

SPIRITUALISM

Articles by William Q. Judge

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SPIRITUALISM OLD AND NEW

I

I AM a spirit myself, but in some respects different from those spoken of at modern *seances*. I have a body and a brain to work with, while they have not; I can prove and feel my identity as son of my father, while they are not able to do so; and, more important than all, I have my due proportion of experience in the trinity of body, soul, and spirit—or in material, intellectual, and universal nature—while they, being deprived of material nerves, sensory organs, brain, blood, and flesh, are confined to a plane of consciousness where they are devoid of those organs of action and sensation which are necessary if one is to come in contact with matter and nature, with human personal experience, or with the great resounding heart-strings of the man who is made in the image of the gods.

The Chinese books called *King*, the Fireworshippers' *Zend Avesta*, the Egyptian mysterious monuments and papyri, the grandly-moving Aryan books of India, the Greek religions, the Roman records, and the Christian scriptures new and old, speak of spiritualism, write of it, explain it, symbolize it. As we see it in the olden times it is grand and philosophical, scientific and religious; but today, in Europe and America, spiritualism is deadly commonplace, bent upon nothing, without a philosophy as confessed by its leaders, piled all round with facts of many years' collection, but wholly undigested, marred with fraud and a daily pouring forth of platitudes for wonder-seekers. It is a revolt from Christianity, and yet with nothing to replace an unjust heaven but an illogical and materialistic summer-land. In the olden times its seers and vestals neither touched money nor engaged in the vulgar strife of competition for private advancement and personal pleasure;

in these modern times the mediums, left unprotected by their leaders, offer to sell the spirits and the spirit-land for a dollar or two to any customer. It is a trade for a living, and not the pursuit of the things of the spirit. Such are the differences. Is the case improperly stated?

The sort of spiritualism which now prevails in the West was well known in the older days, but it was called necromancy and existed under prohibition. The history of the Jewish King Saul, and especially the 28th chapter of 1st Samuel, shows this to be so.,Saul was a medium of the obsessed kind. His particular variety of devil required music to still him, music furnished by David, but even then he broke out sometimes, on one occasion flinging a javelin at the player, who barely missed instant death. And that mediums flourished is proven in the chapter of Samuel I mentioned: "And Saul had put away those who had *familiar spirirts*, and the witches, out of the land," but he retained the higher spiritualism of the Urim and Thummim, of the High Priest, and of the inspired utterances of prophets who were men of austerity working without pay. Saul fell upon evil times, and needed ghostly counsel. He consulted Urim and the prophets in vain. "And when Saul enquired of the Lord, the Lord answered him not, *neither by dreams, nor by Urim*, nor by the prophets." So he asked his servants to seek him a woman who had a familiar spirit, and they mentioned one— who was not called a witch—living at Endor. It is to be noted that only a few verses above an account of Samuel's death and burial at Ramah is given; hence Samuel had not been long buried, and, as Theosophists know, his astral remains were probably not disintegrated. Saul, medium as he was, added fasting to his practise that day, and sought out the woman at Endor for the purpose of calling up the shade of Samuel. When the materialized astral form of the recently-deceased prophet arose, the woman was frightened and discovered the identity of Saul. Her clairvoyance was aroused, and, as she said, she "saw gods ascending from the earth." Here were two powerful mediums, one Saul and the other the woman. Hence the materialization of the spook was very strong. Saul had come full of the wish to see Samuel, and the strong combination brought on a necromantic evocation of the Shade,

by which—reflecting through the clairvoyance of both mediums and drawing upon Saul's mind and recent history—the king was informed of his easily prognosticated defeat and death. Quite properly Moses had interdicted such *seances*. This one, repeating Saul's fears and indecision, weakened further his judgment, his conscience, and his resolution, precipitated his defeat, finished his reign. That the shade was merely Samuel's astral remains is very plain from its petulant inquiry as to why Saul had disquieted it to bring it up. The whole story is an ancient description of what happens every month in America among our modern necromancers and worshippers of the dead. When Moses wrote his Codes, the "voice of Bath-Col"—modern, *independent voice*, as well as many other mediumistic practices, prevailed, and those who could evoke the shades of the dead or give any advice from *familiars* were so well known to the people that the law-giver framed his oft-followed "thou shalt not suffer a witch to live" which his religious descendants obeyed to the letter in Salem, Mass., in England, in Scotland, many centuries after. In the temple erected in the wilderness, as also in the permanent structure attributed to Solomon at Jerusalem, there was the Holy of Holies where the chief medium—the High Priest ringing the bells around his robe—communed with the controlling spirit who spoke from between the wings of the Cherubim. And in the Talmudic stories the Jews relate how Jesus obtained and kept the incommunicable name, although he was roared at by the animated statues that guarded the portal. All through the Old Testament the various prophets appear as inspirational mediums. One falls down in the night and the Lord, or spirit, speaks to him; another fasts for forty days, and then his controlling angel touches his lips with fire from the altar; Ezekiel himself hears the rushing of waters and[^] roaring of wheels while his inspired ideas are coming into his amazed brain. All these duplicate our modern styles, except that the ancient inspirations have some sense and loftiness. But none of these old mediums and seers and inspired speakers—except the necromancers—took money for what they saw and said. That constituted the difference between a prophet, or one with a god, and a contemned necromancer. Could it be possible that the ancients made these distinctions, permitting the one and condemning the other, without

any knowledge or good reason for such a course?

The great oracles of Greece and other places had their vestals. These were mediums through whom the “controls,” as Spiritualists would say, made answer to the questions put. It is true that money and gifts were poured into the establishments, but the officiating vestals were not in the world; they received no money and could not fix a fee; they accumulated no property; they were unfettered by ambitions and petty daily strifes; but their lives were given up to the highest spiritual thought the times permitted, and they were selected for their purity. And, still more, the Oracle could not be compelled by either money or gifts. If it spoke, well and good; if it remained silent, the questioner went sorrowfully and humbly away. There was no expressed or hidden demand for the worth of the money. In fact, very often, after the Oracle had spoken and a large gift had been made, another utterance directed the entire gift to be given back.

This is another difference between the old and new spiritualism, as shown in the attitude of the attendant upon mediums. Ask any of the latter and you will find how strong is the demand for a compensating return for the money paid beforehand for the privilege of a sitting. It presses on the unfortunate creature who offers to be a channel between this plane and the next one. If no results are obtained, as must often be the case, the seeker is dissatisfied and the medium hastens to offer another sitting, somewhat on the principle of the quacks who promise to return the fee if there is no cure of the disease.

Turning to India, living yet although once, without doubt, contemporary with the Egyptians from whom the Jews obtained their magic, necromancy, and spiritualism, we have the advantage of studying a living record. The Hindus always had spiritualism among them. They have it yet, so that there it is both old and new. They made and still make the same distinction between the higher sort and the modern necromantic perversion. Through ages of experience their people have discovered the facts and the dangers, the value of the higher and the injury flowing from the lower. It is very true that we have not much to learn from the simple lower classes who with oriental passivity cling to the customs and the ideas taught by their forefathers. But

that very passivity brings up before us as in a gigantic camera the picture of a past that lives and breathes when the philosophy which is the foundation of the present beliefs is studied.

Women there, just as here, often become obsessed. “Controlled” would be the word with our spiritualistic friends. But they do not hail with joy this *post-mortem* appearance of immediate or remote ancestor. They abhor it. They run to the priest, or pursue a prescription physical or psychical, for exorcising the obsessor. They call it a *bhuta*, which with the vulgar means “devil,” but among the educated class means “elemental remains.” They neither fail to admit the fact and the connection of the obsession with the deceased, nor fall into the other error of supposing it to be the conscious, intelligent, and immortal centre of the one who had died. Just as the ancient philosophy universally taught, so they assert that this spook is a portion of the psychic clothing the departed soul once wore, and the thing is as much to be respected as any old suit of clothes a man had discarded. But as it belongs to the psychic realm and has a capability of waking up the lower elements in man’s being as well as mere mechanical hidden forces of nature, and is devoid of soul and conscience, it is hence called a devil, or rather, the word *elementary* has acquired with them the significance of devil from the harm which follows in the wake of its appearance.

In following papers I will carry the enquiry into present spiritualistic phenomena, their dangers, their use and abuse, as well as reviewing the ancient higher spiritualism and the possibility of its revival.

