary genii, or gods, which are consulted on every occasion. The Rabbis explain that Rachel had no other motive for stealing her father’s *gods* than that of preventing his learning from them the direction she and her husband Jacob had taken, lest he should prevent them from leaving his home once more. Thus, it was not piety, or the fear of the Lord God of Israel, but simply a dread of the indiscretion of the gods that made her secure them. Moreover, her mandrakes were only another kind of sortilegious and magical implements.

Now what is the opinion of various classical and even sacred writers on these *idols*, which Hermes Trismegistus calls “statues foreseeing futurity” (*Asclepias*)

Philo of Biblos shows that the Jews consulted *demons* like the Amorites, especially through small statues made of gold, shaped as nymphs which, questioned at any hour, would instruct them what the querists had to do and what to avoid. (“Antiquities.”) In “More Nevochim” (i, iii) it is said that nothing resembled more those *portative and preserving* gods of the pagans (*dii portatiles vel Avernunci*)

than those tutelary gods of the Jews. They were “veritable phylacteries or *animated* talismans, the *spirantia simulacra* of Apuleius (Book xi), whose *answers*, given in the temple of the goddess of Syria, were heard by Lucian personally, and repeated by him. Kircher (the Jesuit Father) shows also that the *teraphim* looked, in quite an extraordinary way, like the pagan *Serapises* of Egypt; and Cedrenus seems to corroborate that statement of Kircher (in his Vol. iii, p. 494 “*CEdipus*,” etc.) by showing that the *t* and the *s* (like the Sanskrit *s* and the Zend *h*) were convertible letters, the *Seraphim* (or *Serapis*) and the *teraphim*, being absolute synonyms.

As to the use of these idols, Maimonides tells us (“*More Nev-ochim*,” p. 41) that these gods or images passed for being endowed with the prophetic gift, and as being able to tell the people in whose possession they were “all that was useful and salutary for them.”

All these images, we are told, had the form of a baby or small child, others were only occasionally much larger. They were statues or regular idols in the human shape. The Chaldeans exposed them to the beams of certain planets for the latter to imbue them with their virtues and potency. These were for purposes of astromagic; the regular *teraphim* for those of necromancy and sorcery, in most cases. The spirits of the dead (elementaries) were attached to them by magic art, and they were used for various sinful purposes.

Ugolino<sup>1</sup> puts in the mouth of the sage Gamaliel, St. Paul’s master (or *guru*), the following words, which he quotes, he says, from his “*Capito*,” chap. xxxvi: “They (the possessors of such necromantic *teraphim*) killed a new-born baby, cut off its head, and placed under its tongue, salted and oiled, a little gold lamina in which the name of an evil spirit was perforated; then, after suspending that head on the wall of their chamber, they lighted lamps before it, and prostrate on the ground they *conversed with it*”

The learned Marquis de Mirville believes that it was just such ex-human *fetiches* that were meant by Philostratus, who gives a number of instances of the same. “There was the head of Orpheus” —he says—“which spoke to Cyrus, and the head of a priest-sacrificer

<sup>1</sup> Ugolino—“*Thesaur*”—Vol. xxiii, p. 475.0

from the temple of Jupiter Hoplosmius which, when severed from its body, revealed, as Aristotle narrates, the name of its murderer, one called Cencidas; and the head of one Publius Capitanus, which, according to Trallianus, at the moment of the victory won by Acilius the Roman Consul, over Antiochus, King of Asia, predicted to the Romans the great misfortunes that would soon befall them, &c.” (“*Pn. des Esprits*,” Vol. iii, 29 Memoir to the Academy, p. 252.)

Diodorus tells the world how such idols were fabricated for magical purposes in days of old. “Semele, the daughter of Cadmus, having, in consequence of a fright given premature birth to a child of seven months, Cadmus, in order to follow *the custom of his country* and to give it (the babe) a *supermundane* origin which would make it live after death, enclosed its body within a gold statue, and made of it an idol for which a special cult and rites were established.” (Diodorus, lib. i. p. 48.)

As Freret, in his article in the “*Memoires de l’Academie des Inscriptions*,” Vol. xxiii, p. 247—pointedly remarks, when commenting upon the above passage: “A singular thing, deserving still more attention, is that the said *consecration* of Semele’s baby, which the *Orphics* show as having been the custom of Cadmus’ ancestors—is *precisely the ceremony described by the Rabbis*, as cited by Seldenus, with regard to the *teraphim* or household gods of the Syrians and the Phoenicians. There is little probability, however, that the Jews should have been acquainted with the Orphics.”

Thus, there is every reason to believe that the numerous drawings in Father Kircher’s (*Edipus*, little figures and heads with metallic laminae protruding from under their tongues, which hang entirely out of the heads’ mouths, are real and genuine *teraphim* —as shown by de Mirville. Then again in Le Blanc’s “*Religions*,” (Vol. iii, p. 277), speaking of the Phoenician *teraphim*, the author compares them to the Greco-Phrygian *palladium*, which contained human relics. “All the mysteries of the apotheosis, of orgies, sacrifices and magic, were applied to such heads. A child young enough to have his innocent soul still united with the *Anima Mundi*—the Mundane Soul—was killed,” he says; “his head was embalmed *and its soul was fixed in it, as it*

*is averred, by the power of magic and enchantments.*” After which followed the usual process, the gold lamina, etc., etc.

Now this is terrible BLACK MAGIC, we say; and none but the *dugpas* of old, the villainous sorcerers of antiquity, used it. In the Middle Ages only several Roman Catholic priests are known to have resorted to it; among others the apostate Jacobin priest in the service of Queen Catherine of Medici, that faithful daughter of the Church of Rome and the author of the “St. Bartholomew Massacre.” The story is given by Bodin, in his famous work on Sorcery “*Le Demonomanie, ou Traite des Sorciers*” (Paris, 1587); and it is quoted in “*Isis Unveiled*” (Vol. ii, p. 56). Pope Sylvester II was publicly accused by Cardinal Benno of sorcery, on account of his “Brazen Oracular Head.” These heads and other *talking* statues, trophies of the magical skill of monks and bishops, were fac-similes of the *animated* gods of the ancient temples. Benedict IX, John XX, and the VIth and VIIth Popes Gregory are all known in history as sorcerers and magicians. Notwithstanding such an array of facts to show that the Latin Church has despoiled the ancient Jews of all—aye, even to their knowledge of *black art* inclusively—one of their advocates of modern times, namely, the

Marquis de Mirville, is not ashamed to publish against the modern Jews, the most terrible and foul of accusations!

In his violent polemics with the French symbolologists, who try to find a philosophical explanation for ancient Bible customs and rites, he says: “We pass over the symbolic significations that are sought for to explain all such customs of the idolatrous Jews, (their *human* teraphim and severed baby-heads), because we do not believe in them (such explanations) at all. But we do believe, for one, that ‘the head’ consulted by the Scandinavian Odin in every difficult affair was a *teraphim* of the same (magic) class. And that *in which we believe still more*, is, that all *those mysterious disappearances and abductions of small (Christian) children*, practised at all times and even in our own day by the Jews—are the *direct consequences of those ancient and barbarous necromantic practices* .... Let the reader remember the incident of Damas and Father Thomas.” (“*Pneum des Esprits*,” Vol. iii, p. 254.)

Quite clear and unmistakeable this. The unfortunate, despoiled Israelites are plainly charged with abducting Christian children to behead and make *oracular* heads with them, for purposes of sorcery! Where will bigotry and intolerance with their *odium theologicum* land next, I wonder?

On the contrary, it seems quite evident that it is just in consequence of such terrible malpractices of Occultism that Moses and the early ancestors of the Jews were so strict in carrying out the severe prohibition against graven images, statues and likenesses in any shape, of either “gods” or living men. This same reason was at the bottom of the like prohibition by Mohammed and enforced by all the Mussulman prophets. For the *likeness of any person*, in whatever form and mode, of whatever material, *may be turned into a deadly weapon against the original by a really learned practitioner of the black art*. Legal authorities during the Middle Ages, and even some of 200 years ago, were not wrong in putting to death those in whose possession small wax figures of their enemies were found, for it was *murder contemplated*, pure and simple. “Thou shall not draw the *vital spirits* of thy enemy, or of any person into his *simulacrum*,” for “this is a heinous crime against nature.” And again: “Any object into which the *fiat* of a spirit has been drawn is dangerous, and must not be left in the hands of the ignorant. ... An expert (in magic) has to be called to purify it.” (“*Pract. Laws of Occult Science*,” Book v, Coptic copy.)

In a kind of “Manual” of Elementary Occultism, it is said: “To make a bewitched object (*fetich*) harmless, its parts have to be reduced to atoms (broken), and the whole buried in damp soil” —(follow instructions, unnecessary in a publication).<sup>8</sup>

That which is called “vital spirits” is the astral body. “Souls, whether united or separated from their bodies, *have a corporeal substance inherent to their nature*” says St. Hilarion. (“*Comm. in Matth.*” C. v. No. 8.) Now the astral body of a living person, of one unlearned in occult sciences, may be forced (by an expert in magic) to animate, or

<sup>2</sup> The author of “A Fallen Idol!”—whether through natural intuition or study of occult laws it is for him to say—shows knowledge of this fact by making Nebelsen say that the spirit of the tirthankar was paralyzed and torpid during the time his idol had been buried in India. That Eidolon or Elementary could do nothing. See p. 295.

be drawn to, *and then fixed within* any object, especially into anything made in his likeness, a portrait, a statue, a little figure in wax, &c. And as whatever hits or affects the astral reacts by repercussion on the physical body, it becomes logical and stands to reason that, by stabbing the likeness in its vital parts—the heart, for instance—the original may be sympathetically killed, without any one being able to detect the cause of it. The Egyptians, who separated man (*exoterically*) into three divisions or groups—”mind body” (pure spirit, our 7th and 6th prin.); the spectral soul (the 5th, 4th, and 3rd principles); and the gross body (*prana and sthula sarird*), called forth in their theurgies and evocations (for divine *white magical* purposes, as well as for those of the black art) the “spectral soul,” or astral body, as we call it.

