

PSYPIONEER

Founded by Leslie Price

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Psypioneer is pleased to announce that it is soon to open a website dedicated to: -

EMMA HARDINGE BRITTEN

May 2nd 1823 – October 2nd 1899

However, due to work commitments it will not be fully functional until September... The site will be concerned with the life and works of Emma Hardinge Britten: - editor, historian, occultist, Spiritualist medium, traveller, founder member of the Theosophical Society, mesmeric subject for the Orphic Circle and more.

When fully functional, the site will welcome contributions from interested persons, and help to build up a more stable, accurate historical record of this remarkable woman.

Emma Hardinge Britten is by many Spiritualists regarded as simply a Spiritualist and a medium! However, once you look closely into her life, it becomes a *mystery* in itself. You become faced with many complications and contradictions; the conclusion being that she was much more than a Spiritualist and a medium.

Much work that has unveiled some of the mystery surrounding her life has been carried out by Robert Mathiesen, in 'The Unseen Worlds of Emma Hardinge Britten: Some Chapters in the History of Western Occultism'. This is part of the 'Theosophical History Occasional Papers' Volume IX.

Another fine contribution to the early years of Emma Hardinge is, John Patrick Deveney's 'Astral Projection or Liberation of the Double and the Work of the Early Theosophical Society': this is also part of the 'Theosophical History Occasional Papers' Volume VI. Both of these valuable works are available from: - www.theohistory.org .

It is intended to start this site with uploading some works by Sirius which prompts the important question, 'Were Emma Hardinge Britten and Sirius one and the same?' My reply to this is "I do not know!"

Mathiesen points to Chevalier Louis de B [Ernest de Bunsen] as the *anonymous* author of Art Magic and Ghost Land, both edited by Emma Hardinge Britten and published in 1876 by her husband William Britten. Mathiesen mentions little about Sirius, but he does state with certainty that '*Sirius is Emma Hardinge Britten's occult pseudonym*'.

This is what Emma Hardinge Britten said regarding Sirius: - taken from 'The Two Worlds' edited by Emma Hardinge Britten March 23rd 1888, (Sirius was reviewing 'Hallucinations and Apparitions' printed in the same edition; this will appear on the new site.)

[*Note by the Editor T. W. - In delegating the task of reviewing the above report to the writer, known in these columns as "Sirius," the Editor desires it to be understood that she shrinks from no personal responsibility for whatever matter is printed in this journal, but the gentleman writing under the above caption being the only profound and thoroughly masterful OCCULTIST, who is also deeply imbued with the significance and value of the modern spiritual outpouring, it seems to be a privilege to obtain the assistance of his fluent pen on special occasions, which neither the readers or Editor of The Two Worlds would willingly forego.*]

Is this Emma Hardinge Britten writing about her self? '*the only profound and thoroughly masterful OCCULTIST,*'

In another article: - Spiritual Gifts - No.1 'What Constitutes Spiritual Mediumship' she goes further: -

Taken from 'The Two Worlds' April 27th 1888

..... Taking the ground assumed by "Sirius," the author of Art Magic, and strongly enforced by certain of our controlling spirits, we may say we consider that the human body consists of matter, force and spirit. Matter, the mould, formative, and external element. Force, the invisible but ever active life principle, which we shall call magnetism; and Spirit, the interior and only intelligent element in the organism. As it is with this second principle, magnetism, that we have now to deal, we shall confine ourselves at present to a description of the attributes and operation of that special element.....

If Sirius is indeed Emma Hardinge Britten as Robert Mathiesen asserted, did she author Art Magic? That's what Spiritual Gifts - No.1 states!

It is my hope that on these issues and many more, we will make substantial progress in unravelling the true depths of the life and contributions made by a life time's work...Emma Floyd – Mrs Emma Hardinge – Mrs Emma Hardinge Britten

SIX LECTURES ON THEOLOGY AND NATURE

**By EMMA HARDINGE
Published in 1860**

To commemorate the opening of the website, Psypioneer is re-publishing a facsimile of this very rare title. Prior to this publication Emma Hardinge had published only two small discourses of 12pp & 11pp respectively in 1859.

The book preface states: -

PREFACE

THE following series of Lectures was delivered in the course of three Sundays, during the months of October and November, 1860, at Kingsbury Hall, Chicago, Ill. They excited a wide and profound interest at the time; and the large audience that greeted Miss Hardinge, on her first appearance - their deep attention and intelligent appreciation, continued unabated throughout the series. The discourses were taken down, as delivered, by R. R. Hitt, Esq., stenographic reporter of the Chicago Press and Tribune; and are now published from his short-hand notes, without revision - nothing having been suggested or added by the speaker, except the autobiographical - introduction.

These six lectures were given at a time when Emma Hardinge had become critical of Christianity. The book contains 160 pages and holds an interesting appendix together with Emma Hardinge's 'Outline of a Plan for a Self-Sustaining Institution for Homeless and Outcast Females.....'

This is part of what Emma Hardinge says in the introduction: -

The subjects of these Lectures (though presented by me to a Chicago audience for the first time) have formed the theme of address in one or two other places before - such subjects being deemed by my guides of more importance as principles, (the enforcement of which should be one main object of my teachings,) than the mere capacity to make a speech, no matter what the subject, provided it was "something new." For the first two years of my public teaching, I was chiefly exercised in the phenomenal part of speech-making, generally submitting the subjects to the choice of a committee formed on the spot, or presenting, through spirit direction, addresses extemporized on every conceivable variety of subjects, the texts of which were very

frequently found in the events and surroundings of the hour, such as a flower laid on the desk, the falling rain, or, still more commonly, a question proposed by some stranger in the audience. "The day of phenomena is passing away," is the language of one of my Guides, "and if you mediums would become the instructors, rather than the wonder of your audiences, suffer us to enforce and repeat by 'line upon line, and precept upon precept,' such principles as will grow into fundamental truths in the people's hearts." At the same time, however hackneyed the subject may be to myself or others, I find that its treatment is singularly varied in adaptation to the different classes of mind and intelligence that surround me. "Truths, laws and principles are for all times, and revelation belongs to eternity. Its expression, however, must be adapted to the time, place and person, or it is valueless."

This is another sentence by which my Guides have intimated their *DISSENT* from the frequent propositions that have been made to me to publish my Lectures. "We think for all time - but speak for the hour." "The thought will not perish, but the words, gestures, intonation and present surroundings, being specially adapted to the present hour, will serve but as a husk to enclose the living grain, rather than as the daily bread which each hour demands, if it be written or preserved in stereotyped gospels. "Why then, it may be asked, do I depart from so wholesome a provision against the infliction of "stereotyped gospels," upon a growing people whose minds cannot fail to overleap the fetters of stationary books?"

