

The Spiritist Review - 1863

Journal of Psychological Studies

ALLAN KARDEC

Original Title – La Revue Spirite – Allan Kardec
Translator: Luiz A.V. Cheim

IDEAK - Instituto de Divulgação Espírita Allan Kardec

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

January 1863

Studies about the possessed of Morzine

The causes of obsession and the means of fighting it

Second Article¹

In last December's article we reviewed the method used by spirits to exert material actions upon human beings. It causes is entirely in the perispirit that is not only the principle of all Spiritist phenomena but also of a number of moral, physiological and pathological effects that were misunderstood before the knowledge of this agent whose discovery. When the time is right this will open new horizons to science when science decides to acknowledge the existence of the invisible world.

As we have seen before the perispirit plays an important role in every phenomena of life. It is the source of multiple affections whose cause is uselessly addressed through surgery and other medical methods. One can also explain the reactions from individual to individual, the instinctive attractions and repulsions, the magnetic action, etc. In a free Spirit, that is discarnate, the perispirit replaces the material body. It is the sensitive agent, the organ through which the Spirit acts.

The Spirit reaches the individual upon whom wishes to act, surrounding, penetrating, magnetizing and involving that individual through the fluidic and expansive nature of the perispirit. People, embedded in that invisible world, are incessantly submitted to that influence in the same way that we are influenced by the atmosphere that we breathe and such influence is translated by moral and physiological effects that go unnoticed and that are frequently attributed to entirely opposite causes. This influence naturally differs according to the good or bad qualities of the Spirit as explained in the preceding article. If the Spirit is good and benevolent the influence or impression if you wish will be pleasant and healthy. It is like the caress of a mother with the baby in her arms. If the Spirit is bad and devilish the influence will be tough, painful, harmful and full of anxiety. It feels like a constraint rather than an embrace.

We live in this fluidic ocean endlessly fighting contrary currents that we attract or repel or allow ourselves to be carried away according to our personal qualities but in which the individual always preserves the free-will, essential attribute of mankind, and according to which one can always choose the path to follow.

As one can see this is entirely independent of the mediumistic faculty as it is commonly understood. Since the action of the invisible world is part of nature it is exerted upon individuals regardless of any knowledge about Spiritism. We are submitted to that influence as we are to the action of atmospheric electricity even

¹ See December 1862

without knowing physics; as we become sick without knowing medicine. Now, as physics teaches us the cause of certain phenomena and medicine of certain diseases the study of the Spiritist science teaches us the cause of phenomena due to the occult influence of the invisible world and explain that to us, something that without such a cause would go unexplained.

Mediumship is the means of observation. The medium – allow us the comparison – is the laboratory tool through which the action of the invisible world is translated in a positive way. It is through the facility that we are offered to have the experiments repeated that mediumship allows us to study the modes and several nuances of that action. It was from that study and observations that the Spiritist science was born.

Every individual that in any way feels the influence of the Spirits is for that matter a medium and hence it can also be said that every individual are mediums. However, it is through effective, conscious and facultative mediumship that the existence of the invisible world was demonstrated and it was through the diversity of the obtained or provoked manifestations that we learned about the quality of the beings that inhabit that world and role they play in nature. The medium did to the invisible world the same that the microscope did to the world of the infinitely small. In a word it is then a new force, a new power, a new law that was revealed to us.

It is really unconceivable that disbelief alone may repel this idea for it presupposes the existence of a soul in us, an intelligent principle that outlives the body.

If it were about the discovery of a material substance, rather than an intelligent one, it would be accepted without difficulty but the action of an intelligence beyond mankind is a superstition. If we go back to the general facts based on the observation of mediumistic events, we conclude by the similarity of causes given the similarity of effects. It is through the analogy between the Morzine phenomena and those that are observed daily through mediumistic means that it seems evident to us that there is a participation of malevolent Spirits. In those cases, it would not be less evident for anyone who have given some thought to the isolated cases reported in the Spiritist Review. The only difference is in the aliment's characteristics.

History registers several similar cases among which the religious women of Loudun, the convulsionary of Saint-Médard, the case of Cévennes and the possessed from the times of Jesus Christ. The latter ones in particular presented remarkable analogy with those of Morzine. Something that deserves a special note is the fact that wherever those phenomena were produced, there was a dominant idea that they were due to the Spirits and such idea was somehow intuitive in those who were affected.

If we want to refer to our first article with the theory of the obsession contained in The Mediums' Book and the events reported in the Spiritist Review, we will see that the action of the bad Spirits upon the creatures that are taken over presents nuances that are extremely varied in intensity and duration according to the degree of evilness and obstinacy of the Spirit and also according to the moral state of the person that gives them a more or less easy access. Such action is frequently momentary and accidental, more malicious and unpleasant than dangerous, as in the case that we reported in the preceding article. The following fact belongs to that category.

Mr. Indermühle, from Berne, a member of the Spiritist Society of Paris, told us that the administrator of his estate in Zimmerwald, a man of herculean strength, felt the other night as being grabbed by someone who shook him violently. It was like a nightmare. But the man was very much awake and stood up trying to

fight back for some time. When he finally freed himself, he took his sword that was hanging by his bed and unsuccessfully sought the aggressor in the dark. He then lit a candle and searched everywhere finding nothing. The door was closed. As soon as he returned to bed the gardener who was sleeping in the adjacent bedroom started to ask for help shouting that he was being strangled. The caretaker rushed to the gardener's bedroom but like in his case found nothing. A woman servant that was also sleeping in the same building heard a noise. On the day after they all came horrified to tell Mr. Indermühle what had happened. After learning about every single detail and certifying that no stranger could have entered the rooms Mr. Indermühle concluded that it was a bad prank from some Spirit because for some time now unequivocal physical manifestations of several kinds had manifested themselves in his own house. He appeased his servants asking them to carefully observe the details of any occurrence in case it happened again.

Since he and his wife are mediums, he then evoked the disturbing Spirit that confessed the event and apologized saying: *"I wanted to speak with you because I am unhappy and need your prayers. For a long time now I have been doing everything I can to draw your attention: I touch you – I have even pulled your ear (confirmed by Mr. Indermühle) but all without any result. I then thought that creating the situation last night you would think of calling me. You have just done that so I am happy but I assure you that I had no bad intention. Promise you will call me again a few times and pray for me."*

Mr. Indermühle gave him a severe warning, repeated the conversation and gave him moral advices that he listened attentively. He prayed for the Spirit and asked his people to do the same. They did, as they were all sympathetic, and everything went back to normal.

Unfortunately, not every Spirit has good intentions. This one was not bad. There are some, however, whose actions are tenacious, permanent and can even bring unpleasant consequences to the health of the individual and more than that to the intellectual capabilities, if the Spirit subjugates the victim to the point of neutralizing the free-will and hence leading to carry out extravagances. This is the case with obsessive insanity that, although similar in its effects, is very different to pathological insanity with respect to its causes.

In our travels we saw the obsessed young man that we mentioned in the January 1861 issue of the Review with the title "The Rapping Spirit of Aube" and we heard from his father and from an eyewitnesses the confirmation of these facts. The young man is now sixteen years old; he is healthy, tall, perfectly formed and nonetheless he has complaints in his stomach and some weakness of the limbs and, according to him, those limitations don't allow him to work. Once you see him it is easy to conclude that his ailment is laziness but that does not subtract anything from the reality of the phenomena from five years ago and take us back to Bergzabern (Spiritist Review May, June and July 1858). We cannot say the same about his moral health. He was very smart in his childhood and was a fast learner in school. His abilities diminished materially since those days. It is necessary to add that it was only recently that he and his parents learned about Spiritism through word of mouth, not reading anything about the subject. They had never heard about it before then; therefore, we cannot see in Spiritism the cause for those events. The physical phenomena practically stopped or are very rare these days but his intellectual state is the same regrettably to his parents that live out of their work.

The effect of prayers in cases like this is well-known but one cannot expect much from the young man in this case and we would need the support of his parents. They agree that he is under an occult and malevolent influence but their belief does not go much beyond that and their religious faith is very weak.

We told his father that it was necessary to pray but pray sincerely and with commitment. *“It is what they told me”* he said. *“I prayed a few times but without result. If I only knew that praying several times during a twenty-four hours period would resolve that I would do it right now.”* It shows the kind of help we can find from those most interested in circumstances like that.

Here is the counterpart of that and a proof of the efficacy of the prayer when said from the heart and not from the lips.

A certain young lady, contrary to her own inclinations, married a man toward whom she had no love. Her broken heart had led her to mental disturbances. She lost her mind and had to be taken into a hospital. She had never heard about Spiritism but had she got involved and people would say that the Spirits had messed with her mind. Hence the disease was caused by an exclusively personal and intellectual accident. It is understandable that conventional medication would produce little or almost no effect and since there was no apparent obsession one could even doubt the efficacy of prayer.

A family friend and member of the Spiritist Society of Paris thought that he should question a superior Spirit about the case, getting this answer:

“The single mindedness of that lady by its own right attracts to her a large number of bad Spirits that invade her with their fluids, feed her with the single idea and preclude her from receiving good influences. There are plenty of Spirits like that in environments where she is and creates a barrier that makes curing the patient difficult. You may cure her, though, but for that it is necessary a moral strength capable defeating the resistance and such a power is not given to a single person. You need five or six sincere Spiritists gathering every day and for a few moments pleading from the bottom of their hearts to have the assistance of the good Spirits and also that the truly sincere prayer may become a mental magnetization. You don’t need to be close to her to do that. On the contrary, through your thoughts you may take her a healthy fluidic chain whose strength will be directly proportional to your intent and augmented by the number of persons. In such a way you can neutralize the bad fluid that surrounds her. Do that having faith in God and wait.”

Six people dedicated to this charity work and during a whole month they did not miss a single day of their mission. After a few days the patient was sensibly calmer. Fifteen days later the improvement was clear and she has now returned to her house in perfect health, still ignoring, like her husband, the origin of the cure. The way to act is clearly indicated here and we have nothing more accurate to add to the explanation given by the spirit. Prayer not only has the effect of attracting a foreign help to the patient but it also exerts a magnetic action.

How powerful would magnetism be with the support of prayer! Unfortunately, certain magnetizers, following the example of many physicians, make abstraction of the Spiritual element. They only see the mechanical action thus lacking the help of powerful auxiliary force. We hope that the true Spiritists may see in this example another proof of the good that can be done in similar circumstances.

A question of great importance is presented here: Can the mediumistic exercise improve bodily health and mental faculties? One must notice that this is how most detractors of Spiritism formulate the question or, even better, instead of framing a question they transform the principle in an axiom by stating that mediumship leads to insanity.

We refer to real insanity and not to this more burlesque one with which they classify our followers. Such question could be conceived from the part of someone who believed in the existence of the Spirits and on the action that they can exert because there is something real to them. For those who don’t believe, however, the question does not make sense because if the Spirit does not exist it cannot produce any effect. Since

such a thesis is unsustainable they shield themselves in the dangers of super excitation of the brain that in their opinion may be caused by a simple belief in the Spirits.

We will not go back to this already studied point but ask if there is already any statistics about all the brains that have been disturbed by the devil and the terrible scenarios of torture in hell and the eternal condemnation and if it is more harmful to believe that there are good and benevolent Spirits around us, our relatives, parents, friends and guardian angel or the devil.

Once there is the belief in the existence of the Spirits and their action is more rational and serious to have the question formulated as: Can the exercise of mediumship facilitate the invasion of bad Spirits around a person and the impact from this activity?

We have never dissimulated the obstacles found with mediumship and that is the reason why we multiplied the instructions about it in *The Mediums' Book* and never stop recommending people to have it studied previously before initiating that practice. Thus since the publication of that book the number of obsessed people has diminished significantly notably because it spares the rookies an experience that they would otherwise have acquired the hard way.

We state once more: Yes, mediumship has inconveniences when practiced without experience of which the least one is to be mystified by the deceiving and lighthearted Spirits. The practice of experimental Spiritism without study is the same as to make chemical manipulations without knowing chemistry.

The large number of examples of obsessed and subjugated persons in the most unpleasant way who have never heard about Spiritism demonstrates by and large that the exercise of mediumship does not have the privilege of attracting bad Spirits. More than that experience demonstrates that mediumship is a means of keeping them away for it allows to recognize them.

Nevertheless, since sometimes they may be wandering around us it may well happen that by finding the opportunity to manifest they take the chance as long as they see a moral or physical predisposition in the medium that makes him/her accessible to their influence. Now such predisposition is in the individual and in previous personal causes and did not appear with mediumship. One can say that the exercise of mediumship is a circumstance rather than a cause. However, if some creatures are in this group there are others that offer an impassable obstacle to the bad Spirits who avoid them. We speak of really bad and evildoer Spirits, the only really dangerous ones, and not of lighthearted and mocking Spirits that sneak everywhere.

The presumption of being invulnerable to the bad Spirits has often been punished in a cruel way because they are never harmlessly challenged in their pride. Pride is an open door to them because nobody offers less resistance than a proud person when attacked in their weak spot. Hence, before addressing the Spirits, it is highly recommended that we are protected against the assault of the bad ones similarly to the one who enters a dangerous area. This is initially achieved by the previous study that shows the path and precautions to take; then comes the prayer. We need to be clear, however, that the only true preservative in is us, in our own strength and never in exterior things and that there are no talismans, amulets, sacramental words, sacred or profane words that have the least efficacy if we don't have the required qualities in ourselves. Hence these qualities are the ones that need to be acquired.

If we were truly convinced of the essential and serious objective of Spiritism; if we prepared ourselves constantly for the practice of mediumship by a fervent appeal to our guardian angel and our protector Spirits; if we studied ourselves striving to purify from our imperfections the cases of mediumistic obsessions would be even less frequent.

Unfortunately, many people only see the facts of manifestations. Not satisfied with the moral proofs that exist they want to have the satisfaction of communicating personally with the Spirits at any price, forcing the development of a faculty that is sometimes underdeveloped in them, driven more by curiosity than a sincere desire to improve. It results, which instead of being embedded in a healthy atmosphere and protected, open up the door to obsessing Spirits who will torment them in a different way and on another occasion but who take the opportunity that is offered to them.

What can then be said about those who make a pastime out of the manifestations and see in them just a motive for distraction and curiosity or look for means of satisfying their ambition, greed or material interests? It is in these cases that one can say that the exercise of mediumship may provoke the invasion of bad Spirits. Yes, it is dangerous to play with serious things. How many people read *The Spirits' Book* only to know how to operate because their only interest is the recipe or how to proceed! The moral side of the issue is an accessory to them. Hence one cannot blame Spiritism for something that results from imprudence.

Returning to the possessed of Morzine.

Something that one Spirit can do to an individual, several Spirits can do to multiple individuals simultaneously, giving the obsession an epidemic character. A cloud of bad Spirits may invade a region and manifest there in several ways. It was an epidemic like this that spread in Judea during the time of Jesus Christ and in our opinion it is a similar epidemic that took place in Morzine.

It is what we intend to establish in a follow up article where we shall point out the essentially obsessive characters of that disease. We will analyze the medical reports with their observations and among them the reports from Dr. Constant as well as the means of cure that were employed be it through medicine or exorcism.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

January 1863

The story of a servant

The case described in our last December issue entitled “*The lodge and the lounge*” reminds us of another somehow personal one. In a trip done two years ago we saw in an affluent family a servant whose fine traces and air of distinction caught our attention. There was nothing inferior in his manners. His dedication to his masters did not show that typical servility of persons in such a condition.

Going back to that home a year later we no longer saw the young man and asked if he had been fired. “*No*”, they said, “*he left to spend a few days in his homeland and died. We were really sorry for he was an excellent employee and his feelings were really above his position. He was very much devoted and dedicated to us.*”

Later on we thought of evoking him. Here is what he said:

1. – A. In my incarnation before the last one I was from a good family, ruined by my father’s lavishness. At an early age I was left orphan and broken. Mr. G... was my benefactor. He had me educated as a son and that made me really proud. In the last existence I wanted to atone that pride by been born in a servile condition then having the opportunity to demonstrate my dedication to my benefactor. I even saved his life without him noticing. It was simultaneously a trying time from which I gained a lot for not allowing myself to be corrupted at the contact with an ambient that was generally wicked. I remained pure despite the bad examples and for that I thank God and for having rewarded me with the happiness that I enjoy now.
2. Q. How did you save Mr. G’s life? – A. It was over a horse riding event in which I followed him and noticed a large tree falling by his side that he had not seen. I called his attention with a terrible scream. He moved suddenly while the tree fell at his feet. Without that sudden movement he would have been smashed.

NOTE: The fact was mentioned to Mr. G... who had a perfect memory of the event.

3. Q. Why have you died so young? – A. God thought that my trial was enough.
4. Q. How could you have taken advantage of the test if you had no memory of a previous life and the cause that had motivated it? – A. In my humble position I still had the pride that I was fortunate enough to dominate. That made the test useful otherwise I would have to restart it. During moments of freedom my Spirit remembered and I woke up with the desire to resist temptations that I thought were bad things. I had more merit in that fight than if I had remembered everything. The remembrance of my former position would have exalted my pride and caused disturbance whereas forgetting I only had to fight the solicitations of the new position.
5. Q. You were given a brilliant education. What good did it do to you in your last existence considering that you did not remember the acquired knowledge? – A. All that knowledge would have been useless and even meaningless in my new life. It remained latent but I have recovered that now. However, it was not useless since it helped develop my intelligence. Instinctively I was attracted to elevated things and that caused me repulse towards bad examples and ignoble things that I witnessed. Without education I would have been a simple servant.

6. Q. Do the examples of servants totally dedicated to their masters find their causes in previous bonds? – A. No doubt. At least it is the most common case. Sometimes such servants are members of the same family or, like in my case, debtors paying their debts of recognition and whose devotion help them to progress. Do you ignore all the effects of sympathy and antipathy that such previous relationships produce in the world? No! Death does not break those relationships that sometimes remain from century to century.
7. Q. Why such examples of devotion are rarer and rarer these days? – A. The cause is the Spirit of selfishness and pride of your century, produced by disbelief and the materialistic ideas. True faith is destroyed by greed and by the desire of accumulation and with all that goes devotion. Bringing humanity back to the true feeling Spiritism shall make reborn the forgotten virtues.

Note: There is nothing better than this example to point out the benefits of forgetfulness of previous existences. If Mr. G... remembered who his young servant was he would feel embarrassed and would not keep him in that condition. He would then have blocked a trial that was beneficial to both.

January 1863

Boïeldieu in the thousandth play of *The White Madam*

The verses below from Mr. Méry were recited at the thousandth play of *The White Madam* on December 16th, 1862 at the Comic Opera Theater.

To Boïeldieu

Glory to the play where music is all over.

Works of Boïeldieu, a thousand times cheers,

And like in the past, today it is so novel!

Paris still watch, the house is full,

Madam of Avenel, the lady of the castle!

At the age of thirty-six, ten times centennial!

The author produced the best

That the poet can interpret,

And lavishly inspired

The sound of lyre invented

With a charm by the word never described:

The pitch of dreams, the tone of smiles

The joy of the Spirit, the ecstasy of love reconciles!

Fact is that the melody whose supreme grace

Shines in the orchestra, in the poem and in the voice,
Was not overtaken by the nightly
Art since Boïeldieu – it is his victory –
Transforms the public into artists and expresses
The language of love that embraces the universe!
How happily the great master varies
The tones for his muse, the inspiration fairy!
Golden cascades falling from the lyre!
The Scottish haze, the shinning fire!
In this particular play the French music
Between the Alps and the Rhine has no reason for panic!
We must then celebrate this noble
Millennium that elevates his play to the pinnacle.
Besides... do we know the secret of beyond?
Who knows? Perhaps on top of this dome
There is tonight a joyful shadow that listen
To us, perhaps a listener that cannot be seen!

Every Spiritist must have noticed this last stanza that could not correspond to their ideas in a better way or better express the presence in our surroundings of the Spirit now undressed from the mortal remains. To the materialistic that is just a game of imagination from the poet that, in their opinion, it was about the celebrated genius from whom there was nothing left but the memory and the words that were addressed to him were lost in the vacuum, without a trace. His remembrances and sorrows represented nothing; and more: his vast intelligence was just chance of nature and its organization.

Where would then his merit be? For the composition of his master pieces he would have acquired no more than the hurdy-gurdy men that play them. Wouldn't such an idea have something of glacial, of profoundly immoral? Isn't that said to see persons of talent and science defending such an idea in their writings and from the top of their cathedra, teaching such a thing to youngsters in school and trying to prove to them that

the void waits for them and consequently those who were able to escape human's justice have nothing to fear? Such an idea – it is never too much to repeat – is eminently subversive of the social order and sooner or later the peoples will suffer the terrible consequences of its predominance by the spread of vices for it would be the same as saying: As long as you are the stronger one you can do whatever you like and go unpunished.

Such an idea, however – we must acknowledge for the good of humanity – finds in the crowds a feeling of rejection. Which effect would the poet have upon the public if instead of the so true image that he employed, so exciting and reassuring message about the presence of the Spirit of Boïeldieu amidst the public, happy for the tribute to his work, the poet had said: ... there is nothing more left than what is found in the grave and other than rotting a little bit more every day. A few more years and even the dust will not be there, nothing left from the thoughtful creature. He entered the void from where he came. He can no longer see or hear us. And you, his son, who is among us and celebrate his memory, your sorrow and your thought can no longer reach him. It is useless to call him in your earnest prayers. He cannot come since he no longer exists. The tomb has forever shut him off. Useless to expect to see him again after you leave Earth for you will also meet the nothingness. Useless to ask for his support and advice. You were left alone, really alone. Do you believe that he is concerned about you, that he is by your side, here among us? Delusion of a weak mind. You say that you are a medium and that he can communicate with you! That is renewed superstition from the Middle Ages; it is the effect of your imagination reflected in your writings.

What would the audience say about such a picture? This is, however, the ideal of disbelief. By listening to those verses some people in the public would have thought: “beautiful idea! Impressive!” Others, in a larger number, would have thought: “What a kind and reassuring idea that warms one's heart!”

They could have added: “If the soul of Boïeldieu is here how it looks like? What is its shape? Is it a flame, a spark, a mist or a breath? How can it see and hear?”

It is precisely the uncertainty about the state of the soul that raises the doubt. Spiritism is here to dissipate such uncertainty by saying: When Boïeldieu died, he only left his heavy and material body behind but his soul preserved the fluidic and indestructible envelope. From now on and free from the anchor that kept him imprisoned to the ground he can elevate and transpose the space. He is here in his human form but it is ethereal and if the veil that covers our eyes were removed we would see Boïeldieu coming and going or gliding above the crowd and with him thousands of Spirits in their ethereal bodies joining in to celebrate his triumph.

Now if the Spirit of Boïeldieu is here it means that he is interested in what happens here and he is associated to the thoughts of the audience. Why then he would not share his own thoughts if he can do so? That is the ability attested and confirmed by Spiritism. His fluidic envelope, however invisible and ethereal it may be, is still a kind of matter. During his life it served as an intermediary between his soul and his body. It was through that link that the soul transmitted its wishes and the body obeyed and through the same link the soul received the sensations experienced by the body. In a word it is the link between the Spirit and matter.

Now that he is free from his corporeal envelope and associating by sympathy to another incarnate Spirit he can, in a certain way, momentarily utilize that person's body to express his thoughts through the spoken or written word that is through an intermediary or mediumistic means.

Thus, from the survival of the soul to the idea of the possibility of that soul to be among us there is only one step. And from that idea to the possibility of communication the distance is not large. It is all about our understanding of how such phenomenon takes place. As it can be seen the Spiritist Doctrine does not professes something as eccentric as some people say by taking as true the relationships between the visible

and invisible world and the solidarity that the Doctrine demonstrates to exist between these two worlds is the door opened to future horizons.

After reading the verses by Mr. Méry at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies during the session on December 19th, 1862 Mrs. Costel received the following communication from the Spirit of Boïeldieu:

“I am happy for being able to manifest my acknowledgement to those who celebrating the old musician did not forget the man. A poet – the poets are foretellers – felt the breath of my soul still embedded in harmony. Music resounded from his verses full of inspiration in which there was also a touched note gliding above the living souls the happy shadow that was celebrated. Yes, I watched the party that payed tribute to my human talent and beyond the instruments I heard a melodious and earthly voice that sang death stripped from its former horror and no longer shown as a somber divinity of Erebus but as the shining star of hope and resurrection. The voice also sang the union between the Spirits and their incarnate brothers. Gentle mystery! Fecund union that complements mankind bringing back the souls that were hopelessly called from the silence of the tomb.

Precursor of the times the poet is blessed by God. As the morning songbird the poet celebrates the dawn of the ideas well before they shine in the horizon. But here you have the sacred revelation spreading like a blessing from God upon everybody and everyone, like the beloved poet, feels around themselves the presence of those who are evoked by their memories.”

Boïeldieu

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January 1863

Letter about Spiritism

Extracted from the Renard, a weekly journal from Bordeaux, published on November 1st, 1862

“To Mr. Chief Editor of the Renard:

Mr. Editor,

If the subject that I discuss here is not too trouble, I request the insertion of this letter in the next issue of your esteemed journal.

A few words about Spiritism: It is a very controversial subject that worries many people these days and anything that a loyal and seriously convict man may write about this subject cannot seem useless or ridiculous to anyone. I want to impose my convictions to no one for I don't have the age or experience or intelligence to be a mentor. I just want to tell all those who only know this theory by name and who are prepared to welcome Spiritism through a joke or a sympathetic disdain: Do as I did. Try, for starters, to get instructed and you will then have the right to disdain or attack.

One month ago, Mr. Editor, I only had a vague idea about Spiritism. I only knew that this discovery or utopia for which new words were invented was based on facts (true or false) so much supernatural that were immediately rejected by all those who don't believe in anything that cause admiration, who never accept progress unless pig backing the whole century and that, like new Thomas, are only convinced when they can touch something.

Like them, I confess, I was prepared to laugh at this theory and its followers. Before laughing, however, I wanted to know what it was about and introduced myself at a society of Spiritists in the house of Mr. E...B...I must say in-passing that Mr. B... seemed to me to be a righteous, serious and enlightened person, of a conviction strong enough to stop the smile on the lips of a joker for, regardless of what people say, a solid conviction always imposes itself.

At the end of the first session I laughed no more but still had doubts and what I felt above all was a strong desire to learn, a febrile impatience to witness new proofs. That is what I did yesterday, Mr. Editor, and I doubt no more. Not to mention some personal details that were transmitted to me and were ignored by the medium as well as by all members of the Society I saw facts that to me were irrefutable.

Without giving here – and you will understand why – any thoughts about the level of education of the medium I declare to be impossible to anyone unless a Bossuet or a Pascal to respond immediately and so clearly and at a mechanical speed so to speak and in such a concise, elegant and correct style in several

pages about questions such as this: How to conciliate free-will with divine prescience? – That is about the most arduous issues of Metaphysics. That is what I saw, Mr. Editor, and much more that I don't mention in this already long letter. I write it – I repeat – so that it may possibly inspire in some of your readers the desire to learn. Later they may be convinced like I am.

Tibulle Lang, former student of the Polytechnic School'

Spiritist Review

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January 1863

A few words about Spiritism

Extracted from the *Écho de Sétif*, Algeria, November 9th, 1962

From some time now there is some agitation in the air, the world is startled and seeks answers. Its soul suffers and is in great need. Let us admit that Spiritism does not exist and that everything said about it is mistake and imaginations from confused minds. Still, is it negligible to attest the existence of six million people affected by the same disease in seven or eight years? As for myself I see a lot in this. I see the presentiment of great things because at all times the world has always been unsuspectedly uneasy, even turbulent, on the eve of remarkable phases.

What is certain today is that after having passed a period of terrible materialism the world feels the need for a Spiritual and rational belief! There is the need for a belief with knowledge of cause, if I can say so. These are the causes of the world's illness, if we admit that there is one. It is reckless to say that there is nothing at the bottom line of that movement.

A writer, which I did not have the honor of meeting, just published in the *Écho de Sétif* on September 18th an article of profound thoughts. He confessed to not knowing Spiritism but questions if it is possible, if it can exist and his searches lead him to the conclusion that Spiritism is not impossible.

Nevertheless, the Spirits have reason to rejoice these days because valuable people want to dedicate part of their studies to what some call a mistake and others the truth. As for myself I can attest a fact: I saw things that people cannot believe without seeing. There is a very enlightened part of society that does not reject the fact itself but that considers the associated communications as coming directly from hell. That is what I cannot admit before a communication like the one below:

“Believe in God, creator and organizer of the cosmos; love God, creator and protector of the souls... signed Galileo.” The devil does not always speak like that, otherwise people would have attributed him an undeserved reputation. If on one side he disrespected God we must confess that he put too much water in the wine.

I was also a non-believer and could not be convinced that God would allow us to communicate with the Spirit of a living person. I had, however, to surrender to the evidence. I communicated telepathically with a person that was asleep and who responded clear and categorically. Not a single sound, not a single

disruption in my mind. The Spirit of the sleeping person corresponded with mine, irrespective of my wishes, which is what I can attest.

Before that event, I used to think that God had established an unsurpassable barrier between the material and the Spiritual world. I was wrong, that is all. It seems to me that the more I disbelieved the more God wanted to enlighten me by placing before my eyes extraordinary and undisputable facts.

I wanted to write myself ² to avoid being mystified by a third party but my hand never showed any movement. I put a pen in the hands of a fourteen-year-old boy and he fell asleep unintentionally. After seeing that I left and went to the gardens, convinced that that pretense truth was a dream. On returning to the living room, however, I noticed that the young man had written something. I approached to be able to read and was startled by the fact that he had answered all my mental questions. Always denying and despite the fact and willing to wake him up I framed a question about old history in my mind. The sleeping young man responded without hesitation.

Let us spot here for a few observations. Suppose that there was no intervention of Spirits form another world there is still the fact that the Spirit of the sleeping boy and mine were perfectly synched in the communication. I see this as something worth studying. There are people, however, that believe to know so much that there is nothing else to learn and prefer to call me mad.

I am mad, be it! Later on we will see who is wrong.

Had I spoken a single word; had I made a single gesture and I would not be convinced. However, I did not move; I did not speak. What I am saying? I did not even breathe!

Then! Is there a wise man willing to talk to me without saying a word or without writing? Is there someone trying to translate my thoughts without seeing me or without knowing me? And even more serious, I cannot deceive that person even if I speak, without being caught! This could not have happened with the above mentioned medium. I tried that several times unsuccessfully. If you allow me I will give below a few communications that I received.

C...

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

² As a medium (TN)

January 1863

Answer to a question about Spiritism from a religious point of view

Someone from Bordeaux whom we do not have the honor of knowing in person sent us the following question about Spiritism, a question that we prefer to answer in the *Spiritist Review* for the instruction of all:

“I read in one of your books: Spiritism does not address those who have any given faith that satisfies their reason and conscience with the objective of veering them off but the large number of those who are uncertain and the unbelievers, etc. “Now, why not? Shouldn't Spiritism, the truth, address everybody? All those that are mistaken? The ones who profess any religion like the Protestant, the Catholic, the Jewish, aren't them wrong? There is no doubt since the religions professed in our days pretend to have the incontestable truth and force us to believe in false things or at least things that could have come from trustworthy sources but that are wrongly interpreted. If it is demonstrated that the penalties are temporary only – and God knows if it is a slight mistake to confuse temporary with eternal – if the fire of hell is a work of fiction and if instead of a creation in six days it was, in actual fact, six millions of centuries, etc., if all that has been proven, say considering that there is one truth only, the beliefs that gave rise to such false interpretations of those dogmas are not less false since something is true or not. There is no middle ground. Why then would Spiritism not address also those who believe in absurd things to dissuade them like those who believe in nothing or have doubts, etc.?”

We take the opportunity of this letter from which we extracted the above passage to remind us once more of the essential objective of Spiritism that the author of the letter does not seem to be totally convinced.

Through the positive proofs of the existence of the soul and a future life, which is the basis of all religions, Spiritism is the denial of materialism and consequently addresses those who deny or doubt. It is evident that someone who does not believe in God or in the soul is not a Catholic or a Jew or a Protestant, whatever their original religion, or even Muslim or Buddhist. The unbeliever is led to believe in a future life by the evidence of the facts with all their moral consequences. That person is then free to adopt any cult that satisfies their reason or conscience. The role of Spiritism ends there. It helps to walk three quarters of the way; to move over the hardest step of disbelief. The rest is up to the others.

However, the author of the letter may ask, if there is no convenient faith to that person? Well, in such a case stay where you are. Spiritism cannot do anything there. It is not up to Spiritism to force you to accept a cult nor to discuss the intrinsic value of the dogmas of each religion. That is left to your conscience. If what Spiritism gives you is not enough to seek among all other Philosophies a doctrine that can better satisfy your aspirations.

The unbelievers and the doubters form a very large class and when Spiritism says that it does not aim at a given faith and at those whose faith is good enough to them it is because Spiritism does not impose itself on anybody and does not violate any conscience. By addressing the unbelieversnonbelievers, it is able to convince them through its own means. As such, Spiritism grants access to their reason and considering that

others were ineffective. In a word Spiritism has its own method that daily provides beautiful results. However, it does not count on any secret doctrine. Spiritism does not ask some to open their ears and to others to keep them shut. It speaks to everybody through the written messages and each one is free to adopt or reject its way of seeing things. Thus, it converts unbelievers into keen followers. That is all that is intended.

To someone that says: “*I have my own faith and I do not wish to change it; I believe in the eternal penalties, in the flames of hell and in the devils; I even believe that it is the Sun that turn because that is in the Bible and I believe that it is the price of my salvation*” Spiritism responds: “Keep your beliefs since they are convenient to you; nobody tries to impose you a different one. I don’t address you because you want nothing from me.”

In this Spiritism, it is truthful to the principle of respecting the freedom of conscience. If someone believes to be mistaken that person is free to seek the light that shines to all. Those who believe to be right have the freedom to turn the eyes. Once more, Spiritism has an objective from which it does not wish and must not veer off. It knows the path to be followed and will follow it without deviations by the suggestions of the impatient. There is a time for everything and the will to move faster is frequently cause of retreat instead of advancement.

Two words still to the author of the letter: It seems to us that there is a false application of the principle that there is one truth only, concluding that certain dogmas like the eternal penalties and the dogma of creation received wrong interpretation and that everything else must be false in religion. Don’t we see every day the positive sciences acknowledging certain errors of details without the Science being radically wrong? Hasn’t the Church come to agree with Science with respect to certain beliefs that in the past were articles of faith? Doesn’t Church recognize today the law of the movements of Earth and the geological periods of creation that were condemned in the past as heresies? As for the flames of hell the high theology today agrees that it is an image and that one must understand it as a moral and not material flame.

About several other points the doctrines are less absolute than in the past. It is possible to conclude from that that one day, and yielding to the evidence of the material facts, the Church will understand the need for an interpretation in harmony with the laws of nature, about still controversial points, since not one faith could rightfully and rationally prevail against those laws. God cannot contradict Himself by establishing dogmas that are contrary to His own eternal and immutable laws and man cannot pretend to elevate above God by decreeing the nullity of those laws.

Well, the Church that understands all these truths to certain things will equally understand them to the others, notably with matters related to Spiritism, in all points founded on the laws of nature and that are still misunderstood but that are more and more clarified every day.

We must not rush to reject the whole because certain parts are obscure or defective and we believe to be useful to remember, just as in the fable the *Monkey and the Nut*.

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January 1863

Identity of an incarnate Spirit

Mr. Delanne, who is traveling, sent us the following report about the evocation of the Spirit of his living wife that remained in Paris.

“... On December 11th at 11:30pm I evoked the Spirit of my wife. She told me that one of her lady relatives had casually slept over with her. I was not convinced about it because I did not believe it to be possible but two days later I received a letter from her confirming the event. I attach my account of this story. It does not not contain anything private but it does offer a proof of her identity.

1. Are you here, my dear? – A. Yes, my “Chubby” (her favorite term).
2. Do you see the objects around me? – A. I see them well. I am happy to be near you. I hope you are warm enough! (It was 11:30pm, I had just arrived from Arras; there was no heating in the room; I was still wearing the traveling coat and my shoulder cape).
3. Are you happy to have come here without your body? – A. Yes, my friend. Thank you. I have the fluidic body, the periSpirit.
4. Is it you that makes me write? Where are you located? – A. I am close to you. Your hand certainly still has some difficulty in writing.
5. Are you deeply asleep? – A. No, not much yet.
6. Is it your body that holds you back? – A. Yes, I feel that it keeps me. My body is a bit sick but my Spirit feels nothing.
7. Have you had an intuition during the day that I would evoke you? – A. No, however, I could not discern what you were telling me. (At this point I had a coughing fit). You are always coughing, my friend; take care of yourself a little.
8. Can you see my periSpirit? – A. No, I can only distinguish your material body.
9. Do you feel freer and better than with your body? – A. Yes, because I suffer no more. (In a subsequent letter I learned that she had been effectively ill).
10. Do you see Spirits around me? – A. No, although I wish I could.
11. Are you afraid of being alone at home? Adélia is with me (That relative never sleeps over; we rarely see her).
12. How come Adélia is with you? Has she slept over? – A. Yes, by chance.
13. Is that really you talking to me, dear wife? – A. Yes, my friend. It is me.
14. Do you see everything clearly here? – A. Yes, everything is better illuminated than with your weak lamp. (All I had was a candle in a large room).
15. Do you communicate with me by intuition or mechanically? – A. I act more influence upon your brain where it is easier to communicate and at the same time I influence your hand.
16. How can you tell that my brain is able to receive Spiritist communications? – A. It is by the development recently acquired by your organs, demonstrating that it was possible... (At this moment the clock strikes midnight and the Spirit stops).
17. Can you hear the clock striking? – A. Yes, but I am still impressed by this unusual sound. It is like the celestial music I heard in my dreams. (In fact just before my departure she had had an

incredible dream in which she had heard a singular music. At that point, I am certain that I was not thinking about her dream which I had completely forgotten. Hence it could not have been a reaction to my thoughts since nobody else knew anything about it and I alone was at the moment where I saw a proof of identity with the spontaneous revelation of my wife. The Spirit spontaneously ends the statement initiated above)... much power in such a short time.

18. Do you want me to evoke my guardian angel to control your identity? Would that bother you? – A. You can go ahead and do it.
19. (To my guardian angel) – Is that really the Spirit of my wife that has just talked to me? – A. It is your wife talking to you and she is glad to see you.
20. (To my wife) – Have you seen my guardian angel? – A. Yes, his light is magnificent. He just appeared and disappeared.
21. Has he seen you? – A. Yes, he looked at me with eyes of a celestial clemency and I, confused, was overcome by him. So long my “Chubby”, I feel forced to leave you.

OBSERVATION: If this incident had only involved the guardian angel, it would have been insufficient to determine if this was a real event as it would have been necessary to identify the guardian angel, as a deceiving Spirit could have taken the name. There is nothing in his simple statement that reveals the accuracy of this event. In similar cases it is always preferable to manage with an independent medium who is not under the same influence. The evocation of a Spirit to control another one does not always offer sufficient guarantee particularly when the person involved is asked to give permission. In the case above we find a proof in the description that the Spirit gives of the guardian angel. A deceiving Spirit could not have taken that celestial appearance. As a matter of fact, there is a character of truth in all answers that could not be simulated by charlatanism.

Next evening session

22. Are you here? – A. Yes. I will tell you what is worrying you. It is Adélia. Right? Yes, she really slept over with me, I swear.
23. Is your body better? – A. Yes, that was nothing.
24. Do you see Spirits near you today? – A. I still don't see anything but I feel the presence of someone; I feel a certain uneasiness for being alone.
25. Pray my good friend and you shall perhaps better. – A. Yes. That is what I am going to do. Say with me: “My God, great and just, bless us and forgive us for our iniquities; forgive the children that love you; mercifully inspire your virtues in them and give them the remarkable grace of one day being among the elected ones. May the worldly pain signify nothing to them when compared to the happiness that you reserve to those who sincerely love you! Pardon us, Lord, and spread your benefits through the intercession of our pure and angelical St. Mary, mother of all sinners and the incarnate mercy.”

OBSERVATION: This prayer improvised by the Spirit is of a touching simplicity. Mr. Delanne knew nothing about Adélia beyond what the Spirit had told him and that was exactly the reason for his doubts. He sent his wife a letter about it later on received the following reply:

“...Adélia really came over yesterday in the afternoon, by chance. I invited her to stay not out of fear because that makes me laugh but to be with me. As you see she stayed and slept over with me. I was confused these last two nights; I felt sick. An irresistible force made me sleep. I felt like crushed. I feel so happy, though, for having gone and seen you! ...”

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Barbarism in civilization

Horrific torture of a black man

A letter from New York, dated November 5th and addressed to the Gazette des Tribunaux, contains the following horrible details of an appalling tragedy that took place in Dalton, Caroline County in Maryland:

“A young black man was recently arrested under the accusation of lewd behavior against a young white female. Severe charges were filed against him. The young woman declared to recognize him perfectly well. The accused was taken to Dalton jail. He was there for a few hours when a huge and enraged crowd screaming for vengeance demanded to have the poor black man delivered to them. Authorities uselessly tried to stop the violent crowd. Their words in favor of law and justice were met by the mobs’ boos. The masses, whose number was on the rise, started to stone the jail. Gun shots were fired against law enforcement but did not reach them. Once they realized that it was impossible to resist any longer the jail’s doors were open. The crowd shouted and invaded the place furiously. The prisoner was dragged out to a town’s central square amidst screams of rage and supplication by the victim. A jury was immediately staged, the facts examined and the prisoner found guilty and condemned to death by hanging. The prisoner was promptly hung on a tree by a rope that was tied around his neck. While the black man’s body contorted following the convulsions of death he was also victimized by the insults and violence by the crowd. Blindfolded by rage and vengeance the mob did not wait for the stillness of the body, parading the streets of Dalton with their despicable trophy. Men, women and even children applauded the injuries imposed on the poor black man’s body. The mob’s anger, however, would not stop there. After parading around the streets of Dalton in every direction they stopped in front of a black church. A huge bonfire was pitched only to noisily receive and devour the flesh and the mutilated parts of the body.”

Such report gave rise to the following question raised at the Parisian Society on November 28th, 1862:

“One can understand isolated and individual examples of anger among civilized people. Spiritism explains this when describing inferior Spirits. In such cases, these individuals have displayed their evilness during their whole life. What is more difficult to understand is a whole population that has given proofs of intelligence and superiority and even given demonstrations of humanitarian feelings on other occasions, who profess a religion of kindness and peace, be taken by such a blood thirsty vertigo, showing a savage rage to the point of being fed by the torture of the victim. This is a moral issue we ask the Spirits to kindly enlighten us.”

Parisian Society, November 28th, 1862
Medium Mr. A. De B...

Bloodshed in countries towards human progress is a rain of curse. It is near the time when the wrath of a just God shall fall upon those regions where such abominations take place like the one you have just heard.

In vain we want to hide ourselves from the consequences that are inevitably established; in vain we want to mitigate the importance of the crime. The crime is awful by itself not less by the intention that led to the execution with such horrendous refinements of cruelty, with such a bestial fury. The interest! Human interest! Sensual pleasures, the satisfactions of pride and vanity were once again the drives as on other occasions, and the same causes will give rise to similar effects, causes, in turn, of the effects of the heavenly wrath that has threatened so many iniquities.

Do you believe that there is only real progress with technology and all resources and arts that tend to sooth the rigors of material life and increase the insatiable need of pleasure? No, that is not what summarizes the progress of the Spirits, which are only temporarily human and who should only give human things the secondary interest they deserve.

The development of the heart, the illumination of conscience; the diffusion of the sense of universal solidarity of beings and that of brotherhood among humans are the only authentic milestones that distinguish a people marching towards general progress. These are the only traces that identify the most advanced nation. But those who still harbor feelings of exclusive pride and only see such a portion of humanity as a serving race, cut to obey and suffer, those will no doubt experience the nullity of their claims and the weight of Heavens' vengeance.

Your father, V. De B...

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Spiritist dissertations

Proximity of winter

Parisian Society, November 27th, 1862

Medium Mr. Leymarie

My good friends when the cold arrives why wouldn't I come, your former disciple, to remind you of our slogan: Charity? Give. Give everything that your heart can give in words, consolation and kind care. The love of God is in you if you know how to accomplish your mandate as keenly aware Spiritists.

In your free time when you are allowed to rest from work go and seek the one that suffers morally or physically. To the former, give the force that reassures and strengthen the Spirit; to the latter give what sustains and silence both the mother's apprehension's whose arms lie unoccupied and the child's crying for a piece of bread.

The cold spells have come; a chilly draft rolls the dust over; soon there will be snow. That is the time when you must walk and seek. How many embarrassed poor people moan and suffer secretly, particularly the grieving ones who aspire for everything and lack the basic needs. Be prudent with those my friends. May your hand alleviate and cure but may also a kind voice from your heart present the alms that can painfully hurt the self-esteem of a well-educated person. I repeat: It is necessary to give but give well. God, the provider of everything, hides His treasures, the ear of corn, the flower and the fruits. His gifts that laboriously germinated in the trunk's sap have come to us unnoticeably without us feeling the hand that provides. Do as God. Imitate Him and you shall be blessed.

Ah! It is beautiful and good to be useful and charitable; to stand up while raising others; to forget the little and selfish needs of life to practice the noblest attribution of humanity, the one that makes us true children of the Creator!

What a lesson to your children! They imitate you; your example bears fruits for every well grafted branch produces abundantly. The Spiritual future of the family always depends on how you act. I tell you and it is never too much to repeat that you will gain Spiritually if you give and reassure for God will give and console you in His kingdom that is not from this world. Here, the family that honors and praises the intelligent leader in this God given stretch of kingship is a mitigation of the pains of life.

Goodbye my friends, be all love and charity.

Sanson

January 1863

Spiritist dissertations

The law of progress

Lyon, September 17th, 1862

Medium Mr. Émile V...

NOTE: This communication was received at the General Session presided over by Mr. Allan Kardec

[jcm – this paragraph I just could not get the theme well enough to edit effectively. Might worth a opportunity to relook at it and compare to original to see if there is something missing that sets the stage or theme] It seems, if humanity is considered in its primitive condition and current state, that since its first appearance on Earth marking the starting point and now having covered part of the path to perfection, it seems, I was saying, the whole progress, the whole philosophy can only be born from their opposite. In fact any formation is the result of a reaction as every effect is generated by a cause. All moral phenomena, all intelligent formations are due to a momentary disturbance of one's intelligence. Only two principles must be considered from an intellectual point of view: one that is immutable, essentially good and eternal as everything else that is infinite; the other that is temporary, momentary, a simple agent employed to produce the reaction of the originating source towards the progression of humanity.

Progress embraces humanity for eternity and is found everywhere. Look around. What do you see?

At certain points in time, one can say, at certain foreseen, designated moments, someone shows up opening a new path, climbing the tough rocks on which the known world of intelligence is sowed. Such a person is generally amongst the simple, little ones, penetrating, however, into the elevated spheres of the unknown. That person must have the courage of fighting against prejudices and inherited customs. Courage is needed to overcome these obstacles, spread on the way by ill-faith, as there are prejudice to be addressed. There will be abuse and people interested in the abuse. Courage is also needed to fight the material needs of personality and victory, in this case, is the best proof of the person's mission and predestination. When the time is right and light profusely emanates from the spot where that person stands, all eyes will be directed to that center. It is when the whole intelligent and good principle is assimilated and when the contrary principle is reformed. Despite the prejudices; despite the ill-faith; despite the own needs the person reaches the objective; humanity moves up to a new notch that was unknown up until then.

Such a fact has already happened many times and shall repeat itself many times again before the Earth reaches the degree of perfection that has been assigned by nature. God will provide, however, the seed and the worker as many times as needed. The worker is each person, each genius that illustrates the frequently super-human science. Such spots of light, such rings of connection have been seen at all times and it is everyone's duty to approach, help and protect these apostles of truth. That is what Spiritism is here to say.

Hence hurry up all of you brothers in charity. Hurry up and the happiness promised to perfection will come to you much sooner.

Protector Spirit.

January 1863

Bibliography

The plurality of the inhabited worlds

There have been studies concerning the ability to inhabit other planets. These topics have been addressed by many scientists and organizations, including the work *Astronomy and Philosophy* by Camille Flammarion, Director of the Imperial Observatory of Paris.³

Although Spiritism is not discussed in that work the subject is among those that are part of our observations and the principles of the doctrine. Our readers will appreciate the fact that we have called their attention to this publication, persuaded, in particular, by the great interest that they will have for this attractive work both for the style and profundity. It contains one of the capital revelations of the Spirits, confirmed by science.

Mr. Flammarion is a member of the Spiritist Society of Paris and the notable dissertations signed by Galileo and published in September last year bear his name, published under the title *Cosmological Studies*. We are glad to make a special reference to this work for those two reasons and certain that it will undoubtedly be ratified. The author codified every element of nature to support the opinion about the plurality of inhabited worlds while combating the contrary opinion. After having read it we ask ourselves how is it possible to have any doubt about the subject. We must add still that the considerations of the highest scientific order do not exclude grace or poetry in the style. This can be assessed by the following passage where he speaks of the intuition that most people have about the habitability of the worlds when contemplating the celestial world:

“...However, the awe excited in you by the most touching scene of nature’s spectacle soon turns into a feeling of indescribable sadness for we are alien to those worlds where there is an apparent solitude that fails to give us the immediate impression of life that bonds us to Earth. We feel the need of inhabiting those globes apparently forgotten by life, seeking engaging eyes in those eternally desert and quiet lands, like the daring navigator sought for a long time in the desert of the oceans, looking for the land that was revealed, the eagle eyes reaching long distances, carefully transposing the limits of the known world to finally encounter the immense prairies on which the New World had been sitting for centuries. The dream came true. May ours break free from the mysteries that still surround it and we shall rise to the skies navigating the ship of our thoughts in search of new lands.”

The book is divided in three parts. The first is entitled *Historical Study* where the author reviews the long list of scholars and philosophers from the past and modern ones, religious and profane, that professed the doctrine of plurality of the worlds, from Orpheus to Herschel and Laplace.

³ Large brochure, in-8. Price: 2 francs; by mail 2.10 francs; Bachelier Edition, Quai des Grands-Augustins 55, at the *Observatoire*.

“The majority of the Greek sects, he says, taught either openly and broadly to all disciples or in secrecy only to those belonging to this philosophy. If the poetry attributed to Orpheus are really his, we can consider him as the first one to teach the plurality of the worlds. It is implicitly found in his verses in which it is said that each star is a world and in particular in these words preserved by Proclus: ‘God constructed an immense land that the immortals called Selene and that men call Moon in which there is a large number of dwellings, mountains and towns.’

Pythagoras, the first Greek to bear the title of Philosopher, publicly taught the immobility of Earth and the motion of the globes around it like a unique center of creation, while declaring to the advanced students of his doctrine his belief in the movement of Earth, as a planet, and in the plurality of the worlds. Later on his most renowned disciples Democritus, Heraclitus and Metrodorus of Chios propagated the opinion of the master from the cathedra and such opinion became that of every Pythagorean and that of the majority of the Greek philosophers. Philolaus, Nicetas and Heraclides were amongst the keenest upholders of such belief. The latter even pretended that each star is a world like ours with atmosphere and a large extension of ethereal matter.”

Later he adds:

‘The healthy action of the Sun, Laplace says, give rise to the animals and plants that cover Earth and the analogy leads to the belief that it produces similar effects on other planets since it is not natural to think that matter whose fecundity we see developing so abundantly, is sterile in a planet as big as Jupiter that, like Earth, has days, nights, years and about which observations indicate changes that presuppose very active forces... Since man is built to withstand the temperature of Earth he could not live on other planets. However, shouldn't there be an infinity of organizations relative to the diverse temperatures of globes and universes? If only the difference among the elements and climates generates so much variety in the terrestrial production how much more difference, there should be in planets and satellites.’

The second part is dedicated to astrological study and the make-up of the several cosmic globes with the most positive scientific data showing that the Earth does not hold a special position either for its position or volume or even the elements that form it. As a result, there is nothing that justifies the exclusive privilege of being inhabited at the exclusion of all others that are better favored in various aspects. The first part is intellectual; the second part is science; the third part is philosophical. The astronomic observations explain the sequence of seasons, the atmospheric fluctuations and the temperature variations in the majority of the planets in our solar system. It follows that Earth is situated in one of the least favorable conditions, a world in which the inhabitants must endure more vicissitudes and where life must be more difficult from where the author concludes that it is not rational that God reserved for the dwelling of mankind one of the least favored while the better equipped planets would be condemned to not dwell any living being. All that not established on the basis of a systematic idea but on positive data with the contribution of all sciences: Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Meteorology, Geology, Physiology, Mechanics, etc.

“Nonetheless, he adds, the most favorable by far and in all aspects is the magnificent Jupiter whose seamless seasons still have the advantage of lasting twelve more months than ours. That gigantic cosmic orb flies over as challenging the weak inhabitants of Earth, giving a hint about the pompous images of a long and smooth existence.”

“Attached to the little terrestrial sphere by bonds that we cannot break, we see our days extinguishing continuously, rapidly consumed in the respective periods, in the disparate seasons whose antagonism perpetuates in the continual inequality of day and night and in the instability of temperature.”

After an eloquent picture of mankind's struggle for survival against nature and the geological revolutions that transform the surface of the planet, threatening to annihilate it, he adds:

“After such considerations can we still pretend that this globe is the best possible world to mankind, and that many other celestial globes cannot be infinitely better than Earth and provide the favorable conditions to the long duration of human existence?”

Then, leading the reader through the worlds in the infinity of space, he portrays a horizon of such greatness that one cannot but find unworthy of God the supposition that our unknown globe, among many thousands of others, even unknown to our planetary system, is the only inhabited one, then identifying ourselves with the authors' point when he ends by saying:

“Ah! If we could only see well enough to have our vision discover resplendent suns and the inhabited planets that follow their course where we can only see shining spots in the dark background of the skies! If we could only see at a glance the myriads of solidary systems and if we could travel at the speed of light for centuries and centuries crossing the limitless number of suns and spheres without ever touching the bounds of the prodigious infinity where God gives rise to the planets and beings; and if looking back we could no longer locate this grain of dust called Earth we would be fascinated and confused by such a spectacle, uniting our voice to the universal concert of nature saying from the bottom of our hearts: Almighty God! How could we have been so oblivious by thinking that there was nothing else beyond Earth and that our poor dwelling held the exclusive privilege of reflecting your greatness and power!”

From our side we finish with one observation: It is remarkable to see the wisdom contained in that book and the fact that they come from a young man at an age where his peers are still in school. It is even more impressive to see him presenting those ideas with such profound insight. This work demonstrates that his Spirit is not in an early stage or that he is unknowingly being assisted by other Spirits.

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Subscription in favor of the workersworkers of Rouen

There is an open subscription at the office of the Spiritist Review, Passage Saint-Anne 59, supporting the workers of Rouen

whose sufferings could not go unnoticed by anybody. Several groups and Spiritist Societies have already sent us their proceeds. We urge the others who intend to help to hurry up since the winter is approaching fast! The list will be published (see Mr. Sanson's communication above).

Allan Kardec⁴

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

⁴ Paris, Cosson and Co. Typography. Rue de Four-Saint-Germain, 43.

February 1863

Studies about the possessed of Morzine

Causes of obsession and the means fighting it

Third article⁵

The study behind the phenomena of Morzine, in a way, shall not present any difficulty as we are well aware of the facts and considerations deduced from them after careful study. It is just a matter of reporting them so that anybody can reach those conclusions by analogy on their own. The two events below will still help us further to guide the reader on the right path. The first one was transmitted by Dr. Chaigneau, honorary member of the Parisian Society, president of the Spiritist Society of Saint-Jean d'Angély.

“A family used to make evocations with an unbridled passion, provoked by a Spirit that, as we learned, was very dangerous. It was one of their relatives who had died after bad life as well as mental problems. Under a fictitious name and by providing several proofs, he made beautiful promises and gave advices to fascinate those unsuspecting people, submitting them to his demands and forcing them to the most eccentric actions. Since they were no longer able to satisfy his wishes they came to me asking for advice making it really difficult to us to dissuade them and demonstrate to them that it was a Spirit of the worst kind. We were successful though to the point of having them abstain from the evocations from some time. Since then the obsession changed character: the Spirit would completely control the youngest son, a fourteen year old young man, bringing him to a cataleptic state after which he verbally requested to be entertained, gave orders and threatened people. We advised them to keep absolute silence, which was rigorously observed. The parents would pray and come to us for assistance. Reverence and will power have always given us the upper hand in a matter of minutes. In practical terms it has all ended now. We hope that order may follow disorder in that home. Far from being upset with Spiritism, they believe more than ever before but believe more seriously. They now understand the objective and moral consequences of Spiritism. They all understand that it was a lesson to them. Some believe it was perhaps a deserved punishment.”

This example demonstrates, once more, the inconveniences of carrying out evocations without knowledge of causes and without a serious objective. Thanks to the advice of experience heard by those persons they were able to get rid of a perhaps a terrible enemy. Another not less important teaching stems out of this. To the eyes of people ignorant of Spiritism, the young man would have been seen as a mad person. He would not go without the corresponding treatment which in turn could have developed real insanity in him. With the help of a Spiritist doctor the disease was attacked in its true cause without leaving sequels. The same did not happen in the next event.

An acquaintance that resides in a country town, knowingly hostile to the spiritist ideas, was suddenly taken by a kind of delirium that resulted in him absurd things. Since he was involved with Spiritism, he used to talk about spirits. Those around him were scared, alarmed, and without further investigation called in the

5 Refer to the December 1862 and January 1863 issues of the Spiritist Review

doctors who soon declared the man to be mad for the satisfaction of the enemies of Spiritism who wanted to have him taken to a mental health institution.

Everything that we were able to collect about the event demonstrates that the person was momentarily submitted to subjugation perhaps enhanced by certain physical conditions. It was what he thought. He sent us a letter to which we responded. Unfortunately, our letter did not arrive in time and he only much later had he learned about it. *“I am so very sorry for not having received your reassuring letter”*, he said later. *“At the moment it would have helped me a great deal, confirming my thoughts that I was a toy in the hands of an obsession and that would have brought me peace of mind whereas what I constantly heard around me was that I was crazy and I ended up believing in that. Those thoughts tortured me to such an extent that I don’t know what could have happened had they stayed with me any longer.”*

Once consulted about it a Spirit responded: – A. This person is not mad but by the way he is being medically treated he could become mad. Even more: they could have him killed. The remedy to his disease is in Spiritism.”

- Would it be at all possible to help him from here? – A. Yes, no doubt. You can do him good but your action is paralyzed by the bad faith of those around him.

Similar cases have happened and many were arrested as insane without knowing it. It is only an experienced observer in this kind of matter that can appreciate it. Since there are many spiritist doctors these days, it is recommended that people refer to them in such cases. Obsession will one day be listed among pathological causes as it is today just as the action of microscopic organisms whose existence was ignored before the invention of the microscope. People will then realize that neither the showers nor the bloodletting can cure them. A doctor that does not admit it and that only seeks purely material causes is as much inadequate to treat such affections as a blind person is to identify colors.

The second case was reported by one of our corresponding members from Boulogne-Sur-Mer.

“A forty-five-year-old woman, wife of a sailor from this town, has been subjected to the sad domain of subjugation for almost fifteen years. Almost every evening and without exception to the periods of pregnancy she is woken up around midnight, her limbs trembling as if taken by the action of a galvanic battery. She feels her stomach compressed and burning; her brains in furious exaltation, feeling as if pulled from bed and sometimes dragged semi naked outside of the house, forced to run through the fields. She wanders around for two or three hours, only realizing her condition and location at the end of the episode. She cannot pray. When she kneels and try her thoughts are mixed with bizarre and dirty things. She cannot go to any church. She strongly feels like doing it but she is stopped at the door by a barrier that blocks her. Four men unsuccessfully tried to take her inside a church. She screamed that they were killing her, that her chest was smashed. The poor woman fruitlessly tried to commit suicide several times to escape that horrible situation. She drank coffee with dissolved phosphorous; she drank detergent suffering nothing; she threw herself in the waters but every time she would surface again until someone rescued her. Beyond those moments of crisis she is entirely normal and even in those moments she is perfectly aware of her actions and the superior force that acts upon her. The whole neighborhood believes that she is the victim of a curse.”

Subjugation could not be better characterized but through the phenomena that are undoubtedly the works of a Spirit of the worst kind. Will some say that it was Spiritism that attracted the Spirit to her or that disturbed her brains? But nobody spoke of Spiritism fifteen years ago. As a matter of fact, the woman is not mad and what she experiences is not an illusion. Ordinary medicine will only see in these symptoms one of those diseases called “nervous” whose cause is still a mystery. The disease is real but there is always

a cause to any effect. Now, what is the first cause? This is a field that can count on the contribution of Spiritism by demonstrating the existence of a new agent in the perispirit and the action of the invisible upon the visible world. We do not generalize and do recognize that in certain cases the cause may be entirely material but there are other cases in which the intervention of a hidden intelligence is evident since by fighting that intelligence the illness is abated while by nothing happens when the supposedly unique material cause is attacked.

The evil spirits show a common characteristic trait, namely their aversion to anything that is related to religion. The majority of the non-obsessed mediums who have received communications from bad spirits have often witnessed their desecration against most sacred things, including laughing at and avoiding prayer as well as showing irritation when God is mentioned.

In the subjugated medium, the Spirit controls about one third of the body and can express thoughts not only through writing but also through gestures and words forced through the medium. Since no spiritist phenomenon may be produced without the mediumistic concurrence we can say that the woman's experienced mentioned above is a spontaneous, unconscious and involuntary medium. The impossibility of praying and attending a church service comes from the rejection of the Spirit that took control of her because he knows that prayer will set her free.

Instead of one person suppose that we now have ten, twenty, thirty or more in the same region, the same state and there you have the reproduction of what happened in Morzine.

Isn't that proof positive that these spirits are demons? Call them demons if you want as that label would not surprise them. Don't you frequently see, however, people that are really bad and that could be called incarnate demons in their own right? Aren't those who say blasphemous things, deny God, and find pleasure in evilness? Those who rejoice before the suffering of their neighbors? Why then would you expect to have them suddenly transformed in the world of the spirits? The ones you call demons, we call bad spirits with all the bad traits that you wish them to have. The difference, however, is that, in your opinion, demons are fallen angels, perfect beings that became bad and are now eternally devoted to evil and suffering. In our opinion, these are members of a primitive humanity, a kind of underdeveloped savages but to whom the future is not blocked and who will improve as their moral sense develops on them through a series of successive existences, something that seems much more in line with God's law of progress and justice. Besides we have experience in our favor demonstrating the possibility of betterment and regret of the lowest kind of Spirits and those who are placed in the category of demons. Let us look into a special stage of those Spirits whose study is highly relevant to the current subject matter.

It is well-known that the inferior spirits are under the influence of matter, carrying all kinds of vices and passions from their time on Earth. As a result, these spirits will use these imperfections in subsequent reincarnation to misdirect others. Experience demonstrates that some show sexual deviances which are obscene and lead to or orgies and other mockeries that feed on these imperfections. Here is a question: after death what could have been the category of spirits such as Tiberius, Nero, Claudius, Messalina, Caligula and Heliogabalus? Which kind of obsession could have provoked them? In order to explain such obsession do we need to refer to special creatures that God would have created specially to drive people to evilness?

There are some kinds of obsessions that leave no doubt as to the type of Spirits that produce them. Obsession of those kind gave rise to fables of the incubus and succubus firmly believed by St. Augustine. More than one example could be cited to support this statement.

When the multiple corporeal impressions were studied and the perceptible touches sometimes produced by certain Spirits; when the tastes and tendencies of some of them are known and when the character of certain hysterical phenomena are analyzed, we ask ourselves if they would not play a role in that disease as they do in the obsessive insanity. We have seen it several times followed by unequivocal signs of subjugation.

Let's now take a look at what happened in Morzine. To begin with let's start with the location, which is important to the overall story.

Morzine is a commune of Chablais, High Savoy, located eight miles away from Thonon, at one end of the Durance Valley, in the remote Valais of Switzerland, separated by a mountain. Its population counts on about 2,500 souls and besides the main village there are several others spread in the high planes around. It is mostly surrounded by the Alps range but the majority is covered by forests and planted fields up to a considerable height. As a matter of fact, one cannot see permanent ice or snow anywhere there. We were told that the snow persists less there than in the Jura Mountains.

Dr. Constant was sent there by the French government in 1861 and stayed for three months. He portrayed a very unfavorable situation occurring in the region and, based on the assumption that the disease was purely physical, he only sought physical causes for the issues he observed. This was probably the reason that gave him an unfavorable impression of the people and the events.

The illness was a nervous affliction in his opinion, whose primary cause was the physical constitution of the inhabitants, caused by the inhospitable environment and the poor diet and food quality. This situation manifested itself more immediately in the hysterical state of the majority of female patients. Not disputing the existence of the disease, which greatly affect the women, one must say that it also caught men and women at an advanced age. One could not pinpoint the exact cause in the hysteria. What was the cause of hysteria?

We went to visit Morzine and we must say that our observations and the data collected from the local authorities and doctor are somewhat different from those collected by Dr. Constant.

In general , the main village was well built. The houses in the surrounding villages are not exactly hotels but they are not as bad as some of the poorer regions found in France, like in Britany for example, where the peasants live in real shacks.

The population did not seem weakened, in particular, did not seem to have goiter either, as indicated by Dr. Constant. We saw some elementary goiter but nothing pronounced as found in all Marianne women. It is rare to find mentally challenged people there, despite what Dr. Constant said, where on the other side of the mountain in the Valais region there are many of them. With respect to food the region produces more than enough for their own consumption. Although there is no abundance there is no misery either in particular the horrible one found in other regions. There are some places where the peasant population is infinitely worse fed. A remarkable fact is that we did not see a single beggar around. The region offers important resources of wood and rocks but that remains unused due to the lack of logistical transportation. The difficulty in communication is the Achillesheel of the region without which it would be one of the richest of the country. This difficulty can be exemplified by the fact that the postal service of Thonon cannot reach more than 2 miles out of town. Beyond that there is no road but only a trail to the top of the mountain and down to the banks of the Durance River with its furious torrents that cascades down through huge walls of granite, precipitating to its bed in the narrow gorge. For several miles the area is inhospitable. After transposing that stretch the valley becomes calm until Morzine, where it ends. it is difficult to get there, though, and it keeps the visitors away so much so that the region is only visited by hunters, which are strong enough to climb the rocks.

The paths have improved since its annexation. Before that they were only able to be traversed on horseback. People say that the government has plans to extend the road from Thonon to Morzine by the river. It is a difficult job but that will change the region, allowing for the export of their goods.

That is the general description of this region, which is not as unhealthy as pointed out by Dr. Constant. Admitting that the main village of Morzine, located at the end of the valley by the river, is humid. , We must, however, emphasize that the majority of those affected by the disease were from the neighboring villages, located in the higher planes where it is less humid.

If the disease was due to local causes, as pretended by Dr. Constant, such permanent causes should produce permanent effects and the illness would be endemic. just like the intermittent fever of Camargue and the Pontine marshes. If cretinism and goiter are endemic in the Rodano valley and not in the bordering Durance valley, the fact is that there is a permanent cause in one that does not exist in the other. If what is called possession of Morzine is only temporary then its cause is accidental.

Dr. Constant says that his observations did not reveal any supernatural cause. Since he only believes in material causes, it would seem to reason that he can only judge the effects based on the physical rather than an extra-material force? Has he studied the effects of such a force? Does he know its consistence and what are the symptoms that may allow its recognition? No, and since then to him they seem to be what they are not, believing that they are undoubtedly miracles and fantastic apparitions. He saw and described those symptoms but since he does not admit their cause he sought it elsewhere, in the material world where he could not find it.

The patients reported to be tormented by invisible creatures but since he did not see any of these, he concluded that the patients were mad, confirmed by the fact that they sometimes used to say absurd things even to the eyes of the most eager believer in Spirits. To him it was all absurd, though. As a doctor, however, he should know himself that even amidst crazy divagations of insanity there are sometimes glimpses of truth.

He assumed that the population, in general, was taken by superstitious ideas. But what was the surprise in an ignorant and rural population, isolated in the midst of the mountains? What more natural than having a terrified people amplifying the phenomena? Due to the fact that among the reports there were ridiculous comments he concluded that, from his point of view, everything should be ridiculous, not to mention the fact that to the eyes of any one that does not admit the action of the invisible world, all the effects resulting from that action are doomed to be classified as superstitious beliefs.

In order to support his thesis, Dr. Constant supported the reports in the media that asserted that every patient climbed trees that were forty yards tall with the agility of a cat; walked on unyielding branches; lied down with their feet in the air, coming down head first and unharmed. He discussed that at length to demonstrated the impossibility of the phenomenon and to demonstrate that the trees could not be seen from the houses where people supposedly saw the events. [jcm – this sentence does not make sense – need to discuss]

All the effort proved useless as we were told when we were there at the location was that it was not true. It was just a young man who had climbed a tree of normal dimensions and without tricks.

That is how Dr. Constant describes the history and the effects of the disease.

(to be continued in our next issue).

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

February 1863

Sermons against Spiritism

A letter from Lyon, dated December 7th, 1862 contains the following passage verbally confirmed to us by a witness:

“We had the presence here of the Bishop of Texas, USA, who preached on Tuesday, 8th December, at 8pm at Saint-Nizier Church, before an auditorium of about two thousand people and a large number of Spiritists. Ah! He does not seem to be well informed about our Doctrine. One can judge from this summary: - *The Spiritists do not admit hell or prayer in church. They lock themselves in their bedrooms and pray to God there, who knows which prayers! There are only two types of Spirits: the perfect ones and the thieves; the murderers and the villains...I come from America where these blasphemies began. I can assure you, though, that for a couple of years now nobody is involved with these things there any more...I was told here in this famous city of Lyon that there was a lot of Spiritists here. This cannot be true. I don't believe it. I am positive, brothers and sisters, that there isn't a single medium among you for behold the Spirits do not accept marriage or baptism and every Spiritist separates from their spouses, etc.*

“Those few statements give you an idea of the rest. What would the preacher say if he had known that a quarter of the audience was made-up of Spiritists? As for his eloquence, I can only say this: at certain times he was frantic; he seemed to have lost his train of thoughts and did not know what he wanted to say. If I was not afraid of using an disrespectful expression, I would say that he floundered. I do believe that he was led to say such absurd things by some Spirits and, so much so, that I assure you that we even forgot that we were in a sacred place. Everybody was laughing. Some of his followers came outside to observe the effect produced by the sermon but may not have been very happy since each person laughed and said what they thought. Several of his friends deplored his attitude and understood that he had not achieved his objective. This is what happened in the next session. A lady that was sitting by a very kind Spiritist friend of mine asked: - *What is this Spiritism and these mediums that people speak so much about it and what are these men so furious about?* She thought about the explanation and said: - *Ah! When I get home I will try to acquire the books and understand.*

“I assure you that it is thanks to some of these sermons that there are so many Spiritists in Lyon. Keep in mind that only three years ago we were only a few hundred when I wrote to you about a wrathful sermon against the Doctrine that had excellent results. I surmised that a few sermons more like this one and, in a year, the number of followers would double. Well, as predicted, the number is a hundred fold today thanks also to the false attacks from the press.

Everybody has more common sense than one may think when something is attached with such emphasis. As a result, these individuals wanted to investigate the merits of Spiritism themselves. They soon recognized the untruths of certain ignoallegations that denoted ignorance or malevolence, discrediting the critics and bringing more followers to Spiritism instead of keeping them away. The same happens, we hope, to the Bishop of Texas whose greatest mistake was to say that ‘*every Spiritist is separated from their wives*’,

when we have here before our eyes many couples that were separated before and that found union and concord in Spiritism.

Everyone naturally tells themselves that if the adversaries of Spiritism give it false teachings but yet the results demonstrated by the facts and by the reading of the books show the opposite, there is then nothing to confirm the truthfulness of their criticism. I do believe that if the Spiritists of Lyon were not afraid of what how the Bishop of Texas would react, they would have sent him and thank you letter. Spiritism, however, makes us charitable, even to our enemies.”

Another letter from a witness contains the following passage:

“The preacher from Saint-Nizier assumed that Spiritism had had its time in the USA and that for two years now nobody talks about it. Hence in his opinion it was a matter of fashion. The phenomena had no consistence and did not deserve further studies. He sought to see and saw nothing. However, he added that the new doctrine was destructive to the links of family, to the property and to the constitution of Society thus he denounced it to the authorities.

The adversaries expected a more shocking effect and not a simple denial presented in such a ridiculous way as the people are not oblivious to what happens in town, to the march of progress, and to the nature of the manifestations. The issue resumed on Sunday 14th in Saint-Jean, this time handled a little bit better. The preacher of Saint-Nizier denied the phenomena. In Saint-Jean he acknowledged them and said: - People hear raps on the walls, in the air, mysterious voices; in reality these are from Spirits but which Spirits? They cannot be good since the good ones are kind and obedient to God’s orders which prohibits the evocation of Spirits. Hence the ones that come can only be the bad ones.

There was about three thousand people in Saint-Jean. Among those at least three hundred will seek the discovery. What will certainly contribute to the thoughts of honest and intelligent people that made the audience are the singular statements of the preacher – I say that out of education. – *Spiritism*, he said, *comes to destroy the family, to degrade women, to preach suicide, adultery and abortion, to promote communism and dissolve society.*

He then invited the parishioners who eventually had Spiritist books to come forward and give it to them so that they could be burnt like St. Paul did to the heretic books in Ephesus. I don’t know if those gentlemen will find people eager enough to take their money and empty our bookshelves. Some Spiritists were furious; the majority rejoiced for understanding that it was a great day.

Hence, from the top of the second cathedra of France they have just proclaimed that the phenomena are true. The whole issue then is reduced to knowing that if these are good or bad Spirits and if the bad ones have God’s permission to come.”

The preacher of Saint-Jean affirms that it can only be the bad ones. He modified a little bit the solution.

We got a letter from Angouleme last Thursday, December 5th telling us that a preacher expressed himself in this way during his sermon: “*We all knew that the Spirits could be evoked and since long ago but it can only be done by the Church. Other people are not allowed to try to correspond with them by material means. To me it is a heresy.*” The effect it had on people was entirely contrary to the expected.

Thus, it is obvious that the good ones and the bad ones can communicate since if only the bad ones had such a power it is not reasonable that only the Church had the privilege of calling them.

We doubt that two sermons given in Bordeaux in the last October had served better to the cause of our antagonists. Below follows the analysis done by one listener. The Spiritists will be able to see if under this disguise they recognize their Doctrine and if the arguments opposed to them can smother their faith. As for ourselves, we repeat what we have already said somewhere else: While Spiritism is not attacked with better weapons it has nothing to fear.

“I will always regret”, says the narrator, “the fact that I missed the first of these sermons at Margaux Chapel, on October 15th last, if I am not mistaken. According to what I heard from trustworthy witnesses the thesis that was developed was the following: - *the Spirits may communicate with mankind. The good ones only communicate with the Church. All those who manifest outside Church are bad because there is no salvation outside Church. The mediums are miserable people who established a pact with the devil obtaining from him manifestations of all sorts at the price of their soul, extraordinary if not miraculous manifestations.*”

I give below other citations still stranger than that one. Since I did not hear them I suspect these statements could be exaggerated.

“The following Sunday, October 19th I was lucky enough to hear the sermon below. I tried to learn the name of the preacher and I was told that it was Father Lapeyre.

Father Lapeyre offered insights to his critics of *The Spirits’ Book*. In order to do so, he certainly tried to raise issues from this remarkable piece of work. I will restrain myself to point out the arguments that were more shocking to me, choosing to stay below the truth rather than assigning to our adversary something that he might not have said or that I might have misunderstood.

According to Father Lapeyre, *The Spirits’ Book* preaches communism; sharing of assets; divorce; equality among all peoples and in particular between men and women; equality between man and his God since man aspires nothing less than become similar to Jesus Christ taken by a pride that was the loss of the angels. The book drags people to materialism and to sensual pleasures since the works of progress may take place without God’s support and despite God, through the effect of this force that wishes the betterment of everything gradually, promoting the metempsychosis, this insanity of antiquity, etc. Then moving on to the speed with which the new ideas propagate he attests horrified how skillful and smart the devil is, by bringing them about; how well and artfully he was able to elaborate them to strongly vibrate in the perverted hearts of this century of incredulity and heresies. He then states: - *this century loves freedom so much and offer him free examination, freedom of choice, freedom of conscience! This century loves equality so much and shows him mankind at the same level of God! This century loves light so much and with a movement of the hand tears off the veil that hid the sacred mysteries.*

He then attacks the subject of the eternal penalties and gave magnificent pieces of oratory embedded in emotions. – *Believe me, my dear friends; believe me when I tell you where the imprudence of these new philosophers taken them thinking that they have dismantled the sacred religion of Jesus Christ before the weight of their deceptive assertions. Ah! Disgraceful! There is no hell, no purgatory, they say! To them no more blessed relationships connecting the living ones to the souls of those who they lost. No more the sacred*

sacrifice of the mass! Why would they celebrate it? Wouldn't their souls purify by themselves without any work and just by the efficacy of that irresistible force that attracts them to perfection non-stop? And do you know who the authorities are that come to proclaim these impious doctrines stamped on their foreheads by the indelible sign of hell that they wanted to annihilate? Ah! Brothers! These are the strongest columns of the Church: St. Paul, St. Augustine, St. Luke, St. Vincent de Paul, Bossuet, Fénelon, Lamennais, and all renowned men, true saints that fought for the establishment of the unmovable truth in their time and upon which the Church built its foundations, coming now to declare that their Spirits, detached from matter and more clairvoyant realized that their former opinions were wrong and that people should believe in the opposite.

Then, moving on to a question that the author of a Letter from a Catholic addressed to a Spirit to know if one commits heresy by practicing Spiritism, the preacher adds: - Here is the answer, brothers: - *it is curious that despite the devil's astuteness and skills he always shows his claws by the name of the Spirit that gave this answer. I will tell you in a little while.*

“This is followed by the citation of that answer that goes like this: - *Are you in agreement with all truths of the Church that empower you in the good that boosts the love for God in your soul and the devotion to your brothers? Yes; hence, you are a Catholic. He then adds: - Signed... Zenon... Zenon! A Greek philosopher, a pagan, an idolater that from the flames of hell where he burns for over twenty centuries comes to tell us that one can be a Catholic and not believe in that very hell that tortures him, waiting for all those who do not die humble and obedient in the heart of the Church... But senseless and blind you are! With all your philosophy you will not have but this proof, this only proof that the doctrine that you promote comes from the devil and that shall be a thousand times enough!*

After a lengthy explanation about this and the exclusive privileges of the Church to expel the devil, he adds: - *Insensible people that have fun by talking to the Spirits pretending to have any influence upon them! Have no fear like with the one mentioned by St. Luke these rapping and noisy Spirits – and they are very well classified my brothers – will not ask you: Who are you? Who are you to disturb us? Do you really believe that we are going to submit to your sacrilegious caprices? And that taking the tables and chairs that you turn around wouldn't they take you over like the son of Sceva, bringing pain upon you to the point that you have to run away, harmed and naked, too late to acknowledge the true abomination that is like playing with the dead?*

What is left to be done before such positive facts that shout at us? What to do? Ah dear brothers! Watch out and be careful not to be contaminated. Repel all the outrageous attempts of evil to drag you along towards the abyss. However, it is too late for such recommendations. Evilness has progressed rapidly. Those infamous books dictated by the prince of darkness to attract a multitude of ignorant people to his kingdom have spread out so much that like in Ephesus in former times if we added the price of those that circulate in Bordeaux alone it would amount to more than fifty thousand silver denarius (170,000 francs in our currency, repeating the citation made elsewhere in the sermon). I would not be surprised if among the believers that hear me now there wouldn't be some who have already fallen for the reading of those books. We can only say to these ones: Hurry up! Approach the tribunal of penitence. Hurry up! Come and open your hearts to the spiritual guides. Full of benevolence and kindness and always following the magnificent example of Paul we shall forgive you right away. As with Paul, however, forgiveness shall not be given to you if you do not bring us those books of sorcery that have almost destroyed you. What shall we do to those books, dear brothers? Yes, what shall we do? As St. Paul did we will build a mountain at the main square and we ourselves will set them on fire.”

Just a quick observation about this sermon: the author is mistaken about the date and perhaps, like a new Epimenides of Knossos, he has been asleep since the fourteenth century. Another fact that sticks out is the

rapid development of Spiritism. The enemies of another school also attest it in despair, such is the great love that they have for human reason.

The *Moniteur de Moselle* on November 7th, 1862 reads: “*Spiritism makes dangerous progress. It invades the upper, middle and lower classes of society. Magistrates, doctors, serious people also fall in that trap.*”

This statement is repeatedly found in the majority of current critics. In the presence of such a positive fact it was necessary to come from the middle of Texas and enter an auditorium with over a thousand Spiritists who have not been practicing for two years. Then, why such a rage if Spiritism is dead and buried? At least Father Lepeyre has no illusions. Given his horror he even exaggerates the extension of the supposed evil for he estimates the Spiritist books in Bordeaux alone to be worth a fortune. Nevertheless, he acknowledges that the idea has a great power and nobody will say that we exaggerate when we speak of the fast progress of the Doctrine. Some may attribute this to the devil fighting in a struggle against God, others may say that this is a fit of insanity invading all social classes so much so that the circle of shewed people narrows down continuously to the point that it will soon count on only a few, Others may deplore these things and each one from their own standpoint, asking themselves: - *What is going to be, God?* It is their own right. The result is that Spiritism wins over every barrier that is placed on its path. Hence, if it is insanity then soon there will only be mad people on Earth. It is a well-known proverb. If it is the work of the devil, then soon there will only be deranged people around and if those only speak in the name of God cannot stop them then the devil is stronger than God.

The Spiritists are more respectful of the Divinity. They do not believe that there is someone capable of fighting God on a level plan and even more to defeat God. Otherwise the roles would be upside-down and the devil would be the true lord of the universe. The Spiritists say that since God is sovereign there is no sharing there and that nothing happens without God's permission. Consequently, if Spiritism propagates with a lightning speed it does so by the will of God regardless. Since God is sovereignly fair and good he must not expect that his creatures will be lost or allow them to be tempted knowing from his foresight that they will succumb and precipitate in the never ending torments.

The dilemma still stands now. It is submitted to everybody's conscience and the conclusion is up to the future. If we mention all that there is to demonstrate the position of the adversaries of Spiritism when attacking it. In fact, one does need many excuses to criticize Spiritism by preaching the breakdown of family, adultery, abortion, communism and the destruction of social order. Do we need to rebuff those things? No. It is simply enough to guide them to the Doctrine and its teachings, something that is done all over the place.

Who would believe that we preach communism after the lessons given about the speech published in full in the report of our journey in 1862? Who could see an incitement to anarchy in the same brochure, page 58: “*In any case the Spiritists must be the first ones to give the example of submission to the law in case they are drawn.*”

Proposing such things in a distant region where Spiritism was totally unknown, where there was no means of controlling that could produce some effect. But saying it from the top of the cathedra of truth, amidst a whole population of Spiritists who permanently contradict it by their teachings and examples, that is real inability and one cannot help it but say that someone must be deluded to the point of not understanding that such speech can only serve the cause of Spiritism. It would be a mistake, however, to believe that that opinion is shared by the entire clergy. Much to the contrary, there are several priests who don't think that way and we even know some who deplore such deviations that more harmful to religion than to the Spiritist Doctrine. These are personal opinions that do not make law. A proof of the personal appreciations is their contradiction. While one says that all Spirits that manifest are necessarily bad for disobeying God, another

one acknowledges that some are good and some are bad but only the good ones go to Church and the bad ones to the masses. One accuses Spiritism of degrading women, another one criticizes it for elevating women to the same level as men. One pretends that Spiritism “drags people to materialism and sensuality” and the other, Mr. Cure of Marouzeau, recognizes that it destroys materialism.