“It was not the soul itself that was evoked, but its *simulacrum* that the Greeks called *Eidolon*, and which was the middle principles between soul and body. That doctrine came from the East, the cradle of all learning. The Magi of Chaldea as well as all other followers of Zoroaster, believed that it was not the *divine* soul alone (spirit) which would participate in the glory of celestial light, but also the *sensitive* soul. (“Psellus, in Scholiis, in Orac”)

Translated into our Theosophical phraseology, the above refers to Atma and Buddhi—the vehicle of spirit. The Neo-Platonics, and even Origen,—”call the astral body *Augoeides* and *Astro-eides*, *i.e.*, one having the brilliancy of the stars.” (Sciences Oc-cultes,” by Cte. de Resie, Vol. ii, p. 598-9.)

Generally speaking, the world’s ignorance on the nature of the human phantom and vital principle, as on the functions of all man’s principles, is deplorable. Whereas science denies them all—an easy way of cutting the gordian knot of the difficulty—the churches have evolved the fanciful dogma of one solitary principle, the Soul, and neither of the two will stir from its respective preconceptions, notwithstanding the evidence of all antiquity and its most intellectual writers. Therefore, before the question can be argued with any hope of lucidity, the following points have to be settled and studied by our Theosophists—those, at any rate, who are interested in the subject:

1. The difference between a physiological hallucination and a psychic or spiritual clairvoyance and clairaudience.
2. Spirits, or the entities of certain invisible beings—whether *ghosts* of once living men, angels, spirits, or elementals,—have they, or have they not, a natural though an ethereal and to us invisible body? Are they united to, or can they assimilate some fluidic substance that would help them to become visible to men?
3. Have they, or have they not, the power of so becoming infused among the atoms of any object, whether it be a statue (idol), a picture, or an amulet, as to impart to it their potency and virtue, and even to *animate* it?
4. Is it in the power of any Adept, Yogi or Initiate, *to fix such* entities, whether by *White* or *Black* magic, in certain objects?
5. What are the various conditions (save Nirvana and Avitchi) of good and bad men after death? etc., etc.

All this may be studied in the literature of the ancient classics, and especially in Aryan literature. Meanwhile, I have tried to explain and have given the collective and individual opinions thereon of all the great philosophers of antiquity in my “Secret Doctrine.” I hope the book will now very soon appear. Only, in order to counteract the effects of such humoristical works as “A Fallen Idol” on weak-minded people, who see in it only a satire upon our beliefs, I thought best to give here the testimony of the ages to the effect that such *post-mortem* pranks as played by Mr. Anstey’s sham ascetic, who died a sudden death, are of no rare occurrence in nature.

To conclude, the reader may be reminded that if the astral body of man is no *superstition* founded on mere hallucinations, but a reality in nature, then it becomes only logical that such an *eidolon*, whose individuality is all centered after death in his *personal* EGO—should be attracted to the remains of the body that was his, during life;<sup>8</sup> and in case the latter was burnt and the ashes buried, that it should seek to prolong its existence vicariously by either possessing itself of some living body (a medium’s), or, by attaching itself to his own statue,

<sup>3</sup> Even burning does not affect its interference or prevent it entirely—since it can avail itself of the ashes. *Earth* alone will make it powerless.

picture, or some familiar object in the house or locality that it inhabited. The “vampire” theory, can hardly be a superstition altogether. Throughout all Europe, in Germany, Styria, Moldavia, Servia, France and Russia, those bodies of the deceased who are believed to have become *vampires*, have special exorcismal rites established for them by their respective Churches. Both the Greek and Latin religions think it beneficent to have such bodies dug out and transixed to the earth by a pole of aspen-tree wood.

However it may be, whether truth or superstition, ancient philosophers and poets, classics and lay writers, have believed as we do now, and that for several thousand years in history, that man had within him his astral counterpart, which would appear by separating itself or oozing out of the gross body, during life as well as after the death of the latter. Till that moment the “spectral soul” was the vehicle of the divine soul and the pure spirit. But, as soon as *the flames had devoured* the physical envelope, the spiritual soul, separating itself from the *simulacrum* of man, ascended to its new home of unalloyed bliss (Devachan or Swar-ga), while the spectral eidolon *descended* into the regions of Hades (*limbus*, purgatory, or *Kama loka*). “I have terminated my earthly career,” exclaims Dido, “my glorious spectre (astral body), the IMAGE of my person, will now descend into the womb of the earth.”<sup>4</sup>

“*Et nunc magna mei sub terras ibit imago*” (“Eneid,” lib. iv, 654).

Sabinus and Servius Honoratus (a learned commentator of Virgil of the vith cent.) have taught, as shown by Delris, the demon-logian (lib. ii, ch. xx and xxv, p. 116), that man was composed, besides his *soul*, of a shadow (*umbra*) and a body. The *soul* ascends to heaven, the *body* is pulverized, and the *shadow* is plunged in *Hades*, . . . This phantom—*umbra seu simulacrum*—is not a *real* body, they say: it is the *appearance* of one, that no hand can touch, as it avoids contact like a breath. Homer shows this same shadow in the phantom of Patroclus, who perished, killed by Hector, and yet “Here he is—it is

<sup>4</sup> Which is not the interior of the earth, or hell, as taught by the anti-geological-theologians, but the cosmic matrix of its region—the astral light of our atmosphere.

*his face*, his voice, his blood & till flowing from his wounds!” (See “Iliad,” xxiii, and also “Odyssey,” i, xi.) The ancient Greeks and Latins had two souls—*anima bruta* and *anima divina*, the first of which is in Homer the animal soul, the image and the life of the body, and the second, the immortal and the divine.

As to our *Kama loka*, Ennius, says Lucretius—“has traced the picture of the sacred regions in Acherusia, where dwell *neither our bodies nor our souls*, but only our simulacres, whose pallidity is dreadful to behold!” It is amongst those *shades* that divine Homer appeared to him, shedding bitter tears *as though the gods had created that honest man for eternal sorrow only*. It is from the midst of that world (*Kama loka*), which *seeks with avidity communication with our own*, that this *third* (part) of the poet, his *phantom*—explained to him the mysteries of nature. . . .<sup>5</sup>

Pythagoras and Plato both divided soul into two representative parts, independent of each other—the one, the rational soul, or (\*), the other, *irrational*, (\*)—the latter being again subdivided into two parts or aspects, the (\*), and the (\*), which, with the divine soul and its spirit and the body, make the *seven* principles of Theosophy. What Virgil calls *imago*, “image,” Lucretius names—*simulacrum*, “similitude” (See “De Nat. rerum” i), but they are all names for one and the same thing, the *astral body*.

We gather thus two points from the ancients entirely corroborative of our esoteric philosophy: (a) the astral or materialized figure of the dead is neither *the soul*, nor the *spirit*, nor the *body* of the deceased personage, but simply the *shadow* thereof, which justifies our calling it a “shell”; and (b) unless it be an *immortal God* (an angel) who animates an object, it can never be a *spirit*, to wit, the *SOUL*, or real, spiritual ego of a once living man; for these ascend, and an astral shadow (unless it be of a living person) can never be higher than a terrestrial, *earth-bound* ego, or an *irrational* shell. Homer was

5 . . . . Esse Acherusia templa  
Quo neque permanent animce, neque corpora nostra,  
Sed qucedam simulacra, modis pallentia miris,  
Unde sibi exortam semper florentis Homeri  
Commemorat speciem lacrymas et fundere salsas  
Coepisse, et rerum naturam, expandere dictis.

therefore right in making Tele-machus exclaim, on seeing Ulysses, who reveals himself to his son: “No, thou art not my father, thou art a demon, a spirit who flatters and deludes me!”

(!\*) “Odyssey,” xvi, 194

It is such illusive shadows, belonging to neither Earth nor Heaven, that are used by sorcerers and other adepts of the Black Art, to help them in persecutions of victims; to hallucinate the minds of very honest and well meaning persons occasionally, who fall victims to the mental epidemics aroused by them for a purpose; and to oppose in every way the beneficent work of the guardians of mankind, whether divine or—human.

For the present, enough has been said to show that the Theosophists have the evidence of the whole of antiquity in support of the correctness of their doctrines.

H. P. BLAVATSKY

*Note.*—As a corroboration of the theory that a great volume of psychic force may be concentrated in an object of worship, we may add the following biblical narrative of the overthrow of the image of the idol Dagon, in its own temple, by the superior power of the Hebraic ark. It runs thus:

When the Philistines took the ark of God, they brought it into the house of Dagon, and set it by Dagon. And when they of Ashdod arose early on the morrow, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the earth before the ark of the Lord. And they took Dagon, and set him in his place again. And when they arose early on the morrow morning, behold, Dagon was fallen upon his face to the ground before the ark of the Lord, and the head of Dagon, and both the palms of his hands were cut off upon the threshold; only the stump of Dagon was left to him. (I Sam. v. 3 and 4.)

O.

Lucifer, November, 1891

## CHINESE SPIRITS

THE following notes have been collected partly from an old work by a French missionary who lived in China for over forty years; some from a very curious unpublished work by an American gentleman who has kindly lent the writer his notes; some from information given by the Abbe Hue to the Chevalier Des Mousseaux and the Marquis De Mirville—for these the last two gentlemen are responsible. Most of our facts, however, come from a Chinese gentleman residing for some years in Europe.

Man, according to the Chinaman, is composed of four root-substances and three acquired “semblances.” This is the magical and universal occult tradition, dating from an antiquity which has its origin in the night of time. A Latin poet shows the same source of information in his country, when declaring that:

Bis duo sunt hominis: manes, caro, spiritus, umbra;

Quatuor ista loca bis duo suscipiunt.

Terra tegit carnem, tumulum circumvolat umbra,

Orcus habet manes, spiritus astra petit.

The phantom known and described in the Celestial Empire is quite orthodox according to occult teachings, though there exist several theories in China upon it.

The *human* soul, says the chief (temple) teaching, helps man to become a rational and intelligent creature, but it is neither simple (homogeneous) nor spiritual; it is a compound of all that is subtle in matter. This “soul” is divided by its nature and actions into two principal parts: the LING and the HOUEN. The *ling* is the better adapted of the two for spiritual and intellectual operations, and has an “upper” *ling*

or soul over it which is divine. Moreover, out of the union of the lower *ling* and *houen* is formed, during man's life, a third and mixed being, fit for both intellectual and physical processes, for good and evil, while the *houen* is absolutely bad. Thus we have four principles in these two "substances," which correspond, as is evident, to our Buddhi, the divine "upper" *ling*; to Manas, the lower *ling*, whose twin, the *houen*, stands for Kama-rupa—the body of passion, desire and evil; and then we have in the "mixed being" the outcome or progeny of both *ling* and *houen*—the "Mayavi," the astral body.