This is my answer: At the close of these Lectures, I was introduced to a gentleman, who, I found, had hired a reporter at his own expense, to transcribe them, and conceiving that they would benefit the world in the same proportion as he had himself profited, be generously determined to bear all the risk and expense of publication, and by presenting them in the most attractive form possible, add to the good which he supposed their perusal might produce, a surplus fund, which he nobly dedicated to the promotion of a great philanthropic undertaking in favor of forlorn, outcast, homeless females. The entire unselfishness of this project, like a warm ray of sunlight, completely melted away the ice of my philosophical scruples. "Let kindness prevail," I cried, "and the sun of human love shine on, though it may put out the eye of deliberate reason, and overflow the banks of judgment with its genial thaw!" And so, reader, for the sake of that unselfish love of humanity which defies the check-rein of cold prudence to guide it, you have this course of Six Lectures in all their unstudied, uncorrected (for they have not even been seen or revised by me in any way) crudity. If you can extract the kernel of spiritual thought from the rough husk of unpremeditated human speech, they may do you good, - if you fail, the money you bestow upon the unappreciated page will buy one brick in the home for the homeless, the shelter for the houseless, whose miserable lot has been one of the stimulants to this publication.....

We will have initially only fifty copies of the book available for sale at £17.95 + P.P., for details please contact: - psypioneer@aol.com

[Note by Psypioneer: - We conclude our four part series which began in the March issue, Modern Spiritualism, 1928 by Herbert Thurston, pages 66 – 88]

MODERN SPIRITUALISM

CHAPTER IV

THE VALHALLA OF SPIRITUALISM

UNDER the title "Pheneas Speaks" ⁽¹⁾ Sir Arthur Conan Doyle published not long since a volume of what purport to be the communications of discarnate spirits received through the mediumship of his wife, Lady Doyle. There are, of course, many hundreds of similar books in existence, some of which date back to the very beginnings of modern Spiritualism. But this latest manifesto from the other world has rather exceptional claims to consideration, for Sir Arthur (it will economise space to follow his own example and to designate him in future by his initials A. C. D.) seems to be treated by his spirit guides as the precursor, if not the chief comptroller, of a religious convulsion which is now almost immediately to transform and renovate the world in which we live. "*Every sect is done for,*" Pheneas declares, "*the people know too much. The churches have failed in the past, and people will turn to those who have been in direct spirit communication.*" And again, "*Those who have stood in the way of God's truth are being swept aside. Soon, very soon, the light will be seen in the sky, and great will be the fear.*"

Apart from certain family messages which are of little interest outside A. C. D.'s domestic circle, the communicators lay stress mainly upon two points - first the astounding change now at hand, which will "*stagger humanity*" (p. 183) and "*transfigure the earth's surface so that it will be as God originally intended it to be,*" (p. 199); and secondly the wondrous beauty and happiness of that existence in the spheres to which, according to the spiritualistic hypothesis, every decent man seems to pass at once on quitting this world.

As regards the first of these topics the prophecies here printed are of the vaguest. A. C. D. very prudently commits himself to nothing definite concerning the time or the place or the manner in which the change will be brought about. He hints in his preface that much information on these points has been imparted from on high, but he tells us that it "*must wait until its publication should seem advisable.*" The reader will not fail to appreciate the wisdom of this course. It is rarely "*advisable*" to make known the detail of prophecies until they have been fulfilled, for when they have once been set down in black and white, the forecast cannot so readily be adapted to fit the events which actually occur.

On the other hand nothing is risked by expatiating on the glories of life in the spheres. This is the undiscovered country from whose bourn no traveller returns, and Pheneas, however much he romances, can never be refuted. Hence A. C. D. makes no scruple about publishing what has been disclosed by his various communicators concerning the "Summer Land." Much of it is of a type familiar to all who have made even slight acquaintance with the mediumistic script of the past seventy five years.

Still it may be interesting to compare this recent presentment with the accounts which are derived from earlier sources and which we have no reason to suppose less trustworthy.

In "Pheneas Speaks" there are a number of references to the house already prepared, seemingly in the third sphere, for the residence of A. C. D. and his family. It is his brother-in-law, the late E. W. Hornung, (2) who in July, 1921, professed to announce from the other side that the future home "*was a sweet place - full of charm. There is water near and great peace.*" It must be confessed that though the subject recurs many times, we never advance much beyond this in the way of definiteness. For example, four years later Pheneas remarks:

"About your home here all your friends are clamouring that I should tell you more about it. It is good that you know these things, for it sows little hope seeds in your mind. Your eyes have never seen any form or colour so lovely as your home - beauty, peace, sweetness, flowers, nature, sunshine, all vibrating with golden light. And it is full of the spirit of home. Peace is the keynote and love its counterpart; inspiration is its body, and tenderness its heart, and joy its spirit. Christ's spirit is its driving force."

This sounds nebulous enough and rather banal, but A. C. D. records that "*here Pheneas seemed much moved - put out his arms with awe*"; that is to say, the medium, Lady Doyle, under the supposed control of Pheneas, made this gesture. The nearest approach to any precise detail that I can find dates from December, 1925.

Your home in the other world is ready for you. The human forces which are to make it a perfect creation have been selected. There is a round small building in the grounds which is filled with exquisite coloured vibrations into which you go when you want soul's rejuvenation. It stands amid trees. There is a lovely terrace outside that home, with flowers everywhere. Flowers and creepers are all round the home and there is an oblong pond round which coloured birds will come to drink. It is quite close opposite.

The old Catholic description of "Jerusalem my happy home," based on the Apocalypse, was at least frankly metaphorical.

*Thy walls are made of precious stones,
Thy bulwarks diamond square,
Thy gates are of right orient pearl,
Exceeding rich and rare.*

*Thy turrets and thy pinnacles
With carbuncles do shine;
Thy very streets are paved with gold,
Surpassing clear and fine.*

This imagery, if over-luxuriant, was intelligible and the swing of the rhythm made its effective appeal. Does A. C. D. think that Pheneas has improved upon the conception of the Churches by substituting "*coloured vibrations*" and an "*oblong pond*" over the way?

The curious thing is that the author of the book seems himself to find these descriptions of the life to come rather flat and boring. Pheneas more than once reproaches him for his apathetic attitude as regards the promised joys of the other world. As late as September 28, 1926, he remonstrates vigorously: "*You must take a real interest in your future home. Otherwise those preparing it lose heart.*"

I quote this phrase as an illustration of the inconsistencies which abound even in the selection of communications printed by A. C. D. Over and over again we are assured that in the Summer Land "*nothing ever jars,*" "*there are no cross currents,*" "*we do not tire, we get rest sitting among the flowers,*" "*all is peace.*" Nevertheless the workers, it seems, "*lose heart*" if their efforts are not appreciated, and the denizens of the third sphere are apt to get "*furiously*" (p. 57) with the persecutors of the cause of Spiritualism on earth. Moreover, Pheneas, described as a "*very high spirit*" who died thousands of years ago and who has presumably been progressing upward ever since, is found complaining: "*I am so tired; why am I so tired tonight?*" (p. 91); also he "*seems unhappy,*" and on another occasion he loses his temper and is so cross (p. 139) that he finds it necessary to apologise afterwards. Again we learn that he is sometimes much exhausted with his visits to earth and that "*he goes back to his beloved land and has to rest*" (p. 162).