Father Marouzeau says the following in his brochure: *“In reality, according to the followers of the communications from beyond the grave, it would be the deliberate intention of the clergy to fight Spiritism at any price. Let us suppose that the clergy has so little intelligence and common sense and a stupid mind? Why believe that the Church that has given so much demonstration of prudence, wisdom and high intelligence to discern the truth from the false at all times would be now incapable of understanding the interest of its children? Why condemning without listening to the Church. If the Church refuses to hold your flag it means that it is not its flag whose colors are essentially hostile; fact is that side by side with the good that you do by fighting materialism the Church sees a real danger to souls and Society.”* And in another passage: *“Let us conclude from all that that Spiritism must limit itself to fighting materialism and giving people tangible proofs of immortality by means of well-established manifestations from beyond the grave.”*

An essential point that results from all of this is the fact that all those gentlemen are in agreement with respect to the reality of the manifestations. The only difference is in the way each one appreciates them. As a matter of fact, denying them would be the same as denying the truth of the Scriptures and the facts themselves upon which the dogmas are founded.

As for the way people look at the thing, it is already possible to verify how the unity is established and how public opinion manifests itself, an opinion that also has its power of vetoing. Another fact sticks out: the Spiritist Doctrine touches profoundly the masses; while some see in the doctrine a terrible ghost others see an angel of consolation and freedom and a new era of moral progress to humanity.

Since we mentioned Father Marouzeau’s brochure we may perhaps be asked why we have not responded to that once it was addressed to us, personally. The reason may be found in the report of our journey we have traveled to refute these assertions. When we discuss a subject, we do so from the general point of view, abstracting from personalities that to our eyes are just individuals attached to their principles.

We shall talk about Mr. Marouzeau and others when the time is right to discuss the ensemble of objections. It was necessary to wait until each one would speak – bragging or not – in order to appreciate the strength of the opposition. Individual and particular responses would have been premature and repeated incessantly.

Mr. Marouzeau’s brochure was a rifle shot. Our apologies for placing him in the category of the rifleman but his Christian modesty shall not be offended.

Protected by a number of shields it seemed convenient to us to let them unload their guns, even the heavy ones, like the one that has just arrived, so that we could assess their power. Well, up until now we cannot lament the clearings in our ranks. On the contrary, their shots ricocheted. On another hand it was not less useful to allow the situation develop and people should appreciate the fact that over the last two years instead of worsening the general state of things we have gathered new strengths every day. Hence we will respond when we understand that the time is right. So far, there has been no waste of time for we have gained terrain constantly and the adversaries themselves facilitate our job. All we have to do is to let them act.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

February 1863

Spiritist insanity

Answer to Mr. Burlet, from Lyon

The small periodical *Presse* from January 8th, 1863 brings the following article, extracted from the *Salut Public de Lyon*, quickly used by the *Gironde* of Bordeaux, believing to have scored against Spiritism.

Sciences

“Mr. Philibert Burlet, an intern in the hospitals of Lyon, recently read an interesting piece of work about Spiritism at that Society of Medical Sciences in that city, Spiritism that was considered as a cause of mental illness. Given the current epidemic that sweeps French society, it will be useful to reproduce the facts contained in the memories of Mr. Burlet.

The author carefully describes six cases of acute insanity observed by him at the Antiquaille Hospital. In this description, he attested to the direct relationship between mental alienation and Spiritist practices. Dr. Carrier, he says, not long ago treated and cured three women maddened by Spiritism. In fact, there isn't a single doctor that treats mental diseases that has not observed similar cases to a greater or lesser degree, not to mention of course the cases of intellectual or emotional disturbances that may not reach the level conventionally described as mental alienation but that still alter patient's logic and lead them to bizarre behavior.

Such influence of the pretense Spiritist Doctrine is now well demonstrated by science. There are thousands of observations to substantiate it. Mr. Burlet says that “if elsewhere in France the cases of insanity caused by the doctrine of the mediums are as common as they are in our county – and there is no reason to be different – there seems to be no doubt that Spiritism may enlist the most fecund causes of mental alienation.”

The author finishes by calling on parents, supervisors, etc. to be on the lookout so that their children and employees will never attend “those Spiritist gatherings, called groups, in which danger to reason is not the only one to fear.”

Therefore, it is an incontestable utility to give publicity to facts of such a kind, facts collected conscientiously, like those of the interns of Lyon hospitals. This does not mean that there is less chance of success to treat individual already affected by this epidemic. A hallmark of their insanity is exactly the strong conviction of owning the truth. In their humility they believe to bear the gift of communicating with the Spirits, considering proud the science that doubts their powers. Victimized by hallucination that drives them, once their premise is accepted they reason with a stern logic that only empowers them in their

aberration. However, there is still hope to act upon the still healthy minds and that would be tempted to the seduction of Spiritism by showing them the dangers and keeping them away from it.

It is good to know that the Spiritist practices and the socialization with the mediums – truly hallucinated – is necessarily harmful to reason. Only strong personalities can resist. The others always leave behind a greater or lesser chunk of their commonsense.”

A.Sanson

This article may counter the sermons reported in the previous article. One can see that if there isn't a common origin on one hand there is an identity of intentions on the other: that of raising public opinion against Spiritism through means that aim at good-faith or ignorance of things.

Notice the evolution of the attacks since the famous and awkward article in the Gazette de Lyon (Spiritist Review, October 1860). It was not more than simple mockery through which the workers of that town were ridiculed and their looms compared to the gallows. Wasn't that lack of elegance to scorn the workers and their instruments of work, people that create the wealth in a city like Lyon? Aggression has since then taken another turn. Given the impotence of ridicule and the evidence of new gains conquered by the Spiritist ideas on a daily basis, it now takes a more regrettable tune. It is now in the name of humanity before the epidemic that now devastates the French society that it comes to point out the dangers of the pretense doctrine that turns the relationship with those who follow such ideas disgusting and bizarre, a not very nice reference to the ladies of all classes, including princesses, who believe in the Spirits.

It seems to us that violent and irascible people that became good and kind through Spiritism are not demonstrations of a very bad thing and are less repulsive than before and besides one does not find only kind and benevolent people among the non-Spiritists. Considering that there are many families to whom Spiritism reestablished peace and concord it is in the name of their interest that the workers are invited not to attend “those gatherings, so called groups, where they can lose reason and other things”, no doubt believing that they would do better by visiting the cabarets rather than staying at home.

Unsuccessful in their insults they now recourse to science for support but no longer the comic science represented by the muscle that cracks of Mr. Jobert de Lamballe (see Spiritist Review, June 1859) but serious science, condemning Spiritism as vehemently as it did in the past to the steam engine and so many other utopias that later it had to forcibly accept as true.

And who is its representative in such a serious matter? Is that the Institute of Sciences of France? No. It is Mr. Philibert Burlet, an intern from Lyon's hospital, that is to say, a medical student who builds his first weapons by writing a dissertation against Spiritism. He said, in his name and in Mr. Sanson's name from the *Presse*, that science has given its sentence, a sentence that cannot likely be more appealed than that of the condemned Harvey's theory about the circulation of the blood and whose author had to face “more or less vicious and gross attacks” (*Dictionnaire des Origines*). It must be said that a monography about the mistakes of the scientists would be a curious publication.

Mr. Burlet says that he observed six cases of insanity produced by Spiritism but since that is too little in a population of 300,000 souls from which at least a tenth is formed by Spiritists, he is careful enough to add that ‘*there are thousands of observations to substantiate it if elsewhere in France the cases of insanity caused by the doctrine of the mediums are as common as they are in our county – and there is no reason to be different...*’.

One can go far with hypotheses as we can see. Well, we go further than he did and will say not hypothetically but by affirmation that in a given time there will only be mad people amongst the Spiritists. Insanity is in fact one of the diseases of mankind. A thousand accidental causes may produce it and the proof is that there was mad people before even speaking of Spiritism and that not all mad people are Spiritists, Mr. Burlet must agree. There has always been and there will always be mad people. Then if all inhabitants of Lyon were Spiritists there would only be mad people amid Spiritists in the same way that in an entirely Catholic region there would only be mad people among them. Observing the progress of the doctrine from a few years back to our days up to a certain extent one could forecast the time for that. Let us concentrate, however, in the present.

The mad ones talk about what concerns them. It is true that someone who had never heard anything about Spiritism would talk about it whereas if the opposite were true the person would talk as they would do about religion, love, etc. Regardless of the cause of insanity the number of mad persons talking about Spirits will naturally increase with the number of followers. The question is to determine if Spiritism is an efficient cause of insanity. Mr. Burlet says so from the top of his authority as intern by saying '*such influence is well demonstrated by science these days.*' Inflamed he then appeals to the rigor of the authorities as if an authority could hinder the progress of an idea and without considering that the ideas do not propagate better than when under the empire of persecution. Does he take his personal opinion and those who share his view as decrees of science? He seems to ignore that Spiritism counts on a large number of renowned doctors in its ranks; that many groups and societies are presided by doctors who are also men of science who have arrived to opposite conclusions when compare to his own. Who is right: he or the others? Who shall pronounce the final verdict out of this conflict between affirmation and denial? Time, opinion and conscience of the majority and science itself that will surrender before the evidence as done on other occasions.

We ask Mr. Burlet, who is against the simplest precepts of logic, to deduce a general consequence of some isolated events that can be belied by others. A different body of work would be needed to support his thesis. You said that six cases were observed. I believe in you but what does it prove? Had you observed twice or three times as many and it would not prove further if the total would still be below average. Suppose there were a thousand mad people, to use a round number. Given that the causes of insanity are the same then if Spiritism can lead to insanity, it is a new cause that added to the other ones must increase the mean. If this mean had moved from 1,000 to 1,200 since the introduction of Spiritism, for example, and the difference were precisely due to the cases of Spiritist insanity then it would be a different story. However, while one cannot prove that the average number of cases has increased under the influence of Spiritism, the sample of a few isolated cases proves nothing other than the intention of casting discredit upon the Spiritist ideas and scaring the public.

Given the current state of affairs, all we need is to question the value of the isolated cases that are presented to us and learn if every patient that speaks about the Spirits attribute their insanity to Spiritism. But for that, we would need an uninterested and impartial judge. Suppose Mr. Burlet became mad, something that can happen to him or to anybody else, would there be any surprise if, in his insanity, he spoke of Spiritism, an idea that he fought against? We could mention several cases that would make a lot of noise where the individuals effected had little or nothing to do with Spiritism. We must add to that the cases of obsession and subjugation that are confused and treated as insanity with great harm to peoples' health as explained in our articles about Morzine. At first sight, these are the only ones that should be assigned to the Spirits since it has been demonstrated that there are a large number of persons strange to Spiritism but who are mistreated due to the ignorance of causes. It is really curious to see certain adversaries that do not believe in the Spirits or in their manifestations pretending that Spiritism is a cause of insanity. If the Spirits don't exist or they cannot communicate with mankind then all those beliefs are fantasies, far from the truth. We then ask how they can cause anything. It is the idea, they will say; the idea is false; well now, everyone that professes a

false idea betrays oneself. What is that idea, so detrimental to reason? Here it is: we have a soul that outlives the body. That soul preserves the affections of earthly life and can communicate with the living ones.

According to them it is better to believe in the void after death or that the soul loses its individuality and blends with the universal whole, like a drop in the ocean. In fact, with such a belief, there is no need to worry about our neighbors and it is enough to think only about ourselves, to eat and drink well and just feed our selfishness.

If the opposite belief is a cause for insanity, then why are there so many people who believe in nothing? Some will say that this is not the only cause. We agree. But then why wouldn't those causes affect a Spiritist as much as anybody else? Why would you like to blame Spiritism for a high temperature or insolation?

You demand measures against the Spiritist ideas from the authorities because in your opinion those ideas test your thinking. However, why don't you call attention of the authorities against other causes? In your defense of human reason, of which you consider yourself to be the prototype, have you looked into the statistics behind the number of cases involving love? Why don't you appeal to the authorities to have the feeling of love investigated? It has been demonstrated that all revolutions are marked by a remarkable recurrence of mental illnesses. There you have an efficient cause that is well established for it increases the average number. Why don't you advise the governments to block revolutions since they are evil things?

Considering that Mr. Burlet brought about the large report of six cases of the so called Spiritist insanity in a population of 300,000 souls, we advise the Spiritist doctors to do the same with all cases of insanity, epilepsy and other diseases caused by the fear of the devil, by the terrible images of the inferno and the asceticism of the cloister.

Far from admitting Spiritism as a cause of increase of insanity, we say that it is a mitigating cause that must reduce the number produced by ordinary causes. In fact, among these causes we must consider the several causes of broken hearts, deception, the setbacks of fortune and frustrated ambitions. The effect of such causes is proportional to the susceptibility of the individual. If we had the means of attenuating that susceptibility it would no doubt give us the best antidote. Well, that antidote is in Spiritism that mitigates the moral blow and makes us withstand the vicissitudes of life with resignation. A person prone to committing suicide due to a setback acquires the moral strength that gives patience before the misfortune. That person will not only not kill herself but will also keep a cool reason given her unbreakable faith in the future.

Will you give that person the same calmness with the perspective of the void? No, because the person cannot foresee any compensation and, in case there is nothing to eat, you could have ended up starving. Hunger is a terrible consoler to anyone who believes that it all ends with death. Spiritism can help to support hunger through the understanding and the expectation of a life that succeeds death. That is its madness.

The way through which a true Spiritist sees things from this and the other world lead him/her to tame the most violent passions, even rage and revenge.

After the insulting article published by the Gazette de Lyon, mentioned above, a group of about a dozen workers said to us: "*If we were not Spiritists we would teach the author a lesson to teach him how to live and if we were in the times of revolution we would have burned down the editorial room of his paper. But we are Spiritists. We are sorry for him and ask God to forgive him.*"

What do you say about this madness, Mr. Bulet? What would you have preferred in such circumstances to either deal with mad people of this kind or with those who fear nothing? Consider that they count on more than 20,000 in Lyon these days. You pretend to serve the interest of humanity and you don't understand yours? Ask God so that you may never have to one-day regret that not everybody is Spiritist. That is what you and the others alike work for with all your strength. By sowing disbelief, you undermine the foundations of the social order, stimulating anarchy and bloody reactions.

We work to give faith to those who believe in nothing; to spread a belief that makes people better to one another; that teaches them to forgive their enemies; to see one another as brothers without any prejudice of race, cast, sect, color, political or religious opinion, a belief that in a word gives rise to the true feelings of charity, fraternity and social duties.

Check with all military chiefs who have Spiritist soldiers under their command who are the ones conducted with more easiness, who better observe discipline without coercion. Check with the magistrates, with law enforcement agents who have Spiritist auxiliaries in their lower ranks who are the kindest and the most orderly of all; upon whom the law is applied the least and where there is less turmoil and disorderly conduct to repress.

A police commissioner from a southern town said to me: "Since Spiritism has spread in my jurisdiction I have to attend ten times less cases than before."

Finally ask the Spiritist doctors who are the patients who present less diseases caused by the excesses of all kinds. These are statistics that seem to be more relevant to me than your six cases of mental alienation. If such results constitute madness, then I have the honor of propagating it.

Where were such results collected? In the books that some wanted to burn at the stake. In the groups that you recommend the workers to stay away from. What is it that can be seen in those groups that you paint as the grave of reason? Men, ladies, children that respectfully listen to a kind and reassuring moral instead of going to cabarets to lose their money and their health or to make noise in public squares; that exit those gathering with love towards the neighbor in their hearts instead of hatred and vengeance.

Here an amazing confession by the author of the above article: "*Victimized by hallucination that drives them, once their premise is accepted they reason with a stern logic that only empowers them in their aberration.*" That is a truly remarkable madness since it reasons with an irreproachable logic!

Well, what is the premise? We said that not long ago: The soul outlives the body, preserves its individuality and likings and can communicate with the living ones. What is it that can demonstrate the logic of a premise other than the irreproachable logic of deductions? The one that says irreproachable also say unbending and irrefutable. Hence if the deductions of a premise are unimpeachable it means that everything is satisfied and that nothing can oppose it. Therefore, if the deductions are true the premise is true since false cannot be the foundation of truth. Apparently logical consequences can, no doubt, be deduced from a false principle but they will be an apparent logic only, that is, sophisms and not an irreproachable logic since there will always be an open door to contradiction. True logic is the one that thoroughly satisfies reason; the one that cannot be contested. False logic is no more than false reasoning, always refutable. The deductions of our premises are characterized, in principle, by its foundation on the observation of facts; second, that they explain rationally what would go inexplicable without them. Replace our premise by the denial and you shall face insoluble difficulties every step of the way.

The Spiritist theory, we were saying, is based on facts, arguably thousands of facts, that repeat every day and are observed by millions of people. Yours is based on half a dozen observed by you. That is a premise that everybody can make their own conclusion.

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Spiritist Circle of Tours

President's speech at the inaugural session

Tuesday, November 12th 1862

Ladies and gentlemen,

First I must thank the Spirits of our small, newly created society the nomination of my name to its presidency. I shall justify the honor of such a choice by executing meetings and activities so that they always have a serious and moral character. We must never forget or be prepared to to many challenges.

Why did we come here, ladies and gentlemen, away from the normal activities? It is because we believe in the knowledge about our destiny. Yes, all of us in this modest circle that will grow and elevate, as I hope, by the greatness and elevation of the objective that we target, we yield to a very natural desire of tearing off the thick veil that hides from the poor humans the scaring secret of death and to determine if it is true, according to the teachings of a false science and as believed by so many unfortunate souls, that the tomb shuts the door to the book of man's destiny.

I know well that God has placed a spark in the hearts of everyone so that it can illuminate our steps through the rough paths of life: reason and a scale to balance everything in their just value – justice. However, when the pure and vivid light of that driving beam is progressively weakened before the impure draft of negatively influenced passions it fades away. When the scale of justice is contaminated by inaccuracies and lies; when the ulcer of materialism invades everything, even the religions, threatening to devour everything, it is necessary that the Supreme Judge may finally come through the prodigies of his omnipotence and through powerful manifestations capable of drawing everybody's attention straighten up the paths of humanity to avoid the abyss.

At the point of moral degradation that modern societies have fallen under the influence of pernicious but tolerated doctrines, if not encouraged by those whose mission is exactly to reproach them; amidst the general indifference towards anything that is not material; before that extreme and selfish sensuality; that formerly unknown fierce battle for wealth at any price; the boundless cult to the golden calf; the messy

search for profit that drives egotism, hardens all hearts, deceiving intelligences and moving towards the destruction of social links, the revelations from beyond the grave may be considered as a divine revelation, needed by the Providence to call order and that cannot allow its favorite creature to perish.

Given the speed at which the teachings of the Spiritist Doctrine expand to every corner of the globe it is easy to predict that the time for humanity to transpose a new stage is near, after a stationary period it will reach a new level in its intermittent progression through the centuries.

As for ourselves, ladies and gentlemen, we thank Providence for having chosen us to spread and make the Spiritist seed grow in this corner of the world, thus cooperating to the limit of our strength with the great work of regeneration of humanity that is in preparation.

With respect to a medical issue that some of you know about, at this point in time, I am involved with an important philosophical work in which I try to explain rationally the physiological phenomena of Spiritism and connecting them to the general philosophy. Before the publication of this essentially anti-materialist draft work, I propose to submit it to your analysis so that I can receive your advice regarding the opportunity to submit it to the superior Spirits, who are benevolent enough to assist us. Besides we can find in that work the majority of the subjects that must constitute the theme of our Spiritist conversations.

We must never lose sight of the essential objective of Spiritism which is to destroy materialism by illustrating the importance behind the survival of the soul. If the dead respond to our calls, if they communicate with us, it is evident that they are not really dead; the last breath of agony has not marked the final moment of their lives. All sermons of the world are not worth as much as an argument of such a kind.

That is why it is our duty as believers to spread the light around us and not to hide it under the bowl, that is to say in this little room here that much to the contrary shall become a focal point of irradiation through our dedication.

Does it mean that we have to invite everybody to our meetings, receive the first one that shows curiosity wanting to witness our activities as if we were some con artists at work?

This would thoughtlessly expose a very serious thing to ridicule. However, when someone has acquired notions of Spiritism by reading the special books and is in good faith willing to witness the facts we must attend his interest. We must regulate such admissions, though, and do not allow strange persons to the meetings unless the society had been consulted previously and had given previous authorization.

Ladies and gentlemen, when we attested just two years ago with one member of our society at the home of a common friend the most remarkable mechanical and intellectual Spiritist phenomena, despite the evidence of the facts and despite a profound conviction that such phenomena were taking place outside the known natural laws, we only dared to timidly expose our own knowledge, such was the fear of having the integrity of our reason exposed.

The Spirits' Book, then little known in Tours, was still in its first or second edition. It had hardly transposed the limits of the capital city. Behold! What a huge progress in just three years! Spiritism today is everywhere; it counts of followers in all echelons of society; big or small groups are formed in every town, large or small, and coming to the villages. The Spiritist books today are sold in all bookshops which can hardly cope with the demand of a thirsty clientele, willing to initiate into the great mysteries of evocations. Spiritism today is common knowledge, somewhat known by everyone, and is no longer feared, a sign of reproach or indifference. We can dare to attend our meetings and reveal their intent without the fear of

being considered mad. We can challenge mockery and sarcasm and tell the jokers: - Before ridiculing at least count and weigh us.

With respect to the anathema of a party, we analyzed its reach very well to be worried about it. They say that we cut a deal with the devil. Be it. One must agree, however, that in such a case not all devils are bad. To their eyes our true crime is our pretension, certainly very legitimate, that we can communicate with God and His saints, without their compulsory intervention.

Let us demonstrate to them that thanks to the teachings of what they call demons we understand the sublime moral of the Gospels that is summarized in the love of God and our neighbors and universal charity. We embrace the whole humanity, without distinction of cult, race, and origin and even with more reason family, fortune and social condition. Let them know that our God, that of the Spiritists, is not a ruthless and revengeful tyrant that punishes a moment of weakness with the eternal punishment but a merciful and good Father who watches His lost children with an endless solicitude, trying to attract them back to Him through a series of tests destined to wash every single stain. Isn't that written that God does not wish the death of the sinner but his conversion?

Furthermore, we reserve the imprescriptible right of reason here, as everywhere else, a reason that ultimately must analyze and dominate everything. We don't tell the lighthearted ones: Believe or die; we say believe if your reason wishes.

One word still to finish, ladies and gentlemen, for I do not wish to abuse your attention. Since our society does not have and cannot have any other objective but our instruction and our moral improvement, we must carefully keep every personal issue or matters related to politics and material interests away from our meetings.

Study of mankind with respect to its future destiny, such is the program from which we must never depart.”

Hauvet, Doctor in Medicine

This speech is followed by the spontaneous communication transcribed below, received by one of the mediums of the society:

“My friends, the objective of your society is to instruct you and to bring the lost soul back to the light that has been long obscured by the reigning darkness of this century. You must not look at this institution as if it were here to instruct you about Law and Science. It is here pure and simply to drive you through the new path of regeneration that you must walk fearlessly, trusting the instructions that you shall receive. You must fear nothing for God watches those who do good and He does not leave them on their own.

I overheard you discussing an article about the admission of strange persons to the society. Listen to the advice of a friend on this, or even better of a brother that does not speak from his mouth but from his heart and not physically but spiritually because, believe me, to come to you I transpose all levels of the impure Spirits but the path to cover is not painful when I see your hearts animated by good feelings.

When a stranger asks to attend your sessions bring him to the privacy of your office first before admission and through the conversation probe his feelings and make sure that he understands the foundations of the Doctrine. If you detect the desire for the good and not a simple curiosity; if driven by serious intentions, then you can admit him without concerns. But you must reject whoever may come with the idea of disturbing

the session and neglecting your teachings. Be aware that spies sneak everywhere. Even Jesus had them around.

If someone comes along saying that he or she is a Spiritist or a medium do not accept until you know whom you are dealing with. You must not ignore the fact that there are lighthearted and proud mediums that for this very reason only attract insensible Spirits. Similar attracts similar, as they say. A true Spiritist must not have but the feeling of good and charity without which one cannot be assisted by elevated Spirits.

There is no doubt that the loss of a medium may leave a void among us but that does not mean that you will no longer be assisted by us because we shall always be ready to come and support your work whenever allowed by God. If a good medium leaves for whatever reason from you, God certainly has a different and more useful mission to that medium. Who know what is coming? There are things that you cannot understand but must accept.

Yours, my friends, is a difficult step to climb but you shall succeed with the help of your brothers who are above you. I hope to give you instructions on more serious issues on another occasion.”

Fénelon

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Varieties

Cure by a Spirit

We received several letters attesting the efficacy of the medication indicated in the November 1862 issue of the Spiritist Review whose prescription was given by a Spirit. A cavalry officer told us that the pharmacist of his battalion had it prepared for the most frequent cases of horse kick. We also know that other pharmacists have done the same in certain towns.

One of our subscribers from Eure-et-Loir describes the following fact of his personal knowledge regarding the origin of the medication:

“Autheusel, November 6th, 1862

A sick man by the name of Paquine that lives in a nearby commune came to see me about a month ago, walking on crutches. Surprised by his condition I questioned him about the accident. He said that for a long time now his legs were significantly swollen, covered by ulcers that would not yield to any medication. The man is a Spiritist with some mediumship. I told him to pray and address the good Spirits with faith. I saw him at mass on the All Saints Day, now with a simple walking stick. He came to see me on the following day and said: - *Sir, since you recommended me to the good Spirits to obtain the cure I invoked them every day and made the point that my condition was making it very difficult for me to work. I did that for five or six days when one evening I fell asleep and saw a man dressed all in white in the middle of the room. He came to my dresser and took a jar with wax that I used to mitigate the pain in my legs. He showed it to me and taking some tobacco that I had on a piece of paper he showed it again. He then fetched a jar with extract of Saturn⁶ then a bottle with essence of turpentine. He showed it all and indicated that I had to mix them up and showed me the dose by dropping it in the jar. After showing signs of friendship he then disappeared. Come the next day and I did what had been indicated by the Spirit and since then my legs have followed an excellent healing path. Today I only have some swelling in the foot that is fading away thanks to the efficacy of the medication. I shall be cured soon.*

6 Goulard's extract (NT)

There you have it, gentlemen. This is a fact that could almost be classified as a miraculous healing and I do believe that one must take the spirit of partisanship too far to see a demoniac action there.

Examining the commonality and almost always the simplicity of the medications indicated by the Spirits in general I ask myself if from that one could not conclude that the medication in itself is a simple formula and that it is the fluidic influence of the Spirit that leads to the cure. I think that this issue should be studied.”

L. de Tarragon

The last question seems truthful to us particularly when one considers the properties that the magnetic action may give to benign substances as for example the water. Well, since the Spirits can also magnetize they can give curative properties to certain substances, according to the circumstances. On one side Spiritism reveals a world of thinking and acting creatures and on another it reveals unknown material forces that one day will be employed by Science.

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Spiritist Dissertations

Peace to the Men of Good Will

Poitiers. Preparatory meeting of the Spiritist workers. Medium Mr. X

My dear friends, life is short; long is what precedes and succeeds life. Nothing happens but according to the will of God; hence it is all about legitimate and elevated justice. Your hardship, no doubt, is a deserved punishment for your earlier faults. Face them with dignity and raise your eyes to the skies with resignation. You shall be blessed and relieved. Your misery sometimes is the test requested by your own Spirit willing to promptly achieve the final objective, always foreseen in the discarnate state.

At the time when the world agitates and suffers, when societies contort in a laborious struggle searching for the truth God allows Spiritism, this spark of the eternal truth, to come down from the highest regions to enlighten you. Our objective is to show you the direction but allow you to choose, that is the merit or demerit of your actions. Thus, listen to us and rest assured that your happiness is a real concern to us. If you knew how much your bad actions affect us; how much your efforts towards the law of God give us pure joy! The Lord said: - *Servers of my empire, devout apostles of my law, take my word to all; explain to them that the eternal life shall be to those who practice the Gospel; make all of them understand that the good, the beautiful and the great are steps of my eternity contained in this word: love. Fast Spiritist attend everyone; from the most unfortunate to the happy ones; from the king to the simplest worker; from the Pharisee to the one who bears a burning faith.*

And we go everywhere and scream out loud to the unfortunate ones: resignation, charity, humility. To the kings we say: love the people, the workers. Respect the law!

My friends, when you do more than just listen and practice these teaching, there will no longer be selfishness and envy. Then, there will be no more miseries, no more materialism that destroys society; no more prejudice that has long made you believe in noble families and others that assert they are entitled by blood or some other justification. From that point forward, there will be nothing but happiness then!

Your governments will be good because governors and the governed will have taken advantage of Spiritism. Science and Arts will be taken by the wings of the divine charity, raising to unsuspected heights; your climate cleansed by the works in the field; your harvest more abundant; the profound words of equality and fraternity will finally be interpreted so that nobody will ever dream of disputing other peoples' properties, then accomplishing the promises of God.

Peace, said Jesus Christ, to those people of good will. You found no peace because you had no good will. The good will towards the rich and the poor shall be called charity. There is moral just as there is material charity and you have showed none and the poor were to blame as much as the rich!

Listen carefully: Believe and love! Love. A lot will be forgiven to the one who had loved a lot.

Believe: Faith moves mountains.

Prudence and kindness in the new apostolate: your best speech shall be your example.

Feel sorry for the blind: the ones who do not wish to see light. Be sorry but do not criticize.

Pray, my friends, and the blessing of God shall be with your souls. The beam of light is on; there is a light house on all sides of the horizon; the storm will perhaps shake and break the boats! But the pilot who keeps an eye on the light house above the fierce waves will get to the end and the Lord will say: "Peace to the men of good will; be blessed, you who has loved; be happy for you have worked for the happiness of others. My son, each one will be repaid according to what they have done!"

F.D., former magistrate

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Spiritist poetry

The patient and the doctor

Essay dedicated to Mr. Editor of the Renard, from Bordeaux, by the rapping Spirit of Carcassone.

I can bear no long, doctor, too much in my way!

Said Mr. Rochefort the other day.

Feel my pulse, doctor, I am ill;

The whole world in peril.

It seems that God has lost control.

He is down and I curse it all.

First comes the steam... Is that how we travel?

What happened to the pleasant couch, a marvel

That took us risk free from Paris to Sceaux?

They say it is progress... Doctor it is Ridiculous!

The planet is moving backwards... It is chaos, nothing

More... A cable, a line of steel, from Calais to Beijing.

A tailor sews without needles; there is fire in the water;

From cotton they make gun powder.

An art student armed with one brush alone
Sells portraits made under the sun.
Glory, glory to the past! In this frivolous century
The people speaks! Screams equality.
From Bordeaux Sabò wrote! Look doctor,
It's all changed. I shall look for
And find the rascals! Hell!
I will warn the head of the *Etincelle*;
This is where, sword in hand, a skull defends us,
That's not all, Doctor, oh scandal! People fuss
That the good of La Fontaine using the formula,
A true dead, a Spirit gives us the rule. "
- Here Rochefort spat, then he continues:
"Doctor, in good faith, do you believe in the Spirit?
- Bah! Said the doctor! Come on now, it
Is difficult to believe... Spirit? Not even your own. "

NOTE: The text above that is up to the reader to judge was obtained spontaneously by tipology like other beautiful verses by the same medium regarding a witty article written by Mr. Aug. Bez and published in the *Renard* that is willing to open its columns to the followers of Spiritism. The *Etincelle* (Spark) is another newspaper from Bordeaux edited by Mr. de Rattier that throws incendiary darts against Spiritism but that so far was only able to produce a little spark like those of fireworks that fade away before reaching the ground. As for Mr. Rochefort he will certainly find this an unhealthy poetry.

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Rouen subscription

Essay dedicated

Spiritist Society of Paris: 423 fr. - The Prince of Georgia, 20 fr. ; MM. Aumont, libr., 5 fr. ; Courtois, 2 fr. ; Dolé, designer-lith., 5 fr. ; Roger, 20GB. ; Yvose, 10 fr. ; Mrs. Hilary, 20GB. 505 fr. 00

Societies and Spiritist groups: Sens, 60 fr. 05; Orleans, 40 fr. ; Marennes, 34 fr. 50; Saint-Malo, 15 fr. - MM. Bodin (from Cognac), 20 fr. ; Borreau (Niort), 3 fr. ; Bitaube (Blaye), 5 fr. ; Bourges, Lieut. (Provins), 10 fr. ; Blin, cap. (Marseille), 20 fr. ; Lausat (Condom), 5 fr. ; Viewfinder (Orthez), 10 fr. ; Saint-Martin, arqueb. (Maubourguet), 5 fr. ; Petitjean, tailor, and his worker (Joinville H.-M.), 7 fr. ; Auzanneau (Neuvic), 10 fr. ; Lafage (Tarbes), 5 fr. ; Jouffroy (Gaillon), 6 fr. ; Christmas (Bone), 10 fr. ; D ... (Guelma), 2 fr. 50; N ... (Ré Island), 9 fr. - From Poitiers: Barbault Mr. de la Motte, anc. Magistrate 100 fr. ; Barbault Madame de la Motte, 100 fr. ; Mr. Frothier, sculptor, 20 fr. ; Mr. Bonvalet worker, 10 fr. - Spiritist Society of Montreuil-sur-Mer, 74 fr. 497 fr. 05

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Struggle between past and future

There is right now a real crusade against Spiritism as we have been informed. Articles are produced everywhere containing speeches and even acts of violence and intolerance. Every Spiritist must rejoice for this is a positive proof that Spiritism is not a farce. Would they make such a noise for a flying insect? The prodigious speed with which the new idea propagates is what drives such a rage, despite everything they did to stop it. Our adversaries, forced by the evidence to acknowledge that such progress invades the most enlightened layers of society and even the persons of science, are now reduced to deplore this fatal attraction that leads the whole society to the psychiatric hospitals.

Mockery has run out of jokes and sarcasm in its arsenal and their weapon, which is believed to be so terrible, has failed to attract more jesters to their side of the fence, proving that, in this case, there is no matter for laughter. It is no less evident that not a single follower of the Doctrine was converted but, much to the contrary, their numbers increased visibly. There is a very simple reason: people promptly recognized the profound religious principles of this Doctrine that touches the most sensitive fibers of the heart; that elevates the soul to infinity; that brings those who had forgotten to acknowledge God. It has rescued so many people out of despair, it has mitigated so much pain, healed so many moral ulcers that the silly and vulgar jokes against it inspire more disgust than sympathy. The scoffers unsuccessfully struggled to make people laugh at it. There are things that we instinctively feel that should not be laughed at without profanation.

If there are people, however, who only know the Doctrine from what they hear pranksters of bad taste hence believing that it is no more than a useless dream, no more than elucubrations of a sick mind, then it is too bad that they are deceived. After hearing so many furious declamations, they must say to themselves that it is more serious than they thought.

The population may be divided in three classes: the believers, the unbelievers and the indifferent. If the number of believers is hundreds of times higher in a few years, they must have come out of these two other categories. However, the Spirits who oversee the movement still believed that it was not fast enough. There is still, they say, a lot of people who have not even heard of Spiritism, particularly in the country. It is time for the Doctrine to get there. Besides, it is necessary to wake up the torpid indifferent ones.

Scorn has played its role in the involuntary propaganda but it has used up all the arrows from the quiver and the only darts left now are harmless. Now it is just a little faded flame. Something more powerful is needed, something noisier than small comments printed in the newspapers ; something that is heard even in solitude. It is necessary that the last hamlet hears about Spiritism. When they hear the uproar of the artillery they will ask: What is it about? They will be willing to see.

When we wrote the brochure “Spiritism in its simplest expression” we asked our spiritual guides what would be the effect that it would have. They responded: it will have an effect that you do not expect, that is, your adversaries will be furious when they see a low cost publication spreading within the masses, penetrating everywhere. You have already been announced large scale hostilities and the brochure shall be the sign. Don’t worry, you know the end. They are upset due to the difficulty to refute your arguments. – If that is the case, we say, the brochure that should be sold for 25 cents will now be 2 cents cheaper. The events justified the forecast and we congratulate ourselves for that.

As a matter of fact, everything that is happening was foreseen and was to be for the good of the cause. When you see some great hostile demonstration, far from scaring you, rejoice-in, because it was said: the rumbling of thunder will signal the approach of the predicted time. Pray then, my brothers; especially pray for your enemies, for they shall be taken by a true vertigo.

But it is not all done yet; the flames of the pyre of Barcelona did not rise high enough. If it happens again somewhere else refrain from putting it out for the more it rises the more it can be seen from afar, like a lighthouse, and it will remain in the memory of the ages. Let it be and do not oppose violence with violence in any way. Remember what Christ said to Peter to put his sword back in the scabbard. Do not imitate the sects that destroyed one another in the name of a God of peace, that each invoked to support their own fury.

Truth is not proven by persecution, but by reasoning; the persecutions have always been the weapon of bad causes, and by those who take the triumph of brute force by that of reason. Persecution is a bad way of persuasion; it may temporarily bring the weakest down but it can never convince because even when plunged in distress he will cry, like Galileo in prison: “*e pur si muove!*”⁷ Resorting to persecution is to prove that one does not rely much on the power of logic. Retaliation, never! Oppose violence with kindness and unalterable peace; pay back the bad actions of your enemies with good; you will then belie their calumnies, and force them to recognize that your beliefs are better than what they say.

Slander! You will say. Without emotion can you see our doctrine unworthily stained by lies? Accused of saying what it does not say, of teaching the opposite of what it teaches, producing evil while it does so much good? Can’t the authority of those who hold such a language distort the opinion and delay the progress of Spiritism?

That is, undoubtedly, their objective. Will they achieve it? That is another issue and we do not hesitate to say that they meet a completely opposite result: discredit themselves and their own cause.

Without contradiction calumny is a dangerous and perfidious weapon but it cuts both ways and always hurts the one that employs it. Resorting to lies is the strongest proof that they do not have good reasons to provide otherwise they would not go without showing their arguments.

If you believe that something is bad, say it; scream from the rooftops if you can. It is up to the public to judge if you are right or wrong. However, altering something to support your feeling is unworthy of any self-respect.

In the criticism of literary works, it is common to see opposing views. One critic praises what is attacked by another. It is one’s right. But what do think of someone that made believe that the author said what he

⁷ Yet, it moves! (TN)

did not say and attribute bad words to him just to sustain his attacks and demonstrate that the poetry is horrible?

That is how the detractors of Spiritism proceed; through their calumnies they demonstrate the weaknesses of their own cause and discredit it showing the regrettable extremes that they are forced to get at to sustain it. What weight can an opinion founded on clear mistakes have? It is one of two possibilities: either the errors are voluntary and the ill-faith is proven or they are involuntary and the author demonstrates inconsequence by speaking of something that is ignored. Either way there is no case for trust.

Spiritism is not a work that hides in the shadow. It is known; its principle is clearly stated with precision and without ambiguities. Hence, calumny could not harm it. To convince of the imposture it is enough to say: Go and look for yourself. There is no doubt that it is useful to unmask calumny. But it is necessary to do that with calm, without the acrimony of recrimination, limiting to oppose without superfluous words, showing what it is and what it is not. Leave range and injury to the adversaries and keep the role of the true force to yourself: dignity and moderation.

By the way one must not exaggerate the consequences of those calumnies that carry the antidote to their own poison and are definitely more advantageous than dangerous. They forcibly provoke the examination by serious people who want to assess things on their own, dragged to them by the importance the matter has achieved. Far from fearing examination Spiritism provokes it and just regrets one thing: that so many people talk about it like the blind talk about colors. But thanks to the efforts employed by our adversaries to make it known soon such inconvenient will no longer exist and that is all we ask. Calumny that results from such examination exalts instead of diminishing Spiritism.

Therefore, Spiritists are not sorry for such falsities. They do not subtract any quality from Spiritism. On the contrary they will make it stick out shinier due to the contrast and will confuse the slanderers.

Such lies can certainly have the immediate effect of abusing and even confusing certain person but so what? What are a few individuals before the masses? You yourself know how insignificant their numbers are. Which influence will it have in the future? You may rest assured of that future: the facts carried out by Spiritism respond to that and bring every day the proof of the uselessness of the attacks of the detractors.

Wasn't Jesus' Doctrine slandered, qualified as impious and subversive? Wasn't Jesus himself treated as mad and impostor? Has it affected him? No because he knew that his enemies would pass and his Doctrine would stay.

That is how it is going to be with Spiritism. Singular coincidence! Spiritism is nothing else but the return to the pure doctrine of Jesus Christ and it is attacked with the same weapons! But its detractors will pass; it is a necessity that cannot be taken from anyone.

The current generation extinguishes every day and with that the persons full of prejudice of another time. The one that blossoms is fed by new ideas and in fact you know that it is composed of more advanced Spirits that in the end must have Earth governed by the law of God.

Hence look at things from above and do not see them from the narrow point of view of the present but stretch your eyes towards the future and say: future belongs to us! What are the personal issues? People pass and the institutions stay.

Keep in mind that we live a transition period; that we watch the struggle between past that pulls back and the emerging future that pushes forward. Which one shall win? The past is old and outdated – we talk about

ideas – while future is young and walks towards progress that is in God's laws. Gone are people of the past; there come those of the future. We must learn, however, to wait and trust and congratulate ourselves for pioneering the ground preparation. If we have work, we shall be compensated. Hence let us work but not through a weak and thoughtless propaganda instead with the patience and perseverance of the worker who knows the time needed to wait for the harvest.

Let us spread the idea but without compromising the crop by an unseasonable sowing and by our own impatience, anticipating the correct season for each thing. Let us cultivate particularly the fertile plants that only need to be planted. They are in numbers large enough to occupy our time without spending our energy with the unyielding rocks that God will shake and remove when the time is right for if he can raise mountains he can also take them down.

Let us speak without dissimulation and clearly state that there are resistances and that it will be useless to try to overcome them that are more adamant due to self-love than conviction. They will not give in but through the power of persuasion of general opinion. Let us recruit followers among people of good will and there are many; let us grow the phalanx will all those who are tired by the doubt and horrified by the materialistic idea of the void and only wish to believe; their number will soon be so great that others will surrender to the evidence. The result can already be seen. Wait and you will soon see in your ranks those that you expected to join in the end.

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False brothers, inept friends

As demonstrated in the preceding article nothing could prevail against the providential destiny of Spiritism. In the same way nobody can stop something from falling that must fall according to the divine laws – persons, peoples or things – nothing can block the progress of something that must advance.

As for Spiritism such a truth sticks out from the facts that have occurred and much more still from another capital point. If Spiritism were a simple theory, a system, it could have been fought by another system but it is founded in a law of nature like the movement of Earth. The existence of the Spirits is inherent to the human race. One cannot preclude it from existing or impede their manifestation in the same way that one cannot impede mankind from progressing. They do not need to ask for permission and laugh at any prohibition. One cannot lose sight of the fact that, beyond the mediumistic manifestations that we observe, there are other natural and spontaneous manifestations that have occurred at all times and that occur daily with lots of people who have never heard about Spirits.

Thus, who could oppose the development of a law of nature? Since it is God's law, fighting against that law is the same as fighting against God. These considerations explain the uselessness of the attacks against Spiritism. What the Spiritists must do when facing such aggressions is to peacefully continue their work, without presumption, calm and confidently, given the certainty in achieving the objective.

If nothing can bar the general progress, however, there are circumstances that can determine partial obstructions like a small dam that can slow down the course of a river but without impeding its motion. Among such circumstances there are the inconsiderate actions of followers who are more zealous than prudent and that do not evaluate well the consequences of their actions and words. Hence they produce an unfavorable impression upon the non-initiated in matters of Spiritist Doctrine, much more adequate to keep those persons away than the diatribes of the adversaries.

Spiritism is wide spread, no doubt, but it would be even more had all followers always listened to the advices of prudence and kept a wise reservation. One must certainly take their intention into account but it is not less certain that more than one justified the proverb: "Better to have a declared enemy than a clumsy friend." Their worst contribution is to offer ammunition to the adversaries who know well how to explore faults. It would never be too much to recommend to the Spiritist that they should reflect with maturity before acting. In such cases prudence recommend that one's personal opinion is not enough. Nowadays where there are groups forming everywhere there is nothing simpler than getting together before acting. The true Spiritist sacrifices self-love for the good of the cause. Believing in one's infallibility, rejecting the

advice of the majority and persisting on a path that reveals itself to be bad and compromising is not the attitude of a true Spiritist. It would be demonstration of pride, if not obsession.

Not a single Spiritist ignores the fact that the Spirits are far from knowing the supreme science for many among them know less and some pretend to know everything. They have their personal opinion about everything and it can be right or wrong. Still, like people, those who have most misguided ideas are the individuals that are the most uninformed. These misguided Spirits talk about everything, create systems, utopias or dictate the most eccentric things and feel pleased when they find complacent interpreters and believers that accept their misinformation.

Such publications have very serious inconveniences because the medium is frequently deceived and seduced by a fake name, taking things as very serious, giving rise to criticism utilized to stain Spiritism whereas, without presumption, it would be sufficient to seek advice from and be enlightened by colleagues. It is very rare that in this case the medium will not yield to the injunctions of a Spirit that, like with certain people, wants to be published at any price. With more experience, the medium would know that the truly superior Spirits give advice but do not impose themselves, flatter people, or make any commanding prescription.

When Spiritism is completely settled then known publications of such a nature will present no more inconveniences than the bad treats of science today. But at the beginning – we repeat – they have a very harmful side. Thus, as far as publications are concerned, every circumspection is not enough and it would be difficult to estimate the effect they would eventually have on the reader.

To summarize, it is a serious mistake to believe that one is obliged to publish everything the Spirits say as if they are all enlightened Spirits. There are also bad and ignorant ones. It is necessary to make a strict selection of their communications and put away everything that is useless, insignificant, false or of such a nature that may produce bad impression. It is certainly necessary to sow but sow a good seed and in the right season.

Let us move on to an even more serious matter, the *false brothers*. The adversaries of Spiritism, at least some of them because there are some who are in good-faith, are not absolutely scrupulous with respect to the means employed. To them, anything goes in war and if they cannot take the village over they undermine their foundations. In the absence of good reasons and fair weapons we daily see them spreading lies and denigrating Spiritism. To denigrate is hateful, they know that well, and lies may be contradicted. Therefore they look for facts that can justify them. However, how can they find compromising facts among serious people other than the facts produced by themselves or by their partners? The danger is not in the open attacks or in persecution and not even in smear campaigns, as we saw. It is in the hidden ploys used to discredit and ruin Spiritism. Will they succeed? That is what we are going to examine.

We have already drawn the readers' attention to such maneuver in the report of our journey in 1862; during the trip we received three kisses of Jude, although we had not manifested it. In fact, we had been forewarned about that before departure and about the traps that would be set up. We kept an eye on that certain that one day they would show their nails because it is as much difficult to a false Spiritist to always imitate a good one as it is to a bad Spirit to simulate a superior one. Neither can sustain their role for long.

We are referred to men and women from several places coming from suspicious antecedents and liaisons and whose apparent enthusiasm towards Spiritism just inspire mediocre confidence; it would be no surprise to find the three mentioned above among them; they do exist in the lower and upper ranks of society. It is sometimes more than enthusiasm on their part: it is fanatic admiration. They believe that their devotion goes to the sacrifice of their own interest and despite that they do not attract sympathy; there seems to be

an unhealthy ambience around them; their presence casts a mantle of ice upon the meetings. One must add that their bread winning activities are problematic, particularly in the country side where everybody knows everybody.

What characterizes in particular such would-be followers is their tendency in making Spiritism veer off the path of prudence and moderation given their eagerness for the triumph of truth; the stimulus to eccentric publications; the ecstasy of admiration before the most ridicule apocryphal communications that they take care of spreading; the provocation of compromising subjects in the meetings about politics and religion, always concerned with the victory of truth that cannot remain under the bowl.

Their kudos to people and things are insensible: they are the braggarts of Spiritism. Others are sweeter and hypocritical. With a gaze and mellow words, they blow disagreement while preaching union. Skillfully bring up irritating subjects that are prone to generate dissidence. Excite in the several groups envy of domination and rejoice when see them throwing stones at one another, favoring a few differences of opinion about issues that are generally provoked, of formal or trivial matter, raising flag against flag.

Some, as they say, make huge acquisitions of Spiritist books hardly noticed by the booksellers, making intense propaganda. But their choice of followers is serendipitously unfortunate. They are fatally prone to seek exalted people, of strong point of views, or others who have already given signs of aberration. Then, where a case is blown, they deplore it and scream all over the place to be found that they were dealing with Spiritism from which they had not learned a single word. To the Spiritist books, that these eager apostles distribute generously, they frequently add not criticism but other books of *wizardry*, *sorcery*, or unorthodox political texts. This enables them to use this information so that when there is a case, eventual or not, everything can be confused during verification.

Since it is more convenient to be in control of things to have more manageable partners, something that is not easy to obtain, some organize or have parties organized where they preferably deal precisely with what Spiritism advises against and where there is special attention in attracting strangers that are not friends. The sacred and profane are intimately confused in such gatherings; the most venerable names are mixed up with the most ridicule practices of black magic, followed by cabalistic terms and signs, talismans, cryptic tripods and other accessories. Some add, as a complement and sometimes seeking profit, fortune telling, chiromancy, tasseography, paid somnambulism, etc. Complacent Spirits that meet not less complacent people there, foresee the future, find hidden treasures and uncles in America, and if necessary indicate the trend of the stock market and give winning lottery numbers. Later on, on a beautiful day, justice is made or we read in the papers the description of a Spiritist session attended by the author who tells his recollection of the events, witnessed in person.

Will you try to bring all those people healthy ideas? I would understandably believe this to be a waste of time: They are not interested in reason and the serious side of the Doctrine; that is what bothers them the most. They are pleased to hear that they harm the cause and that give weapons to the enemies. Their objective is to discredit the Doctrine while supposedly defending it. They are instruments that are not afraid of compromising others sending them to the rigors of the law, not even of compromising themselves since they know how to find compensation.

Their role is not always the same: it varies according to their social position, their aptitudes, their relationships and their driving motive but the objective is always the same. Not everyone employs such gross means but theirs is not less treacherous. Read certain publications that are said to be sympathetic to the idea and even apparently defending it; examine all thoughts and see if sometimes besides an approval put forward as a cover up or out of etiquette you will not find an insidious thought, a sneaked argument of double meaning as if issued by change, or an event reported with double meaning and that can be interpreted

unfavorably. Some are less concealed and under the mantle of Spiritism try to divide the followers. We will certainly be asked if all the depravities that we have just mentioned are invariably hidden maneuvers or a comedy of interests and if they would not be a spontaneous movement; in short if all Spiritists are people of common sense and incapable of deceiving.

Pretending that all Spiritists are infallible would be as much absurd as the pretension of our adversaries of being the exclusive owners of reason. However, if some are mistaken, it is due to their confusion with respect to the meaning and objective of the Doctrine. In this case, their opinion should not have the weight of law as it is illogical or unfair, according to the intention, to take an individual idea by the general idea and exploit the exception. It would be the same as taking the aberration of some scholars by the general rule of science. We tell them: if you want to know on which side the presumption truly is, you must study the principles that are admitted by the immense majority if not absolute unanimity of the Spiritists of the whole world. Thus the believers of good-faith may make mistakes and we do not judge them if they do not share our ideas. If among the mistakes mentioned above some were just of personal opinion, we would only see isolated, regrettable deviations in that but it would be unfair to claim responsibility of a Doctrine that clearly denies them. But if we say what they result from interested maneuvers the fact is that our picture is made of models. Since this is the only thing really that Spiritism has to fear at the moment we invite every sincere follower to be on guard, avoiding the traps that could be set up on their way.

For that it would never be too much to have circumspection in the choice of elements to be introduced in our meetings as well as the careful denial of any suggestion that would tend to stain the essentially moral character of the Doctrine.

By keeping the order, dignity and righteousness that is proper to serious persons occupied with a serious thing they shall block the access to ill-intended people who shall leave once they acknowledge that they have nothing to do there.

For the same reason they must decline solidarity to any meeting formed outside of the conditions prescribed by a healthy reason and by the true principles of the Doctrine if they cannot lead to the good path.

As seen, there is certainly a great difference between false brothers and inept friends but the result may be unsuspectedly the same: discredit the Doctrine. The nuance that separates them is frequently in the intention something that sometimes would lead to confusion and by watching them serving the interests of the opposing party suppose that they were conquered by them. Circumspection is then and particularly at this time more needed than ever for we must not forget that words, actions and inconsiderate writings are exploited and that the adversaries rejoice when they can say that those things come from the Spirits.

In such a state of affairs it is understandable that they give rise to speculation given the abuse they can generate and may also offer support to the detractors in their accusations of charlatanism. Hence in certain cases it may be a trap that one must suspect. Since there is no philanthropic charlatanism abnegation and absolute selflessness of the mediums subtract the adversaries from one of their most powerful means of denigration, cutting right at the bone any discussion about the subject.

It would be no doubt a serious mistake to take the mistrust to excesses but in times of war and when the tactics of the enemy is known prudence becomes a necessity that exclude neither moderation nor the observation of conveniences from which we must never depart. On another hand we must not make a mistake regarding the character of a true Spiritist whose honesty of attitudes defy any suspicion particularly when reinforced by the practice of the principles of the Doctrine. Even when a flag is raised against flag, as our antagonists do, the future of each one depends on the sum of consolations and moral satisfaction they that people find in them. A system must not supersede the other unless it is more logical, something that

only public opinion may judge. At any rate, violence, injuries and acrimony are bad antecedents and constitute an even worse recommendation.

We still need to examine the consequences of such a state of affairs. Those maneuvers can no doubt lead to momentary and partial disturbances and that is the reason why one must put them off as much as possible but they could not endanger the future first because they shall be around for a limited time since they are maneuvers of the opposition that shall fall by the force of things; second because whatever people say or do they will never subtract the distinctive character of the Doctrine, its rational philosophy and its reassuring moral. No matter how much they distort and stain the Doctrine, make the spirits speak at their own will, or collect apocryphal communications to give rise to contradictions, they shall not have an isolated teaching prevailing against the one that is given all over the place.

Spiritism is distinct from all other philosophies for not being a philosophical conception of a single person but a teaching that everyone can receive in all corners of the world and such is the consecration received by *The Spirits' Book*. Written without conceivable mistakes and at the reach of all minds that book will always be the clear and accurate expression of the Doctrine that will be transmitted unbroken to those who will come after us.

The rage provoked by the Doctrine is an indication of the role it must play and also of the difficulty in opposing anything serious to that. The rapid success of the Doctrine was driven by the consolations and hopes it brings about. Any system that tried to destroy that source of consolation by the very denial of its fundamental principles could not be welcomed with indulgence.

We must not lose sight of the fact that we live a time of transition, as we have already said, and no transition happens without conflict. One must not be surprised by the agitation of passions at play, the compromised ambitions, and the frustrated wishes; they try to retain what is escaping them by their attachment to the past. It all disappears gradually. The fever is quenched. People pass and the new ideas stay.

Spiritists, rise up through your thoughts! Look up twenty years ahead and the present will no longer bother you.

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Death of Mr. Guillaume Renaud, from Lyon

The funeral of Mr. Guillaume Renard took place on Sunday February 1st; he was a former officer, honored with the medal of St. Helen, and one of the oldest and most eager followers of that town, well-known amongst his brothers in faith. Although he professed some points where we disagreed, these points were not significant and did not affect the foundation of the Doctrine. This notwithstanding, he was still liked and respected, given the goodness of his character and his distinguished moral qualities. Had we been in Lyon on that occasion, we would have thrown some flowers on his grave. May he receive here, as well as his family and personal friends, this testimony of our sympathetic memory!

A simple and modest man, Mr. Renaud was almost unknown outside Lyon. His death, however, reverberated even in a Village of Haute-Saone, where on February 8th the following was said:

- The vicar of the parish speaking to the parishioners about the horrors of Spiritism added that “*the chief of the Spiritists of Lyon had died three or four days ago; that he had refused the sacraments; that only two or three Spiritist had attend his funeral, without relatives or priests; that if the chief of the Spiritists (meaning Mr. Allan Kardec) died he would have been sorry if he had done what the chief had done by not showing up.*” He then concluded that he would not deny anything about that doctrine and that he would not affirm anything but that it was something from the devil, acting against God’s will.

If we wanted to rebut all the falsities attributed to Spiritism aiming at the adulteration of its character and objective, we would fill out the Review with that alone. Since that does not bother us, we let them talk limiting ourselves to collect the notes that are sent to us so that they can later take part, if possible, in the history of Spiritism.

Given the circumstances that we have just mentioned, it is a material fact about which the vicar of the parish is undoubtedly misinformed. We do not wish to suppose that he had consciously intended to do this on purpose. He would certainly have done better if he had not been so fast and if he had sought more accurate

information. Not long ago, someone from the same location had died and there was a bad rumor that started concerning the society of the “rapping brothers”. The rumor asserted that there were seven or eight individuals from the village that wanted to resuscitate the dead by placing a bandage on their foreheads with an ointment prepared by the Spiritist Society of Paris. This society of the rapping brothers would then visit the cemetery every day to reanimate the dead. Women and youngsters of the region were so frightened that dared not leave their houses for being afraid of meeting a corpse.

Nothing else was needed to negatively impress a weak or sick mind and in the event of any accident Spiritism would promptly be blamed.

Let us go back to Mr. Renaud. When he was sick, there were useless efforts employed to make him give up his Spiritist beliefs. Nevertheless, a venerable priest received his confession and offered a pardon. Following that there was an effort to withdraw the certificate of confession and null the pardon together with the clergy of Saint-Jean as if it were given *lightheartedly*. It is a case of conscience that we cannot solve. Hence this very just public reflection that someone who receives the pardon cannot have the guarantee of its validity considering that a priest may have given it lightheartedly despite his good will. The clergy then adamantly refused to receive the body at the Church because Mr. Renaud did not want to retreat from his convictions that had given him so much consolation and helped him to withstand the trial of life with resignation.

For a matter of decency and due to the fact that we would be forced to name people, we will remain silent about the unfortunate maneuvers that were tried and the lies that were told to provoke disorder in this case. We will only say that they were totally contradicted by the common sense and prudence of the Spiritists that, despite it all, deserved the benevolence of the authorities. The leaders of the groups recommended that no answer should be given to any provocation.

Regarding the refusal of the clergy to provide prayers at the Church, the body was taken directly to the cemetery, followed by approximately a thousand people, having the funeral the attendance of about fifty women and young ladies, something that is not typical in Lyon. A special prayer was read at the grave by one of the participants, respectfully and silently heard by everybody. Then the crowd left quietly and everything ended as it had begun in perfect order.

As a contrast, we say that our former colleague, Mr. Sanson, received every sacrament before dying and was taken to the Church, followed by a priest from the cemetery, although he had previously and formally declared that he was a Spiritist and did not deny any of his convictions. The priest said: What would you do, however, if I told you that your pardon would depend on such a denial? - It would bother me but I would persist because your pardon is worth nothing. What do you mean? Don't you believe in the efficacy of the pardon? – Yes, but I do not believe in the validity of a pardon received under such hypocrisy. Hear me out. Spiritism is not just a simple belief, an article of faith, but it is as positive as life. How would you like me to deny a fact that has been demonstrated to me like the light that illuminates us and to whom I owe the miraculous healing of my leg? If I did so, it would have been with my lips rather than my heart; it would be perjure. Then you would have given the pardon to a perjurer. I say that it would not be worth anything because it would be given in appearance but not in reality. That is why I would rather go without it.

- My son, said the priest, you are more Christian than many who alleged to be.

We heard these words from Mr. Sanson himself. Since similar situations may occur here and there we hope that all Spiritists follow the example of Lyon and that in no circumstance may they lose civility that is a consequence of the principles of the Doctrine and the best response to be given to its adversaries that only seek pretext to justify their attacks.

Evoked thirty-six hours after his death at the central group of Lyon Mr. Renaud gave the following communications:

“I am still a bit confused despite the fact that I found here friendly faces and sympathetic hearts, feeling almost ashamed or, better saying, my thoughts are somewhat young. Oh! Mrs... what a difference, what a change in my condition! Thank you very much for your constant kindness. Thank you Mrs. V... for your good visits and for being so welcoming. You would like to know what happened to me since yesterday. I began to detach from the body in the morning. It seemed that I was evaporating. I felt the blood coagulating in my arteries, feeling as if it was about to end. I gradually lost consciousness and slept with a certain compressing pain; I then woke up and saw spirits celebrating around me. I then became confused since I could not separate the dead from the living ones; my head was a bit disturbed by the tears and by the joy; I was called from all sides as right now. Yes, thanks to the true friends that protected and encouraged me, now evoked in this difficult transition since the separation is painful and the pain is truly real, I understand the scream of arrival and the sigh of departure. I was already evoked several times hence I feel fatigued as the traveler who travelled all night long. Before I live would you allow me to return and shake hands with everyone?

G. Renaud”

Mr. Renaud was evoked at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies. We postpone the publication due to a lack of space.

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Response from the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies about religious issues

(Summary of the minutes of the February 13th 1863 session)

A letter from Tonny-Charente came to the attention of Mr. Allan Kardec, with answers dictated by a medium from that town about church dogmas. Those questions addressed to the Spirit Jesus, the son of God, and evoked for that reason are given below:

1. Is hell eternal?
2. Can you enlighten me with respect to the scene that preceded your passion [jcm – I do not understand “passion” as I suspect it is a period of time or event that took place. Consider calling this event out]?
3. Why has the passion taken place?
4. What should I think about the communion? Are you actually in the host?
5. What is in common between the material and the spiritual power that does not allow their separation?
6. What is it so special about love to have it in every heart of all creatures?
7. What is sacred history and who is responsible for it?
8. What does sacred history mean?

The sender requests that the Society determine the value of the answers he received and the authenticity of the name of the Spirit that provided those answers.

After discussing the subject, the committee proposed the following resolution be read at the Society, which was unanimously approved, and requested that this be placed in the in the Spiritist Review for the general public. In addition, the committee also wanted to make clear that requests, like these, should make clear the uselessness of future request about similar matters. Had the author limited his letter to the first question, it would have been enough to refer him to The Spirits’ Book where the subject has been analyzed! As a matter of fact, the question is badly formulated. One cannot know if he means eternity as a place of atonement or the penalties imposed upon each individual.

Decision taken by the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies in its session on February 13th, 1863 about the questions proposed by Mr. M... from Tonnay-Charente.

The Parisian Society, after learning about the letter from Mr. M... and the questions that he wishes to have solemnly addressed by the Society, feels that it is its duty to remind the author of the letter that the essential objective of Spiritism is the destruction of materialism and the betterment of mankind; that it is not absolutely in the scope of work of the Society to discuss the particular dogmas of each cult, leaving its appreciation to the individual conscience of each person; that it would be a lack of knowledge of such objective to transform it into an object of religious controversy whose effect would be the perpetuation of an antagonism that the Doctrine tends to eliminate, calling all peoples to the flag of charity, leading them to only see brothers in their neighbors irrespective of their beliefs. If there are controversial dogmas in certain religions one must hand over the care of depuration to the works of time and to the progress of things. The danger of their embedded mistakes shall disappear when mankind converts the principle of charity as the foundation of their conduct. The duty of the true Spiritists, of those who understand the providential objective of the Doctrine, is therefore, and before anything else, to fight disbelief and selfishness that are the true ulcers of humanity, and make the feeling of charity prevail through as much by theory as by actions, for that must be the basis of every rational religion in order to guide social reforms. Questions of real relevance must take priority with respect to questions of form. Relevant questions are those whose objective is to make people better since any social improvement must follow the betterment of the masses. That is the trend of Spiritism thus paving the way to all kinds of moral progress. Willing to act differently is the same as building an edifice from the roof before the foundations are laid out. It is like sowing before preparing the terrain.

By the application of the above principles and based on its bylaws the Spiritist Society of Paris is precluded from discussing any issue of religious and political controversy, as well as social economics, and will not yield to any enticement that may veer if off from such a guideline.

For that very reason the Society would not either officially or unofficially issue a judgement of value to the dictated answers given to the medium Mr. M... considering that those answers are essentially dogmatic and even political, and even less to bring it up as a matter for a solemn discussion as requested by the author of the letter.

As for the book that supposedly deals with those questions and whose publication is prescribed by the Spirit that dictated those answers, the Society does not hesitate in declaring that such publication is inopportune and dangerous since it could feed the adversaries of Spiritism with ammunition. Consequently, the Society believes to be its duty to discourage such publication as it does to every publication that is prone to misguide people with respect to the aim and tendencies of the Doctrine.

With respect to the nature of the Spirit that dictated those communications, the Society believes that it should remind everyone that the name of a Spirit is never a guarantor of his identity; that it is not possible to find proof of superiority in some just ideas that are issued side by side with others that are false.

The truly superior spirits are logical and consistent in everything they say. Well, that is not the case with this Spirit. His pretentious belief that the consequence of his book will be to have the government changing certain areas of politics would be enough to cast doubt upon his elevated position and even more so on the name that he bears. His elevated position also sticks out from no less than these two characteristic facts.

First, it is completely false the idea that Mr. Allan Kardec received the mission of examining and having the book published, as pretended by the Spirit. If he has such a mission, it must only be for the clarification of the inconveniences and to fight against its publication.

Second is how the Spirit exalts the mission of the medium, something that is never done by good Spirits, and something that is on the contrary always done by those who want to impose themselves by capturing the confidence of the mediums through their beautiful words, hoping to be able to accomplish the rest.

In short, it becomes evident to the Society that the name that beautifies the Spirit who pretended to be Christ is not true. The Society believes to be its duty to advise the author of the letter as well as its medium that they should make no mistake about those communications, sticking to the essential objectives of Spiritism.

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François-Simont Louvet, from Le Havre

The communication below was given spontaneously at a Spiritist session in Le Havre on February 12th, 1863:

“Have mercy on this miserable soul that has been suffering horrendous tortures for many years! Oh the emptiness... the space... I fall, I fall... help! God, I had such a miserable life! A poor devil that sometimes had to endure hunger in his old days. That is why I turned to alcohol and was so much ashamed and disgusted with it all... I wanted to die and so I jumped... Oh God, what a moment? What would I have to terminate it when I was so close to the end? Pray for me so that I can see something different from this emptiness before me... I will shatter myself against the rocks. I beg you all who are familiar with the miseries of those who no longer inhabit Earth, I beg you even those of you who don't know me because I do suffer so much... Why do you want proof? I suffer, isn't that enough? If I were hungry instead of going through this terrible but invisible suffering, you would not hesitate in helping me with a piece of bread. I beg you to pray for me. My time is up. Ask one of these happy ones around here and you will learn about me. Pray for me.

Francois-Simont Louvet

Just after this communication the protector Spirit of the medium said: That one that has just communicated with you, my dear, is an unfortunate one that had a test of misery on Earth and who was taken by displeasure, bitterness and lack of courage, instead of looking above and beyond, became a drunk and went down to the lowest possible levels of despair by taking his own life when he jumped from Francis I Tower on July 22nd, 1857. Have mercy on his poor soul that is not advanced but knows enough about our future life to suffer and seek another test. Ask God to allow him such a grace and you shall do him good. I am happy to see your gathering, my dear children; I shall always be with you when you gather like this. I am always ready to teach you. If you were unable to communicate with a good Spirit I would be your intermediary but you are surrounded by them and let them teach you. Show perseverance on the path of the Lord and you shall be blessed. Be patient in your trials and never deny a good action due to the ingratitude of people. They shall be better soon and the times are near. Good-bye my beloved ones. I am with you in sadness and in happiness. Peace be with you.

Your protector Spirit.

After some research the following article was found in the Journal of Le Havre, dated July 23rd, 1857:

“At 4pm yesterday the pier’s passerby were painfully exposed to a horrific accident. A man jumped from the tower and his body shattered on the rocks. It was a poor old man whose drinking addiction dragged him to suicide. His name François-Simon Louvet. The body was taken to one of his daughter’s house at Rue de la Corderie. He was sixty-seven years old.”

Note: A skeptical person to whom the mediumistic phenomenon was reported responded: “Who knows if the medium was aware of the Journal of Le Havre then constructing the story with the news?” – As one can see, deception is always the last resort of the deniers when they cannot bear a fact whose material evidence cannot be doubted. To them it is never enough to show empty hands and pockets because, they say, con men do the same when challenging the intelligence of the observer.

From our side, we ask what is the interest of the medium in this case by representing such a role. Not even self-love can be entertained in this case considering that the episode happens in the privacy of a home where one could only deceive herself and her loved ones. As a matter of fact, when people want to have fun it is not through such matters of a little recreational content and one cannot admit the possibility of a good, young lady toying with the name of God in such a tasteless joke. Total selflessness and righteousness are the best guarantors of honesty and the strongest response in such cases.

Besides, one must notice the punishment inflicted on this suicide case. Dead for six years he permanently sees himself shattering on the rocks; is stunned by the emptiness before him for that entire time! How long will that last? He does not have the answer and the uncertainty increases his agony. Isn’t that the equivalent of hell and its flames? Who has revealed such punishments to us? Have we invented them? No. Those who are suffering are the ones that come to reveal them to us like others who come to describe their joy.

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Conversations from beyond the grave

Clara Rivier

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, January 23rd 1863

Medium Mr. Leymarie

The following fact is reported by Mr. J..., a doctor from Gard:

“A working-class family, my country home neighbors, had a 10-year daughter by the name of Clara who was taken badly ill for four years. In her entire life she never moaned or complained or showed any sign of impatience. Although not educated she used to reassure her afflicted family talking about a future life and the happiness that awaited there. She died in September 1862 after four torturing and convulsive days during which she never stopped praying. – *I don't fear death, she said, because a happy life waits for me thereafter.* To her sobbing father she would say: – *Rest assured I will come back to visit you; my time is up, I feel that but at the right moment I will know and will tell you in advance.*

In fact, when the time was right she called her loved ones and said: – *I have no more than five minutes to live. Give me your hands. Shed then passed as she had announced.*

After that, a rapping Spirit has been visiting the Rivier's, where nothing remains unturned. There are raps on the table as if someone were using a hammer; the curtains are agitated; the china ticks and balls are played in the cellar. The Spirit showed up to her little five-year-old sister as Clara. According to the girl her sister has spoken to her many times; the fact that the girl screams out of joy or sometimes of regret if the lights and the fire are not put out in the room where she has the visions, while she continuously says: – *look at how beautiful Clara is!*

Wishing to know what Clara wanted, she had her father return the hair that was cut according to the habits of the region. However, even though the parents had satisfied her wishes by taking the hair to her tomb, the Spirit continued the visitation and the noise that I witnessed myself to the point that friends and neighbors were moved by this situation. I then talked to the parents asking them if there was anybody to whom they could have done anything wrong. It was unlikely that the Spirit would stop tormenting them while they did not repair their wrong doing. That was my advice to them.

During my ten days of forced absence the obsession became more violent to the point of Mr. Rivier engaging in a physical fight and was taken down. They were so terrified with the events that they decided to seek advice from a local medium who recommended to them to give support to the poor of the region. They so did this for two days. I will gladly tell you the result and would like to receive your remarks about it.”

1. Evocation of Clara Rivier – A. I am here by your side, prepared to respond.
2. Considering your early age, where did those elevated ideas of a future life that you exposed before your death come from? – A. From my preceding incarnation as well as the little time I had with you on Earth. I was a medium when I left Earth and I was a medium again when I was reborn among you. It was predestined. I felt and saw what I was saying.
3. How come a girl at your age never moaned or complained over those four years of suffering? – A. Because the physical suffering was controlled by a superior power. It was my guardian angel that I constantly saw by my side. He was able to alleviate my whole suffering. He made my will power greater than the pain.
4. How were you advised about the time of your death? – A. My guardian angel told me. He was never wrong.
5. You said to your father: *Rest assured. I will come to visit you.* How come you had such nice feelings about your parents and then you came to torment them after your death, making the noise in their home? – A. I had a mission, no doubt, to accomplish. If I would come to see them again would you believe that it is for nothing? The noise, the disturbance, the turmoil provoked by my presence constitute a warning. I am helped by other Spirits whose turbulence has its value as I have mine by showing up to my sister. It will soon end but only after it has brought conviction to a large number of Spirits.
6. Hence it is not you in person that makes the disturbance? – A. I am helped by other Spirits who serve the trial reserved for my parents.
7. How could your sister have recognized you since it is not you that produce the manifestations? – A. My sister only saw me. She now enjoys a second vision and this will not be the last time that my presence will bring her reassurance and encouragement.
8. Will the support to the poor, advised to your parents, have the effect of stopping the obsession? – A. The obsession will end when the time is right. But believe me, prayer and faith give great strength to dominate the obsession. The alms itself is a prayer. It helps to console thus bringing conviction to many hearts. We must reach out to and save the whole population through faith. Never mind that the enemies of Spiritism scream that it is the devil! That scream has motivated curiosity at all times and for each one that yields there are a hundred more led to the study. Obsession and subjugation are, in fact, trials for those who endure it but at the same time an open path to new beliefs. Such facts make people speak about Spirits whose experience cannot be denied after the evidence.

Observation: It seems evident that the alms advised to the Rivier couple in this case was at the same time a trial more or less beneficial to them depending on how it was executed and a means of calling the attention to the phenomena to a larger number of people. It is a way of demonstrating that Spiritism is not the works of the devil since it advises charity and good deeds to combat what are called demons. What can the adversaries of Spiritism do against such manifestations? They can prohibit people from dealing with the Spirits but cannot hinder the Spirits from coming. The proof behind this rests with the fact that there are manifestations that take place at homes where people do not wish to have them and, for their very reputation of sanctity, it is as if they wanted to defy them, in case they were demoniac. There is no denial or opposition against the facts. From what we can surmise, Spiritism must follow its course.

9. Why were you afflicted by so many illnesses at such an early age? – A. I had previous faults to atone. I had misused health a brilliant position in the preceding incarnation. God than told me: *“You have greatly abused and will suffer proportionally; you were proud and will be humble; you were confident in your beauty to see it broken; instead of vanity you shall fight for goodness and charity.”* I did what God expected from me and my guardian angel helped me.
10. Would you like us to say anything to your parents? – A. Following the request of a medium my parents did a lot of good things. They were right in not praying with their lips only; it is necessary to do that with your heart and your hands. Giving to those in need is to pray, to be a Spiritist. God gave the free-will to all creatures, the faculty of progress. He gave the same aspirations to all and that is why suffering reaches the miserable of Earth more than one can imagine. Thus, you must bridge the distances through charity; bring the poor to your house, encourage them, reach out to them and do not humiliate them. If that law of conscience were practiced everywhere one would not have the great miseries that dishonor civilized peoples and that God allows as a punishment and as an eye opener.

Dear parents, pray to God; love one another; practice the law of Jesus Christ; don't do to others what you don't want others do to you; beg for the trials of God to show you his sacred will and power. By predicting the future, forearm yourselves with courage and perseverance for you are still called upon to suffer. One does need to earn a good position in a better world where the understanding of the divine justice becomes the punishment of the bad Spirits.

I shall always be by your side, dear parents. Good-bye, or even better, so long. Have resignation, charity, love to your neighbors and one day you shall be happy.

Clara

Observations: That is a nice thought: “suffering reaches the miserable of Earth more than one can imagine”. It is an allusion to the Spirits that move from a brilliant condition to a humble and miserable one from one existence to the next because they frequently atone the abuse of their God given gifts in forgotten places. It is a justice understandable by everyone.

Another, no less profound thought, is that one that attributes the calamities of peoples to the breach of God's law for God punishes peoples as He punishes individuals. It is certain that if they practiced the law of charity there would be no war or great miseries. Spiritism leads to the practice of that law. Would that be the reason why Spiritism finds such fierce enemies? Can the girl's words to her parents be the words of a devil?

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Spirits and Photography

The *Courrier du Bas-Rhin* from Saturday, January 3rd 1863 (German part) brings the following article under the title “Spectral Photography”:

“The Americans that do not advance in many things are certainly ahead of us with respect to the art of photography and the evocation of spirits. Nowadays in Boston dead people are not only called back by mediums but also photographed. The wonderful discovery is attributed to a Mr. William Mumler from that town. He describes it himself – *I have been experimenting for some time now in my laboratory with a new photographic device taking pictures of myself. Suddenly I felt a pressure on my right-hand arm and a lethargic sensation took over my whole body. What a surprise when I saw my picture with the image of a second person by my side, the image of nobody else but my dead cousin? The similarity of the image leaves no doubt in the minds of those who knew the lady.* As a result and since then Mr. Mumler not only provide his customers with mediumistic sessions but also takes pictures of the evoked souls. These are generally somehow faded and foggy and the outlines difficult to recognize but that does not preclude the enlightened people of Boston from testifying in favor of their authenticity. Who would believe that the spectral images would come so soon?”

In case it was real such a discovery would certainly have huge consequences and would be one of the most remarkable facts of manifestations. However, our recommendation is to take it with careful reservation. The Americans that surpassed us in so many things, in the words of the author of the article, have also moved ahead in the field of deception.

To those who know the properties of the perispirit at first sight, this does not seem materially impossible. So many extraordinary things are discovered that this does not seem to be a big surprise. The Spirits announced manifestations of a new kind, even more remarkable than the ones that we have already seen. This one would then and undoubtedly fit that category. However and once more until there is a more authentic verification than a report from a newspaper it is sensible to remain in doubt.

If it is true it will then become common; while we wait, it is then necessary to avoid believing in all wonderful stories that the enemies of Spiritism rejoice in spreading to bring ridicule upon the doctrine and those who accept it so easily. Besides, one does need to observe things more carefully before attributing every unexplained and remarkable phenomenon to the Spirits. A detailed analysis shows, in the majority of the cases, an entirely material cause that had not been observed yet. It is our clear recommendation in *The Medium's Book*.

As a support to what we have just said and with respect to the Spiritist photography we mention the following article extracted from the *La Patrie* on February 23rd, 1863. It helped us to forewarn ourselves against hastily judgment.

“A young Lord, bearing one of the oldest and illustrious names of the high chamber, whose love for the art of photography brings to that field great and joyful successes, had just lost his beloved sister. Heartbroken and profoundly sad he left his equipment behind, left England and went on a long journey around the continent, only returning to his almost noble Lancashire home about four years later. Unsurprisingly his desperation moved from an acute to a chronic condition, that is, it had not changed in intensity but only in violence, gradually transforming into resignation. When those in suffering seek consolation they first address God, then work. Later on, the young lord returned to the laboratory and his photographic gadgets. In a kind of transaction with his pain he thought of starting the imagery by the chapel where the remains of his sister were buried. He got the negative and prepared the plate to be exposed to light in order to obtain the revealed picture. When he looked at the plate he almost passed out. The interior of the chapel appeared very clearly but the head of the dead young lady was showing vaguely at the not well lit part of the photography. Her beautiful and kind traces were nicely distinguished including details of her dress. Minor details of the chapel could be seen through the fabric of her dress.

The lord’s initial reaction was to believe in an apparition. He soon nodded his head in sadness. He remembered that some years back he had photographed his sister using the same plate. Since the image was poor he had erased it, now realizing that he might not have done it properly for the outlines of his sister were mixing with the new image impressed upon the plate. Some artists in England exploit this bizarre photographic technique: they produce and sell double images whose assembly leads to strange or funny effects. Among other things one can see the ruins of a castle on top of its park, façade and pavilions as they should have looked like before their destruction. They also prepare the montage of old people through which one can see how they looked like in their good old days when they were young.”

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Varieties

The Algerian newspaper *Akhbar* from February 10th, 1863 brings the following article:

“Mr. Bishop of Alger has just published a pastoral instruction about Spiritism for the Lent of 1863, a subject matter that is in fashion these days and about which the African clergy have been quiet so far. Here the passages:

- *It is the devil that dictates these sickening doctrines to renowned philosophers, a doctrine of two equal principles good and evil, governed with the same authority but in opposite directions: the spirit and matter; materialism that reports everything to the body and acknowledges nothing beyond the grave; skepticism that doubts everything; fatalism that excuses everything, denying human freedom and responsibility; metempsychosis, sorcery and evocation of Spirits, sad and shameful systems of twisted minds that try to revive in our days... (Page 21).*
 - *What a regrettable story one could make of the diabolic endeavors that go back to the cenacle, starting at the synagogues and the jokes of Simon, the magician, arriving at the persecutions, the schisms, the heresies and disbelief of all sorts, and to the modern Spiritism, as renovated as the paganism before Moses and by him fairly condemned as an abomination before God (Page 24).*
 - *Those who appreciate to listen to both sides in any litigation can easily do so since theoretical and practical Spiritism is amply explained in *The Spirits' Book* and *The Medium's Book*, two books that can be found in any Algerian bookshop. If you really want to seriously study this, you can add *The Spiritist Review* by Mr. Allan Kardec to your library. It seems to us that this is the best way to verify if Spiritism is, in fact, the works of the devil or if, on the contrary, it is a revelation in a new format as pretended by its followers.”*
- Ariel*

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Mr. Home came to Paris where he stayed for a few days only. We were asked from all sides to provide information about the extraordinary phenomena that he had produced in the presence of trustworthy persons and that the papers mentioned only vaguely. Since those things took place in private meetings it is not up to us to reveal what does not have an official character and even less what involves certain names. We will

only say that the detractors exploited that circumstance as many others in order to cast ridicule upon Spiritism with absurd stories and without any respect to people or the events.

We must add that Mr. Home's passage by Paris as well as the respectability of the homes where he was welcomed constitute a formal denial to the shameful calumnies that he had been expelled from Paris like the rumors that circulated some time ago that because he was absent he had been arrested in Mazas for serious matters when in fact he was enjoying his time in Naples where he was taking care of his health. Calumny! Always calumny! It is about time that the Spirits may come to expurgate them from Earth.

We refer our readers to the detailed articles published about Mr. Home and his manifestations in the February, March and April 1858 issues of *The Spiritist Review*.

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An article published in the *Monde Illustré* about the supposed American mediums Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd have also motivated many requests for information. We have nothing to add to what we have already said in the February 1862 issue of the *Spiritist Review* other than the fact that we saw them in person and that one can also see with Robert Houdin things that are not less unexplainable when the intricacies are not understood. No Spiritist or magnetizer can take those things seriously or waste any time in serious discussions about them when they know the normal conditions in which the phenomena take place.

Certain inept adversaries wanted to exploit those skills against the Spiritist phenomena by saying that if they can be imitated it means that they do not exist and that every medium is a skillful swindler, starting by Mr. Home. They fail to observe that they provide ammunition to discredit themselves for the same argumentation may be used against the majority of the miracles.

Without pointing out the illogical aspect of that conclusion and without discussing the phenomena again we say that the difference between the swindlers and the mediums is the difference between the profit and the selflessness, between imitation and reality, between an artificial flower and a real one. Furthermore, we cannot preclude a con man from pretending to be a medium or a physicist. It is not up to us to defend any exploitation of that kind. Let us leave it up to the critics.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

March 1863

Spiritist Poetry

Why lament?

Spiritist group from Pau, medium Mr. T...

Man was created active, intelligent and free;
God made him the artisan of his own destiny.

He was given two paths to choose from:

One leads to evil, the other to a virtuous home.

The first is apparently smooth,

Easily covered without much strength,

Carelessly, indolently given to brutal

Instincts, hopelessly led by the impulsive fall.

It needs no more. The other one on the contrary,

Seeks continual effort, works endlessly,

Thorough vigilance, careful research,

Reason is prime, instincts on the leash.

Free, man can choose the first one,

Indefinitely groping the dark zone,

Having passion and brutality by guides,

Covering reason with instinct and spite.

However, he can also listen with his heart instead

A kind voice whispering to his ears: Shed

The light of progress on your way,

Leave immobility behind and pray.

Your destiny is in your hands:

Be the wandering shadow, without aim

Or like the joyful bride whose heart acclaims.

If you choose evil in this world

You may conquer pageantry, titles,

But an appeased and kind soul

That warmth in your heart will never grow.

Parties and celebrations in your course

Shall chase you in your remorse.

Stains, dissenting sounds at the station,

Hear the chants of triumph and real celebration.

Later, when the last hour has come,

When the Spirit finally leave its dome,

It is time to undress the moral self,

Where only the shining truth dwells,

No place for lies or hypocrisies,

Your guilty life, your greatest enemy!

The ghost of your past is the shadow,

The executioner behind you.

Your crimes have you sentenced.
Rich and powerful you are now naked,
Abandoned, running away like the trembling
Hunt that cannot escape. The prey
Is now lost, nowhere to go.
The last scream of pride may perhaps blow
Your mind, and you say blasphemies against God
When your conscience is now the lord
Telling you out, loud and clear: No
More, stop now bad and blasphemous soul;
God created you active, intelligent and free
So that through this boundless power you may see
How evil can become goodness by the will
Of anyone that walks the good path until
The final prize is conquered,
The soul in heavens awarded.
That reward is waiting for you.
Don't be sorry. Stand up and move.
Beg God for His presence around
You. When Work, fight and persistence abound
That will be heavens in you.

A protector Spirit

Note: We let go mistakes of poetry in favor of the idea.

