

The Spiritist Review - 1862

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ALLAN KARDEC

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THE SPIRITIST REVIEW – 1862

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Essay about the interpretation of the doctrine of the fallen angels

The issue of origins has always had the magical power of attracting curiosity and, from that point of view, it attracts even more with respect to the origins of the human being, particularly when considering that it is impossible for any sensible person to literally accept the biblical report, setting it aside as one of those allegories so much typical of the oriental style. In fact, science comes to explain through indisputable means the material impossibility of the formation of the globe in a period of six days of twenty-four hours each. Given the irrefutable facts written in the geological layers, the Church had to yield before the opinion of scholars and agree with them that the six days of creation represent periods of undetermined lengths, as the Church did in former times with respect to the Earth's rotation. Hence, if the biblical text is susceptible to this kind of interpretation, with respect to that capital point of view, it can also be with respect to others, notably with respect to the time of appearance of the human beings on Earth, about their origin and the meaning that must be given to the qualification of fallen angels.

Since the origin of things is in God's designs and since it is only revealed to us when God judges it to be adequate, we are limited to conjectures. Many systems have been envisaged to solve that issue and up until now none has completely satisfied this rationale. We will also try to raise a tip of the veil. Will we be more successful than our predecessors? We do not know. It is up to the future to respond. The proposed theory is thus a personal opinion that seems to agree with reason and logic. This is what is going to give that theory a certain degree of likelihood.

To begin with we assert the fact that it is impossible to uncover any piece of truth unless we resource from the Spiritist theory. This theory has already solved a number of issues that were unsolvable up until now, and it is with the support of the guidelines provided by this theory that we will try to go back the course of times.

The literal meaning of certain passages of the sacred books, contradicted by science and rejected by reason, has produced more nonbelievers than one may suppose, given the obstinacy in turning those texts into an article of faith. If a rational interpretation can make them acceptable, it will evidently bring back to the Church those who ran away from it.

Before moving on it is of the essence that we be clear about the meaning of certain words. How many quarrels have been eternalized but for the ambiguity of certain expressions whose meaning were based on individual interpretations! This was demonstrated in *The Spirits' Book* about the word soul. Any controversy was promptly eliminated since we clearly stated the meaning that was given to that word.

The word angel is in the same situation. People use it regardless both in the good as well as in the bad sense by saying things like: "*the good and the bad angels, the angel of light and the angel of darkness*" from which it follows that the word actually means *spirit*. It is evidently with that meaning that the word must be understood when talking about *fallen angels* and *rebel angels*.

According to Spiritism, and in agreement with many theologians on this, the angels are not privileged beings of creation, exempt from the works imposed onto the others as if from a special favor, but Spirits that achieved perfection out of their own merit and efforts. If the angels were created perfect and considering that any rebellion against God is a sign of inferiority the rebellious could not be angels. Spiritism also tells us that the Spirits advance but cannot move backwards since they never lose the acquired skills. Well, a rebellion from the part of perfect Spirits would be a retroaction, since it can only be conceived from the part of imperfect Spirits.

In order to avoid any confusion it seems opportune to spare the word *angel* to the pure Spirits and call all others just by *good and bad Spirits*. However, since use has assigned this expression to fallen angels we say that we take it in its generic application. It will be seen that the idea of fallen and rebellion is perfectly admissible in that sense.

We do not know and perhaps will never know the starting point of the human soul. All that we know is that Spirits are created simple and ignorant; that they advance intellectually and morally; that due to the free-will some take the good path and others the wrong one; that once the foot is stuck in the mud it sinks even further; that after a very large number of corporeal existences on Earth and other planets the Spirits purify and approach God.

A point of difficult understanding is the formation of the first living creatures on Earth, each belonging to a given species, from the plant to the human being. The theory given in *The Spirits' Book* seems the most rational to us, although it solves the problem in an incomplete and hypothetical way, a problem that we consider insoluble as much to us as to the majority of the Spirits who are not granted access to the origin of things.