II

Some of the commands of Moses—speaking for Jehovah—given to the Jews on the subject of spiritualism are not without interest. As they enter into no description of the various phases included in the regulations, it is certain that the whole subject was then so familiar it could be understood as soon as referred to without any explanation. And if Moses and his people ever were really in Egypt in bondage or as inhabitants of the land of Goshen, they could not have been there without learning many of the spiritualistic and necromantic practices

of the Egyptians. In Exodus ch. 22, v. 18, he directs “Thou shalt not suffer a witch to live.” The witch spoken of was a different person from the others who had familiars and the like; they were not destroyed. But a witch must have been a malevolent practitioner of occult arts either for money or for mere malice. In Deuteronomy the lawgiver, referring to the land the people were soon to occupy, said: “There shall not be found among you anyone a consulter with familiar spirits, or a wizard, or a necromancer.” Hence these varieties of occult practices are mentioned and prohibited. There is not much doubt that the very powerful spirit calling himself “Jehovah” issued these directions not only to protect the people in general, but also to preclude the possibility of any other equally powerful tribal God setting up communication with the Jews and perhaps creating confusion in the plans of Jehovah.

The “consulters with familiar spirits” were those who had in one way or another—either by training or by accident of birth—opened up intercourse with some powerful nature-spirits of either the fire or air element, from which information on various matters was obtainable. These elementals are difficult to reach, they are sometimes friendly, at others unfriendly, to man. But they have a knowledge peculiar to themselves, and can use the inner senses of man for the purpose of getting him answers beyond his power to acquire in the ordinary manner. This is done somewhat in the way the modern hypnotiser awakes the inner person, to some degree disengaged from the outer one, and shows that the hidden memory and perceptive powers have a much wider range than the healthy person usually exhibits. These familiar spirits were well known to the ancients, and Moses speaks of them so simply that it is very evident it was a matter of history at that period and not a new development. The same kind of “familiar” is also mentioned in the Acts of the Apostles.¹ Paul and his companions came to Macedonia—if the confused statements as to places are to be relied on—and there “It came to pass as we went to prayer a certain damsel *possessed with a spirit of divination* met us, which brought her Masters much gain by soothsaying.” Paul drove the

¹Acts, ch. 16.

possessing spirit out of the woman, thus depriving her masters of gain and probably herself of support. This was not a mere case of ordinary mediumship where the astral garments of some departed soul had possession of the girl, but was a genuine elemental of the divining kind which Paul could drive out because of the power of his human will.

The “familiar” is not our higher nature giving us useful information, but is always an entity existing outside of and not belonging to the human plane. They are known of today in (the East, and communication with them is regarded there as dangerous. This danger arises from the fact that “familiar spirits” are devoid of conscience, being of a kingdom in nature which is yet below the human stage and therefore not having Manas and the spiritual principle. They act automatically, yet by the uniting to them of the reason and other powers of the person whom they afflict there is a semblance of reason, judgment, and intelligence. But this appearance of those qualities is equally present in the modern phonograph, which is certainly devoid of them in fact. Being of such a nature, it is natural that the influence exerted by them upon the human being is directed only to our lower nature to the exclusion of the higher, and thus in time the moral qualities are paralyzed. Other results ensue in certain cases where what might be styled “astral dynamite” is liberated through the disturbance in the human being’s nature as well as in the other plane, and then destruction arrives for others as well as for the person who has engaged in this intercourse. For these reasons the wise all through the past have discouraged dealing with a familiar spirit.

The next class mentioned by Moses is the wizard, who was on a grade higher than the first and corresponding to the witch. The failure to mention wizards in the verse directing the death of a witch may mean that witches were more common than wizards, just as today the “voodoo women” are far more plentiful than “voodoo men.”

The last spoken of, and called an abomination, is the necromancer. This one corresponds exactly to any modern spiritualist who calls upon the dead through a medium, thus galvanizing the astral corpse which ought to be left in quietness to dissipate altogether. Moses

received his education in Egypt and Midian as a priest of the highest order. In those days that meant a great deal. It meant that he was fully acquainted with the true psychology of man and could see where any danger lurked for the dabbler in these matters. It is not of the slightest consequence whether there ever existed such a man as Moses; he may be a mere name, an imaginary person to whom these books are ascribed; but the regulations and prohibitions and occult lore included in what he did and said make up an ancient record of great value. When he prohibited necromancy he only followed the time-honoured rules which vast experience of many nations before he was born had proved to be right. An ancient instance of necromancy was given in the first article from the history of King Saul.

I propose therefore to call what is now miscalled spiritualism by another name, and that is *necromancy*. This is the worship of the dead. It has put itself in the position of being so designated, and the title is neither an invention nor a perversion. The journals supported by those who practice it and the books written by some of its best advocates have declared year after year that the dead were present—as spirits—at *seances*, the medium have said they were under the control of dead white men and women, long dead red Indians, or babies, as the case might be; and at the time when materializing *seances* were common the ancient dead or the newly dead have been made to appear, as in the case of Samuel to Saul, before the eyes of the sitters, and then, as the latter looked on in astonishment, the apparition has faded from sight. Nor has this been confined to the ordinary unscientific masses. Men of science have practiced it. Prof. Crookes certified that in his presence the “Katie King spook” materialized so strongly as to give as much evidence of density of flesh and weight of body as any living person. It is therefore necromancy pure and simple, and the next question to be determined is whether, as said by Moses, it is an abomination. If it leads to nought but good; if it proves itself to be communication with spirit—the word being used in its highest sense; if it gives no evidence of a debasing effect; if it brings from the world of spirit where the spiritualist declares all knowledge exists, that which is for the enlargement of human

knowledge and advancement of civilization; if it has added to our information about the complex nature of man as a psychological being; if it has given either a new code of ethics or a substantial, logical, and scientific basis for the ethics declared by Buddha and Jesus, then it is not an abomination although still necromancy.

For forty years or more in Europe and America there has been a distinct cultivation of this necromancy, a time long enough to show good intellectual results by any two men in other departments. What does the history of these years give us? It presents only a morbid sort of wonder-seeking and a barren waste of undigested phenomena, the latter as unexplained today by “spirits” or spiritualists as they were when they took place. Such is the general statement of the outcome of those forty years. Before going further into the subject as outlined above, I will close this paper by referring to a first prime defect of the modern necromancy, the defect and taint of money-getting on the part of mediums and those who consult with them.

There was formed not ten years ago in Chicago and New York a syndicate to work some silver mines under the advice of the “spirits.” A medium in each city was consulted and paid a pittance for the sittings. The controlling spook directed the investments and many of the operations. Shares were issued, sold, and bought. The familiar result of the enterprise coming to nought but loss for the investors has here no great bearing, though under another head it is important. But

before the concluding crash there was a certain amount made by sales and purchases. Very little was paid to the poor medium, and it is to be doubted if any more than the regular price per day would have been paid even had the golden promises of the “spirits” been fully realized. All this has been repeated dozens of times in other instances.

There have been a few isolated cases of a so-called medium’s giving in relation to business a long course of directions which came to a successful conclusion. One of these related to operations in the stock market in New York. But they were all cases of “consulting a familiar,” and not at all the same as the work of an ordinary medium. If they were the same as the latter, then we should expect to find

such successes common, whereas the opposite is the fact in the history of mediums. The extent to which even at this day mediumship is devoted to giving assumed rise and fall of railroad stocks and the grain market in New York and Chicago at the request of brokers in those cities would surprise those who think they are well acquainted with these gentlemen.

This is the great curse of the American cult called spiritualistic, and until it is wholly removed, no matter at what individual cost, we shall not see the advent of the true spiritualism. St. Paul was right when he dispossessed the girl in Macedonia of her familiar, even if thereby she lost her employment and her masters their gains. If spiritualists will not eliminate the money element from their investigations, it would be well if some St. Paul should arise and with one wave of his hand deprive all public mediums in the land of the power to see visions, hear from dead or living, or otherwise pursue their practices. The small amount of individual suffering which might ensue would be more than compensated for by the wide immediate as well as future benefit.

AN EMBODIED SPIRIT

Path, September, October, 1892

ABOUT ‘SPIRIT’ MATERIALIZATIONS

SOME EVIDENCE FROM SPIRITUALISM

AN examination of the records of the past forty years of what is known as the spiritualistic movement discloses a strange state of things, revealing a blindness on the part of the unorganized body of people to the just and logical conclusions to be drawn from the vast mass of facts in their possession. They have been carried away wholly by the pleasures of wonder-seeking and ghost-hunting to such an extent that nearly all of them wish for and seek out only that which they are pleased to call the spirits of the departed. In a former article in this magazine this has been called “the worship of the dead”; and that it justly is.