Mother and son

Spiritist Society of Bordeaux, July 6th, 1862, medium Mr. Ricard

A beautiful baby rested in the cradle
Dressed pink and white; the young mother
Rocked the bed, so little,
Watching over with the eyes of an angel!
Oh! How beautiful you are my dear!
Sleep well, your mom is so near...
When time to wake has come
The first caress and kiss are mine.
Oh God, how beautiful this child is...
Take me instead but my son I cannot miss...
Lord, I beg you, leave my son alone
The little mouth has already mumbled: Mom!
Word so smooth and kind
Like a sunray in the spring.
A lovely word, a sweet harmony
That in our hearts reverberates heavenly!
Ah! When I have you in my arms, in the warmest;
Your heart beating on my breast,
I feel happy as if sharing the feast
Of God's elected ones.

It is all mine... the child is my dream!

I want to live for her, my life's gleam.

The vivifying sap of my love

Shall protect this cradle from death, or keep it away thereof...

God, I will soon see him walking

His first trembling steps, vacillating!

Oh! What a happy day! I wait with some

Fear that this day will never come!

And still out of my faith

I see him honored, virtuous and great,

Keeping from his early and timid days

The purity of heart that shall make him happy.

He is so beautiful, my God! If misfortune is

To hit my son please take my life for his!

Keep him under my love, I beg you,

The little mouth has already mumbled: Mom!

He is so cold... the lips colorless!

Wake up, dear son, you seem lifeless!

Come to my heart from where your life streams...

You are so cold... I am all shivers and fear!

Ah! It is all over! Life no more!

I am miserable! I lost the son that I adore!

Merciless God... I am so angry...

You are not just and Almighty!

What has this innocent angel done to you?

Why have you taken him from me so soon?

I now abjure the whole sacred belief...

To your eyes I have also found death...

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“Mom, it is me! The escaping soul...

The Eternal has sent me back to you.

Live no more, Mom, this senseless rage;

Come back to God, I bring you faith!

Kneel before the Lord's will.

Mom, in a distant time you killed

The very child that you born.

Kneel before his power!

You are now by God punished!

Take this book! It will sooth your pain,

This sacred book contains

The words of the Spirits!

If you read it, mom, with your heart lit

You will one day in heavens

Meet your son again!”

Your guardian angel

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Subscription of Rouen

The following proceeds were collected at the office of the Spiritist Review and published in the February issue for 1,491.40 francs. [jcm-need to check this to make sure I assumed the separation correctly]

New contributions until February 28th:

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies: Total 740 francs – published in the February list, 423 francs. In this list, 317 francs.

Several Societies and Spiritist groups: Montreuil-sur-Mer, 74 francs (February contribution that was mistakenly left out); Mescher-sur-Girond, 32.5 francs; Carmaux (Tarn), 20 francs; Monerat et Saint-Gemme (Tarn), 40 francs; Chauny (Aisne), 40 francs; Metz, 50 francs; Bordeaux (Society and groups Roux et Petit), 70 francs; Albi (Tarn), 20 francs; Tours, 103.3 francs; Angouleme, 18 francs. Total 467.80 francs.

Several subscribers:

Paris – Messrs.: L... 5 francs; Hobach 40 francs; Nant et Breul (Passy), 100 francs; Doit, 1 franc; Aumont Editor (2nd contribution), 5 francs; Dufaux, 5 francs; Mazaroz, 20 francs; Queyras, 3 francs; X..., 25 francs; Dr. Houat, 20 francs; Dufilleul, cavalry officer, 10 francs; X... (Saint-Junien) 1 franc; L.D. 2 francs; Moreau – pharmacist (Niort), 10 francs; Captain Blin (Marseille), 10 francs (included in the February list as 20 francs instead of 10 which were only considered in the total); J.L. (Digne) 3 francs; Dr. Reignier (Thionville), 7.5 francs; Mrs. Wilson Klein (Great Dukedom of Baden), 20 francs; B... (Saint-Jean d'Angely), 2 francs; A...(Versailles), 1 franc; V... (Versailles), 2 francs; S...(Dole), 2 francs; Martner officer of the Joint Chiefs of State, 10 francs; Gevers (Antwerp), 10 francs; C. Babin (Champblanc, by Cognac), 40 francs – Total 369,50 francs.

Spiritists and French nationals from Barcelona (Spain): Messrs. Jaime Ricart and sons, 52.5 francs; Micolier 5 francs; Luis Nuty, 5 francs; Jean Regembat, 5 francs; Alex Wigle, photographer, 5 francs; Ch. Soujol,

2.60 francs; X..., 1.25 francs. Total 76.35 francs. With the amount of 489.35 francs from the February contribution Barcelona totals 565.7 francs.

Grand total: 2,722.05 francs.

Errata: In the February list, instead of Lausat (from Condom) one should read Loubat; Instead of Frothier (from Poitiers) one should read Frottier; Instead of Bodin (from Cognac) one should read Babin.

The subscription is still open.

In addition to that grand total the Spiritist Review contributed on February 6th through the subscription initiated by the Opinion Nationale with 2,216.4 francs, according to the note published on February 15th in that periodical, list 14.

We inform that the majority of groups and societies gave their contribution directly in their local lists. We got the following list of contribution from several regions from Lyon, among others:

Group Desprêles, Av. Charlemagne, 57.95 francs; id. of the workers, 93.3 francs; id. Viret, 26 francs; id. from the Red Cross, 31.1 francs; id. Rousset, 48.3 francs; id. Central, 123 francs; private gathering, 15.25 francs; another id., 32.5 francs; another id. (Edoux), 22 francs; isolated subscriptions, 316.5 francs. Grand total 765.9 francs.

The Society from Saint-Jean d'Angely contributed with the city subscription with 100 francs.

Allan Kardec⁸

⁸ Paris, Typography Cosson & Co., Rue de Four-Saint-Germain, 43

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

April 1863

Studies about the possessed of Morzine

The causes of obsession and the means of fighting it

Fourth Article⁹

In a second edition of his brochure¹⁰ about Morzine's epidemic, Dr. Constant respond to Mr. Mirville where he criticized his skepticism about demons and for not having visited the places. "*He did not go beyond Thonon, certainly not for fear of the devil but of the route and, despite that, he does not consider himself uninformed. He criticizes me, as with another doctor, for having left Paris with a preconceived idea. In good legal terms and, if he allows me, I can return the censorship: we shall then be ex aequo¹¹ in that point.*"

We don't know if Mr. de Mirville did go there with a preconceived idea that there would not be any physical condition in the patients of Morzine but it is clearly evident that Dr. Constant went there with the intention of not seeing there any occult cause. Prejudice in any fashion and form is the worst asset of an investigator as everything is looked at and adjusted to his given point of view, neglecting anything that can oppose this point of view. This is certainly not the best way to get to the truth.

Mr. Constant's well entrenched idea, with respect to the denial of any occult cause, results in his rejection of any conclusion and any observation that veers off from his point of view based on the reports that were published before his own.

Thus, while Mr. Constant vehemently insists on the fragile, lymphatic and skinny corporeal constitution of the inhabitants, as the insalubrity, poor quality and insufficient food intake of the region, Mr. Arthaud, chief doctor of Lyon's mental patients and that was sent to Morzine, he says in his report that "*the constitution of the inhabitants is good and that the scrofula are rare and that despite all of his research he found only one case of epilepsy and one of mental disorder.*"

9 See December 1862, January and February 1863 issues of the Spiritist Review

10 Brochure Adrien Delahaye, School of Medicine Square, price 2 francs

11 Latin expression meaning according to the right (TN)

However, replies Mr. Constant, “*Mr. Arthaud spent only a few days in the region. He could not have seen more than a tiny portion of the population and it is very difficult to obtain information about the families.*”

Another report about the same subject says:

“We, the undersigned, declare that after having heard about the extraordinary cases taken by demoniac possessions in Morzine, traveled to that parish, where we arrived on September 30th last, 1857 to witness the events, and examined everything with maturity and prudence. After this examination, we clarified to ourselves, through all possible means by our physical presence in the region, that we can produce a well informed opinion about the subject matter.

- 1. We saw five freed youngsters and five taken ill. The youngest was a ten-year-old and the oldest was a 22 year-old.*
- 2. According to what was reported to us and to what we could observe, the young ladies enjoyed perfect health and acted in perfect agreement with their positions. There was no difference between them and the other girls of the mountain regarding other activities.*
- 3. We saw the non-cured ladies in times of lucidity. We can ensure that nothing different was observed be it madness or pre-disposition for the ongoing crises, by reason of character or exaltation of their minds. We applied the same observation to the cured ones. All persons consulted about the antecedents and first years of those ladies assured us that, regarding their intelligence, they were absolutely normal.*
- 4. The large majority of the ladies belonged to well-to-do families.*
- 5. We attest that they belong to families that enjoyed good reputations among which some show exemplary virtues and altruism.”*

In due course, we will continue with this report. We only wanted to make it clear that not everyone saw things with the same dark colors as Mr. Constant, which presented the inhabitants as if in extreme misery, stubborn, and liars when, in fact, they are good, charitable and devout.

Well, who is right? Mr. Constant alone or several others no less honorable who certified having observed as well? From our perspective, there is no hesitation in taking sides with the latter ones considering what we observed ourselves and what we were told by several medical and administrative authorities from the region. This perspective also supports our opinion from preceding articles.

To us, the primary cause is not in the physical constitution or in the hygiene of the inhabitants as there are many neighboring regions, as we mentioned and starting from the Valais, in which the natural, moral and other conditions are infinitely less favorable and where that disease was not found.

We find it limited, not to the valley, but to the commune of Morzine. If, as indicated by Mr. Constant, the cause is inherent to the place, to the life style and moral inferiority of the inhabitants, we then ask why the effect is epidemic and not endemic, like the mumps and cretinism in the Valais. Why the epidemics of the same kind illustrated by history were produced in religious temples in the healthiest of conditions?

As a matter of fact, here is the picture painted by Mr. Constant about the character of the people of Morzine:

“A prolonged stay, successive and daily visits to all houses allowed me to get to other conclusions:

Morzine inhabitants are kind, honest and very altruist; it would perhaps be fair to say that they show great devotion. They are strong headed and hardly reject their own ideas and that, besides other inconveniences, it is only in very rare cases that the criminal justice finds any guilty person among them. They appear

serious and judicious, apparently, a reflex of a rough nature around them. This situation gives them a certain privacy, as if member of a large religious community. In fact, their way of life does not differ much from a monastery.

They would be smart if their reasoning were not obscured by a number of absurd or exaggerated beliefs, by an irresistible attraction to the supernatural, inherited from the past centuries and from the current century which has not cured them. All of them like the stories about the impossible. Most are fundamentally honest but some lie with a seamless expression to sustain their reports, although I am certain they do lie in good faith for believing in their own stories and in the stories of others. To be fair, it must be said that the majority do not lie rather they just report what they saw inaccurately.”

For us, the causes are independent from the physical conditions of people and things. If we say so, it is not with the objective of seeing Spirits everywhere that nobody admits their presence with more restrictions than we do rather for the analogy that we observe among certain effects and those that are positively demonstrated as coming from a hidden source.

Nevertheless, how can one admit such a cause when the very existence of the Spirits is in doubt? How can one admit with Raspail the diseases caused by microscopic creatures when the existence of those animals is denied because they cannot be seen? Before the invention of the microscope, Raspail would be taken as a madman for seeing those little beings everywhere. Nowadays, when we are a bit more enlightened, the Spirits are not seen! For that, however, all we need is to wear glasses.

After Mr. Constant mentioned Mr. Mirville who, according to him, stopped in the middle, he adds:

“Mr. Allan Kardec covered the whole thing. In the December 1862 and January 1863 issues of his Spiritist Review he has already published two preliminary articles. The analysis of the facts will come in the February issue. While we wait, he warns us that the Morzine epidemic is like the one that took place in Judea at the time of Jesus Christ. It is very possible.

Although I take the risk of being criticized by some readers, who think that I would be better off by not mentioning the Spiritists, I advise those who may read this brochure to also read about the same subject in the aforementioned authors.

However, make no mistake about my invitation. The sooner that more serious readers get to know the books about Spiritism the sooner complete justice will be made about a belief, a science as they say, about which I could perhaps risk an opinion after having verified one its results so many times: the remarkable contingent of people that such believe provides annually to the population of mad people.”

From the above, one can imagine the preconceived ideas that took Mr. Constant to Morzine. We will certainly not try to convince him about our opinion. We will only tell him that, as a result of the reading of the Spiritist books, demonstrated by experience, it was totally the opposite to his expectations. Rather than doing as he said, it actually multiplies the number of followers by the thousands. Today there are five or six millions of them in the whole world of which ten percent are in France alone. If his rebuttal indicated that these are silly and ignorant people only, we then ask him why this doctrine counts on such a large number of medical doctors in every country. These doctors, in fact, are among its most eager followers, demonstrated by our correspondence, the number of doctors subscribing to the Spiritist Review, and among those presiding over or taking part in Spiritist groups and societies. There is also a large number of followers who enjoy social positions only achieved for their intelligence and education. That is a material fact that nobody can deny. Well, since every effect has a cause, the cause of this effect is that Spiritism does not seem as absurd as some people would like it to be!

- It is unfortunately true, say the adversaries of the doctrine. Thus, we no longer have to be ashamed of the future of humanity that marches towards decadence.

There still remains the subject of madness, the bugaboo with which they try to terrify people who, in turn, are not scared as mentioned above. When this argument is over they will certainly invent another one. While we wait, we refer the reader to article published last February under the title: *Spiritist insanity*. The first symptoms of Morzine's epidemic came out in March 1857 with two eleven-year-old girls. In the following November, the number of people taken by the disease counted twenty-seven then achieving a maximum of one hundred and twenty people in 1861.

The observations below were taken from the same report mentioned above:

“These young ladies speak French with a remarkable skill during the episodes, even those who only know a few words in their normal state. During the episodes, they lose any reservation of any kind and also completely lose their family affections. The answer is always so prompt and easy that seems to come before the question arises. The answer is always ad rem¹² except when the person who speaks say silly things, insults or formally refuses to speak. During the episodes, the pulse remains calm and in moments of rage the person shows an air of domination as if commanding wrath, with no exaltation or physical changes. An incredible insolence is observed during the events in girls that out of that phenomenon are timid and kind. All girls show an incredible irreverence beyond any limit with anything that relates to God, the mysteries of religion, Mary, the saints, the sacraments, etc. The dominant characteristic at that moment is hatred towards God and towards anything related to God. We were able to verify well that those girls say things that go back a long way, facts from the past that they had no knowledge about. They also revealed the thoughts in the minds of several persons. Sometimes they announced the beginning, duration and end of the episodes, what they are going to do and what they are not going to do later. We know that they provided accurate answers to questions framed in unknown languages to them such as German, Latin, etc. During the episodes, the girls have a strength that is disproportionate to their age for during the exorcism three or four men are needed to restrain the ten-year-old girls. It is remarkable that the girls do not hurt themselves either by the contractions that seem to dislocate their limbs or by the falls or by the violent punches that they swing against themselves. In their answers, there is always, invariably, a distinction between several entities: the daughter and the devil. Away from the episodes the girls keep no memory of what they had done or said irrespective if the episodes took a whole day or realized assignments that were given in the episodic state.

As a conclusion:

We believe all that to be supernatural, in its cause and effects, according to the rules of a sound logic and according to the teachings of the whole theology, the ecclesiastic history and the Gospels. We declare that, in our opinion, there is a true possession by the devil.

Faithfully signed by...

Morzine, October 5th, 1857”

12 Latin expressions that means: directly referred to the thing... (Revising team)

Here is how Mr. Constant describes the patients' episodes, according to his observations:

“Amidst the most complete quietness, rarely at night, suddenly, there is yawning, stretching of arms, trembling and little shakes of the arms; soon and gradually, as if from electrical discharges, such movements become faster, then simpler and after a short interval they seem like no more than exaggerations of some physiological movements; their pupils dilate and contract successively and the eyes take part in the general change. The patients whose initial aspect expressed terror enter now a state of ascending uproar as if their dominating thought produced two almost simultaneous effects: depression followed immediately by excitation. They then hit the furniture with strength and vivacity, start to speak, or even better, to vociferate; when they are not answering any question they simply repeat these words indefinitely: S... name! F... F... red! (They use the word red to refer to those whose goodness they don't believe). Some add blasphemies. If there is no stranger near them or if no question had been asked they just repeat the same thing without adding anything else. On the contrary, if there is someone asking them questions they respond even to their thoughts but never leaving aside their dominating idea, relating everything to that! It is always like that: - Do you believe, you.... Unbeliever, that we are mad, that it is all madness! We are diabolic, f... We are devils from hell!

And since it is always a demon that speaks out of their mouth, the supposed devil sometimes says what he did when on Earth and what he does now in hell, etc.

When I was present they invariably said: It is not your f... doctors what will cure us! We know well your f... remedies! You can make the girls take them, they will take it and it will make them suffer but they will not reach us because we are devils! We need saint priests, bishops, etc.

That does not preclude them from insulting the bishops when they are not around under the pretext that they are not saint enough to have any effect upon the demons. It was always the same thing in the presence of the mayor or the magistrate.

While they speak, always with the same passion, they always show the same look: uproar. Their necks and faces sometimes swell; other times they go pale like normal people when they blush or become pale in moments of rage and according to their constitution. Their lips are always moist with saliva and that is what led people to say that they foamed.

Their movements are initially limited to the superior limbs, then gaining the trunk and inferior ones; they pant, become aggressive, move the furniture around, throw the chairs and stools away, everything that they can reach is thrown at the audience; they through themselves at people trying to hit them, relatives and strangers; thrown themselves on the ground, always with the same screams; roll over, hit the ground with their bare hands, or hit their own chests, their venter, their throats, always trying to remove something that seems to bother them. They jump and turn in the air. I saw two of them jumping backwards in the air, head and feet touching the ground at the same time. Such phenomenon lasts approximately ten, twenty minutes, half an hour, depending on what had provoked it. If that is the presence of a stranger, notably a priest, it is rare the case that it ends before that person leaves. In such a case, however, the movements are not so much continuous. After a violent beginning their intensity yields and go to a standstill before restarting immediately, as if the nervous power rested a little bit in order to recover.

During the episodes, the heart beat does not accelerate and more commonly it is the opposite: it weakens, become slower and the body extremities colder; despite the violence of the agitation and the fierce blows and swings in all directions, the hands become cold. Contrary to what is generally seen in similar cases

there is no mixture of erotic with demoniac ideas. I was impressed myself by witnessing that not a single girl uses obscene gestures. They never uncover themselves in their most disorderly acts and when the dresses raise a bit rolling on the ground they recompose immediately. It does not seem to produce any lesion in their genital sensitivity; it has never been about incubus, succubus or any scene of the Sabbath. All patients belong to the second one of the four groups indicated by Mr. Macario. Some hear the voice of the demons; much more frequently, though, they speak through their mouths.

Their movements gradually become slower after the great mess; certain gases escape from their mouths and the episode is over. The patient looks around in awe, fixes the hair, grabs the hat and put it on, drinks some water and go back to normal work if doing something before the episode. Almost all of them report no tiredness or remember anything that they did or said.

This last statement is not always true. I surprised some of them remembering very well. They only added: - I know well that he (the devil) said or did this or that, but it was not me. If my mouth spoke, if my hands hit, it was him that made them speak and hit. I wanted to be left alone but he is stronger.

This is the description of the most common state but there are several degrees between the extremes, from the patient that only complains of intestinal pain to the one that gets to the highest degree of rage. Having said that among all patients that I visited I found no significant differences worth noting except in a few cases.

One of them called Jeanne Br... forty years old, single, hysterical for a long time, feels animals that are no more than demons running over her face and biting her.

Mrs. Nicolas B..., thirty years old, ill for three years, barks during the episodes. She attributes her illness to a glass of wine that she one day had with one of those evil ones.

Jeanne G... thirty-seven years old, single, is the one that shows the most different features. She shows no clonic spasms of the others and almost never speaks. In her episodes, she sits down and rocks her head forward and backward. The motion initially slow and not much pronounced accelerates to the point that the head forms circles wider and wider, with an incredible speed, until it reaches and alternates between her back and chest. The movement stops momentarily and the head is kept in the position that it had before the movement stopped in such a way that one cannot lift her head or fold it even external force.

Victoire V... twenty years old, was of the first ones to fall ill at the age of sixteen. Here is how her father describes the events – She had never felt anything when one day she was taken by the illness at the church. During the first two or three days, she only jumped a little. One day she brought me dinner at the Curia where I worked and the Angelus was playing when she arrived. She immediately started jumping, threw herself on the ground screaming and gesticulating, saying blasphemies to the bell-ringer. The curia of Montriond was there by chance. She cursed him, calling him the f... of Montriond. The curia of Morzine came close to her as well, the episode stopped to restart immediately because he did the sign of the cross on her forehead. They exorcized her several times and when we saw that nothing would help her I took her to Geneva to Mr. Lafontaine, the magnetizer. She stayed there for a month and was cured. She was okay for about three years.

She relapsed six weeks ago but the episodes were over. She did not want to see anyone and locked herself in the house. She only ate when I offered her something good. On other occasions, she could not swallow. She could not stand or move her arms. I tried to help her stand several times but she could not do it so that I had to hold her to avoid her fall. I decided to take her to Mr. Lafontaine again. I did not know how to take her. She said to me: - when I am at the commune of Montriond I will walk alright. A neighbor helped me to

carry her over to Montriond. As soon as we crossed the bridge she walked on her own, just complaining of a horrible taste in her mouth. She improved with only two sessions with Mr. Lafontaine and she now works as a maid.

It has been generally observed, says Mr. Constant, that outside the commune the patients only rarely have episodes.

One day I was accompanied by the mayor who was violently attacked and hit with a stone on his face. About the same time another patient charged at him with a stick in hand trying to hit him. He saw that and showed her the armored tip of his waking stick, threatening her if she continued. She stopped, dropped the weapon and continue to curse him.

Despite the runs, jumps, violent and disorderly movements of the patients, their attacks, terrors and divagations, there has been no report of attempt suicide or serious incidents with any one of them. Hence they do not completely lose conscience and the instinct of conservation remains.

If, at the start of the episode, the woman has a child in her arms it happens that sometimes a not as bad devil as the one that is going to work her says: leave the child; he (the other devil) would harm her. The same happens when the woman has a knife or another potentially harmful instrument.

As with the women, men also suffered the influence that depresses everyone but in them the effects were smaller and very different. Some really feel the same pains as the women; they feel suffocation, a feeling of strangulation but none had convulsions and if some convulsive incident was reported they were almost always attributed to a different and prior morbid state. The only male representative that seemed to have had the same sensations as the women was the young T... The girls involved in the episodes are typically between fifteen and twenty-five years old. The males, on the contrary and with the exception of T... are only mature men that perhaps life's hardships had brought back preexistent concerns or added to those caused by the disease."

After having discussed the majority of the extraordinary events about the patients of Morzine and trying to demonstrate the state of physical and moral degradation of the inhabitants out of inheritance, Mr. Constant adds:

"Hence it is necessary to take into account that everything that has been said about Morzine must be considerably reduced when faced by the truth. Each one told their story and wanted it to be bigger than the other one. Such exaggerations are found in all reports of epidemics of that kind. Even if some events were authentic in every aspect and escaped any possible interpretation, would that be enough to give them any interpretation beyond the natural ones? It would be the same as saying that the agents whose modus operandi have not yet been discovered and escape our analysis are necessarily supernatural.

Everything that was witnessed in Morzine, particularly what is said, may well be positive signs of possession to certain people but it is also, with certainty, signs of that complex disease that was named hysterical-demon mania.

To summarize, we have just seen a region whose climate is tough and temperature shows large fluctuations, where hysteria has been considered epidemic at all times; a population whose food provisions are always the same to everybody, richer or poorer, always bad, composed of eventually altered produce that may provoke and do provoke alterations of functions of organs of the gastric system, and from there nervous diseases; a population of a weak and special constitution, frequently marked by genetic predispositions, ignorant and living in an almost complete isolation; a devoted population but a devotion that is more

founded on fear than hope; very superstitious and whose superstition, that ulcer that St. Thomas called a vice opposed to excessive religion, has been more welcomed than fought against. Driven by stories of witchcraft that are the only entertainment outside the ceremonies of the Church, the only one that is not impeded by an exaggerated religious severity; a lively imagination, easily impressed, with the need of anything and that has nothing else but those very ceremonies.”

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We need now to examine the relationships that may exist between the phenomena described above and those that take place in well verified cases of obsession and subjugation that everyone has undoubtedly noted; the effect of the curative means that were employed; the causes of the inefficacy of exorcism and the conditions in which they take place. That is what we are going to discuss in a next and final article.

Meanwhile we say with Mr. Constant that there is no need to seek an explanation to the unknown phenomena in the supernatural. We are in perfect agreement with him in that regard. To us, the Spiritist phenomena have nothing related to the supernatural. They reveal to us one of the forces of nature that we did not know and that produces unexplained effects up until now. Such a law that blossoms out of facts and observations is it more unreasonable because its drivers are intelligent beings instead of animals or brute matter?

Will it be senseless to believe in active intelligences beyond the grave particularly when they manifest in such a tangible way? The knowledge of that law, by taking certain effects to their true cause, simple and natural, is the best antidote to superstition.

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Effect of reading Spiritist books

Letters from Messrs. Michel, from Lyon, and D... from Albi

As a response to Mr. Constant's opinion about the effect of reading the Spiritist books may have on people, we publish the two letters below among thousands of the same kind that are sent to us. As seen in the preceding article his opinion is that the effect must inevitable be a prompt justice to the Spiritist science and, it is for this reason, that he recommends the reading. Well, these books have been read for over six years now and, regrettably to his dismay, justice has not been made yet!

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Albi, March 6th, 1863

"Dear Mr. Allan Kardec,

... I know that I should not abuse your precious time. I also refrain from entertaining you for long. I must tell you that I bitterly regret the fact that I did not get to know your admirable doctrine earlier on for I feel that I would be a different person. However, I am not a medium and do not try to be one either due to serious issues that continuously obsess me. My past is of a deplorable negligence. I was forty-nine years old and did not know a single prayer. Since I read your books I pray every night, sometimes in the morning and in particular for my enemies. Your doctrine saved me from several things and helped me to support the hardships of life with resignation.

I shall always be thankful to your prayers for me Sir.

Sincerely, etc.

D..."

“Lyon, March 9th 1863

My dear professor,

I must begin by asking you for double forgiveness, first for having delayed a duty of mine for too long; second for the liberty of writing to you without having met you and for dealing with you about matters that are somehow entirely personal to me. All that forces me to be as brief as possible and not abuse your kindness or to make you spend with me a time that could be better employed to the benefit of all.

After six months of a fortunate initiation in the Spiritist Doctrine, I see the birth of a vivid recognition in myself. As a matter of fact, such recognition is just a natural consequence of the belief in Spiritism. In my opinion it must be divided in three parts of which God is the first one to whom each Spiritist must thank every day for this new testimony of His infinite mercy; the second duly belongs to Spiritism itself to the good Spirits and their sublime teachings; finally, the third is the one that guides us in our journey and who we are glad to acknowledge as our great and venerable teacher.

Thus, understanding the Spiritist recognition, three distinct duties are imposed: towards God, the good Spirits and the promoter of their teachings. I am hopeful that God's forgiveness to my past errors shall be granted to me for what I continue to pray daily. I will try to pay my debt to Spiritism by spreading around me as much as I can with my little strength that I have in order to carry out my duty with you and that I acknowledge to be doing at a late date. I then appeal to your charity and beg you to accept my sincere tribute of a bondless recognition.

I associate myself with those that have preceded to thank you for bringing upon us the ray of truth; thank you for showing us the means of reaching true happiness through the good deeds; thank you for fearlessly being the first one to enter the battlefield.

In times when selfishness and materialism seem to dominate a divided world the advent of Spiritism in the nineteenth century is a very important and extraordinary event to go unnoticed and to escape the surprise and admiration of serious people and observant minds. In fact, it is completely inexplicable to those who refuse to recognize a divine intervention in the march of the great events of life.

However, a not less surprising event is the finding of such a faithful and courageous believer in these days of disbelief, a man of the people that comes to announce a new doctrine, leaving the currents behind, a doctrine that would put him in disagreement with the majority since his objective is to fight and destroy prejudices, the abuse and wide-spread mistakes and finally preach faith to the materialist, charity to the egotist, moderation to the fanatics and truth to everyone.

That is a reality today and, as such, it was not impossible. To realize it, however, it was necessary the courage that can only come from faith. That is impressive. Such a devotion, my dear professor, could not remain fruitless. You can already begin to receive the reward of your work by contemplating the triumph of the doctrine that you taught us.

Unconcerned with the number and power of your adversaries, you stepped up alone into the arena and faced the attacks and injuries with an unalterable serenity and moderation. Thus, in a very short time Spiritism propagated to all parts of the world. The followers now count in the millions and what is even more pleasing is to find them recruited in all levels of the social echelon. Rich, poor, ignorant, educated, free thinkers and puritans, all responding to the calls of Spiritism and each class striving to provide its contingent in this great crusade of intelligence... Sublime struggle in which the defeated is proud to acknowledge defeat and even more proud to hold the winner's flag.

Such a victory not only honors the one who conquered it but also justifies the fairness of the cause, that is, the superiority of the Spiritist Doctrine upon all the preceding ones and consequently it's divine origin. To the eager follower the fact cannot be contested and Spiritism cannot be the works of a few mad minds as its detractors tried to demonstrate. It is impossible that Spiritism is the result of human work. It must be, as it is, a divine revelation. If that were not the case it would have already succumbed and become powerless before the indifference and materialism.

Every human science is systematic and for that very reason subject to error. That is why it can only be accepted by a small number of individuals that, out of ignorance or calculation propagate, erroneous beliefs fall after a certain trying time. Time and reason have always made justice to unfounded and abusive doctrines. No doctrine, no science can pretend stability if it does not have that pure and divine emanation as a whole and, within the minor details, an emanation that we call truth because only truth is immutable like its source, the Creator. We find a very reassuring example of that in the words of Jesus Christ that the sacred Gospel has transmitted to us, despite its long and adventurous journey, as pure as when they left the mouth of the divine Renovator. After eighteen centuries of life, the doctrine of Jesus Christ shines as brightly on us as when it was born. Despite false interpretations of some and the persecution of others and despite the fact that it is not much practiced in our days it is nevertheless much enrooted within people's memories. Jesus' doctrine is therefore indestructible and a shattering force against human passions. Like the powerless wave that breaks against the rocks the storms of sins exhaust themselves in their struggles against the light house of truth. Since Spiritism is the confirmation and the complement of that doctrine it is fair to say that it will become an indestructible monument because God is its principle and truth its foundation. As we rejoice by predicting its long destiny we gladly foresee the time when this belief shall become universal. Such a time will not be long because people will soon understand that down here there is no possible happiness without fraternity. People will also understand that the word virtue must not only be mumbled by the lips but truly felt by the hearts. Finally, people will understand that the one who takes on the burden of preaching moral will first and before anything else preach through the example.

I stop here, my dear Master, for the greatness of the subject takes me up to places where I cannot stand. More skilled hands than mine have already painted and with brighter colors the picture that my pen uselessly tries to sketch. Please forgive me for having taking so much of your time with my own feelings but I had an invincible desire to confide in the one who had brought peace to my soul by replacing the torturing doubt that has consumed me for fifteen years by a reassuring certainty! I have successively been a keen catholic, a fatalist, a materialist and a resigned philosopher. I thank God, however, for not have been an atheist. I cursed the Providence but I did not denied God. For me the flames of hell were extinct long ago but my soul was not at peace with the future. The celestial pleasures exhorted by the Church were not good enough to lead me to the virtues but my conscience rarely approved my actions. I lived continuously in doubt. Using the expression of a philosopher that 'conscience was given to man to shame him' I concluded that one must always avoid anything that can confuse one's conscience. Hence I avoided crime because my conscience opposed to that; I practice some good deeds because that brought satisfaction to my conscience but I saw nothing beyond that. Nature had brought me up from the void, death should take be back to oblivion! Such thoughts sometimes took me to a profound state of sadness but however much I sought I found the key to the enigma nowhere. The social differences shocked me and I many times questioned why I had been born at the bottom of the stairwell. Since I found now answer I used to say: by chance!

I thought of another kind made me feel terrified by the oblivion! What was the point of education! To shine at the theaters? One needs fortune. To become a poet, a great writer? One does need a natural talent. For me, however, a simple artisan destined perhaps to expire on the working bench to which I was attached by the need of survival... what was the point? I know almost nothing and that is too much already for it does me no good in life and it will all end with death. I entertained that thought many times. I even cursed the instruction that is freely given to the children of a working-class family. Very limited that instruction seemed

*superfluous to me and not only harmful to my condition of poor but made me understand the significance of the problem without giving me the remedy to fix it. It is easy to explain the moral suffering of someone that feels a noble heart beating in the chest but forced to kneel before the will of an individual whose merit and knowledge come from a handful of coins sometimes badly earned. That is when philosophy is needed. Looking at the top of the stairs we say: Money does not make happy. Then, looking to the bottom we see someone even on an inferior position and say: Let us be patient since there are others in worse condition. If such philosophy, however, sometimes brings resignation it never produces happiness. I was in that situation when Spiritism came to rescue me from the marshes of trial and uncertainty in which I drowned more and more despite all my efforts to escape. For two years, I heard about Spiritism giving it no importance. Like its adversaries I thought it was foolish. Finally, tired of hearing about something that I hardly knew the name I decided to get to know it. I acquired *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*. I read them, or better saying, I devoured them with a satisfaction that is impossible to define. What a surprise when I detected that it was a moral and religious philosophy when I was expecting to find a treaty of black magic followed by fantastic stories! Surprise soon gave rise to conviction and acknowledgement. When I finished reading the books I noticed that I was a Spiritist for a long time. I thanked God for having given me such a merciful gift. From now on I pray without the fear that my prayers will be lost in space and shall gladly endure the tribulations of life of this short existence knowing that my current misery is no more than a just consequence of a guilty past or even a time of test to achieve a better future. There is no more doubt. Justice and logic unveil the truth. We happily welcome this doctrine benefactor of humanity. It is almost useless to tell you my dear master about my great desire to be a medium.*

Hence I studied with treat perseverance. After a few days of exercise, I recognized that I was an intuitive medium. My wishes were accomplished half way for I wanted to be a mechanical medium. Intuitive mediumship leaves doubt in the medium's soul for a long time. To eliminate doubt, I took part in some sessions of Spiritism to compare my mediumistic skills to those of other mediums. That was when I understood the appropriateness of your recommendation to read before seeing if one wants to be convinced. I can clearly state that for a unbeliever I saw nothing convincing. I would have given anything to have been placed by the providence under your direction, dear master, because I thought the tests would be more frequent and tangible at your society. Yet I did not stop there and invited some writing and drawing mediums to meet with me so that we could work together. That is when I was lucky enough to witness amazing events and to be given the most evident proofs of the goodness and virtues of Spiritism. I was convinced for the second time! I attach to this already long letter some of my communications. I would be thankful dear master if you could take a look and analyze its value. I consider them irreproachable from a moral stand point but from a literary point of view... I am not capable of passing judgment hence I abstain from any appreciation. If, against my own expectation, you find any passage that you consider worth publicizing please use them at your own discretion. It would be a motive of great happiness to me to have contributed with a little stone to the construction of the edifice. Any direct answer from you would be received with the highest regard, my dear master, but I dare not request it for I do know of your material impossibility in answering all letters addressed to you. I end by begging you to forgive this extreme liberty hoping that you may believe the sincerity of someone that is honored to be one of your most eager admirers and much humble servant.

Michel

Rue Bouteille, 25 – Lyon”

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The sermons continue but are not the same

The following was sent to us from Chauny on March 7th, 1863:

“Dear Sir,

I will try to pass to you my assessment of a sermon that was given to us yesterday by Father X..., a stranger in our parish. That preacher, by the way a good speaker, explained as much as he was able to the meaning of God and the Spirits. He should know that there was a large number of Spiritists in the auditorium for it gave us great satisfaction to hear him speaking about the Spirits and their relationships with the living. He said that the only way to understand miraculous facts, visions and presentiments was through contact with the loving ones who preceded us to the grave. In addition, if I were not afraid of raising the veil from upon something very mysterious or speaking about something that would not be understood by everybody else I would spend much more time on the subject. I feel inspired and listening to the voice of my conscience it would not be too much to recommend that you keep a good memory of my words: Believe in this God from whom all the Spirits come to whom we shall all reunite one day. That sermon, Sir, given with kindness, benevolence and conviction, touched the hearts much more than the frenzied speeches in which one hopelessly seeks Christ's taught charity. The sermon reached every mind. Thus, everybody understood it and left reassured instead of sad and discouraged by the images of hell and the eternal penalties and so many other contradictory issues to their understanding.

Sincerely... V.”

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Thank God this is not the only sermon of its kind. We hear about several other similar ones, more or less pronounced, preached in Paris and elsewhere in the departments. We also hear of this bizarre thing of completely opposing sermons preached on the same day, in the same town and almost at the same time. There is nothing surprising about it since we count on many enlightened clerics that understand the fact that religion can only loose authority by taking the wrong position against the march of things and that, like all institutions, it must follow the general progress or be prepared to later on receive the contradiction of verified facts.

As for Spiritism, it is impossible that many of those gentlemen have not convinced themselves about the reality of things. We personally know more than one in such a case. One of them told us the other day:

“They may prohibit me to speak about Spiritism, force me to go against my beliefs, and say that it is all the works of the devil when I have the material proof against it. That is what I will never do.”

A capital point stems out of that divergence of opinion: the exclusive doctrine of the devil is an individual opinion that will necessarily bend before experience and general opinion. It is possible that some persist in their own ideas *in extremis* but they shall pass and with them their words.

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Suicide falsely attributed to Spiritism

The keenness of the adversaries of Spiritism to collect and above all to tamper with the facts that they believe compromise the doctrine is really incredible. It came to a point that soon there will not be a single accident for which Spiritism will not be the guilty party.

An unfortunate situation that could not have gone unexploited by the critics happened recently in Tours where two people committed suicide and it was attributed to Spiritism: .

The *Le Monde* newspaper (formerly *Univers Religieux*), together with several other periodicals, published an article from where we extracted the following passages:

“An elderly couple Mr. and Mrs. F... still in good health and enjoying a good standard of living got involved with Spiritism about two years ago. A certain number of workers, men and women, and youngsters gathered at their house almost every evening when the Spiritists made their evocations or at least pretended to make them. We will not mention all kinds of questions whose answers were requested to the Spirits in that home. Those who knew the couple for a long time and were familiar with their feelings about religion were not surprised with the scenes. Foreign to any Christian idea they were given to sorcery being considered skillful and established masters.

... Both were convinced for some time that the Spirits clearly induced them to leave Earth so that they could enjoy a great deal in a supra terrestrial world. For not having any doubt about that they went on and carried out their suicide bringing a great scandal to Tours.

... Hence this is the suicide that we have today to attribute to Spiritism and its doctrine. Yesterday we had the cases of madness not to mention domestic violence and other misconducts so commonly provoked by Spiritism. Isn't that enough for people to realize – those who don't want to listen to religion – the dangers to which they are exposed when giving themselves to those terrible and stupid practices?”

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Let us begin by noticing that if the two individuals pretended to make evocations, in fact, they did not do it, instead they abused others or fooled themselves. Hence if there was no real evocation it was a delusion and the Spirits could not have given them bad advices.

Were they Spiritists by heart or just by name? The article confirms that they were foreign to any Christian idea and even further that they were taken by skillful masters of sorcery. Now, it is well known that Spiritism is inseparable from religious ideas, particularly the Christian ones; that the denial of those ideas is the denial of Spiritism; that it condemns the practices of sorcery with which it has nothing in common; that it denounces the belief in the power of talismans, formulas, cabalistic signs and sacramental words as superstition. Therefore, those persons were not Spiritists since they were in contradiction with the principles of Spiritism. As a tribute to the truth we must say that those people were not involved with magic and that, no doubt, they wanted to use the opportunity to connect that name to Spiritism.

Furthermore, the article says that they used to frame questions of all sorts to the Spirits in their house. Spiritism clearly states that one must not ask the spirits all kinds of questions; that they come to instruct us and to make us better and not to get involved in material things; that it is a mistake to see the manifestations as a means to get to know the future or to discover treasures and inheritances, to make inventions or scientific discoveries so that one can become renowned or rich. In one word that the Spirits do not come to tell the 'buena-dicha'. Therefore, by asking all sorts of questions to the Spirits those persons demonstrated their ignorance with respect to the objectives of Spiritism.

The article does not say that they made their living out of that. In fact, they did not. Otherwise we would remember what has been said hundreds of times about such exploitation and its consequences of which a serious Spiritism cannot take responsibility for, legal or not, as it does not take for the eccentricities of those that do not understand it. Spiritism does not defend the abuse that could have been perpetrated in its name by those who have used its form or name but without applying its principles.

Another proof that those individuals ignored, one of the most fundamental points of the Spiritist Doctrine, is that Spiritism demonstrates, not by a simple moral theory but by numerous and terrible examples that suicide is severely punished; that the one who believes to escape the miseries of life by a premature and voluntary death, anticipating God's designs, falls into a much more unhappier state. The Spiritist knows well that through suicide one replaces a transient bad condition by another worse and lengthier situation. That is what those individuals would have known if they knew Spiritism. By stating that Spiritism leads to suicide the author of the article spoke of something that he himself ignores.

We were not surprised at all by the repercussion of this case. By presenting it as a consequence of the Spiritist Doctrine they raised people's curiosity and each one wanted to learn by themselves, free to repel it if confirmed by the way it was presented. Now, they acknowledged that Spiritism is about the opposite of what they wanted people to believe. Spiritism then can only benefit from the fact that it becomes better known, something that our adversaries seem to be eager to realize and for which we are thankful, except with respect to their intentions though. If they produce a little and momentary disturbance with their diatribes it is soon followed by an increase in the number of followers. That is what we see everywhere.

We got this from Tours:

"If those individuals believe, however, that they should involve the Spirits in their deadly resolution and to have their eccentricities well-known it is evident that they understood nothing about Spiritism and that not a single conclusion can be reached from this about the Doctrine. Otherwise one would have to blame the more serious and sacred doctrines for the abuse and even crimes committed in their names by insensible or fanatic people. Mrs. F... pretended to be a medium but all those who heard her could never take her seriously.

The more of the same kind of ideas and the eccentricities of the couple, and in particular of the woman, had the doors of the Spiritist circle of Tours shut to them where they were not admitted to attend a single session.

The paper was precipitated and poorly informed about the causes of the suicide. We took it from authentic reports from the official scribe of Tours as well as from a letter about it sent to us by Mr. X..., a district attorney from that town.

“The F... couple, the wife sixty-two years of age and the husband eighty, far from being okay were led to suicide just by the unique perspective of misery. They had earned a small fortune in the fabric business of New Orleans but were bankrupted then coming to Nantes and later on Tours with the remains of their wreckage. Their only income of 480 francs stopped in 1856 due to another bankruptcy. They had attempted suicide three times before getting involved with Spiritism. Persecuted by former lenders they were lately ruined by an unfortunate law suit that washed away their courage and reason.”

The following letter written by Mrs. F... just before her death and that is found amongst the pieces of the referred process and signed by the president of the court reveals the true motive. We provide below the full transcription as in the original handwriting:

“Mr. and Mrs. B..., before going to heavens, I want to mend things with you once more, please accept my good bye – I look forward, however, to seeing you but since I leave before you I will keep your address so that when the moment is right I want to communicate our project; since our misunderstandings we have hurt ourselves and the pain persists and more than a hassle it becomes a weight, I always have this hard feeling in my heart and it is necessary that I say that for six years the business of the house does not end and we may have to spend another two thousand francs and since we cannot see a way out unless through great deprivation without a light at the end of the tunnel we must end all this and now we are old and the strength is no longer there, we lack courage and it is not the same to start again... we need to end this and decided to stop. Please accept our sincere wishes, Fe... and F...”

Today people in Tours know the true causes of the events and the noise provoked about it comes back in favor of Spiritism because, as our correspondent says, people talk about it everywhere wanting to know that it is in fact and since then the local bookstores have sold Spiritist books more than ever.

It is really interesting to see the regrettable tone of some, the unspeakable rage of others and amidst all that Spiritism following its ascending march like a soldier that seamlessly faces the assault of the rifle.

We saw the powerless mockery saying that it was all just wind now the adversaries say that it is a mad dog.

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Variety

The March 23rd, 1862 edition of the *Siècle* reads:

The couple C..., residing at Notre Dame de Nazareth Street had two children, a fifteen-month-old boy and a five-year-old girl who were never seen since nobody visited their home. She was seen only once, her underarms tied and hanging from a door; moaning were frequently heard coming from the apartment. The word around was that the girl was treated terribly. The chief police officer went to their place and had to force his way in. Those who were able to get into the house saw a horrific picture. The poor girl was almost naked, with just a little Indian like dress tremendously dirty. The sole of her shoes were like glued to her little feet. She was seating on a urinal leaning on a box that was tied by ropes. The report says that she had been left in that position for months and that had produced a rectum hernia; that her parents used to wake her up at night just to torment her; that she was spanked to wake up; the woman would do that with tongs and the handle of the duster and the husband with a rope. Following the questions by the police officer the husband responded: - Sir, I am really religious. My daughter did not say the prayers correctly that is why I wanted to correct her.

What would the author of the previous article, regarding the suicide of Tours, say about the barbarism of these people that name themselves very religious? The act of that mother who killed her five children to send them earlier to heaven? The case of the young made who took Jesus' teaching literally when he says: *Have your right hand cut if it is reason of shame*, then axing her own hand? He would say that it is not enough to say that one is religious but to say that sensibly; that one must not generalize from an isolated fact. That is the opinion we would like him to have from us with respect to his accusations of Spiritism when analyzing those cases of people who only utilized the name of Spiritism.

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Spiritism and the Spirits by Mr. Flammarion

Extracted from the *Revue Française*

Mr. Flammarion, author of the brochure about the “*Plurality of the inhabited worlds*” that we mentioned in our January issue, has just published a first and very interesting article in the February 1863 edition of the *Revue Française* whose initial part is given below. The work requested by the periodical is an important and widely spread literary summary of the principles of Spiritism. The extension of the work almost gives it the title of a special publication for it has nothing less than 23 large format pages (in-8). Up to a certain point the author thought adequate to abstract from his personal opinion about the subject and stay in a kind of neutral terrain, limiting himself to an impartial presentation of the facts thus giving the reader a total freedom of appreciation.

Here is how he begins:

“In a century where metaphysics has fallen from its pedestal; in which the religious idea wanted to stay away from any dogma and special cult; in which philosophy itself changed its way of thinking in order to connect to the positivism of experimental science, a spiritualist philosophy was offered to mankind who received it. That philosophy proposed a symbol of belief that was adopted by its people. It showed them a new avenue leading to unexplored regions and they followed it and there you have it a doctrine based on the manifestations of invisible creatures, standing from its birth above ordinary things, universally propagating amongst peoples of the new as well as the old world. What is then this powerful breath that has led so many thinking heads to gaze the same point in the skies? Simple utopia or a real science; fantastic deception or a profound truth fact is that it is before our eyes and it shows us the flag of Spiritism uniting a large number of champions around it, today counting on millions of followers. And that prodigious number was formed in the short span of ten years. The event is then before us: it is an undeniable fact. Now, whatever the frivolity or importance of this fact wouldn’t that be useful to study it on its own merit so that we can establish if it has the right to live among the children of progress; if its path is parallel to the movement of progressive ideas or if it would not tend, as some people pretend, to make us march backwards towards deprecated beliefs unworthy of consideration. And considering that in order to analyze any subject we must know it very well, before anything else, so that we do not expose ourselves to erroneous

appreciations, we will gradually examine the points upon which Spiritism rests; about the basis that sustains the theory of its teachings and in short what this science is about.

Notice that we are talking about facts and not speculative systems and adventurous opinions for, irrespective of how wonderful the analyzed matter, Spiritism is purely and simply based on the observation of facts. If that were not the case, if it were only another religious sect, a new philosophical school, we are certain that the event would lose a lot of its importance that and that serious people of the present time, in its majority disciples of the “Baconian” method, would not have wasted their time examining a pure matter of theory.

Many utopias were written in the book of human weakness so that we no longer have to take into account the dreams daily proposed by exalted brains.

Let us now and without a hidden agenda discuss this doctrinaire science that a lot of good and bad things have been said about but without studying it sufficiently. In this current work, we begin by its modern history – since Spiritism has its old history – bringing about the successive phenomena that have definitely established the doctrine. Following the natural order of things, we will examine the effects before going back to the causes.”

It is then followed by the first manifestations in America, its introduction in Europe and its conversion to a philosophical doctrine.

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Spiritist dissertations

Mr. Jobard's Visit

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, January 9th, 1863

Medium Mr. D'Ambel

I come to pay you a fraternal visit and at the same time introduce you to an old friend from college that has just enriched our ethereal legions. Please accept him as a new and keen follower of the new truth. Although he had never openly proclaimed himself as a Spiritist we can, nonetheless, ensure that he never said a word against our beliefs. I even say that in his bottom line he saw our doctrine as the lifeline of all religions in the future. More than once in his life he was fortunate enough to feel the venture of inner illumination showing him the path of truth when his soul was about to be taken over by uncertainty. Thus, when we fraternally shook hands just a few hours ago he told me with a kind smile in his lips: - *Friend, you were right!*

If he did not help us in the development of our ideas, his mediumistic intuition indicated that time was not right and that he would have endangered himself amidst the serious complications of his ministry and with such a difficult flock to guide.

Today, free from the concerns of the earthly life, he is extremely happy for being able to attend one of your sessions, a desire that he had cherished since long ago. Several times he wished to visit your president that he had in high regard particularly, appreciating his books and teachings that if not inviting souls to the Church would at least lead people to believe and to respect God with the certainty of immortality. I must say that when I visited him and was received with the warmth of an old disciple he opposed the famous

reasons of state to my perhaps exaggerated eagerness of converting him, before which I had to yield. Yet, he followed me and said these sympathetic words: - *Si non è vero è bene trovato!*¹³

Not that he joined our phalanxes and is no longer constrained by the scruples he wishes for the success of our work and sees the future that it promises humanity with joy. He gladly envisages the Promised Land to the new generations, or even better, to the old generations that fought so much, foreseeing the blessed time that his successors will resolutely sustain the new flag of faith: Spiritism.

Regardless, my dear president and my dear comrades, I was honored to receive this venerable friend at the entrance door of life and I am honored to introduce him to you. He asks me to transmit to you his full sympathy and that he will follow your work and studies with great interest.

To the happiness of being his interpreter before you I add the congratulations from a legion of great Spirits that diligently attend your meetings. I then bring my own and their tribute of friendship wishing you all the success with the great cause.

Let us move on! Soon Earth shall no longer count but on a few rare “*humanimals*” among its inhabitants.

I shake hands with Allan Kardec in the name of all your friends from beyond the grave in whose number I beg you to count me as one of the most dedicated.

Jobard

¹³ It may not be true but it is well said (TN)

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

April 1863

Spiritist dissertations

Be strict on yourself and helpful to others, 1st homily

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, January 9th, 1863

Medium Mr. D'Ambel

This is the first time that I come to visit you my dear children. I wished I could have chosen another medium, more sympathetic to the feelings that I shared in my whole terrestrial life and more apt to help me with the religion but since St. Augustine had long ago taken over the medium whose brains would have been more useful to me and to whom I was attracted I address you through this one that served Mr. Jobard to introduce me to your philosophical society. Today it will then be very difficult to express what I want to say first given the difficulty in manipulating the mediumistic material first considering that I am not much used to that and second because I must have my ideas flowing through a mind that do not admit them. Having said that let us move on to the subject.

A witty hunchback from antiquity used to say that men of his time carried a two-face backpack; the rear part carried one's defects and imperfections while the front received all the imperfections of others. That is what the Gospels would bring later on with the allegory of the "speck in the brother's eye". My God, my children, it is about that that the faces of the backpack change place. It is up to the sincere Spiritists to operate such a change bringing to the front the bag that contains their own imperfections so that by having

them continuously before their eyes they can correct them and having those of others on their back they no longer show envy or malevolence.

Ah! How worthy you shall then be of the professed doctrine, the one that will regenerate humanity, when the sincere followers will act with charity and no longer worry about the “speck” that bothers the eye of the neighbor and, on the contrary, take care of the “beam” that blinds their own eyes.

Ah! My dear children, that “beam” is formed by the layers of your own egotistic tendencies, your bad inclinations and your cumulated faults with which you have so far and like everyone else had too much paternal tolerance whereas most of the time you only show intolerance and severity with your brothers’ weaknesses.

I wanted so much to see you all freed from this moral disease that affects everybody, oh my dear Spiritists, inviting you with all my strength to follow the path that I indicate to you. I know well that many of your bad tendencies have already been modified but I still see a lot of softness and indecision in you towards the absolute good, that the distance that keeps you apart from the sinners and materialists is not long enough to keep you away from the torrents that can still drag you back. Ah! You still have a tough phase to achieve the heights of the saint and reassuring doctrine that my brothers the Spirits have revealed to you for several years.

The militant life that I have just left, praise the Lord, I saw so many lies be taken as truth; so many vices be raised as virtues that I feel happy for having left behind an environment where sadness and moral miseries were almost always covered in the mantle of hypocrisy. I must congratulate you for not allowing the followers of that insidious hypocrisy to join your ranks.

My friends, never allow yourselves to be fooled by golden words. See and observe that actions before you open your doors to those who request such an honor because many false brothers will try to mingle with you so that they can bring disturbance and subtly spread division.

My conscience commands me to enlighten you and I do so with the sincerity of my heart not worrying about anyone else. You are warned. From now on you must act coherently.

To being as I started I beg you, my beloved children, to take care of yourselves seriously; to eliminate all impurities that must still be eating your hearts; to gradually reform yourself but without interruption and according to the sound Spiritist moral; finally, to be as strict with yourselves as you must be indulgent with the weaknesses of your brothers.

If this first homily lacks something regarding the form it is only due to my inexperience with mediumship. I will do better the next time I am allowed to communicate with you taking the opportunity to thank my friend Jobard for having sponsored me.

Good bye my children, I bless you.

François-Nicolas-Madeleine

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

April 1863

Spiritist dissertations

Christmas Party

Spiritist Society of Tours, December 24th, 1862

Medium Mr. N...

It is tonight that the Christian world celebrates the birth of the child Jesus. But you, brothers, you must also rejoice and celebrate the birth of the new Doctrine. You will see it grow like a child. Like him, it will enlighten mankind showing them the path to be traveled. You shall soon see the three kings asking this Doctrine for the help they did not find in the former ideas. They will not bring incense and myrrh but will kneel before the new ideas of Spiritism. Don't you see the shiny star that must guide them? Hence, courage brothers! Courage! You will soon be able to, together with the whole world, celebrate the great party of regeneration of humanity.

The seed of this Doctrine has been entrenched in your heart for a long time brothers. Today, however, it blossoms up to the light with the help of a sturdily planted tutor that will not allow the feeble branches to bend over. It will grow daily with the help of this providential support and will become the tree of divine creation. You shall harvest the fruits of that tree as your brothers who are hungry and thirsty of the sacred faith. Oh! Show this fruit to them and scream from the bottom of your heart: "*Come and share with us the fruit that feeds our spirit and alleviates our physical and moral pains.*"

But do not forget, brothers, that God made you ferment the first seed; that the seed grew up and already became a tree capable of bearing fruit. There is still work for you to do: to transplant the branches. Before that make sure that the terrain to receive the seed is right, that it does not hide a layer with a rodent worm that could devour what has been entrusted to you by the Master.

St. Louis

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End of Rouen Subscription

Published amount according to the March issue: 2,722.05 francs.

Mr. V. Fourier (Versailles), 10 francs; Mr. Lux (Dole), 2.5 francs; Mrs. D...(Paris), 5 francs; Mr. C. L...(Paris), 30 francs; Mr. Blin, cap. (Marseille), 15 francs; Mr. Derivis, by the 2nd Spiritist Group of Albi, 16 francs; Mr. Berger (Cahors), 2 francs; Mr. Cuvier (Ambroise), 14 francs; Mr. V...(Bayonne), 10 francs; Mr. L. D...(Versailles), 2 francs; Mrs. Borreau (Niort), 2 francs; Mr. D...(Paris), 2 francs.

Total: 111.50 francs.

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To the readers of the Spiritist Review

For some time now circumstances have forced us to give more development to the articles of depth and to restrict Spiritist communications given the need for certain urgent refutations. We will soon be able to reestablish the balance. We will strive to provide as much variety as possible to our journal to satisfy all tastes and pretensions but there are things that have priority. We are happy to notice that generally speaking we are well understood and that people take into account the complications associated to the struggle that goes on and the constant growth of the Doctrine that is at the center reached by all ramifications and all wires of this bundle that today encompasses the whole world. Thank God our efforts are crowned by success and as a compensation for our fatigue, there is no lack of moral satisfaction.

Allan Kardec¹⁴

14 Paris, Typography Cosson and Co., Rue de Four-Saint-Germain, 43

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Study about the possessed of Morzine

Causes of obsession and the means to combat it

Fifth and final issue¹⁵

As it must have been noticed Mr. Constant got to Morzine with the idea that the cause of the disease was purely physical. He could be right for it as it would be absurd to suppose a hidden influence to every effect that had an unknown cause. According to him such a cause was entirely in the conditions of hygiene, physiology and climatic circumstances of the inhabitants. We do not pretend to say that he had arrived with another contrary opinion ready, something that would not be more logical. All we say is that with his preconceived idea he only saw what he wanted to see whilst if he had just admitted the possibility of another cause he would have seen something else.

When a cause is real it must explain all the effects that are produced. If certain effects contradict the cause it means that the cause is false or that it is not the only cause and then it is necessary to look for another one. It is undoubtedly the more logical path.

That is how justice is done in search for the causes of criminality. When looking for the perpetrator of a crime will law enforcement arrive at the crime scene with the preconceived idea that it was done in this or that way by this or that person? No. It is necessary to observe the minor details and rebuild the event from the effects to the causes, setting aside those that are irreconcilable with the observed effects and from deduction to deduction it is rare the case in which truth is not established.

The same occurs to the sciences. When a difficulty presents itself as insoluble, the wisest things to do is to suspend the assessment. From that moment on any hypothesis is allowed to try to solve the issue. However, if the hypothesis does not address all the facets of the problem it means that it is not true. It does not bear the character of an absolute truth if it cannot explain everything.

15 See the issues of the Spiritist Review December 1862, January, February and April 1863

That is how in Spiritism, for example, leaving aside the material proof, going back from the effects to the causes, arrives at the principle of the plurality of existences as an unavoidable consequence because only this principle can clearly explain what no other has been able to do.

Applying such a method to the facts of Morzine, it is easy to see that the only cause admitted by Mr. Constant is far from explaining everything. He attests, for example, that the crises cease when the patients are away from the region of the commune. If the illness is due to the lymphatic constitution and the bad nutrition of the inhabitants how can it stop its action when the patients transpose the bridge that separate them from the neighboring community? If the nervous breakdowns were not followed by any other symptom there is no doubt that one could attribute them to such a physical state but there are other phenomena that could not be explained exclusively by such a state.

Here Spiritism offers us with a shocking comparison. In the beginning of the manifestations when we saw turning and rapping tables, tables that would rise in space without any support, the first thought was that it was taking place by the action of electricity, magnetism or another unknown field. Such a supposition was not absurd; on the contrary it had all the likelihood. However, when it was found out that the movements were followed by intelligent signs; that followed an intelligent and spontaneous will, the first hypothesis had to be abandoned because it did not solve that part of the phenomena and it was imperative to acknowledge an intelligent cause producing an intelligent effect. Which intelligence was that? It was still through experimentation that one arrived at that cause and not through a preconceived system.

Let us mention another example. When Newton was observing the fall of bodies and that all of them would follow the same direction he searched for a cause and raised a hypothesis. That hypothesis, by resolving all cases of the same kind, became the law of universal gravitation, a purely mechanical law because all the effects were mechanical. However, let us imagine that when observing the fall of an apple the apple had obeyed his will; that his command would make the apple rise up instead of going down; that it would move from left to right; that it would stop or continue its movement; that by any sign it had responded to his thoughts, he would then have been forced to admit that there was something else besides a mechanical law, that since the apple was not intelligent it had to have obeyed an intelligence. That is what happened to the turning tables. That is what happens to the patients of Morzine.

Speaking only about the facts observed by Mr. Constant we would then ask: How come bad nourishment and a lymphatic condition could produce bad feelings against religion in people that are naturally religious and even devout followers? If it were an isolated fact it could be an exception but it is acknowledged as general and that it is one of the features of the disease there and elsewhere. That is an effect. Look for its cause. Don't you know it? Be it. Confess that you don't know but don't say that it is due to the fact that the villagers eat potato and black bread or due to their ignorance and limited intelligence because the same effects will be shown to you on wealthy and educated people. If comfort were enough to cure wickedness we would be stunned by the number of sinners and blasphemous people that are not deprived of anything.

Would hygiene explain better this other not less characteristic and general fact of the feeling of duality unequivocally translated by the patients' language? Certainly not. It is always a third party speaking. There is always a distinction between the speaker and the young lady, a constant fact on the individuals of the same case irrespective of their social class.

The meds are inefficient for a good reason. They are good to the lady, the corporeal being, but not to the third one, the one that cannot be seen but that nonetheless makes her act, embarrasses her, subjugates her and takes her down and that utilizes her limbs to hit and her mouth to speak.

He says that there is nothing there to justify the idea of possession but the facts are there before his eyes. Can they be explained by the cause that he attributes to them? No. Then that cause is not true. He saw the moral effects hence he should have sought a moral cause.

Dr. Chiara, another doctor who also visited Morzine, published his assessment¹⁶ attesting the same phenomena and the same symptoms as Dr. Constant. However, to him, as to the latter, the malign Spirits are in the imagination of the patients. We find the following fact about a patient in his work:

“The episode begins by a hiccup and swallowing movements; by the alternative bending and straightening of the head on the trunk; later on, after several contortions that give her nice face a horrible expression she shouts:

- *S... doctor, I am the devil... You want me to live the girl? I am not afraid of you... Come! It is four years now that I take her. She is mine. I will stay here.*
- *What are you doing with this young lady?*
- *I torment her.*
- *Why, miserable one, why do you torment someone who has done no harm to you?*
- *Because I was placed here to torment her.*
- *You are evil.*
- *I stop here stunned by an avalanche of swearing and insults.”*

Talking about another patient, he says:

“After a few minutes of a mute scene, of a more or less expressive pantomime, our possessed starts to say horrible words. Bubbling of rage she insults us all with an unprecedented fury. However – we must say now – it is not the lady that expresses herself like that but the devil that possesses her and that using her organs speaks in her own name. As for our innocent girl she is just a passive instrument from which the notion of self was completely abolished. When questioned directly she remains dumb. Only Beelzebub responds. Finally, after approximately three minutes that horrible drama suddenly ends, like by magic. The girl B... recovers her very calm and natural appearance as if nothing had happened. She was knitting before so she continues to knit as if the work were not interrupted. I question her. She responds that she does not feel tired at all and remembers nothing. I mention the swear words and insults against us but she seems bothered by that and apologizes. In all those patients general sensitivity is completely abolished. The can be pinched, poked at or burned to feel nothing. I pierced the folded skin of one of them who felt nothing despite the bleeding. I also saw several of those patients away from the trance in Morzine. They were fat and nice young ladies, enjoying a perfect moral and physical health. It would be impossible to suppose any disorder just by looking at them.”

That in contrast to the skinny and painful state that Mr. Constant believes to have found. As for the phenomenon of lack of sensitivity during the episodes that is not the only proximity to facts presented by catalepsy, somnambulism and double vision. After all the observations Dr. Chiara came to the following definition of the illness:

“It is a morbid group of different symptoms of a bit of nervous and mental disorders. In short it is a sui generis disease that I will call – not giving importance to names – hystericaldemonia a name that has already been used before.”

¹⁶ *Les Diables de Morzine*, at the Mègret, quai de l’Hôpital 51, Lyon.

It is the case of saying: “*whoever has ears, let them hear*”. It is a particular illness, formed by different parts whose source is everywhere. That is the same as simply saying: “*It is a disease that I don’t understand.*” It is a ‘*sui generis*’ illness, we agree, but what is it that you cannot even give a name to?

We could demonstrate the insufficiency of a purely material cause to explain the illness of Morzine by many other approximations but the readers will do it themselves. I refer them to the preceding articles about the same subject in which we explained the mode by which the action of the obsessing Spirits take place as well as the phenomena that result from that action and the analogy will support the latest evidence.

If to the people of Morzine the third intervening power is the devil it is because they were told so and it all that they knew. As a matter of fact, it is well-known that certain inferior Spirits have fun by taking infernal names in order to terrify people. Replace that name by the word Spirit or even better, bad Spirit, and you shall have the perfect reproduction of every scene of obsession and subjugation that we reported.

There is no doubt that in a region where the idea of Spiritism dominated, in the case of a similar epidemic, the patients would say that they were solicited by bad Spirits whereas in the eyes of other certain people they would be considered mentally insane. They say that it is the devil: it is a nervous disease. That is what would have happened in Morzine had the knowledge of Spiritism preceded the invasion of those Spirits. My adversaries would then have shouted: Help! Get him! But Providence did not want to give them such satisfaction. On the contrary, they wanted to prove their impotence to fight the illness by conventional means. The bottom line is that they sent the patients away to the hospitals of Thonon, Chambery, Lyon, Macon, etc. It was a good solution to them because when all were removed they could boast about the fact that there wasn’t any remaining patient in the region. The measure could have been based on an observation that there was no episode beyond the borders of the commune but as it seems it was based on another observation: the isolation of patients. In fact, Mr. Constant’s opinion is categorical:

“There should be a kind of Lazaretto, he says, where the moral illnesses could be hidden as soon as they were produced and whose contagious characteristic was established, as my old friend Dr. Bouchut said. While there was not a better place, the Lazaretto was found in the asylum of the mentally ill, the only truly convenient for the rational treatment of patients with the type of disease I am dealing with, admitting or not that those patients are taken by some sort of mental alienation. It is necessary to pose a certain level of intimation onto them; occupy their minds leaving the minimum possible time for other concerns; absolutely subtract any meaningless religious influence from them, avoid conversations, advices or observations that can feed back their mistakes that must on the contrary be fought back daily; give them an appropriate regimen and finally force them to take the prescriptions adequate to mental treatments and the means of executing them. Where can one find all those necessary conditions if not in an asylum? Some are afraid of the contact of these patients with the truly alienated ones. Such a contact seemed to have been less harmful than thought and also it would have been easy to have a special pavilion to the patients of Morzine. If the agglomeration had had any inconvenience it would have found compensation in the gathering itself and I am convinced that the name asylum, house of mad people, by itself would have produce more than one cure and that there would not be many devils that would not have run away from the shower.”

We are far from sharing Mr. Constant’s optimism about the harmlessness of the contact with the mentally ill and the efficacy of the showers in similar cases. We are, on the contrary, persuaded that such a regimen may produce true madness where there is only apparent disease. Now, notice that out of the episodic crises the patients have common sense and are mentally and physically healthy; there isn’t more than a transient disturbance without any indication of madness as such. Their brains, necessarily weakened by the frequent attacks, would be even more easily influenced by the vision and by the idea of being among the truly ill patients.

Mr. Constant attributed the development and continuity of the illness within the limitation he understood. He therefore recommended putting them together with the mentally ill or having them in a hospital pavilion. Isn't that an evident contradiction? Is it what he understood to be a moral treatment?

In our opinion the disease is due to a different cause and requires different healing procedures. Its source is in the unstoppable interaction between the visible and the invisible world that surrounds us and in whose environment we live, that is, among people and Spirits who are nothing more than the souls of those who lived before and among which there are good ones and bad ones. Such interaction is one of the forces of the laws of Nature and produce a number of misunderstood psychological, physiological and moral phenomena because their cause was unknown. Spiritism enlightened us about that law and considering that the effects are submitted to a natural law there is nothing of supernatural about it. We feel the influence of these beings who live in such environment that is not as much immaterial as people imagine it to be, with their fluidic bodies similar to ours. The influence of the good Spirits is healthy and beneficial. That of the bad Spirits is pernicious like the contact with evil people in our Society.

Thus, we say that there is a momentary cloud of such bad and invisible beings upon Morzine as it has happened to several other places and they will not be expelled by juicy food and showers. Some call them devils or demons. We called them just bad or inferior Spirits but that does not imply the absence of a good quality since this has a big difference in terms of consequences for the very idea of demons is that these are a different set of creatures, separated from humanity, whilst in fact they are only the souls of people who were bad on Earth but that will end up improving one day. When they go to such places they do as they would during their lives, that is, the actions of a bunch of evil men. Hence it is necessary to expel them as one would do to the enemy's troop. It is in the nature of these Spirits to be averse to religion because they fear its power like the criminals who are averse to the law and to the judges who condemn them, expressing their feeling by the mouth of their victims who are truly unconscious mediums absolutely right when they side that they are just echoes. The patient is reduced to passivity as in the situation of a man dominated by a stronger enemy that obliges him to obey. The '*self*' of the strange Spirit temporarily neutralizes the '*self*' of the person. There is an obsessive subjugation and not possession.

"What absurd thinking!", certain doctors will say. It may be absurd but it is still accepted as truth by a large number of doctors. Time will come, and faster than many think, in which the action of the invisible world will be generally accepted and the influence of the bad Spirits identified among the causes of pathologies. The important role of the perispirit in physiology will be taken into account and a new avenue of cure will be open to a large number of diseases considered incurable. If that is the case, people will ask, what is the cause of the inefficacy of exorcism? It demonstrates one thing: exorcism as practiced is worth as much as the meds because its efficacy is not in the exterior act, in the virtue of words or signals but in the moral ascendancy exercised upon the bad Spirits.

Were it not the patients who said: "*it is not medication that we lack but priests*"? And insulted them by saying that they were not saint enough to have ascendancy upon the devil. Was it too much potato eating that led them to speak like that? No, but their intuition of truth. The inefficacy of exorcism in similar cases is demonstrated by experience. And why is that? Because it consists of ceremonies and formulas that make the bad Spirits laugh while they yield to the moral ascendancy that is imposed on them. They see that people try to dominate them by powerless means and want to show stronger. They are like the wild horse that takes the unable rider down but that is docile to an expert.

"*In one of those ceremonies*", Dr. Chiara says, "*...all the patients were gathered in one church where there was a terrible riot. All the women had a simultaneous crisis taking the church benches down, breaking them and rolling on the floor, messing with men and children who hopelessly tried to stop them. They say horrible and incredible blasphemies and question the priests with the most insulting words.*"

They then stopped public ceremonies of exorcism and started doing it at home, at any time of day or night, and since that did not have better results they stopped that too.

We cited several examples of moral strength in similar cases and in the absence of a large enough number of sufficient proofs it would be enough to remember that of Jesus Christ that only had to ask the demons to leave in order to have them expelled. Compare in possession of those days in the Gospels to those of our time and you will see a shocking similarity. Jesus cured them by miracles, you will say. Be it but here there is one fact that took place among the schismatic that you will not consider less miraculous.

Mr. A... from Moscow that had not read our report told us a few days back that the inhabitants of a village in his properties were taken by a disease similar in all aspects to that of Morzine. Same crises, same convulsions, same blasphemies, same insults against the priests, same effect of exorcism and same uselessness of medical science. One of his uncles, Mr. R... from Moscow, powerful magnetizer, a good man by excellence and of a very good heart, having come to visit those unfortunate patients stopped the convulsions by a simple imposition of the hands always followed by fervent prayers. He ended up radically curing almost all the patients by the same procedure.

This example is not the only one. How to explain it if not by the influence of magnetism seconded by prayer, a medicine not much used by our materialists because it is not found in the codex of our pharmacies? A powerful medication though when it is said from the bottom of the heart and not with the lips and when supported by a vivid faith and an eager desire for good. Describing obsession in our first articles we explained the fluidic action produced in such circumstances and from there we conclude by analogy that it would have been a powerful support in Morzine. At any rate, it seems that the illness has found its term despite the fact that the conditions of the region remain the same.

Why is that? That is what we are not allowed to say yet. Since it will be later acknowledged it will have served Spiritism more than people think even if only to demonstrate by a great example that those who don't know them are not shielded against the action of the bad Spirits as well as the impotence of ordinary means employed to have them expelled.

We will end by tranquilizing certain inhabitants of the region under the pretense influence that some of them could have by produced evil actions as they say. The belief in fortune tellers must be relegated to superstition. May they show good hearts and those who are in charge of leading them strive to elevate them morally, that is a safe way of neutralizing the influence of the bad Spirits and must prevent a return to what happened. The bad Spirits only address those that they know can be dominated and not those that are morally superior – we don't mean intellectually – and are shielded against attacks.

Here a very natural objection is presented that is convenient to analyze. You may perhaps ask why all those who are bad are not reached by possession? We respond that by doing bad they suffer the pernicious influence of the bad spirits in a different way, listening to their advice for which they shall be punished with the more severity the more they act with knowledge of cause. Do not believe in the virtues of any talisman, amulet, sign or any word to keep the bad Spirits away. Purity of heart and intention, the love of God and towards the neighbor that is the talisman because that subtracts from them any domination upon our souls.

Here is the communication that St. Louis gave about it at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies:

“The possessed of Morzine are really under the influence of bad Spirits attracted to that region by causes that you will one day learn or even better that you will yourself get to know one day. The knowledge of Spiritism will allow the predominance of the good over bad influence, that is, the healing and consoling Spirits attracted by sympathetic fluids will replace the malign and cruel influence that devastates that

population. Spiritism is called up to do great services. It will be the healer of such diseases whose cause was formerly unknown and before which science remains powerless. It will probe the moral ulcers and give them the healing balsam. By turning people better it will keep them away from the bad Spirits who are attracted by the vices of humanity. If every person were good the bad Spirits would stay away from them because they would be unable to lead them to doing bad. The presence of good people sends them away as the presence of vicious people attract them whilst the opposite happens to the good Spirits. Therefore, be good if you only want the good Spirits around you.” – Medium Mrs. Costel.

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Some refutations

From several places we get the indications of new sermons against Spiritism all of them with the same bottom line that we have talked about before. Since they are always variants of the same theme, we find no need to analyze them. We will limit ourselves to point out certain passages followed by a few reflections.

“Brothers, this is a Christian that speaks to Christians and as such we have the right of being stunned by the growth of Spiritism among us. What is Spiritism, I ask you, if not a mixture of horrors that only madness may justify?”

We have nothing to say about this one but that all sermons given in this town were not able to hinder the growth of Spiritism as confirmed by the speaker. Therefore, the arguments offered against it are less valid than his own. Now, if the sermons are from God and Spiritism is from the devil, it means that the devil is stronger than God. Nothing is further from the truth. It is a well-known fact that Spiritism propagates following the sermons for the simple reason that people find the arguments, given by Spiritism, more convincing than those offered by the adversaries. It is a fabric of horrors, may be, but you must agree that if those Spirits were to take over your ideas instead of demons you would see saints and far from condemning the evocations you would encourage them.

“Our century no longer respects anything. Not even the ashes of the graves are respected for insensible people dare to call the dead for their entertainment. Nevertheless, that is what is happening and this is where we got at with this pretense century of lights: talk to the dead.”

Talking to the dead is not something of this century since history of all peoples demonstrates that this has happened at all times. The only difference is that today it happens everywhere without the superstitious accessories that surrounded the evocations in former times; it is done with a more respectful and religious sentiment. It must be one out of two options: it is possible or not. If it is not then it is a deceiving belief like believing in the Friday the 13th or throwing salt over your shoulder for good luck. Hence, we don't see so much horror and don't find someone disrespectful when talking to people that are no longer here. If the dead come to talk to us it must be allowed by God unless we admit that they come without such a permission or against His will which would imply that God does not care about it or that the evokers are more powerful than God. Notice, however, the contradictions. On the one side, you say that it is only the devil that communicates, on the other hand that the ashes of the dead are disturbed by calling them. If it is the devil then it is not the dead hence they are not disturbed and there is no lack of respect. If they are the dead then it is not the devil. You must find reconciliation in this capital point. Admitting that it is the dead then we acknowledge that there would be profanation by calling them lightheartedly for futile reasons and particularly to make money out of that. We condemn all these things and take no responsibility for those

who stay away from the principles of serious Spiritism as much as you do not take for the false followers that only bear the mask of religion; that preach what they do not practice or that speculate with sacred things. Evocations made in burlesque conditions that were cited by one eloquent speaker that we will mention below would be a sacrilege but thank God, we are not into that and do not believe that the sermon of Mr. Viennois also mentioned below is not in such a case either.

“I witnessed these facts myself and heard them preaching moral and charity, that is true. But what are the basis of that moral and that charity? Ah! None. Can we call moral a doctrine that rejects the eternal penalties?”

If such a moral teaching leads to good without fear of the eternal penalties, it can only have a greater merit. In the past, it was considered impossible to control the students without the support of a teacher. Were they better? No. This is no longer used in our days and they are not worse, much to the contrary. Hence the current method is preferable. The goodness of a given method is evaluated by the effects. As a matter of fact, who are the addressees of that moral teaching? Precisely those who do not believe in the eternal penalties. Do we preclude those who believe in the eternal penalties from believing? Absolutely not. Once more, we do not address those who have faith and to whom their faith suffices but those who don't have one or that are in doubt.

Would you prefer to see them not believe at all? That would not be as acceptable. Are you afraid of having your sheep stolen? That is because you are not as confident in the power of your means to keep them. You are afraid of having them attracted by the kind herb of forgiveness and by the divine mercy. Would you then believe that those who are not as sure and that fluctuate around you will prefer the flames of hell? On the another hand, who are the ones that must be more convinced than those at the heart of the Church? Well! Tell us why haven't such a perspective stopped all the atrocities, all the deviations against the divine and human laws plentifully found in history and that incessantly multiply in our days? Are they crimes or are they not?

Then if those who have such a belief by profession are not stopped how can you expect those who do not believe to obey? No, the enlightened person of our times requires a rational leash. The belief in the eternal penalties, perhaps useful in former times, is out of fashion. It extinguishes daily and however much you try you will not give life back to a cadaver as you cannot revive medieval habits, ideas and costumes. If the disappearance of such a belief jeopardizes the Catholic Church security then it is the case to feel sorry to having it based on such a fragile basis because if there is a corroding germen that is the dogma of the eternal penalties.

“Thus I appeal to the morality of every honest soul; I appeal to the magistrates because they are responsible for all evil that similar heresy brings to our minds.”

We did not know that the magistrates in France were in charge of persecuting the heretical because if there are Catholics among them there are also Protestants and Jewish who would then be assigned with their own persecution and condemnation. And there are servants of the highest echelons.

“Yes, the Spiritists, and I am not afraid of openly declaring that, are not only due to be delivered to the police and the imperial court but also, hear me well, are liable before the civil courts because they are deceivers who sign communications in the name of honored people who certainly would not have signed them when alive, people of prominence these days.”

The Spiritists are really fortunate since Confucius, Socrates, Plato, Saint Agostino, Saint Vincent de Paul, Fénelon and others cannot come to sue them for the crime of falsifying their writings. But here is what I

think: if there were a lifeline it would be exactly in the courts where they would find justice because there they would have found the jurors who judge according to their consciences. There are Protestants and Jewish among them too; there are even – something terrible! – Philosophers and unbeliever free-thinkers that due to our modern laws are found everywhere. Thus, if we are accused of making Saint Agostino say something heterodox we will also find jurors that will acquit us. Oh! The perversity of this century! If we think that Voltaire, Diderot, Luther, Calvino, John Huss and Arius could have been jurors by birth right, that they could have been judges, mayors, ministers of justice and even the cult ones! You see them, those animals of hell, pronouncing about a question of heresy because in order to have a signature of Fénelon placed in a heretical communication condemned it is necessary to judge the question of heresy and who in the jury will have competence for that?

“However, it would be so easy to stop such harm! What is it that would be necessary to do? The minimal. Even without given them the honor of the chief of police you could have a sergeant at the entrance of each group saying: Nobody is allowed here! I paint the picture of evil and provide the medicine, nothing more nothing less, because I let go the remedy of the inquisition.”

Many thanks but there is no merit in offering what one does not have. Unfortunately, you do not have the inquisition without which it would be doubtful that you would grant us with the indult. Why don't you ask the magistrates then to bar the entrance of the synagogues and those of the temples of the Protestants where they publicly preach dogmas that are not those of yours? As for the Spiritists they don't have temples or priests but groups what to you is the same thing and that a sergeant before each one would have it all resolved. It is in fact very simple. But you forgot that the Spirits break any barrier and enter anywhere without permission, even in your house for you have them around you, listening to you unsuspectedly, and even more, speaking to your ears. Analyze your memories and you will see that you had more than one manifestation without soliciting it.

It seems that you ignore something that you should know. The Spiritist groups are not absolutely necessary. They are only gatherings where people feel happy for finding others who share the same beliefs. A proof of that is the fact that in France today there are more than 600,000 Spiritists, 99% of which are not part of any group and have never step foot in any of them; that these groups do not exist in a number of cities; that nor the groups nor the societies open their doors to the public to preach their doctrine to the passerby; that Spiritism preaches itself and by the force of things because it responds to a need of our times; that its contagiousness is in the example of those who are happy with such beliefs and that they are found everywhere, all over the world, without the need to look for them in the groups.

Thus, it is not groups that make the propaganda since they do not welcome the first one that shows up. That happens from neighbor to neighbor, from individual to individual. Admitting the interdiction of every meeting the Spiritists would still be free to gather at home as it does happen in thousands of places without any damage to Spiritism; on the contrary we have always condemned the large assemblies as more harmful than helpful and the intimacy acknowledged as the most favorable condition to the manifestations. Will you stop the family gatherings? Would you place a sergeant at the doorway of each house to watch what happens by the fireplace? That is not done in Spain or in Rome where there are more Spiritists than you think. That would be the last thing needed to promote even more the importance of Spiritism.

Let us now admit the legal interdiction of the groups. Do you know what those Spiritists that you accuse of spreading disorder would do? They would say: “We respect the law; *dura lex, sed lex (it is harsh but it is the law)*. Let us give the example and show that if we preach union, peach and concord that is not to become a factor of disorder. The organized societies are not a necessary condition for the existence of Spiritism. There isn't any material link among than that can be broken in case they are suppressed. What the Spiritists teach in those groups they also teach from person to person. Spiritism has this incredible privilege of having

its focus everywhere. Its sign of connection is the love of God and towards the neighbor and to put it to work there is no need of official meetings. It reaches both friend and foe.

Anyone may say the same; hasn't authority found resistance where it expected submission? If the Spiritists are such a turbulent and perverted people as you pretend to be, why in places where they are found in larger numbers law enforcement has less difficulty in their work, to the point of one of them saying that if everyone in his region was Spiritist he could close shop? Why in the military there is less disciplinary penalties among the Spiritists? Furthermore, you don't imagine that nowadays there are Spiritists everywhere from the top to the bottom of the social scale; that there are mediums and gatherings even at the homes of those who you incite against us. Hence you must see that your means is insufficient. It is necessary to find another one.

- We have the lightning of the pulpit!
- That is fine but don't you see that in every place where Spiritism is hit, it grows?
- We have the censorship of the Church and the excommunication.
- It is better but once more you knock the emptiness; once more Spiritism does not address you or those who are with you; Spiritism does not fetch you to say: leave your religion and follow me; you shall be damned if you don't do that. No. Spiritism is more tolerant than that and it leaves the freedom of choice to everyone. As we have already said, it addresses the countless number of unbelievers, the doubters and indifferent. These are not with you and your censorship cannot reach them. They used to come to you but you repelled them. It is simply wrong. If some of those from your ranks follow them it means that your arguments are not strong enough and it is not with severity that you shall achieve that.

Spiritism pleases because it does not impose itself. It is accepted by the free-will and free exam. In that it is from our time. It pleases by the kindness, by the consolations given in hard times, by the unbreakable faith in the future that it entails, by the belief in the goodness and mercy of God. Besides, it is based on positive, material and irrefutable facts that defy any denial. That is the secret of such a fast propagation.

What is it that you offer instead? Always the eternal penalties, not so good for the current times; then the deformation of your doctrines. You accuse them of preaching abortion, adultery and every crime. Who do you think you can blame for that? Certainly not the Spiritists. Perhaps those who don't know Spiritism? But among these there many want to know what this dreadful doctrine is; they read and then learning that it says exactly the opposite to what you accused it of saying they leave you and seek that doctrine, and all that without soliciting.