Then comes the definition of the third root-substance. This is attached to the body only during life, the body being the fourth substance, pure matter; and after the death of the latter, separating itself from the corpse—but not before its complete dissolution—it vanishes in thin air like a shadow with the last particle of the substance that generated it. This is of course Prana, the life-principle or vital form. Now, when man dies, the following takes place:—the "upper" *ling* ascends heavenward—into Nirvana, the paradise of Amitabha, or any other region of bliss that agrees with the respective sect of each Chinaman—carried off by the *Spirit of the Dragon of Wisdom* (the seventh principle); the body and its principle vanish gradually and are annihilated; remain the *ling-houen* and the "mixed being." If the man was good, the "mixed being" disappears also after a time; if he was bad and was entirely under the sway of *houen*, the absolutely evil principle, then the latter transforms his "mixed being" into *koueis*—which answers to the Catholic idea of a damned soul<sup>1</sup>—and, imparting to it a terrible vitality and power, the *koueis* becomes *the alter ego* and the executioner of *houen* in all his wicked deeds. The *houen* and *koueis* unite into one shadowy but strong entity, and may, by separating at will, and acting in two different places at a time, do terrible mischief.

The *koueis* is an *anima damnata* according to the good missionaries, who thus make of the millions of deceased "unbaptized" Chinamen an army of devils, who, considering they are of a material substance, ought by this time to occupy the space between our earth and the moon and feel themselves as much at ease as closely

<sup>1</sup> The spiritual portion of the *ling* becomes *chen* (divine and saintly), after death, to become *hien*—an absolute saint (a Nirvanee when joined entirely with the "Dragon of Wisdom").

packed-up herrings in a tin-box. "The *koueis*, being naturally wicked," says the *Memoire*, "do all the evil they can. They hold the middle between man and the brute and participate of the faculties of both. They have all the vices of man and every dangerous instinct of the animal. Sentenced to ascend no higher than our atmosphere, they congregate around the tombs and in the vicinity of mines, swamps, sinks and slaughter-houses, everywhere wherein rottenness and decay are found. The emanations of the latter are their favourite food, and it is with the help of those elements and atoms, and of the vapours from corpses, that they form for themselves *visible and fantastic bodies* to deceive and frighten men with. . . These miserable spirits with deceptive bodies seek incessantly the means for preventing men from getting salvation" (read, being baptized), ". . . and of forcing them to become damned as they themselves are" (p. 222, *Memoires concernant l'histoire, les sciences, les arts, les moeurs, etc., des Chinois, par les Missionnaires de Pekin, 1791*).<sup>2</sup>

This is how our old friend, the Abbe Hue, the Lazarist, unfrocked for showing the origin of certain Roman Catholic rites in Tibet and China, describes the *houen*. "What is the *houen* is a question to which it is difficult to give a clear answer. . . It is, if you so like it, something vague, something between *a spirit, a genii, and vitality*" (see Hue's *Voyage a la Chine*, vol. H, p. 394). He seems to regard the *houen* as the future operator in the business of resurrection, which it will effect by attracting to itself the atomic substance of the body,

<sup>2</sup> According to the most ancient doctrines of magic, violent deaths and leaving the body exposed, instead of burning or burying it—led to the discomfort and pain of its astral (*Linga Sarira*), which died out only at the dissolution of the last particle of the matter that had composed the body. Sorcery or black magic, it is said, had always availed itself of this knowledge for necromantic and sinful purposes. "Sorcerers offer to restless souls decayed remnants of animals to force them to appear" (see Porphyry, *Sacrifice*). St. Athanasius was accused of the black art, for having preserved the hand of Bishop Arsenius for magical operations. "Patet quod animae illis quae, post mortem, adhuc, relicta corpora diligunt, quemadmodum animae sepultura carentium, et adhuc in turbido illo humidoque spiritu [the spiritual or fluidic body, the *houen*] circa cadavera sua oberrant, tanquam circa cognatum aliquod eos alliciens," etc. See Cornelius Agrippa *De Occulta Philosophia*, pp. 354-5; *Le Fantome Humain* by Des Mousseaux. Homer and Horace have described many a time such evocations. In India it is practised to this day by some Tantrikas. Thus modern sorcery, as well as white magic, occultism and spiritualism, with their branches of mesmerism, hypnotism, etc., show their doctrines and methods linked to those of the highest antiquity, since the same ideas, beliefs and practices are found now as in old Aryavarta, Egypt and China, Greece and Rome. Read the treatise, careful and truthful as to facts, however erroneous as to the author's conclusions, by P. Thyree, *Loca Infesta*, and you will find that the localities most favourable for the evocations of spirits are those where a murder has been committed, a burying ground, deserted places, etc.

which will be thus re-formed on the day of resurrection. This answers well enough the Christian idea of one body and merely *one* personality to be resurrected. But if the *houen* has to unite on that day the atoms of all the bodies the Monad had passed through and inhabited, then even that “very cunning creature” might find itself not quite equal to the occasion. However, as while the *ling* is plunged in felicity, its *ex-houen* is left behind to wander and suffer, it is evident that the *houen* and the “elementary” are identical. As it is also undeniable that had disembodied man the faculty of being at one and the same time in Devachan and in Kama-loka, whence he might come to us, and put in an occasional appearance in a seance-room or elsewhere—then man—as just shown by the *ling* or *houen*—would be possessed of the double faculty of experiencing a *simultaneous and distinct feeling* of two contraries—*bliss and torture*. The ancients understood so well the absurdity of this theory, knowing that no absolute bliss could have place wherein there was the smallest alloy of misery, that while supposing the higher Ego of Homer to be in *Elysium*, they showed the Homer weeping by the Acherusia as no better than the *simulacrum* of the poet, his empty and deceptive image, or what we call the “shell of the *false* personality.”<sup>8</sup>

There is but *one* real Ego in each man and it must necessarily be either in one place or in another, in bliss or in grief.<sup>4</sup>

The *houen*, to return to it, is said to be the terror of men; in China, “that horrid spectre” troubles the living, *penetrates* into houses and closed objects, and *takes possession* of people, as “spirits” are shown to do in Europe and America—the *houens* of children being of still greater malice than the *houens* of adults. This belief is so strong in

3 See Lucretius De Nat Rerum I, I, who calls it a simulacrum.

4 Though antiquity (like esoteric philosophy) seems to divide soul into the divine and the animal, anima divina and anima bruta, the former being called nous and phren, yet the two were but the double aspect of a unity. Diogenes Laertius (De Vit. Clar. Virc. I., 8. 30) gives the common belief that the animal soul, phren—( \* ), generally the diaphragm—resided in the stomach, Diogenes calling the anima bruta ( \* ), Pythagoras and Plato also make the same division, calling the divine or rational soul ( \* ) and the irrational ( \* ). Empedocles gives to men and animals a dual soul, not two souls as is believed. The Theosophists and Occultists divide man into seven principles and speak of a divine and animal soul; but they add that Spirit being one and indivisible, all these “souls” and principles are only its aspects. Spirit alone is immortal, infinite, and the one reality—the rest is all evanescent and temporary, illusion and delusion. Des Mousseaux is very wroth with the late Baron Dupotet, who places an intelligent “spirit” in each of our organs, simply because he is unable to grasp the Baron’s idea.

China that when they want to get rid of a child they carry it far away from home, hoping thereby to puzzle the *houen* and make him lose his way home.

As the *houen* is the fluidic or gaseous likeness of its defunct body, in judicial medicine experts use this likeness in cases of suspected murders to get at the truth. The formulae used to evoke the *houen* of a person dying under suspicious circumstances are officially accepted and these means are resorted to very often, according to Hue, who told Des Mousseaux (see *Les Mediateurs de la Magie*, p. 310) that the instructing magistrate after having recited the evocation over the corpse, used vinegar mixed with some mysterious ingredients, as might any other necromancer. When the *houen* has appeared, it is always in the likeness of the victim *as it was* at the moment of its death. If the body has been *burned* before judicial enquiry, the *houen* reproduces on to’-body the wounds or lesions received by the murdered man—the crime is proven and justice takes note of it. The sacred books of the temples contain the complete formulae of such evocations, and even the name of the murderer may be forced from the complacent *houen*. In this the Chinamen were followed by Christian nations however. During the Middle Ages the suspected murderer was placed by the judges before the victim, and if at that moment blood began to flow from the open wounds, it was held as a sign that the accused was the criminal. This belief survives to this day in France, Germany, Russia, and all the Slavonian countries. “The wounds of a murdered man will re-open at the approach of his murderer” says a jurisprudential work (Binsfeld, *De Conf. Male/.*, p. 136).

“The *houen* can neither be buried underground nor drowned; he travels *above* the ground and prefers keeping at home.”

In the province of Ho-nan the teaching varies. Delaplace, a bishop in China<sup>5</sup>, tells of the “heathen Chinees” most extraordinary stories with regard to this subject. “Every man, they say, has three *houens* in him. At death one of the *houens* incarnates in a body he selects for himself; the other remains in, and with, the family, and becomes the *lar*; and the third watches the tomb of its corpse. Papers and incense

5 Annales de la propagation de la foi, No. 143; July, 1852.

are burnt in honour of the latter, as a sacrifice to the *manes*; the domestic *houen* takes his abode in the family record-tablets amidst engraved characters, and sacrifice is also offered to him, *hiangs* (sticks made of incense) are burnt in his honour, and funeral repasts are prepared for him; in which case the two *houens* will keep quiet”—if *they are those of adults, nota bene*.

Then follows a series of ghastly stories. If we read the whole literature of magic from Homer down to Dupotet we shall find everywhere the same assertion: Man is a *triple*, and esoterically a *septenary*, compound of mind, of reason, and of an eidolon, and these three are (during life) one. “I call the soul’s *idol* that power which vivifies and governs the body, whence are derived the senses, and through which the soul displays the strength of the senses and FEEDS A BODY WITHIN ANOTHER BODY” (*Magie Devoilee*, Dupotet, p. 250).