When questioned about it, the sages say that they do not know; others less modest pretend to be revealers and dictate things that are the result of their personal ideas, presenting them as the absolute truth. We must carefully analyze the systems brought up by certain Spirits about the beginning of things. To our eyes, what demonstrates the wisdom of those who dictated *The Spirits' Book* is their reservation to questions of such a nature. In our opinion the solution of this issue in absolute terms is not a demonstration of wisdom, as done by some who showed no concern with the material impossibilities demonstrated by science and observation. What we say about the appearance of the first human being on Earth refers to the formation of the bodies. Once the body is formed, it is easier to conceive the fact that the spirit will take that body over. Given the bodies our proposal is to examine the state of the Spirits that animate them so that we can possibly define the doctrine of the fallen angels and the lost paradise in a way that is more rational than what has been done so far.

If we do not admit the plurality of the corporeal existences we must admit that the soul is created at the same time as the body since it must be one of the two: either the soul that animates a body has already lived or it has not lived yet. There is no midterm between these two hypotheses. Now the second hypothesis – the one that states that the soul has not lived yet – leads to a number of insoluble problems, such as the diversity of aptitudes and instincts, incompatible with God's justice; the fate of children who die at an early age; the mentally challenged people, etc., whereas everything is naturally explained by the admission that the soul had already lived and that when it incarnates in a new body it brings along what had been previously acquired. That is how the societies advance gradually; without that how can we explain the existing differences between the current social condition and that from the times of barbarism? If the souls were created at the same time as the bodies the ones that are born today would be absolutely new and primitive as those that were born thousands of years ago. It must be added that there would be no relationship, no connection between them; they would be completely independent from each other. Why then would

God reward the souls of the present more than those created in the past? Why do they understand things better? Why are their instincts more refined and the customs more sophisticated? Why do they have the intuition of certain things that were not learned? We challenge anyone to give the solution to such a gridlock unless one admits that God may have created souls of dissimilar quality, according to the times and places, a proposition that is irreconcilable with the idea of a supreme justice.

Say, on the contrary, that the souls of today have already lived in former lives; that they were barbarian according to their century but that they have advanced; that they bring the summation of skills acquired in their previous existences and that, consequently, the souls of the civilized world were not created perfect but perfected themselves with time and you will therefore have the only plausible explanation for the cause of the social progress.

Those considerations taken from the theory of reincarnation are critical to understanding the facts we will discuss below.

Although the Spirits may incarnate in different worlds, it seems that, in general, they undertake a certain number of migrations on the same planet and in the same environment to better take advantage of the acquired experience; they can only leave such a world to inhabit an inferior one as a result of punishment or a better one as a reward. It follows that the population of the globe is composed of the same Spirits, with small variations, returning on across several epochs until they reach a degree of purification that entails their transfer to more advanced worlds.

According to the teachings given by the superior Spirits such emigrations and immigrations of the Spirits that incarnate on Earth take place from time to time, individually; however, in certain periods they do occur “en masse” forced by great revolutions that disappear with large quantities of those Spirits then replaced by others that constitute a new generation on Earth or on part of the planet.

Jesus said something remarkable that was not understood, like many other passages that were taken literally when he always spoke through images and parables. Announcing great events in the physical and moral world he said: “*Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place*”.¹ Well, the generation from Christ’s time has passed for over eighteen centuries and those things did not take place. We must conclude that either Jesus was mistaken, something that is inadmissible, or that his words had a meaning that was misinterpreted.