I know well that the position is embarrassing because you say this: if we speak against Spiritism we recruit followers for it; if we remain quiet, it walks on its own. What to do then? People used to say in former times: allow the justice of the king to follow its course; now one must say: allow the justice of God to follow its course. (To be continued in the next issue).

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Family conversations from beyond the grave

Mr. Philibert Viennois

Spiritist Society of Paris, March 20th, 1863 – medium Mr. Leymarie

1. Evocation – A. I am near you.
2. You had agreed with Mrs. V... that the one that remained alive would have come to me in order to evoke the one who had left. Mrs. V... let me know of the commitment and I am pleased to agree. I know that you were an eager Spiritist with a great heart. Such circumstances can only increase our desire to communicate with you. – A. I can then write to you and approach you to express my good feelings about you. Thank you for all the happiness you gave me dear wife you who made me love the belief, the sacred rule of my final days by your side. I am very happy for being able to pick today all the fruits that were promised by the venerable faith that reveal to us the existence of another life beyond that of Earth. I enjoy a power that is unknown to mankind; the space is ours; I can understand better and love you better. My sensations are no longer obscure and there is something divine in us of extreme simplicity for everything that is great is simple. Greatness is the true element of the Spirit. I am always by your side. From now on you will be happy because I will surround you with my fluid that will strengthen you if needed. I want you to be always courageous, good and Spiritist. With these three elements, you will praise God for having called me because I wait for you, persuaded that thanks to Spiritism God reserves a good place for you among us.
3. I ask you to kindly describe to us your passage to the world of the Spirits, your impressions and the influence that the Spiritist knowledge had on your elevation. – A. The expected death was not a suffering to me but instead a complete rupture with matter. I saw a new life. The divine future, that awaited hour, came calmly. It is true that I missed my companion that I could not leave behind without pain: it is the last link of the chain that unites the Spirit to matter; once it is broken I suffered little the passage from life to death. My Spirit carried the prayers of my beloved one. All the impressions were extinguished and I woke up in our dominion, the dominion of the Spirits. To the just person, the trip is like the sleep; the rupture is natural but as soon as you wake up, what a surprise! Everything is new, splendid and marvelous! Those who I loved and other Spirits, friends of preceding incarnations, welcomed me and opened the doors to the true existence in this boundless park called Heavens! You cannot understand my impressions neither can I express them. I will try to transmit them to you on another occasion.
4. When I received a letter from Mrs. V... I sent you an adequate prayer. Can you tell us what your opinion about it is? – A. Thank you for your kindness Mr. Allan Kardec! You could not have done better. Those who cry for the absent ones need the Spirit of God but also the help of other benevolent Spirits and the Spirits must be that. Your prayer touched many lighthearted and unbeliever Spirits who are the invisible witnesses of your sessions (the prayer had been read at the

Society after the evocation). Your good words will help your advancement. You frequently do to our world the good that you receive from it. Never neglect the advice of someone smaller than us acknowledging this intimate bond created by God in all creatures.

5. I wanted to ask you to give me a communication to Mrs. V... but I see that you anticipated my thought. – A. I answered your first question addressing my wife when I should have done it to the Spiritist Society. Forgive me since I was holding a promise made. I know that you attract those who wish to find consolation through persuasion. Those that don't sacrifice everything for pleasure and gold will find great satisfaction in talking to the beings of the other world. Please let my wife know that she will always count on my presence. We will work together for her spiritual progress. Send my communication to her. I wanted to tell her so many good things but I miss the expressions. May she always love our family so that through her example it can become Spiritist and believe in the eternal life that is the life of God!

Viennois

We feel that it is our duty to make the above-mentioned prayer public since it was given to us by the Spirits in order to be used in similar circumstances.

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Family conversations from beyond the grave

Prayer for the missing loved ones¹⁷

Preface

How horrible the idea of the nothingness! It is so unfortunate the idea that the tears for a lost friend are lost in space and find no echo anywhere! Those who believe that everything ends with the body have never found true affections; those who believe that the genius who illuminated the world with a vast intelligence is just a game of matter, that disappear forever like a draft of air; that nothing is left from the dearest creature, a father, a mother or a beloved child, but a hand full of dust that time will dissipate forever! How can a person of heart remain cold before such a thought? How come the idea of the absolute annihilation does not freeze someone in horror and at least does not make one wish for something different? If reason has not been enough so far to take us away from the doubt here is Spiritism dissipating any uncertainty about the future through the material proofs of the survival of the soul and the existence of the beings from beyond the grave. Thus, these proofs are welcomed with joy everywhere and confidence is reborn because from that time on people know that the earthly life is just a short passage that leads to a better life; that the work done here is not lost and that the most sacred affections are not broken hopelessly.

Prayer

Almighty God, please receive the prayer that I send in favor of the Spirit ... Make him/her foresee your divine clarities and facilitate his/her path to eternal happiness. Allow the good Spirits to take him/her my words and my thoughts. You that were so dear to me in this world listen to my voice that calls you to give you a new proof of my affection. God wanted you to be freed first. I could not be sorry without being selfish because it would be the same as wishing you the hardships and sufferings of life. I then wait with resignation for the moment of our reunion in the happier world where you preceded me. I know that our separation is just momentary and that however long it may seem to me its duration disappears before the eternal happiness that God promised to the elected ones. May his benevolence impede me from delaying such an expected moment and that He spare me from the pain of not finding you when I leave my earthly captivity! Oh, how sweet and reassuring the certainty that there is only a material veil hiding you from my eyes! That you may well be here by my side, that you can see me and hear me like in the past and even better than in the past; that you don't forget me as I don't forget you; that our thoughts mix up constantly and that your thoughts always sustain me!

17 Inserted in the Gospel According to Spiritism, Chapter XVIII, items 62 and 63

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Terrible argument against Spiritism

Story of a little donkey

In a recent sermon given against Spiritism, with a command to have it attacked from all flanks and throw mortal blow, the speaker told the following anecdote:

“A lady lost her husband three weeks ago. A medium showed up to propose a conversation with her dead partner through which she could perhaps see him. The vision did not happen but the dead person explained to the wife, by the hand of the medium, that he was not considered worthy of entering the resting place of the blessed ones and that he was forced to reincarnate immediately in order to atone his serious sins. Guess where? At a place about one kilometer from here in the house of a mill worker, as a little donkey that was beaten with a whip. Imagine the pain of the poor lady that rushes to the mill worker, embraces the poor donkey and tries to buy him immediately. The mill worker was a tough negotiator but finally yielded before a bag of coins. For the last fifteen days, the little donkey occupies a special room in her house surrounded by a care that has never before seen since the time that God decided to create this loving species..”

We doubt that the audience was convinced about the story but as far as we know from eye witnesses the majority thought that it would be better suited to a mocking paper than to the pulpit both for its content and expressions. The speaker undoubtedly ignored the fact that Spiritism unequivocally teaches that the soul or Spirit cannot animate the body of an animal (*The Spirits' Book*, #118, 612 and 613).

What is even more astonishing is the ridicule cast upon the pain in general with the support of a funny story and with terms that do not shine for their nobility. Besides, watching a priest treating the works of God with such an insolence by these not much reverent words: *“since the time that God decided to create this loving species.”*

The matter is as much improper to make fun of as one could object that everything that is the work of God is respectable and that Jesus was not dishonored for having entered Jerusalem riding an individual of that species. If you establish a parallel between the burlesque picture of the lady's sorrow and that of the true widow whose report we gave above identify which one is more edifying, more in accordance with the true religious feeling and respect for the Divinity; finally, which one would be better placed on the pulpit of truth. Let us admit the story that you told, Mr. Speaker, not the reincarnation in a donkey but the belief of the widow in such a reincarnation.

What have you given her for punishment in substitution? The eternal flames of hell, an even less reassuring perspective because that lady would have said: *“I would rather know that my husband is in the skin of a*

donkey than burning forever in hell.” Suppose she had to choose between your image of unstoppable torture and that given to us by the Spirit of Mr. Viennois above. Do you believe that she would have hesitated? Conscientiously you do not think so because you yourself would not have hesitated.

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Serious words against attacks

One of our correspondents from a Southern city writes the following to us:

“Today I will provide you with a new proof that the crusade that I mentioned to you is translated in a thousand ways. Yesterday I attended a meeting in which there was a heated discussion of the pros and cons of Spiritism. One of the attendees said the following: - Mr. Kardec experiences are not better than the ones we have just talked about. In his magazine, Mr. Kardec avoids comments about all the mystifications and tribulations that he faces. You must know, for example, that September last year in a gathering of about thirty people in Mr. Kardec’s house, all the participants were whacked by the Spirits. I was in Paris on the occasion and heard reports from a person that that just attended the meeting and who showed the bruise on his shoulder hit by a violent blow. I did not see the stick, she said, but she felt it.

I would like to know about this type of activity and that I would appreciate any explanation.”

We would not have bothered our readers with such an insignificant case if it would not have some level of instruction which would be useful as we are not able to respond to every one of these absurdities.

Answer: My dear Sr., the fact that you reported is among those things which are possible and about which there is more than one example. By saying that one of them took place in my house is the same as formally accepting the manifestation of the Spirits. The form of the story, however, denotes an intention that does not allow me to agree with the author. He can be a believer but certainly he is not benevolent and forgets the basis of the Spiritist moral: charity. If the reported case had really happened, as stated by this person, I would not let it go quietly because it would be a fact of capital importance about which there would be no doubt it because, as it was said, there was thirty witnesses being bashed by the proof of the existence of the Spirits. Unfortunately, to your story teller, there isn’t a single word that is true in the story. I formally belie him as the other one who said to have attended the session and I challenge both to come to sustain what they say before the Parisian Society as they do two hundred miles away. The story tellers don’t think of everything and fall before their own traps. That is what happens in this case because there is a material impossibility for the fact so positively attested by an eye witness: the fact that the Society interrupts its activities between August 15th and October 1st; that since I left Paris towards the end of August, I only returned on October 20th, consequently that in September I was fully engaged with a trip. As you see this is one of the most authentic alibies.

If the person really carried the marks of walking stick on the shoulder and since there was no meeting in my house that person received them elsewhere and not willing to say where and how she found it interesting to accuse the Spirits, something that was less compromising and avoided any further explanation.

My dear Sir, you really give too much importance to this little story, classifying it as an act of a crusade against Spiritism. There are so many of this kind that it would be necessary to have nothing else to do in order to take the time to respond to them. Hostility is translated by more serious actions and that nonetheless are not less concerning. You take too seriously the diatribes of our adversaries. Hence you must think that the more they agitate to combat Spiritism, the more they demonstrate its importance. If it were a simple myth or dream they would not be so much worried. What does make them so furious and eager against Spiritism is the fact that they see it advancing against the wind and the tides and feel the circle around them closing in more and more. Let the ill-intended ones invent fairytales and the others to throw in the poison of calumny because such gimmicks are a demonstration of their impotence to attack with good arguments. Spiritism has nothing to fear about them. On the contrary, they are the shadows that point out Spiritism's shine. The liars are worn out by their stories and the slanderers abated by the shame that spills upon them.

Spiritism faces the same attacks as all other new truths that excite the passions of those whose ideas and interests may be hurt. Look and see if all those truths have not prevailed and surpassed all the obstacles that were placed in their way; find one only that has succumbed to the attacks of its enemies. The new ideas that only had a transient light fell on their own because they did not have the vitality that can only be achieved by the truth. These were less attacked because the ones that remained prevailed after more violent attacks.

You must not believe that the war against Spiritism has reached its summit. No. There are still certain things that do need to take place in order to open the eyes of the blind ones. I cannot and I must not say more at this point in time because I should not interfere with the necessary march of the events. I tell you, however, that while we wait: When you hear absurd expression; when you see material acts of hostility from wherever they may come far from being shaken you should applaud them the more they have repercussion. That is one of the announced signs of the forthcoming triumph, soon to take place.

As for the Spiritists these must distinguish themselves by moderation leaving to the antagonists the sad privilege of the defamations and personalities that prove nothing but a lack of skills in the beginning and a lack of good reasons later on. A few more words, if you allow me, about the behavior with respect to the adversaries. It is as much a duty of the good Spiritist to enlighten the ones who seek them in good faith as it is useless to discuss with the ill-faith antagonists or with a pre-conceived idea; they are sometimes more convinced than it seems but do not want to confess. Any polemic is useless with them because there is no objective and cannot change opinion. There are many of good will for us to waste time with the others.

That is the line of conduct that I have always advised and the one that I have invariably followed myself, always abstaining from yielding to provocations with the intent of making me go down to the arena of the controversy. If I occasionally respond to certain attacks and false statements is to show that it is not the possibility of the answer that is missing and to give the Spiritists the means of refutation, if necessary. As a matter of fact, there are some that I spare to later on. Since I am not impatient I observe everything with calm and cold blood. I confidently wait for the right moment that I know will come allowing the adversaries to get to a dead end.

The measure of their aggression has not reached the limit yet. It is necessary that it does. The present prepares the future. Up until now there has been no serious objection that was not refuted in my writings. Hence all I can do is to send it to them to avoid repeating myself incessantly with all those who enjoy speaking of what they don't know even the first words. Every discussion is superfluous with someone that

did not read or, if read, had a preconceived idea. Personal issues disappear before the greatness of the objective and the big picture of the irresistible movement that takes place in the ideas.

Never mind that this one or the other one is against Spiritism when everybody knows that no one can impede the realization of facts. That is what experience confirms every day.

I then say this to every Spiritist: Continue to spread the idea. Spread it through kindness and persuasion and leave it to our adversaries the monopoly of violence and acrimony something that people resource to when there isn't enough power of reasoning.

Yours sincerely,

A.K.

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Analysis of mediumistic communications sent to us

Many communications were sent to us by different groups be it to request our opinion about the contents or with the hopes of seeing them published in the Spiritist Review. All were sent with prior consent. We examined and classified them but not surprisingly there is a material impossibility of having them all published since there are more than three thousand and six hundred, in addition to the ones that were already published. These ones alone would have occupied five whole years of the Spiritist Review, not counting the number of manuscripts that we will discuss at a later date. The report of the examination will provide us with food for thought that could benefit the readers.

We found some bad ones among them, both in content and format. These ones were due to general misunderstanding, such as ignorant, obsessing, or mystifying Spirits who swear in the name of more or less renowned names that they use. In this case, if they were published, we would be giving ammunition to the critics. A circumstance that sticks out from almost all of these messages is the fact that they come from individuals rather than groups. Only fascination would allow them to be taken seriously, hindering people from seeing their ridiculous side. As it is well-known, isolation favors fascination whereas the meetings find a control in the plurality of the opinions.

We gladly acknowledge, however, that communications of such a nature form a small minority; most of the others contain good thoughts and excellent advices but that does not imply that they are all good for publication for the reasons that we are going to explain.

The good Spirits teach more or less the same things everywhere because in all places there are the same vices to be reformed and the same virtues to be taught and that is one of the distinctive characters of Spiritism; the difference is only in the more or less correctness and elegance of style. In order to assess the communications that are more convenient for publication, one must not look at them from a personal stand point but from the point of view of the general public. We understand the satisfaction that someone feels when obtaining something good, particularly at the beginning, but besides the fact that certain persons may be deceived with respect to the intrinsic merit, one does not think that in certain others places people may also obtain something similar and that what has a powerful meaning to an individual may be ordinary to the masses. Furthermore, it is necessary to consider that, for some time now, the communications have acquired proportions and qualities that in every aspect leave behind those that were obtained years ago; what was well-regarded in those days seems pale and petty now. In the majority of the truly serious centers the teachings of the Spirits grew with the intelligence of Spiritism. Considering that more or less identical communications are received everywhere their publication may only be of interest when presenting something of special quality both in the format as well as in the educational content; it would then be an illusion to believe that every communication would find numerous and enthusiastic readers. In the past, the simplest Spiritist conversation was a novelty and would attract attention; now that the Spiritists and

mediums are in large number what was a rarity is now is an almost common and habitual fact, differentiated by the amplitude and reach of the current communications, like the homework of school days are compared to the works of the adult.

We have before our eyes the collection of a journal published at the beginning of the manifestations with the title *La Table Parlante (the talking table)*, a characteristic title in those days. Some say that the journal had about 1,500 to 1,800 subscribers, a huge number for the time; it contained several small family conversations and mediumistic fact that attracted great interest in those days. We unsuccessfully sought something in that journal to publish in our Review; anything that we could choose today would be puerile and uninteresting. If that journal had not disappeared due to circumstances that are not relevant it could only remain with the condition that it would have followed the progress of the Science and in case it would be published again in the same condition in our time it would hardly count on more than fifty subscribers. The Spiritists count on a much larger number today than in those days, it is true, but they are also more enlightened and want a more substantial teaching.

If the communications would come from a single center there is no doubt that the readers would multiply with the number of followers but one must not lose sight of the fact that the focuses that produce them count on thousands and that wherever superior things are obtained there can no longer be interest for weak and mediocre things.

Our intent is not to discourage people from issuing publications, far from that; but in order to show the need of a rigorous choice, a precondition of success, by elevating their teachings the Spirits made us more difficult and even more demanding. Local publications may have an immense utility from two aspects: first to spread to the masses the teaching that is given at the intimacy, second to show the agreement that there is in that teaching about several points. We will always applaud and encourage it every time that they are done in good conditions.

To begin with, it is appropriate to point out everything that is of private interest, only of the interest of a given person; then everything that is vulgar in style and idea or puerile in the subject. Something may be excellent on itself and very good to serve as an individual instruction but whatever is delivered to the public must obey special conditions.

Unfortunately, people are inclined to believe that everything that pleases oneself also pleases others; the most skillful person may be wrong but the key here is that one must be wrong the least. There are Spirits who are happy to feed such an illusion in certain mediums; hence it is never too much to recommend to that they should never trust their own judgment. That is when the groups are useful, by the multiplicity of opinions that may be gathered. The one that in such a case rejected the opinion of the majority by considering oneself more enlightened than the others would be plentifully demonstrating the bad influence that he or she is under.

Applying such principles of **eclecticism** to the communications that are sent to us, we say that out of those 3,600 there are more than 3,000 that are of a irreproachable nature with excellent content but that out of those there are no more than 300 for publication and only about one hundred of incontestable merit. Considering that those communications came in large number from different places we **can infer** that the majority of these are more or less of a general nature. Hence the need for not publishing lightheartedly everything that comes from the Spirits if we want to achieve the proposed objective both from a material as well as from a moral point of view and the opinion that those who are indifferent may have about Spiritism.

We still have to say a few words about the manuscripts or lengthy works that were sent to us. Out of thirty, we find five or six of real value. In the invisible world, like on Earth, there is no shortage of writers but the good ones are rare; a given Spirit is good to dictate an isolated communication, to give an excellent private advice but incapable of producing a whole book that is capable of withstanding the examination, whatever it might be; as a matter of fact, their intention and the names that they use do not serve as guarantees; the more elevated the name the more there are obligated to produce. Now, it is easier to take a name than to justify that name. That is why side-by-side, with some good thoughts, we frequently find eccentric ideas and the undisguised signs of the most profound ignorance. It is in this type of mediumistic work that we find more signs of obsession from which one of the most frequent is the order from the part of the Spirit to have the work published and more than one equivocally think that such a demand is enough to find an interested editor willing to go along with that.

It is important that, in similar cases, a scrupulous examination becomes necessary if one does not want to learn the hard way. Besides, it is the best means of keeping the presumptuous and pseudo wise Spirits away that forcibly leave when they do not find docile instruments that can accept their words as articles of faith. The meddling of such Spirits in the communications is – this is a known fact – the greatest obstacle to Spiritism. All the precautions are not enough to avoid regrettable publications; in such cases it is better to fail due to the excess of prudence for the good of the cause.

In short, the publication of worthwhile things is useful. The publication of weak, insignificant or bad material does more harm than good. A not less important consideration is that of the opportunity. There are some whose publications are untimely and for that reason, harmful. Each thing must come at the right time. Several of them that we receive are in this category and despite the fact that they are very good they must be postponed. As for the others, they will find their place according to the circumstances and objective.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

May 1863

Questions and issues

Unbeliever and materialist Spirits

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, March 27th, 1863

Question: – In the evocation of Mr. Viennois, during the last session, there is the following phrase: “*Your prayer touched many unbeliever and lighthearted Spirits.*” How can the Spirits be unbelievers? Isn’t their environment mitigate this disbelief? We would like to have this question addressed by the Spirits who wish to communicate in case they find it pertinent.

Answer (medium Mr. d’Ambel): – Isn’t the explanation that you requested written in all your books? You ask why the unbeliever Spirits were touched. Having you said it yourself that the Spirits who entered erraticism did so with all their skills, knowledge and old ways of seeing things? My God! I am still too rooky to solve the hard questions of the doctrine, yet I can, from my somehow recent experience, respond to the questions about facts. In the world that you live, people who used to generally think that death can suddenly change the opinion of those who leave and that the blindness of incredulity is suddenly removed from the eyes of those who denied God while on Earth. That is the mistake because the punishment for those begins exactly in their insistence in having the same uncertainty about the Lord of all things and keep the same doubts as they had on Earth. No, believe me, the obscured sight of human intelligence cannot suddenly discover light. There is as much prudence in erraticism as there is on Earth and there is no focus of light shed upon the eyes of ill people to have them cured.

The passage from earthly life to the spiritual life offers, it is true, a period of disturbance and confusion to the majority of the discarnate. There are some that once disconnected from the material things, realize that transition as easily as a dove floating in space. It is easy for you to identify such a difference by examining the habits of travelers who go aboard to cross the oceans. The journey is a pleasure to some; to some it is a common suffering that lasts until the end of the trip. Well! That is what happens, as to speak, to those who travel from Earth to the spiritual world. Some detach rapidly without suffering and disruption while there are others who suffer the illness of the ethereal crossing. But here is what happens: Like the travelers who recover their senses and health as soon as they get to harbor the Spirits that have also transposed all the obstacles of death arrives at the end, like in their beginning, with a clean and transparent conscience of their individuality. It is then certain, my dear Mr. Kardec, that the unbelievers and absolute materialists keep their opinion beyond the grave up until the moment when by reason or grace a thought of truth hidden in

their hearts awakens. Hence the diffusion of ideas and the divergence of communications from the Spirits from beyond the grave. Hence some communications still stained by the idea of atheism and pantheism.

Allow me to go back to personal issues at the end. I thank you for my evocation. That helped me to acknowledge myself. I also thank you for the consolations taken to my wife and I beg you to continue with your good exhortations towards her so as to support her in the tests that wait for her. As for myself I will always be by her side and inspire her.

Viennois

Question: – One can understand disbelief in certain Spirits but one could not understand materialism since its very state is a statement about the absolute reign of matter and the void after death.

Answer: (medium Mr. d'Ambel) – Just one word: Every solid or fluidic body belongs to matter and that is well demonstrated. Those who only admitted one principle in nature during their lives – matter – frequently do not acknowledge anything else but that unique, absolute principle. If you think about the dominant thoughts that they entertained during their entire life you will certainly see them under the domination of the same idea. Before they saw themselves as solid matter; today they recognize their fluidic bodies and that is all. You must recognize that, although they have the vaporous form, this form is bounded and identical to the one they had when on Earth in a material, human state, so that they only see a transformation that they had not considered. It is still, however, the path that will take them to their final destination when sufficiently separated so that it can be dissolved into the great universal whole. Nothing more stubborn than a wise man and they persist in the belief that such an end is the least inevitable. One of the conditions of their moral blindness is that of keeping them more strongly attached to the links of materialism and consequently precluding them from moving away from the terrestrial zones or zones similar to those of Earth. In the same ways as the great majority of the incarnate that are imprisoned by flesh and cannot perceive the vaporous forms of the Spirits that surround them the opacity of the envelope of the materialists block their vision so that they cannot see the spiritual entities that move so graciously and beautifully in the elevated spheres of the celestial empire.

Erastus

Another one: (medium Mr. A. Didier) – Doubt is the cause of the penalties and frequently of the errors of this world. The knowledge of Spiritualism, on the contrary, causes the penalties and errors of the Spirits. Where would the punishment be if the Spirits did not acknowledge their mistakes by the conscience that is the penitentiary reality of the other life? Where would their punishment be if their soul did not feel the weight of the worldly skepticism and the nothingness of matter? The Spirit sees the Spirit as the flesh sees the flesh. The Spirit's mistake is not that of the flesh and the materialist that doubted here no longer doubts up there. The torment of the materialist is to regret the earthly joys and satisfactions, those that still cannot understand the joys and perfections of the soul. Look at the moral inferiority of these Spirits that live in a complete physical and moral sterility, lamenting the possessions that momentarily were the cause of their happiness and that now are the cause of their torment. It is true that one does not need to be materialist by the earthly satisfactions of their passions but only be in the field of the ideas and soul. That is what people call free-thinkers and these are the ones who dare not analyze profoundly the cause of their existences. These will be equally punished in the other world. They are surrounded by truth without being penetrated

by truth. Their abated pride punishes them and they regret those worldly days in which they had at least the freedom of the doubt.

Lamennais

OBSERVATION: At first sight this appreciation seems to be in contradiction with the previous one from Erastus. The latter admits that certain Spirits may preserve their materialist ideas while Lamennais thinks that those ideas are just the regret of material pleasures, but that these Spirits are perfectly aware of their spiritual state. The facts seem to support Erastus opinion. If we see Spirits that even a long time after their deaths still believe to be alive, involved with or believing to be involved with earthly activities, the fact is that they have a complete illusion of their position and are not aware of their spiritual condition. If they do not consider themselves dead it is not surprising that they still keep the idea of the void after death, a death that has not yet come to them. That was undoubtedly the meaning employed by Erastus.

Answer: – They evidently have the idea of the oblivion but that is a matter of time. There comes a time when high and above the veil is broken and the materialist ideas become unacceptable. Erastus' answer refers to particular and momentary facts. I spoke of general and defined facts.

Lamennais

OBSERVATION: The divergence was only apparent resulting from the standpoint from where each one answered the question. It is obvious that a Spirit cannot remain materialist indefinitely. We asked if such an idea was immediately destroyed after death. Well, both Spirits agree in this point responding negatively. We add that the persistence of the doubt is a punishment to the disbelieving Spirit. It is a torture to the Spirit the more pungent the more they lack the distractions of the earthly concerns.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

May 1863

Bibliographic news

The Spiritist publication's multiply and, as we have said, our encouragement has pushed all those that have lately served the cause that we defend. These are so many other voices that rise up to spread the idea under so many different forms. If we did not give our opinion about certain books more or less important that deal with similar issues it is for the reason that we were afraid of having people seeing a sign of partiality in this, then allowing the opinion to be formed on its own. Given our position, we must be sober in the appreciation of similar works particularly when the approval cannot be absolute. By staying neutral, we will not be accused of having exerted an unfavorable pressure and, if the success does not correspond to the expectation, they will not be able to blame us for that.

Amongst the recent publications that we are pleased to recommend without restriction, we remember mainly the two small brochures announced in our last number with the titles *Spiritism without the Spirits* and *The Truth about Experimental Spiritism in the Groups*, by a theoretical Spiritist about which we maintain the already given opinion by saying that in a restricted picture the author knew how to summarize the principles of Spiritism with remarkable accuracy and with an attractive style. In the one about the groups, curious and skeptical people will find an excellent lesson about the adequate way of observing what takes place in serious groups. Price: 50 cents each; 60 cents by mail, Dentu Bookstore, Palais-Royal.

We must not forget the journal *La Verité*, published in Lyon, under the direction of Mr. Edoux that we also announced. The lack of space forces us to say that it is a new champion that seems to be looked at from different angles. It marked its release by a series of articles of elevated reach signed *Philolethes*, among which these sticks out: *Foundations of Spiritism*; *The Perispirit among the Traditions*; *The perispirit before Philosophy and History*, etc. They indicate an experienced pen supported by a rigorous logic that may, by remaining in this path, give our adversaries a hard time without leaving the line of moderation that seems to be the characteristic of that journal, as it is ours. It is through logic that one must combat and not through personality, injuries and attacks.

Allan Kardec

Bordeaux will soon have its special Review that we will gladly support with our input, as they were adamant about getting it. If it follows the path of wisdom and prudence, something that we do not doubt, it will never cease to have the support of every Spiritist, of those who see the interests of the cause above personal issues or personal interest and of self-love. That is how our sympathies are conquered. The abnegation of personality, moral and material selflessness, the practice of the law of love and charity will always be the

distinctive signs of those to whom Spiritism is not only a sterile belief in this life and in the other one, but a fruitful faith.

The journal *Courrier de la Moselle*, from Metz, dated April 11th, 1863 brings an excellent and remarkable article signed by A Spiritist of Metz, refuting the cases of madness attributed to Spiritism. We like to see the Spirits who enter the arena, opposing the cold and strict logic of the facts to the diatribes of their adversaries. We shall cite some passages that a lack of space forces us to transfer to the next issue.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

The principle of non-regression of the Spirit

Since the principle of non-regression of the Spirit has been raised several times, a principle that is interpreted in multiple ways, we will try to resolve the issue. Spiritism wants to be clear to all and do not leave any point of discussion of words to its future followers hence all points susceptible of interpretation will be clarified successfully.

The Spirits do not retrograde in the sense that there is no loss of the already achieved progress. They can remain momentarily stationary but the good ones cannot become bad nor can the wise ones become ignorant. Such is the general principle that only applies to the moral condition and not to the material situation that from good may become bad if the Spirit deserve that.

Let us make a comparison. Let us take a man of the world, someone educated but that is guilty of a crime that leads him to jail. To him there is certainly a great fall with respect to his social condition and with respect to his material well-being. Neglect and abjection succeeded consideration and esteem. Regarding his intelligence, however, there is no loss. He will carry along his faculties, talents and knowledge to prison. It is a decayed man and that is how the decayed Spirits must be understood. Hence God can, after a certain time of atonement, subtract from a world where they did not progress morally, those who were indifferent to Him, those who have rebelled against His laws, sending them to atone their errors and their hard heart in an inferior world, among less advanced creatures. There they will be what they were before, morally and intellectually, but in an infinitely more painful condition given the nature of the globe itself and particularly given the environment where they find themselves. In a word, they will be in the position of a civilized person that is forced to live among the savages or of an educated person that is condemned to forced labor. They lost their position and privileges but did not retrograde to a primitive state. They did not become children after adulthood. That is how retrogress must be understood. Since did not use the time properly they have to restart the work. In His benevolence, God does not wish to keep them among the good ones any longer whose peace they disturb and that is why God sends them to live among people in a mission to make them progress, teaching them what they know. Through such a work they can advance themselves and regenerate through the atonement of previous faults like the slave that continuously save a bit of money to one day buy his freedom out. However, like the slave, many of them only save money instead of accumulating virtues the only way of paying for their redemption.

That has been, so far, the situation of our Earth, a planet of atonement and trials, where the Arian race, an intelligent race was exiled among primitive and inferior races that inhabited the planet before. That is the reason why there is so much suffering here, a suffering that the savage cannot feel in the same way. There is certainly regression of the Spirit in the sense that there is delay in the progress but not from the point of the view of the acquired values, the very reason why, together with the development of the intelligence, social degradation is so painful. That is why a man of the world suffers much more in an abject environment than someone that has always lived in the quagmire.

Following a system that has something of specious at first sight, the Spirits would not have been created to incarnate and incarnation would not be but the result of their fault. Such a system falls before the mere consideration that, if not a single Spirit had failed, there would not be anybody on Earth or in other worlds. Now, since the presence of mankind is necessary for the material betterment of the worlds; since mankind concurs towards the general work through people's intelligence and activities; mankind is one of the essential gears of Creation. God could not have subordinated the partial realization of His work to the eventual regression of His creatures unless He always counted on a sufficient number of guilty souls to occupy the already created worlds and those to be created. Common sense rejects such idea.

Incarnation is then a necessity to the Spirit that by accomplishing its providential mission works towards its own betterment through work and intelligence that must be developed in order to provide for life and well-being. Incarnation becomes a punishment, though, when the Spirit does not do what it was supposed to be done, force to start the task again in a number of painful corporeal existences following one owns faults. A student only graduates after having passed through all classes. Are those classes a punishment? No. They are a necessity, an indispensable condition to advancement. But if due to laziness the Spirit is forced to repeat them it becomes a punishment. Hence it is certain that incarnation on Earth is a punishment to many that inhabit here because they could have avoided it whereas they could have multiplied it by two, three, a hundred, for their own faults and thus delaying their entry into better worlds. What is wrong is to admit in principle that incarnation is a punishment.

Here is another question that is frequently discussed: Since the Spirit was created simple and ignorant with the freedom of choice between good and bad wouldn't it be a moral decay when the Spirit chooses the bad path, considering that the Spirit does evil things that were not done before? This proposition is not more sustainable than the previous one. There is only decay when there is a passage from a good to relatively worse. Now, created simple and ignorant, the Spirit is in a null state, morally and intellectually, like the child that has just been born. If no good is done there is no evil either; it is not happy or unhappy; it acts without conscience and without responsibility. Since it has nothing it cannot lose anything or regress. The Spirit's responsibility only begins at the time when the free-will develops. Hence its primitive state is not a state of innocent and reasoned intelligence. Consequently, the bad deeds that the Spirit may do later on breaching the laws of God and abusing the God given faculties is not a regress from good to bad but the consequence of the path that was taken.

That leads us to another question. Nero, for example, while incarnate as Nero may have committed more bad actions than in his preceding incarnation? We respond that yes which does not imply that in his preceding life he was better. To begin with evil may change its form without being a greater or lesser evil. Nero's position as an Emperor put him in evidence allowing his actions to become more noticeable. In an obscure life, he might have done equally reprehensible things although in a lesser scale and that went unnoticed. As a sovereign, he was able to set a whole city on fire. As a common person, he could have set a house on fire and killed the family. If a vulgar murderer that assaults and kill some travelers were sitting on a throne would be a bloodthirsty tyrant doing in larger proportion what his former position would only allow in a reduced scale.

Considering the question under another point of view I say that a person can do more evil in an existence than in a preceding one, show vices that were not there before without the implication of a moral regression. Often it is the occasion that is not there for the evil to take place. When there is the principle in a latent stage with the occasion the bad instincts reveal.

Common life gives us numerous examples of that order: A man that was considered good suddenly reveals vices that were unsuspected and that provoke astonishment. The reason is simply for the fact that he was able to dissimulate or because a cause provoked the development of a bad seed. It is true that someone in which the good feelings are well entrenched there isn't even the bad thought. When such a thought does exist, it means that the germ is there. The only thing missing is frequently the execution.

Then, as we said, evil although under different forms is always evil. The same vicious principle may be the source of a number of diverse actions, all from the same cause. Pride, for example, may lead to a number of faults to which we are exposed while the radical principle is not eliminated. A person may then show defects in a given existence that were not present in a previous one and that are consequences of the same vicious principle.

To us Nero is a monster because he committed atrocities. But can we believe that those other treacherous people, hypocrites, true serpents that spread calumny, that spoil whole families through deception and abuse of confidence, that cover their turpitudes with the mask of virtue to achieve their aims with more security and be praised when they only deserved execration, can we believe, we were saying, that these are better than Nero? Certainly not. Incarnating in a Nero would not be a regression to them but an occasion to show a new face. In such a condition, they will exhibit the vices that they hid before. They will dare do through power what they did through deception that is the whole difference. But this new trial will not make their punishment more terrible unless instead of using the means of reparation he employs them to evil. Each existence, however, however bad it may be, is an occasion of progress to the Spirit that develops the intelligence and acquires experience and knowledge that later on will help with the moral progress.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

A few refutations

Second article

(See the May issue of the Review)

Every new idea has necessarily the opposition of all those whose opinions and interests are countered. Some think that the Church's position is compromised – we don't think so but our opinion is not the law – that is why they attack us with a fury that is only second to the executions of the Middle Ages. The sermons and pastoral teachings through blows in all directions. Brochures and journal articles are like hail rain mostly without a very Christian cynicism. Several of them show an almost frenetically rage. Why such a demonstration of force and hatred? Because we say that God forgives regret and the penalties are only eternal to those who never repent; and because we proclaim God's clemency and benevolence we are heretical prone to execration and society is lost. We are pointed out at as agitators; they invite authorities to persecute us in the name of a moral and public order, believing that if we are left alone they are not doing their job!

This brings up an interesting point. Some people ask why such an avalanche against Spiritism and not against so many other much less orthodox philosophical or religious theories. Has the Church attacked materialism that denies everything as it does to Spiritism that is limited to the interpretation of a few dogmas? Haven't these dogmas as many others been denied, discussed and controverted in a number of texts that the Church allow to go unnoticed? Weren't the fundamental principles God, the soul and the immortality publicly attacked without any move from the Church?

The so called Sansionism, Fourieism and even the church of Father Chatel have never attracted so much rage, not to mention other less known sects such as the fusionists, whose leader has just passed away and have their own cult, journal and do not admit the divinity of Christ; and there are the Catholics who do not accept the Pope and who have their priests and bishops married, have their churches in Paris and other provinces where they baptize, celebrate marriages and order the dead. Why then Spiritism that has no cult or church and whose priests only exist in people's imagination, draws so much animosity? That is bizarre!

The religious party and the materialist party that mutually deny each other are hand in hand to *annihilate* us, as they say. The human Spirit really does show singular originalities when blindfolded by passion and

history of Spiritism will have funny things to report. The answer is entirely in the conclusion of the brochure by Reverend Father Nampon¹⁸, as below:

*“In general, there is nothing more degraded, nothing lacking more substance and attractiveness in its form than **such publications whose fabulous success is one of the most alarming symptoms our times.** With the money spent in Lyon on these ineptitudes, they could have been easily used it for the installation of more beds in the hospices of the alienated that have been overcrowded since the invasion of Spiritism. And what are we going to do with these clumsy brochures? We will do to them the same as the great apostle of Ephesus did by remaining in the empire of reason and faith, preserving the victims of those regrettable illusions from a number of deceptions in their present life and from the flames of a miserable eternity.”*

It is that *fabulous success* that stuns our adversaries. They cannot understand the uselessness of everything that they do to block this idea that sneaks through their traps, stands up before their blows and moves on in its ascending march without concern for the stones that are thrown in its way. This is an undisputable fact many times attested by adversaries from this or that category in their speeches and publications. They all deplore *the incredible progress of this epidemic* that reaches even people of science, doctors and magistrates. In reality it is necessary to go back to Texas and say that Spiritism is dead and nobody else speaks of that. (See the article *Sermons against Spiritism, Spiritist Review February 1863*).

What is it that we do to succeed? Do we go to public places to preach? Do we invite the public to our sessions? Do we have our own propaganda missions? Do we have the support of the press? Finally, do we count on all of the secretive and ostensive means that you have and widely uses?

No. It takes us a thousand times less work to recruit followers than it takes you to veer them off. We are satisfied in saying: “Read and if you find it proper come back to us.” We do more, by saying: “Read the pros and cons and compare.” We respond to the attacks without hard feelings, without animosity, without acidity because there is on rage in us. Far from being sorry for yours we applaud it because it serves our cause.

Here you have, among thousands, a proof of the persuasive power of the arguments of our adversaries. A gentleman that has just sent a letter to the Parisian Society requesting membership starts the letter as below.

“By reading: The question of the supernatural; The dead and the living ones, by Father Matignon; The question of the Spirits, by Mr. de Mirville; The rapping Spirit, by Mr. Bronson and finally, by reading several articles against Spiritism I only felt completely attracted to the doctrine of The Spirits’ Book and that gave me the most earnest desire to join the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies in order to continue the study of Spiritism in a more consistent and fruitful way.”

Passion sometimes blindfolds people to the point of making them to commit singular contradictions. In the above-mentioned passage by Reverend Nampon he says *“there is nothing that lacks more substance and attractiveness in its form than these publications whose fabulous success...”* etc. He fails to realize that these propositions destroy one another mutually. Something without attractiveness could not have any success because the very condition of success is attractiveness and even more so when the success is *fabulous*. He adds that with the money spent in Lyon one could have installed more beds in the hospices of the alienated in that city, already overcrowded since the invasion of Spiritism. It is true that we would need

¹⁸ Sermon preached at the primatial Church of Saint John the Baptist, in the presence of his Eminence the Cardinal Archbishop of Lyon, from 14th to 21st of December by Reverend Father Nampon of the Company of Jesus of the Advent.

between thirty and forty thousand beds in Lyon alone because all the Spiritists are mad. On another since the texts are inept they have no value. Why then giving them so many sermons, commandments and brochures? As for the use of the money, we know that a large number of certainly disappointed people with the money given to the chancellor of St. Peter would instead have given bread to the hungry during the winter, whilst the reading of the Spiritist works gave them courage and resignation to withstand their misery with courage.

Father Nampon was unfortunate in his citations. He leads us to bring back a passage of *The Spirits' Book*: "There is such a distance between the soul of man and the soul of the animal as there is between the soul of man and the soul of God (# 597)." We say: "... the soul of man and God" that is very different. The soul of God implies a kind of assimilation between God and the corporeal creatures. The omission of a word is understandable by carelessness or typo but one does not add one word without intention. Why such an addition that alters the meaning of the idea if not to give a materialistic flavor to those who are satisfied with the citation without verifying the original? A book that was published somewhat earlier than *The Spirits' Book* and that contains a whole theogonic and cosmogonic theory turns God into a very diversely material being because it makes God composed of the all globes and molecules of the universe, having stomach and digestion from which results mankind, the bad product. Nonetheless, not a word was used to combat it. The full rage was geared towards *The Spirits' Book*. Will that be perhaps for the fact that in six years it has reached its tenth edition and is spread all over the world?

Not satisfied with their criticism they truncate and denature the maxims to add *to the horror that one must feel in such a heinous doctrine* and putting ourselves in contradiction. That is how Father Nampon cites a statement from the introduction of *The Spirits' Book*, page XXXIII saying: "Certain persons, you say it yourself, lost their minds by the study of this material." That gives the impression that we acknowledge the fact that Spiritism leads to madness while the thorough analysis of paragraph XV clearly shows that the accusation falls precisely onto those who raise it.

That is how one can take the fragment of a statement given by an author and lead him to the gallows. The most sacred authors would not have escaped such a dissection. It is with this kind of system that some critics expect to change the trend of Spiritism and make believe that it promotes abortion, adultery and suicide when in fact it definitively demonstrates its criminality and the dismal consequences for the future. Father Nampon goes to the point as to misappropriate some citations aiming at the denial of certain ideas. He says: "*The author sometimes calls Jesus Christ the man-God; but elsewhere (The Mediums' Book, item 259) in a dialogue with a medium that used the name Jesus who said: I am not God but His son, he immediately replies: But then you are Jesus?*" Yes, Father Nampton adds, *Jesus is called the son of God; that is then in an Adamic sense but not less consubstantial to the Father*".

To begin with it was not the medium who said that he was Jesus but a Spirit, and that is very different; and the citation is exactly made in order to show the deception that certain Spirits employ and keep the mediums aware of such gimmicks.

Your intention is to have Spiritism denying the divinity of Christ. Where have you seen such a proposition made by principle? You say that it is the consequence of the whole doctrine. Ah! If go there to the terrain of interpretations we may go further than you would wish. Had we said, for example, that Jesus had not attained perfection; that he had the need of incarnation in order to advance; that his passion was necessary for his ascension in glory you would be right because we would make him not even a pure Spirit sent to Earth with a divine mission but a simple mortal instead who had the need of the suffering in order to progress. Where have you found such interpretation from us? Then! What we have never said, what we will never say is you who say so.

Some time ago we saw at the main hall of a religious place in Paris the following inscription in large letters for the general instruction: *“It was necessary that Christ suffered to enter his glory and it was only after he had drunk large amounts of the torrent of tribulation and suffering that he was taken to the highest heavens (Psalm 110:7)”*¹⁹ This is the comment about the text that reads: *“He will drink from the brook by the way; therefore he will lift up his head.”*

If he had to suffer in order to enter his glory; if he could not have been taken to the highest heavens but through tribulations and sufferings it means that he was not in such a glory before neither was he in the highest heavens, that is he was not with God. Hence his sufferings were not only to the benefit of humanity because they were needed for his own betterment. Stating that Jesus had the need to suffer in order to rise up is the same as saying that he was not perfect before his arrival. We cannot find a stronger protest to his divinity. If that is the meaning of the Psalm that is sung on the Eves than every Sunday they sing the non-divinity of Christ.

The system of interpretation takes us far. If we wanted to mention some from the councils about this verse: *“The Lord is by your right-hand side; he will break the kings in the days of his rage”*, it will be easy to demonstrate that it is the origin of the justification of regicide.

“The picture of future life, says Father Nampon, changes completely (with Spiritism). The immortality of the soul is reduced to a material permanence, without a moral identity, without a conscience of the past.”

It is a mistake. Spiritism has never said that the soul would lose its conscience of the past. It does momentarily lose its memory during the corporeal life but *“when the Spirit enters into its primitive life (spiritual life) their whole past unveils before their eyes: they see their faults, cause of their sufferings and what could have been done to avoid them. They understand that the position that was given to them is fair and then seek the life that could repair the one that has just ended (The Spirits’ Book, item 393).”* Since there is a memory of the past, awareness of the being, there is then moral identity. Since the spiritual life is the normal life of the Spirit and that the corporeal lives are only points in the spiritual life immortality then is not just a material permanence. As it can be seen, Spiritism says exactly the opposite. By such deviation Father Nampon does not have the excuse of ignorance because his citations demonstrate that he did read but instead he makes the mistake of truncating the citations and making them in opposition to their true meaning.

Spiritism is accused by some of being based on the grossest materialism because it admits the perispirit that has material properties. This is still a false consequence taken from a principle that has been incompletely exposed. Spiritism *has never confused soul with perispirit* that is no more than an envelope as the body is another envelope. If the soul has ten envelopes this would not remove its immaterial essence.

That cannot be said about the Council of Vienna at the Dauphiné, France, in its second session on April 3rd, 1312. According to that doctrine *“the authority of the Church commands that the soul is just the substantial form of the body; that there are no innate ideas, declaring heretic those who deny the materiality of the soul”*. Raul Fornier, a law Professor, teaches the same thing in his academic speeches about the origin of the soul, according to the texts printed in Paris in 1619 with the approval and praise of several doctors in Theology. It is possible that the Council, based on the facts of numerous visible and tangible Spiritist manifestations found in the Scriptures, manifestations that are positively material since they affect the

¹⁹ The original in French indicates Psalm 109:8 but that seems to be a typo that the reader may confirm through the text itself (T.N.)

senses, it is possible that the Council confused the soul with its fluidic envelope or perispirit whose distinction is demonstrated by Spiritism. Hence its doctrine is less materialistic than that of the Council.

“But let us examine the people of France, the most advanced in these studies. In order to attest the identity of the speaking Spirit, says Mr. Allan Kardec, it is necessary to study their language. Be it! We know through their authentic writings, the language of St. John, St. Paul, St. Augustine, Fénelon, etc. How dare you then attribute ideas and feelings absolutely contrary to those great geniuses forever consigned in their works?”

You then admit that those figures were not mistaken about anything; that everything that they wrote is the expression of truth; that if they returned today physically they should teach everything that was taught in the past; that coming as Spirits they should not deny any of their words. However, St. Augustine saw the belief in the roundness of Earth and in the antipodes as a heresy. He sustained the existence of the incubus and succubus and believed in procreation through trading between people and the Spirits.

Do you believe that he cannot think, as a Spirit, differently from what he thought as a man and that he would teach those doctrines today? If his ideas have to be modified about certain points they must also be about others. If he was wrong, the undoubtedly superior genius, why wouldn't you yourself be wrong, and would that be necessary to deny him the right, or even better the merit of acknowledging his errors just out of respect for the orthodoxy?

You attribute to St. Louis this ridiculous phrase, particularly in his mouth, about the eternity of penalties: “The assumption of incurable Spirits is a denial of the law of progress” (The Spirits Book, item 1007). That is not how it is formulated. St. Louis responds to the following question: *Are there Spirits that never repent? Answer: There are Spirits that take a long time to regret but the supposition that they will never improve would be the same as the denial of the law of progress and the same as saying that the child will not become an adult.*

The first form would seem ridiculous. When then always truncating and changing the statements? Who do they think they deceive? The ones who will only read the inaccurate comments? But this number is too small compared to the ones who want to know better about these things to which you call their attention. Well, the comparison cannot but favor Spiritism.

NOTE: For the enlightenment of all we recommend the reading of the brochure: Spiritism, by Reverend Father Nampton, from the Company of Jesus, Girard and Josserand, Lyon, at Rue Cassette 5, Bellecour Sq. number 30, Paris. We also recommend the reading of the complete texts from The Spirits' Book and The Mediums' Book, texts that were partially mentioned or altered in the referred brochure.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

Spiritism budget

Or the exploitation of human credulity

That is the title of a brochure published in Alger by a retired officer, former representative of the people at the Constituent Assembly of 1848, in which, by trying to demonstrate that the objective of Spiritism is a gigantic speculation, he shows calculations that result in fabulous fortunes to us, numbers that leave behind the many millions with which we were gratified by a certain priest of Lyon (Spiritist Review, June 1862). We show the whole text with the conclusions of the author so that the reader can appreciate this interesting account. Such excerpt gives an idea about the remainder of the brochure with respect to Spiritism.

“Not stopping at the analysis of all articles apparently related to the proofs of neophytism and discipline of the Society, we call the reader’s attention to articles 15 and 16. It is all there. The reader will see that under the pretext of providing resources to the expenses of the Society each member pays: 1st – a down payment of 10 francs; 2nd – an annual fee of 24 francs and each free member pays an annual fee of 20 francs. The fees are pay in total per year that is in advance. Mr. Allan Kardec takes precaution against desertions.

Well, considering the admiration that people have everywhere for Spiritism we believe that a number of 3,000 members in Paris alone to be a conservative figure. The annual contributions then amount to 63,000 francs not including the down payments served to initiate the business.

We will only superficially estimate the proceedings from the sale of The Spirits’ Book and The Mediums’ Book. They must be considerable since we are not aware of any other book that is so much in fashion now and that is based on the insatiable desire of man to penetrate the mysteries of future life.

From the preceding, we have not yet shown the greatest source of profit. There is a monthly Spiritist magazine, published by Mr. Allan Kardec, an indigestible publication that goes far beyond the legends of the marvelous from antiquity and the Middle Ages, and whose membership is 10 francs per year in Paris; 12 francs to the provinces and 14 francs abroad.

Well, no follower of Spiritism would miss his share of apparitions, evocations, manifestations of Spirits and legends for 10 francs (about 90 cents per month)? Thus, since there are not less than 30,000 members in France and abroad yielding a total of 300,000 francs that added to the 63,000 francs of membership fees give a total of 363,000 francs. The expenses to be discounted are:

- 1) *Lease of the building for the sessions of the Society and salaries of the secretaries, treasurer, the servants and a good number of mediums. We believe that an estimated 40,000 is above the actual costs.*
- 2) *Net cost of the magazine: 32 pages will cost not more than 20 cents. Twelve annual numbers will cost 2.4 francs that multiplied by 30,000 give 72,000.*

*Total expenses: 112,000 francs. Now subtracting these from the 363,000 yield to Mr. Allan Kardec an annual profit of 250,000 francs not including the sales of *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*.*

*Considering the way this epidemic progresses, it will soon have half of France as Spiritist if that is not already the case and since one cannot be a good Spiritist without being a member and a subscriber of the *Spiritist Review* there is the likelihood that out of 20 million inhabitants, 5 million will subscribe to the magazine. Consequently, the income of presidents and vice-presidents of the Spiritist Societies will be 100 million francs annually and that of Mr. Allan Kardec, the owner of the *Spiritist Review* and sovereign pontiff, of 38 million.*

If Spiritism conquers the other half of France, the income will double and if Europe is allowed to be infested, it will no longer be millions but billions that must be accounted for in profit.

Ah! The naïve Spiritists! What do you think about this speculation based on your simplicity? Would you have ever imagined that such a treasure could have resulted from the game of the dancing tables? Are you now aware of the reason why the propagators of the doctrine are so eager to found societies?

Isn't there reason to say that human stupidity is a never ending mine to be exploited?

Let us now examine the means utilized by Mr. Allan Kardec and his skills as a speculator is the only thing that cannot be doubted.

He understands that with the universal fashion of the turning tables and without spending a cent the most important thing is done that is publicity.

The promise of unveiling the mysteries of life beyond the grave through the turning tables attracted an immense clientele eager for such mysteries and consequently entirely available to listen to his revelations. Then noticing that the existing cults could subtract from him a significant number of followers he proclaims their failure. One can read in his brochure "Spiritism in its simplest expression (page 15): From a religious point of view Spiritism is based on the fundamental truths of all religions: God, the soul, the immortality, future penalties and rewards; but it is independent of any particular cult." Such a doctrine made to seduce an ever growing number of people who no longer wish to support any social hierarchy, could not but have its effect."

OBSERVATION: There are then, in your opinion, many to whom the weight of religion is unbearable!

"What is really strange to us is the fact that, by authorizing the cult of Spiritism, the government had not seen that such audacious attempt contains the germ of abolition of its own authority. The reason being the fact that when the epidemic has spread even further isn't that possible that by an injunction of the Spirits the authority that may threaten the existence of Spiritism may be abolished? There would be no harm in allowing the Spiritist societies. However, wouldn't that be wise to prohibit their publications?"

The sect would have been circumscribed to the meeting rooms and probably would not be more successful than the spectacles of Conus or Houdin.

But if the law is atheist, as modern philosophy says, it is due to such paradox that a person may proclaim the defeat of the Church's authority. This example, we must say in-passing, would demonstrate the wisdom of the legislators of antiquity to the eyes of the less clairvoyant, who did not believe that material order could co-exist with moral disorder, so intimately interconnected in their civil and religious laws.

If the destruction of God's spiritual creations was up to humanity the first effect of Spiritism would be to remove hope from people's hearts. What would a person expect here if convinced (not proven) that there would be several corporeal existences after death, at their disposal and indefinitely? Such a dogma that is nothing more than the metempsychosis of Pythagoras, isn't that supposed to weaken the feeling of duty down here by saying: Leave serious businesses to a later date? Charity, so strongly recommended by Jesus and by the Church, that Spiritism itself utilizes as the cornerstone of its edifice, doesn't it receive a mortal blow?

Another effect of Spiritism is to transform faith, an act of free-will, into blind belief? Hence in order to entrench the speculation of Spiritism or the turning tables Mr. Allan Kardec preaches a doctrine whose tendency is the destruction of faith, hope and charity!

Nevertheless, if the Christian world would stand up, Spiritism will not prevail. The whole value of a religious principle will be recognized (as Mr. Bishop of Alger says in his letter dated February 13th, 1863) because it is sufficient to succeed over any vacillation, opposition or any resistance.

But are there true Spiritists? We will deny it while there is hope in one's heart. What is it that Spiritism contains then? It is nothing more than a speculator of deluded people. On the day when the temporal authority understands its bond to the moral authority and just block the Spiritist publications such a moral speculation will fall to no longer stand up."

A paper from Alger, the Akhbar on March 28th, 1863 in an article, as much benevolent as the brochure reproducing part of those arguments, concluded that it has been perfectly demonstrated that by authentic calculations that Spiritism gives us an annual income of 250,000 francs. The author of the brochure sees things even further since his estimates indicate that in a few years it will lead us to 38 million that is a budget above the richest sovereigns of Europe.

We will certainly not take the time to refute the calculations that are disproved by their own exaggeration but that demonstrates something: the horror that the rapid propagation of Spiritism causes in its adversaries to point of leading them to say absurd things. Admitting effectively for a moment the numbers of the author as real wouldn't that be the strongest possible protest against the ongoing ideas that would fall down in the whole world before the idea issued by a single man, unknown six years ago? Isn't that a recognition of the irresistible power of that idea?

You say that it tends to supercede religion and to demonstrate that you present it followed by 20 million people in a short time and later by forty million in France alone. You then shout: "No religion can perish." But if your predictions do take place what will become of religion? Let us do a simple statistical calculation based on the numbers of the author. In France 36 million inhabitants; Spiritists 40 million; that results in minus four millions of Catholics because, in your opinion, one cannot be Catholic and Spiritist. If the Church is so easily destroyed by one person with the support of an extravagant idea isn't that the acknowledgement that it is sustained by a very fragile foundation?

By saying that it can be compromised by simple absurdities is a weak praise to the power of its argumentation and a confession of the secret of its weakness. Where is then its unchangeable basis? We need a stronger and, in particular, more logical defender of the Church than the author of the brochure. There is nothing more dangerous than an unwise friend.

We don't think about everything. The author did not notice that while trying to denigrate he exalts our importance and the means that he utilizes goes directly against his objective. Since money is the god of our time there is no lack of courtesan to the richest ones, attracted by the hope of cadavers. The billions with which he gratifies us would bring even princes to our feet, far from sending them away. What would the author say if we made him the heir of a few dozens of millions since we have no children? Would he believe that the source is bad? That would make him say that Spiritism is good for something.

In his opinion, the Parisian Society is one of the sources of our huge income and, in his estimates, it must have at least 3,000 members. To begin with we could ask who gives him the right to come to meddle with our private business. But let it be. Since the boast about so much accuracy and that is necessary when one wants to prove with numbers if he had only gone through the trouble of checking the report of the Society, published in the Spiritist Review of 1862 he would have had a more precise idea of its resources and of what he calls the budget of Spiritism.

If he had collected information elsewhere and not only from his imagination, he would have learned that the Society, officially listed among the scientific societies, is not a fraternity or a congregation but a simple gathering of persons that are involved with the in-depth study of a new science; that far from being concerned with the number that is more harmful than helpful, it restricts that number instead of increasing it by making the admission really difficult; that instead of 3,000 members it has never reached the number one hundred; that none of its workers is payed, nor president or vice-president or secretaries; that it does not hire payed mediums and that it has always fought against the exploitation of mediumship; that it has never accepted a single cent from the visitors that are accepted in small numbers and it has never had its doors open to the public; that besides the contributing members there is not a single member that is its tributary; that the honorable members do not pay any fee; that there is no affiliation or material solidarity between this Society and the others; that the fees and proceedings never pass through the hands of the president; that any expenses, however small, is only authorized by the committee; finally that its budget of 1862 was closed with a balance of 429,40 francs.

Does this slim result diminishes the importance of Spiritism? No, much to the contrary for it demonstrates that the Parisian Society is not any sort of personal speculation. When the author tries to excite the animosity against us telling the followers that they are ruined in our favor they will simply respond that it is a calumny since nothing is demanded from them and nothing is paid by them. Can it be said about everybody else and couldn't the author's argument be applied to others with more authentic numbers than his own? As for the 30,000 subscribers of the Spiritist Review we wish. "Calumny, calumny, said an author, and there is always something left." Yes, certainly something will remain sooner or later that will return to the defamer.

Injuries, calumnies, clear inventions up to the moment when a private life is reached so that the individual falls in disgrace before a large number of persons; this brochure that has gone beyond all the published diatribes so far offers all the conditions required to be taken to the court. We did not do it despite the many requests we have received because it is Spiritism's luck and we would not like that it would not have been published to the price of even worse calumnies. Our adversaries could not have done anything better for their own discredit by showing the sad expedients to which they were reduced so as to attack us and how much they are scared by the success of the new ideas.

We could say that it leads them to lose their minds. The effect of that brochure was to provoke huge laughter in all of those who know us and the number is large. As for those who do not know us, it must have inspired in them a lively desire to get to know this improvised millionaire that collects millions more easily than people collect cents and who just need to release an idea to attract the population of a whole empire. Well, since according to the author he only attracts the stupid ones it follows that the whole empire from top to bottom of the scale is made of silly people.

History of mankind does not offer a single example of similar phenomenon. Had the author been paid to achieve such result he would not have done better. Hence, we cannot complain.²⁰

²⁰ We got a letter from Algeria – received with reservation – indicating that the author belongs to a Spiritist Center; that his eagerness for the cause had led him to the presidency but later for not be willing to renounce to certain projects that were not approved by the other members he was then destituted.

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

Crowned Spirit at the floral games

We reproduce in full the following letter received from Bordeaux on May 7th, 1863:

“Dear Master,

On April 22nd last, I received a letter from Mr. T. Jaubert, vice-president of the civil court of Carcassonne, honorary president of the Spiritist Society of Bordeaux, in which he informed me that the Academy of Floral Games of Toulouse had judged the poems admitted to the contest in 1863.

There were sixty-eight competing fables; two fables were selected and one got the first prize (The Spring); the other got a special mention in the oral report. Both fables, Mr. Jaubert says, are from his familiar Spirit. Since that was very important to Spiritism I wanted to witness that myself and traveled to Toulouse with a committee from the Spiritist Society of Bordeaux to watch the coronation of the rapping Spirit of Carcassonne. We then attended the solemn ceremony of the prizes and later the reading of the awarded fables, joining the general applause of the public of that city and we saw the hydra of materialism sneak through its brave and rising to its place the sacred and reassuring dogma of the immortality of the soul.

We address you, dear master, just as an interpreter of hour honorable president Mr. Jaubert. He assigned us with the task of telling you about this fortunate event knowing as we know that nobody can deduce with more wisdom its consequences and to make it useful to the cause that we are proud to serve under your paternal direction.

*We gladly take this occasion to affirm our recognition to the excellent Mr. Jaubert and by the cordial and sympathetic reception that was given to the delegation of the Society of Bordeaux. Such protests of friendship are precious to us and give us courage to march with perseverance the laborious *apostolate*, not stopping before the obstacles that we may find there. Mr. Jaubert is one of those persons that can serve as role model to others. He is a true Spiritist, simple, modest and good, full of dignity and abnegation; he is calm and serious with everything that is great; he shows no pride or enthusiasm, essential qualities to anybody that wants to become an apostle of the doctrine, attaching his name to the courageous professions of faith that he sends to the weak and to the meek. We see the victory of the Spirit at the Capitol of Toulouse as a victory to our sacred and sublime doctrine. God wants to stop the smiles of irony and disbelief. That is no doubt why He allowed the chiefs of the Areopagus to have the soul of a dead person crowned.*

Let us have May 3rd recorded with golden letters in the history of Spiritism. It cements the first link of the fraternal solidarity that unites the living ones to the dead: splendid and sublime revelation that warms up and vivifies the souls through the radiation of faith.

The party was so beautiful to every Spiritist that attended the ceremony! They saw in the room of the Floral Games Spirits floating here and there, gliding over the public groups of Spirits that congratulated one another for this victory obtained by one of their brothers and irradiating above all the Spirit of Clemence Isaura, the founder of these new Olympic Games, having in her hands a flexible crown to place on the head of the laureate Spirit at the moment of triumph.

If there are times of sadness in life there are also those of ineffable happiness. It means that on May 3^d, 1863 I saw in Toulouse, or even better, we saw one of those moments that makes us all forget the tribulations of earthly life.

Yours sincerely, dear master...

Sabó"

It is, in fact, a remarkable fact that has just taken place in Toulouse and everybody understands the emotion of the sincere Spiritists that attended the ceremony for they understood its consequences, emotion that was translated in such simple and touching words in the letter that we have just read. It is the expression of truth without jest, *bluster*.

Some people could be surprised by the fact that Mr. Jaubert did not confuse the adversaries of Spiritism by proclaiming during the session and before the crowd the true origin of the winning fables. If he did not do that it was for a simple reason: Mr. Jaubert is a simple man that does not try to make noise and that above all he knows how to live. Among the judges there were certainly some that did not share his ideas with respect to Spiritism. It would like throwing publically in their faces a kind of challenge, a belie, an action unworthy of an elegant man, or better saying, of a true Spiritist that respect other people's opinion, even those that are different from his own.

What such a clamor would have produced? Protest from the part of some attendees, perhaps scandal. Would it have benefited Spiritism? No. It would have compromised its honor. Mr. Jaubert, as well as the numerous Spiritists that attended the ceremony, gave proof of elevated wisdom, abstaining from any public demonstration. It was a sign of reverence and respect as much to the Academy as to the assembly. They demonstrated once more in those circumstances that the Spiritists know how to maintain calm in success as well as before the attacks of the adversaries and that one should not expect incitation to disorder from them. The fact loses nothing in importance because it will soon be acclaimed and known in a hundred different countries. The detractors of good or bad faith, for there are both, will certainly say that there is nothing to demonstrate the origin of the fable and that the laureate could have attributed the products of his own talent to the Spirits in order to serve Spiritism. There is one very simple answer to this: the notorious honorability of Mr. Jaubert's character that challenges any suspicion of having represented a farce unworthy of the moment and of his position.

When the adversaries attack us by showing the charlatans that simulate Spiritist phenomena on the stage we answer that true Spiritism has nothing in common with them as true science has nothing to do with pseudo or false scientists. It is up to those who take the burden of investigating to notice the difference. Even worse is the judgement of those who speak of something that they ignore.

Since the issue of loyalty cannot be questioned there is still the need to know if Mr. Jaubert is a poet or if in good faith he would not have taken one of his work and attributed that to the Spirits. I don't know if he is a poet but if he had the talent of Racine the means by which he obtains his Spiritist fables does not allow for the faintest doubt: the notorious fact that all were obtained by typology, that is, by the language of the alphabet hit by the raps and that most had innumerable witnesses not less trustworthy than him. Whoever is

familiar with this method knows that his imagination could not have had the minor influence. The authenticity of the origin is then incontestable and the Academy of Toulouse could verify that by attending one of his experiments. We give below the two awarded fables.

The lion and the raven

(First prize)

A lion wandered around his immense domain,

With pride and nobility, guarding his terrain;

Many preys devoured, but none in vain,

The good prince finally his dinner did attain!

He did not walk alone, though,

No, after the powerful blow

He was followed by tigers, leopards and wolves,

Panthers, razorbacks and foxes that,

As they say, closed in wisely from the back.

One day the monarch spoke solemnly

To the subjects and victims respectfully:

“Illustrious comrades of my glorious reign,

Quadruped submitted to my noble fang,

Hear me out all of you in my land,

Listen, I am your king by God’s hand!

The lion then spoke of his power

Better perhaps than a lawyer,

Or a district attorney with brains,

Spoke of his duties and his state claims,
Talked about dogs, shepherds, and regulations,
Silly people, bad words and evil actions.
He then finished, already touched by the moment,
By saying: I left my palace giving you the scent
Of my presence; tell me about your problems;
I will judge the cause and give you my terms.
Cows, sheep and rabbits you may count on
My benevolence! You have total freedom
To explain. I wait. But wait, nothing at all,
From this whole assembly, not a call
No complaint, not a single screech!
An old crow then interrupted the speech,
And gliding freely in the air he said:
Do you find their silence bad?
Your grace? It is their horror that touches
Your senses and keep their mouth shut!

A bone to chew

(Honors award)

Wearing a helmet with a feathery pinnacle

On top, a disciple of the late Vatel

In the backyard of this vast mansion

Had with his dogs a conversation:

I have thought a lot about you, he said.

I love you very much and I am glad

To give you the remainders of the kitchen:

It is this bone, this beautiful chewing

Bone. But only one of you will have the great honor.

I am fair and will give it to the one that deserves the favor.

The contest is open; you may defend your rights at once.

A funny little dog, famous amongst the skillful ones,

Formerly the first among the canine troop,

Immediately starts his trickery and by

Looking at the others with his triumphant eyes,

He barks, pretends to be dead and salutes his owner.

A big watchdog then exclaimed at the offender:

“What is the point of such a display?

I always watch over this big estate.

My Lord please do not forget that not long

Ago a stupid thief ended up in my fangs!”

A little dog then said: Valiantly and without an error

For ten years I have been turning your skewer

And for ten years I have been carrying your bag

To buy tobacco at the corner shop.

“But I, howled Tayaut, I love the trumpets and the drums;

When we hunt I am always ahead of these bums!

You owe me at least twenty foxes and a hundred rabbits;

I am sober and obedient. I never devour the bird that is trapped.

The one who finally chewed the bone was an old basset hound,

Like a congressman always in the center.

He did not think twice and before the big crowd

He crawled on the legs of his owner,

Licked his feet until the struggle was over.

Bassets of grand lords, heroes of cafeterias,

Vile adulators, your story is here.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

Considerations about the rapping Spirit of Carcassonne

If someone continues to believe in the ability of a medium to have first-hand knowledge of information, like the production of verses awarded by the Academy of Toulouse, then the same would not apply to things that are physically impossible for the medium to know. Among the many examples, the following fact is a peremptory response to the objection. We took it from a second letter of Mr. Sabò. He says:

“On May 4th, after the delegation left, I remained another day in Toulouse and, during a visit to Mr. Jaubert, he proposed an experiment that I gladly accepted as I had never seen him in action. There was a heavy four-legged table in his room. We positioned ourselves facing one another and after several evolutions of the table that obeyed his commands he asked me to mentally evoke a Spirit after the table had returned to the normal position. Here are the questions he asked the Spirit and the answers:

1. Can you tell us your gender? – A. Female (true).
2. How old were you when you left Earth? – A. Twenty two years old (also true).
3. What is your name? – A. The Spirit answered with six letters forming Félici.

Mr. Jaubert thought that he knew the name and advanced by saying: it must be Félicie or Félicité. Not responding to his observation, I asked him to continue. The Spirit then indicated letter “a”. I was moved and the medium was afraid of a mystification. Once he was certified that the name was Felicia, he continued.

4. What is your relationship with Mr. Sabò: – A. I was his wife.

Mr. Jaubert then thought that it was a real mystification because he knew that my wife was alive. I cannot deny the fact that I was really happy since I had just touched, if I can say so, the soul of my Felicia. I then explained to Mr. Jaubert – a fact that he did not know – that I was a widow and had married again a few months ago the sister of the Spirit that had just given us an irrefutable proof of the manifestation of the soul. He was as happy as I was with the result saying that he used to obtain results of such a nature and that gladly or not it should convince the most absolute disbelief. Whoever tells me: this does not exist, I will respond like Mr. Jaubert: This does exist, you unbelievers! Seek in good faith and you shall find out.

From our side, we tell these persons that they have the absolute doubters in high account believing that they will yield to evidence. There are those that were born unbelievers and will die like that; it does not mean that they could not believe but they did not want to believe. There isn't a worse blind person than the one that does not want to see.

A wise officer recently told one of our friends that spoke to him about these phenomena:

- I will never believe that a table can move and rise up but through the muscles of the operator.
- But if you saw a table floating in space without any contact or support what would you say?
- I would not believe either because I know that it is impossible.

You must understand that not even all the rapping Spirits of Carcassonne and in the whole world are enough to surpass such absolute and preconceived disbelief. The best thing to do is to leave them alone. When in a hundred people, ninety believe then what are the other ten going to do? As in the current situation they will still insist that they are the only ones with common sense and that it is necessary to arrest the mad ones, the ninety nine percent of the population. Leave them with that innocent satisfaction then and let us move on with our lives, not worrying about the ones that are late.

The expression "I know that it is impossible" brings to mind an anecdote:

A Dutch ambassador discussing specifics about Holland with Sian and about what the Prince was learning, he said, among other things, that the water got so hard during the coldest period of the year that people would walk on that and, with such a hardness, even elephants could walk it. The king then responded: "Mr. Ambassador, I believed in the extraordinary things that you told me so far because I saw you as an honored and noble person, but now I am certain that you are lying to me." Isn't that the same as "I know that it is impossible"?

The fact reported above proves nothing, certain unbelievers will say, because if the medium ignored the situation, Mr. Sabò knew it very well. It was his thought that was replicated then. Thus, it was the thought of the one that was not the medium that reflected on the table, agitating it intelligently to make it hit with knocks indicative of the letters that followed his thought.

What an incredible property of the mind! Only this phenomenon, admitting your theory, wouldn't that be prodigious and deserve attention? Why do you disdain it then? Think about the composition of a grain of sand; carefully calculate the proportions of its elements and you only have disdain to show to a manifestation strange to a thought? If a new beam of light of the solar spectrum is identified you will promptly study its properties, its chemical action, its angle of reflection and the refraction index. A beam of thought is isolated, agitates matter, reflects like light and that does not attract your attention! You then say: "What is the point of being bothered with that? It is just a thought!"

But with such a theory, how can you explain the numerous facts of revelations, be it by typology, by writing, of things completely ignored by the attendees and whose accuracy was attested, among others that of Mr. Simon Louvet, reported in the Spiritist Review of March 1863? Whose thought would have reflected that if they had to resource to a six year old journal to verify it? Is it simpler to admit that it was the thought of the journalist than that of the Spirit of Simon Louvet?

You are then very much afraid to be forced to believe that the soul outlives the body! And the idea of annihilation after death smiles to you more than that of reviving in happier conditions and that of meeting again in the spiritual world the loved ones left behind on Earth!

If you are satisfied with the sweet quietness of disappearing forever at the bottom of the tomb and that of sleeping in the rottenness of the body, what bad do those who think the opposite do to you and why persecuting them like the enemies of mankind?

You try to do them harm in proportion to your belief; they don't do that in proportion to yours even if they had the feeling of revenge from your calumnies. That is the condemnation of the social consequences of your doctrines.

We don't refuse to believe, say some among you, but we cannot see because we are precluded even from entering the sessions where we could be convinced and where only the already convinced people are allowed.

The access to the meetings is denied to you for a very simple reason: you do not wish to do what is necessary to learn or to follow the path that is indicated to you. You come to the meetings with a hostile feeling, not to study cold and seriously, with the thought of having your preconceived ideas prevailing there and that in the majority of the cases you bring disturbance. Without the due respect to the private character, although not secretive, of the meetings, you try to enter through gimmicks in order to satisfy a useless curiosity and to find subject for sarcasm and frequently to denature what you had just seen. These are the reasons for your exclusion that would never be excessively strict because you are harmful to some and useless to yourself. Those who consciously want to enlighten themselves must demonstrate it through a patient and perseverant good-will and there will be no lack of means for that. But such a good will could not be found in your desire to submit things to your requirements instead of you yourself submit to the requirements of the thing. Having said that let us leave the unbelievers alone waiting that time will come when they will see light. The first answer given by the Spirit of Félicia could seem contradictory to certain persons. She says that she is a female whilst it is well known that the Spirits have no gender. It is true that they have no gender but in order to allow themselves to be recognized they show up in the form that we knew them when alive. Félicia continues to be female to her former husband. She could not present herself in any other way for it would have disturbed his memory. There is more: when he enters the spiritual world he will meet her as she was on Earth otherwise he would not recognize her. The purely physical characters, though, disappear gradually allowing for the permanence of the purely moral features. It is how the mother meets the child in an early age although in reality the Spirit is no longer a child. We must still add that the purely moral characters are the more persistent the less dematerialized the Spirits, that is, less elevated in the hierarchy of creatures. That is why the inferior Spirits, still attached to Earth, are in the invisible world more or less what they were in their lives, with the same tastes and inclinations.

We will make a final observation about this chapter. It is about the qualification of the rapping Spirit, wrongly given to the Spirit that communicates with Mr. Jaubert in our opinion. Such a classification is not adequate, as we said elsewhere, but to the Spirits that we would call rappers by profession and that always belong to the inferior echelons, by their little elevation of ideas and knowledge. Hence this would not apply to this one that demonstrates at the same time the superiority of his moral and intellectual qualities. For him typology is not an entertainment. It is a means of transmission of his thoughts that he utilizes for not having found in the medium the faculty necessary to act differently. His objective is serious whilst the rapping Spirits properly speaking is almost always futile, when not malevolent. We prefer the qualification of "tiptor" to that of rapping Spirit, since it can be taken in a bad sense, and tiptor is a term that refers to the language of typology.

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

June 1863

Meditation about the future

Poetry by Mrs. Raoul de Navery

Read at the Parisian Society on March 27th, 1863

OBSERVATION: Although it is not our habit to publish poetry that has not been attested as mediumistic the readers will certainly thank us for the exception given to the work below, result of the inspiration of a person that not long ago considered the Spiritist beliefs as utopias.

When the hand of death, multiplying its blows,

Sowed vacuum and sorrow around us,

The only expression to reach our ears was:

If a beloved one rests on its mortal veil

The soul freed from its bodily jail

Broke the links of the heavy shroud;

And now returning to the original cradle

Enjoys God's light and enormous power.

Meet again you will and confuse

With the earthly love, an immortal one.

Today it is no longer the faintly hope

Illuminating pain with a vacillating glare;
It is no longer a future that brings back our dead.
No, they are around us, helping in our struggles,
 Suffering with us, aware of our troubles,
 Messengers bringing the sacred hope,
Responding to our secret sorrow from above,
Their hands in our hands, their lips carrying
 Even more kindly kisses, so reassuring!
From the heart of another world like a dove
Adding some mystery to the greatness of love.
When evoked, invisible phalanxes overwhelm
 Our chests with clarity and calm.
They come! It is all color and change to us;
From unknown worlds, we foresee the dawn;
 Illuminating our heads a reflex, sidereal
 Worshiping in silence, we kneel.
 God's majesty is by them revealed.
 Answer me, oh eternal wisdom!
 Do we offend you when
 Reverently impelled we broke the veil
That has concealed heavens for such a long trail?
 Are we following a restive Soul?
Are we tearing apart the divine texts of the Gospels?
 No. We have conviction and courage!

We do ourselves what the Lord has done:
We believe. We can do miracles
Turning our own homes into temples.
We can call that Spirit whose tongue of fire awed
And turned simple fishermen into apostles of God.
Blow celestial winds, blow from all corners of heavens!
Keep away from us that dismal darkness;
Spread clarity, oh golden chandeliers;
From the sacred arc bring to the treasure cheers!
Light beams from the Sinai! Tree of Horeb on fire!
Powerful Spirits of the strong, prophets and women alike,
Spirit, this furtive breath that Job felt
Passing by, giving him the goose flesh;
All of you who destroyed the exalted minds,
Making martyrs out of the mutinous crowds;
When the tormented Middle Ages in its trunk
Generated the inquisitor, the bloody monk;
Come, we are thirsty of the strange teachings;
Rejecting forever the childish things;
We need another language to the new truths
Instead of old sermons, repeated speeches.
We march ahead of the indolent horde.
And if truth devours us with its burning cords
We become martyrs, gladly dying

But will never such a truth believe!
Let us move ahead of our time;
Let us seek, with the kings, the sign
The hidden God for our homage!
We know very well what they stage:
“Poets, dreamers, they are now mad!”
Be it! Because the name we proudly bear
Was given to Jesus when his servants
Of those days launching the sublime emblem
Of the whitely dress said with Paul:
“Madness, then, is wisdom”!
Let us have the courage of seeking,
Let us investigate incessantly, asking
Death about its powerful secrets;
Ridding our minds from the barriers of senses
Of this world whose rules are revealed by God
Changing us, as eagle is rejuvenated by the Lord!
Standing strong on His laws, fortified by his power
We shall open to all the doors of knowledge.
There will be a day – and its dawn is near –
When tired of crying humanity will engage
Us knowing that pain is quenched in our hearts,
Where there is a satiating wave rather than a lighting fire,
Repeating with us in a huge outcry:

“Give us light and the holy hope by
Having the unction of virtue in hand,
Raising our heads from the abated land.
To the eyes blinded by the dust, filthy,
Suddenly giving them the sacred clarity.
Pronounce the Ephpheta of Christ, a mystery!
Transfigure the flesh of the enslaved mind!
Place us, the living ones, among the cohorts
Of apparitions and dead figures alike!
The graves are not tombs but
Badly whitewashed places of bad hearts.
The dead will teach us how
We must live to follow them in God.”
And we who received the blessings of the Lord
To live on Earth in a more perfect center,
We will open our arms to the docile followers
In the name of Spiritism! In the name of the Gospel!

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Spiritist dissertations

Know oneself

Spiritist Society of Sens, March 9th, 1863

What sometimes precludes you from correcting a defect or a vice is exactly the fact that you do not notice that you carry it. While you see the tiniest faults of your neighbor, of your brother, not even suspecting that you bear the same faults perhaps a hundred times greater than theirs. That is nothing more than the consequence of pride that leads all imperfect creatures to only see good things in themselves. You should analyze yourselves as if it was not you. Imagine for example that what you did to your brother had been done by him to you. Put yourself in his place. What would you do? Respond without a preconceived idea for I suppose you want to find the truth. By doing so I am certain that you will frequently find out about your own defects that you had not noticed before. Be honest with yourselves; get to know your character but do not flatter it because adulated kids become bad and the adulators are the first one to experiment the effects. Go back to the bag where you keep your defects and the defects of others. Bring yours to the top and keep the others behind and observe well if that is not keeping your head down when you have that load before your eyes.

La Fontaine

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June 1863

Spiritist dissertations

Friendship and prayer

Spiritist Society of Vienna, Austria

(Translated from the German language)

God did establish differences among the created souls. May the equality of rights serve them as the principle of friendship that is nothing more than the unity of tendencies and feelings! True friendship only exists between virtuous persons, united under the protection of the Almighty to encourage one another for the accomplishment of their duties. Every truly Christian heart carries the feeling of friendship. Such a virtue, however, finds in the selfishness of the vicious souls the tripping stone, like the fallen seed upon the arid rock that is infecund for the good.

Have your soul surrounded by the protecting fence of a faithful prayer, so that the internal as well as the external enemy cannot penetrate. The prayer elevates one's soul to God, releasing from all human concerns, transporting to a state of tranquility and peace that cannot be provided by the world. The more confident and fervent the prayer the more it is heard and pleasing to God.

When the human soul is entirely penetrated by the holy zeal it reaches heavens through the devoted prayer and the passions, the inner enemies, as well as the vices of the world, the exterior enemies, are powerless to break the protecting walls.

Friends, pray to God with confidence from the bottom of your hearts, with faith and truth!

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June 1863

Spiritist dissertations

Future of Spiritism

Lyon, September 21st, 1862 – medium Mrs. B...

You ask me about the future of Spiritism and what shall be the place that it will have in the world. It will not have a place only. It will encompass the world. Spiritism is in the air, in space and in nature. It is the key to the dome of the social edifice. You can forecast its future based on its past and present. Spiritism is the works of God. You humans gave it a name; God gave you reason when the time came because Spiritism is the immutable law of the Creator. God has been inspiring Spiritism since mankind has achieved intelligence and from time to time has sent advanced Spirits to Earth with the initial insights about the influence of Spiritism. If they did not succeed it was due to the fact that human intelligence was not sufficiently advanced. But that was not sufficient to preclude them from sowing the idea leaving behind their names and actions as milestones on a road for the traveler to find the route. Look behind and see how many times God has already tried the Spiritist influence as a means of moral betterment.

What else was Christianity eighteen centuries ago if not Spiritism? The only difference is in the name. The idea is the same. It was only mankind that altered the works of God through free-will. Nature dominated bringing along the error. Later on, Spiritism struggled to germinate but the terrain was sterile and the seed broke hurting the head of the God assigned sowers. Intelligence developed with time and the field could be cultivated since the time for sowing again is near. Everyone admits that Spiritism spreads out. Even the nonbelievers understand it and if they do not confess and keep their eyes closed it is because the obfuscating light of Spiritism makes them blind. But God protects His work. He sustains it with His powerful sight; He encourages it and soon all peoples will be Spiritists because it contains the universality of all beliefs. Spiritism is the great leveler that advances to level plane all heresies. It is led by sympathy; it is followed by agreement, by love and fraternity; it advances without commotion and without revolution; it comes to destroy nothing, to knock nothing down in the social fabric; it comes to renovate everything.

There is no contradiction here: By becoming better people, we will aspire to better laws. The businessman will understand that the worker has the same essence as his own, then introducing sooth and wise regulations in their commercial relationships. The social relationships will change very naturally between wealth and mediocrity. With the absence of progress the Spiritist will understand that there is something more

important than wealth, breaking the idea of accumulation that generates greed and the poor will certainly benefit from the reduction of selfishness. I don't say that there will not be rejection of this idea; that all will evolve universally fertilized by the wave of Spiritism. There will still be deniers and fallen angels for mankind has free-will and although there is no lack of advice many of them will only see from their narrow point of view that restricts the horizon of greed, not willing to yield to evidence. Bad for them. Be sorry for them, enlighten them because you are not judges and only God can criticize their conduct.

By the future that I show you for Spiritism, you can evaluate the influence it will have upon the masses. How are you organized, morally speaking? Have you balanced your qualities and defects? Neutral and lighthearted people populate a good chunk of Earth. Do the good individuals account for the majority? It is doubtful. Among the ones with a foot on the good side and the other on the bad side of the scale, the neutral ones, there are many that can swing both feet to the good side, the first step that quickly leads to more advanced stages.