It is not the worship of those who have died, such as the Hindu and other eastern nations have in their ceremonies for the spirits of the fathers, but it is the running after that which is really dead to all intents and purposes—corpses in fact. For these people stand on the brink of the grave and call for those who have passed away, who are still living in other states, who do not return; and in response to the cry the seekers are rewarded by the ghosts, the ghouls, the vampires, the senseless, wavering shapes, the useless images and reflections of human thoughts and acts of which the vast reservoir of the astral light is full. This and this alone is their worship. It is the seeking after dead images, senseless and conscienceless, moved by force alone and attracted solely by our passions and desires that give them a faint and fleeting vitality.

Yet from the remotest days of the past down to the present time the loudest and clearest warnings have been given against such practices. It is what was called necromancy in the old time, prohibited in the Christian Bible and the pagan mysteries alike.

Moses, educated among the Egyptians, told his people that they must not run after these things, and the Hindus, warned by centuries of sorrow, long ago declared against it, so that today these so-called "spirits" are known to them as devils. The literature of the Theosophical Society is full of these warnings from the very first book issued by H. P. Blavatsky to this present article. But the spiritualists and their leaders, if they have any, persistently ignore not only the experience of the past but also the cautions now and then given by their own "spirits." For, as is well known to the thoughtful theosophist, mediums, being passive and open to any and every influence that may come their way, often do give out the knowledge in the possession of living men on these subjects

Many times have learned living occultists entered into the sphere of mediums and compelled them to tell the truth, which has been sometimes recorded and preserved so that it may be inspected afterwards when found in the mass of their history as printed in their journals. To some of this I purpose to refer, for no spiritualist can say with propriety that the evidence given through their own mediums and purporting to come from the "spirit land" is not to be relied upon. If they reject any such testimony from mediums who have not been shown to be frauds, they must reject all. Enough has been given out by those who say they are controlled by spirits to prove the case made by the theosophists, or, at the least, to throw doubt upon the assertions of spiritualists about the summer-land and the returning of spirits.

In October, 1877, beginning on the 13th, the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* began a series of interviews with a medium in Chicago in which questions were put to the control by the reporter of that paper. This "control" was called Jim Nolan, and the medium was Mrs. M. J. Hollis-Billing. Her reputation has never been assailed, nor has she been ever accused of lying or fraudulent practice. The place where the interviews took place was 24 Ogden Avenue.

The first question was whether Nolan understood the process of spirit materialization. He, replying from the "spirit world," said he did, and proceeded in substance thus:

The electrical particles in a dark room are in a quiet condition; they are collected by us and laid upon one another until we have made an electrical form (still unseen). We then take magnetism from the medium or from the sitters in the circle and with it coat this electrical form. After that the form is used by the "spirit," who steps into it and uses it as a form.

This of course proves from the side of the spirits that no materialized form is the form of any spirit whatever, for certainly electrical and magnetic particles are not spiritual. Nolan then proceeds:

Another way is this: We gather these particles to which I have referred and, going into the astral light, we reflect upon them the face of some spirit and thus a reflected image of a spirit is seen. Or, again, we collect these particles into a sheet or plane surface, take chemicals from the atmosphere with which to coat them over, and then (at the request of the sitters) reflect upon this surface a face, and you see the features of the deceased or other person.

From this it follows inevitably that no real face of any spirit is seen, and as the images are taken from the astral light the whole thing is full of deception. At the request of the sitter the operating "spirit" finds in the astral light any desired face, and then goes through the form of reflecting it upon the prepared surface. Now all of this on the part of Jim Nolan is very scientific, much more so than the mass of nonsense usually heard from "spirits," yet it has passed unnoticed because it is a deathblow out of their own camp to the claims of spiritualists that the dead return or that spirits can materialize, and raises up the horrid suspicion that they do not know, never can know, who or what it is that speaks and masquerades at their *seances* and behind the forms said to be materializations of spirits. It at once opens the door to the possibility that perhaps the theory of the theosophists is right, that these spirits are only shells of dead people and that nothing is heard from them except what may be found on the earth and in the earthly lives and thoughts of living people. But the second question was in regard to the identity of "spirits" among many materialized forms, and the reply was:

"It is very rarely in cases of materialization that over two or three forms are used for the whole number of reporting spirits. Really, what would be the use in building house after house for every one who wishes to go into it for some special purpose?" What use, truly, except

to prove that spirits do come back in the way claimed by spiritualists? But what he says upsets the identity of any materialization. If two forms have been used by five or more spirits to show themselves in, it of course results that none of them have shown themselves at all; but that some force or intelligence outside the circle or inside the medium has done all the talking by means of access to the astral light where all the pictures and all the images are forever stored up.

Nolan.—The Materialized form shown never belonged to the physical part of that spirit. It consists of chemical, electrical, and magnetic particles or elements from the atmosphere.

At the sitting of October 27th in the same year he said:

The Astral Light spoken of by ancient men is what we call magnetic light. All the acts of life are *photographed in the astral light of each individual*; the astral light retains all those peculiar things which occur to you from day to day.

And again, on the 12th of January, in reply to the sixth question, the same “spirit” said:

We gather these electrical particles together and with them form a house, as it were, into which we step; they are no more a part of the spirit than the chair on which you sit.

Nothing could be plainer than this. Out of the mouth of the “spirit” who has never been charged with being untruthful it is proved that the astral light exists, that it contains all images of all our acts and of ourselves, and that these images are reflected from that other side to this, and are mistakenly taken by the ghost hunter for the faces, the bodies, the acts, the speech of those who have gone the great journey. So, then, just as we have always contended, all these sittings with mediums and these materializations prove only the existence* powers, and functions of the astral light. As the frequenters of *seances* are not behind the scenes, they cannot say who it is or what it may be that operates to produce the phenomena exhibited. It may be good spirit or devil; more likely the latter. And therefore the great Roman Catholic Church has always insisted that its members should not run after these “spirits,” accounting them devilish and asserting that all these powers and forces are under the charge of the fallen angels.

It is seldom, perhaps not once in a century of materializations,

that a spirit such as that called Jim Nolan would be so foolish as to give out correct information as he has done in the sitting referred to; for the nature and habit of the elements who work at the most of these *seances* is to bring about and continue delusion. But going a step farther, I say that in the case of Jim Nolan it was no “spirit” of dead man and no elemental that spoke and acted, but the spirit, soul, and intelligence of a living man who chose to take the name of Nolan as being as good as any other, in order that the evidence might be recorded for the benefit of the spiritualists in their own camp and in their special investigations, of the truth of the matter, as an offset to the mass of stuff gathered by the elemental from the brains and confused thoughts of mediums and sitters alike. This evidence cannot be razed from the record, although so far it remains unnoticed. It must stand with all the rest. But while the rest will fall as not being in accord with reason, this will remain because it is the truth as far as it goes.

WILLIAM Q JUDGE *Path,*

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asserted for any so-called spirit, but his views have not been accepted by the Spiritualists. He said:

Question.—Will you fully explain the mechanical process, without going into the chemical properties of the various constituents farther than may be essential to a clear understanding of your statements?

Answer.—You understand that electrical particles in a darkened room are in a quiet condition; and they are collected together by the spirits and laid one upon the other until a form is completed. After completing this materialized form, we take magnetism from the medium, or such magnetism as we can get from the circle, and put a coating upon the electrical particles of the physical body just completed; and then the spirit steps into it and uses it in precisely the same manner as you use your physical form, controlling it by strong will-power. There are also other modes of materialization; sometimes we merely gather electrical particles and reflect upon them the face of some spirit, a reflected image as from a mirror is then seen; or we first place these electrical particles gathered in on a sheet, like, for example, a sheet of paper; then we coat this sheet with certain chemicals from the atmosphere, and then we reflect electrically upon them, and that brings the form of a face, and you clearly identify the likeness of a spirit; for instance, here is a young girl not more than 16; the medium can be covered with a coating and made to look precisely like her, and then made to appear like the form of an old man of ninety. Sometimes spirits walk out upon the floor. Frequently the medium walks out covered with this dressing or a coating looking exactly like your deceased relative, and, should that fade off, the medium would be standing in your presence.