If we refer, however, to what the Spirits tell us, not only to us but through mediums from all countries, we should be close to the predicted times, an era of social renovation, that is, a time of great emigration of Spirits that inhabit Earth. That God sent them here so that they could improve, leaving them here for the time necessary to their betterment. God allowed them to get to know his laws, first through Moses and then Jesus; God warned them through the prophets; in their successive incarnations they were able to take advantage of those teachings; now the time has come and those who did not take advantage of light, those who violated God’s laws and neglected God’s power, those will leave Earth where from now on they would be misplaced given the moral progress that takes place and to which they would only create embarrassments, as human beings as well as Spirits. The generation that Jesus talked about could not be understood as the generation of people that lived in his time, physically speaking, but as the generation of Spirits that lived several periods

1 Matthew 24:34 (NT)

of their reincarnations on Earth and that will leave it. They shall be replaced by a new generation of more morally advanced Spirits who will establish among them the kingdom of love and charity taught by Christ and whose harmony shall not be disturbed by the contact with the bad ones, the proud, the selfish, the ambitious and impious.

According to the Spirits it really seems that among the children that are born now there are many reincarnations of Spirits of that generation. As for those of the previous generation that have merit but who, despite the odds, have not achieved a sufficient level of purification to move to more advanced worlds, these will be able to continue to inhabit Earth and go through a few incarnations. However, instead of punishment this shall be a reward since they will be happier and in constant progress here. The time for the disappearance of a generation and the appearance of a new one may be considered as the end of the world that is the moral world.

What will become of the Spirits that will be expelled from Earth? The Spirits themselves tell us that they will inhabit new worlds where they will find creatures even more underdeveloped than here to which they will have the mission of progress, transferring to them their acquired knowledge. The contact with a barbarian environment will be a cruel atonement to them and a source of permanent physical and moral suffering, becoming the more aware of such condition the more developed their intelligence. Such atonement, however, will be simultaneously a mission that will offer them the means of mending their past; according to the way they accomplish it. They will live a series of reincarnations there during a more or less lengthy time period, after which those who deserve it will move on to better worlds, perhaps even Earth that shall then be a resort of happiness and peace, while those from Earth will gradually move on up to the state of angels or pure Spirits.

That will take too long, some will say. Wouldn't it be better to move from Earth to Heavens at once? There is no doubt but with such a system you also have the alternative of moving, also en masse, from Earth to Hell for the whole of eternity. Now, you must agree that down here the sum of virtues necessary to go straight from Earth to Heavens is very rare and only a few people would have the certainty of holding them. The result is that it is more likely to go to hell than paradise. Isn't that more valuable to walk a longer path but with the certainty of achieving the objective? Given the current condition of Earth nobody is concerned with returning here but there is no obligation for that since it depends on each individual to advance in such a way while living here that a promotion may be granted. No prisoner expects to return to the cell after leaving jail and it is easy to do that. All that is required is that one does not fail again. The soldier would also find it very convenient to suddenly become a general but that has to be earned.

Let us return to the course of times and from the present, as a known starting point, let us try at least by analogy to deduce the unknown, although without the certainty of a mathematical demonstration.

The issue of Adam as the only branch of the human race on Earth is knowingly very controversial, because the Laws of Anthropology demonstrate its impossibility, not to mention the authentic documents about the Chinese history proving that the population of our globe goes back to a time much earlier than that of the biblical chronology of Adam. Is the story of Adam a fictitious tale then? It is not likely. It is an image that like all other allegories must contain a great truth whose key will only be produced by Spiritism. The central question, as we see it, is not about the fact if Adam has actually lived or what was the time when that happened but if the human race, identified as Adam's descendent, is a decayed race. The solution to this issue is not empty of moral content since it can guide our behavior towards the future by enlightening us about our past.

Let us observe, for starters, that the idea of a fallen human race is senseless when separated from that of reincarnation in the same way that one would carry the responsibility for the actions one's first father. If the soul of a person is created at the time of birth it means that the soul did not exist prior to that. Thus, it must not keep any direct or indirect relationship with the soul that made the first mistake. Then there is the follow up question: how could the soul be responsible for that? Doubt about such a point naturally leads to doubt and even disbelief about many others considering that if the starting point is false then the consequences are also false. That is the reasoning of many people. Well, such reasoning will fall if we consider the meaning of the biblical texts and not literally, and if we refer to the principles of Spiritism that is destined to revive the dying faith, as it was said before.