There is still a group of bad creatures in this world but that tends to diminish every day. When people understand that the "eye for an eye" is the immutable law of God, a much more severe law than the toughest human laws; more terrible and logical than the eternal flames of hell in which they no longer believe, they will then fear that reciprocity of the penalties and will then think twice before doing the wrong thing.

When the criminal mind may foresee his fate through the Spiritist manifestation, he shall back up before the idea of a crime for he will know that God oversees everything and that the crime, although it may go without punishment on Earth, one day that impunity will have to be paid for and very dearly.

All hateful crimes will then disappear one day from the face of humanity, giving rise to concord and fraternity that have been preached to you for centuries. Your legislation will then be kinder in proportion to the moral betterment; slavery and death penalty will have no place in your laws only remaining as memories of the tortures of inquisition. Hence regenerated people will only be concerned with their intellectual progress. Since there will no longer be selfishness the scientific discoveries that frequently require the concourse of many minds will develop rapidly, and they will say: "Never mind the name of the one that does good; the important thing is that good gets done! For in reality what frequently stops your scientists in their ascending march of progress is their ego, the ambition of seeing their names attached to the works. That is the future and the influence Spiritism will have upon the peoples of Earth.

A philosopher from the other world.

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Bibliographic news

In the last edition when speaking about the journal *La Verite de Lyon*, we said that Bordeaux would also have its Spiritist Review soon. We saw a proof of that publication whose title will be “*La Ruche Bordelaise, Revue de l’enseignement des Esprits* (The Hive of Bordeaux, a Review with the teachings of the Spirits), promising a new serious vehicle for the propagation of Spiritism. Since they requested our advice we say their directors a letter that they kindly placed at the top of their first edition, declaring their intent of following the flag of the Parisian Society in all points. We feel happy for such an adhesion that can only strengthen the bonds of union of all Spiritists through the communion of ideas. These are Spiritists sincerely dedicated to a common cause without prejudices.

The Hive of Bordeaux is issued on the 1st and 15th day of each month in brochures of sixteen pages beginning on June 1st, 1863. The price is six francs per year for people living in France and Algeria. Edition Rue des Trois-Conils, 44 Bordeaux.

Allan Kardec²¹

21 Paris, typography of Cosson and Co., Rue de Four-Germain, 43

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

July 1863

Human duality demonstrated by somnambulism

Without referring here to the several phenomena that come out of experimental Spiritism and demonstrate with the latest evidence the independence between Spirit and matter, we will draw your attention to a common fact whose consequences, as far as we know, have not been completely exhausted and that, nevertheless, has characteristics that impress every serious observer.

We want to discuss what happens during natural and artificial somnambulism and the strange outcomes that occur with the cataleptic such as double sight. This will illustrate, even to nonbelievers whose cause to discredit Spiritism, although worthwhile, is not justified.

A distinct doctor of Tarn sent us the letter below, demonstrating the train of thought of a person going from incredulity to belief just supported by reason and observation carried out in good faith.

“Dear Sir, v

Confused in the crowd of doubters and unbelievers, the reading of The Spirits Book produced a lively sensation in my soul. The sooth satisfaction that remained after the reading gave rise to the very natural desire to believe, without restrictions, in all teachings of the Spirits given in the book. I wanted to attest the reality of the communications myself to achieve such objective. Hence, I struggled to become a medium but it did not work out and I had to stop the researches. Tired of living my own uncertainties I decided to refer to other people’s observations. However, since I have a personal trait that makes it hard to persuade I had the need to get to know those phenomena to be able to evaluate their authenticity.

After having gone through the four initial years of the Spiritist Review and particularly after having noticed the precaution used to report the events there and that the manifestations of the Spirits and their communications are always attested by respectable, selfless and truthful persons, it is no longer possible to have any doubt about their authenticity. Once admitted the communications, however, I wanted to have an idea of the degree of confidence that one should attribute to the revelations, particularly those that constitute the foundation of the Spiritist doctrine. In those observations, I could not be stopped by the flames of hell unless I denied the infinite benevolence of God. The difference in religions did not create an obstacle to my logic either since according to common sense by doing good one cannot harvest bad. The essential point of reincarnation, however, was still missing. In that case somnambulism was a great help to me and, if it does not entirely solve the problem in my opinion, it makes it so likely that one does need a great dose of ill-faith in order to deny it.

To begin with, if the existence of the soul had not been sufficiently demonstrated by the manifestations and communications of the Spirits, it would be clearly proved by the remote sight and sight through opaque bodies that cannot be explained otherwise. Furthermore, leaving aside the faculties of the soul when separated from matter such as remote sight, transmission of thoughts, etc. somnambulism leads the sensitive to discoveries that are much more extensive than when in the state of vigil. The consequence of that is preexistence of the soul to the body because if it were created at the same time it could not acquire knowledge beyond the knowledge of the body. But, after attesting that the soul is older than the body there is no rejection of the idea of reincarnation because, if the current life is not the beginning, there is nothing to prove that it is the last one; on the contrary, they become very natural and even indispensable. There is more: the somnambulist, in the state of vigil, has no memory of what was said or done during the sleep but during the sleep recovers the memory of not only what was done during the preceding sleeps but also during vigil. Isn't that the accurate picture of the existence of the soul in their numerous states in Iranicity and incarnate with their memories and forgetfulness?

I am a son of the people, with an extremely mediocre education, self-taught that has only been granted in the latest 1/3 of my life of forty two years. Hence it seems that a much more experienced pen would explain the truths that I discovered more clearly. However imperfect the approximations they sufficed to determine my conviction and I would be happy if you consider them worthy of having the same influence upon others.

Although my conviction is very recent it has started to produce effects and irrespective of the fortunate changes in my behavior it is a source of kind consolations to me. These happy changes are sole result of your books. Thus, Sir, I ask you to receive the eternal recognition of the one that in the future would like to count among your keenest followers.

G.”

Remote vision, the impressions felt by the somnambulist, and, according to the place that is visited, prove that part of the being is transported. Well, if it was not the physical, visible body that changed places, it can only be the invisible and sensitive body. Isn't that the most positive proof of double physical and spiritual existence?

But leaving aside that singular faculty that is not wide spread it is enough to observe what happens to the most common somnambulists. The duality occurs in a not less positive way, as observed by our correspondent in the phenomenon of forgetting at the wake up. No one that has observed magnetic phenomena has not notice the instantaneous nature of such obliviousness. A somnambulist speaks and the conversation is perfectly logical and sequential. If suddenly awoken in the middle of a word or an unfinished sentence and that person is asked about the conversation the answer is that there is no memory of the word or that nothing was said.

If thought was the result of the cerebral material, why such an oblivious if matter is always there and it remains unchanged? Why an instant is enough to change the train of thoughts? But what is even more characteristic is the absolute memory in a new event of what was said in the preceding sleep, sometimes with the interruption of a year. Only this would prove that there is the life of the soul side by side with the body and that the soul may act and think independently. If the soul can manifest such independency during the life of the body more or less suffering the effects of the obstacles even with more reason what can the soul do when enjoying total freedom! The consequences that our correspondent draws from these phenomena to demonstrate the preexistence of the soul and the plurality of the existences are perfectly logical. The somnambulist phenomenon, like many others, seems to be brought about by the Providence to direct us to the route of the mysteries of mind. Science, however, does not consider them worthwhile.

With the purpose of looking at them, it will not veer its eyes from a polyp, a mushroom or a nervous ramification. It is true that the soul cannot be seen at the tip of a scalpel but since the causes are assessed based on the effects the effects of the soul are before your eyes and you don't see them. You would drive a hundred miles to see an astronomical phenomenon without any practical utility while you only show sarcasm and disdain when the subject is the phenomena of the soul that are at your reach and are of the interest of the whole humanity, in its present and its future.

If official science hardly renounces to its prejudices it would be unfair to blame all scientists. There is a positive movement manifesting among them with respect to the new ideas. The tactical and individual adhesions are innumerable but perhaps even more than others they are afraid of being in evidence. It will be enough to have a few celebrities holding the flag to mute the scruple of others, impose silence to the scorners of bad taste and give food for thought to the selfish aggressors. That is what we will soon see.

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Philosophical character of the Parisian Society with Spiritist Studies

As a response to the calumnies that the adversaries of Spiritism like to spread against the Society we believe it is right to publish the requests for admission expressed in the two letters below followed by some observations.

“To the President of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies

Dear Sir,

Would I be allowed to aspire to be admitted as a member of the illustrious Society that you preside?

I was also fortunate to get to know Spiritism and experience its beneficial influence in all its plenitude. I have been suffering physical difficulties and consequently the moral pain that follows when there is, for compensation, only doubt and uncertainty. The Spirits' Book came to my house as the savior whose helping hand rescued us from the abyss like the doctor that cures instantly. I read and understood it and soon the moral pain gave rise to a huge happiness before which the physical suffering disappeared because since then I only see it as the effect of the divine will and wisdom that only sends us pain for our own good.

Under the influence of this beneficial belief my physical condition improved significantly and I hope God will complete the work because if I wanted to be cured now it is not like in the past when it was to enjoy life only but to solely dedicate it to good, that is, to use it exclusively to march to the future, working hard and with all available means to the betterment of my neighbors and, in particular, dedicating my life to the propagation of the sublime Doctrine that God, in His infinite benevolence, sends to the poor humanity to have it regenerated. Praise the Lord for the divine light that in His mercy decided to send it to His blind creatures! Praise you Sir, who was chosen by God to bring the sacred focus of light!

If you deign Sir, to accept my request, I will be profoundly thankfully to you for transmitting it to your honorable colleagues. I do not have the honor of knowing you in person since my health condition has always precluded me from visiting you. But my colleague, Mr. Canu, may put a word for me.

Receive, dear Sir and master, my sincere feeling of respect and devotion.

Hermann Hobach”

“Dear Sir and venerable master,

*Confident in your benevolence, I address you with a request that if accepted will give me a lot of joy. I had the honor of writing to you already, some time ago, with the double objective of expressing me in a way new feelings produced by the reading of *The Spirits’ Book* and to obey a sacred duty of a venerable man who extends courage to the vacillating and weak of this world in whose rank I counted a short while back given the ignorance of these sublime principles that finally show man a mission to accomplish according to their strength and capabilities. You gave that letter an answer full of amenities, inviting me to come and attend the general sessions of the Society as a listener. Those sessions and the reading of *The Medium’s Book* gave me more and more strength and courage and inspire in me the desire to join a Society founded on the same principles that have just sent away from me agitation, dispersion and the chaos that presided over all my actions.*

I had even supposed that the enigma of life must be very insignificant because my soul had not allowed me to understand that there was a spiritual world beyond the material one that surrounded me, marching shoulder to shoulder with our world for the betterment.

Thus, Sir, I reaffirm my intent to gladly demonstrate before the whole world of disbelief and the skeptical that the Spiritist Doctrine has brought such a radical change to my behavior and such a change could be certainly classified, without exaggeration, of a miracle because by opening my eyes to all the good that one can do and does not do I noticed an objective to our lives, to begin with, and then full of sins of all sorts I finally saw that the providence had not let us go without work and that a single existence was not enough to perfect the Spirit working first to dominate the body and then to dominate oneself.

If you find it adequate to receive me, Sir, as a member of the Spiritist Society, despite my early age, I ask you to forward my request to the council and let them know how honored I would be to be received at the heart of the Society, something that I would appreciate with the highest feeling of recognition.

With the highest veneration,

Paul Albert”

If such letters honor their authors, they also honor the Society to which they are addressed, gladly seeing the requests from those who want to join it, animated by such feelings. It is a proof of how much they understand the exclusively moral objective proposed by the Society since they are not driven by an empty curiosity that, in fact, would not be our purpose to satisfy.

The Society only welcomes serious people and letters like those published above illustrates its true character. It is among followers of that caliber that the Society is happy to recruit and it is the best response that it can give to the detractors of Spiritism who strive to present it as its sisters from other counties and abroad that march under the same flag as dangerous focus to reason and public order or as a huge speculation. It was God’s will that there would not be other sources of disturbance.

As we have said, modern Spiritism will have its history, the report of its phases, struggles and successes, its defenders and its martyrs and adversaries for it is necessary that posterity knows the weapons that were used to attack it. It is necessary, above all, that it registers the people of heart that devoted to its cause with total abnegation, complete moral and material selflessness so that it can pay them back with a just tribute of recognition. To us it is a real joy when we can inscribe a new name, glorious for its modesty, courage

and virtues in these archives that confuses the worker and the prince, the poor and the rich, people of all countries and religions, since there is only one cast for the good, only one cult, only one nationality and only one flag: the universal fraternity.

The Spiritist Society of Paris, the first one to be founded and officially recognized; the one that we can say gave the impulse and from which so many other societies were formed; that became, by the force of things and however small the number of members, the center of the Spiritist movement, for its principles are of the almost universality of the followers, this Society, we were saying, will also have its archives for the instruction of those to whom we pave the way and for the confusion of its slanderers.

It is not only far away that calumny spits its poison but to our door steps. A few days ago, someone told us that he had the greatest desire to attend some sessions of the Society but that he had stopped when he was told that he had to pay ten francs. His was greatly surprise, and we can say, also very happy when he learned that such a rumor was incorrect; that since the time of creation of the Society that not a single listener had to pay one cent; that there is no monetary commitment in any form or shape, not even as subscription to the Spiritist Review or for the purchase of books; that none of our mediums are paid for since all of them without exception do their service out of pure devotion to the cause; that the members and associated are the only ones to contribute to the material expenses but that the corresponding and honorary members have no obligation, having the limited budget of the Society applied to current expenses, restricted as much as possible and without capitalization; that Spiritism is a purely moral doctrine and that it cannot, like any other sacred thing, be an object of exploitation that we have always repudiated verbally and in writing; that therefore only a remarkable malevolence is capable of attaching similar ideas to the Society.

We must add that the author of this pseudo-official information said that he had paid the ten francs, demonstrating that he was not innocent in the spread of these rumors. The Spiritist Society of Paris, given its position and role, will have a later repercussion. It is then necessary to our brothers of forthcoming times to guarantee that its objective and tendencies are not denatured by malicious maneuvers and for that it is not enough to provide a few individual refutations that only have effect in the present, and then lost in the crowds. The obtained retractions are no more than temporary satisfactions whose memories will soon disappear. It is necessary a special, authentic and lasting monument and such a monument will be built in due course. While we wait let our adversaries to belie one another through their lies. Time will judge them.

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Apparitions simulated at the theater

“Dear Sir,

In order to fight Spiritism, its adversaries have just envisaged some new tactics that consists of making impalpable spectra and ghosts to appear at the stage, presenting it as if from Spiritism. Such apparitions take place every evening at theater Robin, Boulevard du Temple. Yesterday I watched the second presentation and it was with astonishment that I heard Mr. Robin say to his spectators that he had proposed, through his experiments, to combat the strange belief of certain people that imagine possible to have Spirits moving hands and making tables turn around.

Sir, from my side I have never understood that there could be similarity between these imitations created by physics of entertainment and the actual Spiritist manifestations that are in the laws of nature. Thus, such maneuvers are almost harmless to the followers of Spiritism. However, and considering that one must not allow the good faith of the public to be caught by surprise, I found myself in the obligation of letting you know about these events so that you can dedicate a special article to that in the Spiritist Review, if you find it adequate. As I have the habit of acting openly and not in the shadows I authorize you to use this latter as you wish.

Yours sincerely etc.

Simond, Law student in Paris.”

For some time now people talk about a fantastic play that is on at the Theater du Châtelet where by a new and secret process they make impalpable shadow-ghostly forms to appear at the stage. As it seems the secret was unveiled for Mr. Robin exploits it at this time. Since we have not seen it we cannot assess the merit of the imitation. We hope that they are less gross than those imagined by the Girroodd couple, from Canada, that some translate as Girod de Saint-Flour, to simulate the transmission of thought through walls and that would be the hopeless death of the mediums and somnambulists alike. We wish his invention does not bring him the same disaster that it has brought to the latter ones.

Nevertheless Mr. Simond is absolutely right when thinking that such maneuvers are harmless because by the simple fact that something can be imitated it does not follow that such a thing does not exist. False diamonds take nothing out of the fine jewels and artificial flowers do not preclude natural flowers from existing. The intent of demonstrating that certain phenomena do not exist because they can be imitated

would undoubtedly be like the one that makes champagne out of Seltzer water wanted to prove with that that champagne and sloth only exist in our imagination.

Imitation has never been more ingenious, more perfect and witty than the double sight by Mr. Robert Houdin. That has not, however, discredited somnambulism. Much to the contrary because after having seen the imitation people wanted to see the original.

Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd had the intention of killing the mediums by making every Spiritist phenomena to look like a deception. Well, since those phenomena are the nightmare of certain persons, they collected the adhesion published in their prospects from several "*Spiritophobic*" priests and bishops, delighted by the blow swung against Spiritism. But in their happiness those gentlemen had not reflected that such Spiritist phenomena could demonstrate the possibility of miraculous events and that if they can be demonstrated they are not magical tricks and the same could be done to the miracles; that consequently the discredit of ones would be the discredit of the others. One can never think of everything. Will Mr. Girroodd cut a deal with Mr. Robin considering that his tricks are a bit worn out now?

The *Indépendance Belge* that does not like Spiritism, and we don't know why exactly, since Spiritism has never done it any harm, when speaking of this new scenic trick in a June issue says: "*That is the religion of Mr. Allan Kardec going down the drain. How can Spiritism answer to that now?*"

Notice that such a question has been framed many times by all those who pretended to swing the fatal blow against Spiritism, not excluding Father Marouzeau, and Spiritism has not left those cases in a worse condition. We say to the *Indépendance* that the supposition that it is founded on apparitions is prove of the most complete ignorance about the foundations of Spiritism and that if such a foundation is subtracted then the soul is also subtracted.

If it were demonstrated that the facts of apparitions are a deception then religion would suffer more than Spiritism since three quarters of the most important miracles have only that foundation.

Scenic art is the art of imitation by excellence from the paper chicken to the most sublime virtues and from that one cannot deduce that we should not believe in chickens or in virtues.

This new kind of spectacle, given its originality, will excite public imagination and will be repeated in every theater because it brings money; it will make people talk about Spiritism perhaps even more than the sermons, precisely due to the analogy that the journals will try to establish. One does need to understand that everything that attracts public opinion forcibly leads to the examination even if out of pure curiosity and it is from such examination that the followers come.

The sermons present Spiritism with a serious and terrible aspect, like a monster that is invading the world and threatening the Church in its groundwork. The theaters will address the crowds of curious people so that the ones who don't hear about Spiritism in the sermons will do in the theaters and the ones that do not go to the theater will hear the sermons. As we can see, there is a place for everyone.

It is really a remarkable thing to see the means utilized by the hidden forces that guide this movement to make it penetrate everywhere, using the very ones who wish to destroy it. It is true that without the sermons on one side and the fallacies of the papers on the other the Spiritist population would be today ten times smaller than it is in fact.

Thus, we say that the imitations, even admitting them as perfect as possible, cannot do any harm. We even say that they are useful. As a matter of fact, here is Mr. Robin producing remarkable things to his spectators

by any given process and saying that they are the same as those of Spiritism produced by mediums. Some in the audience will say: “*Since it is possible to do the same with Spiritism let us study it, let us learn how to become a medium and we can see it done at home whenever we wish and for free.*” Among these there will be many who will acknowledge the serious side of the issue and that is how unwillingly they serve the interests that they wish to harm.

Serious people are afraid that these antics will deceive certain persons about the true character of Spiritism. That is undoubtedly the bad side but the inconvenience is not important since the number of those who are going to be trick is tiny. The ones who say: “*That is all it is about!*” will sooner or later will have the opportunity to recognize that it is something else. And while they wait the idea spreads, we get familiarized with the word that penetrates everything with a burlesque name; they pronounce it with confidence and when the word is everywhere the thing is close too.

Be it a maneuver of the adversaries of Spiritism or simply an individual action to reinforce someone’s income we must admit that it is clumsy.

It would be wiser from the part of Mr. Robin and his associates to deny any analogy with Spiritism or magnetism because the claim of parity is the acknowledgment of competition – we speak of their commercial interests – exciting people’s imagination to see the competition and acknowledge that they can both be forgotten.

Since we are trailing the terrain of ineptitudes this is one more as there have been many others. We regret to place them side by side with those of Mr. Robin and Mr. Girroodd but it is the analogy of results that takes us there. In fact, considering that the dignitary of the Church did not think that they were diminishing themselves by sponsoring a conjurer against Spiritism they cannot be caught by surprise if they find a sermon about it.

A corresponding member of Bordeaux writes:

“Dear master, I have just received a letter from my sister that lives in a little town of B... She was desperate for not having anybody to talk to about Spiritism when the adversaries of our dear doctrine came to rescue her. Some people had just heard about it and sought the Carmelite to find out. The latter, not happy by just veering them off, preached four sermons about it whose main conclusions are the following:

“The mediums are possessed by the devil. They only act selfishly and use their power to find treasures and precious objects that were lost but when they find a sacred relic you see them twisting in horrible convulsions. The times predicted in the Gospels are here. The mediums are not but false prophets announced by Jesus. Their boss will soon be the anti-Christ. They will make remarkable miracles and prodigies and through that they will attract three quarter of the population of the globe to their cause which will be the sign of the times because Jesus will ride a celestial cloud and his breath will throw them onto the flames of hell.”

*The result was that the whole city was shaken. People talk about Spiritism everywhere. People are not satisfied with the explanations of the priest and want to know more and my sister that had nobody to talk, receives more than thirty visits on given days. She always refers them to *The Spirits’ Book* that will soon be in every hand and many of those who already have it say that it has no similarity to the picture painted by the priest because he said the opposite. We now count of several serious followers thanks to those sermons without which Spiritism would not have penetrated into those remote regions.”*

Weren't we right when we said that it was inept? Aren't we right by wishing so well to adversaries that work so much for us? But that is not the last one. We wait for the greatest of all, the one that will crown the work. They have been engineering a serious one for a year now, one that we prefer not to reveal because it is necessary that it reaches its end but whose consequences we will one day see. About two years ago we asked one of our spiritual guides what would be the means that would take Spiritism to the country side. The answer was:

- Through the Cures²²
- That will happen voluntarily or involuntarily from their side?
- In the beginning involuntarily, then voluntarily. They will soon make a propaganda that you cannot evaluate. Don't you worry about anything! The Spirits watch and know what they are doing.

The first part of the prediction, as we can see, occurs in the best possible way. In fact, all phases that have been covered by Spiritism were announced to us and all those who still have to be covered are equally announced and every day witnesses an event.

It is in vain that they try to dissuade people from Spiritism presenting it with horrible colors. As we can see the effect is quite the opposite of the expected. For every ten people that are veered off there are another hundred that become connected. This demonstrates the existence of an irresistible attraction on itself, not to mention that of the prohibited fruit. That brings us the memory of the following anecdote:

One day a landowner brought home a barrel of excellent wine but because he was afraid of his servant's betrayal he attached a label to the barrel with these large letters: *Horrible vinegar*. Well, the barrel had a small leak and one of them had the curiosity of trying it out with the tip of his hand, concluding that it was a good vinegar. The word spread and soon each servant would come to collect some of the vinegar until the whole barrel was empty. As the owner used to give them cheap booze to drink they said: "this is not close to the horrible vinegar"!

However much they say that Spiritism is a vinegar they cannot make those who taste it to believe that it is not sweet. Now the ones who taste it will tell the others and soon everyone will want it.

22 Church title, see for example The Cure of Ars (T.N.)

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Mediumistic painting at the Constantinople exhibition

The president of the Constantinople Spiritist Society, an honorary member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, sent us the letter below on May 22nd last:

“Dear Mr. Allan Kardec and Spiritist brother,

Since long ago I intended to send you news from my side but please don't you believe that we are resting with respect to the Spiritist propaganda. On the contrary, there is more activity than ever before. Believe me that in this entirely fanatical country, already recruited by the sects, Spiritism finds obstacles everywhere that perhaps it would not find in other places, but its roots are so lively and productive that despite the odds they gradually find fertile terrain and will soon sprout vigorously, indestructible by any human power.

Constantinople already counts on several followers of Spiritism and I can attest that they are in the highest ranks of society. I only noticed that they keep it to themselves, afraid of being compromised.

*Allow me to mention a fact that is taking place here and that illustrates the rooting of Spiritism: several book stores that import Spiritist books, notably *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*, sell them immediately and to whom? We, the well-known and openly confessed Spiritists don't know. We are sure about the fact that I just described because when someone among us wants to buy your books the bookseller responds: “I got them but they were sold out immediately”. The question is who has the monopoly on those books at the time they are unpacked to the point that when our people want them they are already sold out...*

Here another no less interesting news for you:

Our friend and Spiritist brother Paul Lombardo, a drawing medium, from whom I sent you a few flowers, executed a watercolor painting depicting a beautiful bouquet of flowers among which there is a velvety dahlia in a magnificent effect; all other flowers, roses, carnations, tulips, lilies, camellias, daisies, poppies, cornflowers, etc. show a perfect finishing touch and naturalness. I took him to present the painting at the National Ottoman Exhibition that is open now and the painting was admitted there with the following inscription:

Mediumistic painting

Executed by Mr. Paul Lombardo, from Constantinople, who ignores the art of drawing and painting.

At this time, the painting is showing at the Palace of Exhibitions on the right-hand side of the area reserved to paintings and works of engraving. The price tag was established as 20 Turkish pounds or 460 francs. This is something that thousands of people see with their own eyes.

*I received letters from several points of Europe, Asia and Africa but my answers are sober unless it is to stimulate a serious and profound study of our great and beautiful science. I then refer them to your excellent publications, *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*.*

We always have sessions for the physical experiments and for the psychological studies. Although the former almost always wear us out, we cannot abandon them completely for they serve to convince the unbelievers that wish to see and touch.

I ask you to please forward to the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies the fraternal and respectful compliments from our Spiritist brothers of Constantinople and, in particular, from this one that is also said to be your devout brother,

Repos Son, lawyer"

The significance behind the exhibition of the painting by Mr. Lombardo in Constantinople is that it was admitted and ostensibly presented as a mediumistic piece of work, much like the Spiritist fables that were crowned in the Floral Games of Toulouse.

It was said elsewhere that if the Toulouse Academy had known the origin of the fables they would have been rejected. That is the grossest calumny; it is also a misrepresentation of the fact that the works sent to that kind of contest must not bear a signature or any other sign that may identify authorship or be excluded. Hence Mr. Jaubert could not add his name or that of a Spirit not even mention that it was the works of a Spirit because he would have violated the regulations of the event that requires the most absolute secrecy. That is the answer to those who accuse Mr. Jaubert of having deceived by keeping his silence about the origin of the fables. Nevertheless, an official sanction is given to works from beyond the grave in the two extremes of Europe.

Similar facts would suffice to demonstrate the irresistible power of Spiritism if, in fact, it had not become evident for everything that has taken place before our eyes from some time now and by uselessness of the efforts to fight against it. And why are such efforts useless? Because, as we have been saying, it has a character that turns it different from all other philosophical doctrines that is the fact that it is not a single focus and of not depending on the life of any single person. Its focus is everywhere, on Earth and in space, and if they attack it here it surges elsewhere. As declared by the Spiritist Society of Palermo Spiritism stands up by the facts themselves that each person may verify and by a theory that has its roots in inner sense of each person. One cannot silence it by compressing one point on the globe or a village or a town or even a whole country but the whole world. Even in such a case it would be a temporary pause because the forthcoming generation brings the intuition of the new ideas that sooner or later will prevail. Look at what happens to a neighboring country where a cover is placed on top of these ideas and from where they escape through multiple fissures.

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New Spiritist journal in Sicily

We have the pleasure to announce the appearance of a new vehicle of Spiritism in Palermo, Sicily, published in Italian under the title *The Spiritism, or Journal of Experimental Psychology*.

The multiplication of specialized journals in this matter is an unequivocal indication of the terrain that has been conquered by the new ideas despite, or even better, due to the attacks that are carried out against them. These ideas that have been implanted in all corners of the world in a few years, count on numerous and serious representatives in Italy. In that homeland of intelligence, as everywhere else whoever probes their reach understands, they contain all elements of progress; that they hold the flag under which all peoples will one day congregate; that they are the only ones capable of resolving the fearsome problems of the future and in a way that satisfies reason. Our sympathetic acknowledgement is naturally extensive to every publication of such a nature, prone to second our efforts in the great and laborious task that we undertake. The following letter that accompanied the journal announces, at the same time, the formation of the Spiritist Society of Palermo, under the title Società Spiritista de Palermo.

“Sir,

A new Spiritist Society has just been formed here in Palermo under the presidency of Mr. Joseph Vassallo Paleologo. It already becoming popular: The Spiritism, or Journal of Experimental Psychology whose two initial editions have just been issued. Kindly accept a sample that I take the liberty of offering you the one who has been given the task of advancing humanity through the new ideas under the providential impulse of Spiritism.

Yours sincerely, etc.

Paolo Morello,

Professor of History and Philosophy, University of Palermo

Each number of the journal begins by the citation of some aphorisms in the form of epigraphs extracted from *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*, like for example:

“If Spiritism is a mistake it will fall by itself; if it is a truth not even all diatribes of the world will be able to turn it into a lie.”

“It is a mistake to believe that certain classes of unbelievers only need to see the phenomena in order to be convinced. The ones who do not admit the soul or the Spirit cannot admit it outside of the body. That is how by denying the cause they deny the effect.”

“Frivolous meetings have a serious inconvenience to rookie attendees because they give them a false idea of Spiritism.” We add: and that, while not frivolous, are not held with the proper order and dignity.”

The first number contains an exposition of principles in the form of manifesto from which we extracted the following passages:

“Every science is founded on two points: facts and theory. According to what we have read and seen we are in a position to affirm that Spiritism has the materials and qualities of a science because on one side it stands on peculiar facts that result from experience and observation, absolutely like any other experimental science, and on the other side it stands on its theory, logically deduced from the observation of the facts.”

“Considering it from the facts or from the theory Spiritism has not come out of a human brain but it derives from the very nature of things. Given the creation of intelligences, as well as the spiritual existence, what has received the name of Spiritism presents itself as a necessity from which and given the current condition of science and humanity we are witnesses rather than judges, a necessity that generates a complex fact that needs to be seriously studied before being assessed. Everyone is free to not study it but that does not give anybody the right of mocking those who do.”

“The founding society of this journal does not intent to promote its belief or its doctrine. Since it is convinced that there is nothing that belong less to human invention than Spiritism the Society then proposes to expose the doctrine but not to impose it. The Society reserves itself, in fact, the entire freedom of examination and the most complete independence of conscience in the appreciation of the facts, not allowing itself to be influenced by the opinion of any individual or any corporation. It is only through the honesty of the facts that it becomes responsible before its own conscience, before God and men.”

The following communication that holds the signature *The Dante*, extracted from the second issue, bears witness of the nature of the teachings given to that society.

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The Mediums and the Spirits

“No one can become a good medium if not able to strip away from the degrading vices of humanity. All those vices have their origin in selfishness and since the denial of selfishness is love, every virtue is summarized in this word: charity.

Charity is taught by the precept: “Quod tibi non vis”²³, etc. God has not only printed it indelibly in people’s heart but sanctioned it by a fact given us His own Son as the role model of charity and abnegation. If it must be every one’s guide, irrespective of their social condition, it is above all the “sine qua non”²⁴ condition of every good medium.

Anyone can become a medium but the question is not to be a medium but a good medium, and that depends on moral qualities. It is true that the Spirits communicate with persons of any condition but with the mission of perfecting them, if their qualities are good, and they realize that betterment by submitting the mediums to the hardest trials to purify them, trials that good people withstand without denying the moral feeling of their consciences and without veering off from the good path by temptations. The Spirits communicate with those whose qualities are bad to take them by the hand and guide them through a more rational behavior and in more harmony with the objective that must be the aim of any person persuaded that the objective of this life is atonement. When there is a mixture of good and bad the Spirits provoke betterment by intermediary processes.

Many will be left behind by their Spirits if they are not willing to understand that charity is the only path of progress. Therefore, miserable is the one who did not want to hear the voice of truth! God forgives ignorance but not the one that knowingly does evil things. The objective of our mission is your moral betterment and your duty is equally your progress but do not expect any type of improvement without charity.”

23 Do to others what you want others do to you (T.N.)

24 An essential condition (T.N.)

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Willpower against passions

(Extracted from the works of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies)

“Mr. A... from Paris, a twenty-three-year-old young man that was initiated in Spiritism, only two months ago, assimilated it with such a speed that even without seeing anything he accepted it in all its moral consequences. Some will say that there is no surprise given the age of the man and his tendencies towards lightheartedness and insensible enthusiasm. Be that as it may, let us continue.

That insensible young man had, as he acknowledges himself, a large number of defects of which the most important was an irresistible predisposition to rage since his childhood. The least upset and due to futile causes like when getting home and not finding what he was looking for; if something was not in its habitual place; if what he had ordered was not ready in a minute all that would make him fierce, to the point of breaking everything around him. It was so much so that one day, at the apex of his rage, he threw himself against his mother and said: “*Go away or I will kill you!*” Then, worn out by the hyper excitation he would fall unconscious. It must be added that neither the advices of his parents nor the exhortations of religion were able to stop that indomitable character yet opposed by a vast intelligence, a well-cared for education and the noblest feelings.

Others will say that it is the effect of a bilious-bloody-nervous temperament, resulting from his physical organization and consequently with an irresistible action. Such a system leads to the fact that if he had committed a crime during one of those fits of wrath he would be perfectly excusable because it would have been due to an excess of bile. It would also result that unless he changed his temperament, changing the normal state of liver and nerves, the young man would be predestined to all of the dismal consequences of rage.

- Do you know a medication for such a pathological state?
- None, unless with time and age may attenuate the abundance of the morbid secretions.
- Well! What science cannot do Spiritism does not slowly and following a continuous struggle but instantaneously. A few days were enough to turn this young man into a kind and patient person. The acquired certainty of a future life; the knowledge of the objective of the earthly life; the feeling of dignity of man through the free-will, placing him above the animals; the responsibility that stems out of that; the understanding that most evils of Earth are the consequences of our own actions; all these ideas drawn from a serious study of Spiritism produced a subtle transformation in his brain; he felt like a veil being removed from his eyes and a new face of life was presented to him. Certain that an intelligent being inhabited his body, independent of matter, he said to himself:

“That being must have a willpower that matter does not have. It can then dominate matter.” Followed by this other train of thought: *“The result of my rage was to make me sick and unhappy and it does not give me what I need hence it is useless because it took me nowhere. It is bad to me and gives me nothing good in turn. Besides, it makes me do reproachable and even criminal things.”*

He wanted to succeed and did so. Since then he faced a thousand situations that would have made him mad but instead he was calm and indifferent for the astonishment of his mother. The blood would boil in his veins and blow his head but his willpower would abate and force it down. A miracle would not have done better but Spiritism has done many others that our Spiritist Review would not be able to register if we wanted to report all of those that come to our personal knowledge related to moral transformations of the most inveterate habits. We mention this one as a remarkable example of the willpower and also because it raises an important problem that only Spiritism can solve. With that respect, Mr. A... asked us if his Spirit was responsible for the fits or if only suffered the influence of matter. Here is our answer:

Your Spirit is so much responsible that when you seriously wanted to stop the bloody actions, you did so. Thus, if you had wished to stop before the fits of rage would have ended earlier and you would not have threatened your mother. Besides you, who is the one that becomes enraged? Is it the body or the Spirit? If the fits would happen without reason, they could be attributed to the blood flow, however, futile or not, their cause was an upset. It is then evident that it was the Spirit and not the body that was troubled. The Spirit reacted on top of an irritable organic system that would remain quiet if it had not been provoked.

Let us offer a comparison. You have an impetuous horse. If you know how to ride the horse properly it becomes obedient. If you maltreat the horse it dashes away and takes you down. Whose fault is that? Yours or the horse?

To me, your Spirit is naturally bad-tempered but since each one brings their own original sin, that is, the remainder of the former tendencies, it is not less evident that in your preceding life you must have been an extremely violent man that may have paid a very dear price, even with your own life. In the spiritual world your good qualities helped you to understand your mistakes. I made the resolution to change this and fight against it in your new life. However, if you had chosen a weak and lymphatic body, your Spirit would not have found any difficulty and would gain nothing, resulting in the need of a new beginning. That was the reason why you have chosen a bilious body, so that you would have the merit of the battle. The victory has been conquered now. You won over your enemy and nothing can hinder the free exercise of your qualities. As for the easiness, with which you accepted, Spiritism that is explained by the same cause. You were Spiritist long ago. The belief was innate within you and materialism was only the result of the false direction given to your ideas. Muffled in the beginning, the Spiritist idea remained in a latent state and a simple spark was enough to wake it up. Praise the Providence that allowed that spark to arrive at the right time to stop an inclination that could have perhaps cause bitter displeasures whilst you now have a long road ahead to walk the good path.

All philosophies have been shattered against these mysteries of human life that seemed unreachable up until the time when Spiritism illuminated them with its focus. In the presence of such facts can one still ask the utility of Spiritism? Can't we make good predictions about the future of humanity when it is understood and practiced by everybody?

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First Letter to Father Morezeau

“Dear Father Morezeau,

You are surprised that after two years I have not responded to your brochure against Spiritism. You are mistaken because I have addressed most of the questions that you raised since its release in several articles of our Spiritist Review. I recognize that you would have preferred a personal response, a counter publication; that I would take on your arguments one by one to give you the pleasure of my replies. Well, I made an irreparable mistake by not even mentioning you but I am certain that your modesty will not consider that as a crime. Today I fix that omission but do not think that I intend to engage in a controversial discussion with you; no, my only intention is to offer you some simple reflections and to explain my reasons.

To begin with, I must tell you that I did not respond directly to your brochure because you had announced that it would bury us alive. I wanted to give you time since that article so that I could have the pleasure to tell you that we are not dead; that Spiritism itself is stronger than before; that the number of societies multiply in all countries; that in all corners where it was preached against the number of followers increased; that such a growth is directly proportional to the violence of the attacks. These are not theories but facts given my position. Furthermore I attest that the homeless people, who were forbidden by zealous priests to receive the bread of life from the charitable Spiritists because they were the bread of the devil, they did not die for having eaten that; that the bakers who were told not to receive the Spiritists because they would be robbed by the devil, did not lose anything; that the workers who were subtracted from their bread winning activities just out of pure evangelical zeal found compensation with the new customers that in turn increased the number of followers.

I have no doubt that you disapprove such a way of attacking Spiritism but the facts, nonetheless, are the facts. You must agree with me that such means are not the most adequate to bring back to religion the ones that have been away. Fear may momentarily stop but it is a fragile link that breaks at first contact; the only strong bonds are those of the heart, cemented by conviction. Conviction, though, cannot be imposed by force.

You must know, Father, that your article was followed by many others. Above many of them yours has the merit of civility. You want to kill us politely and I thank you for that but the arguments are the same everywhere, stated more or less politely and in a more or less correct French. In order to refute them all, article per article, it would be necessary that I would repeat myself incessantly and frankly speaking I have more serious things to attend. In fact, it has no use and you will understand why.

I am a positive person, without enthusiasm, that analyzes everything with reasonableness; I reason according to the facts and say: considering that the Spiritists count on a number that is larger than ever before, despite Father Marouzeau's brochure and all others, despite all sermons and commandments, it means that the arguments that they presented did not convince the masses but had the opposite effect. I believe to be elemental logic to judge the value of a cause based on its effects. Hence, why refuting them? If they are good to us instead of causing us harm we should avoid to create obstacles to them. I see things differently from you, Father. Like a general that observes the movement of the battle, I analyzed the power of the blows, the effect that they produce and not the noise that they make. I look at the whole picture. The whole picture is satisfactory and that is all I need. Hence individual answers would not have utility.

When I deal in general terms with questions that are raised by a given adversary it is not to have him convinced because that is not my concern, absolutely, and even less to make him renounce his belief that I respect when it is sincere. It is exclusively to the instruction of the Spiritists and because I found a point that needs to be developed or clarified. I refute principles not individuals because the principles remain and the individuals disappear. That is why I give little importance to personalities that may not even exist tomorrow and from whom nobody will hear about whatever the importance given to them.

I see the future much more than the present; the whole and important things more than the isolated and secondary facts. Redirect people to the good path is the true conversion to us. A man that is yanked from his bad tendencies and redirected to God and to charity towards everyone by Spiritism is to us the most useful victory; that is the one that brings us true joy and we thank God for having had that so many times.

To us the most honorable victory is not in moving people away from this or that cult, of this or that belief by violence or fear but to deviate people from evilness by persuasion. We appreciate all sincere convictions and not those obtained by force or just apparent.

That is how, for example, when you ask in your brochure about the miracles that Spiritism can invoke in its favor. I answered that question in our February 1862 issue of the Spiritist Review in the article entitled "*Is Spiritism demonstrated by miracles?*" On that occasion, I responded to all others who framed the same question.

You ask about the miracles of Spiritism but is there a greater one than its incredible propagation despite everything and against everything, despite the attacks that it suffers; despite, above all, the terrible attacks that you yourself has launched against it? Isn't that a fact that demonstrates the will of God?

"No, you will say, it is the will of the devil." You must then agree that the will of the devil is stronger than the will of God, that it is stronger than the Church since the Church cannot stop it. But this is not the only miracle made by Spiritism. It does it every day by bringing unbelievers to God and converting those who do bad to good, given them the strength to succeed over their bad passions.

- You ask for miracles but isn't the report above about the young Mr. A... a miracle? Because if religion did not do it leaving to Spiritist the task of doing it, is that the devil?
- But that is not what is called miracle.
- But doesn't the Church classify certain conversions as miraculous?
- Yes, but these are conversions of heretical to the Catholic faith.
- Hence the conversion of evil to good is not a miracle in your opinion. You would rather have a material sign: the liquefaction of St. January's blood; the head of a statue that moves in a church; an apparition in the skies like the cross of Migne. Spiritism does not make such miracles. The only miracles to which it gives an infinite value and glory are the moral transformations that it entails.

Father, I like time and space. On another occasion, I will say a few words that may serve you in the new book that you are working on and that must annihilate Spiritism and the Spiritists forever. I wish this one better luck than the previous one. A few passages of this current issue may perhaps clarify you about the difficulties that you are going to face in order to succeed.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Kardec

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Earthly Atonement

Max, the beggar

Around 1850 in Bavaria, an almost centenary old man known as Father Max died. Nobody knew for sure what his origin was since he had no family. For about half a century, constantly challenged by problems that made it difficult for him to support himself through work, he had no other resource but to appeal to public charity where he disguised himself by going to farms and castles to sell almanacs and small objects.

He was given the nickname Count Max and the children only called him Mr. Count after which he smiled and took no offense. Why the title? Nobody knew since it was a name that passed on through the years. It could perhaps be for his manners and physiognomy whose distinction were in contrast with his rags.

Several years after his death he appeared in the dreams of the daughter of a castle proprietor where he used to stay at the horse's stable since he was homeless. He told her: *"Thank you for having remembered the poor old Max in your prayers for they were heard by the Lord. You wanted to know who I was, charitable soul that took care of the unfortunate beggar. I will satisfy you and this will be a great lesson to everybody."*

He then provided the report below with more or less the following terms:

"About a century and a half ago I was a rich and powerful owner in this region but frivolous, proud and fatuous of my nobility. My immense fortune served nothing but to my own pleasures of gambler, lewd, spending time in orgies. My vassals were servants that I used like animals in the farm just to serve my luxuriousness. I was deaf to their laments as those of all unfortunate people and in my opinion they should feel much honored for serving my whims. I died early, worn out by the excesses but without having experienced any true hardship. On the contrary, everything seemed to smile to me to the point that people saw me as one of those happy persons in the world. My condition rendered me a pompous funeral; the baggy ones were sorry for the portentous master but not a single tear was dropped in my tomb; not a single heart felt prayer was said in my behalf and my memory was damned by all those whose misery I had aggravated. Ah! How miserable the malediction of those that we make unfortunate! It never stopped vibrating in my ears for long years that seemed like eternity to me! The death of each one of my victims would bring a new threatening or sarcastic figure to my face, incessantly chasing me without a hiding place. No friendly sight. My former friends of debauch, now miserable like me, ran away from me as if saying with disdain: "You can no longer pay for our pleasures."

Oh! How much I would have paid for an instant of rest, for a glass of water to quench the scorching thirst that devoured me! But I had nothing on me anymore and all the gold that I had spread on Earth had not brought me a single blessing. Not one, my child, hear me out!

Then, finally abated by fatigue and worn out like a wasted traveler that cannot see the end of the journey, I exclaimed:

- *My God! Have mercy on me! When will this horrible situation end?*

Then I heard a voice, the first after having left Earth that said:

- *Whenever you wish.*
- *What must I do, great God? I responded. Tell me! I will do whatever it takes.*
- *You need to repent; you need to humiliate yourself before those that were humiliated by you; you must ask them to intervene in your name because God is pleased by the prayer of the offended one who forgives.*
- *I humiliated myself and begged my vassals that were there, before me, and whose faces gradually more benevolent ended up by disappearing. Then it was like a new life to me. Hope replaced despair and I thanked God with all the strength of my soul. The voice then said:*
- *Prince!*
- *I responded: There is no Prince here other than the Almighty God that humiliate the proud ones. Forgive me Lord for I have sinned. Turn me into a servant of my servants if that is your will.*

A few years later I was born again, but this time into a family of poor peasants. My parents died when I was still a child and I was left alone in the world, without support. I made my living as I could, sometimes as a worker, sometimes as a servant in a farm, but always honestly because this time I believed in God. At the age of 40 I was taken ill by a disease that paralyzed all my members forcing me to beg for another fifty years in the same land that I had been the absolute owner; I had to ask for a piece of bread in farms that had been mine and where, out of bitter irony, I had been given the title of Mr. Count; many times, I felt happy in the stables of the castle that had been mine.

In my dreams, I enjoyed visiting the same castle that I commanded like a tyrant. How many times I saw myself in my dreams amidst the former fortune! Those visions would bring me an indefinable feeling of bitterness and sorrow when I woke up, but I never complained and when God felt that it was time to take me back I praised Him for having given me the courage of enduring this long and painful trial without moaning and whose reward I receive now. And you, my child, I give you my blessings for having prayed for me.”

OBSERVATIONS: We refer this case to those who pretend that people would no longer have brakes if they did not have to face the challenges from eternal penalties, asking them if the perspective of a punishment like that of Father Max is less able to stop evil than that of the endless tortures in which people no longer believe.

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Blessed the ones who have their eyes closed²⁵

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, June 19th, 1863

(Medium Mr. Vézy)

NOTE: This communication was given with reference to a blind lady that was present at the session

“My good friends, it has been a long time since I last came here but here we are. I thank God for that and to the good Spirits that come to help you walk the good path. Why have you called me? To pass my hands onto the poor lady that is in suffering and cure her? And what a suffering, good Lord! She lost her vision and it became all darkness for her! Poor child. She must pray and wait! I cannot make miracles without God’s consent. All the healings that I was able to obtain and that have been reported to you can only be attributed to the Father of us all. When suffering you should always look above and say from the bottom of your heart: “My Father cure me but have my soul cured before the illnesses of the body. May the flesh be punished, if needed, so that my soul can rise to you with the whiteness it had when created by you!” After this prayer my dearest friends, that our good God will always hear, you shall be given strength and courage and perhaps also be granted the cure that you have so humbly requested as a reward for your carnal abnegation. But since I am here in this assembly where before anything we study, I must tell you that those precluded from sight should consider themselves like the blessed ones of atonement. Remember that Jesus said that it was necessary to pull the eye if the eye was bad and that it would be preferable to have it thrown into the fire than have it as a cause of your condemnation. How many among you on Earth that will one day, in darkness, be sorry for having seen light! Oh! Yes, how fortunate in their atonement the ones who have their vision damaged? Their eyes will not be reason for scandal and ruin! They can live entirely the life of the soul. They can see better than you do you who have the light... When God allows me to open the eyelids of some of these miserable ones and give them your light I say to myself: “Dear soul, why don’t you live all the joys of the Spirit that lives in contemplation and love? It would not demand to see images that are less pure and kind than those that they see in their blindness.”

25 Communication inserted in *The Gospels According to Spiritism*, Chap. VIII, item 20

Oh Yes! Blessed be the blind who want to live with God! That person feels and touches happiness more than you who live here. They see the souls and can live in the spiritual spheres and reach regions that not even the predestined of Earth can. The open eye is always ready to ruin the soul.

The closed eye, on the contrary, is always ready to guide the soul to God. Believe me, my dear and good friends, the blindness of the eyes is frequently the light of the heart whereas vision is sometimes the terrible angel of death.

And now a few words to you, my poor and suffering soul. Wait and have courage! If I told you: "My child, your eyes will open", how happy you would be! And who knows such a happiness would not be the cause of your loss? Have trust in our good God who made happiness and allows sadness. I will do everything in my power but you must pray and above all think about everything I have just said.

Before I leave, all of you here receive my blessings, my dear friends. I give them to all: to the mad ones, to the wise, to the believers and to the unfaithful of this assembly. May it be useful to each one of you!

Vianney, Cure d'Ars."

OBSERVATION: We were asked if this is the language of devil and if one offends the Cure d'Ars by attributing such thoughts to him. An uneducated peasant who is also a natural somnambulist who sees the Spirits very well attended the session and was in a somnambulistic state. She did not know the Cure d'Ars, not even by name, however she saw him by the medium and described him with perfection of details.

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Repentance

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mrs. Costel

Repentance reaches God and it is more pleasing to him than some sacrifices and the smoke of incense spread around sacred rooms. It is a productive suffering, a reactive and acting force like the storms that purify the air. Jesus sanctified his virtues and Magdalene's tears spread like dew upon the hardened hearts that ignored the grace of forgiveness. The sovereign virtue proclaimed the power of regret reverberated along the centuries and weakening the word of Jesus.

Time has come when Spiritism must renovate and vivify the very essence of Christianity. Thus, in all places and forever take the cruel sentence down that strips the guilty soul from regret. Repentance is a lively, strong virtue that only advanced Spirits or kind hearts can feel. The momentary and scorching sorrow of a fault does not carry along the atonement that leads to the knowledge of God's justice, a strict justice in its conclusions, that applies the "eye for an eye" sentence to the moral as well as physical life, punishing by the logic of the events, all resulting from the good or bad use free-will.

You must love those in suffering and support repentance for this is the God given sign and expression impressed on every intelligent being to rise up to and approach Him.

John, disciple

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Accomplished Facts

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies,

December 26th, 1862, medium Mr. d'Ambel

NOTE: This communication was given with reference to a report given at the Society about the new Spiritist societies in formation everywhere, in France and abroad.

Progress in regenerating ideas that we bring to your world today occurs in a clamorous fashion because it does need to be demonstrated now. Blind is the one that does not see the triumphant march of our ideas! When the most eminent persons, in the most liberal functions, people of study and science, doctors, philosophers and magistrates resolutely throw themselves onto the search for the truth in the avenues opened by Spiritism. When the working class come to find new forces and consolations, who among humans would be strong enough to oppose a barrier to the development of this new philosophical science? Lamennais said the other day in his concise and eloquent style that you are aware that the future points to Spiritism. Today I have the right to say: Isn't that an accomplished fact? The road actually becomes broader; yesterday's creek becomes a river and from the transposed valleys its majestic course will laugh at the feeble gates and late barricades that a few late inhabitants of the riverbanks will try to build to block its flow to the great ocean of infinity. Poor people! The currents will drag you along and soon we will also hear your screams: "It is true! Earth turns!"

If the bloody waves that spill over America did not draw the attention of every serious thinkers and of every friend of peace whose hearts bleed before the reports of those fratricide and bloody fights; if the weak, established nations were not seeking normality in their whole territory; finally if everyone's aspirations did not tend to the moral and physical betterment that has been sought for so long one could then deny the utility of moral cataclysm announced by some Spirits of vanguard. But all these characteristic signs are very evident for not recognizing the need, the urgency of a new lighthouse that can save the endangered world. In the past when the pagan world undermined by the most absolute demoralization, vacillating on its own foundation, prophetic voices announced everywhere the soon arrival of a redeemer. Haven't you heard, oh Spiritists, the same prophetic voices for a few years now? Ah! I know. None of you forgot. Rest assured then that the time has come and let us scream together like one day in Judea: - Glory to God in the highest heaven!" Erastus

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Periods of transition of humanity

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies,

June 19th 1863, medium Mr. Alfred Didier

The centuries of transition in the history of mankind are similar to vast landscape spotted by terrain features that looked sporadic and unorganized. The facts are that the integration of these features are understood in the detail not in the whole. The centuries abandoned by faith and hope are somber pages in which mankind, guided by skepticism, consumes itself in the deafness of refined civilizations arriving at reactions that frequently replaced them by other civilizations.

The researchers of thought, more than the scientists, in our time and through a rational eclecticism, study in depth this concatenation of history, the darkness in its uniformity cast upon civilizations not long ago still lively and fertile like a thick fog and cloud. Strange destiny of peoples! It is almost near the birth of Christianity, in the most opulent cities, headquarters of the greatest Sea of the East and West that the devastations of decadence begins. It is amongst civilization itself, before the intelligent splendor of Arts, Sciences, Literature and the sublime teachings of Christ that the confusion of ideas and religious dissent begin. It is in the very cradle of the Roman Church, proud and stained by the blood of the martyrs that heresy, generated by the superstitious dogmas and by the ecclesiastic hierarchy, sneaks like an imminent serpent to bite the human heart, infiltrating into their veins amidst political and social chaos the most profound of all scourges: doubt.

The downfall this time is immense. The religious apathy of the priests, added to the heresy of the fanatical, removes any political strength, any love for the country and the Church of Christ becomes human but no longer humanitarian. It is useless to compare here, I believe, the horrific reports of those days with our time. The same commotions shake our civilization living side by side with the traditions of Christianity and the hopes for the future; the divide is present in the same ideas and the same doubt torments humanity, precursor signs of a social and moral renovation that is in preparation.

Ah Pray, Spiritists! Your troubled and blasphemous time is a rough time that the Spirits come to instruct and reassure.

Lamennais

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About the Spiritist communications

Spiritist Group of Sétif, Algeria

You are frequently surprised when finding mental or physical mediumistic faculties that, in your opinion, should be a proof of personal merit in people that, given their moral character, are placed at a level below such a gift. That is due to the false idea you have about the laws that regulate such things and you want to consider them constant. The question is what is constant. The means vary to infinity so that your freedom may be respected. This one has a skill, the other has another one; one is led by pride, the other by greed and a third one by fraternity. God employs the capabilities and passions of each one, in their respective spheres and from evil itself He knows how to produce good. The actions of men that seem so important to you are nothing to God. It is the intention that carries merit or demerit to His eyes. Hence fortunate is the one that is guided by fraternal love.

Providence has not created badness. Everything was made aiming at the good. Badness only exist by the ignorance of man and the bad use made of passions, tendencies and the instincts acquired by the contact with matter. Great God! When you have them inspired by the wisdom of having in their own hands the direction of this powerful instrument – passion – how much badness will disappear! How much good will be produced by that power that today he only knows the bad side, his own work! Eagerly continue your work my friends! Finally, may humanity foresee the route that one day it will follow in order to achieve the happiness that is allowed on Earth!

Don't be surprised if the communications that you are given by the elevated Spirits, entirely supported by the moral of the Savior, confirming and developing it, offer you so many points of contact and similarity with the mysteries of antiquity. The former peoples had the intuition of things of the invisible world and of what was to come and several of them were assigned with the mission of paving the way.

Observe and study carefully the received communications; accept what is not rejected by reason; repel what shocks it; request clarification about those who leave doubts. You have here the guidelines to be followed and to transmit to future generations, without fear of seeing the truths denatured, truth that you will separate effortlessly from its unavoidable entourage of mistakes.

Work, become useful to your brothers and to yourselves. You cannot envisage the happiness that the future spares you after the contemplation of your works.

Saint Augustine

OBSERVATION: This communication was obtained by a young man, an illiterate somnambulist. It was sent to us by Mr. Dumas, a dealer in Setif, member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, informing that the sensitive person ignores the meaning of most words and provide us with the names of ten renowned persons that attended the session.

Illiterate mediums that receive messages above their intellectual reach are frequent. A short while ago we were shown a message that was received in Lyon by a lady that cannot read or write and does not know a single word of what she writes. Her husband, who is almost like her, deciphers it out of intuition during the session but that becomes impossible on the following day. The other persons read them without much difficulty.

Isn't that the application of Jesus' words: "Your wives and your daughters will prophesize and make prodigies?" Isn't that a prodigy to write, paint, draw and compose music and poetry without the skills?

You demand material signs? Here you have them. Will the unbelievers say that it is the result of imagination? If it is they should know that such persons have imagination in their hands and not in their brains. Still once more a theory is only good with the condition that it can explain all the facts. If it is contradicted by a single one it means that it is false or incomplete.

Allan Kardec²⁶

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Jean Reynaud and the Start of Spiritism

We had the opportunity to throw some flowers into the grave of a man that was not only known for his knowledge but for his moral qualities. Jean Reynaud was born in Lyon, in February 1808 and died in Paris, on June 28th, 1863. We could not give a better example of his character than by reproducing the short and touching necrology given by his friend, Mr. Ernest Legouvé, published in the *Siècle*, on June 30th, 1863:

“Democracy, philosophy, religion and I are not afraid of saying that we have been impacted by a loss : Jean Reynaud died yesterday, after a short illness. From any point of view that his doctrines may be judged, his work as well as his life were eminently religious because both his life as well as his work were an eloquent protest against the great scourge that threatens us: skepticism in all forms and shapes. Nobody believed more strongly in the divine personality; nobody believed more strongly in the human personality; nobody loved more ardently freedom. In his book Terre et Ciel that created a huge groove from the get-go and whose memory will be engraved more and more, in that book there is such a breath of infinite, such a feeling of the divine presence that one may say that God beats in each page there!

How could that be different if the writer of those pages always lived in the presence of God? We know well, all of us who know and love him and whose highest honorary title is that of having been loved by such a man, that he was a continuously flowing source of moral life. Nobody was able to approach him without leaving closer to goodness; his face alone was a lesson of righteousness, honor and devotion. Fallen souls felt uneasy before his clear eyes, as if before the very sight of justice. And all that has gone! He left while still strong when so many useful words, so many great examples could still come out of that mouth, that heart!

We don't cry for ourselves only, Reynaud. We cry for our whole country.”

E. Legouvé

In the same edition of the journal on July 16th, Mr. Henri Martin gave more details about the life and works of Jean Reynaud. He says:

“Raised in the freedom of the country side by a mother of strong and kind soul, it was there that he discovered the habits of closeness to nature that never abandoned him, developed the robust physical structure that later on allowed him to cover twenty leagues in one breath, jumping from glacier to glacier,

from one tip to another through the Alps, through narrow cornices where even the deer hunters would not adventure.

He had a fast and fecund education. He very soon developed a strong interest for literature and arts and initially turned his eyes to science, a fortunate direction that would feed him with the food and instruments of thought by turning the wise man into a faithful server of the philosopher. Coming out of the first class of the Polytechnic School, he graduated in Mining Engineering at the time of the outburst of the July revolution. He returned to Paris where Sansimonism had just started and was engulfed by this great and singular movement that then excite so many minds by the idea of the dogma of the perfectibility of mankind. The school, however, pretended to become a church. Jean Reynaud did not follow that replacing it by democracy. He then rebuilt a group and a center of intellectual action with friends that had moved away from the movement at the same time he did. Pierre Leroux, Carnot and him recovered the Revue Encyclopédique from the hands of Julien (from Paris). It was when Pierre Leroux published his remarkable Essai sur la doctrine du progress continu²⁷ and Jean Reynaud the very attractive passage about the Infinite des Cieux²⁸, germ of his great book Terre et Ciel.²⁹ He then founded the Encyclopédie Nouvelle together with Pierre Leroux, a huge task that was left unfinished. On February 24th he became involved in politics. President of the Commission for High Studies of Science and Literature and after that Sub secretary of State of the Ministry of Public Education, he developed in cooperation with Carnot, one of his oldest and closest friends, plans to raise public education to the level of democratic institutions. Transferred from public education to State Council Jean Reynaud conquered there an authority that originated from his personal character and wisdom and however short his passage there he left in the memory of the most renowned experts an inextinguishable memory.”

Of all the writings from Jean Reynaud, the one that contributed most to his popularity was undoubtedly the book *Terre et Ciel*, although the abstraction used in the language does not make it reachable by everyone; the depth of the ideas, though, and the logic of deductions made it appreciated by every serious thinker, placing the author in the class of spiritualist philosophers. To the Church that book was a threat to the orthodoxy of faith. It was consequently condemned and listed in the “Index” by the Roman Curia, a fact that gave the book even more importance that it already had and hence increasing the demand for that piece work. Nobody spoke of Spirits when the book was published, around 1840, however Jean Reynaud seemed to have had, like many other modern writers in fact, the intuition and presentiment of Spiritism, from which he was one of the most persuasive precursors. Like Charles Fourier, he admits the indefinite progress of the soul and as a consequence of such progress the need for the plurality of the existences, demonstrated by the multiple states of people on Earth.

Jean Reynaud had seen nothing. Everything was taken out of his profound intuition. Spiritism saw what the philosopher had only presented, thus adding the sanction of experience to the purely speculative theory and the experience naturally led to the discovery of details that could not be foreseen by imagination only, but that comes to complement and corroborate the fundamental points. Like all the great ideas that revolutionized the world, Spiritism was not suddenly born. It germinated in more than one brain, showing up here and there, bit by bit, as if to have people used to the idea. A sudden and complete appearance would have found a too strong resistance and it would have fascinated without convincing.

Incidentally, everything must come at the right time and every plant must germinate and grow before it reaches a complete development. The same happens in politics for there is no revolution that had not been

27 Essay about the doctrine of continuous progress (T.N.)

28 Infinite of heavens (T.N.)

29 Earth and sky (T.N.)

incubated for a long time and anybody guided by experience and the study of the past may safely follow those preliminaries and foresee them unfolding with no need to be a prophet.

That is how the principles of modern Spiritism were partially presented and with different faces, in several occasions: with Swedenborg in the last century; with the doctrine of the theosophist in the beginning of this century, who clearly admitted the communications between the visible and the invisible worlds; with Charles Fourier that admits the progress of the soul through reincarnation; with Jean Reynaud, who admits the same principle, probing infinity with science at hand; in the American manifestations, twelve years ago, which such a great repercussion demonstrating the material relationships between the dead and the living ones and finally with the Spiritist philosophy that consolidated those several elements in a body of doctrine, deducing their moral consequences.

Who could tell that a whole philosophy would stem out of the entertainment with the turning tables? When the philosophy came out who could tell that in a few years it would go around the world, conquering millions of followers? Today, who could tell that it has said the last word? It has certainly not but the foundation is established and there are still many details to be clarified and that will come at the right time.

Besides, the more it advances, the more one can see the multiplicity of interests that it touches, for one can say without exaggeration that this doctrine embraces every issue of the social order. Thus, it is only the future that can unfold all of its consequences, or even better, its consequences will be developed by themselves, by the force of things, because Spiritism contains what was uselessly sought elsewhere. For that reason, one will be forced to acknowledge that only Spiritism can fill out the moral emptiness that daily surrounds people, an emptiness that threatens society itself on its foundation and whose fear can be felt already.

At a given time Spiritism will be the lifeline but it was not necessary to wait for that moment in order to throw in the safe rope, as one does not wait for the harvest to sow the seeds. The wisdom of the Providence prepares things slowly. That is why the core idea has had, as we said, many precursors that paved the way and prepared the terrain to receive the seed, some in one direction, others in another, and all the numerous treads that intertwine to arrive at the fundamental idea will one day be recognized. Now, each of those ideas has their own followers resulting from that a natural predisposition to accept the complement of that idea for each of them prepared a portion of the terrain. That is, unequivocally, one of the causes of such a propagation that borders a prodigy without precedent in the history of the philosophical doctrines. The adversaries, in turn, are stunned by the resistance that this doctrine offers to their attacks. They will have to yield later before by force of opinion.

There are a number of contemporary writers that must be added to the roll of precursors of Spiritism whose works are spotted with Spiritist ideas, perhaps unwillingly. One would need to write several books if wanting to collect the innumerable passages that make more or less direct reference to the preexistence and survival of the soul; to their presence amongst the living ones; to their manifestations; to their pilgrimage through progressive worlds; to the plurality of existences, etc. Admitting that it was no more than imagination of the authors, the idea is not less filtered in the heart of the masses where it remains latent up until the time it is demonstrated as a truth. Will there be a more Spiritist thought than that found in the letter of Mr. Victor Hugo about the death of Mrs. Lamartine, and that the majority of the newspapers received with enthusiasm even those that more strongly question the belief in Spirits? Here is the letter that says a lot in a few lines:

“Hauteville-House, May 23rd,

Dear Lamartine,

A great tragedy hurts you. I need to place my heart near yours. I revered the one you loved. Your elevated Spirit sees beyond the horizon. You clearly perceive the future life.

You are not the one to be told: Wait. You are among those who know and wait. She is always your companion, invisible but present. You lost the wife but not the soul.

Dear friend, let us live in the dead.

Victor Hugo.”

It is not only isolated writers that sow some of the ideas here and there but it is science itself that comes to pave the way. Magnetism was the first step towards the knowledge of the perispiritual action, source of every Spiritist phenomenon. Somnambulism was the first isolated manifestation of the soul. Phrenology demonstrated that the brain is a keyboard at the service of the intelligent principle for the expression of multiple skills for contrary to Gall's intention, its materialistic founder, it served to demonstrate the independence between Spirit and matter. Demonstrating the power of action of the spiritualized matter, homeopathy shows the important role of the perispirit in certain diseases; it attacks the illness in its source, out of the physical organization whose alteration is only a consequence. That is why homeopathy is successful in a number of cases in which ordinary medicine fails: more than the latter, the former takes into account the spiritualist element, so dominating in this matter, thus explaining the facility with which homeopathic doctors accept Spiritism and why the majority of the Spiritist doctors belong to the Hahnemann school. Finally, it was not but until the recent discoveries about the properties of electricity that its contingent was brought to the question of concern to us and that sheds some light onto what could be called the physiology of the Spirits. We could not stop if we wanted to analyze every circumstance, great or small, that has come to open the route to the new philosophy since half a century. We would see the most contradictory doctrines provoking the development of the idea; the political events themselves preparing its introduction in practical terms; but from all causes the most preponderant is the Church that seems fatally predestined to impel it.

Everything comes to support it and if people knew the large number of documents that come to our hands from everywhere; if they could follow, as we do, this providential march in the world, favored by the least expected events and that would seem in contradiction at first sight, they would understand better how irresistible it is and would be less surprised with our unaffectedness. Fact is that we see everyone working towards that, in good will or unwillingly, voluntarily or involuntarily; we see the objective and we know when and how it is going to be achieved; we see the whole advancing and that is why we don't bother with individualities that march backwards. Thus, Jean Reynaud was a precursor of Spiritism in his writings. He also had his providential mission and was supposed to open a groove. It would benefit him after his death. An eminent Spirit gave the following appreciation about the event:

“This is another circumstance that is going to support Spiritism. Jean Reynaud had done what he was supposed to do in his last existence. People will talk about his death, his life and more than never about his books. Speaking of his works is the same as to step foot into Spiritism's way. Many intelligences will learn about our belief by studying this philosopher who gained authority. They will understand and see that you are not as mad as those who laugh at you and at your faith pretend that you are. All the works of God is well done, believe me. He will be praised by your detractors and know this that they will unwillingly work to recruit more followers to you. Let them act. Let them scream. It will all be according to the will of God.

Still a bit of patience and the elite of people of intelligence and knowledge will join you and before certain ostensive adhesions criticism will have to lower its voice.”

Saint Augustine

NOTE: See some communications of Jean Reynaud in the Spiritist dissertations below

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

August 1863

Spiritist ideas from several writers

Extracted from the journey to the East by Mr. Lamartine

“Oh, for that matter I tell you there is another question. Nobody suffers and bears the burden of nature, people and society more than I do. Nobody speaks so loudly of the social, political and religious abuse. Nobody expects a reparation to all these intolerable evils of humanity more than I do. Nobody is better convinced that such a repairer cannot be but divine! If you expect a messiah, I expect, like you, to do more than you as I wait for his appearance; like you, and more than you, I see in the shaken beliefs of mankind, in the turmoil of ideas, in the emptiness of hearts, in the depravation of the social fabric, in the repeated commotion of the political institutions, all the symptoms of disorder and consequently of a nearing and imminent renovation. I believe that God is always present at the precise moment when everything that is human is insufficient confessing humans’ inability of doing anything on their own. That is where the world is. I thus believe in a messiah; I don’t see Christ who cannot give us more wisdom, virtue and truth; I see the one that one announced by Christ that would come after him: this always an active saint Spirit, always supporting mankind, always revealing, according to the times and needs, what they need to know and do. May such a divine Spirit incarnate in a man or in a doctrine, in a fact or in an idea, it does not matter: it is always him, man or doctrine, fact or idea. I believe in him, I wait for him and more than you, madam, I invoke him! As you see we can understand one another and that your stars are no so much diverging as this conversation made us to think.” (vol. 1, page 176)

“Human imagination is truer than thought. It does not always build with the dreams but proceeds by instinctive assimilations of things and images that give safer and more positive results than science and logic. With the exception of the valleys of Lebanon, the ruins of Baalbek, the waterways of the Bosphorus, Constantinople and the first signs of Damascus, from the top of the Anti-Lebanon, I have never found a place, something that at first sight was not a memory to me! Have we already lived twice or a thousand times? Isn’t our memory a foggy glass that is cleaned by the breath of God? Or do we have in our imagination the power of presenting and seeing before we do actually see? Insoluble questions!” (vol. 1, page 327).

OBSERVATION: In our preceding article about the precursors of Spiritism, we said that there are, in many authors, sparse elements of this doctrine. The fragments above are very clear without the need for us to point out their purpose. For that fact that Mr. Lamartine and others issue Spiritist ideas in their texts does it follow that they frankly adopt Spiritism? No. In most cases they did not study it or, if they did, they don’t dare to associate their already well-known names to a new flag. Their conviction, incidentally, is only partial and to them the idea is just a flash that starts from a vague intuition, not formulated and not matured in their minds; they can thus back up before a whole body from which certain parts may obfuscate them, even horrify them. To us it does not represent less an indication of a presentiment of the general idea that

germinates in bright minds, what is sufficient to demonstrate to certain adversaries that these ideas do lack so much sense as they pretend to be as long as they are shared by the people whose superiority they acknowledge. By gathering and coordinating the partial idea of each one it would certainly constitute the complete Spiritist Doctrine according to the most renowned and trustworthy persons. We thank our subscriber from Joinville that kindly sent us the two passages cited above and will always be very thankful to the persons that have the kindness of sending us the result of their readings, as he did.

NOTE: We take the opportunity to thank the person that sent us a brochure entitled "Dissertation about the floods". Since the parcel came without a letter we cannot thank directly. A glance at the brochure convinced us that the very original system of the author is in contradiction with the most common and positive data of geological science that irrespective of people say have its value. Thus, it would be easy to refute his theory by observations that are at least as rigorous as his own.

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

August 1863

Human destiny in the two worlds

By Hippolyte Renaud, former student at the Polytechnic School³⁰

The Presse on July 27th, 1862 published the following news about the book mentioned above. It is directly related to the Spiritist Doctrine so the readers must know that we are glad to reproduce it here. We ourselves could have analyzed that work but preferred a person that has no interest in the matter. We will limit ourselves to make comments about this article. The editor says:

“What is there that is more attractive to the Spirit and more refreshing to the soul than finding at this time a man of sincere, plain and profound faith, a man that believes and nonetheless, reasons and reasons without prejudice in order to seek light upon his conscience? That is Mr. Renaud.

For him mathematics and sciences did not kill the feeling or combine the mysterious sources that bond us to infinity through faith. Mr. Renaud is a firm believer, convict, an excellent Christian, even being a bad Catholic, from which he does not defend himself. On the contrary.

His enlightened reason, no less important than his loving heart, allows him to dismiss the idea of a jealous and enraged God; of a God that would have chosen rage to link the creature to the creator; of a God that punishes the son for the fault of the father, something that is iniquitous to the eyes of human justice.

Mr. Renaud’s God is a God of light and love. The harmony of His infinite work manifests His omnipotence and goodness. Man is not a victim but a collaborator in a smallbut still glorious part, proportional to his strength. Why evil then and how to explain it? Evil does not arise from a primitive downfall that would have changed all human condition. Its cause is the noncompliance with God’s law and man’s disobedience by the bad use of one’s free-will. We would find it clearer if Mr. Renaud had simply said that man begins by instinct and that only gradually could develop superior feelings and intelligence. The species man, like all other living creatures, cannot suddenly achieve the plenitude of the being. Goes through successive and normal evolutions. His social infancy is characterized by the domination of instincts. Then his misery, ignorance and brutality.

30 Single vol, 18-in, price 2 francs. Ledoyen; Palais-Royan – do not confuse with Jean Reynaud.

It gradually detaches from the mud of the first ages as it elevates in life. Intelligence grows, the feelings become stronger and he begins to humanize. The more man understands the more is connected to the law, the more he becomes religious and concur from his side to the general harmony.

Suffering is a warning, a stimulus to get rid of evilness, to move away from the shadows and walk with light. The more he advances, the more he rejects the world of instinct, fight, violence and war; the more he sees and understands, the more he aspires the world of peace and order, the empire of reason, the reign of elevated feelings, that are the dignity and the sacred sign of his species.

It follows that thanks to sciences, technology and to the incessant progress of sociability, mankind tends to become the king or if you prefer a less ambitious term, the manager of the globe. But later on, admitting for a moment this hypothesis that seems to become certain every day, will there be always this insatiable desire of man that cannot be limited to the present however magnificent it can be? What does it matter the material and earthly happiness if my soul remains empty and thirsty? We are taken by a supreme tedium and a great displeasure before such a short living happiness.

That is true, Mr. Renaud responds, and it is here that he triumphs. Illuminated by science, his robust faith in the eternal destinies of man show him a whole infinite future of conscientious activity and paradisiacal joy.

At the birth of thought, at the first trembles of the soul, man raises the eye to the sky, interrogates his infinite depths and seeks the link that he foresees with the universe. This earthly existence, so short and sometimes so sad, is not enough. He feels that he is part of the infinity and wants to find his place at any price. He dreads the oblivion as nature does to the vacuum. Instead of going without an ideal he will madly throw himself at the strangest beliefs. Hence so many more or less flamboyant beliefs but that attest this absolute and fundamental need to feel reconnected to the infinity, assured of his own immortality.

The paradise of the Buddhists is well-known; the Greek Champs-Élysées; the paradise of the natives with their abundant forests and hunting prairies; the paradise of Mohamed with its material delights. The Catholic paradise that puts humanity in a state of infinite contemplative beatitude is a concept relative to cruel times in which work was considered suffering and punishment; where the general pain is such that resignation in this world and rest in the other would seem to be the sovereign wisdom and the highest ideal. But this hypothesis is evidently contradictory with the simplest and clearest notions of life. To live is to be; to be is to act with all the strength of one's skills and its vital energy. To live is to incessantly aspire for transformation.

Pythagoras' metempsychosis is incomplete, although respecting the idea of activity in the sense that it limits the transformation to passages through organisms that live on the face of Earth and still for not taking into account the law of the ascending progress that governs everything.

According to Mr. Renaud there is only one rational way of looking at the issue of immortality.

For starters the author rejects the idea that after having spent some time in the visible world, a place of atonement, the soul would move to the invisible world, a paradise, in the state of pious contemplation, uninterested about the fate of one's fellow human beings and the earthly works. That the elected and blessed ones would be these creatures stripped of from any desire and aspiration, of any useful activity, any interest about the past and their neighbors, about the infinite universe where they worked, felt and thought!

Mr. Renaud equally rejects the hypothesis of an indefinite series of existences on Earth and on other globes. This kind of immortality already has an advantage with respect to the first concept because it opens up an indefinite field to human activity. Mr. Jean Reynaud, Mr. Pierre Leroux, Mr. Henri Martin and Mr. Lamennais are more or less connected to this idea. But there is an essential point that deteriorates its foundation: the absence of memory. What does it matter an immortality from which I have no conscience of and only God knows about it? To make my immortality real it would be necessary that in a life different from the current one I have the memory of my previous existences; that I am aware of the continuity and identity of my being. It is only with that condition that I am truly immortal participating to the infinite and conscious of my function in the universe. We only know our being through its manifestations because its virtual essence escapes us. What is it that would harm reason by admitting that our being whose persistence we verify down here in its incessant modifications would persist eternally? It only changes its form and organs according to the environment in the successive incarnations.

That is how Mr. Renaud exposes his conception that satisfies this essential condition of keeping the memory and that is, besides, according to the justice and the omnipotent benevolence of God.

There is no oblivion in the universe. Now, if the visible world is everywhere the invisible is nowhere, as Mr. Renaud wisely say, unless it is also everywhere.

Man has two very distinctive states on this Earth. During vigil he generally remembers all of his actions and has conscience of himself; during the sleep he loses both memory and conscience. Consequently, why would he not have two distinct modes of existence, always interconnected, always bonded to the life in space and in the planet? Initially the existence that we know down here and in the other life, of a more elevated order, in which the individual organizes himself and reincarnate through imponderable fluids; participates in a broader and more extensive way of the life of our maelstrom; preserves then the memory of his previous existences and had plentiful awareness of his own role and function in the universe? Has the mundane and visible life a relationship to the sleep and the trans mundane or ethereal has an analogy to the vigil state?

With such a hypothesis, the solidarity of mankind in its present and future generations seem to be complete and thorough. Each one of us lived, lives and will live in different times of life on Earth in both worlds, visible and invisible. Each one of us was born there and lives there according to the laws of numbers, weights and measures that presides the harmony of the worlds. Our several alternations are counted as days and seasons. Each one of us is reborn, takes one's class in the species and function in the general works according to one's value and the universal law of order. Perhaps each one of us go through the multiples states and functions presented by the species. The most absolute justice certainly presides such transformations like the most harmonious order shines in the eternal creation, in the multiple combinations that characterize every organism and living being. We are reborn for the ethereal life and leave it under the same conditions of order and harmony. That is Mr. Renaud's conception that I cannot reveal completely here. It is necessary to refer to his book, clear, simple and quick where a profound faith linked to an as much elevated as impartial reason, keep the reader constantly under the enchantment of a theory that is as much reassuring as it is great and religious. The free spontaneity of the man, his intimate and endless solidarity with his fellow human beings, with his planet, his maelstrom, with the universe; his ever more progressive activity, efficient, radiant, in harmony with the divine laws; an infinite career for his eternal aspiration; the omnipotence and goodness of God justified, explained and glorified; love as the link between God and mankind, that is what sticks out of that little book, the most complete of any that was written under the inspiration of this great sentence: "Man's desires are God's promises."

E. de Pompéry

This article provoked the two letters below also published in the Presse on July 31st and August 5th 1862.

“Paris, July 29th 1862

To the Editor,

Dear Sir,

I have just read in the yesterday's Presse the following passage (article by Mr. de Pompéry about the works of Mr. Renaud):

Mr. Renaud equally rejects the hypothesis of an indefinite series of existences on Earth and on other globes. This kind of immortality already has an advantage with respect to the first concept because it opens up an indefinite field to human activity. Mr. Jean Reynaud, Mr. Pierre Leroux, Mr. Henri Martin and Mr. Lamennais are more or less connected to this idea. But there is an essential point that deteriorates its foundation: the absence of memory. What does it matter an immortality from which I have no conscience of and only God knows about it? To make my immortality real it would be necessary that in a life different from the current one I have the memory of my previous existences; that I am aware of the continuity and identity of my being.

Mr. de Pompéry is right, in my opinion: an indefinite metempsychosis and without memory is not immortality. But, if he is right about the ideas he is not about the persons. Out of the four writers mentioned by him only one professed the doctrine that he combats: Mr. Pierre Leroux, in his book Humanité. As for myself I must give my position considering that I was mentioned. Although without titles to stand side by side with the three eminent philosophers I must say that I share the opinion exposed above by Mr. de Pompéry. As for Mr. Jean Reynaud, in a certain way he crowned his book Terre et Ciel with this idea where he presents the absence of memory as a condition of inferior existences and the acquired and permanently preserved memory as an essential attribute of a more elevated life. I don't believe either that Mr. Lamennais, at some point in his career, had in any fashion accepted the idea of an unconscious and indefinite transmigration. It was very much opposed to all of his tendencies.

I do appreciate, dear chief editor, if you accept this complaint and please receive my most sincere acknowledgement.

Henri Martin”

“To the Editor,

Dear Sir,

Analyzing Mr. Renaud's book I said that according to the author Mr. Henri Martin, Jean Reynaud, Pierre Leroux and Lamennais, and according to the systems that they adopted, man could not keep a memory in their future lives. It does not mean that these philosophers did not support the idea of man keeping his own identity and perpetuity of the being through memory.

Mr. Henri Martin's complaint would then be very just from the point of view of his intention. It still needs to be verified if Mr. Renaud when discussing the systems of his illustrious contradictors, is not right on concluding by their unfoundedness. That is the whole question that I cannot discuss. It is necessary to look at the debate in the book by Mr. Renaud that incidentally expresses his highest sympathy to those renowned men.

Yours sincerely,

E. de Pompéry

This is a serious debate that takes place in a newspaper without criticism and all of them about the plurality of the existences, one of the fundamental basis of the Spiritist Doctrine, by men of incontestable intellectual value, demonstrating that it cannot be as absurd as some like to say.

If someone wants to study more in depth the ideas given in Mr. de Pompéry's article they will find all of those common to the Spiritist Doctrine in that point. All that is missing to complement them is the relationships between the visible and invisible worlds that is not discussed.

By the simple force of reason and intuition those gentlemen that could be joined by many others like Charles Fourier and Louis Jourdan, they got to the summit of Spiritism without passing through the intermediary levels. The only difference between them and us is that they found the thing on their own whereas to us it was revealed by the Spirits and to the eyes of certain people that is its biggest mistake.

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Journal of Psychological Studies

August 1863

Actions of the Spirits on physical organs

The fact below was transmitted to us by Mr. A. Superchi from Parma, an honorary member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies:

“In our session on April 23rd last, I had the medium to pose his hand onto the paper, without the evocation of any Spirit. As soon as the hand started to move he felt a strange force that obliged him to keep the index finger up and straight, in an abnormal position. The finger was singularly cold. Since I could not find the reason for that I asked the Spirit about it. Answer: ‘You forgot! Don’t you remember the one who used to write like that when alive? I hardened this finger to give you proof of our authenticity and power.’ It was the Spirit of one of the medium’s brother, deceased more than twenty years ago in Florence. He had hurt his finger with a broken bottle when pouring its content no much so that his finger became ankylosed. I attach a drawing illustrating the medium’s hand.

Another medium, envious due to a mystification, deservedly in fact, struggled to demonstrate that the phenomena were produced by our own Spirits, somehow concentrated. Talking with him one day he distractedly took a pencil to jokingly draw some lines but his hand became immobile, despite every effort he made to use it. Yielding, he then began to write: ‘You will never be able to write anything if I don’t want you to.’ Astonished, but at the same time hurt by his own ego, he took the pencil again saying that he did not want to write and that he challenged the supposed Spirit to force him. Despite his resolution his hand moved quickly writing: ‘You cannot stop writing if I don’t want you do’

In both cases above, as it can be seen, the action of the Spirit upon the organs is entirely independent of one’s will. It can be readily seen that it can occur spontaneously, abstraction made of any knowledge of Spiritism. That is what in fact is demonstrated by many observations. Here it occurs in a finger, elsewhere it will be on another organ and could be translated by other effects. Temporary in such a case, the action could last certain time and have a pathological appearance that is inexistent in reality and against which ordinary treatments would be ineffective.

From the point of view of the Spiritist manifestations this phenomenon provides a remarkable proof of identity. The Spirit, in the condition of Spirit, unquestionably does not have the ankylosed finger; but to the eyes of a clairvoyant, he would have presented himself as having it in order to be recognized; to the one

that could not see him, he communicates his disease. Still once more there is here a proof that the Spirit identifies with the medium and utilizing the body as if his own.

If such an action is produced by a bad Spirit, with a certain duration, that takes the most characteristic and eccentric forms, we will find the explanation to the majority of the cases of physical subjugation, taken by madness.