Being then asked a question regarding deception by mediums when presenting themselves as the spirit called for, he made the following interesting remarks in reply to the second query:

The only mode of purification is the proper purification of yourselves. I will venture to say that you can bring twenty people into this room tonight who ask for materialization; ten out of that number would rather have the medium walk out from the cabinet and personate their friends, provided they did not positively detect the swindle, than go home without any manifestations. The spirits see this, and if not exactly honorable *assist the medium. // is very rarely in cases of materialization that over two or three forms out of the whole number manifesting at a seance are newly materialized; the same form is used with another coating.* Really, what would be the use in building a house for every one who wishes to go into one for some especial purpose? Another point: the materialized form shown *never belonged to the physical part of that spirit;* such materializations merely consisting of chemical, electric, and magnetic principles or elements gathered from the atmosphere by the controlling or working band of spirits.

SPIRITUALISM

A "SPIRIT" TESTIFIES ON MATERIALIZATIONS

LAST month we gave two prophecies from the "spirit" Jim Nolan as reported some years ago by the *Religio-Philosophical Journal*! As this "control" has expressed himself quite definitely on several subjects, this article deals with some of his views on the phenomena of materialization of "spirit forms." The method of communication needs explanation. It is reported as being through his "materialized organs of speech." It is what is sometimes called the "independent voice." In these phenomena the medium was not entranced but carried on conversation, and the voice would sound from the air or out of the wall. Sceptics of course say that it is purely ventriloquism by the medium, but there are a large number of credible and intelligent witnesses who say that after careful examination no such trick was played, and that in several instances the voice was plainly heard while the medium was speaking at the same time. There is no exclusive impossibility in the matter, for two classes of spirits can project a voice from what appears to be empty space. The first is composed of the spirits of living men who have gained great occult power, and the other of certain gross entities existing in *Kama Loka*.

The *seances* used for this article were reported by the *R. P. Journal*, beginning October 13, 1877. Replying to the first question, Jim Nolan's voice said that he understood "the processes of form materialization of spirits," and was then asked to fully explain such alleged materializations. His answer completely demolishes the theory that a spirit can materialize itself, and throws doubt around the identity

¹Inadvertently, in the December article the name of the medium was given as "Hollis-Billing" when it should have been "Mrs. Hollis."

On the twenty-seventh of October in the same year Nolan was asked to explain the dematerialization of spirit forms, and said:

There is in such cases a black or darkened atmosphere thrown around it. It does not actually dematerialize. If it did, it could not be brought back again so quickly. When a body is materialized the particles composing the same are gathered together by the spirits and placed one upon the other until the desired form is completed; if these are separated they go back to the elements they were in before and we only gather them together again with greater difficulty; and often when the form disappears from view and you think it is dematerialized, the spirits have placed around it a darkened atmosphere to shut it from the view of those present.

On the seventeenth of November, 1877, the questions put were cognate to the present subject, and one of them-, the fourth of that day, asked if fabrics such as pieces of garments were materialized so as to remain thereafter. Nolan justly replied:

No: such fabrics are not materialized. The spirit can clothe itself in garments that are brought from some place on earth; they are in every sense of the word material. It is impossible for spirits to materialize any fabric or garment so that it will remain on your earth. It would be impossible for a garment materialized by the spirits to remain on the material plane.

At another *seance* held in the same place and reported in the same journal of October 27, '77. Nolan was asked about memory by the first question. In replying he upheld the old views about the astral light, only calling it "magnetic light." As he was speaking of memory he went into an explanation to sustain his position and said:

In ancient times men called a certain light surrounding and emanating from every person the astral light, and upon which, they taught, was impressed or imprinted every thought or act of the individual. We, the spirits, . . . call this emanation a magnetic light. . . . All the acts of life are photographed upon the astral light of each person . . . the astral light retaining all those peculiar things which occur to you from day to day during life.

This is all theosophical and true. It has a wider range than the subject of materializations, and if followed out to its right conclusions will upset many a theory held by spiritualists of their own invention or given them by some of the "lying spirits" Nolan spoke of.

All these remarks by Jim Nolan's spirit we commend to the attention of Spiritualists and Theosophists. The first have ignored them and all conclusions to be made from them for years, and impugned

their wisdom by contrary action. The word of one "spirit" should be of more weight than the theorizing of a living follower of mediums. In the plane from which the manifestations come the "spirit" must have more knowledge of these phenomena than the people who live in bodies on this. And when we find—as in the case of Nolan—a great deal of Theosophical and Occult wisdom displayed through his medium, who was unconnected then with the Theosophical Society, giving explanations which accord with what many a Theosophical student knows to be true, his opinions are of greater weight than those of such spooks as deal in platitudes or continue to crystallize more deeply the preconceptions of the medium or the sitters.

Nolan's explanations completely dispose of the identity of the alleged spirits. They assume a good deal in the line of Occultism, but nothing different from the explanations of similar astral and psychic phenomena offered by Occultism and Theosophy. They overturn, it is true, many of the spiritualistic theories, and that is why they have no credence there, for if followed out they would lead to Theosophy. In many of his other replies he says that which if attended to would have long ago purged Spiritualism, excluded the bosh that comes in floods from mediums, and made the cult of value to the world. He urged purity of mediums and their non-contact with the world. He demanded a cessation of wonder-mongering, of seeking for gratification of curiosity, of selfish questioning for business or other temporary purposes; he insisted on intelligence in question and investigation; he found his requests refused, his suggestions ignored, and then—he disappeared. There are some who think, and perhaps with reason, that he was no disembodied spook, but the spirit of an intelligent living person who sought near the descending arc of the cycle of "spiritualism" to inject a new method and bring about if possible a revival of true psychic investigation and demonstration in a body of people already largely prepared. But he was denied and ignored.

From what he says we can deduce the following as testimony from the world called by spiritualists the world of spirits:

(a) That no "materialized form" is the form of the spirit claiming it.

(b) That all such forms are merely electro-magnetic shapes capable of deluding, being mere reflecting surfaces.

(c) That the necessary elements for them are *sucked out* from the medium and sitters, thus depleting the vital forces of all present.

(d) That in many cases the supposed face of the deceased is a simple picture drawn from the astral light and reflected on the prepared electro-chemical magnetic surface, being delusion number two.

(e) That the astral light and its properties—or some such medium—are known to this super-sensual plane from which the phenomena come.

(f) That the astral light contains, preserves, and reflects when needed the images of persons who have left the earth, hence also of those living as well as of all events.

(g) That inasmuch as no sitter knows personally the facts of the super-sensual realm and its denizens—excluding the few who have vision—all sitters are at the mercy of the spooks and the pictures, and, it being declared by a spook-land denizen that two or three forms at the most are used for a much greater number of alleged identities to masquerade in, the whole question of the identity of reporting spirits is plunged in doubt. This has always been asserted by Theosophists, and in the end of 1877 was clearly and forcibly said by H. P. Blavatsky, who, as Theosophists know, often said during her life that all phenomena were full of “psychological tricks.”

(A) Referring further to (c) we find that attending *seances* is full of danger to the sitters from the loss of vitality due to the physical and nervous elements taken from their bodies for the purposes of phenomena, whether those be materialization or other. Certainly the materialization *seance* is positively shown by this “spirit” to have such dangers. And if anyone will take the trouble to read what H. P. Blavatsky said (see *Incidents* in her life) to her sister about what she saw with clairvoyant eye at *seances* he will more clearly see the danger; spooks dignified with the name of “spirit” were hovering about like octopi ready to pounce on any sensitive person for the purpose of drawing his vitality; they enveloped such, looking like vast sponges,

and then disappeared into the form of the person, sure to leave him less so much energy.

Finally it results that there is a distinct issue raised by Jim Nolan which should be decided by the followers of mediums and “spirits” whether he is right or wrong; if right, as he seems to be from a philosophical view of the matter, then all theories different should be given up. At any rate the spiritualist ought to give a good reason why the views of this spook, so concordant in many things with Theosophy, have had no acceptance, and why he is a liar or a fool and all the rest wise.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Path, January, 1894

BEFORE AMERICAN SPIRITUALISM

SO many persons have come to suppose that Spiritualism took its rise through the rappings at Rochester under the mediumship of the Fox sisters, it may be profitable to reprint a few descriptions of spiritualistic *seances* which had place a hundred years ago in France, Germany, and other European countries. At that time there were very many inquiring minds looking for the truth. They lived at a time when the Church had complete power, except perhaps in France, as in the latter country the Revolution was in the air. Much of the inquiry was tinctured with prevailing religious thought, and at the same time *seances* were held very privately. But enough leaked out and was recorded in various ways to indicate that much more of the same kind must have gone on. These extracts are taken from the *Theosophical Correspondence* between Count Saint Martin and Baron Liebig, beginning in 1792.