The whole presentment of this exalted personage who is so near to Christ and at the same time so tremendously interested in A. C. D., his wife ("*the dear medium*") and his four children, who seems according to his own account to be director-general of earth activities, ranging the world from China to Peru, while always breathlessly overcharged with moral platitudes which fly from him on the smallest provocation like sparks from a Leyden jar, is utterly unreal. His name, I am sure, ought to be Chadband not Pheneas.

A more ordinary communicator, "Lily," a deceased friend of Lady Doyle's, only appears rarely, but she is distinctly less sententious and more matter-of-fact than the Arabian gentleman who fills the title role. Still even she has her moments of rhapsody. In October 1922, it appears that A. C. D. asked her: "*Shall we go to America to spread this teaching?*" Her reply was: "*Go, and God's blessing go with you every mile of the way,*" and she adds: "*Never fear. All will be arranged for the best for you all. You are ambassadors for God and humanity, in the world; so never worry about the trifles.*" But in answering another question, "*What do you do in your world?*" Lily touches matters which are of more practical interest.

"*We develop,*" she says, "*our gift for music and we look after the orphan children, loving and mothering those whose hearts have been starved on earth. Far, far more to do here than on the old grey earth. Nothing in people round ever jars. It makes everything happier and more complete.*"

Then after speaking of the flowers and scents of her own spirit home, she says in reply to the question "*Can you see other homes?*"

No, it would spoil the peace if we could. Nature only sometimes one wants. Every home is an oasis, as it were. Beyond is wonderful scenery and other sweet homes full of dear sweet, bright people, full of laughter, from the mere fact of living in such wonderful surroundings . . . We have rooms as on earth, but so

much lovelier. The colours are so much daintier and the fabrics so much more delicate.

If nothing jars, why should it spoil the peace if one could see other homes? And surely this oasis idea, presumably some sort of patriarchal arrangement in family groups, suggests rather serious difficulties. Even in this world we are familiar enough with the problems created by the children of divorced or much re-married parents. But I forbear to press the point, which might lead me to matters which are too personal. [ACD had remarried after his first wife's death and had two families – Psypioneer]

On the great food question, one communicator when asked "*Have you food over there?*" answers:

"Not in your sense but much nicer. Such lovely essences and wonderful fruits, and other things besides, which you don't have on earth."

In accord with this Pheneas also states: "*We don't have meat here,*" and he goes on to announce that even on this earth of ours vegetarianism is soon about to prevail. "*Comparatively few more animals will be sacrificed.*"

But the most noteworthy of the many puzzles which are suggested by these descriptions of life in the spheres is the question of occupation. The spirits all seem to be so very busy; but what do they do? E. W. Hornung is asked: "*Is your present work literary?*" To which from the other side he answers vaguely: "*Yes, of a kind. It is more interesting. I prefer it to my work in the world. It is so much more vital. It really counts.*" On the other hand when Delane, Editor of *The Times*, purports to communicate, the question is put to him: "*Do you edit a paper now?*" He replies: "*There is no need here. We know everything. It is like wireless in the air, and all so much bigger and larger and so splendid. It is great this life.*" A young doctor killed in the war says: "*I go on with my medical work, but it is much more vital, and means much more to me now. I am helping some on your plane. At Guy's Hospital there is a good man whom I impress with my greater knowledge.*"

But medical studies in a land in which everyone is restored to relative youth and no disease is known, must be somewhat lacking in point. And if all the doctors formerly deceased, from Hippocrates and Galen downwards, are engaged in impressing with their greater knowledge the doctors who are still living, there must either be a good many veterans who have nobody to impress, like the "poor lion" who hadn't got a Christian, or the present generation of practitioners must certainly be in danger of becoming bewildered through the multiplicity of their spirit guides. Moreover there is the complication of "spirit healing," which would seemingly tend to eliminate the medical profession altogether, but which the same communicator declares to be "*great - ever so great.*" "*If only,*" he sighs, "*the doctors would have open minds, and receive this great truth and knowledge.*"

It will be seen that there are a good many inconsistencies in these descriptions, even if we do not travel outside the pages of the book itself. But the moment we set out to compare them with the hundreds of equally authoritative statements received through other mediums, we find that there is not a single particular here made prominent which is not flatly contradicted by one or other of the rival seers. Take for

example the home prepared for A. C. D. and his family to which so much attention is devoted. One would infer from the details given that the process of construction occupied several years and that a number of friends took part in the work, who would "lose heart" if their efforts were not appreciated. With this view would agree the statement of Raymond Lodge that he lived in a house built of bricks, that there were trees and flowers, and that the ground was solid; (3) and also the communications of Claude Kelway Bamber, where we read of houses in the next world as "*built by bricklayers and designed by architects.*" (4) On the other hand seventy-five years ago one of the earliest and sanest of the apologies for spiritualism reports that the dead son of the author, when asked if the spirits in his entourage lived in houses, replied: "*We are in open space; our dwelling is immensity.*" (5) And this also is evidently the conception that Dr. Eugene Crowell derived from his extensive acquaintance with mediumistic utterances, when he writes:

"Spirits sleep as do mortals. They have no beds, but repose on a velvety kind of grass". (6) None the less the view which of all others has perhaps been most generally favoured by spiritualistic writers is that which stands thus expressed in a work of the same class: -

In this Summer Land you can picture us surrounded by the most beautiful scenery, in an absolutely perfect climate, where every intellectual and spiritual desire is gratified, and with homes that we fashion exactly to suit our taste. You who love to design and beautify a house are, in your world, met by endless worries and difficulties to get everything just as you want it. But here we breathe forth the desire and the thing is created. And so much of our surrounding in this Homeland is the result of how we lived in the earth life. (7)

Even on spiritualistic principles, I can see no way of reconciling these utterances, for they refer to souls in the same stage of development. If A. C. D. when he arrives in Summer Land has only to conceive in thought the home he wishes for himself and it will at once be created, why should his family and friends on the other side spend their energies for years in adorning the grounds with "*a round small building filled with coloured vibrations and an oblong pond just opposite?*" Lady Doyle may in the end prefer her vibrations plain, not coloured, and may wish to move the pond to a distance; whereupon apparently she has only to conceive the thought or express the wish and, as in the Arabian Nights, the transformation will be effected in the twinkling of an eye.