The fact below, of a similar kind, was reported by a member of the Parisian Society that witnessed it in a provincial town. He says:

“I saw a very normal medium. It was a young lady that asked her familiar Spirit for example to paralyze her tongue and soon she cannot speak but only struggle to communicate and make herself understood like a mute person. On her request she has both hands glued to one another, making it impossible to separate them. The Spirit grounds her on a chair until she asks to have her freedom back. I asked the Spirit to make her sleep instantaneously and he did. The medium fell asleep immediately at the first time without the help of anyone. It was in that state that I thought I had recognized the nature of that Spirit that seemed like an obsess or to me because when the young lady suffered or at least became agitated during the sleep the Spirit forced her to push me away when I tried to apply some magnetic passes on her. I advised the lady not to repeat those experiments very often.”

As for ourselves, we advise that she should abstain from that completely for he could trick her. It is obvious that a good Spirit is not given to such things. Playing games with that is the same as voluntarily be under dismal dependence, *morally and physically*, and only God can tell where it would end. It could result in any terrible subjugation to her from which it would be very difficult if not impossible for her to get rid of. It is already enough that such accidents take place spontaneously, without enjoyment and only to satisfy an empty curiosity.

Such experiments have no use for the moral betterment and may lead to the most serious inconveniences. People would then blame Spiritism when in fact the only thing to blame is improvidence or the pride of those who believe to be able to control the bad Spirits according to their own will. We never go unpunished when challenging them.

We don't say that the Spirit referred above is fundamentally bad. But it is certain that he cannot be advanced not even fundamentally good and that it is always dangerous to submit oneself to such domination whose minimal inconvenience would be the removal of one's free-will. By given access to Spirits of such a nature one becomes engulfed in their fluids, necessarily refractory to the influence of good Spirits that stay away if we do not strive to attract them by seeking in Spiritism the means of improving ourselves.

Once immersed in such a mean fluid the perispirit is like an outfit that is impregnated by an acrid odor that the most delicious perfume cannot make disappear.

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August 1863

Still a word about the artificial spectra and Mr. Oscar Comettant

The weekly magazine of the *Siècle* from July 12th, 1863 brought the following:

“Besides these important questions there are many others that cannot be neglected, including the spectra issue. . . Have you seen the spectra? For about eight days the spectrum is the only subject to be entertained in conversations. Thus, each theater has its own: spectra of honest con men that robbed, deceived and murdered and that come back, untouchable shadows, to stroll around at midnight in the fifth act of a very well planned play. The secret of the spectrum or, using the language from behind the curtains, the trick, as they say, is due to a very well paid Englishman, of an elemental simplicity that allows all theaters to have their spectra on the same day, this one more expensive than the next. After the theater the spectrum moved on to the living room where it says good evening to the ladies and gentlemen that are like stung by a tarantula through this gentle spectromania.

That is an entertainment that come to explain many prodigies and I want to specifically mention the prodigies of Spiritism. Much has been said about these Spiritists that evoke the dead showing them in small groups of terrified believers. With the help of a simple trick one can do the same thing without being taken by a witch. That general evocation of the spectra throws a dismal blow on the wonderful, now that has been demonstrated that to make a ghost show up is not more difficult than to do the same to a person in flesh and blood. The esteem of the renowned Mr. Home may have already fallen 75% on the account of his admirers. The ideal turns into dust at the touch of the real. The real is a trick.”

Edmond Texier

We were right when we said that the newspapers would still talk about Spiritism when referring to this new ghostly process. The *Indépendance Belge*, in turn, had rubbed their hands and asked: “*How are the Spiritists going to get out of that?*”

We only say to these gentlemen that they should learn about the behavior of Spiritism. What most clearly sticks out of such articles is as always a proof of the most absolute ignorance about the subject that they attack. In fact, it is necessary to ignore the first word to believe that the Spiritists meet to make ghosts to

show up. What is even more astonishing is that we have never seen them not even in the theaters although these people say that we are greatly interested in the subject. Mr. Robin, the prestidigitator mentioned in our preceding article, goes further. It is not only Spiritism that he wants to destroy but the Bible itself. In his daily speech to the spectators he affirms that the apparition of Samuel to Saul happened in the same way that he operates. We did not know that the knowledge about optics was so advanced in those days among the Hebrew who were not considered very educated. Following such a line of thought there is no doubt that Jesus appeared to his disciples using some sort of trick as well.

Since the false spectra do not produce the expected results we will undoubtedly see very soon the appearance of a new gimmick. They will have their time as everything else whose only result is to satisfy curiosity. Such a time may be shorter than expected because people get tired soon of things that left nothing in their Spirits. The theaters then do well by using them while they count on the privilege of attracting the crowds by the force of novelty. Their production will nevertheless have had the advantage of making people talk about Spiritism and to spread its ideas. It was a means, like any other, of leading a large number of people to seek the truth.

What can we say about Mr. Oscar Comettant's article about Mr. Home's book published in the *Siecle* on July 15th, 1863? Nothing other than the fact that it is the best propaganda for the sale of the book and that it will benefit Spiritism. It is useful that from time to time there are whip lashes in order to wake up the attention of the indifferent. If the article is not Spiritist or Spiritualist is it at least witty? Let the others say.

There is however something good in that article. The author, following the example of several of his comrades, falls heavily onto those who make a profession out of the mediumistic skill. He criticizes with just severity the abuse that results from that thus contributing to discredit them, something that serious Spiritism cannot be sorrow for since Spiritism itself rejects any kind of exploitation of that kind as unworthy of the exclusively moral character of Spiritism and as a lack of respect to the dead.

Mr. Comettant makes the mistake of generalizing what would be, at the extreme, a rare exception, particularly by comparing the mediums to jesters, foretellers and deceivers just because he saw charlatans using the titles of mediums, as we see charlatains using the titles of doctors.

It seems that he ignores the fact that there are mediums amongst the members of families of the highest social echelons; that there are some even among renowned writers, highly considered by him and his own friends; that it is notorious that Mrs. Émile de Girardin was an excellent medium. We have the curiosity of knowing if he would have the courage to call them deceivers on their face.

If those who say saw had studied before speaking they would know that the exercise of mediumship requires a profound reverence, incompatible with the lightheadedness of character and the turmoil of curious people and that one must not expect anything serious out of such public gatherings.

Spiritism disapprove any experiment based on pure curiosity, with the objective of distraction, for we must not entertain ourselves with such things. The Spirits, which are the souls of those who left Earth, of our relatives and friends, come to instruct and moralize us and to entertain the lazy ones and that is not funny at all. They don't come to predict the future or to uncover hidden treasures. They come to teach us that there is another life and how we must behave to be happy there, something that is not very entertaining to certain

people. If one does not believe in the soul and in the survival of those who were dear to them, it is always wrong to make fun of that belief at least out of respect for their memory.

Spiritism also teaches us that the Spirits are not there to serve anybody; that they come when and with whom they want; that whoever pretended to have them at their service and to control them at will could well be taken as ignorant or a charlatan with good reason; that it is as much logical as irreverent to admit that serious Spirits attend the caprices of the first one to show up and at a given amount per session, playing the role of accomplices; that there is even a feeling of repugnance associated to the idea that the soul that deserves our tears may come for money.

On the other hand the principle that the Spirits do not communicate easily is confirmed by experience, as they don't do it out of good will through certain mediums and that, among the latter, there are some that absolutely repulse certain Spirits, something that is easily understood by the way that the communication takes place, by the assimilation of fluids. Hence there could be attraction or repulsion between the Spirit and the medium, according to the degree of sympathy and affinity.

Sympathy is founded on the moral and sentimental similarities. Well, which sympathy can a Spirit have to a medium that only calls him for money? They may say perhaps that the Spirit comes for the person that invokes and not the medium that is only an instrument. Agree but that does not make the need for the fluidic conditions less necessary, essentially modified by moral feelings and by the personal relationship between Spirit and medium. That is why there isn't a single medium that can boast about communicating with every Spirit in distinctively, a capital problem to whoever wanted to exploit them.

That is what we teach Mr. Comettant since he ignores as it does destroy the similarities that he pretend to establish. Real mediumship is a precious skill that increases in value the more it is well employed towards good and the more it is exercised religiously and with total moral and material selflessness.

As for the *simulated or abusive* mediumship, whatever it is we leave it to the severity of the critic. Believing that Spiritism is the defender of such a thing and that the legal repression of an abuse would constitute a setback to Spiritism shows complete ignorance of its most elementary principles.

No repression could reach the mediums that did not use their mediumship as a profession and that did not stay away from the moral path delineated to them by the doctrine. The weapons that the abuse provide to the detractors, always eager to use any occasion to attack, and even the ones that are created, when they don't exist they point out even more to the eyes of the sincere Spiritist the need to show that there is no solidarity between the true doctrine and the ones who make a parody of that.

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Questions and Issues

Mystifications

A letter from Locarmo contains the following passage:

“...To me the doubt would be impossible considering that I have a daughter that is a very good, all-around medium and my own son is a medium that writes. But ah! He received such terrible mystifications that his discouragement contaminated me a little without, however, disturbing our belief in this so pure and reassuring doctrine, despite the displeasures that we have when we see ourselves deceived by disappointing answers. Why then would God allow individuals in good faith be deceived by the ones who were supposed to teach them?...”

Answer:

The physical world spills over into the spiritual world by death while the spiritual world spills over the physical one through incarnation. As a result, the normal population that surrounds the planet Earth is composed of Spirits that come from the earthly humanity. Since the latter figures among the most imperfect humanities it can only produce imperfect fruits. That is why the bad Spirits elbow around it. For the same reason, in the more advanced worlds, where good reigns sovereignly, there is only good Spirits. One can now understand why there is so much frequent meddling of inferior Spirits; it is based on the the mediumistic relationships that is inherent to the inferiority of our globe. We take the risk that we could fall victim to deceiving Spirits just as someone on this physical planet can be robbed in a country of thieves.

Isn't this also the case of asking why would God would allow honest people to be mugged by thieves, victims of wickedness and exposed to all sorts of miseries? Ask before why you are here on Earth and the answer will be that you do not deserve a better place, with the exception of the Spirits that are here on a mission. It is then necessary to endure the consequences and strive to leave it as soon as possible. While waiting, it is necessary to make efforts in order to be protected from the assault of the bad Spirits something that can only be achieved by closing all doors that may give them access to our soul, imposing ourselves by moral superiority, courage, perseverance and by an unshakable faith in God's protection and that of the good Spirits, and in the future that is everything whereas the present is nothing. However, since nobody is perfect on Earth nobody can be proud of being sheltered from their malice in absolute terms.

There is no doubt that purity of intentions means a lot. It is the path to perfection but it is not perfection and there can still be some old yeast at the bottom of the soul. That is why he is not the only medium that has been more or less deceived.

Simple commonsense tells us that the good Spirits can only do good, otherwise they would not be good, and that evil can only come from imperfect Spirits. Hence mystification can only be made by frivolous or lying Spirits that abuse people's beliefs and that frequently exploit pride, vanity and other passions. Such mystifications aim at testing perseverance and the firmness of faith and also exercise judgment. If the good Spirits allow them on certain occasions is not for impotence on their side but to allow us the merit of the fight. Considering that the experience that is acquired in such situations is the most valuable if courage fails us it is a proof of weakness that leaves us defenseless before the bad Spirits.

The good Spirits watch us, assist and help us but with the condition that we help ourselves. Man is on Earth for the fight. It is necessary to succeed to leave it behind otherwise he will stay here.

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Questions and issues

Infinite and indefinite

The following letter was sent to us from St. Petersburg on July 1st:

“...In The Spirits’ Book, book I, Chap. I, #2, I noticed the proposition: Everything that is unknown is infinite. It seems to me that many things are unknown to us but that does not imply that they are infinite. Since the word is found in all editions I requested an explanation to my guide that answered: “The word infinite here is a mistake. It should read indefinite. What should one think about it? ...”

Response:

The two words although synonyms in their general sense, have each a special meaning. Here is how the Academy define them:

Indefinite, whose end and limits are not or cannot be determined. Indefinite time. Indefinite number. Indefinite line. Indefinite space.

Infinite that has no beginning or end that has no boundaries or limits. The space is infinite. God is infinite. The mercy of God is infinite. By extension it is said of something that cannot be delimited, the term and by exaggeration, both in the physical as in the moral sense, that everything that is much considered in its kind. It is said particularly for the uncountable. An infinite duration. The infinite contemplation of the elected ones. Globes situated at an infinite distance. My appreciation to you is infinite. An infinite variety of objects. Infinite penalties. There is an infinite number of authors that wrote about this subject.

It results that the word indefinite has a more particular meaning while the word infinite has a more general one; that the first one is preferably used about material things whereas the second about abstract things, hence the former is vaguer than the latter.

The more general sense of the word infinite allows its application in certain cases in which it is not but indefinite while the opposite cannot occur. One can equally say: an infinite duration or an indefinite duration but one could not say God is indefinite, God’s mercy is indefinite.

From that point of view the use of the word *infinite* in the above mentioned phrase is not abusive and it is not an error. We say more that the word indefinite would not express the same idea. From the time that something is unknown it presents to our mind the vagueness of the infinite, if not absolute at least relative.

For example: You don't know what is going to happen to you tomorrow hence your thoughts wander in the infinite; the events are the ones that are indefinite. You don't know the number of stars hence the number is indefinite but it is also infinite to imagination. In the issue in question, it was then adequate to use the word that generalizes the idea, preferably the one that would give it a restrictive meaning.

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Family conversations from beyond the grave

Mr. Cardon, the doctor, deceased in September 1862

Parisian Society, medium Mr. Leymarie

Mr. Cardon had spent part of his life in the mercantile navy as the doctor and had acquired somehow materialistic habits and ideas. Retired to the J... village, he practiced the modest profession of the doctor of the township. For some time, he was convinced that he had a cardiac hypertrophy and, since he knew that it was an incurable disease, the idea of death threw him into a somber melancholy from which nothing would rescue him.

At a given point he predicted his final days about two months in advance and when he was close to that date he gathered the family to say his last farewell. The mother, his wife, the three children and other relatives were around this bed. When his wife tried to lift him up he fell down, his color turned into a livid blue, his eyes closed and was considered dead. His wife placed herself between him and the kids, to preclude them from seeing such a spectacle. After a few minutes he opened his eyes and with the face illuminated, he took a radiant expression of beatitude and said: Oh my children, how beautiful! Oh death! What a prize! How sweet! I was dead and felt my soul rising up very high but God allowed me to come back to tell you: Have no fear for death. It is freedom... I cannot paint the magnificence of what I saw and the impressions that engulfed me! You would not understand them! Oh my children, always behave in such a way that you may deserve this ineffable happiness, reserved to the righteous by living according to charity. ... My dear wife, I leave you in a position that does not make you happy. People owe us but I conjure you, do not torment those who owe us. If they are in trouble wait until they can pay and those who cannot, make the sacrifice. God will reward you. You, my son, work to support your mother. Be always an honest man and guard yourself from doing anything that can dishonor our family. Take this cross that comes from my mother; keep it and may it always remind you of my last advices... My children, help one another and sustain one another and may the good harmony reign among you. Don't allow yourselves to be empty or proud; forgive your enemies if you want God to forgive you... He then brought them closer, reached out to them with his hands and added: - I bless you my children. His eyes then were closed this time forever but he kept such an outstanding expression in his face that a huge crowd came to admire him up to the moment when he was buried.

These interesting details were transmitted to us by a friend of the family, giving us the suggestion for an evocation that could be educational to everyone, at the same time that it could be useful to the Spirit. It follows below:

1. Evocation. – A. I am near you.
2. We were told about your final moments that really impressed us. Could you kindly describe better than you did what was it that you saw in the interim that could be called the interval between your two deaths? – A. Could you understand what I saw? I don't know because I would not be able to find expressions that could help you understand what I saw during the lapse of time when it was possible for me to leave behind my mortal remains.
3. Do you have any idea about the place where you had been? Was it far from Earth? On another planet or space? – A. The Spirit does not know the value of distances as you see them. Taken by an unknown wonderful agent I saw the splendor of a sky that could only be seen in our dreams. Such a journey through the infinite is so fast that I cannot precisely indicate the time spent by my Spirit.
4. Do you enjoy the foreseen happiness at this point in time? – A. No. I wish I could but God cannot reward me with that. I was revolted many times with the good thoughts dictated by the heart and death seemed like injustice to me. As a doctor, I had acquired in the art of healing an aversion to the second nature that is our intelligent, divine movement. The immortality of the soul was a fiction used to seduce less advanced minds, and yet the emptiness scared me and I frequently sworn against this mysterious agent that always hurts and hurts. Philosophy had deterred me, without providing the understanding of the greatness of the Eternal that knows how to distribute pain and joy for the betterment of humanity.
5. Have you recognized yourself just after your true death? – A. No; I recognized myself during the transition carried out by my Spirit when traveling through ethereal places; but after the real death, no; I needed a few days to wake up. God had rewarded me with a grace. I will tell you why: My initial disbelief was gone. I had believed before death because after having scientifically probed the heavy matter that made me perish I had found the divine reasons after the earthly ones. It had inspired, reassured me and my courage was stronger than the pain. I then blessed what I had cursed before; the end seemed like freedom to me. God's thought is as large as the world! What a supreme consolation found in prayer that touches you ineffably; it is the safest means in our physical nature; it was through prayer that I understood, that I firmly believed and that is why God, hearing about my blessed actions, wanted to reward me before the end of my incarnation.
6. Could we say that you were dead the first time around? – A. Yes and no. Since the Spirit left the body the flesh would naturally extinguish but when it retook the possession of my earthly dwelling life returned to the body that had gone through a transition, a sleep.
7. At that moment did you feel the bonds that attached you to the body? – A. No doubt. The Spirit has a link that is hard to break and it is necessary a final shake of the body so that it can return to its natural life.
8. How come during your apparent death and during a few minutes your Spirit could detach instantaneously and without difficulty, while real death was followed by a disturbance that lasted a few days? It seems that in the first case the links between the soul and the body, subsisting more than in the second one, the detachment should have been slower and it was the contrary that actually happened. – A. You have many times evoked incarnate Spirits that gave you real answers. I was in the condition of those Spirits. God had called me and His servers had told me: "Come..." I obeyed and I thank God for the special grace that he was kind to give me. I could see the infinite of his greatness and be aware of that. I thank those who allowed me to teach my loved ones before the real death so that they could have good and fair incarnations.
9. Where did the good and beautiful words come from, those that you addressed to your family over your return to life? – A. It was the reflex of what I had seen and heard. The good Spirits inspired my voice and illuminated my face.
10. What is the impression that you believe your revelation had on those present, particularly on your children. – A. Shocking, profound. Death is not a liar. However ungrateful the children may be they bow before a disappearing life. If one could probe the heart of the children by the

semi open tomb there would be only beats of true feelings, profoundly touched by the secret hands of the Spirits that dictate such thoughts to all. Tremble if you are in doubt; death is the reparation, it is God's justice and I assure you that despite the unbelievers, my friends and my family will believe in the words that I voiced before dying. I was the interpreter of another world.

11. You said that you don't enjoy the happiness that you had foreseen. Are you unhappy? – A. No because I believed before I died and that in my soul and my heart. Notice that God took into account my prayers and my absolute belief in him. I am on my way to perfection I will arrive at the stage that I was given to foresee. Pray, my friends, for this invisible world that preside over your destinies. This fraternal interchange is charity; it is a powerful lever that puts in touch the Spirits of all worlds.
12. Would you like to send a few words to your wife and children? – A. I beg all of them to believe in God, powerful, just and immutable; in the prayer that reassures and alleviate; in charity that is the purest act of human incarnation. May they remember that one can give little: the alms of the poor is more meritorious to God who knows that a poor gives much by giving little. The rich needs to give much and many times to deserve as much. Future is charity and benevolence in every action; is to believe that all Spirits are brothers, never taking advantage of puerile vanities. My beloved family you will have tough tests but know to support them with courage thinking that God see them. Always say this prayer: God of love and goodness, that provides for everything and always, give us the strength that does not back up before any penalty; makes us good, meek and charitable, small for the fortune but great in our hearts; may our Spirit be Spiritist on Earth to better understand and love you. May your name, oh my God, symbol of freedom, be the reassuring objective of all of the oppressed ones, of all those who have the need of love, forgiveness and belief.

Cardon

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Spiritist dissertations

The Spirit of Jean Reynaud

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mrs. Costel

“My friends, how magnificent is this new life! Like a shiny torrent it drags in its huge course the merry souls of infinity! After the rupture of the corporeal links my eyes glanced at the new horizons that surround me and I enjoy the splendid wonders of the infinite. I passed from the shadows of matter to the brilliant light that announces the Almighty. I am saved but not for the merit of my works but for the knowledge of the eternal principle that made me avoid the dirt impressed by ignorance onto humanity. My death was a blessing; the biographers judged it premature. How blind! They will be sorry for some writings that were born from the dust and will not understand how much the little noise made around my tomb is useful to the cause of Spiritism. My work was finished; my predecessors followed the path; I had reached the summit of someone that had done his uttermost and where there is only a new beginning. My death draws the attention of the educated ones and they analyze my fundamental work that is related to the great Spiritist question that they pretend to ignore and that will soon entangle them. Praise the Lord! I will be one of the front runners of the motorcade that delineate your route, helped by the superior Spirits that protect your doctrine.”

In a private family meeting – medium Mr. Charles V...

The Spirit responds to this refection: Your unexpected death, at such an early age, surprised many people.

“Who told you that my death was not be a benefit to Spiritism, to its future and to its consequences? Have you noticed, my friend, the march that progress follows, the route of the Spiritist faith? From starters God gave material proofs: the dance of the tables, the vibrating raps and all kinds of phenomena. That was to draw attention. It was an entertaining preface. Men need material proofs to believe. Now things are very different! After the material facts, God speaks to the intelligence, common sense and cold reason. It is no longer a manifestation of strength but rational things that must convince and unite even the biggest [need to check non or in...I think it may be non] unbelievers. It is just the beginning. Notice well what I tell you: a whole series of intelligent, irrefutable facts will follow and the number of followers of the Spiritist faith that is already large will grow even more. God will take care of the bright minds, of the renowned Spirits, of talent and knowledge. It will be a shiny bolt spreading everywhere on Earth, like an irresistible magnetic fluid, pushing the most refractory ones to the search for the infinite; to the study of this admirable science

that teaches us such sublime maxims. They will all group around you, and abstraction made to the title of geniuses that they were given before, they will make themselves small and humble to learn and be convinced. Then, later on when well instructed and convinced will utilize their authority and notoriety of their names to impel it even further still, thus reaching the final objective of everyone: the regeneration of mankind through a reasoned and investigated knowledge of past and future existences. That is my sincere opinion about the current state of Spiritism.”

Jean Reynaud

Bordeaux, medium Mrs. C...

I attend your call with pleasure, ma'am. Yes, you are right, the Spiritist perturbation, as to say, did not exist to me (responding to the medium's thoughts). Voluntarily exiled on your Earth where I had to sow the first serious seed of the great truths that surround you at this time I was always aware of the homeland and soon recognized myself amongst my brothers.

Q – I thank you for your kindness in having come but I did not believe that my desire to speak with you would have any influence upon you. There must necessarily be such a difference between us that I only think about it with respect.

A – Thank you my child for your thought. However you must know as well that whatever the distance more or less realized or more or less existent or that could more or less fortunately exist between us there is always a powerful link that unites us: sympathy and that was the link that you embraced through your constant thoughts.

Q – Given that many Spirits have explained their initial sensations at their waking, could you kindly tell me what you did experiment when recognizing yourself and how did the separation took place between the Spirit and the body?

A – Same as with everyone else. I felt the time of separation approaching, happier than many though, as it did not cause me anxiety because I knew the result of that, although greater than I thought. The body is a hurdle to the spiritual faculties and whatever the enlightenment that had been preserved, they are always more or less muffled by the contact with matter. I fell asleep expecting a happy awakening. The sleep was short, the admiration immense! The celestial splendors unfolded before my eyes, shining at full power. My stunned eyes plunged into the greatness of those worlds whose existence and habitability I had affirmed. It was a mirage that revealed and confirmed the truth of my feelings. When we speak, however secure we may feel, there are frequently moments of doubt, of uncertainty at the bottom of our hearts; there is then mistrust if not about the truth that we may claim but at least of the imperfect means utilized to demonstrate them. Convinced of the truth that I wanted people to admit I often had to fight against myself, against the frustration of seeing, touching in a way, the truth and not being able to make it tangible to those who needed to believe it so much to provide them with the guidelines on the path to be traveled.

Q – Did you profess Spiritism when alive? – A. There is a big difference between professing and practicing. Many profess a doctrine that they don't practice. I did practice and did not profess. Like every person that follows the laws of Christ is Christian, even when not knowing those laws, every person may also be a Spiritist if he believes in his immortal soul, in their previous lives, in their incessantly progressive march, in their earthly trials, necessary ablution to their purification. I did believe; I was then Spiritist. I understood erratically, this intermediary link between incarnations, this purgatory where the guilty Spirit strips off from

the dirty clothes to take on new ones, where the progressing Spirit carefully weaves the dress that will be worn again and that they want to keep pure. I told you that I understood and without professing it I continued to practice.

OBSERVATION: These three communications were obtained by three mediums that were did not know one another. . We don't have material proofs of the identity of the Spirit that manifested but by the similarity of the thoughts and the style of the language one can at least admit the presumption of identity. The expression "*carefully weaves the dress that will be worn again*" is a charming figure that paints the solicitude with which the Spirit in progress prepares the new life that must make him advance even further. The inferior Spirits take less precaution and sometimes make unfortunate choices that will force them to restart.

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Spiritist dissertations

Homeopathic medicine

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, March 13th 1863 – medium Mrs. Costel

“My child, I come to give a teaching to the Spiritist doctors. Here Astronomy and Philosophy have eloquent interpreters and moral counts on as many writers as mediums. Why would medicine on its practical and physiological side be neglected? I was the creator of a medical renovation that today penetrates the ranks of the sectary of the old medicine. United against homeopathy they hopelessly created barriers and uselessly screamed: - You are not going far!

The triumphant young medicine transposed every obstacle and Spiritism will be its powerful supporter. Thanks to Spiritism that medicine will abandon the materialistic tradition that has delayed its development for so long. The medical study is entirely connected to the research of spiritualist causes and effects; it dissects the bodies and must also analyze the soul. Allow then an old doctor to justify the aims and the means of the doctrine that he promoted and that he sees strangely disfigured down here by the practitioners and above by ignorant Spirits that usurps its name. I wish my spoken word has the power of correcting the abuse that change homeopathy thus impeding it of becoming as useful as it should be. If you spoke in a practical center where my advices could be heard with utility I would stand against the negligence of my earthly colleagues that ignore the fundamental laws of the Organum, exaggerating the doses and above all not giving the trituration that is so important to the medication the necessary care that I indicated. Many forget that a hundred, and sometimes two hundred blows are absolutely necessary to the detachment of the medical principle appropriated to each of the plants of poisons that form our healing arsenal. No medication is indifferent and none is inoffensive. When the badly executed diagnostic produces an irrelevant result it develops the germ of the disease that it should combat.

I get carried away though and here I am teaching a course of homeopathy to an audience that cannot be interested in the subject. However I don't believe it is useless to initiate the Spiritist in the fundamental principles of the science in order to prevent them against eventual deceptions be it from the part of man or from the part of the Spirits.

Samuel Hahnemann

OBSERVATION: This dissertation was motivated by the presence of a foreign homeopathic doctor at the session and who wished Hahnemann's opinion about the current state of that science. We must add that it was obtained by a young lady that did not study medicine and to whom many special terms are strange.

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Correspondence

Letter from Mr. T. Jaubert, from Carcassone

Mr. T. Jaubert, Vice-President of the Civil Court of Carcassone, sent us the letter below. This honorary title was awarded to him by the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies. The Society was fortunate to give Mr. Jaubert this testimony of sympathy and demonstrate to him how much his devotion to the cause of Spiritism is appreciated as well as his modesty and his resolute character. There are positions that reinforce even more the merit of the courage of opinion and qualities that place the man above the critic. (See the last June issue of the Spiritist Review: A Spirit crowned by the Academy of Floral Games).

“Moligt-les-Bains, July 21st 1863

Mr. President,

Your letter with the minutes giving my admission among the honorary members of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies has found me in Moligt where, for health reasons, I have been recovering for the past twenty-nine days. I must enthusiastically send you my gratitude.

I believe in the immortality of the soul, in the communication of the dead with the living ones as I believe in the sun. I love Spiritism as the most legitimate affirmation of God's law: the law of progress. I confess this out loud as to do so is good.

I accepted the primula of the Academy of Toulouse as a shiny response to those who don't want to see in the real messages of the Spirits but rather wrong perceptions or ridiculous exclamations.. I receive the title of honorary member of the Society, of which you are the chief, as the most honorable that I have ever received from the hands of men. Still once more, Sir, I send to you and to all members of the Parisian Society my most sincere appreciation.

Your report about the session of the Floral Games faithfully interpreted my feelings and my behavior. By declaring that the awarded fable was the work of my familiar Spirit, I could expose myself to shocking the public and my judges. You expressed perfectly well in your Spiritist Review the respect that I owe to myself and to the opinion of others.

Now, if in any case, I did not have any initiative towards you and if I only respond it is for the fact that I would have to speak about myself, associating my name to an event that certainly makes me happy but that others have given me the honor of considering a success.

I feel freer today and it is from the very bottom of my heart that I beg you, Sir and dear master, to accept the tribute of my acknowledgement, of my sympathy and my most distinct consideration.

T. Jaubert

Vice-President, Court of Carcassone

The abundance of material forces us to postpone to the next issue our second letter to Father Marouzeau as well as the answer to the question that was sent to us about the distinction between atonement and trial.

Allan Kardec

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Union between Spiritism and Philosophy

NOTE: The following article is the introduction to a complete work that the author, Mr. Herrensneider, intends to complete about the need for harmony between Philosophy and Spiritism.

“Since the time when Spiritism was revealed in France, about ten to twelve years ago, the continual communication of the Spirits provoked a positive religious movement throughout all layers of society to encourage and develop. The religious feeling was in fact lost in this century, particularly with the literate and educated classes; the sarcasm of the Voltairism had removed the prestige of Christianity; the progress of science made them see the existing contradictions between the dogmas and the natural laws; the astronomical discoveries demonstrated the puerility of the idea of God sustained by the sons of Abraham, Moses and Christ.

The development of wealth, of the wonderful inventions of art and industry, the whole civilization protested before the eyes of modern civilization against the renunciation of the world. It was due to these several reasons that disbelief and indifference penetrated the souls; that the concern with respect to the eternal destinies had hampered our love to good and paralyzed our moral betterment and that the passion towards the well-being, pleasure, luxury and the earthly vanities ended up by captivating our ambition; it was then that the dead came back to remind us that our current life is followed by another day and that our actions have fatal, inevitable consequences that will come if not in this life certainly in the future life.

That apparition of the Spirits was like a bolt that had a lot of people trembling in the presence of moving furniture by the action of an invisible force; when hearing intelligent thoughts dictated by the use of a gross telegraphy; when reading these sublime pages, written by distracted hands under the influence of a mysterious power. How many pounding hearts suddenly shaken by fear; how many oppressed consciences woke up by deserved anguishes; how many minds hurting by the stupor! The renovation of relationships with the soul of the dead is and continues to be an extraordinary event whose consequence will be the regeneration so much needed by modern society. This is due to the fact that when human society has the sole objective of material prosperity and the pleasure of the senses it dives into the egotist materialism; every action is weighed with the basis on its return; renouncing to any effort that does not lead to material advantage; only appreciates the wealthy and only respects power that is imposed. When people are only concerned with immediate and profitable success, they lose the sense of honesty, renounce to the choice of means, step on their own intimate happiness and virtues, no longer following the guidelines of justice and equity.

In such a society that is dragged into this immoral direction, the rich lead a life of dishonorable morality and hardening of the heart and the disinherited ones are left to a painful and monotonous life whose last consolation seems to be suicide.

Philosophy is powerless against such moral, public and private disposition. It is not that it lacks arguments to demonstrate the social need for pure and generous principles; it is not that it cannot demonstrate the imminence of the final responsibility and establish the perpetuity of our existence but in general people have no time or taste for this or have not given sufficient thought to pay attention to the voice of conscience and to the observations of reason. Besides, the vicissitudes of life are frequently very demanding to have them leaning towards the exercise of virtue by the love of good. Even if philosophy had been what it should had been: a complete and certain doctrine, it would had never been able to lead to an efficient social regeneration only through its teachings, hence up until today it was only able to give to the authority of its doctrine the abstract love to the ideal and to perfection.

To be convinced of the need to be dedicated to good humanity needs tangible things that speak to the senses. They need the striking image of their future pains to make them walk back the dismal ramp of their vices; they need to touch with their own fingers the eternal miseries that they engineered to themselves in their moral carelessness to understand that current life is not the objective of their existences but the Creator given means of having them working individually towards the achievement of their final destinies. It was also for these reasons that every religion based their commandments on the horror of hell and on the seduction of celestial joys.

But since people were reassured about the final consequences of their sins, under the influence of disbelief and religious indifference, an easy and inconsistent philosophy that supports the cult of the senses, temporal interests and the doctrines of selfishness finally prevailed. Today the enlightened, intelligent and strong ones move away from the Church and follow their own inspirations; it fails them for a lack of authority, an authority needed to regain its twenty century old influence. Therefore we can say that the Church is as powerless as philosophy, and that neither one nor the other will exert salutary influence unless each one is submitted to a radical reform, each on its own ground.

Meanwhile humanity stirs up, events follow one another, and the appearance of the Spirit manifestations in this century of lights, practical, and skeptical enough, is unquestionably the most remarkable event. We then see the tomb open before us, not as the end of our troubles and earthly miseries, not as the yawning abyss engulfing our passions, our joys and our illusions, but instead as the majestic door of a new world, where each will reap, despite themselves, the bitter fruits sowed by their own weaknesses; and where others, on the contrary, will ensure by their own merit the passage to the purest and highest spheres. Hence it is Spiritism that reveals our future destiny and the more it is known, the more religious and moral regeneration will gain momentum and reach.

The union between Spiritism and philosophical sciences, in fact, seems highly necessary for human happiness and moral, intellectual and religious progress of modern society because we no longer live in times when one could rule out human science and give preference to blind faith.

Modern science is too wise, too sure of itself and too advanced in the knowledge of the laws that God has imposed on the intelligence and character, so that the religious transformation can take place without its assistance. We know too well the relative tininess of our globe to assign humanity with a privileged place in the designs of the Providence. To the eyes of all, we are only a speck in the vastness of the worlds and we know that the laws that regulate this indefinite multitude of existences are simple, unchanging and universal.

Finally, the demands for the certainty of our knowledge were strongly reinforced so that a new doctrine can rise and sustain itself on another base without a touching and harmless mysticism. When therefore Spiritism wants to expand its influence over all classes of society, upon persons of intelligence and superiority, as onto the kind and believing souls, it must then unreservedly throw itself onto the course of human thoughts and that by its philosophical superiority it imposes to proud reason respect to its authority.

It is this independent action from the followers of Spiritism and the elevated Spirits fully understand. The one who calls himself St. Augustine said recently: "Observe and study carefully the communications that you receive; accept what your reason does not reject and reject what shocks it; ask for clarification about those that leave you in doubt. There you have the procedure to transmit to future generations, without fear of seeing them altered, the truths that you will effortlessly separate from the entourage of unavoidable mistakes."

That is in a few words the true spirit of Spiritism, the one that science may admit without derogation; the one that will serve us to conquer humanity. As a matter of fact Spiritism has nothing to fear about its union to philosophy because it is based on incontestable facts whose very existence are based on the laws of creation. It is up to science to study its reach and coordinate the general principles according to this new order of phenomena for it is evident that if science had not foreseen the necessary existence of the souls of the dead or the ones that are destined to be reborn around us it must understand that its initial philosophy was wrong and that it had missed the fundamental principles.

Philosophy, on the contrary, has much to gain by considering the facts of Spiritism. To begin with because these are the solemn sanction of its moral teachings and because they will by themselves demonstrate the fatal reach of its conduct to the most hardened ones. Nonetheless, regardless of the importance of such a positive justification of its maxims the in-depth study of the deduced consequences of the attested survival of the soul will then serve to determine its constituent elements, origin and destiny, also serving to the establishment of the moral law and progress upon basis certain and unyielding. Besides, the knowledge of the essence of the soul will lead philosophy to the knowledge of the essence of God's things allowing the union of all dividing doctrines in a single and same true complete system.

Finally, these several developments of philosophy, provoked by this precious determination of the psychic essence, will infallibly lead it through the traces of the fundamental principles of the old Cabala and the old hidden science of the hierophants whose last luminous beam that reached us is the Christian trinity. That is how by the simple apparition of the errant soul one will form, since we all have the right of waiting, to the unbreakable chain of moral, religious and metaphysical traditions of humanity, old and modern.

That considerable future that we conceive to philosophy allied to Spiritism will not seem impossible to those who have some notion of that science if they consider the emptiness of the principles that found several schools and their consequent impotence to explain the concrete reality of God and the soul.

That is how materialism claims that the creatures are no more than material phenomena, similar to those produced by combinations of chemical substances and that the principle that animates them is supposedly part of a universal vital principle. According to this system the individual soul would not exist and God would be a completely useless being. The disciples of Helel, in turn, imagine that the idea, this undisciplined phenomenon of our soul, is an element in itself, independent of us; that it is a universal principle that is manifested through humanity and its intellectual activity as well as through nature and its wonderful transformations. That school consequently denies the eternal individuality of our soul, confusing it in a whole with nature. It supposes that there is a perfect identity between the visible universe and the moral and intellectual world; that one and another are the result of the progressive and fatal primitive, universal idea, in one word, the absolute. God equally has no individuality, no freedom and knowledge of himself.

He only noticed himself in 1810 through Hegel when he acknowledged Him in the absolute and universal idea (Historical).

Finally, our spiritualist school, commonly called eclecticism, considers the soul as only a force without extension and robustness, an imperceptible intelligence in the human body and that, once separated from its envelope, keeping its individuality and immortality, would no longer exist in time and space. Our soul would then be one I don't know what without connection to what exists and would not occupy any determined space. According to the same system God would not be perceptible. He is the perfect thought and equally would not be permanent or have any stability or form or sensible reality; it is an empty being; without reason we can have no intuition of him. However, who are those who invented atheism, skepticism, pantheism, idealism, etc.? These are the man of reason, the intelligent and wise men! Ignorant peoples whose main guides are their sensations have never doubted God or the soul or its immortality. Hence reason only seems to be a bad counselor!

Those doctrines, as one can verify, consequently have not a real, stable principle, a living notion of the real Being. They move in an intelligible world that has nothing to do with concrete reality. The emptiness of their principles relates to the whole of their systems making them as much subtle as vague and oblivious to the reality of things. Common sense itself is hurt, despite the talent and prodigious erudition of their followers. But Spiritism is even more brutal with respect to them for it takes down these abstract systems by opposing them with a single fact: the substantial reality, living and current of the non-incarnate soul. It is shown as an individual being, existing in time and space, although invisible to us; like a being with a solid element, substantial and its thinking and active force. It even shows us the errant souls communicating with us out of their own initiative! It is evident that such a fact must destroy all the castles of sand and with a single pen dispel those proud and imaginary schemes.

But for more confusion, we can demonstrate to the followers of such convoluted doctrines that every person carries in their own conscience the elements sufficient to demonstrate the existence of the soul, like Spiritism establishes through the facts, so that their systems are not only wrong at the arrival but also at their starting point. Therefore the best side to be taken by those honorable wise people is to completely reformulate their doctrines and dedicate their profound knowledge to the foundation of a first science, more accurate and according to reality.

We effectively carry in ourselves four irreducible notions that authorizes us to affirm the existence of our soul, as it is presented to us by Spiritism. First we have in ourselves the feeling of our own existence. Such feeling can only be revealed by an impression that we receive from ourselves. Well, no impression is possible from something that is not sturdy or extensive so that by considering the simple fact of our sensations we must deduce that there is a sensible element in us, subtle, extensive and resistant, that is, a substance. Second, we have the conscience of an active element, causal, that manifests in our free-will, thoughts and acts. Consequently it is still evident that we have a second element: a force. Hence by the simple fact that we feel ourselves and are aware of ourselves we must conclude that we have two constituent elements, force and substance, an essential, psychic duality. But these two primitive notions are not the only ones that we carry with ourselves. In third place we still conceive a personal unity, original, that remains always identical to itself; and in fourth place an equally personal destiny because we all seek happiness and our own conveniences in every circumstance of life. Consequently, joining these two new notions that constitute our double being to the two preceding ones, we acknowledge that we are formed by four distinct principles: the duality of essence and the duality of appearance.

Now with the knowledge of these four elements of our self that define our individuality that are notions independent of the body and that have no relationship with our material envelope, it is evident and peremptory to any fair and not prejudiced mind that our being depends on an invisible principle called "soul" and where that soul exists as such because it has a substance and a force, a proper and personal destiny.

These are the four elements of our fundamental psychic individuality whose notion each one of us intimately carries along and that none would deny. As a consequence, as we said, philosophy has, at any time, the elements sufficient to the acknowledgement of the soul as we are given to know by Spiritism. If so far human reason could not have construed a true and useful metaphysics that might have brought the knowledge that the soul must be considered as a real being, independent of the body and capable of existing by itself, substantially and virtually, in time and space, fact is that reason has disdained the direct observation of the facts of conscience and that, in its pride and sufficiency, reason took the place of reality.

According to these observations, one can understand how important it is to philosophy the union to Spiritism for it will take from that union the advantage of creating a first, serious and complete science, founded on the knowledge of the essence of the soul and the four conditions of its reality. But it is no longer necessary for Spiritism to ally to philosophy because it is the only way through which it will be able to establish the scientific certainty of the Spiritist events that form the fundamental basis of its belief and from there extract the important consequences that it contains.

No doubt that to common sense it is enough to see a phenomenon to attest its reality and many are satisfied with that but science many times had motives to doubt the claims of common sense and to mistrust the impressions of our senses and in the illusions of our imagination. Hence common sense is not enough to scientifically establish the reality of the presence of the Spirits around us. In order to establish that in an irrefutable way it is necessary that it is done rationally according to the general laws of creation, that its existence is necessary by itself and that its invisible presence is not but the confirmation of rational and scientific data as the ones that we just indicated unquestionably. Therefore it is only through the philosophical method that one can get at that result. That is necessary to the works of Spiritism and it is only philosophy that can do such a service.

In order to succeed in any undertaking it is necessary to the knowledge about the principles to the observation of the facts. In the particular circumstances of Spiritism it is even much more necessary to proceed in that rigorous manner to get to the truth because our new doctrine touches our dearest and highest interests, constituting our present and eternal happiness. The union of Spiritism and philosophy, consequently, is of the utmost importance for the success of our efforts and for the future of humanity."

F. Herrensneider

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

September 1863

Questions and issues

About atonement and trial

“Moulins, July 8th 1863

Dear and venerable master,

I want to bring to your attention a question that was discussed in our small group and we could not have resolved with our insights and knowledge. The Spirits that we consulted did not respond in a way that we could understand. . I wrote a short note that I take the liberty of sending to you in which I put together the points of my personal opinion which are different from the other colleagues. In their opinion, atonement takes place effectively during incarnation. This is based on the fact that these assertions have been used in many communication, including in The Spirits' Book.

I then ask for your extreme kindness in giving us your opinion about this issue. Your decision will have the force of law to us and in good will each one will sacrifice their own way of seeing it to hold the flag that you have planted and hold in such a wise and firm way.

Yours sincerely...etc.”

T. T.

“Several communications given by different Spirits qualify atonements and trials indistinctly, pains and tribulations that account for the share of each one of us during the incarnation on Earth. The application of the same idea to two words that have very different applications results in some confusion undoubtedly without importance to the dematerialized Spirits but that give rise to discussions among the incarnate ones, therefore it would be recommended to stop that by a clear and accurate definition and explanations given by the superior Spirits that would irrevocably determine that point of the doctrine.

To begin with and taking the two words in their absolute meaning, it seems that atonement would be the punishment, the imposed punishment to compensate for a fault with the perfect knowledge from the part of the punished person of the cause of the punishment, that is the fault to be atoned. In that sense it is understandable that the atonement is always imposed by God. The trial carries no idea of reparation. It can be voluntary or imposed but strictly speaking it is not the immediate consequence of perpetrated errors. The trial is a means of assessing that state of something, to acknowledge its quality. That is how a rope, a bridge, a piece of armory are tested to verify if they are adequate for the function that they should perform

and it is not related to their previous condition. By extension people call trials of life the set of moral or physical means that reveal the existence or absence of qualities of the soul that establish its perfection or the progress it has achieved in search of that final perfection.

It seems then logical to admit that atonement, properly saying and in the absolute sense of the word, takes place in the spiritual life, after discarnation or corporeal death; that it may be more or less lengthy, more or less painful, according to the severity of the faults, complete in the other world, always terminating with an eager desire to have another incarnation during which the chosen or imposed trials will allow the soul to make progress towards perfection that was not achieved due to previous faults. Hence it would not be adequate to admit that there is atonement on Earth even exceptionally because there would then be the need to admit the knowledge of the faults that are punished. Such knowledge only exist in the life beyond the grave. Atonement without that knowledge would be a useless barbarism and it would not conform to God's justice or goodness.

During the incarnation one can only conceive trials because whatever the pains and tribulations on Earth it is impossible to consider them sufficient atonement for faults of any gravity. Would you believe that when a condemned person is delivered to the justice of men that person would be well punished if condemned to live with the most unfortunate among us?

Let us then not exaggerate the troubles of Earth to assign us with the merit of having endured them. The trial is more associated to the way that the troubles are endured than on their intensity that, like earthly happiness, is always relative to each individual.

The distinct characters of atonement and trial are that the first is always imposed and its cause must be known by the one that endures it whereas the second may be voluntary that is chosen by the Spirit or even imposed by God in the absence of a choice. Besides, it may well be conceived without a known cause for it is not necessarily the consequence of committed faults.

Simply put: the atonement covers the past; the trial opens up the future.

The July issue of the Spiritist Review contains an article entitled Earthly atonement that would seem contrary to the opinion above. However, reading it carefully one can see that the true atonement took place in the spiritual life and that the position that Max had in his last incarnation in reality is nothing more than the kind of trials that he chose or that were imposed to him and from which he rose victorious but during that whole life he could not benefit from an aimless atonement since he did not know his previous position.

This may perhaps be more of an issue of words than principles. In fact, it has been said many times: "Don't stay at the level of the words; look for the meaning of the thought." In any case for us that understand one another through words it is important that we understand well the meaning that is given to them."

Answer: The distinction established by the author of the note above between the character of the atonement and trials is perfectly just. However, we cannot share his opinion with respect the application of that theory to the situation of mankind on Earth.

Atonement implies the idea of a more or less painful punishment, result of fault that was committed. The trial always implies a real or presumable inferiority because the one that arrived at the aspired summit no longer needs trials. In certain cases the trial is confused with atonement, that is, the atonement may serve as a trial and vice versa. The candidate that shows up to graduate needs to go through a test. If he fails he will have to restart a painful work. This new work is the punishment for the negligence in the first one. The second trial then becomes an atonement.

A condemned person that awaits a reduction or a commutation in sentencing, after good behavior, the penalty is at the same time an atonement for the fault and a trial for the future life. If the person is not better when leaving prison then the trial is null and a new punishment will lead her to a new trial.

Now, taking into account humans on Earth, we will see that we endure troubles of all kinds and sometimes cruel. These troubles have a cause. Unless we attribute them to a caprice of the Creator, we are forced to admit that the cause is in us and that the miseries that we experience cannot be the result of our virtues. Hence its source is in our imperfections.

If a Spirit incarnates on Earth amidst fortune, honor and all material pleasures one can say that the Spirit endures the trial of being hauled. The one that falls in disgrace by conduct or improvidence it is the atonement of their current faults and it can be said that it is the punishment by the sins. However, what can we say about someone that was born in need and deprivation; that drags along a miserable and hopeless life; that succumbs to the weight of congenital diseases not having ostensibly done anything to deserve such a fate? Be it a trial or an atonement the position is not less painful and would not be less just from the point of view of our correspondent because if the person does not remember the fault he or she don't remember having done wrong either. Hence the solution to the issue must be found somewhere else.

Since every effect has a cause human miseries are effects that must have a cause. If the cause is not in this life it must be in the preceding one. Besides, admitting God's justice, the effects must have a more or less close relationship with preceding actions from which they are at the same time punishment for the past and trial for the future. They are atonements in the sense that they are consequence of a fault and trials with respect to the benefit that is taken from that. Reason tells us that God cannot harm the innocent. Hence if we are hurt and if we are not innocents the troubles we face is the punishment and the way we endure them is the trial.

However it frequently happens that the fault is not in this life. People then accuse God's justice, deny his goodness and even doubt his existence. That is precisely the toughest trial. Whoever admits a sovereignly good and just God, even in things that we don't understand, and that we suffer a punishment is that we deserve it. That is then an atonement.

By the great law of the plurality of the existences Spiritism completely raises the veil that kept our vision in darkness. It teaches us that if the fault was not committed in this life it was then done in the previous one and for that matter God's justice follow its course pushing us where we were in error.

Then comes the serious question of forgetting that, according to our correspondent, subtracts the character of atonement from the troubles of life. It is a mistake. Give it any name you like but you will not preclude it from being the consequence of a fault. If you ignore that which Spiritism teaches you. As for not remembering the faults this does not have the consequences that you attribute. We demonstrated elsewhere that the precise memory of those faults would have extremely serious consequences because that would disturb and humiliate us before our own eyes and before the eyes of our fellow human beings; it would create disturbance in the social relationships and for that very reason would block our free-will.

On another hand the obliviousness is not as absolute as people suppose. It only happens in our exterior life of relationship for the interest of humanity but in the spiritual life there is no solution of continuity. Both in errant spiritual life as well as at moments of emancipation of the soul the Spirit remembers perfectly well and that memory leaves an intuition that is translated into the voice of the conscience that adverts the person of what must or must not be done. If the person does not listen to that it is the person's fault.

In addition Spiritism gives people a means to go back to the past if not accurately in the actions at least in the general characters of those actions that remain more or less faded away in the present life. By the endured tribulations, atonements or trials, the person must conclude that was guilty. By the nature of the tribulations helped by the study of the instinctive tendencies and supported by the principle that the most just punishment is the consequence of the fault, the person can deduce about her moral past. The bad tendencies teach about what is left in terms of imperfection to be corrected. Current life becomes a new starting point. The person gets at this life rich or poor of moral qualities being then enough to study oneself to see what is missing and say to oneself: "If I am punished it is because I sinned." The punishment itself will tell about the sin.

Let's conduct a comparison.

Suppose a man that was condemned to forced labor and to suffer a special punishment there more or less severe according to the fault; suppose further that when he gets to prison he loses the memory of his past actions that led him to that place; couldn't he say to himself: "If I am in prison it is for being guilty because righteous people are not condemned; hence I must become good right away so that I don't come back here after I leave." Does he want to know what he did? Studying the criminal law, he will understand what type of crime leads to that situation because someone is not placed on shackles for something silly; from the time and severity of the sentence he will conclude about the kind of crime that was committed. To have a more accurate idea, he will only have to study those to which he feels more instinctively attracted. He will then know what he will have to avoid thereafter in order to keep his freedom and for that he will also be stimulated by good people assigned with the mission of educating and guiding him in the good path. If he does not take advantage of that he will suffer the consequences. That is the situation of the man on Earth where, like the shackles, could not have been placed on him for his perfection since his is unfortunate and forced to work. God multiplies the teachings that are proportional to his advancement. He is incessantly warned and even hurt in order to wake up from the numbness. The one that persists by turning blind eyes cannot be justified by ignorance. In short if certain situations of human life have more particularly the character of a trial others will unquestionably have that of punishment and every punishment may serve as a trial.

It is a mistake to think that the essential character of an atonement is that of its imposition. We daily see voluntary atonements not to mention the monks that hurt and punish themselves with discipline and cilice. Thus there is nothing of irrational in admitting that a Spirit, in trying to better and better, chooses or requests an earthly existence that lead him to make up for his past mistakes. If such an existence had been imposed on him it would not have been less fair, despite the momentary absence of memory, by the reasons that were developed above. The miseries here are then atonements on their effective and material side, and trials on their moral consequences. Whatever the name that they may be given the result must be the same: the betterment. In the presence of such an important objective it would be foolish to transform a question of words into an issue of principle. This would demonstrate that one gives more importance to words than to the thing itself.

It gives us great pleasure to respond and clarify serious questions, whenever possible. The discussion is even more useful to people of good faith that have studied and want to analyze things further because that is work towards the progress of the science as it is useless to those who judge without knowledge and want to know without carrying the burden of studying.

Spiritist Review

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September 1863

Second letter to Father Marouzeau

See the issue of July, 1863

Father, ,

In my previous letter I gave you the reasons that led me to not respond to your brochure article per article. I will not remind them, limiting myself to transcribe some passages.

You say: "We must conclude from all that that Spiritism must be limited to combat materialism, give people material proof of their immortality through well attested manifestations from beyond the grave; that beyond that point everything else is uncertainty, thick darkness, illusions, a true chaos; that as a philosophical-religious doctrine it is just a true utopia as many others found in history and to which time will do justice despite the spiritual army that you were made the commander-in-chief."

To begin with, Father, , you must agree that your forecasts did not materialize and that time is in no hurry to do justice to Spiritism. If it did not succumb, one cannot blame the indifference and negligence of the clergy and its followers for there has been no lack of attacks: brochures, journals, sermons and excommunications fired in all directions; nothing was missed not even the indisputable talent and merit of some champions. If even under such a formidable artillery, the ranks of the Spiritists increased instead of diminishing, it is because the fire turned into smoke. Still once more a rule of elemental logic tells us that a force is judged by its effects. You could not stop Spiritism as it continues to move faster than you do and the reason for that is that it is ahead while you push from the back as the century advances.

Upon examining the several attacks directed against Spiritism, some serious and important teachings stand out. Those that come from the skeptical and materialistic party are characterized by the denial, a more or less witty mockery, the generally silly and banal jokes while – this is unfortunate to say – it is from the religious side that come the most uncivilized injuries, the personal attacks and the calumnies. It is from the cathedra that the most offensive words fall. It is in the name of the Church that the ignoble and lying pamphlet about the pretense balance of Spiritism. Despite that, I provided you with some data from the Spiritist Review. In addition, I did not say everything out of deference as I know that all the elements of the clergy are far from approving such things. It is useful, however, that later on people will know the kind of weapons that were used against Spiritism. Unfortunately, the journal articles are evading like the pages that they carry; the brochures themselves have a short life and in a few years the names of the most eager and bellicose antagonists will probably be forgotten.

There is only one way of preventing against this effect of time: it is to collect all the diatribes, from wherever side they come, and create an archive that will not be the least illustrative of the history of Spiritism. I have no lack of documents for such a work and I am sorry to say that it is the publications in the name of religion that, up until now I have provided the strongest contingent. I attest with pleasure that your brochure at least constitutes exception with respect to its civility but by the force of the arguments.

According to you, Father, everything in Spiritism is just uncertainty, thick darkness, illusions, chaos and utopias. You must then acknowledge that it is not very dangerous since nobody will understand it. What is it that the Church has to fear of something that is so absurd? If that is the case why such an exhibition of power? Based on these mismatches one can say that the Church is afraid. In general nobody fires a canon shot against a fly. Isn't that a contradiction to say on one side that Spiritism is a threat to religion when on the other side they say that it is nothing?

In the above mentioned passage I notice, in passing, a certainly involuntary error for I don't suppose that you would deliberately alter the truth like some of your colleagues, to serve your cause. You say: "*despite the spiritual army that you were made the commander-in-chief.*" To begin with, I ask you about what you understand by spiritual army. Is that the army of the Spirits or the Spiritists? The first interpretation would lead you to say an absurd; the second a falsehood because it is notorious that I have never made myself chief of anything. If the Spiritists give me that title it is out of a spontaneous feeling from their part given the trust they kindly have in me while you give the impression that I imposed myself and took the initiative, something that I formally deny.

As a matter of fact the successes of the doctrine that I profess give me certain authority upon the followers, a purely moral authority that I do not use but to recommend calm, moderation and abstention from any reprisal against those that treat them dishonorably, in a word to remind that about the practice of charity even against their enemies.

The most important part of that paragraph is the one in which you say that "*Spiritism must be limited to combat materialism, give people material proof of their immortality through well attested manifestations from beyond the grave.*" Spiritism is then good for something. If the manifestations from beyond the grave are useful to destroy materialism and demonstrate the immortality of the soul it is not the devil that is manifesting.

To get to that proof that according to you sticks out from those manifestations it is necessary to recognize parents and friends in them; thus, the communicating Spirits are the souls of those who had lived. Hence, Father you are in contradiction with the doctrine professed by several of your illustrious comrades, meaning that it is only the devil that can communicate. Is that a point of a doctrine or is it a personal opinion? In the second case one does not bear more value than the other. In the first case you attest the heresy.

There is more. Considering that the communications from beyond the grave are useful to fight against disbelief with respect to the fundamental basis of the religion: the existence and immortality of the soul; considering that Spiritism must be useful to that objective then each person is free to seek in the evocation the remedy to cure the doubt that religion alone could not resolve. Consequently every believer and even every good Catholic and priest is allowed to use it to lead the lost sheep to the pen. If Spiritism has the means of clearing the fog of doubt that religion could not destroy then it offers the resources that religion does not have otherwise there wouldn't be a single unbeliever in the Catholic religion. Why then it rejects such an efficient way of saving the souls?

On another hand how to conciliate the utility that you acknowledge the communications from beyond the grave have with the formal prohibition set by the Church to evoke the dead? Considering that it is a strict principle that one cannot be a Catholic if not scrupulously conform to the precepts of the Church; that the least deviation from its commandments is a heresy, there you are Father, well and duly heretical since you declared to be good what the Church condemns.

You say that Spiritism is only chaos and uncertainty; are you much more clearer there? Where is the orthodoxy in that point since some think in a way and others in another way? How to you want people to agree when you yourself are in contradiction with your words? Your brochure is entitled: Complete Refutation of the Spiritist Doctrine from a Religious Point of View. If you say complete, you say absolute. If the refutation is complete it must not leave anything out. And now from a religious point of view you do acknowledge a huge utility to something that is prohibited by the Church! Is there a greater utility than leading that of leading the unbelievers to God? Your brochure would have been better entitled: Refutation of the demoniac doctrine of the Church. In fact that is not the only contradiction that I could point out. Be relax you are not the only one dissident. I know very well a good number of ecclesiastics that do not believe more than you do on the exclusive communication of the devil; that deal with evocations safely and with conscience; that don't believe more than I do in the irresistible penalties and in the absolute eternal condemnation and that in agreement with more than one father of the Church as it will be demonstrated to you later. Yes, many more ecclesiastics than people think look at Spiritism from a more elevated standpoint. Stunned by the universality of the manifestations and with the great spectacle of its irresistible march they see the dawn of a new era in all that and a sign of God's will before which they bow in reverence.

Mr. Priest you say that Spiritism should stop at a given point and not go beyond. One must be consistent with oneself in everything. To have these souls convincing the unbelievers about their own existence it is necessary that they speak. Well, is it possible to preclude them from saying what they wish? Is it my fault if they come to us do describe their condition, fortunate or not, differently from what is taught by the Church? And if they come to say that they have already lived and that they will live again physically? That God is neither cruel nor vindictive nor inflexible as he is presented but good and merciful? If in all corners of the world where they are called to convince about the future life they say the same thing?

Finally, is that my fault if the picture that they paint of the future that is reserved to mankind is more seducing than the one you offer? If people prefer mercy to damnation?

Who made the Spiritist Doctrine? It was their words and not my imagination; it was the actors of the invisible world themselves, the eye witnesses of the things from beyond the grave that dictated them and it was only established upon the agreement of the immense majority of revelations made in all places and to thousands of people that I have never met. All I did in all that was to methodically coordinate the teachings given by the Spirits. Without taking into account isolated opinions I adopted those from the larger number, keeping away every systematic, individual, eccentric or contradictory idea with the positive data of science.

From those teachings and from their agreement, as well as from the careful observation of the facts, it turns out that there isn't anything of supernatural in the Spiritist manifestations but, on the contrary, they are the result of a natural law that was unknown up until now, as were for a long time the law of gravitation, of the movement of the globes, the formation of Earth, the electricity, etc.

Considering that this law is in nature it is then the works of God unless someone says that nature is the work of the devil. Such a law that explains a number of things that would remain unexplained without it, converted as many unbelievers as did the fact of manifestations themselves and the proof of that is in the large number of materialistic persons redirected to God just by the reading of the books and without having

seen anything. Would it be better if they remained as unbelievers taking the risk that they would not even accept the Catholic orthodoxy?

The Spiritist Doctrine then is not my work but that of the Spirits. If those Spirits are the souls of people it cannot be the works of the devil. If it were my personal conception I should congratulate myself for its prodigious success but I could not take the credit for something that is not mine. No, it is not the work of one person or even one Spirit, whoever they may be because they could not have given the doctrine a sufficient sanction, but it is the works of the Spirits and that is what constitutes its strength because anyone may receive their own confirmation.

Will time do it justice, as you say? For that it would be necessary to have it blocked from being taught, that is, the Spirits would have to stop existing and communicating all over the world. Besides, it would be necessary that it would no longer be logical and satisfying people's aspirations.

You add that you hope I will acknowledge my mistake. I don't think about that and frankly speaking it is not the argumentation found in your brochure that will make me change my opinion or desert from the position where I was placed by the Providence in which I find every moral happiness that one can find on Earth by seeing the fruits of what was sowed by God. It is a great and kind joy I assure you to see the people that became happy through the doctrine, so many people enrooted from despair, suicide, the brutality of passions and been redirected to good. Only one of its blessings is a plentiful compensation to me for the fatigue and the insults.

Nobody has the power to take such happiness away from me. You don't recognize that because you wanted to do that. I wish you the same happiness from all my heart. Try it and you will see.

Father, I give you ten years to see what your opinion about the doctrine.

Yours sincerely,

Allan Kardec

Spiritist Review

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September 1863

Article from *Écho of Sétif* to Mr. Leblanc de Prébois

The passage below was extracted from an article in the *Écho of Sétif* on July 23rd, 1863 responding to a brochure entitled *Le Budget du Spiritisme* which we mentioned in the last June issue of the Spiritist Review.

“We did not give much attention to the issue and for a better understanding we follow the order below:

- 1. You believe in the immortality of the soul and so do I. We are in agreement on that point.*
- 2. You send my soul to God after death and me too. This is the second point that we agree.*
- 3. Once my soul finds God, you want it to remain with God, go to hell or finally to the purgatory. These are the only three places where you allow it to dwell. We are no longer in agreement here. I believe that God allows the soul to travel everywhere. You restrict the space to the soul and I increase it. Tell me openly and frankly if you think that your opinion is better founded than mine. Tell me why God would preclude my soul from traveling after the death of the body. Do you have any insight about this? Any proof from this type of rationale? I do not believe so. I have one: it is the rationale that I utilize from the known to the unknown. God created immutable laws that never contradict one another. I see in nature that everything moves and nothing remains still. It is God's wish. Only this truth that I touch and feel is enough to demonstrate to me that the same happens to the globes that are not known to me. As for you, tell me why you want it to be different. If you do not contest the fact that my soul can move after the death of the body, if it is alive, if it feels, if it can communicate with something, with someone, tell me why it cannot ever communicate with your soul, still bonded to the body. Give me a reason, but a logical one otherwise I must reject it. If you say that your intelligence refuses to believe in that, it is a reason that I don't admit because there are millions of things that your reason would refuse to believe and that, nonetheless, you will believe after you saw them. That is what St. Thomas did. I have one request only. I don't mind what you believe and have no interest in that but I beg you to insult nobody without any need. Regardless of your merit there are people in Spiritism that are as worthy as you are. There are those who want to see, study and enlighten themselves; there are those who saw remarkable things and want to know their causes before they say anything. Well! Do as they did: Study, seek and only after you have found, give us the clear and accurate explanation of the phenomenon. That is more valuable than malicious expressions. You would have helped science to move a step forward and reassured alarmed consciences like yours. That is a nice role to play. Before I finish I have a question to Mr. Leblanc de Prébois: Has he sold his brochure or only had it published for the love of humanity?”*

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

September 1863

Bibliographic news

By Daniel Dunglas Home³¹

This book is a pure and simple report without comments or explanations of the mediumistic phenomena produced by Mr. Home. Those phenomena are very interesting to anyone that knows Spiritism and want to understand them but, on their own, they are not much convincing to unbelievers which do not believe in what they see, let alone what they are told. It is a collection of facts more appropriate to those who know than to those who don't know, instructive to the former but simply a curiosity to the latter. Our intention is not to examine or discuss those facts that were already dealt with in the articles about Mr. Home published in the Spiritist Review in February, March, April and May 1858. We only say that the simplicity of the report carries a weight of truth that could not be ignored and that, from our point of view, we have no reason to be suspicious of its authenticity. What can be criticized is its monotony and the absence of any conclusion, of any moral or logical deduction. Inaccuracies of style are also very frequent. The translation, particularly in certain passages, is very distant from the spirit of the French language. If the doubt is the first impression in someone that cannot attest the facts any person that had carefully studied and understood our books, particularly *The Mediums' Book*, will at least acknowledge their possibility because the explanation will be found.

As everybody knows, Mr. Home is a very gifted, enlightened medium. A remarkable point is that he gathers the necessary skills to obtain the majority of the phenomena of that kind in an exceptional level, in a certain way. Although he had been ridiculed by some because of his apocryphal facts and exaggerations, there is still a lot to justify his reputation. His work will have, above all, the great advantage of separating the true from the false. The phenomena produced by him takes us back to the first period of Spiritism. The period of the turning tables, also called as the "Curiosity Period". This is the period of preliminary effects which was intended to draw the attention to the new order of things and pave the way to the "Philosophical Period".

³¹ Single volume, translated from the English. Price 3.5 francs and not 2 francs as wrongly announced in the precious issue of the Spiritist Review. By mail 3.9 francs.

Such a march was rational because every philosophy must involve the deduction of facts consciously studied and observed and the one that would only rest on unfounded, speculative ideas. Theory then should result from the facts and the philosophical consequences should result from that theory.

If Spiritism was limited to the material phenomena then, once the curiosity was satisfied, it would have lived out its fashion and been short-lived. The proof of that is the turning tables which had the privilege of entertaining the theaters only during a few winters. Its vitality was in its utility only. Thus, the prodigious extension that it acquired comes from the time when it entered the philosophical path. It was only then that it took its place amongst the doctrines.

The observations and the agreement of the facts led to the search for the causes; the search for the causes led to the knowledge of the relationships between the visible and invisible worlds as a consequence of a law. Once that law was known it provided the explanation to a number of phenomena misunderstood and considered supernatural up until then, before the causes were known. Once the causes were established the phenomena entered the order of the natural phenomena and the wonderful disappeared.

In that respect and with reason one may criticize how Mr. Home characterizes his life as supernatural in his book. In the past, he would certainly be taken by a magician. Had he been a priest in the Middle Ages he would have become a saint, with the gift of making miracles; in his privacy he would be considered a witch and would have been burnt at the stake; among the pagans he would have been a god with altars erected in his name. But these were other times and other customs. Today he is a simple medium, predestined by the power of his gifts to a limited number of prodigies, proving by experience that certain phenomena considered supernatural are just part of the natural laws.

Some people feared the authenticity of certain miracles by seeing them reaching public opinion. But by sharing Mr. Home's gifts with many other mediums so that all could observe, it becomes impossible to consider them as an exception to natural laws.

What to do then? One cannot preclude something to be what it is; one cannot hide something that is not the privilege of anybody. One must resign to the acceptance of these facts just like the Earth's movement and creation were accepted. If Mr. Home were the only one of that kind, his works could be denied after his death but how can one deny phenomena that multiplied by the daily surge of thousands of families in all corners of the globe? Still once more, willing or not, one must accept what is positive and that cannot be blocked.

But if certain phenomena lose prestige from the point of view of the miraculous, they gain in authenticity. The disbelief, with respect to the miracles, is in the order of the day and must be acknowledged. Now in the presence of mediumistic effects and thanks to the Spiritist theory that proves that such effects are part of nature then the possibility of these phenomena is demonstrated and disbelief will have to be silenced.

The denial of a fact brings the denial of its consequences. Is it better to deny a fact that is considered miraculous than to admit it as a simple law of nature? Aren't the laws of nature the works of God? Isn't the revelation of a new law the proof of his power? Will God be smaller by acting through his laws than by derogating them? As a matter of fact, are the miracles an exclusive attribute of the divine power? Doesn't the Church teach us that "false prophets solicited by the devil may make miracles and prodigies to seduce even the elected ones"? If the devil can make miracles, he can also depart from the laws of God, that is undo what was done by God, but the Church does not say anywhere that the devil can make laws to rule the universe. Now if the miracles can be made by God and the devil and if the laws are only made by God, Spiritism, by explaining that certain facts that are seen as exceptions, are in-fact the application of the laws of nature attesting for that very reason much more the power of God than the miracles themselves. This is

because Spiritism attributes them only to God while, in the alternate hypothesis, they could also be the work of the devil.

Another teaching sticks out from the phenomena produced by Mr. Home and his book supports what we have many times said about the insufficiency of the physical manifestations only to bring conviction to certain persons. It is a very well-known fact that many people witnessed the most extraordinary manifestations and yet were not convinced because they did not understand them and because they were not founded on reasoning. As a result, their assessment was that these manifestations were based on charlatanism.

There is no doubt that if anyone was able to convince someone that these manifestations were factual then Mr. Home would be able to do so. Not a single medium has produced a more credible set of phenomena. And even with these manifestations there were still those that believed he was a skillful conjurer. To many, he produces curious things that are even more interesting than the great magician, Robert Houdin. It would seem, however, that given the amazing effects and the observations from witnesses that that any denial would be impossible and that France would be massively converted. When those phenomena only took place in America they were rejected given the impossibility of witnessing them. Mr. Home came to show them to the top notch of society and he found more curious people than believers in that society although he challenged any suspicion of charlatanism.

What was missing in such manifestations to convince people? They lacked the key to understand them. Today there isn't a single Spiritist that had seriously studied the science that would not admit the facts mentioned in Mr. Home's book without having seen them, whereas there is more than one unbeliever among those that saw. This demonstrates that something that speaks to the mind and is supported by reason has the power of conviction that is not carried by something that only speak to the eyes.

Does it follow that the arrival of Mr. Home was useless? Absolutely not. We have said, and repeat, that he rushed the emergence of Spiritism in France by the light shed upon the phenomena even amidst the unbelievers, proving that they are not surrounded by mysteries or ridicule formulas of magic and that one can be a medium without the appearance of a witch.

Finally, by the repercussion that his name and the environment that he lived proved to be very useful as it gave Mr. Oscar Comettant the opportunity to speak about and write his well-known witty article. The only missing thing is the author to know about the subject that he criticized. This is similar to someone someone who know nothing about music and wants to criticize Mozart or Beethoven (see report of the work of Mr. Home by Mr. Comettant, Siècle July 15th 1863 and some words from us about that article in the Spiritist Review in the following August).

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Sermons about Spiritism

On the billboard at the Metz Cathedral from 27-29th of May, 1863 was a brochure that was posted by Rev. Father Letierce. This brochure was refuted by a Spiritist of Metz which addressed the assertions in the brochure about the about the Spiritist madness.³²

Although we don't know the person that authored the brochure, we can say that it is the work of an enlightened and sincere Spiritist. We are glad to see Spiritist defended by such skillful hands that are able to ally the strength of reasoning to moderation, the hallmark of true power.

The arguments of the adversaries are combated there with a logic that we cannot envisage its counterpart for there is only one serious logic which is the one that leaves no room for counter argument. We think that the author's is in that category. It is certain that, right or wrong, one can always respond for there are some people to whom one cannot say the last word even when trying to tell them that there is sunshine at noon. But these are not the ones to be silenced. Never mind if they are convinced or not of their mistakes. These are not the ones addressed by us either but the public, the judge in last instance of the good and bad causes. There is a sound judgement in the Spirit of the masses that may fail individuals alone but whose whole is like the resultant of the intellectual forces and common sense.

The aforementioned brochure, in our opinion, unites the advantages of depth and form, that is, it provides precision and elegance of the style to the fairness of reason. This combination can never spoil anything and makes the reading of any text easier and more attractive. We don't doubt that this book will be welcomed by the Spiritists with the deserved sympathy. We do recommend it with every confidence and without restrictions. Contributing to its expansion you will do service to the cause.

32 Brochure in-12, price 1 franc, by mail 1.1 franc. Paris, Didier Quais des Augustins, 35; Ledoyen, Palais Royal, Metz; Linden, Rue Pierre-Hardie, 1

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Spiritist dissertations

A premature death

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, July 31st 1863

Medium Mrs. Costel

“There I was still in the theater of the world and saw myself buried forever in the veil of innocence and youth. The fire of Earth saved me from the fire of hell: that is how I used to think in my Catholic faith, daring not to see the splendors of paradise, my soul seeking refuge in the atonement of purgatory and I prayed and cried. But who gave me, in my weakness, the strength to endure the anguishes? Who, in the long nights of insomnia and painful fever, bent over my body of martyr? Who refreshed my dry lips? It was you my guardian angel, whose white light surrounded me; it was you also, dear friendly Spirits, who came to whisper in my ears words of hope and love.

The flame that consumed by fragile body rid me from the attachment to the transient; I then died but already alive in the true life. I did not know about the disturbance and entered serene and in reverence into the shiny day that surrounds the ones that had hope after a lot of suffering. My mother, my dear mother, was the last human vibration at the heart of my soul. Oh how much I would like to see her as a Spiritist!

I separated from the earthly tree like a premature fruit. I had not yet blossomed to the demon of pride that hurts the souls, dragged by the lights of success and wasted by youth. Blessed are the flames, the sufferings, the trials that were an atonement. Like those thinly white treads of autumn I float away, dragged by a luminous current. It is no longer the diamond stars that shiny upon my front by the golden ones from God.”

NOTE: It was our intention to evoke this Spirit at this session for being sympathetic to us. We were led to postpone the evocation for private reasons that we had not mentioned to anyone. The Spirit came spontaneously to give us this delightful communication above and without a doubt attracted by our thoughts and by those of several members of the Society.

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Purgatory

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, July 31st 1863

Medium Mr. Alfred Didier

“The Catholic religion shows purgatory to us as a place where the soul that suffers terrible punishments alleviate its faults and gradually claims, through pain, its rights to eternal life. Splendid image, the most perfect and truer of the great dogmatic trinity of hell, purgatory and paradise! Despite its desperate severities the Church understood that it needed a mid-ground between the eternal punishment and eternal happiness. The Church confused, however, in that strange setting, the infinite and progressive time, that is only one, with three limited and incomprehensible situations.

Spiritism adds to religion, or even better, to the entirely humanitarian teachings, the means of realizing that ideal humanity. In the philosophical deviations of our times there is more than one Spiritist germ; the skeptical philosophers whose advices are not towards the definite happiness of humanity but to the destruction of every human and divine belief work towards the universal trend of Spiritism more than one may think.

It is a path, however, where there isn't much of heavens; where there is almost no future life but where there is at least material and egoistic tranquility in this life, clearly understood by the legislator and, if not a saint at least as a humanitarian philanthropist.

Now, it is necessary to know if in its latent state, say in the extracorporeal life that could be called intra-worlds, if the measure of knowledge and clairvoyant sagacity of the superior Spirits and the universal progress are as efficient as it is the earthly one.

Such a fundamental question to Spiritism has been poorly resolved up until now with answers about details. As the Church says it is not only a place of atonement but a universal spot where the souls fear with anguish or accept with hope the existences that unfolds before them. That is just the beginning of purgatory, that

important stage of the life of the soul that we believe has not been well explained and not even mentioned by the Catholic dogmas.”

Lamennais

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Spiritist dissertations

Chastity

Group of Orléans, medium Mr. de Monvel

“From all virtues that Jesus gave us the adorable example there isn’t one more indignantly forgotten by humanity than that of chastity. I do not speak of the bodily chastity only that we certainly would not find many examples, but the chastity of the soul that had never conceived a single thought, a single word capable of harming the purity of the virgin or the listening child.

Evil is so widely spread and consists of so many dangerous occasions that parents, even the most truly chaste in their actions and words, cannot avoid the painful certainty that regardless their children cannot escape the dismal contact. Irrespective of the rejection to the idea they must resign to open the eyes of those innocent creatures at least to preserve them from the physical danger for it is absolutely impossible to preserve them from the moral danger. Frequently even after having thought that a danger was avoided there comes some obstacle that was unnoticed that shatters the innocent child that their love could not preserve from the dirt of vices.

How many imprudent words even in the most respectful society; how many images and descriptions, even in the most serious books don’t come without their parents’ knowledge to excite, awake and even completely satisfy that keen and feared curiosity of the child that is unaware of the danger! If bad is difficult to avoid even in the most enlightened layers of society what to think of the lower layers? Supposing that a child was fortunate to escape all that in the protection of the home, how to keep her from the inevitable contact with the daily elbowing vices?

There you have a dangerous and profound cancer that every righteous person must feel the imperious need to eliminate from society. Evil is entrenched in our hearts and a long time is still needed to have us pure enough just to suspect their seriousness. Someone who believed that a simple word with double meaning is a serious fault before a child will have pleasure in obscene or trivial jokes when surround by mature people believing that there is no harm in that. That person misses the fact that obscenity is such an immoral evil that it stains everything, even the air with vibrations will carry the blemish further downwind. They say that the walls have ears and if that image was true at least once it is true particularly in this situation.

Pure and sacred chastity will only and definitely establish its kingdom on Earth when every person that thinks and speaks understands that in no circumstance one should write or speak a single word that would blush the purest virgin. You will say that you have no kids at home and for that reason there is no need for the constraint, as you see it. Nonetheless, if you were pure yourselves there would be no need for the constraint. Don't you have friends listening to you, excited by your example and that before the children that you don't know may lose the last reservation of scruples that were maintained so far? Furthermore, it is almost always during meals that your mind is dragged by jokes that animate the gues. But can't you see the servants around you, can't you see that the neighbors have children? You don't know the neighbor or the children so you cannot assess the damage that you have done. But evil regardless of its origin will always be punished, rest assured. It is not only the walls that have ears: there are things in the air that you breathe that are unknown to you or that you do not wish to know.

Nobody has the right to demand a virtue from their subordinates that is a virtue that one does not have or does not practice. A simple impure word is enough to break the purity of a child. A single impure child is enough to spread the gangrene around a whole generation of children when introduced in a public school, children that will become adults later on. Is there a single sensible person that can doubt the positive and painful truth in this?

Nobody doubts, nobody ignores the extension of the harm that can be carried by a single word, however, nobody feels obliged to this chastity of the soul that rejects every obscene thought however disguised it might be and even in certain circumstances nobody sees as their strict duty to abstain from jests that could make them blush if they were not proud of not blushing. Said and shameful pride!

It is not only chastity that we should respect in children but also that delicate candor that brings the blood to their faces by the simple idea of falsehood and that virtue is also very rare. We must not be very surprised when observing how elevated the immense majority of our children are. To the majority of the parents the children are not but little dolls, particularly at an early age, with whom they have fun like with a toy. It is their naïve belief that makes them so funny all day long after the little jokes that are considered innocents because they are told without malice and just to have fun as they say. Now in the true meaning of the word, innocent means that it causes no harm. But is there anything more harmful, on the contrary, to the candor of a child than those little and unstoppable abuses of trust before which the child is momentarily innocent but then laugh and have fun to imitate as soon as possible?

It results that the most sincere child learns to deceive as quickly as she learns to speak and that after a short while she is capable of teaching her own masters.

It goes almost unsuspected and particularly in that age when sometimes an insignificant cause may later on give rise to deplorable results. The organs of intelligence, particularly in children at a very early age, are like soft wax, capable of absorbing the form of the weakest touching object. The deformation does occur even in an instant and when the wax that was so fluid earlier on becomes harder the impression will remain unreasonable. One may think that it is covered by others but that is mistake because only the primitive impressions will stay indelible whereas the posterior ones will leave a fading mark only under which the initial one will always show.

That is what just a few young parents are capable of feeling strongly enough to transform it into a rule of conduct with their children and what is necessary to repeat to them continuously.”

Cécile Monvel

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The hand of God

Thionville, December 25th 1862, medium Dr. R...

“We allowed you to foresee the dawn of human regeneration. You must see the hand of God in that as with the whole march of humanity through the ages. We have said many times that everything that happens down here, as in the whole universe, follows a general law, the law of progress.

Bow before that law, you arrogant and proud ones that pretend to be above the Almighty’s designs! Look around for the cause of your miseries and delights to always find the hand of God.

But then, you will say, the hand of God is fatalism! Ah keep yourself from confounding this impious word with the laws imposed by the Providence, the Providence that gave you the free-will to give you the merit of your actions but seasoned by this so many times ignored voice that warns you of the dangers ahead. Fatalism is the denial of the duty because if our fate is determined previously there is nothing we can do to change it.

What would become of the world with such a horrible theory that leaves mankind to the perfidious suggestions of the worst passions? Where would be the objective of creation? Where the meaning of the remarkable order that reigns in the universe?

The hand of God, on the contrary, is the punishment that is always hanging above the head of the guilty one; it is the remorse that erodes their heart, censoring the crimes at every step of the way; it is the horrible nightmare that tortures the long sleepless nights; it is that bloody impression that follows everywhere as if producing the image of the errors all the time; it is the fever that torments the egotist; the perpetual anguishes of that bad rich that sees pillagers in all those that approach as if prepared to rob a badly acquired asset; it is the pain that they experience at the last hour when feel incapable of carrying along the useless treasures!

The hand of God is the peace of heart reserved to the righteous person; it is the kind perfume that feels your soul after a good deed; it is this sweet pleasure that one feels every time one does good; it is the blessings of the poor that is assisted; it is the kind looks in the face of a child whose tears we stop; it is the fervent prayer of the poor mother that was given the blessing of work to take her away from her misery; in a word, it is to be content with oneself.

The hand of God is finally the serious and austere justice, dressed by mercy! The hand of God is hope that does not leave behind a person in their most cruel sufferings; that always reassures and that allows the worst criminal touched by regret to foresee a corner of the celestial dwellings from which he thought to be expelled forever!"

Familiar Spirit

September 1863

Spiritist dissertations

True

Thionville, medium Dr. R...

“A poet said: ‘Only truth is beautiful; only truth is delightful.’

Acknowledge in this verse one of the nicest inspirations ever given to mankind. Truth is the straight line; it is the light whose splendor need not be hidden to the righteous whose souls are wonderfully predisposed to understand its huge benefits. Why is it so hard for the majority of people in our present society to notice the light? Why is the teaching of truth surrounded by so many obstacles? The answer is the fact that humanity has not made significant progresses so far since the origin of Christianity. Since Jesus that had to shroud his teachings in the form of allegories and parables, all of those who tried to propagate the truth were not more heard than the divine Master. Humanity had to wisely progress slowly so that the march would be safer. It needed a long period of novice hood to be able to walk on its own.

Rest assured though! Since long ago, the sun of regeneration is in its dawn and it will not be long before its light will shed on you its shiny clarity! The true light will come up and its beneficent influence shall extend over all social classes. How many will then be stunned for not having welcomed such a truth earlier on, a truth that comes from the highest antiquity and that pride made you always go around to not see it!

At least this time you will not have to endure any of those horrible cataclysms that seem like landmarks destined to mark the march of true light through the centuries. Better educated mankind will then understand that the mudslides that leave behind a trail of blood and fire would no longer adapt to our customs today mitigated by the practice of charity. They will finally understand the reach of the sublime words of Jesus Christ: ‘Peace to those of good will!’ The only war will be that to destroy the bad passions. Everybody will join forces to send the evil Spirit away whose disastrous kingdom has only detained the advance of civilization for a long time. All will stop before the certainty that the only legitimate conquest is that of true light; the only one to be longed for, the only one that leads to happiness. Hands on then you that sustain the flag of progress! Have no fear for raising it high and strong so that people can join from all corners of the world and seeking its shelter. Ask your celestial Father for strength and energy that are indispensable to this great task and if you cannot enjoy the happiness of seeing it accomplished here on this Earth may you at least take with you after your death the conviction that your present life was useful to all and that the sweetest reward waits for you among us: the joy of having accomplished your mission for the greater glory of God.”