“Triplex unicuique homini daemon, bonus est proprius custos,” said Cornelius Agrippa, from whom Dupotet had the idea about the “soul’s *idol*.” For Cornelius says: “Anima humana constat mente, ratione et *idolo*. Mens illuminat rationem; ratio fluit in *idolum*; *idolum* autem animae est supra naturam quae *corporis et animae* quodam modo *nodus est*. Dico autem animae *idolum, poten-tiam* illam *VIVICATIVAM et reatricem corporis* sensuum originem, per quam . . . alit in corpore corpus” (*De Occulta Philos.*, pp. 357, 358).

This is the *houen* of China, once we divest him of the excrescence of popular superstition and fancy. Nevertheless the remark of a Brahman made in the review of “A Fallen Idol” (*Theoso-phist*, Sept., 1886, p. 793)—whether meant seriously or otherwise by the writer—that “if the rules [or mathematical proportions and measurements] are not accurately followed in every detail, an *idol* is liable to be taken possession of by some powerful evil spirit”—is quite true. And as a moral law of nature—a counterpart to the mathematical—if the rules of harmony in the world of causes and effects are not observed during life, then our *inner* idol is as liable to turn out a maleficent demon (a *bhoot*) and to be taken possession of by other “evil” spirits, which are called by us “Elementaries” though treated almost as gods by sentimental ignoramuses.

Between these and those who, like Des Mousseaux and De Mirville, write volumes—a whole library!—to prove that with the exception of a few Biblical apparitions and those that have favoured Christian saints and good Catholics, there never was a phantom, ghost, spirit, or “god,” that had appeared that was not *aferouer*, an *impostor*, *ausurpator*—Satan, in short, in one of his masquerades—there is a long way and a wide margin for him who would study Occult laws and Esoteric philosophy. “A *god* who eats and drinks and receives sacrifice and honour can be but an evil spirit” argues De Mirville. “The bodies of the evil spirits who were angels have deteriorated by their *fall &nd* partake of the qualities of a more condensed air” [ether?], teaches Des Mousseaux (*Le Monde magique*, p. 287). “And this is the reason of their appetite when they devour the funeral repasts the Chinese serve before them to propitiate them; they are demons.”

Well, if we go back to the supposed origin of Judaism and the Israelite nation, we find *angels* of light doing just the same—if

“good appetite” be a sign of Satanic nature. And it is the same Des Mousseaux who, unconsciously, lays, for himself and his religion, a trap. “See,” he exclaims, “the angels of God descend under the green trees near Abraham’s tent. They eat *with appetite* the bread and meat, the butter and the milk prepared for them by the patriarch” (*Gen.* xviii, 2, *et seq*). Abraham dressed a whole “calf tender and good” and “they did eat” (v. 7 and 8); and baked cakes and milk and butter besides. Was their “appetite” any more *divine* than that of a “John King” drinking tea with rum and eating toast in the room of an English medium, or than the appetite of a Chinese *houen*?

The Church has the power of discernment, we are assured; she knows the difference between the three, and judges by their bodies. Let us see. “These [the Biblical] are real, genuine spirits”! Angels, beyond any doubt (*certes*), argues Des Mousseaux. “Theirs are bodies which, no doubt, in dilating could, in virtue of the extreme tenuity of the substance, become transparent, then melt away, dissolve, lose their colour, become less and less visible, and finally disappear from our sight” (p. 388).

So can a “John King” we are assured, and a Pekin *houen* no

doubt. Who or what then can teach us the difference if we fail to study the uninterrupted evidence of the classics and the Theurgists, and neglect the Occult sciences?

H. P. B.

Theosophist, April, 1881

## NATURE'S HUMAN MAGNETS

**I**F any of us now-a-days ventures to relate some weird experience or seemingly incomprehensible phenomenon, two classes of objectors try to stop his mouth with the same gag. The scientist cries—"I have unravelled all Nature's skein, and the thing is impossible; this is no age for miracles!" The Hindu bigot says—"This is the Kali Yug, the spiritual night-time of humanity; miracles are no longer possible." Thus the one from conceit, the other from ignorance reaches the same conclusion, *viz.*, that nothing that smacks of the supernatural is possible in these latter days. The Hindu, however, believes that miracles did once occur, while the scientist does not. As for the bigoted Christians, this is not a Kali Yug but—if one might judge by what they say—a golden era of light, in which the splendour of the Gospel is illuminating humanity and pushing it onward towards greater intellectual triumphs. And as they base all their faith upon miracles, they pretend that miracles are being wrought now by God and the Virgin—principally the latter—just as in ancient times. Our own views are well-known—we do not believe a "miracle" ever did occur or ever will; we do believe that strange phenomena, falsely styled miraculous, always did occur, are occurring now, and will to the end of time; that these are natural; and that when this fact filters into the consciousness of materialistic skeptics, science will go at leaps and bounds towards that ultimate *Truth* she has so long been groping after. It is a wearisome and disheartening experience to tell any one about the phenomena of the less familiar side of nature. The smile of incredulity is too often followed by the insulting challenge of one's veracity or the attempted impugment of one's character. An hundred impossible theories will be broached to escape accepting the

only right one. Your brain must have been sur-excited, your nerves are hallucinated, a “glamour” has been cast over you. If the phenomenon has left behind a positive, tangible, undeniable proof then comes the sceptic’s last resource—*confederacy*, involving an amount of expenditure, time and trouble totally incommensurate with the results to be hoped for, and despite the absence of the least possible evil motive.

If we lay down the proposition that everything is the result of combined force and matter, science will approve; but when we move on and say that we have seen phenomena and account for them under this very law, this presumptuous science having never seen your phenomenon denies both your premise and conclusion, and falls to calling you harsh names. So it all comes back to the question of personal credibility as a witness, and the man of science, until some happy accident forces the new fact upon his attention, is like the child who screams at the veiled figure he takes for a ghost, but which is only his nurse after all. If we but wait with patience we shall see some day a majority of the professors coming over to the side where Hare, De Morgan, Flammarion, Crookes, Wallace, Zollner, Weber, Wagner, and Butlerof have ranged themselves, and then, though “miracles” will be considered as much an absurdity as now, yet occult phenomena will be duly taken inside the domain of exact science and men will be wiser. These circumscribing barriers are being vigorously assaulted just now at St. Petersburg. A young girl-medium is “shocking” all the wiseacres of the University.

For years mediumship seemed to be represented in the Russian metropolis but by American, English and French mediums on flying visits, with great pecuniary pretensions and, except Dr. Slade, the New York medium, with powers already waning. Very naturally the representatives of science found a good pretext to decline. But now all excuses are futile. Not far from Petersburg, in a small hamlet inhabited by three families of German colonists, a few years ago a widow, named Margaret Beetch, took a little girl from the House of Foundlings into her service. The little Pelagueya was liked in the family from the first for her sweet disposition, her hard-working zeal, and her great truthfulness. She found herself exceedingly happy in her

new home, and for several years no one ever had a cross word for her. Pelagueya finally became a good-looking lass of seventeen, but her temper never changed. She loved her masters fondly and was beloved in the house. Notwithstanding her good looks and sympathetic person, no village lad ever thought of offering himself as a husband. The young men said she “awed” them. They looked upon her as people look in those regions upon the image of a saint. So at least say the Russian papers and the *Police Gazette* from which we quote the report of the District Police Officer sent to investigate certain facts of *diablerie*. For this innocent young creature has just become the victim of “the weird doings of some incomprehensible, invisible agency,” says the report.

November 3, 1880, accompanied by a farm-servant, she descended into the cellar under the house to get some potatoes. Hardly had they opened the heavy door, when they found themselves pelted with the vegetable. Believing some neighbor’s boy must have hidden himself on the wide shelf on which the potatoes were heaped, Pelagueya, placing the basket upon her head, laughingly remarked, “whoever you are, fill it with potatoes and so help me!” In an instant the basket was filled to the brim. Then the other girl tried the same, but the potatoes remained motionless. Climbing upon the shelf, to their amazement the girls found no one there. Having notified the widow Beetch of the strange occurrence, the latter went herself, and unlocking the cellar which had been securely locked by the two maids on leaving, found no one concealed in it. This event was but the precursor of a series of others. During a period of three weeks they succeeded each other with such a rapidity that if we were to translate the entire official Report it might fill this whole issue of the *Theosophist*. We will cite but a few.

From the moment she left the cellar the invisible “power” which had filled her basket with potatoes, began to assert its presence incessantly, and in the most varied ways. Does Pelagueya Nikolaeff prepare to lay wood in the oven—the billets rise in the air and like living things jump upon the fire-place; hardly does she apply a match to them when they blaze already as if fanned by an invisible hand.

When she approaches the well, the water begins rising, and soon overflowing the sides of the cistern runs in torrents to her feet; does she happen to pass near a bucket of water—the same thing happens. Hardly does the girl stretch out her hand to reach from the shelf some needed piece of crockery, than the whole of the earthenware, cups, tureens and plates, as if snatched from their places by a whirlwind, begin to jump and tremble, and then fall with a crash at her feet. No sooner does an invalid neighbor place herself for a moment's rest on the girl's bed, than the heavy bedstead is seen levitating towards the very ceiling, then turns upside down and tosses off the impertinent intruder; after which it quietly resumes its former position.

One day, having gone to the shed to do her usual evening work of feeding the cattle, Pelagueya, after performing her duty, toas preparing to leave it with two other servants, when the most extraordinary scene took place. All the cows and pigs seemed to become suddenly possessed. The former, frightening the whole village with the most infuriating bellowing, tried to climb up the mangers, while the latter knocked their heads against the walls, running round as if pursued by some wild animal. Pitchforks, shovels, benches and feeding trough, snatching away from their places, pursued the terrified girls, who escaped within an inch of their lives by violently shutting and locking the door of the stables. But, as soon as this was done every noise ceased inside as if by magic.