Then there is the great question of the spheres. If anyone wishes to obtain precise information on this matter in compendious form, I would commend him to the work entitled *Spirit Intercourse* by Mr. J. Hewat McKenzie, then Principal of "the British College of Psychic Science" in Bayswater, London, and an ardent ally of A. C. D. The subject is treated with the precision of a Guide-Book advertisement. Thus:

Third Sphere.

The family sphere, commonly called the Summer Land, 1,350 miles from earth; light, 100 to 110 degrees. Pet animals and birds are most numerous on this plane. Flowers and fruit in rich luxuriance; habitations interspersed with gardens;

houses built in brick and also stone. This is the principal sphere of children, where they receive their education on arriving from earth. (8)

This is the whole account. Now I have no wish to be hypercritical, but may I point out that these geographical statistics have presumably been printed, as official reports are wont to say, "subject to revision"? As far back as 1855 when Professor Robert Hare, the distinguished chemist of Pennsylvania University, published his *Experimental Investigation of the Spirit Manifestations*, this illustrious convert to the new movement learned upon good discarnate authority that "*the spirit world lies between sixty and one hundred and twenty miles from the terrestrial surface, and that the whole intermediate space, including that immediately over the earth, the habitation of mortals, is divided into seven concentric regions, called spheres.*" (9) According to this, therefore, even the seventh sphere is not more than 120 miles distant from the earth's surface.

In 1875 Dr. Crowell, as the result of "*frequent and intimate communication with my spirit friends,*" decided that this third sphere was "*160 miles from the earth and 100 miles above the second sphere,*" whereas Mr. McKenzie, as we have seen, in 1917, states, with the added impressiveness of diagrams drawn to scale, that the third sphere or Summer Land begins at a distance of 1,350 miles from earth and is itself 1,500 miles high, while he adds that the seventh sphere stretches into space more than 35,500 miles away from our planet. These estimates are not very concordant, but they may figure as harmony itself as compared with the dogmatic pronouncement of Andrew Jackson Davis, that the Summer Land "*is a solid belt of land extending above the earth two-thirds of the distance from the sun and some seventy millions of miles wide.*" (10) Seeing that Davis, the seer of Poughkeepsie, highly belauded by A. C. D. in his "*History of Spiritualism,*" had himself invented the Summer Land, he really ought to be allowed to know where it is situated.

But can anything be stranger than the acceptance by Spiritualists in the middle of the nineteenth century of an old-world cosmogony which had its ultimate *raison d'être* in the geocentric ideas of Ptolemy and Pythagoras? That this conception of the spheres should form part of the familiar imagery of such medieval writers as Chaucer or Wycliff we can well understand. Science was a sealed book to them; but as Professor Skeat explains in a note to a passage in one of Chaucer's poems:

The old astronomy imagined nine spheres revolving round the central stationary earth. Of the seven innermost, each carried with it one of the seven "planets," viz.: the Moon, Venus, Mercury, Sun, Mars, Jupiter and Saturn; the eighth sphere, that of the fixed stars, had a slow motion from west to east, round the axis of the zodiac, to account for the precession of the equinoxes; whilst the ninth or outermost sphere, called the primum mobile or the sphere of first motion, had a diurnal revolution from east to west carrying everything with it.

That is how the idea of the seven spheres originated, and we are asked to accept these desperate hypotheses, elaborated by the Greek mathematicians in their gropings after truth more than two thousand years ago and only perpetuated by the astrologers of the Wallenstein epoch, as a serious contribution to the problem of human survival after death. Pheneas in September, 1926, so A. C. D. informs us, was still "*very anxious to get through some teaching about the spheres which had never before been*

given to humanity." This teaching has not been incorporated in the Pheneas volume. We need have no quarrel with its author when he declares that in the lowest spheres, in which men of evil life are detained, "*the surroundings are horrible.*" But Pheneas improves the occasion by insisting that in these regions:

It is deadly silent, and dark. The conditions are indeed terrible. There are many ecclesiastics there. They are shown pictures of the lives of those whom they have influenced for evil by getting in the way of God's message [i.e., by opposing Spiritualism]. That is among their punishments.

The opinion that the lower spheres are planes of suffering and self-discipline is no doubt widely spread, but even here there is no unanimity. In the collection of spirit utterances called "The Voices," by Admiral Osborne Moore, we may read:

There are seven spheres. The idea that the lower spheres are uncomfortable is all nonsense. When I passed over I had the choice of going to higher spheres or remaining among earth conditions. I chose the latter.

Even Adin Ballou's son in 1852, says in answer to the question: "*Have you seen any spirits that were really unhappy?*" "*I have seen those not as happy as myself, but none that might be termed **unhappy**. Conscience is a fearful tormentor, and spirits, even after they reach the fourth sphere, are not supremely happy **at all times**.*" A reply which again conflicts with A. C. D.'s presentment of the situation.

One of the moot points which continually recur in connection with all these so-called spirit communications is the question of reincarnation. The reader of "Pheneas Speaks" would be forced to conclude that A. C. D.'s discarnate visitors knew nothing of it. (11) Pheneas who left the earth some five thousand years ago had apparently never been reincarnated in all that time. Nevertheless he expresses high approval of a book of spirit messages called "The Witness," and "The Witness," like "Claude's Book," is saturated with reincarnation. For example the communicator "Tiny" says to his mother:

It is awfully funny to think that I haven't been an Englishman always, but I don't mind that. I wonder if you have ever been a man! Well, Mother, you needn't feel so shocked. It does happen, and I don't mind knowing that I was once a woman.
(12)

Similarly Claude tells his mother:

In Egypt we were brother and sister, I was told, and were attached to the court of the Pharoah, a sort of lady and gentleman in waiting. . . . I saw you a tall woman with a good figure and an upright carriage in a purple robe and overdress trimmed with gold and a sort of cloak of some skin falling at your back, your forehead bound low with a fillet of gold with hieroglyphics on it. You looked jolly fine, mums! (13)

This sort of thing may be very gratifying to the bereaved mother who publishes it, but it leaves the ordinary reader cold, and it certainly is not evidential. I may add that

a page or two further on Claude informs his mother that they were both of them at one time young men, though even then their lives were linked together.

Belief in reincarnation has been explicitly, even fiercely, repudiated by many Spiritualists, the famous medium, D. D. Home, foremost among the number. A. C. D., though he does not refer to the matter in this book, has stated elsewhere that "*the balance of evidence shows that reincarnation is a fact, though not necessarily a universal one.*" Has he ever realised, I wonder, how utterly inconsistent the doctrine is with that peaceful and patriarchal family-homestead arrangement which is depicted in "Pheneas Speaks"? If the same individual may have been, in a score of previous existences, husband, brother, wife, daughter, master, slave or concubine to a multitude of different people, in what character is he, she, or it, to settle down? And if there are still future existences upon the earth plane to be looked forward to, what becomes of the finality which is such an essential element of the peaceful atmosphere of the Summer Land?