Familiar Spirit

Allan Kardec

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

October 1863

Reaction to the spiritualist ideas

“A century ago society was influenced by the materialistic ideas reproduced in all forms and translated into most literary and artistic works. Disbelief was in fashion and the denial of everything including God was in vogue. Present life was considered positive and beyond that it was all uncertainty.; This lead to people living out their lives for the present because after that who cares! That was the thought of all of those that pretended to be above prejudices and for that reason called themselves ‘strong minds’. One must acknowledge that they were the largest number and among them where the ones who were assigned the task of driving and guiding society and whose example would necessarily have great influence.

The clergy also suffered from this influence. The public or private conduct of several of its members where completely contradictory to their teachings and Jesus’ teachings. The clergy did not believe in what they preached because if they did firmly believe in a future life and in the punishments they would have passed over less the interests of heavens than those of Earth. Thus, the foundations of every human institution had been sought in the material order of things. However, they ended up recognizing that those institutions lacked a solid supporting point for the ones that seemed well established would fall flat on a stormy day, given that the vices were masked by repressive laws but mankind had not become better.

What would that supporting point be? That was the question that they tried to answer and even recognized that God could be useful to something in the universe. Later some strong Spirits started to fear and to avoid discounting the future (they did that in their lips only) they said: People pretend that everything ends with death but what do they know the ones who say so? In fact it is only their opinion after all. Before Christopher Columbus people also believed that there was nothing beyond the oceans. And if there were something beyond the grave? It would be interesting to know, however, because if there is something we all have to go through as we all die. How does one live there? Good? Bad? The question is important and must be considered. But what if we continue to live beyond the physical body? We must then have a soul. The soul would not be fake then? Then, how is that soul? Where does it come from? Where does it go to?

A vague uneasiness took over these boasters before the idea of death. They started to seek, to discuss, recognizing that they would never be okay on Earth, regardless, and that in some cases they would even be very bad, then casting their eyes and hopes towards the future. All the extremes find their reaction when not in agreement with the truth because it is only the truth that is unable to be changed. The materialistic ideas had met their apogee. It was then that they noticed that they did not provide what was demanded from them; that they would leave an emptiness in the hearts; that they would create an unfathomable abyss that

would back up in horror as they do before a rock cliff. Hence an aspiration for the unknown and as a consequence an inevitable reaction towards the spiritualist ideas as the only possible way out.

It is a reaction that has manifested itself for some years now. But humans arrived at the apex of intelligence. At this age, when the capacity of understanding reached maturity, mankind can no longer be led like in the infancy or adolescence. The positivism of life taught them to search. We say more, made it necessary to understand the whys and hows of everything for in our mathematical century there is the need for the awareness of everything, to calculate everything, to measure everything in order to probe the terrain where we set foot.

They want certainty if not material at least moral even in the abstraction. It is not enough to say that something is good or bad; people want to know why it is good or bad and if there is or there is not reason to prescribe or prohibit that. That is why blind faith no longer has a place in our "thinking" century. They no longer ask for faith. Today they wish for and are thirsty of that faith because it is a necessity. They want a reasoned faith though. Discussing their belief is a necessity of the time that willing or not one has to accept.

The spiritualist ideas respond well to the general aspirations since they are preferable to skepticism and the idea of the oblivious because people instinctively know that they are right but they satisfy imperfectly only because the soul is still left in vagueness and those ideas are on their own powerless to provide the solution to a number of problems.

Simple spiritualism is in the position of a person that feels the objective but still does not know the path to achieve that and that finds obstacles on the way. That is why a large number of writers and philosophers have lately probed these mysterious secrets; why so many systems have been created aiming at the solution of innumerable problems that remain insoluble.

Regardless of these systems being rational or absurd they do not witness a lesser spiritualist tendency of the this time, tendencies that are no longer mysteries; that people no longer try to hide and from which, on the contrary, they are proud of as they formerly were of their disbelief.

If none of those systems got the absolute truth it is incontestable that several were close or made it blossom and that the discussion that followed paved the way preparing the minds for such studies.

It was in those eminently favorable circumstances that Spiritism arrived. A little bit earlier and it would have clashed with the almighty materialism; a little bit later and it would have been muffled by blind fanaticism. It shows up at the moment when fanaticism killed by the disbelief that it provoked itself it no longer can oppose a serious barrier to Spiritism, a time when fanaticism is fatigued by the void left by materialism; at the moment when the spiritualist reaction, provoked by the excesses of materialism, takes all minds over when people are looking for the great solutions that are of interest of the whole humanity.

Therefore it is at that moment that it comes to resolve these problems not by hypothesis but by effective proofs, giving Spiritism the positive character, the only one that satisfy the times. There people find what was not found elsewhere. That is why it is accepted so easily. Thousands of organizations paved the way and continue to do that gradually sowing the professed ideas.

One must not believe that there are only serious books read by a small number of scholars. Notice how much the Spiritist thoughts abound in the form of romance or bulletins, penetrating everywhere even among those that think the least about Spiritism. These are so many other latent germs that will blossom when the great light comes so that they will be familiarized with the new ideas.

One of the most important principles of Spiritism is undisputedly that of the plurality of the physical existences, that is the reincarnation, voluntarily or out of ignorance confused by the skeptical with the principle of metempsychosis. Without this principle, we face so many unsolvable difficulties in the moral and psychological order that many modern philosophers were led to it by the force of reason as a necessary law of nature, like Charles Fourier, Jean Reynaud and many others. That principle, today openly discussed by renowned people who yet are not Spiritist has a tendency to be introduced in modern philosophy. With that key in hand people will see new horizons opening up before their eyes and the most difficult issues been level planed like magic. Such a position cannot be avoided. People will be led to that by the force of things because the plurality of the existences is not a system but a law of nature that sticks out from the evidence of the facts.

Although not elevated to the position of a doctrine or not so clearly formulated as in Fourier and Reynaud, the principle of the plurality of the existences is now found in a number of authors and consequently in every mouth so that one can say that it is in the order of the day and tends to find a place amongst the most common beliefs given that in several of them it precedes the knowledge of Spiritism. It is a natural consequence of the spiritualist reaction that takes place at this time with the strong impulse of Spiritism.

With respect to the citations our only difficulty would be in the choice. We shall be restricted to the passage below from one of the latest novels by Mrs. George Sand: *Mademoiselle de la Quintinie*, an outstanding philosophical work that made the index of the Roman curia as well as the *Revue des Deux Mondes*³³ in its publications number 1 and 15 in March, April and May 1863. The passage is about a very guilty priest that is taken by regret to the earthly reparation and atonement after the rigorous advices of a lay person that says the following:

“You say that you have overcome the age of passions! No, because you have entered the age of vengeance and persecutions. Watch out! However, irrespective of your fate among us I tell you that we will meet again in another place where we will get along better and love one another instead of fighting each other. Like you, I don’t believe in the that evil goes unpunished and in the efficacy of the error. I believe that you will atone the voluntary hardening of your soul by great lacerations of the heart in another life. All that is left to you is to enter the progressive path of happiness for I am certain that everything can be rescued starting from this life. The human soul is gifted with wonderful powers of repentance and rehabilitation. This is not contrary to your dogma, and your contrition word says a lot.”

In a forthcoming article we will examine the works of Mr. Renan about the life of Jesus and will show that despite its appearance and without the knowledge of the author it is a spiritualist reaction. Materialism uselessly shakes the circle of logic and universal awareness that surrounds it, however much it proclaims the obliviousness. Its final screams are muffled by the voice that shouts in all corners of the world: “We have an immortal soul.” But who will benefit from the reaction? That is what a not distant future will tell us. Hoping to be able to talk about Mr. Rena’s work we insistently recommend a little brochure to our readers in which the question seems to be handled in a very rational way, with precious observations about this delicate issue. The title is: *“Réflexions d’un orthodoxe de l’Église grecque sur la vie de Jésus, by M. Renan* (Didier e Co., price 50 cents).

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Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

October 1863

Burial of a Spiritist in a common ditch

Mr. Costeau, one of our brothers in Spiritism, has just died. He was inhumed on September 12th last at Montmartre cemetery. He was a good man led back to God by Spiritism. He had a total, sincere and profound faith in the future. He was a simple worker who practiced charity in his thoughts, words and actions according to his scarce resources. He always found ways of helping those who were less fortunate.

It would be a mistake to believe that the Parisian Society is an exclusively aristocratic gathering because it counts on more than one working class person; it welcomes every devotion to its cause be it from the highest or the lowest social echelon; the aristocrat and the artisan are fraternally hand in hand there.

Sometime ago, at the wedding of one of our colleagues, who was also a modest worker, there was a high ranking foreign dignitary with his wife, a princess, both members of the Society that did not feel diminished for seating side-by-side with other guests although the ceremony celebrated in an obscure chapel had luxury reduced to its simplest expression. The fact is that Spiritism does not segregate based on class or pretend to try and move everybody to the same impossible social level, Spiritism makes people appreciate from a different stand point the fascinating prism of the world. It teaches that the little one may have been great on Earth; that the great may become little and that in the celestial kingdom earthly classes are not taken into account. That is how it leads to true fraternity by logically destroying the social prejudices of cast and color. Our brother Costeau was poor and leaves behind a widow in need. Hence he was taken to a common ditch, a door that leads to heavens as much as the sumptuous mausoleum.

Mr. d'Ambel, vice president, and Mr. Canu, Society secretary, led the burial. One and the other gave speeches at the tomb that caused marked impression in the auditorium and among the gravediggers who were visibly touched although insensible to such ceremonies. Here is Mr. Canu's eulogy:

“Dear brother Costeau! Just a few years ago many among us, and I confess I was the first one, would not have seen anything in this grave but the end of human miseries and after that the void, that is, nothing for the soul to deserve or atone and consequently nothing for God to reward, punish or forgive. Today, thanks to our divine doctrine, we see here the end of our trials and to you, dear brother whose remains we return to Earth, the triumph in our works and the beginning of the deserved reward to your courage, resignation and charity, in one word, your virtues and above all, the glorification of a wise, powerful, just and benevolent God. Hence, dear brother, take our thanksgivings to the feet of the Eternal who wanted to dissipate from around us the darkness of error and disbelief because not long ago we would have told you

with a warm forehead and a discouraged hearth: Good by forever friend. Today we say with our heads up and radiating hope and with our hearts full of courage and love: So long, dear friend and pray for us.”

Mr. d’Ambel’s eulogy:

“Ladies and gentlemen, and you, dear colleagues of the Parisian Society, this is the second time that we lead a colleague to his last dwelling. The one that we came to say farewell to he was one of those obscure fighters that the difficulties of life always found unbreakable; the absolute certainty, however, had failed him long ago. Thus, as soon as he got to know Spiritism he was fast to embrace a doctrine that brought him the truth and whose teachings reassure the afflicted of this world in their trials.

Modest worker, he always accomplished his tasks with the serenity of the just and the adversity that hurt him so badly in his last days, for our sorrow, also opened up for him, rest assured all of you who hear me, a next career of prosperity and venture.

Ah! I am so sorry for not having our venerable master in Paris! His authoritative voice would please our brother much more than mine and he would have paid a more considerable tribute than I can in my insignificance. I wanted to give a better solemnity to our colleague but I was informed too late in order to be able to communicate with all members of the Society that were in Paris. However, irrespective of the small number present here we represent the Spiritist family united by a common faith in the future from one end to the next. We are the delegates of many millions of followers in whose name, dear and missing colleague, we come to ask you to contribute to the propagation of our great doctrine, to the limit of your new abilities, a doctrine that supported you so strongly amidst your last cruel trials.

Ah! As so eloquently our dear president Allan Kardec said at the burial of our brother Sanson, before such a supreme time the Spiritist faith gives a strength that only those who carry that can realize and Mr. Costeau had that faith at the highest level.

Dear Mr. Costeau, be assured that the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies had you in high regard. You will always be remembered as one of the most diligent members. It is in the name of the Society, in the name of its president, in the name of your devastated wife and sister that I come to tell you, as our friend Mr. Canu said, not a good-bye, but so long in a happier world. May you be able to enjoy the happiness that you deserve there; may you come to reach out to us when our time to be there comes.

I beg the Spirits of Mr. Jobard and Mr. Sanson to welcome our colleague Mr. Costeau and facilitate his access to your serene regions.

Dear Spirits, pray for him. Pray for us. So be it.”

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After this eulogy Mr. d’Ambel textually read the prayers for those who have just died that was dictated at the tomb of Mr. Sanson (Spiritist Review, May 1862).

Mr. Vézy, one of the mediums of the Society, a well-known name by our readers for the beautiful communications of St. Augustine, stepped down into the ditch and Mr. d’Ambel evoked Mr. Costeau out loud who then gave the following communication through Mr. Vézy, a communication read to all those

present and that was heard by all with their bare heads and profound emotion, including the gravediggers. In fact, hearing the words of a dead person inside the grave was a new and touching spectacle.

“Thank you friends, thank you. My tomb is not sealed yet and nonetheless the earth will momentarily cover my remains. But you know that, my soul will not be buried by this dust. It will float in space towards God.

Thus, how reassuring it is to say despite the annihilated envelope: Oh No! I am not dead! I live the true life, the eternal life!

The funeral of the poor is not followed by the crowd. Proud manifestations don't take place at the tomb and despite that, friends, believe me there is no lack of immense multitude here and good Spirits followed with you and with the heartfelt women the body that lies here! At least all of you believe and love the good God.

Oh! Dear wife, we certainly do not die because our body is broken! From now on I will always be with you to help you and reassure you in order to withstand your trial. Life will be tough to you but the idea of eternity and the love of God fulfilling your heart will lessen your sufferings!

Relatives that embrace my dear companion, love and respect her; be her brothers and sisters. Do not forget that you must assist one another on Earth if you want the eternal rest of the Lord.

And you, Spiritist brothers and friends! Thank you coming to say good-bye to me at this dwelling of dust and mud. But you do know well that my soul lives immortal and that my soul will sometimes ask for your prayers that I will not refuse, helping me in this magnificent path that you have opened to me when I was alive.

Good-bye to those who are here. We may see one another beyond this grave. The souls call me.

Good-bye. Pray for those in suffering. So long.

Costeau”

After the final arrangements of the funeral those gentlemen payed a Spiritist visit to the tomb of Georges, at the same cemetery, the eminent Spirit that gave beautiful communications through Mrs. Costel and that were eventually admired by our readers. Mr. Georges was Mr. d'Ambel's brother-in-law. Through Mr. Vézy they collected the following words:

“Although we don't live here (the burial place), we like to come here to thank you for your prayers in our favor and for the flowers that you lay on our tombs. It is so good that they created these places of rest and prayer! The souls can talk more at will and out of these intimate impulses they can better exchange feelings: one by the tomb, the other above it!

You have just said farewell to one of your friends; I thank you for not having forgotten me. I was with you in that crowd of Spirits that elbowed one another by the freshly opened grave and I felt happy for reading conviction and faith in your hearts. I mixed my prayers with yours and the blessed Spirits carried it to God! My good friends the Spiritist faith will travel around the world and will finally convert the confused ones

into wise people. It will even penetrate the hearts of priests like the ones you have just saw smiling causing you a real pain (reference to the kind of religious ceremony that took place). Their scandalization makes your heart bleed but you overcome that by thinking in the good you were doing to your friend. He is here by my side asking me to thank you in his name.

You have already been told that the tomb is life. Come sometimes by the shade of the willow, by the foot of the mortuary cross, in calmness and silence, and you will hear a divine harmony; the breeze will allow you to hear the concert of our souls, singing God... eternity... Then some of us will stick out from the sacred chorus to come and instruct you about your destinies. What was a mystery to you up until now will gradually unveil before your eyes and you will be able to understand your beginning and your future greatness.

Then you will have a meeting here with those whom you wish to learn. Here you will read the pages of eternity and the book of life will be always open to you. In this place of peace and calm the voice of the Spirit seems to be better heard by the one who wishes to learn; it takes magical and sound proportions and its accents penetrate even more the one that it intends to achieve.

Work with fervor and zeal for the propagation of the new idea. I will help you tirelessly and if the tranquility of the grave scare some they should know that the Spirits happily instruct everywhere. Good-bye and thank you! I wish I could transmit to the whole world the faith that fulfills you! I truly say, though, that Spiritism is the lever with which Archimedes will move the world!

A few words in particular to you, my brother, since the occasion is proper. Tell me sister that she must always love the God imposed duties however heavy they may be. Tell her to love our mother and to replace me by her side. Tell her to take care of my daughter, to smile to the skies and find perfume in all flowers of Earth...

As for you, my brother, I have both of your hands in mine.

Georges."

Double teaching sticks out from the above. It could cause surprise the fact that a Spirit that died so recently could communicate with such clarity but one must remember that Mr. Sanson was evoked at the mortuary chapel before the body was carried away and that he gave a beautiful communication at that time and that everyone was able to read in the Spiritist Review. His mental confusion had lasted only a few hours as in fact it is known that the detachment is fast for the morally advanced Spirits.

On another hand why has Mr. Vézy stepped foot into the grave? Was there a utility for that or was it all just a scene? Let us promptly reject the second motive since serious Spiritists act serious and religiously and make no scenes. At that occasion it would have been a profanation.

Certainly the utility was not absolute. There must be a more special testimony of sympathy particularly considering that the dead was buried in a common ditch. As a matter of fact access to those ditches is easier than to the private ones whose entry is narrow; Mr. Vézy was more comfortable to write there. However, from another point of view this could have had a reason that probably was not in Mr. Vézy's mind. It is a known fact that the evocation facilitates the separation of the Spirit from the body and may shorten the time of mental confusion. It is also known that the links that connect the Spirit to the body are not always entirely broken just after death. Here a remarkable example: A young man had had a horrible sudden death. He had, like many rich young men, a lighthearted life, that is totally bounded to matter. He spontaneously communicated with an acquainted medium of ours that knew him in life, asking to have him evoked and for prayers by his grave to help him break the links that he had with the body from which he was unable to

separate. There must certainly be a magnetic action facilitated by proximity of the body and there may perhaps be one of the causes that instinctively lead friends of the dead to go to the place where the body is located.

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Inauguration of the retreat of Cempuis

We have already mentioned the other retreat installed in Cempuis by Mr. Prévost, member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, near Grandvilliers, Oise County.

The construction as well as internal installations are now finished. They are adjacent to the facility, although independent, a wonderfully looking chapel in gothic style. It was inaugurated last Sunday, July 19th, St. Vincent de Paul's day, to whom it is dedicated; it was a charitable ceremony with distribution of bread, wine and meat to the poor of the parish. On the occasion Mr. Prevost gave the speech below that we are glad to publish :

“Ladies and gentlemen,

You know the reason for this gathering thus I will not take long with useless details that will not add anything to what you already know. The physical work is practically done thanks to the evident protection of the Almighty that kindly supported my efforts. We are here as a family and all of us, I have no doubt, are animated by the same feelings of his divine benevolence. Let us then unite in a unique impulse of gratitude asking him to continue to assist us and provide us with the lights that we lack.

God of Earth and Heavens, sovereign Lord of all things, have mercy on our weakness! Raise our hearts to you so that we can learn to do as you wish and so that all of our actions are in agreement with your universal law. Lord, let our soul be fulfilled by your love; may our soul fall in love with the sacred fire of conviction and prove its faith through acts of trough charity. Every creature, regardless of how good they are, must show charity towards their neighbor otherwise will be like a beautiful tree without fruits.

Therefore help us, infinite Power, to overcome the obstacles that could be erected before us, hindering our desire to become useful in our mission that you have assigned to us. Give us the strength to accomplish it with love and sincerity.

God, you are pleased with the assistance to the elderly because that is an act of justice. They were on the way before us. They opened ditches that were watered with their sweat and we harvest the fruits. Their experience today is a worn field but where we can still harvest. It is then fair that we compensate their sacrifice by ensuring their rest after the work. It is a duty to us because that is what we would like for ourselves but to carry that out we need your assistance since we are aware of our weakness.

It is also in your name, Lord, that the orphan will find a new family. The abandoned child will grow among us embedded by the gentle divine fire with which you favored St. Vincent de Paul to whom we ask for assistance so that we can carry out this work following his example.

Infinite Spirit, everything is in you, everything is for you, and nothing is beyond you. Punishments as well as rewards come to us from your blessed hand. You know our needs. We are your children and submit ourselves to your divine Providence.

The good Spirits that preside over the destinies of Earth, before your paternal eyes, the guardian angels of humanity, deserve your trust, Lord. We hope that for you they may help us to keep intact the sublime code of moral promulgated by Jesus Christ, your beloved son. Love your God, he said from the top of the cross, eighteen centuries ago; love one another; love your neighbor as you do to yourself; practice charity to everyone and everything. That is his law, Lord, and that law is yours. May it be printed in our hearts and make us see everyone as our neighbor that are your children like we are. So be it.

My friends, my brothers, let us follow that great example and have a sincere faith in God. He will help us to withstand the consequences of the bad direction imposed on society by forgetting those duties long ago. Many things now follow the path prescribed by the Creator. Despite the egotism that still dominates a large number of people, fraternal love is better understood; the prejudices of cast, sect and nationality fade away gradually; tolerance, one of the children of the evangelical charity, make antagonisms that have for so long divided the children of the same God disappear piece by piece; feelings of humanity infiltrate the hearts of the masses and have already realized great things on several corners of the planet.

The lay-off by several factories in France have not long ago experienced the kind effect of that love to the neighbor. This balsam to the suffering speaks out loud in favor of our country; one does need to see the hand of God there. We are glad to see the first nation of the civilized world taking to the most distant places the fruits of this love to humanity that can only be given by true greatness that found it at the radiant center of the cross, supported by the light of progress that forces mankind to be better to the other thus improving themselves.

My friends, with the help of instructed and educated people I hope to build a library in the future, an instructive and moral library, adjacent to this building, where everyone will be able to find the means of improving themselves with respect to their souls and hearts.

I am most thankful to you who attended my appeal, coming to offer a common thanksgiving in recognition for the foundation of this establishment.

From this day of July 19th, 1863 onwards this chapel dedicated to St. Vincent de Paul whose kind and immortal image is portrayed in its stained glass windows, consecrated by its founder who wishes that it be considered a sacred place, a place of prayer.

Here God must be worshiped and before the symbol of his love for humanity; before this venerable and great figure of the apostle of Christian charity, all must be convinced that the love to the neighbor is to be practiced by actions and must be in people's hearts rather than lips.

Before we part ways let us say the dominical prayer:

'Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done, on Earth as it is in heaven. Give us today our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from the evil one.' Mathew 6:9:13

On that occasion Mr. Prévost was kind enough to personally send us the amount of 200 francs for the works of charity whose utilization, unfortunately, is not difficult to find.

We reference to the speech above the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies voted unanimously and by acclamation to send him the following letter:

“Sir and dearest colleague,

The Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies of which you are a member heard with great interest the speech that you gave during the inauguration of the chapel at the retreat that you founded in your property in Cempuis. The speech is the expression of the noble feelings that drive you; it is worthy of someone who has given such a good use of the fortune that was acquired by work and that does not wait for death to have it beefing others because it is in life that you impose deprivation on yourself to increase their share.

The Society is honored for having in its ranks a follower that makes such a Christian application of the principles of the Spiritist Doctrine. It has unanimously decided to let you know officially about its vivid gratitude and fraternal sympathy towards the humanitarian work that you have undertaken and towards you in particular.

Yours sincerely...”

Mr. Prevost’s fortune is entirely the result of his work and merit. After having suffered the setback of the revolutions that took it away from him, he rebuilt it with courage and perseverance. He has now gotten to the age of retirement; he could as well use it for the pleasures of life but he is satisfied with the strictly necessary, contrary to many others, expecting not to need anything else so that his brothers in Jesus may share his superfluous. His reward will then be beautiful and he enjoys its taste by the pleasure that results from the good that he does.

To the eyes of certain people, however, Mr. Prévost is very wrong because he is a Spiritist and professes the doctrine of the devil. Yet his speech is not that of an atheist or even that of deist, but the one of a Christian. His moderation itself is a proof of charity because he abstained from any bad word about his neighbors and even from making any reference to those who associate his help to conditions that his conscience cannot accept.

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Anonymous sponsors

The event below was reported by the *Patrie* last April:

“Yesterday the owner of a house at Rue de Cherche-Midi allowed the tenant to move out without paying rent after acknowledging his debt. However, while the furniture was being transported away the owner regretted his decision and demanded payment before the move. The tenant became desperate followed by his sobbing wife and two very young children that were also crying. The scene was observed by a passerby gentleman who had been awarded with the Legion of Honor. He stopped. Touched by the devastating spectacle he approached the miserable debtor and learning about the outstanding rent he reached out with two bills and disappear, followed by the blessings of that family that he had just rescued from despair.”

The journal *Opinion du Midi*, from Nimes, reported in July another case of similar nature:

“A fact that has just happened is as strange for its mystery as touching for its objective and kindness of the author. Three days ago, we were informed that a terrible fire had almost completely destroyed a store and the workshop of a person named Mr. Marteau, a woodworker in Nimes. We told the story of that unfortunate man that meant his ruin since the insurance he had was infinitely lower than the amount necessary to cover the value of the destroyed merchandise.”

“We learned today that three trucks loaded with woods of several types and tools were unloaded in front of his workshop.. The person in charge of delivery alleged total ignorance with respect to the name of the actual donor. He said that he did not know the person who had assigned him with the task of transporting the wood and tools to Mr. Marteau, knowing nothing beyond that task. He left after unloading the three vehicles.”

“Joy and happiness replaced Mr. Marteau’s abatement that was unchanged since the day of the fire.”

“May the unknown generous person that helped to rescue someone from the misery with such a nobility and without which the situation could have been irreparable, may that person receive here our thank you and the blessings of a family that henceforth owes him the kindest consolation and that may soon owe him their prosperity.”

It is heart soothing to learn about these facts that from time to time come to counter reports of crimes and turpitudes exhibited on newspapers’ columns.

Facts as reported above demonstrate that virtue is not entirely banned from Earth as certain pessimistic people believe. There is no doubt that evil is still dominating but when we look in the shadows we find that there are more violets under the weeds, that is, larger number of good souls than expected. If they look so sparse is due to the fact that true virtue does not seek evidence whilst the vice manifests openly in plain sight. It is a vice because it is proud. Pride and humbleness are the two poles of the human heart. One attracts the whole good, the other the whole evil. One is calm, the other is a storm. Conscience is the compass that shows the path leading to each one of them.

The anonymous sponsor, like the one that does not wait for death to give to the ones that don't have, is undisputedly the good man by excellence; it is the personification of the modest virtue, the one that does not seek people's applause.

Do good without ostentation is an unquestionable sign of moral superiority because it requires a lively faith in God and in the future. It is necessary to abstract from present life and identify oneself with a future life to expect the approval of God, renouncing to the present testimony of people.

The unfortunate one blesses the unknown and generous helping hand from the bottom of his heart and such a blessing rises to heavens more than the applause of the crowds. The one who seeks more the cheers of mankind than that of God demonstrate more faith in people than in God and that the present life has more value than a future life. If the person says the opposite acts like someone who does not believe in what they say.

How many people only help in hopes that the helped one will proclaim the benefit from the rooftops; who would give a large amount in day light but would not give a single coin in obscurity! That is why Jesus said: those who do good with ostentation have already received their reward.³⁴ In act God owes nothing to the ones who seek compensation on Earth. The only missing prize is the price of their pride.

Certain critics may perhaps ask: What does it have to do with Spiritism? How many funnier cases won't you tell than this boring moral! (*Jugement de la morale spirite, by Mr. Figuiet, vol. IV, page 369*). This has to do with Spiritism in the sense that Spiritism, by providing an unbreakable faith in God's benevolence and in a future life and thanks to Spiritism, people doing good for the good, the good ones will one day be less scarce than today. The newspapers will then have less crimes and suicides to register and more actions of the kind that gave rise to these considerations.

³⁴ Mathews 6, 2 - "So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honored by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

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Visiting Spirits

François Franckowski

Some people believe that the Spirits only come when called. This is a mistake not made by those who know Spiritism for they know that that Spirits frequently show up spontaneously, without being called, leading us to the argument that if we are prohibited from calling the Spirits they cannot be precluded from coming.

Nonetheless, they will say, they come because of the practice of mediumship and because others are called. If you abstained then they they would not come. It is another serious mistake and the facts demonstrate how many times the Spirits manifested by vision, hearing or any other means, to persons who had never heard of Spiritism. Hence it is not against the mediums that the prohibition must be issued but against the Spirits so that they don't communicate not even with God's permission.

Those spontaneous communications attract much more interest when done by Spirits that were not expected or known and whose identity may later be verified. We mentioned a remarkable example in the story of Simon Louvet, published in the Spiritist Review, March 1863.

Here is another educational fact obtained by a medium that we know:

A Spirit by the name François Franckowski shows up and says the following:

“Love to God is the feeling that summarizes all loves, all abnegations. Love to the homeland is a ray of that sublime feeling. Oh my poor country! Oh unfortunate Poland! How many disgraces have fallen upon you? How terrible the crimes of those who consider themselves civilized and how much punishment to the miserable ones that want to hinder freedom! Oh God! Keep an eye on that unfortunate country and forgive those that are totally dedicated to vengeance, not thinking that you will punish them on the other side of life! Poland is a blessed land because it entails great devotion and none of its children are cowards. God loves the ones who forget themselves for the benefits of all. It is a reward to the devotion of the Polish people that will be forgiven and their punishment broken. I died victimized by our oppressors, cursed by all. I was young, I was twenty-four years old and the excruciating pain of having lost everything she loved in the world is killing my mother: her son. Pray for her, I beg you, so that she may forget and forgive my executioner for without such a forgiveness she is doomed to be separated from me forever... Poor mother! I only saw her again in the morning of my death and it was so terrible to feel the separation... God have mercy on me and I am always with her since the moment I was able to unravel from the rest of vitality that connected my Spirit to my body... I come to you because I know you will pray for her, so good and

ordinarily resigned but so revolted against God since the time I was not there anymore... She needs to forgive. Pray for that sublime forgiveness of a mother to the murderer of her son to come to finish a life so gloriously begun. Good-bye. You will pray, won't you?

François Franckowski

The medium had never heard of such a person and perhaps thought that he had been the victim of a mystification when, a few days later, received several pieces of linen that had been purchased rolled in a fragment of the *Petit Journal* from July 7th last. The medium read it mechanically when under the title "Capital Executions" read an article that began like this:

- "We found curious details about the execution of a young Polish man who was a prisoner of the Russians. Franckowski was a twenty four year old young man. He still has his parents who were given permission to visit him in prison. Since he had no weapons when arrested he was condemned to be hanged by the war council. I witnessed the execution and cannot think of that terrible event without emotion..."

It is followed by a detailed report of the execution and about the last moments of the victim, killed with the courage of a hero.

To those who deny the manifestations – and their number diminishes daily – to those that attribute the manifestations to imagination, to the reflex of thoughts, even unconsciously, we ask where the medium could have gotten the intuition of the name Franckowski, a twenty-four year old man; from the mother that came to see the son in prison; from the fact that the medium had not heard absolutely no knowledge about, that even had doubts about and whose confirmation was found in a cut of paper that surrounded a package? And it is necessary that the piece of paper be the one that contains the precise report of the event. You will say: Yes, it was chance. Be it since for you everything is by chance. However, how about the rest?

Those who intend to prohibit the communications under the pretext that they proceed from the devil or any other, we ask if there is anything more beautiful, nobler, and more evangelical than the soul of that son that forgives the executioner; that begs the mother to also forgive, pointing at the forgiveness as the condition of salvation! And why has the soul come to that unknown medium and later on gives an irrefutable proof of identify? To ask for prayers so that his mother may forgive. And you will say that this are the words of the devil? I wish all those who speak in the name of God would speak in such a way! They would touch the hearts more than with anathema and curses.

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About the prohibition of evoking the dead

Some members of the Church use Moses' directive to not engage in communications with the Spirits but if his law is to be strictly observed on that point it must be followed on all others. Why would his law be correct on this point but not on others? One must be consistent. If we acknowledge that his laws are no longer in harmony with our time and customs on certain things there is no reason to be different with respect to the prohibition of the evocations. As a matter of fact, we must refer to the reasons that led him to such prohibition, reasons that made sense then but that are certainly no longer here.

As for the death penalty that followed the breach of that law, we must consider that he was very prodigious in that and in his Draconian legislation the severity of the punishment was not always an indication of the severity of the fault.

The Hebrew people were tempestuous, difficult to lead and could not be tamed but by terror. Besides, Moses did not have much choice as he had no way to punish his people through more modern means, like a jail or correction center. He was only able to control his people through purely psychological penalties. Hence, he could not scale up punishments as in our days.

Now would that be necessary to respect death penalty in all applicable cases for respect to his law? Besides, why people insist so much on bringing back this article of the law and remain silent with respect to the beginning of the chapter that prohibits clergymen from having the ownership of earthly properties and from sharing inheritance because the Lord is their inheritance? (Deuteronomious, Chapter XVIII).³⁵

Moses' law has two distinct parts: God's law per se, given at Mount Sinai and the civil or disciplinary law, adequate to the customs and character of the people. One is invariable, the other modifies itself over time and nobody should believe that it can be governed by the same means. How we addressed the Hebrews in the desert during the Middle Ages could not be applied to France of the nineteenth century.

³⁵ "The Levitical priests—indeed, the whole tribe of Levi—are to have no allotment or inheritance with Israel. They shall live on the food offerings presented to the LORD, for that is their inheritance. ²They shall have no inheritance among their fellow Israelites; the LORD is their inheritance, as he promised them." (T.N.)

Who would, for example, dream of reviving today the following article of Moses' law: *"If a man or a woman is hurt by the horn of an ox and the person dies the ox will be stoned without remission, the meat will not be eaten and the owner of the ox will be acquitted."*

What do God's commandments say? *"You shall have one God only; you will not use God's name in vain; honor your father and your mother; do not murder; do not commit adultery; do not steal; do not bear false testimony against your neighbor; do not covet your neighbor's possessions."* Here we have a law that belongs to all times and all countries and for that very reason has a divine character but it does not deal with the prohibition of evoking the dead from which we must conclude that such prohibition was a simple disciplinary measure according to the circumstances.

Hasn't Jesus modified Moses' law and isn't his law the code of Christianity? Hasn't Jesus said: You heard what was said to former peoples and I tell you this...? There isn't a single place in the Gospels with prohibition to the evocation of the dead. It is something very serious to have been left out by Jesus Christ from his instructions when he dealt with issues of much more secondary order. Or should we follow one priest that when asked about such objection said that *"Jesus forgot to talk about it"*.

Since the pretext of Moses prohibition is inadmissible, they then bring the idea that the evocation is a lack of respect to the dead whose ashes must not be disturbed. When such evocation is carried out religiously and with deference there is no disrespect but there is a prompt response to such an objection. The Spirits come in good will when called and even spontaneously without being called; that they give testimony of their satisfaction in communicating with people and eventually regret the obliviousness in which they are sometimes left.

If they were disturbed in their silence or if they were unhappy with our calls they would either tell us or do not come. If they do come, it is because it is convenient to them since we know nobody that has the power of forcing and bothering the Spirits, impalpable creatures, considering that we cannot apprehend their bodies.

There is another alleged reason, when they say that the souls are either in heavens or in hell. The ones in hell cannot leave hell. The ones in paradise are in complete beatitude and well above the mortal ones to be bothered by them. There remain the ones in purgatory but those are the suffering ones and must think in their salvation before anything else. Well, if neither ones nor the others may come it is only the devil that come in their place.

In the first case, it would be very rational to suppose that the devil, author and provoker of the first revolt against God, in an eternal rebellion, who does not experience regret or remorse for his actions, be more rigorously punished than the poor souls that he drags to evil and that many times are just guilty of a temporary fault over which they feel a bitter remorse. Far from that what does happen is exactly the opposite. Those unfortunate souls are condemned to terrible sufferings, without a truce or mercy for eternity, without a single moment of relief, and during that whole time the devil, author of all that evil, enjoys a plentiful freedom, going around the world and recruiting victims, taking all forms and shapes, given to all sorts of pleasures, even having fun by interrupting the course of God's laws since the devil can even make miracles.

Frankly speaking the guilty souls should envy the fate of the devil. And God goes quiet and allows them to act, without the imposition of any brake, not even allowing the good Spirits to come to counter the devil's criminal actions! Is this in good faith logical? And those who profess such a doctrine can they swear with their hands in their conscience that they would stick their hands in the fire to sustain that this is true?

The second case raises an issue whose difficulty is equally great. If the souls that enjoy beatitude cannot leave their place of rest to come to rescue the poor mortals, something that in-passing must be said would be a very egotist happiness, why does the Church claim the support of the saints who must enjoy an even greater beatitude? Why does the Church offer the help of the saints to its followers in their afflictions, in their diseases and to keep them from all miseries? Why, according to the Church, the saints and the Virgin herself come to show up to people and even make miracles? Do they leave heavens to come to Earth then? If they can do so why can't others?

Since all the reasons given to justify the prohibition of communication with the Spirits cannot withstand a serious examination, there must be another unconfessed one. That reason could well be the fear that very enlightened Spirits could come and clarify people about certain points, allowing the righteous ones to get to know how things are in the other world and the true conditions to become happy or unfortunate. That is why for the same reason a child is told: "*don't go there because the werewolf is there*", people are then told: "*don't call the Spirits because it is the devil that comes*".

But that will be useless. If people are prohibited from calling the Spirits they cannot preclude the Spirits to come to people to remove the light from below the bowl.

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Considering that Moses prohibited the evocation of the dead, should it be done?

Bordeaux, medium Mrs. Collignon

NOTE: This communication was given in a Spiritist Center in Bordeaux as a response to the above question. We had written the preceding article before learning about this message about the same subject. We published it despite the coincidence due to the agreement of the ideas. Many others were obtained in several places with the same teaching what demonstrates the agreement among the Spirits about the subject. This objection, not more justifiable than all others that oppose the relationship with the Spirits, will fall by itself.

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Is then man so perfect that it is useless to test one's strength? Is our intelligence so developed that it can bear the whole light?

When Moses brought a law that could take the Hebrew people from their slavery state, reviving in them the forgotten idea of God, he was forced to downplay the light to their capacity of vision and science to their capacity of understanding.

Why don't you also ask: Why had Jesus allowed himself to remake the law?

Why did Jesus said: "*Moses told you: an eye for an eye and I tell you to do good to your enemies; blessed be the ones that curse you; forgive the ones that oppress you*"? Why has Jesus said: *Moses told you: The one who wants to leave his wife allow her to divorce but I tell you: do not separate what God united.*

Why? It is because Jesus was speaking with more advanced Spirits than those incarnate during Moses' time. It is necessary to adapt the lesson to the comprehension of the pupil. Those who ask and doubt have not yet arrived to the position that they will have and still don't know what they will one day know.

Why? You should then ask God why he has created the weed that was even used as food by man; why he created trees that only grow in certain climates, in certain latitudes, and that mankind was able to spread and grow everywhere.

Moses told the Hebrews: "Don't summon the dead", as we tell the child: don't play with fire.

Wasn't the evocation that gradually turned into idolatry among the Egyptians, Chaldeans, Moabs and all peoples of antiquity? They did not have the strength to support science, were burned and the Lord wanted to preserve some people so that they could serve and perpetuate his name and his faith.

People were perverted and prone to dangerous evocations. Moses prevented the worse. Progress should happen among the Spirits, as among men, but the evocation was known and practiced by the princes of the church. Vanity and pride are as old as humanity thus the chiefs of the synagogues used the evocation and frequently used it badly; that is why the rage of the Lord fell upon them sometimes.

That is why Moses said: "Don't evoke the dead". But the prohibition itself demonstrates that the evocation was usual among the people and it was the people that he prohibited.

Hence, let those who ask why speak. Open before the eyes the history of the planet that they cover with their little steps and ask them why, after so many cumulated centuries, it is taking them so long to advance so little? Their intelligence is not developed enough; their routine constricts them; they want to keep their eyes closed despite the efforts carried out to have them open.

Ask them: why God is God? Why are they illuminated by the Sun?

Have them study and seek and they will find in the history of antiquity that God wanted that such knowledge vanishes to revive later with more intensity when the Spirits in charge of bringing it were stronger and did not succumb to its weight.

Don't bother, my friends, with idle questions and meaningless objections made to you. Always do what you have just done: ask and we shall gladly respond. Science is of those who seek it; it then comes to show itself. Light illuminates the ones that open their eyes but darkness thickens out to those who want to keep them closed. The refused are not the ones who ask but those who make objections with the sole objective of extinguish the light or that dare not look at the light. Courage, my friends! We are ready to respond every time that it is needed.

Simeon, for Mathews

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The false devout

Private meeting, March 10th, 1863

Medium Mrs. Costel

My memory has just been evoked by my portrait and my poems; twice touched in my feminine vanity and self-love of poetry, I want to acknowledge your benevolence, sketching in broad traces the silhouette of the false devout that are to religion what the falsely honest woman is to society. The subject is in the picture of my literary studies whose nuance was expressed in *Lady Tartufe*.

The false devout sacrifice appearance and betray the true; they show a dry heart with humid eyes, their purse is closed and their hand open; they speak of the neighbor with good will, criticizing their actions in a sweet way, exaggerating the bad and diminishing the merit. Eager on the acquisition of mundane things they cling on imaginary treasures that death disperses, neglecting the true values that serve the righteous ones and form the wealth of eternity.

The hypocrite of devotion is the reptile of the moral world. Vis and low they avoid the faults punished by public vendetta, committing criminal acts in the shadow. How many destroyed and spoiled families! How much betrayed trust! How many tears, and even how much blood!

Comedy is the opposite of tragedy. Evil marches behind the buffoon and the false devout have inept creatures by followers, only acting by imitations: like in the mirror they reflect the physiognomy of their neighbors. They take themselves seriously; deceive themselves; ridicule their beliefs in their shyness; exalt what they doubt; show ostentation and light up little hidden candles to which they give much more importance than to the virtue of the sacred host.

The false devout are the true atheist of virtue, of hope, of nature and of God. They deny the true and affirm the false. Meanwhile, death will carry them blotted out of the make-up, and covered with tinsel which disguised them, and throw them panting in full day light.

Delphine de Girardin

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Patriarch's longevity

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, July 11th 1863

Medium Mr. A. Didier

What does it matter to you the age of patriarchs in general and that of Methuselah in particular? Nature, know this well, has never been contradictory or shown irregularities and even if the human machine has varied any time it has never repelled the material destruction: death.

As I have already told you the Bible is a magnificent oriental poem in which human passions are divinized like the passions idealized by the Greek like the great colonies of Asia Minor.

There is no need to match concision with emphasis, clarity with diffusion, the coldness of reason and modern logic with the oriental exaltation. The cherubims of the Bible had six wings as you know: almost monsters! The God of the Jewish would bathe in blood; would you like your angels to be the same as those and your sovereignly good and just God to be that one same God?

Hence you must not ally your poetic modern analysis with the lying poetry of the antique Jews or Pagans. The age of the patriarchs is a moral figure and not a reality. The authority, the memory of those great names, of those true shepherds of peoples, enriched by the mystery and legends that radiated around them, existed among those superstitious and nomad worshipers of memories. It is likely that Methuselah had lived for a long time in the hearts of his descendants.

Notice that in the oriental poetry every moral idea is incorporated, incarnate, covered in a brilliant, radiant, splendid form, contrary to modern poetry that discarnate that breaks the shell allowing the idea to rise to heavens. Modern poetry is not only expressed by the color and shine of the image but also by the firm and correct drawing of logic, in a word, by the idea. How would you like to join these two great and contrary principles? When you read the Bible by the rays of the orient, among the golden images, in the endless and diffuse horizons of the deserts, of the steppes, let electricity flow, trespassing the abysses and darkness's, using your reason to always judge the difference in time, forms and understandings.

Lamennais

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The voice of God

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, July 11th 1862

Medium Mr. Flammarion

Did you hear the confusing sound of the reverberating sea when the northern wind swells the waves or when it breaks with its roaring silver blades on the shore? Did you hear the loud clatter of lightning in the dark clouds or the whisper of the forest under the blast of the evening wind? Have you heard in the depths of the soul that multiple harmony which speaks to the senses only to pass through them and to reach the thinking and loving being? If therefore you have not heard and understood these silent words, you are not children of revelation, and you do not believe yet. To these I will say: "Come out of the city at this silent hour when the starry rays descend from heaven and, gathering in yourselves your inner most thoughts, contemplate the spectacle that surrounds you, and you will arrive before dawn to share the faith of your brethren. To those who already believe in the great voice of nature, I will say, "Children of the new covenant, it is the voice of the Creator and the conservator of beings, who speaks in the turmoil of the waves, in the sound of thunder; It is the voice of God that speaks in the breath of the winds: friends, listen again, listen often, listen for a long time, listen always, and the Lord will receive you with open arms. O you, who have already heard his powerful voice down here, you will understand it better in the other world.

Galileo

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Free-will and divine prescience

Thionville, January 5th 1863

Medium Dr. R...

There is a great law that dominates everything in the universe: the law of progress. It is due to that law that man, an essentially imperfect creature, must walk through all phases that separate him from perfection. There is no doubt that God knows the time that each will take to get to the end. Since every progress results from the endeavor for its realization, there would be no merit if mankind did not have the freedom of following one path instead of another. In fact, true merit can only result from the actual work done by the Spirit in order to overcome a more or less considerable resistance.

As each of us ignores the number of existences that took part in their moral advancement, nobody can prejudge that great question and it is particularly, in this point, that the infinite benevolence of our Celestial Father shines in a more remarkable way, side by side, with the free-will that we were granted with, sowing landmarks in our paths that illuminate our deviations. Hence, it is due to a remnant predominance of matter that many people persist in remaining deaf to the warnings that come from all sides, preferring to spend a life that had been given for the advancement of the Spirit with deceiving and momentary pleasures. One could not affirm without blasphemy that God wanted the unhappiness of his creatures for the unfortunate ones always atone both in a badly lived previous life as well as after their refusal to follow the good path when it had been clearly shown to them. Hence it is up to each one to abbreviate the trial to endure. That is why so many safe guides are provided so that each person is entirely responsible for the refusal to follow the advices and still, in that case, there is a sure means of mitigating a deserved punishment following sincere signs of regret and prayer that is always attended when said with fervor. Thus, free-will does effectively exist in man but with a guide: the conscience. All of you who have access to the great focus of the new science, do not neglect the opportunity to incorporate the eloquent truths that it reveals and the remarkable principles that are its consequence. Follow them faithfully because that is the shining place of your free will. On one side think about the fatal consequences for you if refusing to follow the good path, as well as the wonderful rewards that await in case you obey the instructions of the good Spirits. That is, in turn, the place where the divine prescience will shine.

It is in vain that men seek the truth in all means provided by science. That truth that seems to escape is always on our side and the blind do not notice it.

Wise Spirits from all countries to whom is given to lift the tip of the veil do not neglect the means that the divine Providence has offered you! Provoke our manifestations; allow all your less fortunate brothers to benefit from them; take to all of them the Spiritist world and you will have deserved well because you will have significantly contributed to the realization of the designs of the Providence.

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Pantheism

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mrs. Costel

Pantheism or the incarnation of the Spirit, the idea in the shape, is the first step of Paganism towards the law of love revealed by Jesus. Greedy for pleasures, intoxicated by the exterior beauty, antiquity almost did not see beyond its own eyes. Sensuality and lust made it ignore the melancholies that stem from the uneasiness of doubt and repressed love. Antiquity feared the gods whose smoothed images decorated the living rooms of their homes. Slavery and war corroded it from inside and outside. The outstanding sounds and beauties of nature hopelessly invited mankind to understand its magnificence although nature was also feared or worshiped like the gods. The sacred woods attended the horrors of the oracles and not a single mortal separated the benefits of their solitude from the religious ideas that shook the tree and had the stone shuddered.

It is convenient to study Pantheism from two angles. First the infinite separation of the divine nature divided in all parts of creation, getting together again in the tiniest details as much as in its magnificence, in other words, a flagrant confusion between the work and the worker. Then in second place comes the assimilation of humanity, or even better, its absorption in matter. Former Pantheism had the divinities incarnate; modern Pantheism assimilates mankind to the animal kingdom and give rise to the creating molecules from the ardent oven where vegetation is born, confusing results with the principle.

God is the order that human confusion could not disturb. Everything has its place: sap to the trees, thought to brains. Not a single idea, child of the times, is serendipitously left abandoned. It has its path, a close relationship that finds its meaning connecting to the past and inviting the future. The history of religious beliefs is the proof of this absolute truth for there has not been any idolatry, system or fanaticism that would not have had its imperious and powerful reason of being. They all advanced towards light, all converged to the same objective and they will all come to confound, like the waters of a long river reaching the vast and deep sea of the Spiritist unity. Thus Pantheism the precursor of Catholicism carried the seed of God's universality. It inspired in people fraternity towards nature, a fraternity that would be taught by Jesus and to be practiced with one another, a sacred fraternity that today is reinforced by Spiritism that victoriously reconnects the earthly creatures to the spiritual world.

I truly say this to you that the law of love slowly and continuously unfolds its infinite spirals. It is that law that in the mysterious rites of Indian religions divinizes the animal, sanctifying it for its weakness and humble services. It was that law that populated the purified homes with familiar gods. It is that law that makes each religion spell out one word of the divine alphabet.

But the proclamation of the universal idea that summarizes them all was reserved to Jesus. The Savior announced love and made it stronger than death. He said to mankind: "Love one another; love in pain, joy and misery; love nature, your first initiator; love the animals, your humble companions; love what begins, love what ends.

The verb of the Eternal is called love and it embraces in an inextinguishable kindness the Earth that you dwell and the Heavens that will receive you purified and triumphant.

Lazarus

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Bibliographic news

Rational Spiritualism, by Mr. G.H. Love, Engineer³⁶

This remarkable and conscientious book is the work of a distinct scientist that proposed to find the demonstration of the reality of Spiritualist ideas from science and from the observation of facts. It is another piece supporting the thesis that we put forward above. It is more still because it is a first step, almost official, of science in the Spiritist way; as a matter of fact, it will be followed soon – and we are certain about it – by other even more resounding adhesions that will make deniers and adversaries of all schools to seriously think about it. It is enough to mention the following excerpt to show the mind frame of the work. It is found in page 331.

“It can be seen – and that is undoubtedly a sign of the times – the Spiritist sect that I already mentioned in paragraph 15, rapidly reaching persons of all classes and the most enlightened ones, not to mention the late and missed Jobard, from Brussels, that had become one of the liveliest champions of the new doctrine.

The fact is that if we examine this doctrine only in the little pamphlet of Allan Kardec, What is Spiritism? It is impossible not to notice how clear and homogeneous its morality is, consistent with itself, how satisfying it is to the mind and the heart. If the reality of communications with the invisible world were taken away people would always have that, and that is a great deal; it is enough to attract many members and explain its ever-increasing success. As for communications with the invisible world, I believe I have scientifically demonstrated that they were not only possible, but that they should take place every day in sleep. Inspiration during the state of vigil whose authenticity or nature is impossible to doubt, according to what I said, is in fact a communication of that kind although there could be cases in which they are only the result of a greater degree of activity of the mind. Now, if one verifies where the communication is translated by knowledge foreign to the medium that receives them and see nothing there that is not highly likely and it is in every case an issue that can be resolved in the absence of wise men, that each medium has the notion of their own knowledge in their normal state – and that can be judged by friends and family members better than anybody else – so that if Spiritism makes daily wonders beyond the moral issue it is apparently due to the fact that it produces mediums in quantity sufficient to produce proofs of their particular condition to whoever wants to examine them without preconceived ideas.

“Morality, as I understand it and as I deduced from scientific notions – I am not afraid of acknowledging it – has multiple points of contact with the one transmitted by Mr. Allan Kardec’s mediums. Also, I am not far from admitting that if there are many pages written by them that do not surpass the ordinary reach of

36 One volume, 12in, Didier Edition

human minds, including theirs, there must be, and there are, some of such a reach that it would be impossible to write other similar ones in their own rights.

All that makes me wish that a doctrine that does not offer a minor danger and, on the contrary, elevates mind and spirit as much as one can wish for in the interest of society may expand more and more every day. Because according to what I have read I imagine that it is impossible to be a good Spiritist without being a good man and a good citizen. I do not know many religions about which one can say the same.”

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Sermons about Spiritism

Preached at Metz Cathedral, 27-29th May 1863 by Rev. Father Letierce, from the Company of Jesus

Refuted by a Spiritist from Metz and preceded by considerations about Spiritist madness³⁷

We are always pleased to see serious followers entering the fight when they add calm and moderation to the logical arguments. This is a behavior that we must always follow even against those who do not use the same methods as us. We congratulate the author of this brochure for being able to unite these two qualities in his very interesting and conscious work that will be, no doubt, received with the deserved consideration. The letter inserted at the introduction of the work is a testimony of sympathy that we could not acknowledge better than by transcribing it here in full for it is a proof of how much he understands the doctrine as well as the following thoughts that he uses as an epigraph:

“We believe that there are facts that are not visible to the eye or tangible to the hand; that cannot be reached by the scalpel or the microscope however perfect we can imagine them to be; that equally escape taste, smell, hearing and that nonetheless are susceptible to verification with an absolute certainty. (Ch. Jouffroy, preface of Esquisses de philosophie morale, page 5).”

“Do not believe in every Spirit but have them tested to see if they are from God.” (Gospel)

“Dear Master,

Will you kindly accept the offer of this modest defense of Spiritism, a scream of outrage against the attacks against our sublime moral? To me that would be the strongest evidence that these pages are dictated with the same spirit of moderation that we daily admire in your work and that should guide us in all of our endeavors. Please accept it as a naïve essay of one of your recent followers, as the profession of faith of a true believer.”

37 Brochure in-18, price 1 franc; by mail 1.1 franc – Paris: Didier & Co., Ledoyen; Metz: Linden, Verronnais bookstores.

“If my effort succeeds I shall attribute its success to your elevated sponsorship; if my unskilled voice does not find echo, Spiritism will not lack other defenders and I will be appeased with my own conscience for having been approved by the immortal apostle of our philosophy.”

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We extracted the following passage from the brochure with one of the sermons by Rev. Father Letierce to give an idea of the power of his logic.

“There is nothing that may shock reason by the admission, within certain limits, of the communication between the Spirits of the dead with the living ones. Such communication is perfectly compatible with the nature of the human soul and numerous examples are found in the Gospels and in the Life of Saints. But they were saints, they were apostles.

“As for us, poor sinners, on the ramp of corruption, we who would frequently only need a helping hand to guide us back to good, isn’t that a sacrilege, an insult to the divine justice, to ask the good Spirits that God has spread around us for advices and guidance for our moral and philosophical instruction? Isn’t that an impious audacity to ask the Creator to send us guardian angels to endlessly remind us about the observation of his laws, about charity, the love to our neighbors and to teach us about what to do to the limit of our strength in order to achieve their own level of perfection as soon as possible?”

“That appeal to the soul of the righteous ones, in the name of God’s benevolence, is only heard by the soul of the bad ones, in the name of the infernal powers. Yes, the Spirits do communicate with us but not the condemned Spirits. Their communications and teachings, it is true, are such that could have been dictated by the purest angels. All of their speeches breathe the highest virtues from which the lowest ones must serve us as an ideal of perfection that we can hardly achieve in this life but it is only a trap to better attract us; it is like poison covered in honey with which the devil wants to kill our soul.”

“In fact, the soul of the dead, according to Allan Kardec, has three classes: those that arrived at the state of pure Spirits, those that are on the path towards perfection and the soul of the bad ones. The first ones, given their own nature, cannot attend our appeal. Their state of purity makes it impossible to have any communication with human beings that are trapped in a very thick envelope. By the way, what would they do on Earth? Preach things that could not be understood?

“The second ones have a lot to work for their own moral betterment to waste any time and come to talk to us. They are not the ones that come to assist us in our sessions either.”

“What is our last resort then? As I said, it is the soul of the sinners and these are the ones who are always ready to come. Always available to take advantage of our error and our need for instructions they come to us in large numbers to drag us along with them to the abyss where they were thrown by the just punishment of God.”

Allan Kardec

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Union between Spiritism and Philosophy

By Mr. Herrenschnneider

2nd Article³⁸

The principle of duality with the essence of the soul and the spiritual system

In the previous article we tried to demonstrate that if Mr. Free-Thinkers wanted to carry the burden of examining the reason that allow them to say “I”, they would arrive at the knowledge of their own essence; they would be convinced that their soul is constituted in a way that it exists separately from the body as well as from its envelope and would understand erraticism when the soul, after death, it would have left its earthly matter so that their science, if based on the true principle of the constitution of the soul, would confirm the Spiritist facts instead of contradicting them so obstinately.

In fact, our notion of “self” is mainly composed of the feeling and knowledge that we have of ourselves and these two intimate phenomena, evident to everyone, peremptorily imply two distinct elements of the soul: one is passive, sensitive, extensive and solid.. The is the one that receives the impressions. The another one is active, boundless and thinks. This is the one that perceives these same impressions.

Consequently, if we have side by side with a virtual element an element that is resistant and permanent, different from our body, we cannot be dissolved by death; our immortality is demonstrated and our pre-existence is a natural consequence. Our destinies therefore are independent of our earthly dwellings that become a more or less interesting episode to thus according to the events that are associated.

Following those observations, the duality of the essence of the soul is an important principle for it does instruct us about our real and immortal life. However, it is a much more important principle because that is the only source from which we acquire full conscience of our individuality hence being the origin of our science that we cannot doubt and that is the foundation of all of our knowledge.

We all effectively begin to get to know ourselves before we are aware of our surroundings and we use our own measure to assess everything that we examine and judge. Hence, for the study of the truth, it is

38 See Spiritist Review, September 1863

indispensable to observe that our knowledge comes from within ourselves to return to ourselves. It is a circle formed by ourselves and that in spite of us it fatally surrounds us.

Our contemporary philosophers unnoticeably ignore this. It is what clouds and blinds them, precluding them from looking beyond and above themselves. We will then have many occasions to attest to their blindness. Previous generations, on the contrary, knew this principle and its mysterious influence as symbolized by the figure of a serpent folded on itself and biting the tip of its own tail. To their eyes it meant that knowledge started from a given point, goes around our intellectual horizon and returns to the starting point. Now if that starting point is elevated and the vision is sharp the horizon is broad and science is vast. If, on the contrary, the starting point is close to ground and vision is impaired, the horizon is restricted the intelligence of things is limited.

Therefore, the way we are personally impacted will be the whole and the reach of our knowledge. In this case, it becomes evident that the first condition of the individual science is the self-examination not only to assess one's skills, defects and vices but also to get to know, from start, the intimate constitution of our being and from that elevate our spirit and form our character.

Consequently, true science is not made for each one individually. The one that aspires that science must have intelligence and education but above all must be serious, sober and prudent and not allowing oneself to be carried away by the caprices of imagination, vanity, personal interests and self-sufficiency.

Selfless love for that venerable objective is what must guide the true lover of truth; it is the strong and constant will of never stopping, strictly separating the good seed from the weed.

The more a person owns and controls oneself and is calm and noble, the more that person will be able to distinguish the paths that will lead to the truth. The more lighthearted, presumptuous or passionate, the more an impure breath will contaminate the fruits harvested from the tree of life.

Hence the first condition to get to the knowledge of things is the individual character and it is for that reason that in antiquity there were solemn trials preceding initiation. Today knowledge is spread without distinction and each one pretends to have it but at the same time truth, more than never, is well received while the strangest doctrines find numerous followers. It is necessary to be convinced that indifferent Spirits, limited by math and natural sciences, led by imagination or full of impertinence, are inadequate to the search of truth and that it would be wiser to spare such a noble task to some chosen ones. Yet more sensible dispositions manifest today by the advent of Spiritism and in fact the Spiritists are persons well cut for the search of truth because, separating from the turmoil that drags society, they renounce to the mundane vanities, to the principles of free-thinkers and to the official superstition of the known cults. They give proof of healthy independence, of a sincere love to the truth and of a touching solicitude towards their eternal interests. These are the best moral dispositions to deal with the serious issues of the soul, the world and Divinity. For our own eternal good we must try to understand one another and follow together the signs that will lead to the sacred path because we need to help each other to achieve the objective that we all seek, that is the knowledge of what is real and durable.

After the moral dispositions that we have just indicated the most indispensable thing to dedicate to the delicate work of initiation is the knowledge of the principle of the duality of the essence of the soul because that is what constitutes part of the mysterious secrets of the Sphinx³⁹. It is one of the keys of science and without it all efforts are useless to achieve that. The principle of the essence of the soul carries on itself and

39 The other principle is the duality of the aspect of things that we will see later on.

as consequence the considerable notions that we wish to acquire whereas all secondary principles discovered up until now are not sufficiently elevated to dominate the vast horizon of human knowledge and to embrace every detail.

The inferior principles detour those who use them in the warren of numerous facts that they do not understand and it is for the insufficiency of their first principles that the philosophers veered off and got lost in the arbitrary subtleties of their incomplete doctrines. They definitely led to confusion where they thought the truth to be.

In these more delicate than difficult matters, it is only the true principle that spreads light that easily resolves every problem and opens up the secret doors that lead to the most secret sanctuary. Now, we already know that we carry that principle and that all we need to find it is to study ourselves but to do that with calm and impartiality. We know that that principle is the duality of our spiritual essence so that we must handle the thread carefully for we hold the most important knot. But as we advance in our psychological study we must nonetheless consult the works of our most renowned philosophers to find out where they failed and what the points that confirm our own researches are.

Thus, as observed above, it seems evident that everything in us that connects to the sensitive order depends on the substance of our soul because it is the extensive and solid element that receives every exterior impression and that feels our inner activity.

In fact, our soul could not be touched without presenting an initial obstacle to oscillations of the environment and vibrations of emotions that affect us intimately. Therefore, it is that very natural way of being that explains our relationships with everything that exists, with what is not us, with our non-self-moral, intellectual and physical, visible or invisible.

The solidity and extension of our substance evidently cannot be rejected, in principle. Nevertheless, that is not the broad opinion that reigns in the university and in the Institute⁴⁰. Spiritualism denies it as absurd under the specious pretext that divisibility that would be its consequence would imply corruptibility of the substance. That is nothing but a mistake because what matters to the corruptibility of the nature of the soul is the chemical simplicity of its corporeal fluidity and not its mechanical indivisibility whose lack of has thousands of ways to remediate while to remain with the scientific truth is necessary to admit an effect without cause, a possible impression without resistance. Hence the sensitivity of our soul teaches nothing to our Spiritualist school. It freely connects feelings to reason, attributes sensations to the material organs and does not explain the connection between those different faculties. That is one of the causes of its philosophical impotence.

As for us, the sensitivity of our soul is the irrefutable proof of the solidity and extension of its substance. And it is the notion of those properties that opens up a vast field of observation to us. Thus, in the beginning, the substantial extension and solidity allow our soul to take different shapes and contains the type of organs that constitute our physical body. It thus serves of origin and support to our nerves, senses, brains, organs, muscles and bones and allows us to incarnate by this law of mutability of the corporeal cells, much known to modern physiologists. Our scientists suppose only and wrongly so in our opinion that such a law is the effect of a mysterious force of matter that renovates, absorb and flows by itself and forms by itself because matter is inert and forms nothing on its own. Such mutability, evidently, is the effect of an instinctive activity of the double essence of our soul that is enclosed in our envelope, and the existence of that law

40 The way the Parisian Institute of Sciences was referred to in those days (TN).

demonstrates that our incarnation is in the natural order because it is continuous and after a number of years our body renovates regularly.

The formation of our material envelope and our successive incarnation are explained very naturally. But still such extensive substantiality of our soul allows us to understand equally the existing link between the soul and the body because since only the cover of our substantial organism is visible everything that is felt by one must affect the other. The emotions of the substance of the soul must disturb the body and its state must inevitably affect its own moral and intellectual dispositions. That is the first teaching resulting from the concrete nature of our substance.

The second teaching that we extract from there is that the part of substance of our soul that does not serve to the type of our material organization must be the basis of our intimate sense, the one that receives all the moral and intellectual impressions and that puts us in contact with our own divine substance, so that our substance receives impressions from the radiation of all the previous existences and all possible activities, attesting that it is the first impression of all of our notions. In the same way we receive the knowledge of ourselves for if we ask a skeptical person how come that person can affirm itself, the answer will certainly be: - I feel myself – since even the skeptical cannot doubt their own sensations.

The feeling, however, is not our whole knowledge: the skeptics cannot deny that she knows that she feels herself. Now, the perception of our feeling is consequence of our intellectual activity proving not only that our soul is not passive but also that it is active, that it wants, that it perceives, thinks and that it is causative and free by itself.

Our own organs work without our awareness so that we are forced to attribute a second element to our soul, an active, virtual element, that is, an essential force that is aware when our sensitivity is awoken; that wishes as the result of its own movement; that perceives, thinks and reflects through our brain; that acts with the help of our members and that animates our organs by an involuntary movement.

It is by the presence of that essential double order: the passive and sensitive order and the virtual, thoughtful and active order that allow us to feel and know ourselves and that give us the consciousness of our own personality without any support from the exterior world.

The spiritual element of perfection is the power of our soul since it does not have extension and solidity by itself. We do not know it but by its activity. If the soul does not want, think or act, it is as if it does not exist; and if our soul were not substantially concrete by the virtue of another element, our body would not exist and only a pile of dust. Our soul would not even be capable of living because it would be lost in the void unless we would suppose, as it is done by spiritualism, an impenetrable mystery that allowed the soul to exist without extension or solidity, a hypothesis that Spiritism and the natural laws turn absolutely inadmissible. Nonetheless, it is our essential force that Leibnitz considers as a substance, despite its escaping nature and the French spiritualist school repeats that not stopping at the illogical confusion.

It is not enough, however, to call a substance force to make it so and consider such imaginary substance as if being the bottom line of our being to stay away from the emptiness of the abstractions. A substance does not exist but by its tangible state, by its extension and solidity, regardless of how subtle we may conceive it, and that is what our spiritual school quietly passes on. Thus, that is another cause of its moral and philosophical impotence. Our essential force is not but the principle of our activity; it animates but does not constitute us. It is the principle of our life but not of our existence. It is all over our substance, spreading all over our being, receiving directly its impressions without our voluntary support. It is through that union of our essential elements that our organization works spontaneously; that our sensations awake followed by our attention and without any other intermediary leads us to perceive the cause of our impressions; that our

conscience is a set of feelings and reflections and that every notion, regardless of the object, demands our feeling and knowledge.

It is only then that we are certain of its existence. It is through the same process that we are aware of the Supreme Being. We have the sensation of his presence by our innate sense and we understand that sublime sensation through our reason because the ideal of the truthful, good and beautiful is primarily in our heart before it reaches our head.

Uncivilized peoples are not mistaken about it. They do not doubt God; they simply imagine him in accordance to the level of their intelligence whereas we see scientists discussing God's personality because they pretend to not admit anything but by the power of their reason and because they endlessly debate abstractions, not establishing their supporting point in the sensitive order.

That is the constitution of our soul. It is formed by two very distinctive elements that nonetheless are indissolubly together for these elements are never and nowhere found separately since every substance has its force and every force has its substance. Thus, such duality is present in the essence of everything that exists. It is in matter, in the soul and in God. Again, such distinction in unity is necessarily admissible because each of those elements is well characterized. This is because they have their respective properties and categorical types. It is also a universal law that the same principle cannot have contrary effects and that excluding qualities indicate other particular principles. Its unit, however, is not less authoritative because no function, faculty or phenomenon is produced in us or beyond us without the simultaneous support of those two irreducible elements.

It is that unity in the permanent duality of our soul that explains this important psychological phenomenon: the instinctive spontaneity of all of our faculties and functions, as well as the formation of our character and our intimate moral constitution. Effectively, our impressions are preserved in us and are reproduced involuntarily so much so that since the substance is the passive and permanent of our soul, it is necessary to attribute to it the property of preserving our sensations, making them concrete and, in time, transmitting it to the attention of our essential force. Since those impressions are of all sorts, a moral order is formed in us through that conservative property, a permanently moral, intellectual and practical order that manifests through our spontaneous and instinctive activities; that inspire in us feelings and ideas and that involuntarily guides our actions, sometimes even in spite of us. Besides, these acquired ideas and feelings gather in our soul producing new ideas and images that we were far from expecting.

The psychological functions of our substance united to the essential force are therefore multiplied, forming our spontaneous moral, intellectual and practical nature, the bottom line of our character, the origin of our natural dispositions. Hence, our substance remains in a latent or potential state as expressed by the school, all of our qualities, all of our knowledge and past habits, permanently in us. Consequently, it is to that substance and its instinctive activity that memory, imagination, the Spirit and natural senses must be attributed to, as well as the origin of our ideas and feelings.

That instinctive substantial order does incontestably exist in our soul. Each one of us acknowledges a permanent moral nature, intellectual dispositions and habits that facilitate career and behavior, if good, or that preclude success dragging us to deplorable deviations, if bad. It is only our philosophers that do not notice them because not admitting a substantial psychological order they condemn themselves to the attribution of the influence of matter to everything that is resistant in our soul and confound everything that is sensitive and alive with our intelligence.

It is true that Aristotle acknowledged a potential order in men in which all of our qualities are in potential state, but he defines it badly and also confuse it with matter. Since then nobody else dealt with that special

order with the exception of Mr. Cousin. But this contemporary philosopher considered only the spontaneous activity, not acknowledging anything else in the soul beyond intelligence, not seeking its origin in the permanent element of our essential nature.

He names it the spontaneous and instinctive reason, as opposed to reflected reason, without noticing the contradiction between instinct and thought, excluding qualities that evidently cannot belong to the same principle! Thus, Mr. Cousin only extracts limited consequences from that discovery and that is why his psychology, like his that of his school, became a dry, illogical and inexpressive science.

Let us now analyze the preceding observation that showed us psychological phenomena unknown up until now. They helped us to attest the existence of two orders: moral and intellectual, and very distinctive and strongly characterized practices, one perfectly related to the particular properties of our substance that are permanence, extension and solidity; the other related to our essential force that are causality, intermittence and in extension. The former is passive, sensitive, conservative; the latter is active, voluntary, and thoughtful. The intimate union of the two essential elements produces in us our triple instinctive activity, the direct reflex of the true state of our natural qualities and defects.

In fact, on one side the more sensitive our substantial nature and the more delicate and conservative and the livelier and the more energetic our instinctive activity the purer and more elevated our ideals and feelings; the fairer our common sense and the easier and safer our memory and imagination. Contrary to that, the less perfect our substantial state the slower and the more limited our memory and imagination, the cruder our ideas, the viler our feelings and the more distorted our common sense.

On another hand, though, the more energetic, constant and flexible our causal force, the stronger our attention, our will, our virtue and our control upon them; the more reach our perception, thoughts, judgement and reason will have and, finally, the greater our skills and more honorable our behavior because all qualities and faculties derive from our virtual element.

In opposition, the softer, blocked or heavier our essential force, the more our brutality and moral and intellectual cowardness will manifest in daylight. Therefore, our value depends on both the state of our qualities and the properties of one and the other element of our soul.

Such is the summary image that represents the intimate constitution of our essential soul and that reveals our double faculty of feeling and knowing ourselves. For starter the picture shows the soul in its living unity because we discover the double principle of its activity and its passivity; of its permanence and causality; of its existence in time and space and its independence that is proper and distinct from God, the world and its material envelope.

Then it shows its wonderful diversity for we acknowledge the origin and quality of its faculties, functions and organization, in the respective properties of our essential elements and in their reciprocal support.

This image, however, is a first sketch but it is easy to notice the method of rigorous observation that we follow that is the one discovered by Bacon; that Descartes introduced in Psychology; that the Scottish school applied; that the spiritualist and Eclectic School observed in its whole doctrine. Hence, we share the same terrain of every serious philosophy and if occasionally we are not in agreement with our academic hypotheses fact is that we cannot help it but believe that the majority of cases of conscience were both badly observed and badly explained by them.

As a matter of fact, the Spiritualist Ecletism acknowledges three faculties in us: will, sensation and reason. These faculties are distinct from our body that is solid and ample so that we necessarily have a spiritual and extensive soul.

Given that assumption Ecletism does not question how the soul must be formed to be sensitive or if will and reason, both active, are two manifestations of the same virtual principle. These are questions that do not shake Ecletism. It only sustains that out of those three faculties only the will effectively belong to us because alone it is the result of a substantial inextensive that is the essential principle of our *self*.

To Ecletism sensitivity is not more than the effect of the shock resulting from the action that the force of the exterior world exerts upon us through our body. However, Ecletism does not investigate how come our extensive force acts onto the body or how come that force may receive impressions in this extensive isolation or explain how we can be sensitives. These are small mysteries that would not stop Ecletism. Reason, according to that belief, is the sovereign faculty of knowledge, but it is impersonal, meaning that it does not belong to us although we may utilize it. Hence according to Mr. Cousin, the expression – my reason – is senseless for the same reason that one does not say this is *my truth*. Such explanation does not seem much concluding to us but it is probably our fault.

In fact, in that system reason is the set of necessary and universal truths, truths like the principles of causality, the substance, the unity, the true, etc. The set of those principles makes them, according to him, the divine reason that we share by the ineffable will of the Almighty. But it is precisely here that we have to accept the word since we don't see how a set of truths, regardless of how universal they are, could form the divine and human reason. It is commonly believed that truths are laws and reason is a faculty. However, I see the sun but this faculty has never been taken by the sun or by the smallest of its rays. Therefore, there we have a mystery to be added to the preceding ones so much so that nothing is explained by itself in that doctrine, nothing is connected and our soul is there presented just as an heterogeneous set of faculties, qualities and distinct functions randomly interconnected like sparse leaves gathered in a book pompously entitled *Philosophical Doctrine of the XIX Century*.

The second preface of the third edition of *Philosophical Fragments* brings an interesting summary about that book in several aspects. According to those considerations we can assess the causes that make the official spiritualist philosophy, despite the good intentions, something bizarre and indigestible. We would be even authorized to treat it with severity had the eminent services done to the French Spirit been forgotten, deviating it from an immoral sensuality and from a desperate skepticism. Those were evidently the concerns of the illustrious philosopher in the beginning of his brilliant career. Studying his remarkable books, one can see that Condillac and Kant were his main adversaries. Therefore, this fight is the most important part of his work. His own system, however, seems very defective to us and his morale, theology and ontology contain several very controversial points.

Truth is such a delicate flower! The slightest breath of error makes it wither in our hands reducing it to an obfuscating and pernicious powder. In the heat of the fight or in the emotion of ambition it is particularly difficult to keep the calm of Spirit and the kind feeling of evidence so much so that the person involved is easily dragged to go beyond the limits of true wisdom.

Fortunately, the Creator has given us facts, circumstances and providential events that are shocking enough to bring us back to the good path. Certainly, the doctrines and facts that form the foundation of Spiritism are among them. May our great and wise philosophers do not repeal it under the futile pretext of superstition! May they study it without prejudice! They will find the extensive and solid nature of our soul,

its preexistence and perpetuity! They will find a kind and healthy morale, well established to guide everyone to good.

If they really want to get to know it they must frankly study the work; they must examine scientifically its principles and consequences and then perhaps the principle of the duality of the essence of the soul may be found in all of its splendor and power because it does seem to us that it casts a lively light upon the intimate secrets of our being. That is what we will examine in the near future.

F. Herrensneider

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

November 1863

Pastoral by Mr. Bishop of Alger against Spiritism

Mr. Bishop from Alger published a brochure on August 18th last addressed to the priests of his diocese with the title "*Memo about the superstition called Spiritism*". We extracted the following passages with comments:

"...We thought of adding a modest page to those luminous compendiums, casting shame upon Spiritism from the heights of common sense and faith, as it must be, a doctrine that is renovated from the oldest and grossest idolatry that has reached the frontiers of Alger. Poor colony! After so many cruel trials it must still face something like that kind!"

Poor inhabitants! In fact, wouldn't this city be much more prosperous if, instead of tolerating and protecting the indigenous religion, it had transformed its mosques and synagogues into churches and if the zeal of the proselytism had not been stopped? It is true that the sacred war, a war of extermination like the crusades, would still last if hundreds of thousands of soldiers had perished and if we had perhaps been forced to abandon it. But what is the meaning of all that when compared to the victory of faith! Well, here we have another scourge: Spiritism comes in the name of the Gospels proclaiming fraternity among all different cults, cementing their union and inscribing in its flag: ***There is no salvation but through charity!***

"...But multiple considerations, Mr. Priest, have kept us from doing that so far. First, we hesitated in revealing this new shame, added to so many others ironically exploited miseries by the enemies of our dear and noble Algeria. On the other hand we know that Spiritism has hardly penetrated our location with the exception of certain towns where there are larger numbers of idle people; where the incessantly excited curiosity avidly feeds out of everything that has signs of novelty; where the need to shine and stick out of the crowds is not always strange even to the educated as well as the uneducated, whereas the majority of our small cities and the country ignore it, certainly not missing anything for that matter, including the pretentious and bizarre name of Spiritism. Finally, we believe that such practices are never destined to live long because disillusionment comes soon with the scandals of imagination that almost always die from their own shame. That is what happened to the charlatanism of Cagliostro and Mesmer; in the same way the furor of the turning tables calmed down leaving behind not more than the ridicule of their enticements and memories."

If the name of Spiritism itself is unknown in the majority of small towns and in the Algerian country the memo by Mr. Bishop of Alger, spread in profusion, is an excellent means of making it known, exciting curiosity that will certainly not be stopped by the devil. That has been the well attested effect of all sermons given against Spiritism that notoriously contributed to the multiplication of its followers. Will Mr. Bishop's memo have a contrary effect? It is more than doubtful. We always remember these so much realized prophetic words by a Spirit to whom we were asking two years ago how Spiritism would reach the country side. He answered:

- Through the priests
- Voluntarily or involuntarily?
- In the beginning, involuntarily. Later, voluntarily.

We also remember from our first trip to Lyon in 1860 that the Spiritists there were just a few hundreds. In that same location, an intense sermon was preached against them who then sent us this: "*More two or three sermons like that and our numbers will multiply tenfold.*" Well, everybody knows that there has been no lack of sermons in that city and that the number of Spiritists grew to five to six thousand in the following year and that after the third year they accounted for more than thirty thousand. Poor city of Lyon!

Another thing that is well-known is that the workers form the larger number of followers since they found strength in this doctrine to patiently endure the tough trials of life, not resorting to violence or exploitation to make ends meet. Today they pray and trust God's justice contrary to the belief in man's judgement; they now understand Jesus' words: "*My kingdom is not from this world.*"

You must say why, with your doctrine of eternal penalties that you promote as an indispensable brake you have never precluded any excess while the maxim: "There is no salvation but through charity" is invincible! God forbid that you may never need to be sheltered there! But if you are still reserved disastrous days by God remember that those who were denied the alms of bread by you because they were Spiritists, those will be the first ones to share their bread with you because they understand these words: "*Forgive your enemies and do good to those who persecute you.*"

But then what is it so bad about Spiritism since it only attracts indolent people of some cities? What if it is short-lived? What is the problem then if it will have the same fate as Cagliostro, Mesmer and the turning tables? As for Cagliostro, we must leave him out of this because Spiritism has always denied him solidarity despite the persistence of some adversaries in trying to connect his name to Spiritism as they did to every charlatan and conjurer. With respect to Mesmer, one must be really oblivious to what is happening to ignore the fact that magnetism is more spread out than ever and that today it is professed by scientific celebrities.

It is true that today not many people are involved with the turning tables but one must acknowledge that they walked a nice path for they were the starting point of this doctrine that causes so much anxiety to those gentlemen. They were the foundation of Spiritism. If people are no longer interested in them it is because a good reader no longer needs spelling. They grew so much that you cannot recognize them.

After mentioning his successful trip to France Mr. Bishop of Alger adds:

“Our first and permanent task on the way back was to publish information against superstition in general and against Spiritism in particular since the Gospel according to Renan only worried us for eight days.”

There we have a singular confession, one must admit. Mr. Renan’s work that destroys the edifice from its structure and that had such a great repercussion, did not worry His Highness but for eight days while Spiritism catches his whole attention.

“I hurry up”, he says, “and spite of being worn out by the fatigue of the journeys I roll the sleeves up to work. We have in Mr. Renan a new and fierce adversary but that does not worry me much. Let us move straight to Spiritism for that is more urgent.”

It is an honor to Spiritism because it is an acknowledgement that Spiritism has much more to fear and it cannot be fearful unless it is logical. If it does not have any serious foundation, as intended by Mr. Bishop, why then all this uproar against it? Who would shoot a fly with cannon? The more violent the attacks the more its importance is exalted. That is why we are not sorry for that.

“We heard, and we don’t doubt it, that true Christians, sincere Catholics, thought that they could associate Jesus and Belial, the commandments of the Church with the processes of Spiritism.”

It is a bit late to notice that considering that Spiritism has arrived and prospers in Algeria for three years now and it is not doing bad. Besides, Mr. Leblanc de Prébois’ brochure, published in the name of and as a defense to the Church, must have informed you that there are currently twenty million Spiritists in France, according to his calculations, that is to say half of the population, and that the other half of the population will be gained soon. Well, Algeria is part of France.

The memo addressing the priests of the diocese says:

“If there are Spiritists in your parish, whatever their condition, generally unfaithful, vain women, empty heads, always forming the majority of superstitious entourage, the priest must not hesitate but let them clearly know that there cannot be any possible relationship between Catholicism and Spiritism; that their practices must necessarily be either charlatanism from some, hallucination from the part of others or, something that is even worse, diabolic intervention.”

If there isn’t a possible relationship that is unfortunate to the Catholics rather than the Spiritists because Spiritism gains ground every day and regardless of what is done against it, what is Catholicism going to do when the Mr. Leblanc Prébois’ prediction come true? If he sends all the Spiritists out of the Church who is going to stay inside? But that is not the issue now. It will come at its time. The last part of the phrase has a great reach from the part of Mr. Bishop of Alger, who must measure his words well. According to him, Spiritism must contain either: charlatanism, hallucination or, what is worse, devilish intervention. The Reverend seems uncertain about which one considering that a devilish intervention is the worst. Well, if it is charlatanism and hallucination that it is not serious and there is no diabolic intervention. In the first hypothesis one must recognize that all this noise for an illusion or a simple charlatanism is like fighting the windmills, something that is not much worth of the Church’s attention; the second hypothesis attributes to the devil a greater power than that of the Church or a huge weakness to the Church since it cannot stop the devil’s action as it could not have stopped the possesses of Morzine despite all the exorcisms.

“We were there Mr. Priest, in our apostolic endeavor, when we received numerous newspapers cuts, brochures, books and particularly a speech (from Father Nampon) from which, with the exception of the general ideas, we found very clearly and easily exposed everything that we wanted to say next with respect to Spiritism. Since we do not like to unnecessarily rework what we believe to have been done well, we advise you to acquire some of those books and at least one article with that speech that will clarify you sufficiently with respect to those processes, the doctrine and the consequences of Spiritism.”

We are delighted to know that Father Nampon’s work is considered a good job by the princes of the priests after which there is nothing else to be done. It is quite reassuring to the Spiritists to know that Mr. Priest has rested his case with respect to his arguments and that nothing else can be added. Now, since those arguments instead of stopping Spiritism, it does recruit more followers it is up to their adversaries to be happy with the price to be paid.

As for clarifying sufficiently the priest about the doctrine, we don’t believe that altered and truncated texts as those unceremoniously used by Father Nampon, as we demonstrated in our Spiritist Review in June last, are adequate to give them an accurate idea of Spiritism. One must have a very limited reason to use similar means that discredit the cause that they serve.

“Before anything else, wouldn’t that be deplorable to find in Algeria serious Christians that would hesitate to strongly oppose Spiritism, some with the pretext that there is something true in it and others because they would have seen convict materialists coming back to the belief that there is another life through Spiritism? That is illogical ingenuity from both sides!”

In truth, does bringing materialists back to the belief in God and in a future life means nothing? That is why Spiritism is still perceived [jcm – see if this fits in the right spot] something bad. However, Jesus said that a bad tree cannot produce good fruits. Give faith to someone that has none, is it bad fruit? If you were unable to guide those convicted unbelievers and Spiritism did that which one is the better tree? It is obvious that those materialists would continue to be so without Spiritism. Considering that Mr. Bishop would like to see Spiritism destroyed, a belief that bringing the souls back to God, it is because to his eyes, since those souls were not brought back by the Church, it is preferable to have them dying with their disbelief. That reminds us of those words pronounced from the pulpit of a little town: *“I would rather have the unbelievers out of the Church than having them back through Spiritism.”* Truly, these are not the words of Christ who said: *“I want mercy, not sacrifice.”* And there is another one that was said somewhere else: *“I prefer to see the workers leaving the cabarets drunk to the alternative of learning that they are Spiritists.”* That is Madness! We would not be surprised if some people became mad out of a fit of rage against Spiritism.