All such phenomena took place not in darkness or during night, but in the daytime, and in the full view of the inhabitants of the little hamlet; moreover, they were always preceded by an extraordinary noise, as if of a howling wind, a cracking in the walls, and raps in the window-frames and glass. A real panic got hold of the household and the inhabitants of the hamlet, which went on increasing at every new manifestation. A priest was called of course—as though priests knew anything of magnetism!—but with no good results: a couple of pots danced a jig on the shelf, an oven-fork went stamping and jumping on the floor, and a heavy sewing-machine followed suit. The news about the young witch and her struggle with the invisible imps ran round the whole district. Men and women from neighboring villages flocked to

see the marvels. The same phenomena, often intensified, took place in their presence. Once when a crowd of men upon entering, placed their caps upon the table, every one of these jumped from it to the floor, and a heavy leather glove, circling round, struck its owner a pretty sound thump on his face and rejoined the fallen caps. Finally, notwithstanding the real affection the widow Beetch felt for the poor orphan, towards the beginning of December, Pelagueya and her boxes were placed upon a cart, and after many a tear and warm expression of regret, she was sent off to the Superintendent of the Foundling Hospital—the Institution in which she was brought up. This gentleman, returning with the girl on the following day, was made a witness to the pranks of the same force, called in the Police, and, after a careful inquest, had a *proces verbal* signed by the authorities, and departed.

This case having been narrated to a spiritist, a rich nobleman residing at St. Petersburg, the latter betook himself immediately after the young girl and carried her away with him to town.

The above officially-noted facts are being reprinted in every Russian daily organ of note. The prologue finished, we are put in a position to follow the subsequent development of the power in this wonderful medium, as we find them commented upon in all the serious and arch-official papers of the metropolis.

“A new star on the horizon of spiritism has suddenly appeared at St. Petersburg—one Mile. Pelagueya”—thus speaketh an editorial in the *Novoye Vremya*, January 1, 1881. “The manifestations which have taken place in her presence are so extraordinary and powerful that more than one devout spiritualist seems to have been *upset* by them—literally and by the agency of a heavy table.” “But,” adds the paper, “the spiritual victims do not seem to have felt in the least annoyed by such *striking* proofs. On the contrary, hardly had they picked themselves up from the floor (one of them before being able to resume his perpendicular position had to crawl out from beneath a sofa whither he had been launched by a heavy table) than, forgetting their bruises, they proceeded to embrace each other in rapturous joy, and with eyes overflowing with tears, congratulate each other upon this new manifestation of the mysterious force.”

In the *St. Petersburg Gazette*, a merry reporter gives the following details:—"Miss Pelagueya is a young girl of about nineteen, the daughter of poor but dishonest parents (who had thrust her in the Foundling Hospital, as given above), not very pretty, but with a sympathetic face, very uneducated but intelligent, small in stature but kind at heart, well-proportioned—but nervous. Miss Pelagueya has suddenly manifested most wonderful mediumistic faculties. She is a 'first class Spiritistic Star' as they call her. And, indeed, the young lady seems to have concentrated in her extremities a phenomenal abundance of magnetic aura; thanks to which, she communicates instantaneously to the objects surrounding her hitherto unheard and unseen phenomenal motions. About five days ago, at a seance at which were present the most noted spiritualists and mediums of the St. Petersburg *grand monde*,<sup>1</sup> occurred the following. Having placed themselves with Pelagueya around a table, they (the spiritists) had barely time to sit down, when each of them received what seemed an electric shock. Suddenly, the table violently upset chairs and all, scattering the enthusiastic company to quite a respectable distance. The medium found herself on the floor with the rest, and her chair began to perform a series of such wonderful aerial jumps that the terrified spiritists had to take to their heels and left the room in a hurry."

Most opportunely, while the above case is under consideration, there comes from America the account of a lad whose system appears to be also abnormally charged with vital magnetism. The report, which is from the *Catholic Mirror*, says that the boy is the son of a Mr. and Mrs. John C. Collins, of St. Paul, in the state of Minnesota. His age is ten years and it is only recently that the magnetic condition has developed itself—a curious circumstance to be noted. Intellectually he is bright, his health is perfect, and he enters with zest into all boyish sports. His *left* hand has become "a wonderfully strong magnet. Metal articles of light weight attach themselves to his hand so that considerable force is required to remove them. Knives, pins, needles,

<sup>1</sup> We seriously doubt whether there ever will be more than there are now believers in Spiritualism among the middle and lower classes of Russia. These are too sincerely devout and believe too fervently in the devil to have any faith in "spirits."

buttons, etc., enough to cover his hand, will thus attach themselves so firmly that they cannot be shaken off. Still more, the attraction is so strong that a common coalscuttle can be lifted by it, and heavier implements have been lifted by stronger persons taking hold of his arm. With heavy articles, however, the boy complains of sharp pains darting along his arm. In a lesser degree his left arm and the whole left side of his body exerts the same power, but it is not at all manifest on his right side."

The only man who has thrown any great light upon the natural and abnormal magnetic conditions of the human body is the late Baron von Reichenbach of Vienna, a renowned chemist and the discoverer of a new force which is called *Odyle*. His experiments lasted more than five years, and neither expense, time nor trouble were grudged to make them conclusive. Physiologists had long observed, especially among hospital patients, that a large proportion of human beings can sensibly feel a peculiar influence, or aura, proceeding from the magnet when downward passes are made along their persons but without touching them. And it was also observed that in such diseases as St. Vitus's dance (chorea), and various forms of paralysis, hysteria, &c, the patients showed this sensitiveness in a peculiar degree. But though the great Berzelius and other authorities in science had urged that men of science should investigate it, yet this most important field of research had been left almost untrodden until Baron Reichenbach undertook his great task. His discoveries were so important that they can only be fully appreciated by a careful reading of his book, *Researches on Magnetism, Electricity, Heat, Light, Crystallization, and Chemical Attraction, in their relations to the Vital Force*;—unfortunately out of print, but of which copies may be occasionally procured in London, second-hand.

For the immediate purpose in view, it needs only be said that he proves that the body of man is filled with an aura, "dynamide," "fluid," vapour, influence or whatever we may choose to call it; that it is alike in both sexes; that it is specially given off at the head, hands, and feet; that, like the aura from the 'magnet, it is polar; that the whole left side is positive, and imparts a sensation of warmth to a sensitive to whom

we may apply our left hand, while the whole right side of the body is negative, and imparts a feeling of coolness. In some individuals this vital magnetic (or, as he calls it, Odylic) force is intensely strong. Thus, we may fearlessly consider and believe any phenomenal case such as the two above-quoted without fear of outstepping the limits of exact science, or of being open to the charge of superstition or credulity. It must at the same time be noted that Baron Reichenbach did not find one patient whose aura either deflected a suspended magnetic needle, or attracted iron objects like lodestone. His researches, therefore, do not cover the whole ground; and of this he was himself fully aware. Persons magnetically surcharged, like the Russian girl and the American boy, are now and then encountered, and among the class of mediums there have been a few famous ones. Thus, the medium Slade's finger, when passed either way over a compass, will attract the needle after it to any extent. The experiment was tried by Professors Zollner and W. Weber (Professor of Physics, founder of the doctrine of Vibration of Forces) at Leipzig. Professor Weber "placed on the table a compass, enclosed in glass, the needle of which we could all observe very distinctly by the bright candlelight, while we had our hands joined with those of Slade" which were over a foot distant from the compass. So great was the magnetic aura discharging from Slade's hands, however, that "after about five minutes the needle began to swing violently in arcs of from 40° to 60° till at length it several times turned completely round." At a subsequent trial, Professor Weber succeeded in having a common knitting-needle, tested with the compass just before the experiment and found wholly unmagnetized, converted into a permanent magnet. "Slade laid this needle upon a slate, held the latter under the table . . . and in about four minutes, when the slate with the knitting-needle was laid again upon the table, the needle was so strongly magnetised at one end (and *only* at one end) that iron shavings and sewing-needles stuck to this end; the needle of the compass could be easily drawn round in a circle. The originated pole was a south pole, inasmuch as the north pole of the (compass) needle was attracted, the south pole repelled."<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Transcendental Physics, p. 47.

Baron Reichenbach's first branch of inquiry was that of the effect of the magnet upon animal nerve; after which he proceeded to observe the effect upon the latter of a similar aura or power found by him to exist in crystals. Not to enter into details—all of which, however, should be read by every one pretending to investigate Aryan science—his conclusion he sums up as follows: "With the magnetic force, as we are acquainted with it in the lodestone and the magnetic needle, that force ("Odylic"—the new force he discovered) is associated, with which, in crystals, we have become acquainted." Hence: "*The force of the magnet is not, as has been hitherto taken for granted, one single force, but consists of two, since, to that long known, a new hitherto unknown, and decidedly distinct one, must be added, the force, namely, which resides in crystals.*" One of his patients was a Mile. Nowotny, and her sensitiveness to the auras of the magnet and crystal was phenomenally acute. When a magnet was held near her hand it was irresistibly attracted to follow the magnet wherever the Baron moved it. The effect upon her hand "was the same as if some one had seized her hand, and by means of this drawn or bent her body towards her feet." (She was lying in bed, sick, and the magnet was moved in that direction.) When approached close to her hand "the hand adhered so firmly to it, that when the magnet was raised, or moved sideways, backwards, or in any direction whatever, *her hands stuck to it, as if attached in the way in which a piece of iron would have been.*" This, we see, is the exact reverse of the phenomenon in the American boy Collins' case, for, instead of his hand being attracted to anything, iron objects, light and heavy, seem attracted irresistibly to his hand, and *only his left hand*. Reichenbach naturally thought of testing Mile. Nowotny's magnetic condition. He says: "To try this, I took filings of iron, and brought her finger over them. *Not the smallest particle adhered to the finger*, even when it had just been in contact with the magnet. . . . A magnetic needle finely suspended, to the poles of which I caused her to approach her finger alternately, and in different positions, did not exhibit the slightest tendency to deviation or oscillation."

Did space permit, this most interesting analysis of the accumulated

facts respecting the occasional abnormal magnetic surcharge of human beings might be greatly prolonged without fatiguing the intelligent reader. But we may at once say that since Reichenbach<sup>8</sup> proves magnetism to be a compound instead of a simple force, and that every human being is charged with one of these forces, Odyle; and since the Slade experiments, and the phenomena of Russia and St. Paul, show that the human body does also at times discharge the true magnetic aura, such as is found in the lodestone; therefore the explanation is that in these latter abnormal cases the individual has simply evolved an excess of the one instead of the other of the forces which together form what is commonly known as magnetism. *There is, therefore, nothing whatever of supernatural in the cases.* Why this happens is, we conceive, quite capable of explanation, but as this would take us too far afield in the less commonly known region of occult science it had better be passed over for the present.