Further we are here inevitably brought into contact with the sex question, which, in such an exact reproduction of earth conditions as Pheneas depicts, cannot be ignored. I do not propose to discuss the matter except to point out that while on the one hand Mr. Hewat McKenzie and many others declare that "*there is no such thing in spiritual spheres as marriage,*" the intelligences who purport to communicate from the other side do not always endorse this view. In the book "Thy Son Liveth," printed in 1918, one of the War victims holds converse with his mother, telling her:

It appears that everyone is or will be married. The twain shall be one spirit. I judge from this statement that marriage is consummated here; [and then a little later] I got your wire calling my attention to the scriptural statement that in heaven there is neither marriage nor giving in marriage. . . . Love and marriage are certainly in bud and flower here; I can see this fact with my own eyes.

The fact is, I submit, that the whole conception of the Summer Land, as soon as one attempts to make any study of the communications which describe it, resolves itself into a tissue of contradictions. The book "Pheneas Speaks" overflows with denunciations of "*theological egotism,*" of dogma, and of "*the Church which prates of Christ,*" and yet readers are called upon to accept all this fabric of inconsistencies, of prophecies and of threats, as if it were gospel truth. It has never occurred to A. C. D. that in the Catholic Church there has at least been unity of teaching, based upon a tradition of nineteen centuries, and that it was those who lived with the historical Christ who were the first to denounce heresy, to preach the doctrine of the Cross, ⁽¹⁴⁾ and to proclaim the punishment of sin.

It seems just now to be the fashion among communicating spirits to claim familiarity with Christ. Kingsley, A. C. D.'s son, has seen Christ; "Tiny" in "The Witness," tells his mother how "*Our Master Christ sent for me the other day and told me He was proud of me*"; while Pheneas, of course, poses as the confidant of all Christ's plans for that marvellous renovation of earth life which we are informed is now imminent. Our Lord warned us long ago against "false Christs and false prophets," and their signs. This Summer Land also is no more than the baseless fabric of a vision which, as I venture to predict, will ere long fade and "leave not a rack behind."

EPILOGUE

ALTHOUGH the limits of this little volume of necessity preclude anything like full discussion, there are one or two further points connected with the reported glories of the "Summerland" which seem to claim a brief notice, however inadequate.

Is it not an extraordinary thing that in the immense mass of communications which purport to have been received from those who have "passed over," we hardly ever hear anything of the lot of the poor, the illiterate, the toilers who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow? A good many millions of them die every year, and if every home is "*an oasis, as it were,*" one wonders how the spheres (for location and dimensions see p. 78 above) can manage to supply accommodation. We are told that conditions in the beyond reproduce so exactly the conditions of this life that many on their first arrival cannot believe that they are dead or that any change has taken place in their state of existence. If houses in the spirit world are built with bricks, is it the bricklayers who build them for the love of the thing? Do the coal-miners go on mining, and the agricultural labourer go on ploughing, and the numberless thousands of operatives in cotton-mills and iron foundries continue the dreary routine which filled the working days of their life on earth? Do the servants, in a word, go on serving, or may they also, if they are good, look forward to a villa residence, "*filled with exquisite coloured vibrations,*" and "*an oblong pond quite close opposite*"?

Our communicators say nothing about this and do not appear interested - a fact which seems to me strongly to suggest that it is out of the thought-stuff, conscious or subconscious, of the medium and recipients that the fabric of these messages is woven. The recipients, who are for the most part of the educated and leisured class, are not thinking of the poor, but only of their intimates or at any rate of the sort of people who belong to their own set. They may be philanthropic and kindly in their general outlook, but when they come to consult a medium their minds are occupied with more personal matters and the mediumistic response takes shape in accord with this. As for class divisions in the world to come, one would like to know whether Mr. De Wyckoff, Mr. Bradley and other affluent people when they settle down in their charming residences in the third plane will be on visiting terms with their own former domestics. Or will there be a separate colony, a gigantic servants' hall, where "that kind of person" may find himself more at his ease, when out of contact with his betters.

Another question which imposes itself is this: What of the personal handicap which is the cause of so much depression in the present life? The deformed, the cripples, the blind, the deaf and dumb - what becomes of them? No doubt we shall be told that their limbs are straightened in the next world, that sound organs and robust health are bestowed on them as a matter of course. But still there are difficulties. What of the plain girl with forbidding features and stunted or ungainly figure? She may have enjoyed good physical health, but she has always seen herself passed over and others preferred. She has never been able to win any of the human affection which her heart has craved for. Is this to go on? Are these disabilities to be her portion in the spheres as well as on earth? And what of the negro? Will he always remain a negro, retaining all the physical characteristics of his race? Even if he invariably meets with sympathy and consideration in the new life, that will not give him what he

longs for. He wants to be as the rest, equal with the rest, not to be in a position to evoke sympathy.

On the other hand, if we suppose that bodies are remade on the other side, and that the good people in the third sphere have the features, the stature, the straight limbs, which they would desire to have, are we not upsetting one of the most familiar spiritualistic arguments for survival? Ballou as early as 1852 tells a story of a man who was convinced during a dark seance that it was really his wife who had come to him and touched him, because she bade him feel her hand and he recognised the deformity of a crooked finger which she had always had during life.

Similarly Feda, Mrs. Osborne Leonard's control, when she gives an account of the personal appearance of those spirits present who wish to hold converse with their earth friends, nearly always describes them as they were best remembered, the old people as white-haired and wrinkled, others with peculiarities which could not always have flattered their vanity. If the denizens of the spheres are in fact invested with youth and comeliness, one has ground for arguing that these apparitions are mere simulacra and not realities; and when Sir A. C. Doyle, for example, tells us that in a seance room he has seen his son as clearly as ever he saw him in life, we are justified in replying that proof of survival and identity is still lacking until it can be demonstrated that the simulacrum can only be built up by the spirit it represents.

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1) "Pheneas Speaks." Direct Spirit Communications in the Family Circle, reported by Arthur Conan Doyle, M.D., LL.D. London: Simpkin Marshall and Co., 1927. Pheneas purports to be an Arabian sage who lived before the time of Abraham. He is the spirit guide of A. C. D.