Let us observe still that the idea of rebel angels, fallen angels and lost paradise is found in almost every religion and is part of the tradition of almost all peoples. Hence, it must be founded on a truth. In order to understand the true meaning given to the expression *fallen angels* it is not necessary to imagine a real struggle between God and the angels or Spirits, considering that the word angel here is used in its generic meaning.

Admitting that human beings are incarnate Spirits, it stand to reason that the materialistic and atheists are no other than revolted angels or Spirits. These beings are these *fallen angels* as they are against the Divinity, deny God's existence, and do not acknowledge God's power or God's laws. Isn't it out of pride that they pretend that everything comes from them and not God? Isn't it extreme rebellion to preach the nothingness after death? Aren't they as much to blame for the utilization of their intelligence, something that they swagger about, to drag their fellow human beings to the precipice of disbelief? Isn't that, up to a certain extent, an act of rebellion to neglect the true attributes of God's essence, without denying it? Those who cover their bad actions with the mask of pity? Those who, in the name of peace, violate the first of God's laws: that of charity? Those who sow disturbance and hatred by slander and calumny? Finally, those whose voluntarily useless lives flow down the drain of idleness, without any benefit to them or to others? Everyone will have to report not only their bad deeds but also a good deed that was not done. Well, all those Spirits that have made bad use of their incarnations, once expelled from Earth and sent to inferior worlds among peoples still in the infancy of barbarism, what will they be if not fallen angels that were sent for their expiation? Isn't Earth to them a lost paradise, comparatively to the inhospitable environment where they shall be exiled for thousands of centuries, up until the day when they deserve their freedom?

If we now go back to the origin of the current race symbolized by Adam we find every character of a generation of Spirits expelled from another world for similar reasons, exiled on the already populated Earth but by primitive, barbarian and ignorant peoples, with the mission of helping their progress by bringing to this world the lights of an already developed intelligence. Isn't that the role actually played by the so-called Adamic race so far? By relegating it to this world of work and suffering wouldn't it give God reason to say: "*By the sweat of your brow you will eat your food*"? If that race deserved such a punishment for reasons like those that we see today, wouldn't it be fair to say that it was lost by pride? Couldn't God out of benevolence promise to send them a redeemer, that is, the one that should illuminate the path leading them to the happiness of the elected one? That savior was sent as Jesus who taught the law of love and charity as the true anchor of salvation.

Here there is an important point for consideration. Jesus' mission is easily understood by admitting that it refers to the same Spirits who lived before and after his appearance thus taking advantage of his teachings or of the merit of his sacrifice; without the reincarnation, however, it is more difficult to understand the utility of that same sacrifice for the benefit of Spirits that were created after his

appearance and in that case God would have created Spirits stained by faults of others with whom they never had any relationship.

That race of Spirits seems to have done its time on Earth. Some of them took advantage of that time and advanced and hence deserved their rewards; others, given their obstinacy in keeping their eyes closed to light, drained God's benevolence and deserved punishment. Thus these words of Jesus will be accomplished: "The good ones shall be on my right, the bad ones on my left".

A fact that seems to confirm the theory about the preexistence of the first inhabitants of that race on Earth is this: Adam, considered as the main branch, is represented as a person with a high level of intellectual development, higher even to the present savage races; his first descendants also demonstrated skills on very advanced level.

Now, from what we know about the condition of the Spirits in their origin, what would Adam be from an intellectual point of view if his soul had created at the same time as his body. Admitting, by exception, that God had given him a more perfected soul one still needs to explain why the savages of New Zealand, for example, are infinitely behind their common father, considering that they came out of the same branch.

Everything indicates, on the contrary, that from a physical and a moral stand point they belong to another race of Spirits, closer to their origin, and that they still need a large number of corporeal migrations before they even get to the least advanced levels of the Adamic race. The new race that will surge will speed up their advancement by the rule of Christ's law everywhere, which is the law of justice, love and charity.