“If, despite the voice of their consciences, people that were educated in the Christian principles and that had forgotten, denied and fought against these principals, trying to practice them and admitting the immortality of the soul, completely different hell and purgatory as compared to those found in the Gospels, if they had gained something through Spiritism, something out of their faith and for their salvations, which Christian person would image herself in such a situation, considering that the only thing they did was to replace those things by sacrileges and blasphemies of belief?”

What is the difference between the purgatory of Spiritism and that of the Gospels since they say nothing about it? So much so that Protestants do not admit that idea. As for hell, the Gospels are far from placing there the scorching hot chairs of Catholicism and from have said, like we heard in our childhood, and like

it was preached about three or four years ago in Montpellier, that “*the angels remove the seat of those chairs so that the elected ones may enjoy the vision of the suffering of those who are condemned.*”

There we have an original side of beatitude of the blessed ones. We were not aware that Jesus had said a single word about it. Spiritism, in reality, does not admit such things. If that is reason for reproach that be it!

“You give the impression that it is the renovation of Pagan doctrines that were neglected by wise people, even before the appearance of the Gospels; that by introducing the metempsychosis or the transmigration of the souls, Spiritism kills the individuality of the soul, reducing moral responsibility to nothing; that by destroying the idea of purgatory and the eternally personal hell, it opens the avenue to every kind of disorder and immorality.”

If there is anything that was taken from Pagan theories, that is certainly the image of the tortures of hell. As a matter of fact, we cannot clearly see how come after having admitted any kind of purgatory we now deny its very idea. As for the metempsychosis of antiquity far from having introduced it Spiritism has always fought against it and demonstrated its impossibility. When are you going to stop saying that Spiritism says something contrary to what it actually does? The plurality of existences admitted by Spiritism not as a system but as a natural law demonstrated by facts is essentially different when compared to that. Well, there is no system that can prevail against a law of nature, the work of God, as there is no anathema that can invalidate it as they were not able to nullify the movement of Earth and the periods of Creation.

The plurality of existences, rebirth if you will, is an inherent condition to human nature, like sleeping, and it is necessary to the progress of the soul. It is always unpleasant to a religion to remain in the vanguard of knowledge because there will come a time when it will be overtaken by the irresistible wave of the ideas, then losing credit with and influence upon the educated people. To feel compromised by the new ideas is the same as admitting the flimsiness of its supporting point. It is even worse when they are alarmed by what they call utopias. It is something really interesting to see the adversaries of Spiritism fighting to have it seen as an empty dream, without importance and vitality, constantly screaming: fire!

According to the saying “the tree is known by the fruit it bears”, the best way to assess something is to study its effects. If, as they say, the denial of the eternal hell opens the way to all kinds of disorder and immoralities, it follows that: 1) the belief in that hell opens the way to all kinds of virtues; 2) anybody given to immoral actions has no fear for the eternal penalties and if they do not fear it means that they don't believe in them. Now, who should believe more in those than the ones that teach them? Who should be more committed with such a fear, more impressed by the images of the eternal torments than those who are day in day out embedded in such a belief?

Where should we find the maximum strength of such a belief? Where there should be more composure and morality if not in the very center of Catholicism? If all those who profess such a dogma and make them the condition of salvation were exempt from reproach their words would certainly have more weight but when we see such scandalous disorder even among those that preach the fear of hell one must conclude that they do not believe in what the preach. How would they expect to persuade the doubtful ones? They kill the dogma by their own exaggeration and by their example.

The dogma of the eternal penalties does not bear good fruits, demonstrating that the tree is not good, and among those fruits we must place the immense number of unbelievers that are daily produced by that tree. The Church hangs on it as if in a lifeline but the cord is so thin that the boat will soon drift away.

Should the Church be in peril one day for the absolutism of its dogmas of hell, for the eternal penalties and for the supremacy attributed to the devil in this world! If one cannot be a Catholic without believing in that hell and in the eternal sufferings one must acknowledge that the number of true Catholics is reduced these days and that more than one Father of the Church may be considered stained by heresy.

“It would not be useless to admit, Mr. Priest, that the peace of the families is seriously disturbed by the practice of Spiritism; that a large number of minds has already lost their senses by it and that the homes of the mentally ill in America, England and France are already full with their innumerable victims so much so that if Spiritism propagates its conquest we would have to change the names from sanatoriums to mental asylums.”

Had Mr. Bishop of Alger collected his teachings elsewhere and not from interested sources, he would have known what are those supposed mad people instead of yielding to the echo of an ill-faith invented story from which ridicule sticks out of its own exaggeration. The first newspaper mentioned four cases that supposedly were attested in a hospice; another paper, mentioned the first one, raised the number to forty; a third, citing the second, raised it to four hundred, adding that the hospice will be enlarged, a story that is repeated by all hostile newspapers. Mr. Bishop of Alger then retakes that story and without demolishing the edifice out of his zeal, goes beyond and amplifies it by saying that the homes of the mentally ill in America, England and France are overcrowded with victims of our doctrine. Something interesting here! He mentions England that is one of the countries where Spiritism is least spread and where there are certainly less followers than in Italy, Spain and Russia.

We accept the fact that an ephemeral and inexpressive brochure that a newspaper not much concerned with the sources of the news may say something adventurous for the need of their cause and there is no surprise there although immoral but an episcopal and official document should only contain authenticity, free from suspicion and inaccuracy, even if involuntary.

As for the peace of the families, disturbed by the practice of Spiritism, we only know the cases of women that were deceived by their confessors and encouraged to leave their homes to avoid the influence of the devil that was brought to them by their Spiritist husbands.

On the other hand, there are many examples of formerly split families that were brought together by the advice of their protector Spirits and under the influence of the doctrine that, like Jesus, preaches union, concord, kindness, tolerance, forgetfulness of injuries, indulgence towards the weaknesses of others and brings peace where there is separation. Still here we must say that the tree is known by its fruits. It is a well attested fact that when there is division in families it is always related to religious intolerance.

The pastoral letter ends with the following order:

“For all that and invoking the Saint Spirit, we have ordered the following:

- 1. The practice of Spiritism and the evocation of the dead is forbidden to all and everyone in the archdiocese of Alger;*
- 2. Confessors will deny absolution to whoever does not renounce any participation both as medium, follower or simple witness of any private or public session or finally any activity of Spiritism;*

3. *In all cities of Algeria and in all rural parishes where Spiritism has penetrated in some sort Mr. Priests will read this letter to the public on the first Sunday after you receive it. In fact, it will be communicated everywhere in particular, according to the need.*

Alger, August 18th 1863.”

This is the first order issued with the objective of officially banning Spiritism in a given place. The data shall be recorded in the archives of Spiritism like that of October 9th, 1861 an always memorable day for the Barcelona Act of Faith ordered by the Bishop of that town. Since the attacks, criticism and sermons did not produce the desired effect they wanted to reach it with an official excommunication. Let us see if the result will be better now.

The first paragraph is addressed to all and everyone at the Alger diocese outlining the prohibition of dealing with the dead without exception. But the population is not only formed by eager Catholics. Without mentioning Jews, Protestants and Muslims, it encompasses materialists, Pantheists, unbelievers, free-thinkers, skeptical and indifferent whose number is incalculable. They are nominally accounted among the Catholics because they were born and baptized in the religion but in reality, they left. With that respect Mr. Renan and so many others are considered Catholics. Hence the condemnation does not reach all the individuals but those restricted to the orthodoxy. The same will happen in any place where there is similar prohibition. Since such prohibition cannot materially reach everybody, regardless of its source, for each one that is kept away by that there will be another hundred dealing with the matter.

Also, they leave aside the Spirits that come to us without invitation, even close to those that were prohibited to receive them; that speak to those that do not want to hear; that move through walls when the doors are closed. Such is the greatest difficulty for which there is a lack of an article in the above order.

The order does not reach but the eager Catholic. Now, we have repeated many times that Spiritism came to bring faith to those who believe in nothing or that are doubtful. Those who have a well-established faith and to who such a faith is enough Spiritism says: “Keep it”, without trying to deviating them from that. Spiritism does not say to anyone: “Leave your belief to come to me” for Spiritism has a lot to harvest in the field of the unbelievers.

Hence the prohibition cannot reach those that are addressed by Spiritism and it only reaches those who are not. Jesus said: “It is not the healthy who need a doctor but the sick.” If the former comes to him without invitation it means that they find consolation in him and certainty that they cannot find elsewhere and in that case the prohibition will be neglected.

The prohibition was issued about three months ago and we can already feel its effect. More than twenty letters were sent to us from Alger since its appearance, all of them confirmed the predicted results.

In our next issue we shall see what is happening.

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

November 1863

Examples of the moralizing effects of Spiritism

With the letters below we call the attention of those who pretend that, without the fear of the eternal penalties of humanity, would no longer have opportunities and that the denial of the eternal personal hell paves the way for all disorders and immoralities.

“Montreuil, August 23rd 1863

Last March, I still was what one can say “full strength of the word”, embedded in atheism and materialism. I would not spare to criticize the head of the Spiritist group in our small town, a colleague of mine, with mockery and sarcasm; I even referred him to homes of the mentally ill! He opposed my mockery with a stoic patience. Meanwhile during Lent a priest spoke against Spiritism from the pulpit. That excited my curiosity because I could not understand what was it that the Church had to do with Spiritism. I then read the little book – What is Spiritism? – promising myself not to give in as easily as certain convert materialists, then reaching all to all resources and persuaded that nothing could destroy the power of my arguments, having no doubt that I would enjoy total victory. How wrong! I had hardly reached page fifty and had already acknowledged the uselessness of my poor battery of arguments. For a few minutes I felt like illuminated; a subtle revolution took me over and here is what I wrote to my brother on June 18th:

Yes, as you say, my conversion was providential; I owe this sign of great benevolence to God. Yes, I believe in God, in my soul and its immortality after death. Before that my philosophy was a certain firmness of the Spirit with which I was placed above the tribulations and accidents of life but I fell before the many moral tortures imposed on me by pretense friends. The pain of such memories had poisoned my heart. I entertained a thousand and one projects of revenge and if I were not afraid of public humiliation to me and my loved ones I would have perhaps executed the dismal plans. But God saved me. Spiritism promptly led me to believe in the fundamental truths of religion from which I had been kept away by the Church with the horrible images of the eternal flames and for trying to impose on me dogmas that are in clear contradiction with the infinite attributes of God, as if they were articles of faith. I still remember the horror that I lived in 1814 when I was seven years old during the reading of this passage from the Christian Thoughts: ... And when the condemned has suffered for as many as there are atoms in the air, leaves on trees and grains in the sand of the oceans, it will all count as nothing!!! And it was Church that dared say that blasphemy! God forgive! I continue this letter, dear Eugene, leaving to the Church the infernal property to which I have no claim.

The idea that my soul was renewed and the plurality of the worlds and existences are no longer in doubt, giving me now an undefinable moral satisfaction. The prospect of a cold and gloomy void used to freeze

the blood in my veins; today I foresee myself inhabiting one of those more advanced worlds both morally, intellectual and physically when compared to our planet, expecting to achieve the state of pure Spirit.

In order to enjoy the benefits of God and to thoroughly deserve them I forgave my enemies, those who made me endure tough moral trials, all of those that in the end offended me, resigning from any thought of vengeance. Every day I thank God for the great benevolence towards me, quickly allowing me to leave the tortuous path that I was walking with atheism and materialism; I beg God to do the same favor to all of those that doubted and denied as I did.

I also ask God that my wife, my children, relatives, friends and enemies may enjoy the sweetness of Spiritism. I then ask for everybody, every suffering soul that may foresee the infinite goodness of God has not closed the door of regret to them. I also ask God to forgive my faults and the grace of practicing charity in all of its extension. Thus, I now find myself in a state of perfect calmness and tranquility with respect to the future. The idea of death no longer scares me because I have the unbreakable conviction that my soul will outlive the body and I have total faith in the future life. There is, however, only one thought that makes me feel bad and that is of leaving my loved ones on Earth fearing that they might be unhappy. Ah! Such a fear is very natural given the selfishness that impregnates most people in or world. God understands me. He knows that he has my full trust. I had the pleasure of seeing our dear Laura last December, a few days after her death. That is certainly an anticipated effect of his goodness towards me.”

Since the time of that letter, dear Sir, I have been feeling better. In the past, I got irritated by the tiniest opposition. My patience is really remarkable today, succeeding violence and impulse. The victory conquered a short while ago over a very tough trial demonstrates that. It would have certainly been different last March. It is precisely in such circumstances that the Spiritist Doctrine exerts its soothing influence. Those that criticize it say that the Doctrine is full of seductions and I don't believe I can deny such praise since I find it delightful. My return to religion caused surprise here since up until now I was connected to the deepest materialism. A very logical consequence of that is that I am now the center of mockery and sarcasm to which I am insensitive and as you wisely say all of that flows over Spiritism like the water on marble.

My dear Sir, I must terminate this already lengthy letter to spare you from wasting your precious time.

Please accept my gratitude for my moral satisfaction, reassuring hope and the well-being that you have given me. Continue with your sacred mission for which you have been blessed by God!

Roussel (Adolphe)

Certified notary, former auction official

PS – In the interest of Spiritism you may use this letter in part or in full”

OBSERVATION: We have already published several letters of this kind but we would need volumes to publish all that we have received and what is no less impressive is that the majority of them come from mostly unknown individuals, solicited by nobody but the ascendancy of the Doctrine.

Hence, here we have a man reached by the anathema of Mr. Bishop of Alger, a person that would have died an atheism and materialism without the Spiritist Doctrine. This would have been mercilessly unacceptable had he sought the sacraments of the Church.

Who brought him to God? Was it the fear for the eternal penalties? No, because it was exactly the theory of such penalties that sent him away. Who then had the power of calming his impulsiveness turning him into a kind and harmless man; to make him renounce his ideas of vengeance and to forgive his enemies? It was Spiritism where he found an unbreakable faith in the future.

That is the doctrine that you want to eradicate from your dioceses where there are certainly many individuals in the same condition and that in your opinion they are a shameful cancer to the colony. Who do you want to convince that it would have been better to this many to have remained where he was? If it were objected that this is an exception rather than the rule, we would respond with thousands of similar cases and even if it were an exception we would respond by the parabola of the one hundred sheep from which one veered off but the shepherd went after it.

What would you have offered him instead to produce a similar transformation? It is always the perspective of the eternal penalty, the only one in your opinion capable of dominating immorality and disorder. Finally, who led him to study Spiritism? Was it a gang of Spiritists? No because he ran anyways from the Spiritists. It was a sermon given against Spiritism. Why was he then converted to Spiritism and not by the sermon? It seems that apparently the arguments of Spiritism were more convincing than those of the sermon. That is how it has been with every analogue preaching. That is how it is going to be with the episcopal order of Alger that will have, we predict, a very different result as compared to what they expect from it.

To the author of this letter we say: "Brother, this kind of confession of yours before humanity is a great gesture of humility. There is never shame but greatness in acknowledging that one was wrong, confessing one's mistakes. God loves the humble ones because theirs is the kingdom of heavens."

The letter below is not a less touching example of what Spiritism can operate in the consciences and here the result is much more remarkable because it is not about a man of the world, living in an educated environment whose bad inclinations may be contained by the fear of future life or at least by the opinion, but from a man hurt by justice and condemned to the reclusion of life in prison.

"September 20th, 1863

Dear Sir,

I was fortunate to read and study some of your excellent books about Spiritism and the effect was so impactful that I believe it is my duty to let you know and, in order for you understand it well, I need to explain the current circumstances.

I have unfortunately been condemned to six years in prison as a consequence of my former behavior and for that I have no right to complain. That explains the order of my report below.

Just a month ago I considered myself lost forever. Why do I think differently today and why does hope shine in my heart? Wouldn't that be because Spiritism made me understand that the earthly assets are nothing by unveiling to me the sublimity of its maxims; that happiness only exist really to those who practice the virtues taught by Jesus Christ, virtues that take us closer to God, our common father?

Isn't that also because since I have fallen into a state of misery and although shamed by society I can expect to be reborn somehow and thus prepare my soul for a better life by the practices of virtues and the love to God and the neighbor?

I don't know if these are the true causes of the changes that I experienced. All I know is that something happened to me that I cannot define. I have more empathy to the unfortunate ones that like myself are kept under the ferule of society. I have certain authority on about a hundred of them and I am decided to only use that for good. My moral condition seems less painful to me. I consider my sufferings as a fair atonement and that helps me to endure them. Finally, I no longer see society the eyes of hate. I pay society with the tribute that is due.

These are – I am sure – the causes that operated upon my Spirit and that will make me a man of God and that loves the neighbors – I have a kind hope – practicing charity and one's duties.

Who should I thank for this fortunate metamorphosis that turned a bad man into a lover of virtue? First, I must thank God, to whom we must inform everything, and then to your excellent writings. Thus, Sir, allow me to say, the objective of this letter is to let you know about my gratitude. But why is it necessary that my Spiritist education is incomplete? There is no doubt that it is the will of God. His will be done!

I must let you know, Sir, the name of the person to whom I owe what I know now: it is Mr. Benoît that having noticed in me a desire to rebuild my past wanted to have me initiated in the Spiritist Doctrine. I will unfortunately lose him because his new position would not allow him to come to see me. He brings me a lot of happiness, I must confess, because he adds example to his advices. He also owes his betterment to the Doctrine. He once said: Until I was enlightened by the Spiritist Spirit I used to go to the café and there I frequently forgot not only my duties with my family but also with my employer. The time that I used to spend like that today I spend with the reading of Spiritist books, reading that I do out loud so that my family may enjoy. And that, added Mr. Benoit, is worth more because it is the beginning of the true and only happiness.

I beg you to forgive my pretension and particularly the extension of this letter, yours...etc.

D.”

That Mr. Benoît is a simple worker. He was educated in Spiritism by a lady from the town from which the prisoner had sent the letter. He sent this letter to her before his instructor left:

“Madam,

I am certainly pretentious by daring to send you these words but I hope you can forgive me out of your benevolence, particularly given the causes that made me act. To begin with, I want to thank you, ma'am, from the bottom of my heart, from my soul, for the good you did to me, allowing Mr. Benoît to educate me with respect to Spiritism, this sublime doctrine called to regenerate the world, and that knows so well to demonstrate to everyone what is due to God, to one's family, to society and to oneself; that by demonstrating that not everything ends with this life, stimulating and preparing us for another life. I believe I learned well the teachings I received because now I enjoy a feeling that gives me more empathy towards my fellow human beings, always keeping my thoughts in heavens. Is it the beginning of a faith? I hope so.

Unfortunately, Mr. Benoît will leave and with him the hopes that I can learn more. I know that you are a good person and that you have thought of helping in my instruction. I kneel and beg you that you continue the work that was initiated. It will be taken into account by God for you have the hopes of turning an unfortunate person lost in the vices of the world into a virtuous man, a man worth of such a name, well deserving his family and society.

Looking forward to the day in which I will be able to demonstrate that I will always praise you for being my guiding Spirit in this world; I will have you in my prayers and there will come a day when I will also be able to teach my family and thank you, venerate you since you have given them back a son, an honest brother. It is impossible to be different when one does sincerely serve God.

I then finish, ma'am, asking you to be my good Spirit on Earth, guiding me on the good path. Your work will be accounted among the good ones. As for myself I promise you that I will be meek to your teachings.

I end by wishing... etc.”

OBSERVATION: Thus, that Mr. Benoît, a simple worker, was a recent example of the moralizing effect of Spiritism, that already brings back to the good path a lost soul; returns an honest man to his family and to society, instead of a criminal, a good job for which a good lady concurred, a lady that was unknown to both but that was animated by the desire of doing good. And all of that is done in the shadow, without ostentation, with the sole testimony of the conscience.

Spiritists, these are the miracles that must make you proud, that all of you can do and for which you don't need any special skill because all it is needed is the desire of doing good.

If Spiritism has such a power upon the stained souls what shouldn't we expect for the regeneration of humanity when it has been converted into a common belief and each and every one utilizes it in their own sphere of action!

All of you who throw stones at Spiritism and say that it fulfills the homes of the mentally ill provide something instead, something that does better than it does. The quality of the tree is recognized by the fruit. Hence you must judge Spiritism by its fruits and go and produce better fruits. You will be followed then.

Still a few years and you will see many other prodigies, not signs of heavens, to hurt the eyes as the Pharisee demanded, prodigies of people's hearts from which the greater one will be to shut the mouth of the detractors and to open the eyes of the blind for it is necessary that the predictions of Jesus Christ come true and they will all do.

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New success of Spiritism in Carcassone

The rapping Spirit of Carcassone keeps his reputation demonstrated by the success achieved through the unquestionable merit of his excellent fables and poetry where he attends several contests as a candidate. After having already won the first prize, the Golden Eglantine of the Floral Academy of Toulouse, he just received the bronze medal in the Nîmes contest. The Courrier of Aude writes: "*This distinction is even more flattering considering that the contest was not only about fables and poetry but encompassed all kinds of literary works.*"

This new success certainly illustrates how Spiritism will continue in the future. What will the unbelievers say about Mr. Jobert's ability? What they have already said over the success in Toulouse: that Mr. Jobert is a poet that entertains the fantasy of hiding himself under the mantle of a Spirit. Nonetheless, those who know Mr. Jobert know that he is no poet. Besides, if he were a poet, the means of obtaining the work through typology and in presence of witnesses keeps removes any doubt, unless one supposes that he does not hide under the table but in the table.

In any case, events like this call the attention of serious people and speeds up the time when the relationship between the visible and the invisible world will be admitted as one of the laws of nature. Once that law is acknowledged then philosophy and science will enter a new era.

Providence compels the victory of Spiritism because Spiritism is one of the great phases of human progress. It employs several means to make it achieve the spirit of the masses, means that are adequate to the tastes and dispositions of every one, considering that what convinces one person may not convince another. Here the academic successes of a poet Spirit; there the tangible and provoked phenomena or the spontaneous manifestations; elsewhere the purely moral phenomena; then the cures that in different times would have been considered miraculous, challenging common science, artistic productions created by persons strange to the arts. There are the cases of obsession and subjugation that demonstrate the impotence of science in such types of disease will lead the scientists to acknowledge the action of a force beyond matter. Finally, do we have the need to say that the adversaries of Spiritism constitute one of the most powerful means of promoting the Doctrine in the hands of the Providence? It is evident that Spiritism would be much less spread than it is without the repercussion of their attacks. By convincing of their impotence God wanted them to serve his triumph. (See Spiritist Review, June 1963)

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Existence of multiple worlds

By Mr. Gelpke

We owe this interesting passage below to the kindness of one of our correspondents from Bordeaux, extracted from a book entitled *Exposé de la grandeur de la création universelle*⁴¹, by Dr. Gelpke, published in Leipzig in 1817.

“... Hence, if the construction of all of the worlds that shine above us could have been examined by us what would have been our astonishment by admiring their diversity, each one organized in a different way when compared to its closest neighbor in creation! And as I have already said, since their number is incalculable their construction must also be infinitely different. Besides, as the organization of the beings that inhabit those worlds depend on their own organization, both internally as well as externally, they must also essentially differ in each globe. Now if we consider the multitude and the immense variety of creatures on our Earth, where a simple leaf is not like the next, and if we admit such a large variety of creatures in each globe, how prodigious will such immensity look like to us in the immensurable kingdom of God!

We will reach the plenitude of our happiness when, under progressively perfect envelopes, we later successively penetrate the mysteries of creation, finding endless worlds, populating a boundless space! Then, how much will God seem even more adorable to us, he who got all of that out of nowhere; he whose infinite benevolence created all of that for the satisfaction of the living beings and whose wisdom has ordered all of that in such a remarkable way!

But can our current lodging and organization make us happy? For that don't we need another dwelling that will place us ahead in the domain of creation and a much more delicate and perfect envelope that will not hinder our Spirit in its progress towards perfection and through which it will be able to see by itself well beyond we can see from here with the best instruments available?

41 Exposition of the greatness of the universal creation (TN)

But why, after several steps of existences, wouldn't the Creator give us an envelope that like a lightning bolt could move from a world to the next, at the same time allowing us to see everything close by, better embracing the whole through our thoughts? Would we doubt such a thing when we see the shiny butterfly raising out of a caterpillar and the flowery tree blossoming out of a simple seed? If God gradually develops the butterfly like that and show it magnificently transformed to us; if he also develops the germ step by step, how much won't he make us progress, human beings, the kings of Earth, advancing in Creation?"

Plurality of the inhabited words, existences, perispirit, successive and indefinite progress of the soul, it is all there.

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Spiritist Dissertations

The New Tower of Babel

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies

Medium Mrs. Costel

Spiritism is Christianity of modern age. It must reestablish the spiritualist sense of traditions. Before, the Spirit was made of flesh; today flesh becomes Spirit to develop the grand idea that must evolve the world. But the Spiritist gathering will be followed by disturbance and pride of the several systems that, neglecting wise teachings, will erect a new Babel tower, the works of confusion soon to be reduced to nothing because the works of the past are the pawns of the future and the oblivious dissipates with the treasure of experiences cumulated through the centuries.

Spiritism doesform an intellectual tribe. Follow your guides with more humility than that of the Hebrews. We also came to free you from the yoke of the Philistine leading you to the Promised Land. Dawn shall succeed the darkness of the first ages and you will be surprised when you understand the slow reflex of past times upon the present. Legends will revive so energetically as reality and you will find the proof of the remarkable unity, pawn of the alliance between God and his creatures.

St. Louis

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Spiritist Dissertations

The true Spirit of traditions

Setif, Algeria, October 15th, 1863

Open the sacred scriptures and in every page you will find incomprehensible predictions or allegories to anyone who is not aware of the new revelations that for the majority were interpreted by editors according to their own opinion and too often to their interest. However, using the science that you have just begun to acquire, you will easily discover their meaning. The ancient prophets were all inspired by elevated Spirits but that gave them teachings of a kind only to be understood by high intelligences and whose meaning was not in strong opposition with the knowledge and prejudices of the time. It was necessary to be able to have them adequately interpreted to the understanding of the crowds so that they were not rejected by them as they would had they been in formal opposition to the general ideas. Today our mission is to completely clarify to you and, at the same time, make you understand the proximity between the new revelations and those of former times. We have another task to accomplish and that is to fight falsehood, hypocrisy and error, a very difficult and arduous task but whose objective we will reach for that is the will of God. Have faith and courage. God never finds unbreakable obstacles to his will. Under his commandment unpredictable means are used to beat the evil genius now personified by those who should march ahead of progress and propagate the truth instead of creating obstacles to that out of pride and self-interest. Hence, it is necessary to announce everywhere with safety and confidence that the end of slavery, injustice and falsehood is near. I say the end is near because the events, although realized with the wise slowness of the reforms of the Providence avoiding irreversible disgraces of a great rush, will have their course in a time frame shorter than that expected by those who fear the obstacles that they anticipate, not expected either by those interested in the maintenance of the *status quo* out of fear or selfishness. Therefore you must be eager in the propaganda but careful with the listeners in order to not scare away the ignorant and fearful consciences. Have no fear since only the egotist do not need skills. You have God's support. Their resistance is powerless against you. It is necessary to unequivocally show them the terrible future that waits for their own fault and for those who allowed to be converted by their example since everyone is responsible for the harm they do and for the onesthat they cause.

St. Augustine

Allan Kardec

Spiritist Review

Journal of Psychological Studies

December 1863

Utility of the teaching of the Spirits

A distinct publicist to whom we profess the most profound esteem and whose sympathy was conquered by the Spiritist Philosophy was not yet convinced about the utility of the teaching of the Spirits, sent us the following:

“... I believe that humanity already owned the principles that you show, principles that I like and that I defend without the support of the Spiritist communications. This does not mean, , , rest assured, that I deny the help given by the divine lights.

Each one of us receives that help within certain limits according to their good will, self-love and love towards their neighbor and also according to their mission during the passage on Earth.

I don't know if your communications have given you a single idea, a single principle that had not already been exposed by a number of philosophers, from Confucius to Plato, Moses, Jesus Christ, St. Agostine, Luther, Diderot, Voltaire, Condorcet, Saint-Simon, etc. all helped our humble planet progress. I don't believe so and if I am mistaken I would appreciate your help in demonstrating my error. Notice that I do not condemn your Spiritist systems but I consider them useless, etc...”

My dear Sir, I will answer your question with a few words. I don't have your talent or eloquence but I will try to be clear not only for yourself but for our readers to whom my answer may serve as a teaching and that is why I answer through the Spiritist Review.

To begin with I will say that there are two choices : either the communication with the Spirits does exist or it doesn't. If it doesn't, millions of people that daily communicate with them are victims of an illusion and I myself would have had a singular idea by attributing to them something that could not have been theirs. However, it is useless to discuss this point because you do not dispute that fact. If such a communication does exist then it must have a utility because God does nothing useless. Now, such utility not only sticks out of that teaching but also and above all from the consequences of those teachings as we will see below. You say that those communications do not teach anything new beyond what had already been taught by the philosophers since Confucius; hence your conclusion is that they are useless.

The proverb “there is nothing new under the sun” is perfectly right and Edouard Fourier clearly demonstrated that in his interesting book *Vieux neuf*.⁴²

What he said about the works created by the human genius is also true, philosophically speaking, by the very simple reason that the truths are from all times and they must have been revealed in all times to geniuses.

But because an idea has been formulated by someone does it mean that it is useless to have it formulated by someone else later? Haven't Confucius and Plato enunciated moral principles identical to those of Jesus? Must one then conclude that the doctrine of Jesus was superfluous? If that were the case then very few pieces of work would have real utility since, for the majority of them, one can say that the idea had been thought of before and that it would be enough to go back to the first one.

You, yourself, my dear Sir, that dedicate your talent to the triumph of ideas of progress and freedom, what do you say that has not been said by another hundred others before you? Does it mean that you should go quiet? You don't think so.

Confucius, for example, proclaims a truth. After him, one, two, three, or hundred others that came after him develop this idea, complement and present it in a different form, and the truth that was hidden in the archives of history and as a privilege of some erudite becomes popular, reaches the masses and becomes a popular belief. What would have happened to the ideas of former philosophers if their ideas had not been retaken second hand by modern writers? How many would know them today? That is how each pushes their own weight.

Let us then suppose that the Spirits had not taught anything new; that they had not revealed any new truths; in short, that they had only repeated all of those ideas professed by the apostles of progress. Then, those principles taught by the voices of the invisible world, in all corners of the planet, in the privacy of the homes, from the palace to the hut, would have not meant anything. Therefore, are the daily and hourly contributions that we see everywhere nothing?

Don't you think that the masses are more enlightened and impressed by the maxims that come from their relatives and friends instead of those from Socrates and Plato that they never read or that they just know by name?

How can you, my dear Sir, that fights all kinds of abuse neglect similar help, a help that knocks on all doors, challenging all kinds of sorcery and inquisition measures?

Jcm11

This helper alone – you shall one day have the proof – will triumph over all resistances because it fights the abuse in its foundation, supported by the fading faith that it helps to consolidate.

You preach fraternity in eloquent terms and that is great and I admire you for that. But what is fraternity with selfishness? Egotism will always be the stepping stone for the accomplishment of the most generous ideas. There is no lack of old and recent examples to support such proposition. It is then necessary to fight the evil on its foundation, thus combating egotism and pride that have already done so and will abort the

42 New old (TN)

best conceived projects. But how can we destroy selfishness under the empire of the materialistic ideas that concentrate the action of man in present life? To someone that expects nothing from this life denial [jcm-need to check definition to ensure follows line of thinking] has no meaning and any sacrifice is silly because it diminishes the short pleasures of this world. Who better than Spiritism gives that unshakable faith in the future? How has Spiritism succeeded against disbelief in such a large number of persons and to dominate so many bad passions but through the material proofs that it provides? And how can Spiritism provide such proofs without the relationships established with those who no longer live on Earth?

So, isn't that useful to teach people about where they come from, where they are going to and the future that is reserved to them? The solidarity that Spiritism teaches is no longer a simple theory but an unavoidable consequence of the existing relationships between the living ones and the dead, relationships that make fraternity among the living ones not only a moral duty but a necessity because it is related to the interest of their future life.

Weren't the ideas of a cast systems and the aristocratic prejudices resulting from pride and selfishness, an obstacle to the emancipation of the masses in all times? Is it enough to say that all men are equal to the privileged ones? Were the Gospels sufficient to persuade the Christian owners of slaves that they were their brothers? Now, who is capable of destroying such prejudices? Who can place all minds on a level plane better than the certainty that among creatures that are in the lowest level of the social hierarchy there are some that have occupied the top of that scale; that among our servants and among those to whom we give the alms there could be relatives, friends, people who had authority over us and finally that those who are on top today may go down to the last step? Is that a sterile teaching to humanity? Is such an idea new? No. More than one philosopher issued that and presented that great justice of God. However, is it useless to give them a positive and evident proof of all that?

Several centuries before Copernicus, Galileo and Newton the thesis of the roundness and the movement of Earth had been established. Those wise geniuses came to demonstrate what the others had only suspected. Therefore there are Spirits that come to demonstrate the great truths that remained like dead words to most people, giving them the basis of a natural law.

Ah! Dear Sir! If you only knew, as I do, how many people that would have been obstacles to the realization of humanitarian ideas changed the way they see things and today, thanks to Spiritism, became its champions, and you would not say that the teaching of the Spirits is useless. You would praise it as the life line of society and would strongly support its propagation.

Was it the teaching of the philosophers that they lacked? No because almost all of them were enlightened people but to them philosophers were dreamers, idealists, conservatives. In fact, they were revolutionaries! It was necessary to touch their hearts and it was the voice of beyond the grave that were heard in their own homes.

Allow me, dear Sir, to stop here today. The abundance of material forces me to analyze the issue from a different point of view in the next issue.

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Spiritism in Algeria

Regarding our article last month about the pastoral by Mr. Bishop of Alger several persons asked us if we had sent it to him. We are not aware if someone did it. As for ourselves we did not and here is the reason:

We don't have the slightest interest in converting Mr. Bishop of Alger to our opinion. He could have seen in such a letter a kind of bravado from our side something that is not in our character. Still once more, Spiritism must be freely accepted instead of violating consciences; it must attract people by the force of reason, accessible to everyone, and by the good fruits that it produces; it must realize these words from Jesus Christ: "In the past heavens were taken by violence; today it is by kindness."

Mr. Bishop of Alger either stops himself from speaking about an area he knows little to nothing about or he does not. In the first case, he must learn about the issue and do not stop reading the abundant articles about the subject if he does not wish to expose himself to regrettable mistakes. In the second case, it would be useless to try to open the eyes to someone who wishes to keep them shut.

It is a serious mistake to believe that the fate of Spiritism depends on the adhesion of this or that person. It is based on more solid foundations: the acceptance of the masses in which the opinion of the little ones weighs as much as that of the big ones.

It is not a single stone that accounts for the sturdiness of the edifice since a stone can be removed but not all stones that make the foundation. In a matter of such a broad interest the importance of individualities fades away. Each person brings their contribution in action but if some are missing the whole does not suffer for that.

Mr. Bishop of Alger did what he thought was within his own right. We say more: he did well because he acted according to his conscience. If the result is not what he expected it is for the fact that he chose the wrong path. That is all. It is not up to us to change his ideas and that is why we were not supposed to send him our article refuting his assertions. We did not write that for him but to the instruction of the Spiritists of all countries to reassure them with respect to the consequences of a maneuver that is likely to have followers. Hence, never mind the occurrence. The essential was to demonstrate that neither this one nor others will reach their objective: the destruction of Spiritism. As a general thesis in all of our refutations we never aim at the individuals because personal matters die with them. Spiritism sees things from above. It handles issues of principles that outlive the individuals.

In a given time all of the current detractors of Spiritism will be dead. If they were unable to hold their own in life they will even less likely to do so when dead. Much to the contrary more than one, as a Spirit, will acknowledge their mistake and support what they fought against when alive, as did the Bishop of Barcelona that we refer to prayers of every Spiritist according to his own wishes.

Behold more than one adversary is morally dead before their departure! How many articles that were supposed to vanish with the doctrine have survived? One or two years and they were forgotten and those that made more noise just lit a little spark into an already extinct fire. A few more years and they will no longer be remembered and will be sought as rarity.

Will the same happen to the Spiritist ideas? The facts respond to this question. Can one presume that those authors will be followed by more difficult adversaries that will be right against Spiritism? It is unlikely because the current adversaries do not lack either talent or good will or elevated social position. They are plenty of fire and eagerness but what they lack is arguments that may overcome those of the Spiritists and certainly it is not because they do not seek those arguments. With the continually increasing number of Spiritists the number of adversaries will diminish in proportion and these will be forced to accept what is a fact.

As a matter of fact, we have already said that the clergy is not unanimously against Spiritism. We personally know several ecclesiastics much sympathetic to this idea whose consequences they totally accept. Here is a very characteristic proof. The following fact whose authenticity we can guarantee happened very recently.

Two gentlemen were traveling by train. One was a scientist of materialistic and atheist ideas of the highest order and his friend, on the contrary, was very spiritualist. They were having a lively discussion, each one holding their positions. A young priest got on the train at a near station initially hearing the discussion and later on joining in. Addressing the unbeliever he said:

- *It looks like, Sir, that you do not believe in anything, even in God!*
- *It is true, I confess Mr. Priest, and nobody has demonstrated that I am wrong.*
- *Then I advise you, Sir, to go to the Spiritists and you will believe.*
- *How come, Mr. Priest, how can you say that?*
- *Yes Sir, I say so because that is my conviction. I know, from experience, that when religion is impotent to defeat disbelief, Spiritism succeeds.*
- *But what would your Bishop think about what you have just told me?*
- *He would think what he wished and I would sustain it to him as well for it is not my habit to hide what I think.*

It was the scientist himself that told this story to a friend of ours from whom we learned the case. Here is another not less significant one.

One of our keen followers was visiting one of his uncles, a priest in a village, and found him reading The Spirits' Book. We transcribe below the report that we were given about the conversation.

- *What uncle? You reading this book and not afraid of going mad? It is certainly to refute it in your sermons.*
- *On the contrary, this doctrine gives me peace with respect to the future because today I understand many mysteries that I did not before, even in the Gospels. And you, do you know it?*
- *Sure, I do know! I am Spiritist by soul and heart and besides a little bit medium as well. Why haven't you told me*

- *Then, my dear nephew, shake my hand! We never agreed with one another about religion; that will be different now. Why haven't you told me that?*
- *I was afraid of shocking you.*
- *You shocked me much more before for your disbelief.*
- *You were the cause of my disbelief.*
- *How come?*
- *Weren't you the one that educated me? And what have you taught me in terms of religion? You always tried to explain to me what you yourself did not understand. Besides, when I asked and you did not have the answer you used to say: "Shut up. You need to believe instead of understanding. You will always be an atheist." I could perhaps object now. I educate my son now and can assure you that he believes more than I did at his age in your hands and I don't believe he will ever lose his faith because he understands everything as much as I do. If you saw the eagerness of his prayers, how kind and hardworking he is, always aware of his duties, you would be impressed. But tell me dear uncle, do you preach Spiritism to your parishioners?*
- *I wish but you understand that that it is not possible.*
- *Do you tell them about the flames of hell as you used to do in my time? I can tell you that now with no offense but really that used to make us laugh. I assure you that there were only three or four ladies that believed you. The young ladies, that are normally very afraid, would go and play the game of the devil after the sermons. If such a fear has so little appeal onto country people who are naturally superstitious, imagine how it is with enlightened people. Ah my dear uncle! It is time to change the batteries because the time of the devil is over.*
- *I know, and it is even worse that the majority no longer believes more in God than in the devil and for that reason they go more to the cabaret than to the Church. I assure you that I feel frequently embarrassed when I need to conciliate my duty with my conscience. I seek a middle ground; I speak more of moral, the duties with family and society with the support of the Gospels and there I am better heard and understood.*
- *What do you think would happen if you preached religion from the point of view of Spiritism?*
- *You made your confession and I will make mine with an open heart. I am sure that in less than ten years there would not be a single unbeliever in the parish and that everyone would be decent. It is faith that they lack. They have no faith and like the brute their skepticism is not countered by human respect given by education. I speak of moral but moral without faith has no foundation and Spiritism would give them such a faith because those persons have a lot of common sense despite their lack of education. They reason more than we think but with a lot of mistrust what brings the need to understand before they believe. For that there is nothing better than Spiritism.*
- *The consequence of what you say my uncle is that if the result is possible in a parish it is also possible in others. Hence if every priest in France preached with the support of Spiritism society would be transformed in a few years.*
- *That is what I think.*
- *Do you think that this is going to happen one day?*
- *I hope so.*
- *And I am certain that before the end of this century such a change will take place. Tell me, uncle, are you a medium?*
- *Quiet (whispering). Yes!*
- *And what is it that the Spirits tell you?*
- *They tell me that... (Here the priest spoke at such a low voice that the nephew did not hear).*

We said that the sermon given by Mr. Bishop of Alger had not blocked the progress of Spiritism in that region. The summary of the letters below, among many others, gives us an idea of that:

“Dear venerable master, confirming my previous letter on the occasion of the memo by Mr. Bishop of Alger, I today want to renew the certainty in the unbreakable dedication of every Spiritist in our group to the sacred and sublime Spiritist Doctrine and that we will never be persuaded that it is the works of the devil since it has yanked us from the doubt the cult of matter, makes us better to one another even to our enemies for whom we pray every day. Like in the past, we continue to gather and receive instructions from superior and protector Spirits that assure us that everything that happens is for the better and according to the wise designs of Providence. All of them tell us that the time is near in which great changes take place in people’s beliefs and that Spiritism will operate as a link among them, leading humanity to fraternity...”

Another letter says:

“Mr. Bishop of Alger’s memo provided our priest with content for a deadly sermon against Spiritism, particularly given his eloquence. I am wrong because he created a strong impression onto mockers that saw Spiritism taken so seriously by an ecclesiastic authority telling themselves that there should be something serious there. It prompted them to study it and now they no longer laugh and count among us. As a matter of fact the number of Spiritists continues to grow and several new groups are about to be formed.”

All of our correspondence is in the same direction and does not show a single defection but only persons whose positions depended on the ecclesiastic authority hence avoiding exposure, but that nonetheless deal with Spiritism in their private time or in the silence of their bedrooms. They can make impositions to the outside but cannot control the conscience. The communication below demonstrates that the impulse has not diminished both among people and among the Spirits.

“Setif, September 17th, 1863

My dear friends, I come to you full of happiness by seeing Spiritism making fast progress and by acquiring new strength everyday amidst the obstacles that are placed on its way. Those forces are not only related to the quantity but to the union, fraternity and charity. Hence, you must have confidence, hope and courage when marching on this avenue of Spiritist progress from which no human force can veer you off. Nevertheless you must be prepared for the fight. Out there the enemies prepare heavy shackles with which they intend to chain and dominate you. What can they do against God’s will that protects you? The foundations of his law shall rise regardless of the obstacles. The servants of the Almighty are full of ardor and zeal. They shall not abate; they shall resist every attack; they shall always walk the path, despite everything; the obstacles and the chains will break as if made of glass. I tell you this, you must worship and pray and reach out to the unfortunate brothers and open the eyes of those who have them closed. May you embrace everyone, without exception, with your arms and hearts!

Spiritists, your mission is beautiful. What is it that can be more reassuring than this pact between the living and the dead? How great a service we can mutually do for one another! You can do a lot by your prayers to God, from the bottom of your hearts, to alleviate the suffering souls, and how soothing is that to the heart of the one that sends those prayers! How touching are the blessings that you have deserved! Still once more, pray and raise your soul to heavens and rest assured that each and every one of your prayers will be heard and will mitigate one pain.

Understand that the more people you guide to imitate you the more powerful the aggregated prayers will be. Take your fellow human being by the hand and lead them to the true route where your seeds will grow.

Preach the good doctrine, the doctrine of Jesus, the one taught by the divine Master in his own communications, repeating and confirming the doctrine of the Gospels. Those who live will see remarkable things, I assure you.

Is it necessary to respond to that memo through the press?

My God! Allow me to tell you what I think. They established a route. They had it swept so that the people can walk there with comfort and in larger numbers. Hence the multitude comes here, packing the place. You must understand my somewhat enigmatic language. Your duty is to demonstrate that they have opened the door instead of closing it.

St. Joseph"

OBSERVATION: This communication was obtained by a worker, an absolutely illiterate medium that could hardly sign his name. Since he became a medium he wrote some but with difficulty. One cannot suspect that the communication above was the work of his imagination.

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Elijah and John the Baptist

Refutation

The passage below is in a letter sent to us:

“I have just had a discussion with the priest here about the Spiritist Doctrine. Talking about reincarnation he asked me to explain which body the Spirit of Elijah would take in the day of the final judgment announced by the Church, before Jesus Christ: will it be the first or the second? I did not know how to respond. He smiled and said that we, the Spiritists, are not strong.”

We don't know which one of you provoked the discussion. At any rate it is not prudent to engage in a controversy when we don't have the strength to sustain it. If the initiative was from the part of our correspondent we remind you of what we have endlessly repeated that *“Spiritism addresses those that do not believe or that are in doubt and not the ones that have their faith and to whom it is enough; that it does not ask anyone to resign to their beliefs to adopt ours”* and for that matter it is consistent with the principles of tolerance and freedom of conscience that it professes.

For that reason we could not approve attempts made by certain persons to convert the clergy of any belief to our ideas. We then repeat to every Spiritist: Receive with dedication all of those that have good will; illuminate those who seek light for you shall not be successful with those who believe to have it; do not force anyone's faith, both clergy or lay persons, for it is like seeding in an infertile land; have the light out so that the ones who wish to see may see; show the fruits of the tree and feed the hungry ones and not the ones that are plentiful.

If the members of the clergy come to you with sincere intentions and without hidden thoughts do as you do to the other brothers: instruct the ones who wish that but do not try by force to bring the others who have their consciences compromised, trying to make them think like you; leave them with their faith as you wish that you left with yours; finally show them that you know how to practice the charity taught by Jesus.

If they were the first to attack then one has the right to respond and refute. If they opened the field that it is okay to follow without, however, losing moderation like Jesus exemplified to the disciples. If our adversaries do that by themselves then we must allow them such a sad privilege that is never a demonstration of true force.

If we have ourselves entered the avenue of controversy some time ago and if we picked the glove thrown by a few members of the clergy, justice should be made in the acknowledgement that we have never fed an aggressive controversy. Had they not been the first to attack their names would have never been pronounced by us. We have always neglected the injuries and personalism that we addressed to us but it was our duty to defend our attacked brothers and our doctrine when indignantly disfigured for they have even said from the pulpit that it preached adultery and suicide. We have already said and repeat here that such a provocation is awkward because it forcibly leads to the examination of certain questions that it would have been better to have left alone since once the field is open nobody can foresee where it is going to end. But fear is a bad adviser.

Having said that let us try to respond to the question posed by the priest above. If his counterpart were not as strong as he is in theology, he himself does not look so strong to us with respect to the Gospels. His question sends us back to the one proposed to Jesus by the Sadducee. All he had to do was to refer to the answer given by Jesus that we take the liberty of reminding him since he does not know.

That same day the Sadducees, who say there is no resurrection, came to him with a question. "Teacher," they said, "Moses told us that if a man dies without having children, his brother must marry the widow and raise up offspring for him. Now there were seven brothers among us. The first one married and died, and since he had no children, he left his wife to his brother. The same thing happened to the second and third brother, right on down to the seventh. Finally, the woman died. Now then, at the resurrection, whose wife will she be of the seven, since all of them were married to her?"

Jesus replied, "You are thinking about this in the wrong way because you do not know the Scriptures or the power of God. At the resurrection people will neither marry nor be given in marriage; they will be like the angels in heaven. But about the resurrection of the dead—have you not read what God said to you, 'I am the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'?⁴³ He is not the God of the dead but of the living." Mathew XXII 23:32.

Since after resurrection men will be like angels in heavens and since angels have no material body but an ethereal and fluidic body, then men will not resurrect in flesh and blood. If John the Baptist was Elijah he is not but one soul that had two envelopes left in different times on Earth and he will not present himself either like one or the other but with the ethereal envelope that is adequate to the invisible world.

If the words of Jesus do not seem clear enough to you refer then to those of Paul that we mention below. They are even more explicit. Do you doubt that John the Baptiste had been Elijah? Read Mathew XI: 13-15 as: *"For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. He who has ears to hear, let him hear."*

There is no mistake here. The terms are clear and categorical and to misunderstand it is necessary to have no ears or to keep them shut. Since those words constitute a positive affirmation, it must be one out of two: Jesus told the truth or he was mistaken. In the first hypothesis reincarnation is attested by him; in the second case he casts doubt upon all of his teachings since he was mistaken in one point he could be in all of them. You must pick one.

43 Exodus 3:6 (TN)

Now, Mr. Priest, allow me, in turn, to ask you a question that will certainly be easy for you to respond. You know that the book of Genesis establishes six days for creation, not only of Earth but for the whole universe: the sun, the moon, etc. That did not account for the discoveries of Geology and Astronomy and Joshua did not take universal gravitation into account. It seems to me that the dogma of the resurrection of flesh did not take into account Chemistry.

True, Chemistry is a diabolical science, as all others, that turn clear what some wanted to keep fuzzy but irrespective of its origin it teaches us a positive thing and that is that our body, like every organic substance animal and vegetal, is composed of multiple elements from which these are the main ones: oxygen, azote (nitrogen) and carbon. Besides, it teaches us – and notice that it is from experimentation – that those elements disperse with death and enter the composition of other bodies so much so that after certain time the whole body is absorbed.

It is also attested that the terrain, where there is abundance of decomposing organic material, are the most fertile and is the vicinity of cemeteries that the bad believers attribute the proverbial fecundity of the gardens of village priests.

Let us then suppose, Mr. Priest, that potatoes are planted in the proximity of a grave. Those potatoes will feed out of the gases and salts resulting from the decomposition of a dead body; the potatoes will feed chickens; you will eat the chickens, enjoying it so much that your own body will contain molecules of the dead individual and that will still be his although traveled through intermediaries. You will then have parts that belong to others. Now, when you both pass on the day of the final judgment each one with their body, how is it going to be? Will you keep what is his and he shall claim what belongs to him or will you still have something from the potato and the chicken.

It is a question at least as serious as the one about the resurrection of John the Baptist with the body of John or that of Elijah. I do that with great simplicity but imagine the embarrassment if, as it does happen, you have in your portions of hundreds of individuals. That is the meaning of resurrection of the flesh. Another different one is the resurrection of the Spirit that does not carry its remains. See below what St. Paul says.

Considering that we are still in the terrain of questions here you is another one, Mr. Priest, that we hear from unbelievers. It is certainly strange to the subject that we are discussing but it is brought up by one of the events that we mentioned above. Still according to the book of Genesis, God created the world in six days and rested in the seventh. That rest is what makes the Sunday in the canonical law. If, then, as demonstrated by Geology, instead of those six days, it represent millions of years, instead of twenty four hours, how long will the resting day last? In terms of importance this question has as much value as the other two.

You must not believe, Mr. Priest, that these observations are the result of neglect to the sacred scriptures. No, on the contrary, we perhaps pay more tribute to them than you. By considering the allegorical form, we seek the spirit of the text that vivifies; we then find great truths in them and through that we lead the unbelievers to believe and respect them whereas by adhering to the letter that kills you make them say absurd things and the number of skeptical increase.

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St. Paul, precursor of Spiritism

The communication below was obtained in the session at the Parisian Society on October 9th, 1863:

“How many days have passed, my children, since I was fortunate enough to be with you! Thus, it is a great joy to be here at my dear Parisian Society.

What is the subject matter today? The majority of the moral questions were already handled by skillful pens. Yet they are so very close to me and their scope is so broad that I will still find some seeds of truth to sow. Besides, even if I just repeat what has already been said by others, it may perhaps bring about new teachings considering that good words, like the good seeds, always produce good fruits.

For us the sacred books are inextinguishable flames and the great apostle Paul that has formerly contributed so much to the establishment of Christianity from his powerful speeches and that left monumental writings that will serve, not less powerfully, to the expansion of Spiritism.

I do not ignore the fact that your religious adversaries invoke his testimony against you but that does not preclude the illustrious illuminated individuals from Damascus to support you and to be with you. You can rest assured.

The breath that airs from his works; the sacred inspiration that animates his teachings, far from being hostile to the doctrine it is, on the contrary, full of predictions regarding what is happening today. That is how in his first words to the Corinthians there isn't a single person, even if a saint, a prophet and that could transport mountains that can be proud of being a true disciple of our Lord Jesus Christ. Like the Spiritists and before them he was the first to proclaim the maxim that is your glory: there is no salvation but through charity!

But that is not the only side that connects him to the doctrine that we taught you and that you now propagate. Highly intelligent, he had foreseen what God had spared to the future and notably this transformation, this regeneration of the Christian faith that you are called upon to lay profoundly onto the modern Spirit, describing in the aforementioned epistle and unquestionably the main mediumistic faculties that he names the blessed gifts of the Saint Spirit.

Ah my dear! That saint contemplates, with an undisguisable sadness, the degree of shame in which those who speak in his name fall and proclaim 'urbi et orbi'⁴⁴ that in the past God gave to Earth all the truths that the planet could take.

This apostle had said, however, that in his time there were not more than one science and imperfect prophecies. Well, the one that was sorry for such a situation knew that for that very reason they both would perfect in the future. Isn't that the absolute condemnation of all of those that condemn progress? Isn't that the hardest strike against those that pretend that Jesus and the apostles, the fathers of Church and above all the reverends in the company of Jesus would have given Earth all the philosophical and religious science that it deserved? Fortunately, the apostle himself took care of belying it in anticipation.

My dears, in order to assess the ones that fight you in their fair value all you must do is to study the arguments of the controversy, their heated words and the sorrow that pain inflicted like those of Rev. Father Pailloux; may the flames be extinguished and that the Saint Inquisition no longer work 'ad maiorem Dei gloriam.'⁴⁵

My brothers, you have charity, they have intolerance and for that we can only feel sorry. That is why I invite you to pray for those poor ones that are lost so that the Saint Spirit that they invoke so much may finally illuminate their consciences and their hearts.

François-Nicolas Madeilene

We add the following words of St. Paul to this remarkable communication, taken from the first letter to the Corinthians:

But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? With what body do they come?" You fool! What you sow is not made alive unless it dies. When you sow, you do not sow the body that shall be, but a bare kernel, perhaps of wheat or of some other grain. Then God gives it a body as He pleases, and to each seed its own body. All flesh is not the same flesh. There is one kind of flesh of men, another flesh of beasts, another of fish, and another of birds. There are also celestial bodies and terrestrial bodies. The glory of the celestial is one, and the glory of the terrestrial is another. There is one glory of the sun, and another glory of the moon, and another glory of the stars. One star differs from another star in glory. So too is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption; it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body.

- Now this I say, brothers, that flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God, nor does corruption inherit incorruption.

St. Paul, 1 Corinthians 15:35-44 and 50.

Now what else can that spiritual body be since it is not the animal body; it is the fluidic body whose existence is demonstrated by Spiritism, the perispirit that covers the soul after death! The Spirit experiences some confusion with death and for some time the Spirit loses consciousness of oneself and later recovers the awareness and is reborn for the intelligent life. In one word *the Spirit resuscitates with the spiritual body*.

44 Latin expression meaning: to the city and to the world (TN)

45 the Latin motto of the Company of Jesus (Jesuits), a religious order of the Catholic Church, meaning "For the greater glory of God" (TN)

The last paragraph about doomsday positively contradicts the doctrine of the resurrection of the flesh because it says: “*flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God*”. Thus, the dead will not resurrect with in flesh and blood and won’t need to gather their scattered bones but will have their celestial body that is not the animal body.

If the author of *Catéchisme philosophique*⁴⁶ had given more thoughts to these words he would have avoided making the remarkable mathematical calculation that every person that died since Adam’s days would fit perfectly well in Josapha’s Valley after their resurrection.

Therefore St. Paul established in principle and in theory what Spiritism now teaches about the state of mankind after death. But St. Paul was not the only one to present the truths taught by Spiritism. The Bible, the Gospels, the apostles and the Fathers of the Church are full of them so much so that denying Spiritism is the same as denying their own authority and upon which religion is founded. Attributing all of the teachings to the devil is the same as saying anathema to the majority of the holy authors.

Thus, Spiritism does not come to destroy but on the contrary to reestablish all things, that is to assign the true meaning to all things.

46 Philosophical Catechism by Father Feller, Vol. III, page 83 (TN)

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A case of possession

Ms. Julia

We said that there is no spirit possession in the absolute sense when a spirit communicates through a body but that the spirit can only be subjugated [jcm – please check this as I tried to clarify this sentence so that audience can understand what is next in the paragraph]. We changed our opinion about this absolute statement because now we have been shown that there can be true possession, that is, replacement although partial of an incarnate Spirit by another errant⁴⁷ Spirit.

Here we have a fact that demonstrates that and that presents the phenomenon in its whole simplicity.

One day there were several people in the house of a lady that happen to be a somnambulist medium. She suddenly starts behaving in an masculine way. Her voice changes and addressing one of the persons present she says: *“Ah my dear friend, I am so happy to see you!”* Caught by surprise they asked her about the meaning of all that. The lady continues: *“How come my dear friend you don’t recognize me? Ah that is true. I am covered in mud! I am Charles Z...”* When the name was heard they remembered a gentleman that had died months ago from a stroke on the side of the road. He had fallen in a ditch from where he had been taken out all covered in mud.

He says that he wanted to talk to his old friend and took the opportunity when the Spirit of Mrs. A..., the somnambulist, was away from the body and he then took her place. The scene in fact repeated for several days after that and every time Mrs. A... impersonated the characteristic masculine attitudes of Mr. Charles, stretching against the back of the chair, crossing his legs, twisting the mustache, passing the hands of the hair in such a way that if it weren’t by the clothes one could believe to be in the presence of Mr. Charles. However, there was no transfiguration as seen on other occasions. These are some of his responses.

- Since you took over the body of Mrs. A... could you stay if you so wished?
- No, but I wish I could.
- Why couldn’t you?
- Because her Spirit is always connected to her body. But if I could break that link I would trick her.
- What is the Spirit of Mrs. A... doing now?
- She is by my side. She sees me and laughs a lot when sees me in her clothes.

⁴⁷ Spirit living in the spiritual world, between incarnations (TN)

Those conversations were very entertaining. Mr. Charles had been a Bohemian and he acts as such. Given to material things, he was little advanced as a Spirit but naturally good and benevolent. He had no bad intention by taking over the body of Mrs. A... so that the lady suffered nothing with the situation so much so that she allowed that in good will. It should be mentioned that she had never met that gentleman and could not know about his habits. It is important also to mention that the assistants did not think of him hence the scene was not provoked and he came to them spontaneously.

This possession is evident here and is even more evident from the details where the list is long. That is, however, an innocent possession and without inconveniences. That is not the case when involving a bad and ill-intentioned Spirit because it may have consequences that are the more serious the more tenacious the Spirits are and many times it becomes difficult to free the patient from that fall their victims.

Here is a recent example that we observed in person and that was object of serious study at the Parisian Society of Paris:

Ms. Julia was a maid, born in Sabia, at the age of twenty-three, very kind and uneducated that for some time was the subject to fits of natural somnambulism that lasted whole weeks. In that state she continued her normal work and nobody would suspect her situation. She even worked better. Her lucidity was remarkable. She described distant places and events with perfect accuracy.

For about six months she has become the prey of crises of a strange kind that always happened in the somnambulistic state and that it had somehow become her normal state. She contorted, rolled on the floor as if taking part in a fight with someone that was trying to strangle her and in fact she presented all the symptoms of strangulation. That fantastic creature ended up by winning, took her by the hair, hit her on the face, and swore at her and called her names, like Fredegunda, infamous regent, dirty and vile creature stained by all sorts of crimes, etc. She crushed the feet on the ground and took her clothes off. Strange thing, she called herself Fredegunda and hit her on her own arms, breast and face. "Here, take it. Is it enough Fredegunda? You want to suffocate me but you will not succeed; you want to come to my box but I will expel you."

My box was the term that she used to represent her own body. Nobody could describe the horrible expression on her face when she mentioned the name Fredegunda, grinding her teeth, and the tortures that she suffered in those moments.

One day, to get rid of her enemy, she took a knife and used it against herself but she was helped in time to avoid this situation. Another strange thing is that she never took any of the assistants by the name Fredegunda. The duality was always on her. Her fury was always against herself when the Spirit was in her and against an invisible Spirit when he was away from her. To everyone else she was kind and benevolent even at times of great exasperation. These truly frightening crises sometimes lasted for hours and repeated several times per day. When she succeeded in beating Fredegunda, she would fall in prostration and abated and she would only gradually recover but left in a state of weakness with difficulty to speak. Her health was profoundly compromised; she denied herself food and would go up to eight days without eating. The best food would have a terrible taste to her and consequently be refused. She used to say that it was the work of Fredegunda who did not want her to eat.

We said above that the girl had no education. In her vigil state she had never heard about Fredegunda or her character or her role. In the somnambulistic state, on the contrary, she knew everything perfectly well and said that she lived on her time. She had not been a Brunehaut as initially thought but someone else related to that court. Another not less essential observation is that up to the beginning of the crises Ms. Julia had never been involved with Spiritism whose name was unknown to her. Even today in her vigil state she

ignores and rejects it. It is only in the somnambulistic state that she knows about it and after she started being treated. Thus, everything she said was spontaneous.

Given such a strange situation some attributed her state to a nervous breakdown; others think it is a special case of madness and one must forcibly acknowledge that, at first sight, the last opinion seemed plausible.

A medical doctor said that in the current state of science there was nothing that could explain those phenomena and that there wasn't any medication to cure her. Nonetheless, persons experience in Spiritism easily acknowledged that she was the victim of subjugation at the most serious level and that it could be deadly to her.

There is no doubt that someone who had only seen her in a crisis and had only considered the singularity of her words and actions would certainly say that she is mad and would recommend the treatment given to the mentally ill that, undoubtedly, would make her actually mad. But such an opinion should yield to the facts. When awake her conversation is that proper to her condition and compatible with her lack of education. Her intelligence is really common. However, in the somnambulistic state everything is completely different. When she is calm she reasons with sense, fairness and profundity. It is strange that madness can give someone more discernment and intelligence.

Only Spiritism can explain this apparent abnormality. In her vigil state her soul or Spirit is compressed by organs that do not allow her but limited development. In her somnambulistic state the soul emancipates, partially freed from the material chains, enjoying the amplex of her faculties. At the moments of crises her words and actions are only eccentric to those that don't believe in the action of the invisible world. Since it is just the effect and not the cause that is the reason why the obsessed, subjugated and possessed are taken by mad people. In the homes of the mentally ill at all times there have always been pseudo mad people of that kind that would have been easily cured had they not adamantly been seen as physically ill.

Given that situation and considering that Ms. Julia had no resources of her own, a family of true and sincere Spiritists agreed in taking her to work for them but in her situation, she would be more of an embarrassment than a service and one would need true devotion to take care of her. But those persons were well rewarded first for the pleasure of doing a good deed and then by the satisfaction of having powerfully contributed to her cure that is complete today. It was a double cure because Ms. Julia not only recovered but her enemy was converted to the best feelings.

Here is what we witnessed in one of those terrible fights that lasted no more than two hours when we were then able to observe the phenomenon in its tiniest details and, in which, we acknowledged a thorough analogy with the possessions of Morzine.⁴⁸ The only difference is that in Morzine the possessed acted against people that reproached them and that they spoke of the devil that they had in them because they had been persuaded that it was the devil. In Morzine, Ms. Julia would have called Fredegunda by the name of devil.

In a next article we will expose the details of the several phases of this cure and the means that were employed for that. In addition, we will refer to the amazing instructions given by the Spirits about it as well as the important observations that it entailed with respect to magnetism.

⁴⁸ See the articles entitled "Studies about the possessions of Morzine" in the Spiritist Magazine, December 1862 and January, February, April and May 1863

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Period of struggle

The first period of Spiritism, characterized by the turning or dancing tables, was that of *curiosity*. The second was the *philosophical*, marked by the appearance of *The Spirits' Book*. Since that time Spiritism took a completely different character. Its objective and expansion were foreseen, faith and consolation were found and the speed of its progress was such that no doctrine philosophical or religious can offer such example. However, like with every new idea, it found the more ferocious adversaries the greater the idea was because any new great idea will hurt interests. It is necessary that this idea take its place and those affected by that cannot see it with good eyes. Besides the interested parties, there are those that systematically or without any precise reason are born against everything that is new.

Many doubted its vitality in the first years and for that reason they did not give Spiritism much attention. But when they saw it growing, despite everything; when they saw it reaching every layer of the social fabric and in all corners of the world; when they saw it taking its place among beliefs and becoming powerful for the number of followers, those interested in the maintenance of old ideas were then seriously alarmed. Then I real crusade was thrown against it giving rise to the period of struggle in which the *Act of Faith of Barcelona* on October 9th, 1860 was somehow a sign. Up until then it was the object of sarcasm and disbelief that laughs at everything and in particular to something that is unknown, even the most sacred things and there isn't a new idea that can escape that. It is its test of fire. But the others don't laugh. They see it with anger, an obvious and characteristic sign of the importance of Spiritism. From that moment the attacks started to show an unseen character of violence. The order was given: ferocious sermons, orders, anathemas, excommunications, persecution to individuals, books, brochures and articles in newspapers. Nothing was left untouched, not even slander.

We are then fully in the period of struggle that has not ended. After the uselessness of the open attacks they are going to try the underground war that begins to show and organize. An apparent calmness will be felt but it is just the calmness that anticipates the storm; but after the storm comes the rainbow.

Spiritists, have no fear because the end is not doubtful. The fight is necessary and the success will be bright. I have said and repeat: I see the end; I know when and how it is going to be achieved. If I say that with such a confidence it is because I have reasons for that but prudence requires that I remain quiet but one day you will know them. All I can tell you is that powerful supporters will come to shut the mouth of more than one detractor. Nonetheless it will be a lively fight and if there are victims of their faith in the conflict may they rejoice as the first Christian martyrs did from which there are many among you to encourage you and give you examples and may they remember these words from Jesus:

“Blessed are those who are persecuted because of righteousness, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. Blessed are you when people insult you, persecute you and falsely say all kinds of evil against you because of me. Rejoice and be glad, because great is your reward in heaven, for in the same way they persecuted the prophets who were before you.” “(Mathew 5: 10-12)

Don't these words seem to have been said to today's Spiritists as to the apostles of those days? This is because Jesus' words have that character in particular: they are for all times because his mission was for the future as much as for the present.

The struggle will determine a new phase of Spiritism and will lead to the fourth period that will be the *religious* period. Then there will be the fifth, the *intermediary period*, a natural consequence of the preceding one, and that later on will receive its characteristic denomination. The six and last period will be that of *social renovation* that will open the era of the twentieth century. In that period all the obstacles to the new order of things wished by God for the transformation of Earth will be gone. The new generation embedded in the new ideas will use its power to pave the way to the one that must inaugurate the definitive victory of union, peace and fraternity among all, confounded in in common belief by the practice of the evangelical law.

That is how the words of Christ will be confirmed for all must be accomplished and many realize at this time because the predicted times have come. But it is useless to look for those signs from heaven taking appearance by reality. Those signs are around you and come from all places.

It is remarkable that the communications given by the Spirits had a special character in each period: in the first they were frivolous and lighthearted; in the second were serious and instructive; since the third they presented the struggles and their several nuances. The majority of the ones obtained today in the multiple centers have the intent of forewarning the followers against the maneuvers of their adversaries. Thus, instructions are given everywhere about it as everywhere an identical result is announced.

The coincidence about that point of view as for many others is not one of the less significant facts. The situations if fully summarized in the two following communications whose veracity the Spiritists have already acknowledged.

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Instructions by the Spirits

The quiet war

Paris, August 14th, 1863

“The struggle waits for you, my dear children. That is why I invite all of you to imitate the gladiator of previous times and get ready. The forthcoming years are full of promises but also of anxieties. I do not come to say: the day of the battle is tomorrow! No, because the time of the fight is not certain yet but I come to warn you so that you are ready for any eventuality. Up until now Spiritism only found an easy and almost flowery path whereas from now on the attacks in your direction will have a totally different character: time has come when God will appeal everyone, when he is going to judge his faithful servers and give each one the part that they have deserved.

You shall not be physically tortured as in the first days of the Church; there will not be killing flames like in the Middle Ages but they will torture you morally; there will be traps, armed by friendly hands; they will act in the shadows and you will receive the blows not knowing who sent them towards you and you will be hurt and your chest injured by the poisoned arrows of slander.

Your pain will lack nothing; there will be defections in your ranks and supposedly Spiritists lost in pride and vanity will allege independence, saying: We are the ones in the right path!

They will try to sow bad weeds onto the groups provoking the formation of dissident groups; they will entice your mediums taking them to a bad path, deviating them from the serious groups; intimidation will be used against some, fascination against others; all weaknesses will be exploited. Besides, don't forget that some saw in Spiritism a role to play, an important role, and today they are deluded in their ambitions. These will be promised a new way, something that otherwise they cannot find. Then, with money, so powerful in the last century, won't they find accomplices to represent undignified comedies to discredit and ridicule the doctrine?

These are the trials that wait for you, my dear, but from which you shall exit triumphant if you beg for the Almighty help from the bottom of your heart. That is why I repeat with my whole heart: My dear, embrace one another and be vigilant because it is your Golgotha that follows and if you are not crucified in flesh and blood you will in your interests and in your affections and in your honor! It is a serious and solemn time. You must then leave behind the petty discussions, all the puerile concerns, every idle question and any vain pretension of prominence and self-love.

Be concerned with the great interests that are in your hands and for which the Lord will make you accountable. Unite so that the enemy will find your ranks compact and unbreakable. You have an unequivocal password, touch stone with which you can recognize your true brothers, for that word means abnegation and devotion and summarizes all of the duties of a true Spiritist. Courage and perseverance, my children! Know that God oversees and judges you. Remember also that your spiritual guides will not abandon you down while you walk the right path.

As a matter of fact, all this war will only have a period and will turn against those who thought to create arms against the doctrine. Triumph, and no longer the bloody holocaust, will irradiate the Spiritist Golgotha.

So long my dear children. Greetings to all!"

Erastus, disciple of the apostle St. Paul

One of the maneuvers predicted above has just come true from what we heard. A letter tells us that a young lady had attended a meeting only once left her home and moved in to the house of a strange person from where she was taken to a home of the mentally ill, as if taken by the Spiritist madness; her relatives were only informed afterwards, when everything had already happened. Twenty days later the family was granted authorization to see her when she was then criticized for having left them. She then confessed that she was promised money to pretend madness. Even at that time the attempts to convince her to leave and come home were useless.

If that is how Spiritist mad people are recruited the means is more dangerous to those that employ it than to Spiritism. When someone reaches out to such a gimmick to defend their own causes, it is the most positive proof that they are out of good arguments.

We then tell the Spiritists: When you see similar things rejoice instead of becoming sad for they are signs of a near triumph. In fact, there is something else that must encourage you: our ranks grow not only in number but also in moral strength and you have already seen more than one renowned person to come out and resolutely defend Spiritism and with grab the glove thrown by our adversaries with a strong hand.

Texts of irresistible logic daily show them that the Spiritists are not mad. Our readers know the excellent refutation to the sermons of Rev. Letiece by a Spiritist of Metz. Now we have the not less interesting one given by the Spiritists of *Villenave de Rions (Gironde)*, about the sermons of Father Nicomède. The *Verité of Lyon* is known for its profound articles. The November 22nd number in particular deserves special attention. The *Ruche de Bordeaux* enlightens with new supporters as capable as dedicated. Finally, if there are many aggressors there aren't fewer defenders. Hence, Spiritists, have courage, confidence and perseverance because it is alright and according to what had been predicted.

The communication below develops one of the phases of the serious issue that we have just discussed and cannot but forearm the Spiritists about the difficulties that will accumulate in this period.

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The conflicts

Family gathering, February 25th, 1863

Medium Mr. d'Ambel

There is currently a reoccurrence of obsession, the result of the struggle that the new ideas must inevitably face against incarnate and discarnate adversaries. Obsession, skillfully exploited by the enemies of Spiritism, is one of the most dangerous tests to be faced by the doctrine before it is established in a more stable way in the heart of the masses hence it must be fought by all possible means, and in particular by the judiciousness and energy of your earthly spiritual guides.

Mediums show up from all sides with a supposed mission, called up, as they say, to carry the flag of Spiritism and plant it in the ruins of the old world, as if we had come to destroy but we are here to build.

There isn't a single person, however mediocre they might be, that had not yet a Spirit telling them, like Macbeth: 'You will also be king', and that does not consider themselves destined to a very special apostolic mission.

There aren't many private and even familiar meetings in which there hasn't been at least one soul that thinks a lot of herself, believing to be indispensable to the success of the cause; too pretentious to just accept the task of a normal worker that brings their stone to the building. Ah my friends! That is too much dedication for very little result! Almost every new medium is submitted to that temptation in the beginning. Some resist to that but many fail at least for some time until the time when after successive falls they come to be dissuaded.

Why does God allow such a difficult test if not to demonstrate that good and progress can never establish in your hearts without work and without the combat; if not to make the triumph of truth shinier by the difficulties of the struggle? What is it that certain Spirits want through the exaltation of pride and self-love but to hinder progress? They will unsuspectedly be the instruments of trials to give evidence to the good and the bad servants of God. A Spirit reveals the secret of transmutation of metals to one, like that medium in R...; another one reveals events that will supposedly take place like to Mr..., establishing the period, dates and the persons that will be involved in the drama; a mystifying Spirit teaches the secrets of diamond

formation; to others they indicate hidden treasures, easy fortune, wonderful discoveries, glory and honor, etc. In one word, people's ambitions and greed are skillfully exploited by mean Spirits. That is why you see those unfortunate obsessed persons everywhere, preparing to take their place in the Capitol, with such a serious and arrogant face that saddens any impartial observer.

What is the result of all of those fallacious promises? Deception, annoyance, ridicule and sometimes bankruptcy, fair punishment to the lazy pride that believes to have been chosen to do everything better than anyone, neglecting advices and forgetting the true principles of Spiritism.

Modesty is the hallmark of the mediums chosen by the good Spirits as much as pride, self-love and say mediocrity are the characters of those inspired by inferior Spirits. The former neglect communications that keep them away from the truth as much as the latter sustain the superiority of what they receive against everybody else even if that is an absurd.

It results that and according to the words given at the Parisian Society by its spiritual President, St. Louis, a true Tower of Babel is about to be erected among you. In fact, one does need to be blind or deluded in order to not acknowledge the crusade that has been launched against Spiritism by the natural adversaries of any progressive and freeing doctrine, added by the spiritual crusade directed by all of those pseudo wise Spirits, false great men, false religious and false brothers in erraticism, entering in a common cause with the earthly enemies, amidst the multitude of mediums that they have fanaticized and to whom they dictate so many false statements.

But look at what is left out of all that foundation established by ambition, self-love and envy. How many haven't you seen falling and how many will you still see! I tell you this that every edifice that is not founded on the truth, the only solid foundation, will fall because only the truth can challenge the times and triumph over utopias.

Sincere Spiritists, have no fear for the momentary chaos. Time is not far when truth, yanked from the veils that some intend to cover it, will come out shinier than ever and its clarity will illuminate the whole world, sending its detractors back to the shadows, those who had their moment of evidence for their own confusion.

Therefore, my friends, you must defend yourselves not only against the attacks and slander of your living adversaries, but also from the dangerous maneuvers of your adversaries in the spiritual world. Strengthen yourselves through healthy studies and in particular by the practice of love and charity and recharge yourself in your prayers. God always illuminates those that dedicate themselves to the promotion of truth when acting in good faith and without any personal ambition.

Besides, Spiritists, what does it matter to you, mediums that in the end are just instruments? What you must take into account is the actual value and reach of the teachings that you receive; it is the moral purity that you are taught; it is the clarity and accuracy of the truths that are revealed to you; it is, finally, the instructions that correspond to the legitimate aspirations of elevated souls and are in agreement with the general and immutable laws of logic and universal harmony.

Inferior Spirits that take the place of apostles before their obsessed, as you know, have no scruples in taking the most venerable names; hence it would be outrageous that I, one of the last disciples of the Spirit of Truth, would be sorry for having had my modest name used by them; I then repeat what I incessantly said to my medium two years ago: Never assess a mediumistic communication by the name that signs it but only by its intrinsic content. It is urgent that you be forearmed against every publication of suspicious origin that appear now and will appear in the future, against all of those that would not have a clear and honest

attitude, and rest assured that many will be produced in the fields of the enemy, in the visible as well as in the invisible world, with the objective of spreading disagreement among you.

It is up to you to be caught in that since you have all the elements need to assess them. Be you must also know that every Spirit that announces oneself as a superior Spirit and in particular with an infallibility second to none, that Spirit is, on the contrary, the opposite to everything that he announces so pretentiously.

Since the time when the kind Spirit Francois-Nicolas Madeleine alleviated part of my spiritual burden I was able to evaluate the whole Spiritist work and do the moral statistics of the workers that help in the vine of the Lord. Ah! If so many imperfect Spirits sneak in the mission that we carry I am even more sorry to attest that among our best supporters on Earth many have fallen before the weight of their tasks and gradually returned to the paths of their old weaknesses, so much so that the great ethereal souls that advised them were, since then, replaced by less pure and less perfect Spirits.

Ah! I know that virtue is difficult but we don't ask for and we don't want the impossible. Good will is enough to us when followed by the desire to do the best.

My friends, relaxation is pernicious in everything because much will be demanded to those that after having elevated themselves by the renunciation of their own individuality have fallen back to the cult of matter, and even allowed themselves to be driven by selfishness and self-love. Yet we pray for them and condemn nobody because we all must remember the magnificent teaching of Christ: 'Let any one of you who is without sin be the first to throw a stone at her.'

Your followers count to the millions today. The false masks of the brothers that was recently mentioned by your momentary President fall all over. I am not recommending that your ranks may only accept the spotless and white sheep; no because the sinners are the ones that more than anybody else have the right to find refuge against their own imperfections. I advise you to be suspicious of the others, the dangerous hypocrite to whom we are tempted to place our trust in principle and at first sight. They show strict behavior and a serious and dignifying behavior to the eyes of the crowds that says: 'These are respectable people!' Nonetheless, perfidy and immorality sometimes hide under that appearance.

They are accessible, helpful, full of amenities; they sneak into places; voluntarily invade privacy; listen behind doors and pretend to be deaf to be able to hear even better; the present disagreements and excite and feed them; they move between opposing fields and ask about each one. What is it that this one is doing? What is the bread winning activity of the other one? Who is this person? Do you know the family? Then you see them quietly moving in the shadows and spreading little maleficence that they were able to collect, carefully poisoning them with lively slander. 'These are rumors in which we don't believe', they say, but then add: 'Where there is smoke there is fire', etc.

You must add the hypocrite of the spiritual world to these hypocrites of incarnation and then, my dear friends, you can see how much I am right in advising you to act, from now on, with extreme reservation and to watch out for any and every reflected enthusiasm and imprudent action.

I said you live in a time of crisis, even more difficult given malevolence, but from which you shall come out stronger, with firmness and perseverance.

The number of mediums today is incalculable and it is sad to see that some consider themselves the only ones called upon to spread the truth to the world and rejoice before banalities that they consider real monuments, poor deluded people that lower their heads under the arches of triumph, as if the truth had waited for their arrival before being announced.

Neither the strong, nor the weak, neither the educated nor the ignorant had that exclusive privilege, because it was through the intermediary of a thousand unknown voices that the truth had spread and it is exactly because of that unanimity that it was duly acknowledged.

You must count those voices; count those that listen; count in particular those whose hearts are touched by them if you want to know in which side the truth is.

Ah! If all mediums had faith! I would be the first to bow before them. But most of the time they don't have but only the faith in themselves, such is the size of pride on Earth! No, their faith is not the one that moves mountains and that make someone walk on the water! It is the case to repeat here the maxim from the Gospel that has served as my theme since the first day I made myself heard among you: 'For many are invited but few are chosen.'

In short, there are publications on the right, on the left, on all sides, pros and cons in all senses and in all forms; exaggerated criticism from people that know nothing about it; heated sermons from people that are afraid; to summarize I say that Spiritism is in the order of the day. I shake every brain and agitates every conscience, an exclusive privilege of great things. Everyone presents that it carries the principle of renovation that some vow to support and others fear.

But what is going to be left after all this? What shall come out of this Babel tower? A huge thing: the vulgarization of the Spiritist idea and the true doctrine!

The conflict is unavoidable because mankind is stained by a lot of pride and selfishness to accept any new truth without opposition. I even say that the conflict is necessary because it is the friction that dismount false ideas pointing out to the strength of those that resist.

Amidst this avalanche of mediocrity, impossibilities and surreal utopias the splendid truth shall spread in its greatness and magnificence.

Erastus

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Duty⁴⁹

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, November 20th, 1863

Medium Mrs. Costel

“Duty is a moral obligation, first before oneself and then before the others. It is the law of life and it is found in the tiniest details as much as in the most elevated acts. I will only speak of the moral duty and not of those imposed by profession. In the order of feelings, duty is very difficult to realize because it is in opposition to the seductions of instinct and heart. Its victories bear no witnesses and its defeats have no repression.

The intimate duty of a person is given to one’s free-will. The goad of conscience, that guardian of inner probity, warns and sustain it but it is frequently powerless before the sophisms of passion. The accomplished duty of heart elevates mankind but how can one measure that? Where does it start? Where does it end? It begins exactly where you threaten the happiness and the rest of your neighbor and ends at the border that you would not like to see transposed against yourself.

God created everyone equal for the pain. Great or small, ignorant or enlightened, all suffer for the same causes so that each one can judiciously assess the harm that can be caused. The same criteria do not exist for the good, infinitely more varied in its expressions.

The equality before pain is a sublime providence of God that wishes his creatures, instructed by the experience, do not do harm to one another by alleging ignorance. Duty is a practical summary of all moral speculations; it is the bravery of the soul that faces the anguishes of the combat; it is austere and simple, ready to yield to the many complications and inflexible before temptations. Anyone that does their duty loves God more than the creatures and the creatures more than oneself. That person is at the same time judge and slave in the same cause.

Duty is the most beautiful laurel of reason. It stems from that like the son from the mother. A person must love duty not because it prevents the miseries of life from which humanity cannot escape but because it gives the necessary strength for the development of the soul. No one can send away the chalice of atonement.

49 Message incorporated in The Gospels According to Spiritism, chap. XVII, item 7

Duty is painful in its sacrifices and evil is bitter in its results but those pains, almost equal, have completely different results: one is healthy like the drugs that recover health, the other is harmful like the parties that ruin the body. Every superior stage of humanity has a greater and more radiant duty. There is never an end to the moral obligation of the creature to God. It must reflect the virtues of the Eternal that does not accept an imperfect sketch but he wishes the shine of greatness of his work resplendent before his eyes.

Lazarus

Spiritist Review
Journal of Psychological Studies

December 1863

Feeding

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, July 4th, 1862

Medium A. Didier

“Animal sacrifice was severely condemned by the philosophers of antiquity. An elevated Spirit rejects the idea of blood and particularly the idea that blood pleases God. Notice that we don’t talk about human sacrifice but to the sacrifice of animals offered in holocaust.

When Jesus came to announce the Good News, he did not order the sacrifice of blood because he was only concerned with the Spirit. The great wise men of antiquity also were horrified with this kind of sacrifice and they only ate fruits and roots.

Those incarnate on Earth have a mission to accomplish. Their Spirit must be fed by the Spirit and the body must be fed by matter but the nature of the matter influences – easily understood – the density of the body and consequently the manifestations of the Spirit.

Those that have a temperament strong enough to live like the anchorite do good by avoiding meat because they can then be more easily led to meditation and prayer. However, in order to live like that one would need a more spiritual nature than yours and that is impossible given the terrestrial condition and, most importantly, nature never acts against common sense and hence it is impossible to mankind to go unpunished by submitting to such deprivation.

It is possible to be a good Christian and a good Spiritist and eat as one wishes within reason. It is a kind of side question to our studies but not less useful and beneficial.

Lamennais

Allan Kardec