2) Hornung, the author of "Raffles" and many other novels, was a very successful writer of fiction. His wife, Connie Doyle, A. C. D.'s sister, always to her death remained a devout Catholic. She is obscurely referred to once or twice in her brother's book as "Cynthia," and is described as "*in the grip of the Church*"; or again: "*Poor Cynthia, so good and kind, but alas! her Church is filling all her thoughts and her life to the exclusion of all other ties.*" I was sufficiently well acquainted personally with both Mr. and Mrs. Hornung to appreciate the pain which these alleged posthumous communications through mediums may cause in a Christian household. The distress experienced by the survivors in this world is patent and real; the disappointment felt by the purporting communicators on the other side, if their advances are not encouraged, is at best inferential.

3) "Raymond," by Sir Oliver Lodge, 6th edition, pp. 184 and 198.

4) "Claude's Book," edited by Mrs. Kelway Bamber, with a preface by Sir Oliver Lodge, p. 20.

5) Adin Ballou, "Spirit Manifestations," English ed., 1853, p. 102.

6) E. Crowell, "Primitive Christianity and Modern Spiritualism," New York, Vol. II., p. 299.

7) Speaking Across the Border-Line. Being letters from a Husband in Spirit Life to his Wife on Earth, by F. Heslop, with a commendatory note from Sir Oliver Lodge, 5th ed., p. 81. Mrs. Heslop must not, of course, be confused with the late Professor Hyslop of Columbia University, formerly Secretary of the American Society for Psychical Research.

8) 1 " Spirit Intercourse," New York, 1917, p. 203.

9) 1 Hare, "Experimental Investigation," 5th Edition, New York, 1858, p. 87.

10) See Davis's "Morning Lectures," 1864, pp. 349-350.

11) Unless indeed a reference on p. 134 to "those who are to have a second chance on this plane" should be so interpreted.

12) "The Witness," by Jessie Platts, p. 49.

13) "Claude's Book," p. 36.

14) Pheneas professes to revere the person of Christ, but to him and to A. C. D. the Cross is foolishness as it was to the gentiles. "*In the new world,*" we are told (p. 93) "*the Cross idea will have passed. The new religion will be all beauty and sweetness.*" None the less, by one of those astounding inconsistencies of which these script-books are full, Pheneas says (p. 204): "*If you make the sign of the Cross on your forehead when you lie down to sleep, you help the good spirits.*" A. C. D. comments, "*you seem to have some very R.C. ideas.*" To which Pheneas replies: "*Yes, they know the signs, but not always the spirit.*"

.....Concluded.

[**Note by Psypioneer:** - Sir Arthur Conan Doyle was sufficiently angered by this short book by Fr. Thurston to write one of his scarcest works "The Roman Catholic Church: a rejoinder". We hope to reprint Fr Thurston's brief review of this large pamphlet in due course.]

[**Note by Psypioneer:** - we continue our occasional series about this Japanese pioneer which began with an interview in the March 2007 issue.]

Taken from: - LIGHT November 10<sup>th</sup> 1928 p530.

## **SPIRITUALISM IN MODERN JAPAN**

**By Mr. W. Asano**  
**(President, Japanese Society for Psychic Science)**

In 1923 Japan underwent a great disaster in the Great Earthquake, but in spite of this heavy material blow the nation had its greatest blessing from the spiritual point of view in having thus the foundation for its future spiritual progress laid. At least I can say that it was given the opportunity by the society to introduce here its spiritual side to the psychic scientists and Spiritualists of the world.

Only a short time has been spent in Japan on systematic Spiritualistic study, and we cannot say as yet that all of its psychical phenomena are scientifically classified or studied; but, as far as I can see at present, there appears to be a great difference between the mediums of the West and East (including Japan and other oriental countries) with regard to their faculty and strength. While those of the West are willing to be put to the test and show various astounding results in laboratories, those of the Orient would not use their power but for moral or practical purposes. It is needless to say that scientific tests are most important, but at the same time the student should not try to put every medium into his own mould, as both extremities will certainly incur a great loss in the course of the study. I will now mention a few powerful mediums which Japan has at present, and of which it may interest you to know something.

MR. S. UCHIDA, a resident of Okazaki City, whose psychic faculty I have for two years been testing, possesses three kinds at present. The first is the phenomenon of Apports. Small pieces of metal or stone are gathered in his hand during a short trance. The second is the phenomenon of creating audible sounds in the air simply by moving hands. When he shakes his hand in trance there is produced in the air the sounds of an electric discharge. The third is trance speaking. He is an illiterate man and cannot write even his own name properly, but, in spite of his ignorance, often he gives lectures during trance on the illegible Buddhist scriptures, even quoting some long passages difficult to remember.

MRS. G. NAKANISHI IS also a trance medium, whose faculty is specially adapted for practical purposes. She is capable of remaining in trance for several hours at a stretch, and during the interval can diagnose even internal diseases in a few minutes. She can easily speed to a distant place to investigate things and trace fugitives. In our numerous tests with her for the past few months she was remarkably successful.

PROF. R. NAKAO, now filling a chair in the Osaka Technical College, is an excellent clairvoyant, whose faculty was discovered several years ago. Of late,



demonstrations are given by him every Sunday. He published a book on his experiences last year, calling it *Tosi to sono Jiturei* (Clairvoyance and its examples), illustrating clairvoyant phenomena from over 5,000 cases. It contains many interesting examples.

MR. M. ARAFUKA is a noted business man of Osaka. He is at present running a linen factory; not only is he a man of business but also of learning. About four years ago he found that he possessed the faculty of trance speech and also of automatic writing. His family and friends became doubtful of his sanity on account of the psychic phenomena produced by him, and he himself could not be confident of his own faculty for a considerable length of time. I came to know him in December, last year, and after repeated tests found in him excellent psychic power. His control announces himself by the name of *Michiominomikoto*, who was the assistant to the Emperor Jimmu, the first ruler enthroned in the Japanese Empire. Whosoever he may be, I marvel at his keen and profound knowledge of ancient Japanese history and the origin of Shintoism. I believe I am not exaggerating the fact if I say that through the explanations of this spirit, the oldest Japanese scripture came to show its true deep meanings which had not before been revealed. My deeper study of Mr. Arafuka is yet to come, but there is no room for doubt that he is one of the most promising mediums Japan has at present.

These mediums are not professional. They are all ardent students of psychic phenomena, and are willing to render services to others. There are in Japan, besides these psychics, numerous professional mediums who, like those in the West, are showing their psychic faculties in healing, etc. Their powers are varied, but in form can be roughly classified as Buddhistic incantations and prayers, Shinto charms, trance-speech, *kiai* (spellbinding shout), *tinkon* (a Shinto practice of meditation), the Western hypnotic treatments, etc. Such psychics are thousands in number within Tokyo City only. Some of them possess quite strong power and could satisfy people often in showing good results against diseases incurable by modern medical treatment. All of them, however, cannot be admitted genuine, as very few of them have undergone scientific investigation and treatment. Our Society for Psychic Study is now endeavouring to make statistical experiments among these psychics, and I think it will be possible for us to submit a precise report on them within a few years.