The authors of works on Earth's anthropology concentrated their attention particularly on physical characters; the spiritual element was almost always neglected and authors who do not admit anything outside matter invariably deny it. When the spiritual element is taken into account by science it will shed a new light upon a number of still obscure issues because that element is one of the living forces of nature playing a fundamental role both in the physical and moral phenomena.

Let us see in a summarized form an example of an analogy that happens at a larger scale in the world of the Spirits. This example will help us to understand it.

On May 24th, 1861 the frigate *Iphigénie* disembarked with a company formed by 291 men at the port of New Caledonia. At their arrival the commander in chief gave the following order of the day:

"On disembarking on this far away land you have already realized your role. Following the example of our brave mariners whose service you see, you will help us to shine the light of civilization upon the savages of New Caledonia. I ask you this: isn't that a noble mission? You will accomplish that with dignity. Listen to the voice and advices of your superiors. I am before them. Make no mistake about these words. The choice of your commander, your officers, your sub-officers and corporals is an assurance of the efforts that will be employed in order to turn you into excellent soldiers; I say even more, to raise you to the condition of good citizens, transforming you into dignified settlers, if you so wish. The discipline imposed on you is strict and it must be so. It will come firm and inflexible to your hands but also fair and fraternal, knowing how to distinguish a mistake from vice and degradation..."

Here we have men who were expelled from a civilized country for their bad behavior and sent to a savage environment as their punishment. What did their commander say? *"You breached your*

parents' laws; you were cause of scandal and turmoil and you were expelled from there. You were sent here. However, you can make up for your past; you can conquer an honored position here through work and then become honest citizens. You have a beautiful mission to accomplish here and that is to bring civilization to these savage tribes. Discipline will be severe but fair and we will know how to distinguish the good behavior."

Isn't homeland a lost paradise to those relegated to the heart of savagery for their guilt and rebellion against the law? Aren't they fallen angels in the far away land? Isn't the language of their commander the same used by God to the Spirits exiled on Earth?

"You disobeyed my laws. That is why I sent you away from the land where you could live happily and in peace. You will be forced to work here. However, through your behavior you may conquer forgiveness and return to the land that you lost for your own fault – Heavens."

The first impression is that the idea of a fall seems to be in contradiction with the principle that the Spirits cannot regress. It is necessary to take into account; however, that it is not about a return to the primitive state. The fact that the spirit is in an inferior position does not follow that the spirit has lost everything that had been acquired before. The moral and intellectual development remains the same regardless of the environment where the spirit is located. It is like a common person that was condemned to the galleys for her crimes. That person has certainly fallen from the point of view of her social position but that has not made her more stupid or more ignorant.

Should we suppose that those people sent to the New Caledonia will suddenly become role models of virtue? That they will promptly renounce their past mistakes? One would need to ignore humanity in order to admit that. For the same reason the Spirits that will be expelled from Earth will not suddenly eliminate their pride and bad instincts as soon as they are installed in their new worlds of exile. They shall keep their original tendencies for a long time, the remains of the old yeast. The same must have happened to the Spirits of the Adamic race that were exiled on Earth. Isn't that the original sin? The stain that is brought by birth is that of the guilty and punished Spirits, stain that can be removed by repentance, atonement and renovation of their moral character.

The original sin is senseless when considered as the responsibility for someone else's fault and it is the denial of God's justice. Considered, as the consequence and remains, the initial imperfection of an individual. This imperfection is not only admitted by reason but also totally fair given the responsibility derived from that imperfection.

Such interpretation gives an absolutely natural explanation to the dogma of the Immaculate Conception, so much mocked by skepticism. That dogma established that Jesus' mother was not stained by the original sin. How can that be? Very simple: God sent a pure spirit that did not belong to the guilty and exiled race to incarnate on Earth and carry out her dignified mission, in the same way that from time to time God sends superior Spirits to boost and accelerate progress. Such Spirits are like the venerable pastor that visits the prisons to moralize their residents, showing them the path to salvation.