Nevertheless, as I believe I speak to a man of moderation, calm and discreet, I will not withhold from you that in the school through which I passed, more than twenty-five years ago, *communications* of all kinds were numerous and frequent, in which I had my share, like many others; and that, in this share, every sign indicative of the Repairer was present. Now you know the Repairer, and active Cause, are one. Nevertheless, as I was introduced by an initiation, and the danger of all initiations is lest we should be delivered over to the violent spirits of the world, as happened to Adam when he initiated himself in his imagination (*Incarnation*, 3d part, vi. I), and his desire was not all of God, I cannot answer that the forms which showed themselves to me may not have been assumed forms, for the door is open to all initiations, and this is what makes these ways so faulty and suspicious. I know that Germany is full of these initiations; I know that the Cabinet of Berlin is guided, and leads its King by their means—and, hitherto, without much profit to boast of; I know, in short, that the whole earth is full of these prodigies; but, I repeat, unless things come from the centre itself I do not give them my confidence. I can assure you I have received by the inward way truths and joys a thousand times higher than those I have received

from without.

* * *

A remarkable instance of this kind, which I heard of about two years ago, is what occurred at the consecration of the Egyptian Masonic Lodge at Lyons, 27th July, 5556 [Masonic chronology], according to their reckoning—which I believe to be incorrect. The labors lasted three days, and the prayers fifty-four hours; there were twenty-seven in the meeting. While the members were praying to the Eternal to manifest His approbation by a visible sign, and the Master was in the middle of his ceremonies, the Repairer appeared and blessed the members assembled. He came down on a blue cloud, which served for vehicle to this apparition; gradually he ascended again on this cloud, which, from the moment of his descent from heaven to earth, acquired a splendor so dazzling that a young girl, C, who was present could not bear its light. The two great prophets and the lawgiver of Israel also gave signs of their benevolence and approval. Who could reasonably doubt the fervor and piety of those twenty-seven members? ... I repeat my question: do you believe in physical communications, emanating from or produced in the centre? I call centre, in the poverty of my nomenclature, the interior of our souls; but I know not whether perception of any sort can penetrate to it; yes or no?

* * *

I found some old acquaintances at Bale, who, to my surprise, were very advanced in the theory and practice of communications. They told me of an event which had just occurred to a celebrated ecclesiastic of Zurich whom I formerly knew; his name is Lavater. He has received an invitation to go to see some persons of the highest rank in a northern court; not the one you mentioned in one of your letters, whose Cabinet would not move a step without physical consultations [Berlin—Tr.]; the one in question is farther north [Copenhagen—Tr.]. Lavater arrived there last summer; he met with men of education engaged in public business and living in the world, occupying high positions—men of acknowledged probity, who, in inviting him, could have no motive but one of goodness, for they even that they have immediate communications with the active intelligent Cause; they assure him that one of his friends, dead some time ago, will, through his medium, enter their society. These men promise to enlighten him on subjects upon which he had prayed for light for a long while—on the doctrine of the heavenly food, the great mystery. . . . They tell him also, what is very remarkable, that whenever they are together they have a most intimate experience of the truth of the promise. “When two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them”; since then a cloud, white as snow, descends, and for about half an hour rests upon them. They were convinced that these manifestations were signs and emanations of the active and intelligent Cause:

(1) Because these communications were always had after prayer had been offered to that Cause, and the answers came immediately after the petitions.

(2) Because these manifestations enjoined their love for that Cause.

(3) Because the manifestation which they called Lord, Spirit of the Lord, Image, and Symbol of the Lord, received their adoration, which no good virtue would have dared to do.

(4) Because the answers were given at the same time, in many places, to different persons, and in the same manner.

(5) Because it judged them with severity, and on their sincere repentance it immediately blessed them, and that visibly.

(6) Because whenever they asked it “Art thou the active intelligent Cause?” they were answered “Yes,” which no power, good or bad, would have dared to say.

(7) Because they were quite able to distinguish him from the good and evil intermediate beings which surrounded him.

I thank you for elucidating the new branch of intercourse going on in the North. The great difficulty remains as to the conclusions of our Zurichers: “Art thou the active intelligent Cause?” They answered “ ‘Yes’, *which no intermediate power, good or bad, would have dared to say*.”⁹ Is this conclusion right or not? —that’s the question.

The father, notwithstanding his attachment to these subaltern initiations, has been gradually led round to my way of thinking by his daughters. What completely gained me the confidence of these young ladies, who may yet open all their soul to the truth, was reading the twelfth and thirteenth chapters of / *Corinthians*, which the eldest of them opened accidentally. But with the other men, members of this society, and who are men of a certain age, nothing of consequence can be done. They are infected with the idea of the prerogative of having this direct intercourse with the powers.

* * *

I have received a quire-full of details of the experiences at Copenhagen. They still glorify themselves in the belief that the light, which, after their questions, gives out the sign “yes” or “no,” is a whitish phosphoric colour, and not red, because red, or the color of fire, would be a bad species. . . . Just as if it was not as easy to ape a whitish color as a fiery color.

Sometimes they see a star by the side of the light which is their oracle: they know this star represents a *virtue*. Then they ask: “Dare it remain there?” According to the answer “Yes” or “No,” the scholars order, the star obeys.

They sometimes put questions on points of doctrine; for instance, they ask:

“Is there a passage in Scripture which indisputably proves the metempsychosis?”

“Yes and no.”

Some understand this to mean that such passages may be found in the *Old Testament*, and they again ask:

“Is there any in the *New Testament*?”⁹⁹

“Yes.”

“In the four Evangelists?”

“Yes.”

“**In *St. Matthew***?”⁹⁹

“Yes.”

“In the first chapter?”

“No.”

“In the second?”

“No.”

“In the fourth?”

“No.”

“In the eleventh?”

“Yes.”

“In the four first verses?”

“No.”

“In the four next?”

“No.”

“In the fourteenth?”

“Yes.”

* * *

In this record we find support for certain conclusions* First, that the *modus operandi* was the same then as it now is in American spiritualism. Second, the alleged spirits showed at that time the same ignorance and want of progress which they have given evidence of ever since There the communicating spirits of 1792, including the “Great First Cause,” spoke in line with the philosophic and religious views of the believers, going no further and knowing no more about God, Nature, or Man than the questioners. This is exactly what is

proved by the record of forty years of American Spiritualism. If to this we add the fact, so well known, that the old Greek spiritualists obtained from their mediums at the Temples of the Oracles precise answers to their questions, confirming their own views, we must admit that spiritualism of no matter what kind, in every time, and among all nations, will gain from the unseen powers giving reports and communications no more in respect to philosophy, religion, and the laws of nature and man's constitution than corresponds with the most advanced thought of living believers. In other words, man's true teacher and initiator is himself in the body, and not any intelligence devoid of a body.

WILLIAM BREHON

Path, October, 1893

COMMUNICATIONS FROM "SPIRITS"

THEIR SOURCES AND METHODS

THE complexity of this subject makes treatment of it difficult. So little is known, and challenge of power to know is so natural, that any treatment must be unsatisfactory. Those "spirits" whose existence as active entities wholly in the spiritual world is claimed by the votaries of the worship of the dead, have not told us clearly anything of lasting value. They have had in America distinctly forty years to give the information in, but disagreeing among themselves and not showing in any way a concert of mental action by way of explanation, nothing has as yet resulted from the very sphere where, if anywhere, the knowledge ought to exist. If it be true, as is asserted for them, that those who have reported are conscious, intelligent spirits, then all of them who while reporting to man have failed to lead him to a right conclusion are blameworthy. Some of these entities or intelligences or spirits or whatever they are have, however, made through their mediums assertions of fact about nature and occult physiology which are in my opinion true, but they have not been accepted. Independently speaking in the air, using trance mediums and writings, they have at various times spoken of and described the astral light: have upheld reincarnation; have sustained the teachings of Swedenborg, and in many ways indicated a complete agreement with Theosophical explanations of occult nature; they have shown that materializations of spirits cannot be possible, and that the sometimes really coagulated forms are liable to be frauds of a pious nature, inasmuch as they are not the bodies of the dead nor in any sense whatever their property, that they are over and over again simply surfaces or masses on which pictures of dead or living may be reflected, being thus a spirit-conjurer's trick beyond our power. But

they have found no favor, and the cult does not, as a whole, think along those lines. If, then, the “spirits” themselves failed to get credence, how shall I gain any? The scientific world, on the other hand, knows not these realms, and believing not in either Theosophical or Spiritualistic explanations accords no belief to the one or the other. So we will have to be satisfied with just saying what is in mind, trusting to fate and time alone.