Apart from these numerous mediumistic faculties, there are in Japan some peculiar psychic phenomena that cannot be overlooked. It is shown in the disciples of mysticisms of various kinds and occult sciences. Most of these men are leading the solitary life of a hermit amidst mountains, and shun society. It is, therefore, rather difficult to put them under strict scientific tests in the laboratory; but it does not mean that these psychics can be disregarded. It would mean a great loss to the development of Spiritualism, for the psychic phenomena produced by such people and also those occurring around them appear often too marvellous and significant to be passed over simply as absurd or mysterious.

Our study of such psychics may still be insufficient, but I am able now to introduce you to a few of them. MR SAIKINAN, born in Chosen (Corea), was once a Government official in that district, which post he resigned more than ten years ago to devote his whole life to spiritual work. From childhood, he had been an earnest student of occult doctrines and also of Chinese mysticism, and since freed of his

professional yoke has shut himself up in Kongozan, a high mountain in Chosen, and given up the eating of cooked meals, taking daily only seven pieces of pine-bark biscuits. He had lived ten years in this way by June, last year, when he proceeded to try to live simply on air. He then climbed up Hakutozan, alone, an uninhabited high mountain situated in the boundary between Chosen and Manchuria, where he succeeded in observing his fast for one hundred days.

MR. S. T. is personally known to me as a friend. He is a graduate of an American college and now a member of Kobe Municipal Assembly. He has also been interested in the study of occult science and has come in contact with the *Sennin*; these are peculiar beings found only in the Eastern countries, and are considered to have attained immense longevity through, their extensive spiritual training. These men do not show their forms except to those whom they select as their disciples. Mr. T. says that he meets from time to time eight *Sennins* in a secret place on a mountain, where he stays with them from three days to a week, and gets himself instructed and trained during the interval under the guidance of these men. As far as their appearance is concerned, these eight men are said to look like the people of ancient times in their old-fashioned robes, but when they walk their easy and swift gait suggests that they feel no weight of their body. They show no difficulties in climbing steep, peaks or passing over precipitous cliffs.

MR. H. TOCAWA is an illiterate old man, over sixty, living in the county of Isé. When he was nine years old he was made the disciple of *Tengu*, a mysterious being in the Astral Plane, who is considered to be spiritually inferior to a *Sennin*. From time to time this *Tengu* pays calls on him and takes him along to travel in different places. He says he can pass over several hundred miles in a very short time when he is with this non-human guide. He is often given by this strange being various common objects, books, scrolls, or offerings to shrines, such as rice cakes, dried fishes, fruits, sweetmeats, etc. To Mr. Togawa, the *Tengu* looks simply as an old man of noble appearance, but nobody else is able to see the form of this supernatural being.

.....Concluded.

Hannah Jenkins is a Ph.D candidate at the University of Tasmania, and can be reached at: <http://www.utas.edu.au/philosophy/postgradpubs/Hannah/hannah.html> she has kindly sent in this article: - 'Some Observations on Table-Moving' by William Archer F.L.S.

**Introduction: -**

**Hannah Jenkins writes:** I was recently asked by Psypioneer to source an article on table-moving published in 1864 by the Royal Society of Tasmania. Table-moving, table turning or table tilting are all names for a common parlour game at the time in

which a group of 'sitters' would attempt to communicate with spirits. Sometimes the table moved, levitated or made sounds like raps or knocks and this piqued the curiosity of those involved as well as scientists at the time.

The article reproduced below was written by the naturalist and architect William Archer (born in Launceston, Tasmania in 1820) who appears to have been concerned to promote a 'normal' explanation for the anomalous psychokinetic phenomena associated with table turning. Archer uses the scientist Michael Faraday's conclusions as a basis for supposing the explanation - that it is involuntary movement by the sitters which creates the apparent psychokinetic effects.

It appears from the tone of his article that table turning was undertaken here, as elsewhere in the western world at that time, with the expectation that 'spirits' were responsible for creating the movement of the table and associated accompanying raps and taps. Given the close connection between Great Britain and the new colony of Tasmania at the time it is not surprising. As elsewhere, with the decline of Spiritualism, the prominent debunking of popular mediums and the rise of the study of psi in more controlled laboratory conditions, table turning became a forgotten parlour game.

However, lately interest in table turning in Australia has re-ignited and a group inspired by the 'Philip Experiments' in Canada in the 1970s has attempted replication of the anomalous phenomena. The group attempted to produce apparent psychokinetic effects with a view to find supporting evidence for the theory that the anomalous movement is due to anomalous effects rather than to either spirits or involuntary movements. All effort was taken to rule out 'normal' means of procuring the anomalous phenomena that were experienced (raps, taps and some movement).

As a participant in the experiments I can say that I definitely observed some phenomena that could not be explained through normal means, although we had to laugh when we spent months with no effects at all! A record of the events was kept on various forms of video and we also experienced certain difficulties with cameras working and then suddenly not working, even though the batteries were full and there were usually no technical problems with the equipment when used for other purposes.

A report on the attempts to produce PK was published in the Australian Journal of Parapsychology 'Examining Macro-psychokinetic Experiments' by M. Williams and R. Lang (volume 2/1 2002). The article is available online at:

<http://www.strangenation.com.au/Articles/Psipaper.htm>. The article contains references to the Philip Experiments (well worth a read) as well as notes on the procedure and methods undertaken by the Australian group. Interested readers should attempt replication themselves as video evidence and anecdotal tales can appear a little less convincing than the events when experienced personally.

**MONTHLY NOTICE**  
of  
**PAPERS AND PROCEEDINGS**  
OF THE  
**ROYAL SOCIETY**  
OF  
**TASMANIA.**

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**SEPTEMBER, 1864.**

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HOBART TOWN:  
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**SOME OBSERVATIONS ON TABLE-MOVING**  
By **WILLIAM ARCHER F.L.S.**

THE mystery which appears to surround the experiments connected with Table-Moving, has prevented many intelligent persons from arriving at a satisfactory conclusion as to the true cause of such singular results; and the celebrated Faraday has failed to convey to other than scientific minds that precise information upon the subject which he himself may be presumed to possess, - while others have involved the question in technical language, quite unintelligible to the public. The real nature of the case appears to me to be capable of a simple elucidation, which I will endeavor to place clearly before the Royal Society, in the hope that it will, at the least, create a discussion upon this curious and interesting subject.