Some people will certainly find this not aligned to an orthodox interpretation. Some will even call it heresy. However, isn't it so that many people see the report found in Genesis, the story of the apple and Adam's rib, as symbolic, simple images? And because they are unable to find a suitable meaning to the doctrine of the fallen angels, of the rebellious angels and the lost paradise, they consider all that as fables? If a logical interpretation can show them a truth hidden by an allegory, isn't that better than absolute denial?

Let us admit that such interpretation is not in agreement with the strictest orthodoxy from all points of view, using the vulgar meaning of the phrase: we then ask if it is not preferable to believe in something than in absolutely nothing. If the belief in the literal text keeps people away from God and if the belief given the interpretation take people closer to God isn't the latter better than the other one? Hence, we are not here to destroy the principle, uprooting it like some philosophers did. We try to unveil its occult meaning and much to the contrary we came to consolidate it, giving it a rational foundation. However it may be one cannot deny the fact that this interpretation has a grandiose character that in reality is missing in the literal text. This theory simultaneously encompasses the universality of the worlds, the infinite in the past and future; gives everything a reason for being by the interconnections of all things, by the solidarity that it establishes among all parts of the universe. Isn't that more in agreement with the idea that we make of God's majesty and goodness than the one that circumscribes humanity to a point in space and an instant in eternity?

January 1862

Spiritist Communications and Publicity

The issue of publicity of the Spiritist communications is the complement to the general organization that was discussed in our previous issue. While the Spiritist circle grows, the number of mediums increase and with that the number of communications. For some time now those communications have shown a remarkable development with respect to the style, ideas and scope of the subjects that are discussed. The growth follows the very development of the science and the Spirits gauge the elevation of their teachings based on the development of the ideas. That happens in the local provinces, abroad and in Paris, as demonstrated by some examples that we receive and publish in the Review.

The Spirits aim with the general instruction and propagation of the principles of the Doctrine by giving those communications is to spread the message as opposed to keeping it hidden... Another important advantage is to demonstrate the ability of spontaneous teaching from the Spirits concerning all fundamental points and the neutralization of the influence of wrong methodologies, proving their isolation.

It is therefore necessary to examine the means of publicity that can best achieve that objective and for that reason there are two points to be taken into account: the media that offers the best reach to the publicity and the most adequate conditions to produce a favorable impression on the reader, given a judicious choice of subject matter and the presentation itself. The best works are sometimes dead on arrival for not taking into account certain and perhaps simply formal details. This observation results from experience. Certain editors are skilled with that respect, developing a feeling for the taste of the general public, something that allows them to promptly assess the chances of success of a given publication, regardless of its intrinsic merit.

The development taken by the Spiritist communications makes it virtually impossible to include all of them in the Review. The incorporation of everything would force the Review to grow that would make it unaffordable by many people. Hence there is the need to find the means of offering it to everybody in the best possible condition. For starters let us examine the pros and cons of the several means that could be employed.

1st – Local periodical publications. These pose two inconveniences. First, that of being almost always limited to the region; second is the fact that a periodical must be offered on pre-established dates, requiring administrative controls and regular expenses that must somehow be covered or pay the price of interruption. If the great media that reaches the public in general sometimes has difficulties to survive that would be even more justifiably true in the case of a publication that addresses a limited public since it would be impractical to count on many external subscribers, particularly if the publications grew in number.

2nd – Local non-periodical publications. A society, a group or some groups of the same town could gather their communications in independent brochures, like it was done in Metz, publishing them on undetermined dates. From a financial point of view this method is preferable to the preceding one since one can stop its publication at any time. However, there is always the issue of restriction in the publicity. There would be the need to cover for the costs of ads to spread such brochures outside the local circle and people often step back before those costs, or there should be the need for a central book store with many representatives in charge of that but then there is

another difficulty that comes out of that. Booksellers in general do not have a lot of good will with books that were not edited by them; besides, they do not want to load their representatives with publications of lesser importance to them or of uncertain acceptance, sometimes carried out in bad commercial condition given their format and price, forcing them to cover for the costs of returns in addition to discounts. These are considerations ignored by most authors who do not understand the business of book selling, letting alone the matter that some writers are surprised by the fact of not finding any editor interested in their works that they consider excellent. Even the authors who cover the costs of having their works published must remember that regardless of the advantages offered to the booksellers the work must please the public if in terms of the business they are not negotiable.