Theosophist, June, 1881

## A PSYCHIC WARNING

BY A. CONSTANTINE, ESQ.

CAN any of the numerous readers of the *Theosophist* enlighten me as to the influence that acted on me on the occasion alluded to below? I certainly emphatically deny that there was a spirit manifestation, but there was beyond doubt some singular agency at work, which I have not up to this time been able to comprehend or explain.

After having been in a certain school with another boy of about the same age as myself we parted, and only met again after the lapse of about thirty-five years. It was at Agra, where he was a Deputy Collector and I, head-clerk in the same office. Our friendship was renewed, and we soon became very much attached to each other; in fact, we had no secrets between us. Thus we continued to be for several years, and almost every day saw each other. I had occasion during the Dasara Holidays to visit my brother-in-law, an opulent land-holder at Meerut, and on my return related to my friend the festivities that had been observed there. My friend promised that, if he could possibly manage, he would also accompany me to my brother-in-law's at the next Dasara vacation. In the interval, and particularly when the vacation approached, we repeatedly discussed our plans, and when the time drew near we made all arrangements for fulfilling our engagement. But on the last working day in the office when I asked my friend to meet me that evening at the appointed time at the railway station with his luggage, to my utter astonishment and disappointment he told me that he was very sorry for being unable to go with me in consequence of his family having been recommended for a change, and he was going with them to Rambagh (a sanitarium

<sup>3</sup> Reichenbach, op. cit., pp. 25, 46, 210.

on the other side of Agra). On parting he shook hands with me and again expressed his sorrow, and said that “though absent in body he would be present in thought and spirit with me.” On our way in the train I arranged with my wife to go to Meerut first, and after remaining four days there to go off to Delhi where she had never been, stop a couple of days there, and on our return to pass a day at Allyghur with a relation, and then to return home to Agra a day prior to the opening of my office. The programme was finally settled between us. The two days after our arrival at my brother-in-law’s were spent most pleasantly. Early on the morning of the third day after partaking of some refreshments we sat\* together to think of amusements for the night, when all of a sudden a curious sensation came over me, I felt dull and melancholy, and told my brother-in-law that I must return to Agra immediately. He was extremely surprised. As I had agreed to spend that and the following day with him, the whole family remonstrated with me for my abrupt proposal, and naturally concluded that something or other had given me offense. But all persuasions to detain me, even for that day, proved ineffectual, and in another hour I was with my luggage on the Meerut Railway Station. Before we took tickets for Agra, my wife urged me to go only as far as Ghaziabad (whence the train branches off to Delhi). I did so, but no sooner was the train in motion than the longing to go to Agra again returned. Without taking any further course, I took on our arrival at Ghaziabad tickets direct for Agra. This surprised my wife very much, in fact she felt dismayed, and we sat all the way to Allyghur without exchanging even so much as a sentence. At Allyghur she was inexorable in her entreaties to see her relations. I sent her over there, but I could not be persuaded to accompany her, and proceeded to Agra, where on my arrival at night, I was thunderstruck with the dreadful news that my friend had suddenly died that very morning from apoplexy at Rambagh, probably about the time I was taking refreshments at Meerut. The next morning I was present to witness the last remains of my dear friend committed to his last resting-place. Every one present at the funeral, who knew that I was not to have returned to the station before the office opened, plied me with questions as to how I came to

hear of the sad bereavement, and who it was that had telegraphed to me. But I candidly confess that no other communication or message was ever sent to me or even attempted—save a depression in spirits, a longing and restless desire to be present at Agra as quickly as possible.

*Note by the Editor.*—No need of attributing the above “warning” to anything supernatural. Many and varied are the psychic phenomena in life, which unintentionally or otherwise are either attributed to the agency of disembodied “spirits” or entirely and intentionally *ignored*. By saying this we do not intend at all depriving the spiritual theory of its *raison d’etre*. But beside that theory there exist other manifestations of the same psychic force in man’s daily life, which is generally disregarded or erroneously looked upon as a result of simple chance or coincidence, for the only reason that we are unable to forthwith assign for it a logical and comprehensive cause though the manifestations undoubtedly bear the impress of a scientific character, evidently belonging, as they do, to that class of psycho-physiological phenomena which, even men of great scientific attainments and such specialists as Dr. Carpenter are now busying themselves with. The cause for this particular phenomenon is to be sought in the occult (yet no less undeniable for it) influence exercised by the active will of one man over the will of another man, whenever the will of the latter is surprised in a moment of rest or a state of passiveness. We speak now of *presentiments*. Were every person to pay close attention—in an experimental and scientific spirit of course—to his daily action and watch his thoughts, conversation and resultant acts, and carefully analyze these, omitting no details trifling as they might appear to him, then would he find for most of these actions and thoughts coinciding *reasons* based upon mutual psychic influence between the embodied intelligences.

Several instances, more or less familiar to every one through *personal* experience, might be here adduced. We will give but two. Two friends or even simple acquaintances are separated for years. Suddenly one of them—he who remained at home and who may have never thought of the absent person for years, thinks of that

individual. He remembers him without any possible cause or reason, and the long-forgotten image sweeping through the silent corridors of MEMORY brings it before his eyes as vividly as if he were there. A few minutes after that, an hour perhaps, that absent person *pays the other an unexpected visit*. Another instance,—A lend to B a book. B having read and laid it aside thinks no more of it, though A requested him to return the work immediately after perusal. Days, perhaps months after that, B's thought occupied with important business, suddenly reverts to the book, and he remembers his neglect. Mechanically he leaves his place and stepping to his library gets it out, thinking to send it back without fail this once. At the same moment, the door opens. A enters, telling that he had come purposely to fetch his book, as he needed it. Coincidence? Not at all. In the first case it was the fault of the traveller, which, as he had decided upon visiting an old friend or acquaintance, *was concentrated upon the other man*, and that thought by its very activity proved energetic enough to overpower the *then passive* thought of the other. The same explanation stands good in the case of A and B. But Mr. Constantine may argue, "my late friend's thought could not influence mine since he was already dead, when I was being irresistibly drawn to Agra." Our answer is ready. Did not the warmest friendship exist between the writer and the deceased? Had not the latter promised to be with him in "thought and spirit"? And that leads to the positive inference that his thought was strongly pre-occupied before his death, with him whom he had unintentionally disappointed. Sudden as may have been that death, thought is instantaneous and more rapid still. Nay, it surely was a hundredfold intensified at the moment of death. Thought is the last thing that dies or rather fades out in the human brain of a dying person, and thought, as demonstrated by science, is material, since it is but a mode of energy, which itself changes form but is eternal. Hence, that thought whose strength and power are always proportionate to its intensity, became, so to say, concrete and palpable, and with the help of the strong affinity between the two, it enveloped and overpowered the whole sentient and thinking principle in Mr. Constantine subjecting it entirely, and forcing the will of the latter to act in accordance with his desire. The thinking agent was dead and the instrument lay shattered

for ever. But its last sound lived, and could not have completely died out, in the waves of ether. Science says, the vibration of one single note of music will linger on in motion through the corridors of all eternity; and theosophy, the last thought of the dying man changes into the man himself; it becomes his *eidolon*. Mr. Constantine would not have surprised us, nor would he have indeed deserved being accused by the skeptical of either superstition or of having labored under a hallucination had he even seen the *image*, or the so-called "ghost" of his deceased friend before him. For that "ghost" would have been neither the conscious spirit nor the soul of the dead man; but simply his short—for one instant—*materialized* thought projected unconsciously and by the sole power of his own intensity in the direction of him who occupied that THOUGHT.

## THEOSOPHY AND SPIRITUALISM

A Calcutta correspondent asks:

- (a) Is Occultism a science *akin* to Spiritualism?
- (b) What are the principal points in which the Theosophists and the Spiritualists differ?
- (c) *Can* a Spiritualist call himself a Theosophist without altering his faith? and *vice versa*?
- (d) I understand you do not believe in Spiritualism—then how is it that a *Spiritualist* has been elected President for the Bengal Branch of the *Theosophical Society*?

To which we answer :—

(a) That Theosophy is a very ancient science, while Spiritualism is a very modern manifestation of psychical phenomena. It has not yet passed the stage of experimental research.

(b) The difference is in our theories to account for the phenomena. We say they are *mainly*, though not *always*, due to the action of other influences than that of the disembodied conscious spirits of the dead. The Spiritualists affirm the contrary.

(c) Yes; many excellent persons are both, and none need alter his faith.

(d) We do believe in the phenomena, but not as to their cause — as above remarked. There being no religious or other test— other than that of good moral character and sympathy with the objects of our Society, applied by us to those who seek for admission, the election of the Venerable Babu Peary Chund Mitra, as President of our Bengal Branch, was not only most proper, but very desirable. He is certainly the most *spiritual* Theosophist and most *theosophic* Spiritualist we have ever met.

## AN ASTRAL PROPHET

EVERY educated Englishman has heard the name of General Yermoloff, one of the great military heroes of this age; and if at all familiar with the history of the Caucasian wars, he must be acquainted with the exploits of one of the chief conquerors of the land of those impregnable fastnesses where Shamil and his predecessors have defied for years the skill and strategy of the Russian armies.

Be it as it may, the strange event herein narrated by the Caucasian hero himself, may interest students of psychology. That which follows is a *verbatim* translation from V. Potto's Russian work "The War in Caucasus." In volume II, chapter *The period of Yermoloff* (pp. 829-30-31 and 832) one reads these lines:

Silently and imperceptibly glided away at Moscow the last days allotted to the hero. On April the 19th, 1861, he died in his 85th year, seated in his favorite arm-chair, with one hand on the table, the other on his knee; but a few minutes before, in accordance with an old habit of his, he was tapping the floor with his foot.

It is impossible to better express the feelings of Russia at the news of this death than by quoting the obituary notice from the (Russian) Daily "Caucasus," which did not say a word more than was deserved.