It must be premised that whenever the will is exercised, and is unobstructed in its operation, that operation is immediate. Contemplated corporeal exertion is no sooner willed than it is attempted by the obedient muscles. When the will is weak, or enfeebled by disease, or confused by intoxication, its servants the muscles, cease to operate with the same exact and instantaneous obedience; and thus the man "sick of the palsy," fails to impart motion to his paralysed limbs, - the sufferer from ague vainly endeavors to compose and quiet his agitated body, - and the drunken man strives unsuccessfully to move his perplexed members with their natural and

regularity. Moreover, it is evident that, when the mind wills a certain result, it not only constrains the muscles to act, but to act in the manner and direction most likely to produce that result.

Now, when a person proceeds to try the experiment of "Table-Moving," he is instructed to keep his whole body perfectly quiescent, and to will at the same time, that a certain effect should be produced upon the table.

It is clear, then, in such a case that the mind is influencing the will with respect to two operations utterly opposed to one another: the one, that the muscles should act, the other, that they should remain quiescent; and the immediate result is in accordance with the idea which is impressed most strongly on the mind, - which idea at the outset, is invariably that the muscles should remain quiescent; consequently, no immediate movement of the table occurs. After some time, however the idea that the muscles should remain quiescent becomes fainter, while the idea of the projected movement, which is being continually impressed upon the mind, becomes more said more deeply implanted, until it is completely dominant, and the movement accordingly, takes place; but the idea of quiescence, which at first influenced the will almost entirely, still retains much of its force, and causes such confusion in the mind as to prevent it from realizing the fact that the movement in question is the direct consequence of volition.

Thus, when it is intended by persons seated round a table, with their hands placed upon its margin, that one side of the table should be elevated, the person whose hands are placed at that side pushes the table, the person opposite presses downwards and pulls, while those who occupy the other sides force the table, by a lateral pressure, in the direction in which it is pushed-all these movements being such as are best calculated to effect the object in view, when the hands are so placed as above stated. The result is that the side of the table is raised where the legs are situated near its centre (so that the centre of gravity is easily displaced) - or that the table is moved along the floor where the legs are situated near the table's margin, especially if the floor is smooth.

The conclusion, therefore, at which I have arrived is, that the motion of the table is caused by the muscular action of the persons who place their hands upon it; which action appears to them to be involuntary, on account of its not taking place in immediate consequence of volition.

It follows, then, that the effect is produced independently of direct electrical, or electro-biological, influence, engendered by the usual contact of hands completing the circle. This is demonstrated by the fact that the motion takes place without such contact of the hands. In fact, similar effects are produced, within the ordinary period of time, by the hands of one operator only.

In order to demonstrate that the result is effected by muscular action alone, I threw a light cloth over a polished round table. The persons who placed their hands upon it, - not in contact - willed that the table should turn towards the left. In a short time the cloth began to move in front of one person only, becoming tight on the right, and wrinkled on the left of his position; then the same effect was produced in the case of another. But it was only when the hands of all the operators were in decided motion

from right to left that the whole cloth was moved round equally - the table remaining quite stationary all the time.

The next experiment was to raise the table entirely from the floor by placing the palms of the hands on the margin of the table, and the thumbs underneath - the operators willing that the table should rise - which was successfully performed within the usual space of time.

The succeeding experiment was to raise the table by placing the whole hand flat upon the margin, - the operators willing, as before, that the table should rise; but the hands alone were elevated - the table remaining unmoved, as might have been expected.

My next deduction was, that this peculiar operation of the will might be applied to any kind of muscular exertion, the truth of which was demonstrated by the following experiments: - In the first, two persons took one end each of a piece of twine, and willed that the twine should break. Accordingly, their hands began shortly to move in opposite directions, and the movement increased in force until the twine gave way. Then, two persons stood up together, and willed themselves to walk. After a short time one felt the weight of his body thrown on his right leg, and, by degrees, the right leg moved forwards; but it did not appear inclined to plant itself on the floor, - so that the operator was obliged to resort to direct volition, in order to save himself from falling backwards. The other operator experienced similar sensations, excepting that his right leg moved.

Being anxious to discover whether there were any tendency in these operations to bring the mind under electro-biological influence, I placed half-a-crown in the hand of one of the operators, and told him to regard it earnestly for ten minutes, the usual time being twenty minutes. After he had done so I bade him raise his head and shut his eyes. Then, drawing the point of my finger downwards over the lids after they were closed, - in order to convey to his mind the idea of my power to keep them shut, - I told him that he could not open them; and he only succeeded in doing so after many and violent efforts. I tried one or two more experiments which satisfactorily proved his susceptibility of the influence. He had never tried the experiment before, nor had I. It is, however, possible that he may be at all times very susceptible of electro-biological influence.

The whole of the foregoing experiments were performed in immediate succession.

With respect to the declaration of numbers by the successive movements, up and down, of the side of a table, I cannot but wonder at the superstitious feelings with which many persons regard such experiments; for a little reflection would, I think, convince them that the results, when accurate, deserve to be considered as no more than good guesses, produced by the influence of the majority; that is to say, if "the table is to tell" the number of keys in a certain bunch - there being six operators, - the first of whom thinks of the number 4, the second of 5, the third of 7, the fourth of 6, the fifth of 6, and the sixth of 8, the result would probably be the average of those numbers, namely, 6, - which, if correct, could only be regarded as a good guess. There is no doubt that some correct, and, therefore, apparently supernatural guesses have been made; but the failures have been far more numerous; - the memory of them,

however, being soon obliterated by a very few instances of notable success. It is only those who are too superstitiously credulous to believe that the motion of the table is caused by muscular action, resulting from embarrassed volition, who will imagine that the minds of men sitting round a table, under circumstances of peculiar restraint, are more nearly omniscient than they are found to be when in the enjoyment of perfect freedom, - or that they are then capable of infusing into, or evoking from, inanimate matter the sensibility and power which belong to creatures endued with life.

Shakespeare makes Hamlet well say "There are more things in heaven and earth, Horatio, than are dreamt of in your philosophy;" but such a sentiment does not justify, respecting certain effects, conclusions which are opposed to reason, - especially when a reasonable explanation can be given of those effects, and a reasonable cause of them assigned.

The safest rule for our guidance, with respect to matters which appear to be mysterious and unaccountable, is to believe what is beyond our reason only upon reasonable testimony, and to reject at once what is evidently contrary to reason. Acting upon this rule I have been led to make such an investigation of the subject of table-moving as to warrant conclusions which seem reasonable to myself, and which will, I trust, appear satisfactory to others, at least to those who bring to the consideration of the subject minds free from prejudice or superstition.

Pages 86-89

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## BOOKS FOR SALE

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*Red Cactus: - The Life of Anna Kingsford.* By Alan Pert @ £14.95 + pp. See Psypioneer 3.5 issue: - <http://www.woodlandway.org/PDF/PP3.5May07..pdf>

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Paul J. Gaunt