Many factors have to be admitted as present in this question. Some of them may be described, but many must as yet remain untouchable.

First. There are the minds (*a*) of the medium, and (*b*) of the sitter or sitters or enquirers. Neither can be left out of account. At once this should show how vast is the theme, for it is well known that the mind and its powers are but little known.

Second. Occult psychological powers and faculties of all concerned. This would include the subconscious or subliminal mind of the hypnotic schools.

Third. Physical memory, which is automatic, racial, national, and personal. This is present at all times. To overlook it is simply blindness. To trace it is extremely difficult, requiring a trained mind and trained inner sense. It is that memory which causes a child to catch at a support even just at birth; it is the guide in sleep when often we do acts for preservation or otherwise; it brings up the hate that a man of one race may feel for another race after centuries of oppression or repulsion; it causes the cat, no matter how young, to arch back and expand the tail the moment a dog is near. To say that man, the one who is the last great product of all the material evolution, has not this physical memory would be folly. But I have not heard that the spirits have told of this, nor described it, nor indicated how it may be traced, nor to what extent it acts in the simulation of conscious intelligence.

Fourth. Forces in their law and method wholly unknown to medium or sitters. These constitute the moving power, the writing force, the reflecting power, and all the vast number of hidden powerful forces behind the veil of objective matter.

Fifth. Entities of some kind or another, unseen but present, whether

elementals, elementaries, shades, angels, nature-spirits, or what not.

Sixth. The Astral Light, the Ether, the Akasa, the Anima Mundi.

Seventh. The Astral Body of medium and sitter. I have purposely put this by itself, for it has its own automatic action as much as has the physical body. With it must be also noted its memory, its idiosyncrasies, whether it is new for the person in question or whether it is one that has been used for more than one life, though each time in a different body. For if it be new to the present body, its memories and powers and peculiarities will be different from those of one that has actually been through several lives. It is not so rare in fact that the astral body is an old one; many mediums have strange powers because they have several distinct astral memories due to so much prior experience in one astral body. This alone would furnish a field for study, but we have not heard of the “spirits” telling about it, though some have shown that they experience these multiform personalities.

Lastly, there is the great fact well known to those who have studied this subject from its occult side, that the personal inner self centered in the astral body has the power not only to delude itself, but also to delude the brain in the body and cause the person to think that a distinct other personality and intelligence is speaking to the brain from other spheres, when it is from the astral self. This is for some people extremely difficult to grasp, as they cannot see how that which is apparently another person or entity may be themselves acting through the means of the dual consciousness of man. This dual consciousness acts for good or for the opposite in accordance with the Karma and character of the inner, personal self. It sometimes appears to a sensitive as another person asking him to do this, that, or the other, or exhorting to some line of conduct, or merely wearing some definite expression but being silent. The image seems to be another, acts as another, is to all present perception outside the perceiving brain, and no wonder the sensitive thinks it to be another or does not know what to think. And if the present birth happens to be one in which strong psychic power is a part of the nature, the delusion may be all the greater. Having briefly analyzed to begin with, let us now go further.

During the history of Spiritualism, many communications have

been made to and through mediums upon many subjects. Facts have been given that could not be known to the medium, some lofty ideas have also had expression, advice has emanated, prophecies have been issued, some of the questions that vex the soul have been treated.

The facts of death, kind of death, place where wills might be found have been told, unexecuted purpose of the dead expressed, personal peculiarities of the former person shown, have all been too easily accepted as proof of identity. These things are not proof. If they are, then a parrot or a phonograph may prove identity with a man. The possibilities are too many in other directions for this sort of proof to be final or even competent. The living clairvoyant may, by taking the requisite mental steps, become so absorbed in the person clair-voyantly brought up—both being alive—as to accurately reproduce all the other person's peculiarities. Consequently the same thing done in respect to a deceased may be possible in the same way for a clairvoyant entity on the other side of death reporting to us. But, at the same time, it is the fact that the astral body of the deceased does now and then consciously have a part in such reports by reason of unfinished separation from earth and its concerns, or from gross materiality. In other cases where the astral "shell," as some call it, is involved, it is galvanized by nature spirits or by the power of living beings once men who are condemned by their own character to live and function in the denser part of the astral envelope of the earth.

The very moment we go to a medium, who always forms the condensing focus for these forces and that realm, we begin to draw to us the astral remains of all persons whom we think of or who are enough like us or the medium to fall into the line of attraction. Thus we have in the sphere of the focus those we knew and those we never heard of and who never heard of us when they were alive. Elemental sprites which act as the nerves of nature come also, and they, condensed or plunged into the human astral shells, give a new life to the latter and cause them to simulate intelligence and action sufficient to delude all who are not positively trained in these matters. And this sort of training is almost unknown as yet here; it does not suffice to have followed on the proceedings of hundreds of *seances* or hundreds of experiments; it consists in actual training of the inner

senses in the living man. If the astral shape is coherent it will render a coherent report, but that is what also a phonograph will do. If it be partly gone or disintegrated it will, like a damaged phonograph cylinder, give a confused report or suddenly stop, to be replaced by another, better or worse. In no case can it go beyond facts known before to it, or those known to the inner or outer sense of the medium or sitter. And as these astral shells form the greater part of what come to a medium, this is the reason that forty long years of dealing with them have resulted in so little. It is no wonder, then, that the "astral shell" theory has been over-worn by many Theosophists, causing Spiritualists to think that to be the only explanation which we have. A judicious fear also has contributed to the much dwelling on this theory, for with it come up all the actual and very present dangers to mediums and sitters. These galvanized things necessarily are devoid of conscience, and hence cannot but act on and from the very lowest plane of morals and life, just as may happen to be the left-over material memory of the astral person; and that will vary in accord with the essence of the former life and not with its appearance. 'Hence we may have the shade of Smith or Jones who seemed to their neighbors to have been good men but who in reality always had low or wicked thoughts and strong desires which law or convention prevented them from giving full expression to. In the astral world, however, this hypocrisy is absent, and the real inner character will show itself or have its effect. And in any case whatever, the material shade of the best of men will not be as good as the man tried to be. but will have all the follies and inner sinfulness of his inheritance against which he struggled when living. Therefore it cannot be that these astral remnants are beneficial to us, no matter who was the person they once belonged to. They are but old clothes, and not the spirit of the man. They are less divine than the living criminal, for he still may be a complete trinity.

But good thoughts, good advice, good teaching, high ideas, noble sentiments have also come from this other world, and it cannot be that "astral shells" have given them. If they were sifted out and tabulated, it would be found that they are not different from what living men have said of their own free will and intent. They are not

new save as to means of communication. The strangeness of method very often serves to more deeply impress them on the mind of the recipient. But yet this extraordinary means has now and again led men to give them out as something new in all time, as very wonderful, as a revelation, when the unprejudiced observer sees that they are the opposite, are old or trite, and sometimes mixed up with gush and folly, the product of either one side or the other as might happen. This has casta stigma on the cult of Spiritualism and made the profane to laugh.

We have therefore to consider such communications which were valuable at the time or to a person, and beneficial in their effect. For were we to refuse to do so, the weapon thus forged will cut the Theosophist who so often is found to be a believer—as I am myself—in communications from Masters or Ma-hatmas who are no less spirits, but rather more so, because they are still in bodies of one sort or another.