On April the 12th, at 11 } a.m., at Moscow, the Artillery General, famous throughout Russia—Alexey Petrovitch Yermoloff, breathed his last. Every Russian knows the name; it is allied with the most brilliant records of our national glory: Valutino, Borodino, Kulm, Paris, and the Caucasus, will be ever transmitting the name of the hero,—the pride and ornament of the Russian army and nation. We will not enumerate the services of Yermoloff. His name and titles are: a true son of Russia, in the full

significance of the term.

It is a curious fact that his death did not escape its own legend, one of a strange and mystical character. This is what a friend who knew Yermoloff well, writes of him:

Once, when leaving Moscow, I called on Yermoloff to say good bye, and found myself unable to conceal my emotion at parting.

“Fear not,” he said to me, “we will yet meet; I shall not die before your return.”

This was eighteen months before his death.

“In life and death God alone is the Master!” I observed.

“And I tell you most positively that my death will not occur in a year, but a few months later”—he answered, “Come with me” — and with these words he led me into his study; where, getting out of a locked chest a written sheet of paper, he placed it before me, and asked—“whose handwriting is this?” “Yours,” I said. “Read it then.” I complied.

It was a kind of memorandum, a record of dates, since the year when Yermoloff was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant-Colonel, showing, as in a programme, every significant event that was to happen in his life, so full of such events. He followed me in my reading, and when I was at the last paragraph, he covered the last line with his hand. “This you need not read,” he said. “On this line, the year, the month, and the day, of my death are given. All that you have read was written by me beforehand, and has come to pass to the smallest details, and this is how I came to write it.

“When I was yet a young Lieutenant-Colonel I was sent on some business to a small district town. My lodging consisted of two rooms— one for the servants, the other for my personal use. There was no access into the latter but through the former. Once, late at night, as I sat writing at my desk, I fell into a reverie, when suddenly on lifting my eyes I saw standing before me across the desk a stranger, a man, judging by his dress, belonging to the lower classes of society. Before I had time to ask him who he was or what he wanted, the stranger said, ‘Take your pen and write.’ Feeling myself under the influence of

an irresistible power, I obeyed in silence. Then *he* dictated to me all that was going to happen to me during my whole life, concluding with the date and hour of my death. With the last word he vanished from the spot. A few minutes elapsed before I regained my full consciousness, when, jumping from my seat, I rushed into the adjoining room, which the stranger could not by any means avoid passing through. Opening the door, I saw my clerk writing by the light of a candle,

and my orderly lying asleep on the floor across the entrance door, which door was securely locked and bolted. To my question ‘who was it who has just been here?’—the astonished clerk answered, ‘No one.’ To this day I have never told this to any one. I knew beforehand that while some would suspect me of having invented the whole thing, others would see in me a man subject to hallucinations. But for myself, personally, the whole thing is *a most undeniable fact*, an objective and palpable fact, the proof of which is in this very written document.”

The last date found on the latter proved, after the death of the General, to be the correct one. He died on the very day and hour of the year recorded in his own handwriting.

Yermoloff is buried at Orel. An inextinguishable lamp, made of a fragment of a bomb-shell, burns before his tomb. On the cast-iron of the shell these words are wrought by an unskilled hand, “The Caucasian soldiers who served on the Goonib.”<sup>1</sup> The ever burning lamp is established through the zeal and grateful love of the lower ranks of the Caucasian Army, who collected among themselves from their poor pittance (copeck by copeck, verily!) the needed sum. And this simple monument is more valued and admired than would be the richest mausoleum. There is no other monument to Yermoloff in Russia. But the proud and lofty rocks of the Caucasus are the imperishable pedestal on which every true Russian will always behold the majestic image of General Yermoloff, surrounded by the aureole of an everlasting and

<sup>1</sup> “Goonib” is the name of the last stronghold of the Circassians, on which the famous Murid Shamil the Priest-Sovereign of the Mountaineers was conquered and captured by the Russians, after years of a desperate struggle. Goonib is a gigantic rock, deemed for a long time impregnable but finally stormed and ascended by the Russian soldiers at an enormous sacrifice of life. Its capture put virtually an end to the war in the Caucasus, a struggle which had lasted for over sixty years, and assured its conquest. [Ed.]

immortal glory.

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And now for a few words about the nature of the apparition.

No doubt every word of General Yermoloff's concise and clear narrative is true to a dot. He was pre-eminently a matter-of-fact, sincere, and clear-headed man, with not the slightest taint of mysticism about him, a true soldier, honorable, and straightforward. Moreover, this episode of his life was testified to by his elder son, known to the present writer and her family personally, for many years during our residence at Tiflis. All this is a good warrant for the genuineness of the phenomenon, testified to furthermore by the written document left by the General, bearing the correct and precise date of his death. And now what about the mysterious visitor? Spiritualists will, of course, see in it a disembodied Entity, a "materialized Spirit." It will be claimed that a *human Spirit* alone could prophecy a whole series of events and see so clearly in Futurity. So we say, too. But having agreed on that point, we diverge in all the rest; *i.e.*, while Spiritualists would say that the apparition was that of a Spirit distinct from and independent of the Higher Ego of the General, we maintain precisely the reverse, and say it was that Ego. Let us argue dispassionately.

Where is the *raison d'être*, the *rationale* of such apparition of prophecy; and why should you or I, for instance, once dead, appear to a perfect stranger for the pleasure of informing him of that which was to happen to him? Had the General recognized in the visitor some dear relative, his own father, mother, brother, or bosom friend, and received from him some beneficent warning, slight proof as it would have been, there would still be something in it to hang such theory upon. But it was nothing of the kind: simply "a stranger, a man, judging by his dress, belonging to the lower classes of society." If so, why should the soul of a poor disembodied tradesman, or a laborer, trouble itself to appear to a mere stranger? And if the "Spirit" only *assumed* such appearance, then why this disguise and masquerading, such *post-mortem* mystification, at all? If such visits are made of a "Spirit's" free will; if such revelations can occur at the sweet pleasure of a disembodied Entity, and independently of any established law of

intercourse between the two worlds—what can be the reason alleged for that particular "Spirit" playing at soothsaying Cassandra with the General? None whatever. To insist upon it, is simply to add one more absurd and repulsive feature to the theory of "Spirit-visitation," and to throw an additional element of ridicule on the sacredness of death. The *materializing* of an *immaterial* Spirit—a divine Breath—by the Spiritualists, is on a par with the anthropomorphizing of the Absolute, by the Theologians. It is these two claims which have dug an almost impassable abyss between the Theosophist-Occultists and the Spiritualists on the one hand, and the Theosophists and the Church Christians on the other.

And now this is how a Theosophist-Occultist would explain the vision, in accordance with esoteric philosophy. He would premise by reminding the reader that the Higher Consciousness in us, with its *sui generis* laws and conditions of manifestation, is still almost entirely *terra incognita* for all (Spiritualists included) and the men of science pre-eminently. Then he would remind the reader of one of the fundamental teachings of Occultism. He would say that besides the attribute of divine omniscience in its own nature and sphere of action, there exists in Eternity for the *individual* immortal Ego neither *Past* nor *Future*, but only one everlasting PRESENT. NOW, once this doctrine is admitted, or simply postulated, it becomes only natural that the whole life, from birth to death, of the Personality which that Ego informs, should be as plainly visible to the Higher Ego as it is invisible to, and concealed from, the limited vision of its temporary and mortal Form. Hence, this is what must have happened according to the Occult Philosophy.

The friend is told by General Yermoloff that while writing *late in the night* he had suddenly fallen into a *reverie*, when he suddenly perceived upon lifting the eyes a stranger standing before him. Now that reverie was most likely a sudden doze, brought on by fatigue and overwork, during which a mechanical action of purely somnambulant character took place. The *Personality* becoming suddenly alive to the Presence of its Higher SELF, the human sleeping automaton fell under the sway of the Individuality, and forthwith the hand that had

been occupied with writing for several hours before resumed mechanically its task. Upon awakening the *Personality* thought that the document before him had been written at the dictation of a visitor whose voice he had heard, whereas, in truth, he had been simply recording the innermost thoughts—or shall we say knowledge—of his own divine “Ego,” a prophetic, because all-knowing Spirit. The “voice” of the latter was simply the translation by the physical memory, at the instant of awakening, of the mental knowledge concerning the life of the mortal man reflected on the lower by the *Higher* consciousness. All the other details recorded by the memory are as amenable to a natural explanation.

Thus, the stranger clothed in the raiments of a poor little tradesman or laborer, who was speaking to him *outside of himself*, belongs, as well as the “voice,” to that class of well-known phenomena familiar to us as the *association of ideas* and *reminiscences* in our dreams. The pictures and scenes we see in sleep, the events we live through for hours, days, sometimes for years in our dreams, all this takes less time, in reality, than is occupied by a flash of lightning during the instant of awakening and the return to full consciousness. Of such instances of the power and rapidity of fancy physiology gives numerous examples. We rebel against the materialistic deductions of modern science, but no one can controvert its facts, patiently and carefully recorded throughout long years of experiments and observations by its specialists, and these support our argument. General Yermoloff had passed several days previously holding an inquest in a small town, in which official business he had probably examined dozens of men of the poorer classes; and this explains his fancy—vivid as reality itself—suggesting to his imagination the vision of a small tradesman.

Let us turn to the experiences and explanations of a long series of philosophers and Initiates, thoroughly acquainted with the mysteries of the *Inner Self*, before we father upon “departed spirits” actions, motives for which could never be explained upon any reasonable grounds.

H. P. B.

Lucifer, October, 1889

## MEMORY IN THE DYING

WE find in a very old letter from a MASTER, written years ago to a member of the Theosophical Society, the following suggestive lines on the mental state of a dying man:

“At the last moment, the whole life is reflected in our memory and emerges from all the forgotten nooks and corners, picture after picture, one event after the other. The dying brain dislodges memory with a strong, supreme impulse; and memory restores faithfully every impression that has been entrusted to it during the period of the brain’s activity. That impression and thought which was the strongest, naturally becomes the most vivid, and survives, so to say, all the rest, which now vanish and disappear for ever, but to reappear in Devachan. No man dies insane or unconscious, as some physiologists assert. Even a madman or one in a fit of *delirium tremens* will have his instant of perfect lucidity at the moment of death, though unable to say so to those present. The man may often appear dead. Yet from the last pulsation, and between the last throbbing of his heart and the moment when the last spark of animal heat leaves the body, *the brain thinks* and the Ego lives, in these few brief seconds, his whole life over again. Speak in whispers, ye who assist at a death-bed and find yourselves in the solemn presence of Death. Especially have ye to keep quiet just after Death has laid her clammy hand upon the body. Speak in whispers I say, lest you disturb the quiet ripple of thought and hinder the busy work of the Past casting its reflection upon the veil of the Future. ...”