WILLIAM Q JUDGE

Path, October, 1894

SPIRITUALISM

THE subject of spiritualism brings us face to face with the history of the Theosophical Society and the true progress of the human soul. When Mme. Blavatsky came to this country in obedience to the orders given her by those she called her Masters and who are known to us as the Mahatmas and Adepts, it was with spiritualism here that she began. It was seen by the Masters that the new wave of inquiry had begun in those ranks but had been deflected into the channel of materialism miscalled by the high name of “spiritualism,” and it was sought at first to give the spiritualists a chance to do what they might and ought for the sake of the western races. But the opportunity was not availed of at all: instead, ridicule and hate were thrown by them at H. P. B. Anyone who reads the published letters of the Masters can see the attention paid at first to this. One said that he was engaged in looking over the utterances of the mediums at their camp meetings, and H. P. B. often wrote her views as if she wanted to get into their ranks. She did wish to get there for the purpose of reform, but they would not let her in, and thus missed the greatest chance of the age. Letters were written by her to many people to have them help a new paper in Boston called the *Spiritual Scientist* as one that would give the right views about these matters, and she and Olcott wrote for the paper and gave money to it. It, however, died out soon. I knew the editor, and personally knew what H. P. B. and Olcott were then doing in that particular instance. She wanted to reform such abuses as paid and public mediums, and all the mass of wrong notion and wrong dealing with the whole subject, and especially she wished, as we do also, that things should be called by their right names, and that certain facts should not be accepted as

NOTE.—A paper read before the Aryan T.S. February 28, 1893.

proofs for theories advanced by mediums, and especially by A. J. Davis, as to the state after death and the power and nature of the forces that come to and about mediums. So it may be justly said that at first she had in mind to carry a reform in spiritualism at a time when the cycle permitted vastly more phenomena than now. And a student in Theosophy will see in this her knowledge of facts and laws of which so many are ignorant to this day. For it is the fact that then more psychic power was loose in the country than there now is, and also that it was bound, as years rolled on, to fade out to some extent. This is borne out by history, for it is hard today to find many good physical mediums, while then it was very easy and they were quite common. The world thinks that the reason that they have now grown rare is because of many exposures, but the real reason is that the *force* has for the time diminished. Her desire, in fact her haste, was to take advantage of time before all was too late. And so when she found no acceptance among the spiritualists, she and Olcott began the Theosophical Society.

We are brought by the subject face to face with the problem of the nature and destiny of the human soul, because the facts of spiritualism are the facts of the soul's own life and of the various vehicles it uses for its experience of Nature. Spiritualists look at this subject in a material way and go at it blindly, endangering all who have anything to do with it. They speak of the life after death, and give details as to the facts of that life which are to the spiritually minded the grossest form of materialism, for they but deify and enlarge in the most sensuous manner the life supposed to be led after death, a life modeled entirely on this poor mean existence of ours and not at all resembling what soul-life ought to be. They have merely made the old christian heaven a little more definite and gross.

The Theosophist must accept the facts of spiritualism or be accused of ignorance and bigotry. But his philosophy gives to those facts an explanation which takes in the real nature of man, without sentiment, wonder, or amazement. He looks for the right meaning at all hazards. It is folly and waste of time to go day after day to a medium and hear over again that which excites wonder. And the

careful Theosophist knows it is also dangerous to seek mediums; it is better to stay away and try to understand philosophy first of all. Not a single thing seen at a *seance* but can be found in smaller measure elsewhere if you but choose to look, for the world is full of wonders every day, and each one's life has in it much that gives the explanation for what the spiritualist claims as exclusively his own. If you will watch your own life in its three stages of waking, deep sleep, and dream, you will find the key to all the mysteries of mind and even to the mysteries of the whole of nature. So in considering spiritualism you must not set it in a compartment by itself, but must examine every part of the subject with reference to the living man and the philosophy of that living man's constitution. If you do not do so, but go on looking at these phenomena by themselves, you will be all the time on the wrong road and sure to come at last to wrong conclusions about the whole matter. It is hence important for us to keep clearly in mind the sevenfold constitution of man as explained in Theosophical literature. Our septenary nature must be known if we are to know all that the psychical phenomena mean, and we must also remember that what we are really considering is not the body but the action of the soul itself in the use of its various sheaths sometimes called "principles." And also it is essential, if you wish to know the truth, that you should accept, and try to understand the impermanent nature of all that is usually called "material," and "matter," and "objective." The dense may at once become the fluid, and the objective turn into the subjective; in the same way also the subjective may, by the operation of natural laws, become the objective, and the unseen is more permanent than the seen. If this is not accepted and realized, then there will be no hope of the enquirer's really knowing anything but the outside of all these strange phenomena. Set it down very carefully in the mind, then, that thoughts and ideas make shapes of their own which have the power under certain conditions of affecting our senses in such a way as to seem objective to our waking cognition. This often happens in the realm of the psychic nature, and has deluded hundreds into thinking that to be spirit which was not spirit, but was of the very grossest part and essence of matter. And this brings us to the

root of it all, which is that matter *in its essence* is invisible but at the same time far more gross than the matter we talk of daily. Almost to this conclusion such men as Tyndall and Huxley have been led when they tell you that it is impossible for us to really know anything of the essential or ultimate nature of matter.

In looking over spiritualism it resolves itself, so far as distinguishing it from other matters, into those phenomena called the coming back of the spirits of the dead, the materialization of forms said to be those of the dead and hence called "materialized forms," the carrying through the air of objects or the bodies of mediums, the writing of messages or the giving of them, and the precipitation of such messages in the style and handwriting of the deceased. Trance speaking, messages delivered in trance or not, speaking by inspiration, clairvoyance, and clairaudience, and all such phenomena are not distinctively the property of present-day spiritualism, as they have all been known for ages. But what I have laid aside as distinctive is quite wonderful to the ordinary lay mind, as we do not know how it may be possible for a tangible form to come out of the air, nor how a woman sitting in a trance may be able to tell many facts such as the name, the circumstances, and all such details about a dead man whom she never knew. And just here is the point of departure between the Theosophist and the Spiritualist. The latter says this proves that the dead man's spirit is present, but the theosophist denies it and says it is all done by some or all of three agencies, excluding kama-loka entities. The *first* is the astral remainder of the dead man, devoid of his soul and the conscience; the *second* is the astral body of the living medium; and the *last* the minds and astral bodies of those present. In these three agencies is the explanation of every one of the phenomena; the elemental sprites being included in all the three, as they take part in every movement in nature and man all over the globe and around it. That is why I have not given them a separate part in the matter. Our every thought stirs up and uses these elementals, and the motion of the wind, the rays of the sun, and the fluids of the body, with the motions of the organs, all do the same thing. These elementals are the nerves of nature, and not a thing can happen or be done in any department of life that does not involve and use the sprites of the

elements. By their aid, acting only under law, do our thoughts fly from place to place. They galvanize the deserted astral bodies of the dead, and thus, giving them a brief and wholly artificial life, cause them, like machines, to utter sounds, to repeat what they had been concerned in, to imitate the once active and ensouled person. This is about all the "spirit" there is in the communications from the dead. We might as well say that a lot of educated parrots left in a deserted house were the souls of the persons who had once lived there and owned the birds. Indeed, the illustration of the parrot is perfect, for a good parrot behind a screen could make you think that an intelligent man was hidden from view but speaking in a voice you hear and words you understand.

Take now the case of a "materialized form." Here you see, rising out of the floor or coming from the cabinet, an apparent human form which you can touch and feel, and which, in the very best case, utters some words. What is this? Is it real? Is it a spirit?

It is not a spirit. It is made from the astral body of the medium, and often from astral matter sucked out of the sitters who may be present. The medium furnishes the natural chemical laboratory in which the astral particles are added to the loose physical atoms of the persons near, so as to make a dense form from the subjective that becomes for a time objective, but which cannot remain. It will fade away. A framework of magnetic and astral particles is first made, and then is condensed by adding the physical particles from the bodies of those present. Then it becomes visible. But it has no organs.

It could not be dissected. And did it last long enough to be sawed in two you would find that it was solid all through, or ethereal as you please, for the dividing line between those two conditions would be constantly changing. It certainly would not be the heavenly form of your departed dead. More likely it is made up by the great force of some person of a very bad and utterly depraved nature lingering in the sphere of the earth and unable to get out of it, but constantly desiring to gratify its old lusts.

This is the ancient explanation, and the same solution has been given by one or two mediums under what they call control. Once,

some years ago, a medium in Chicago reported that one Jim Nolan, long dead but said to be a very learned spook, came to her and said that materializations were just as I have told you, and added, "Why do you suppose it useful or necessary for us to make a new form for every new spirit that comes to you? We use the same old form over and over again, and we just reflect upon it from the astral light the face of those who are dead whom you wish to see."¹ He might have added that if the callers persisted in asking only for those who were still alive, the forms and faces of the living would also materialize from the cabinet. This experiment has not been tried by the spiritualists, but it would inevitably result in proving that others than the dead would appear, and would cover with doubt the question of the dead returning. For if a spirit materialized, which after all turned out to be the *simulacrum* of a living person, what proof would one have that all the other spooks were not also alive? This is just what Theosophy says. They *are* all alive, and are one and all fraudulent representations of those whose names are taken in vain. And until this crucial experiment has been tried and well tried, the spiritualist cannot properly assert that the dead come back and make themselves visible.