The above statement has been more than once strenuously opposed by materialists; Biology and (Scientific) Psychology, it was urged,

were both against the idea, and while the latter had no well demonstrated data to go upon in such a *hypothesis*, the former dismissed the idea as an empty “superstition.” Meanwhile, even biology is bound to progress, and this is what we learn of its latest achievements. Dr. Ferre has communicated quite recently to the Biological Society of Paris a very curious note on the mental state of the dying, which corroborates marvellously the above lines. For, it is to the special phenomenon of life-reminiscences, and that sudden re-emerging on the blank walls of memory, from all its long neglected and forgotten “nooks and corners,” of “picture after picture” that Dr. Ferre draws the special attention of biologists.

We need notice but two among the numerous instances given by this Scientist in his *Rapport*, to show how scientifically correct are the teachings we receive from our Eastern Masters.

The first instance is that of a moribund consumptive whose disease was developed in consequence of a spinal affection. Already consciousness had left the man, when, recalled to life by two successive injections of a gramme of ether, the patient slightly lifted his head and began talking rapidly in Flemish, a language no one around him, nor yet himself, understood. Offered a pencil and a piece of white cardboard, he wrote with great rapidity several lines in that language—very correctly, as was ascertained later on—fell back, and died. When translated—the writing was found to refer to a very prosaic affair. He had suddenly recollected, he wrote, that he owed a certain man a sum of fifteen francs since 1868—hence more than twenty years—and desired it to be paid.

But why write his last wish in Flemish? The defunct was a native of Antwerp, but had left his country in childhood, without ever knowing the language, and having passed all his life in Paris, could speak and write only in French. Evidently his returning consciousness, that last flash of memory that displayed before him, as in a retrospective panorama, all his life, even to the trifling fact of his having borrowed twenty years back a few francs from a friend, did not emanate from his *physical* brain alone, but rather from his spiritual memory, that of the *Higher Ego* (Manas or the re-incarnating individuality). The fact

of his speaking and writing Flemish, a language that he had heard at a time of life when he could not yet speak himself, is an additional proof. *The Ego is almost omniscient in its immortal nature*. For indeed matter is nothing more than “the last degree and as the shadow of existence,” as Ravaisson, member of the French Institute, tells us.

But to our second case.

Another patient, dying of pulmonary consumption and likewise reanimated by an injection of ether, turned his head towards his wife and rapidly said to her: “You cannot find that pin now; all the floor has been renewed since then.” This was in reference to the loss of a scarf pin eighteen years before, a fact so trifling that it had almost been forgotten, but which had not failed to be revived in the last thought of the dying man, who having expressed what he saw in words, suddenly stopped and breathed his last. Thus any one of the thousand little daily events, and accidents of a long life would seem capable of being recalled to the flickering consciousness, at the supreme moment of dissolution. A long life, perhaps, lived over again in the space of one short second!

A third case may be noticed, which corroborates still more strongly that assertion of Occultism which traces all such remembrances to the thought-power of the *individual*, instead of to that of the personal (lower) Ego. A young girl, who had been a sleepwalker up to her twenty-second year, performed during her hours of somnambulant sleep the most varied functions of domestic life, of which she had no remembrance upon awakening.

Among other psychic impulses that manifested themselves only during her sleep, was a secretive tendency quite alien to her waking state. During the latter she was open and frank to a degree, and very careless of her personal property; but in the somnambulant state she would take articles belonging to herself or within her reach and hide them away with ingenious cunning. This habit being known to her friends and relatives, and two nurses, having been in attendance to watch her actions during her night rambles for years, nothing disappeared but what could be easily restored to its usual place. But on one sultry night, the nurse falling asleep, the young girl got up and

went to her father's study. The latter, a notary of fame, had been working till a late hour that night. It was during a momentary absence from his room that the somnambule entered, and deliberately possessed herself of a will left open upon the desk, as also of a sum of several thousand pounds in bonds and notes. These she proceeded to hide in the hollow of two dummy pillars set up in the library to match the solid ones, and stealing from the room before her father's return, she regained her chamber and bed without awakening the nurse who was still asleep in the armchair.

The result was, that, as the nurse stoutly denied that her young mistress had left the room, suspicion was diverted from the real culprit and the money could not be recovered. The loss of the will involved a law-suit which almost beggared her father and entirely ruined his reputation, and the family were reduced to great straits. About nine years later the young girl who, during the previous seven years had not been somnambule, fell into a consumption of which she ultimately died. Upon her death-bed, the veil which had hung before her physical memory was raised; her divine insight awakened; the pictures of her life came streaming back before her inner eye; and among others she saw the scene of her somnambule robbery. Suddenly arousing herself from the lethargy in which she had lain for several hours, her face showed signs of some terrible emotion working within, and she cried out "Ah! what have I done? ... It was I who took the will and the money . . . Go search the dummy pillars in the library, I have ..." She never finished her sentence for her very emotion killed her. But the search was made and the will and money found within the oaken pillars as she had said. What makes the case more strange is, that these pillars were so high, that even by standing upon a chair and with plenty of time at her disposal instead of only a few moments, the somnambulist could not have reached up and dropped the objects into the hollow columns. It is to be noted, however, that ecstasies and convulsionists (*Vide the Convulsionnaires de St. Medard et de Morizine*) seem to possess an abnormal facility for climbing blank walls and leaping even to the tops of trees.

Taking the facts as stated, would they not induce one to believe

that the somnambule personage possesses an intelligence and memory of its own apart from the physical memory of the waking lower Self; and that it is the former which remembers *in articulo mortis*, the body and physical senses in the latter case ceasing to function, and the intelligence gradually making its final escape through the avenue of psychic, and last of all of spiritual consciousness? And why not? Even materialistic science begins now to concede to psychology more than one fact that would have vainly begged of it recognition twenty years ago. "The real existence" Ravaisson tells us, "the life of which every other life is but an imperfect outline, a faint sketch, is that of the Soul." That which the public in general calls "soul," we speak of as the "reincarnating Ego." "To be, is to live, and to live is to will and think," says the French Scientist.<sup>1</sup> But, if indeed the physical brain is of only a limited area, the field for the containment of rapid flashes of unlimited and infinite thought, neither will nor thought can be said to be generated *within* it, even according to materialistic Science, the impassable chasm between matter and mind having been confessed both by Tyndall and many others. The fact is that the human brain is simply the canal between two planes—the psycho-spiritual and the material—through which every abstract and metaphysical idea filters from the Manasic down to the lower human consciousness. Therefore, the ideas about the infinite and the absolute are not, nor can they be, within *our* brain capacities. They can be faithfully mirrored only by our Spiritual consciousness, thence to be more or less faintly projected on to the tables of our perceptions on this plane. Thus while the records of even important events are often obliterated from our memory, not the most trifling action of our lives can disappear from the "Soul's" memory, because it is NO MEMORY for it, but an ever present reality on the plane which lies outside our conceptions of space and time. "Man is the measure of all things," said Aristotle; and surely he did not mean by man, the form of flesh, bones and muscles!

Of all the deep thinkers Edgard Quinet, the author of "Creation," expressed this idea the best. Speaking of man, full of feelings and thoughts of which he has either no consciousness at all, or which he

<sup>1</sup> Rapport sur la Philosophie en France au XIX<sup>me</sup>. Siècle.

feels only as dim and hazy impressions, he shows that man realizes quite a small portion only of his moral being. “The thoughts we think, but are unable to define and formulate, once repelled, seek refuge in the very root of our being.” . . . When chased by the persistent efforts of our will “they retreat before it, still further, still deeper into—who knows what—fibres, but wherein they remain to reign and impress us unbidden and unknown to ourselves. . . .”

Yes; they become as imperceptible and as unreachable as the vibrations of sound and colour when these surpass the normal range. Unseen and eluding grasp, they yet work, and thus lay the foundations of our future actions and thoughts, and obtain mastery over us, though we may never think of them and are often ignorant of their very being and presence. Nowhere does Quinet, the great student of Nature, seem more right in his observations than when speaking of the mysteries with which we are all surrounded: “The mysteries of neither earth nor heaven but those present in the marrow of our bones, in our brain cells, our nerves and fibres. No need,” he adds, “in order to search for the unknown, to lose ourselves in the realm of the stars, when here, near us and *in us*, rests the unreachable. As our world is mostly formed of imperceptible beings which are the real constructors of its continents, so likewise is man.”

Verily so; since man is a bundle of obscure, and to himself unconscious perceptions, of indefinite feelings and misunderstood emotions, of ever-forgotten memories and knowledge that becomes on the surface of his plane—*ignorance*. Yet, while physical memory in a healthy living man is often obscured, one fact crowding out another weaker one, at the moment of the great change that man calls death—that which we call “memory” seems to return to us in all its vigour and freshness.

May this not be due as just said, simply to the fact that, for a few seconds at least, our two memories (or rather the two states, the highest and the lowest state, of consciousness) blend together, thus forming one, and that the dying being finds himself on a plane wherein there is neither past nor future, but all is one present? Memory, as we all know, is strongest with regard to its early associations, then when

the future man is only a child, and more of a soul than of a body; and if memory is a part of our Soul, then, as Thackerary has somewhere said, it must be of necessity eternal. Scientists deny this; we, Theosophists, affirm that it is so. They have for what they hold but negative proofs; we have, to support us, innumerable facts of the kind just instanced, in the three cases described by us. The links of the chain of cause and effect with relation to mind are, and must ever remain a *terra-incognita* to the materialist. For if they have already acquired a deep conviction that as Pope says—

Lulled in the countless chambers of the brain

Our thoughts are link'd by many a *hidden* chain. . . .

—and that they are still unable to discover these chains, how can they hope to unravel the mysteries of the higher, Spiritual, Mind!

H. P. B.

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(\*) Greek type not being available, the Greek words have been omitted.