The imagination of both sitters and medium is also very potent. Not in making them see what is not there, but in giving the shape or form to what does come. I have seen by the side of a medium of weak picture-making power the forms of so-called spirits that looked as if made by an amateur, as if cut out roughly from some substance. This was because the medium had no ability to draw or picture a thing to himself, and so, the elementals having to follow the natural model in the medium's mind, had perforce to produce just what shape was there. But others there are who have good picturing-power, and so with them the spook is well formed.

This brings me to the precipitation or writing of messages; and here it does not make any difference about the ability of the medium to write or draw, as the model or matrix of writing or picture is fixed in the astral light, or ether, and makes it easy for the natural forces to produce an exact imitation of the writing of those who have died. As

¹ See *Religio-Philosophical Journal for 1877*.

I have seen the writing of the *living* thus imitated in precipitation, I know that this is the process, and that the matrix or model is independent of the medium.

The laws governing the production of a precipitation of matter from space on to a surface so as to become fixed and visible on the paper or other material are the same in every case, whether done unconsciously by a medium or consciously by an Adept in the art.

The medium acts as the controlled and ignorant means; the Adept is the master, and at his own will, using the same laws, brings about the same end. The difference between the two is just that which exists in the case of the person who throws a mass of paint at a canvas and produces, by an accidental combination of color, a sunset or other scene, and the artist who with knowledge and skill deliberately paints a picture. Other illustrations will occur to you of the same kind. In the realm of psychic force, however, the laws act with greater certainty and power, thus showing results more astonishing. So we may not say that the medium uses any of the laws consciously, but we can assert that the inner body, the astral one, of the medium may use these laws and forces in a manner not understood by the waking sense of the person.

Now when the Adept makes a precipitation he constructs with the developed imagination or picture-making power of the mind an image, exact in every detail, of the words or figures to be precipitated, and then, using the force of his will, draws from the air the carbon or other matter for the color. This falls like rain, condensed from the air, and is unerringly drawn into the limits of the picture thus made by the mind. The drawing force being continued, it gradually condenses on the paper, and you have the message or the picture. Of course there are some other details I have not given, but they are not now necessary for the explanation. The medium is the means for the same action helped on by the elementals.

The case of slate-writing are not usually precipitation, but are the actual rubbing of the pencil on the surface of the slate, and this is always done by the astral hand of the medium urged on by the elemental forces and the vivified astral shells of the dead. The explanation of

the resemblance to handwriting and so forth is as adverted to above, from the pictures in the astral light, the pictures in the aura of the sitters, and also those in the aura and mind of the medium. There is no spirit present but those enclosed in living bodies, and none of the messages will be any higher or better than the education and nature of medium and sitters and the sub-conscious impressions in the medium's astral body.

Objects have been carried through the air and even through walls in the presence of some mediums, and also sometimes the bodies of mediums have been levitated. How is this done? If you go to India you can see, by searching, the bodies of yogees levitated and objects sent flying through space. I have seen both there, as well as in the presence and by the conscious force of Mme. Blavatsky. In levitation of the human body the thing is done by altering the polarity of the body so that it is of the opposite kind of electricity to the spot of earth beneath. The distance it will levitate depends on the force and strength of the polar change. This is not contrary to gravitation, for that law is but one half of the great law which should be called attraction and repulsion, or, in other words, sympathy or its opposite. Gravitation, in the opinion of Occultism, depends entirely on electrical law, and not on weight or density.

Carrying of objects through the air by no visible means is a feat of the elementals or of the astral hand of the medium. And hence we have to know all about the astral body. One of the powers of the astral body is that of stretching out to a distance of a great many yards.

The sending of a hard object through a wall is done with small objects, and then a portion of the wall equal to the size of the object selected is disintegrated, so that the small object may pass through. It cannot be done with very large things nor with the human organized frame, except by the exertion of a vast amount of force not in the control of any one save a Master. I have seen H. P. B. push out her astral arm and hand for a space of over ten feet and draw into her physical hand an object at the other side of the room, and this is what she meant by "psychological frauds," as you did not perceive the arm

and hand and were filled with wonder to see inanimate things move of their own accord, so far as you could tell. The medium does the same thing most of the time, and in very few cases are they aware that it is their own member that does it. But of course there are instances when the elemental sprites do it also.

Other phenomena belong to other fields. For all of them have been long before the world, and all that really distinguishes spiritualism from the rest is that it amounts to no more than the worship or following of the dead. It is not the worship of spirits at all. It is dealing with the dead shells of once living men and women. We hold that at death the soul flies to other states and leaves its coats of skin and of astral matter behind it. These should be let alone, as there is danger in them. They belong to other planes of nature, and if we wake them up, brutes and devils as they really are, we then subject ourselves to their influence and power. I say they are brutes and devils because the best of us knows that a part of our nature is not divine but is related to the earth and to brute matter, and is full too of all the passions and desires we have had in life.

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The soul being gone, there is no director to guide and prevent, and so we deal only with the gross dregs of man when we attend *seances* or let ourselves become mediums. In sleep we see a slight but convincing evidence of this. Then we are gone for a time, and the body, left to itself, throws itself into unbecoming attitudes, snores, throws itself about, and may strike another: I have read of cases where a man in sleep has leaned over and killed the person lying beside him. "Oh," you say, "that was a nightmare." Precisely; it was; but it was the body of the man not controlled by his soul that did the act. It is the same with these spooks. They are devoid of soul, no matter who may have been the owner in life, and it is better to leave them alone and try on the other hand to develop and educate the living soul while it is in the body and is the real trinity, through which alone in any life real knowledge may be gained.

In a short paper it is impossible to fully treat this subject, as it brings up the whole of dynamics and science of psychic forces. But I have indicated the solution to all the problems that arise. For the present, until you have carefully studied the sevenfold constitution and the nature of mind with its powers, you may have difficulty with

the matter except so far as concerns the historical and analogical arguments. These, together with the improbability deduced from absurdities of speech and action shown by the alleged spirits, should sustain the position taken so many years ago by H. P. Blavatsky and outlined above. And no one surely can doubt but that no truthful spiritual utterances—other than as to mere facts—can come out of the practice of sordid money dealings between mediums and enquirers. This is the bane of spiritualism, and should be eliminated at whatever great or painful cost. Until that is done no good can come out of that Nazareth.

WILLIAM Q. JUDGE

Path, April, 1893

HOW SHE MUST LAUGH

SINCE the demise of H. P. Blavatsky's body, a little over a year ago, mediums in various parts of the world have reported her "spirit" as giving communications like what follows:

In Paris in May, 1891, that she objected to the cremation of her body and had changed her views. Yes indeed, how her views must have changed! *Nota bene*: this was from a Catholic medium.

In America in September, 1891, that she had absolutely changed all her views and was now sincerely sorry she had promulgated Theosophy at all. Again later, in the United States, that she desired to have materializing and picture-daubing mediums represent her theories and her teachers to the world, and to carry on her work.

About October, 1891, that her old ideas regarding "spooks" had altered, and that now she wished it to be known as her teaching that the cast-off astral remnants of a human being are in fact spirits, and may be taught in the after life! And further, she is at present—presumably in Kamaloka—desirous of seeing all her books burnt so that her old teachings, now pernicious in her sight, may be forgotten as speedily as possible.

Those who communicate these extraordinary reports from H. P. B. are not accused by us of malice or any improper motive. The first "message" came privately from one who had known her in life but whose views were always quite in linewith the message. The others represent the different private opinions of the medium or clairvoyant reporting them. Such is nearly always the case with these "spirit messages." They do, indeed, come from psychic planes, and are not strictly the product of the medium's normal brain. But they are the result of obscure thoughts of the medium which color the astral

atmosphere, and thus do no more than copy the living. In one case, and that was the hugest joke of all, the medium made a claim to at once step into H.P.B.'s shoes and be acknowledged the leader of the Society!

How she must laugh! Unless mere death may change a sage into an idiot, she is enjoying these jokes, for she had a keen sense of humor, and as it is perfectly certain that Theosophists are not at all disturbed by these "communications," her enjoyment of the fun is not embittered by the idea that staunch old-time Theosophists are being troubled. But what a fantastical world it is with its Materialists, Spiritualists, Christians, Jews, 2nd other barbarians, as well as the obscure Theosophists!

Path, July, 1892