Our apologies to our readers for getting into so much material aspects on talking about spiritual works but it is precisely in the interest of propagation of good things that we want to forearm against the illusions of inexperience.

3rd – Individual publications of the mediums. Every consideration above is naturally applicable to the isolated publications that certain mediums could produce with the communications they receive. However, in addition to the fact that the majority of those mediums cannot do that there is another inconvenience: these, in general, have a trait of uniformity that make them dull, thus diminishing their appeal the more they were produced. They would only be attractive when treating a given subject, encompassing that subject as a whole, be it from a single or from several Spirits.

Such considerations are not absolute and there will certainly be exceptions. One must agree though that they rest on some foundation of truth. As a matter of fact what was said above does not aim at imposing our opinion that each person may consider or neglect. Fact is that since we all publish with the intention of achieving a result, we feel that it is our duty to expose the causes of deception.

The inconveniences that we have just mentioned above seem completely overcome by a central and collective publication that Mr. Didier & Co. is about to issue under the title 'Bibliothèque du monde invisible'.² It will encompass a series of large volumes (18 in) with about 250 pages, by a fixed price of 2 francs. Each volume will be numbered and sold separately so that those interested may acquire the number of their choice without the need to purchase others of no interest. That collection without fixed limits will offer an opportunity for the publication of mediumistic works from the several centers with the advantage of a very ample publicity through the correspondents. Something that this editor cannot do through isolated brochures can be done through a collection that may prove very important.

The name 'Library of the Invisible World' is the general title of the collection. Each volume might have a special title to indicate the subject and the origin and will benefit the author without the need that each author get involved with areas they are not as familiar. It is a collective publication but without solidarity among the producers and where each one participates on their own risk subjected to the chances of merit of their work, but enjoying a common publicity.

It is not the intention of the editor to publish everything that is sent to them. On the contrary, they express their freedom with a strict selection. The works that have been published under the

² Library of the invisible world (NT)

sponsorship of their authors may take part in the collection, provided that they are accepted and obey the conditions of format and price.

We personally have no connection with that publication and its administration and that has nothing in common with *The Spiritist Review* or with the other specialized works about this matter. We give it our blessings and our moral support because we believe it to be useful and the best open avenue of publication to the mediums, groups and societies. We shall contribute with that work as anyone else and only taking responsibility for the material that carries our name.

Besides the special works that we can offer to that collection we will give it a few volumes composed of select communications under the title '*Portefeuille spirite*',³ out of some communications obtained in our meetings in Paris and some from those sent to us by mediums and groups in France and abroad that correspond with us and do not want to move on with individual publications. These communications will have the attractiveness of the variety since they come from different sources. According to the circumstances we will add the observations necessary to their understanding and development. Special attention will be given to the order, classification and the table of matter.

Since we do not aim at any personal profit from those publications our intention is to revert the proceeds that are our own right to the free distribution of our works about Spiritism to those who cannot afford to purchase the books or any other application found useful to the propagation of Spiritism, according to the established conditions.

Such a plan seems to attend the requirements and we have no doubt that it will be well received by every sincere friend of Spiritism.

3 Spiritist portfolio (NT)

January 1862

Control of the Spiritist Teaching

The organization we proposed for the formation of Spiritist groups aims at preparing the avenue that must facilitate their mutual relationships. Among the resulting advantages is the unity of Spiritism as the most relevant and its natural consequence. That unity is already partially accomplished and is the fundamental bases of Spiritism. A large majority of the followers now follow these principles. Nonetheless there are still some doubtful questions. The reason may be that these principles have not yet been resolved or because they were done so in different ways by people or even by the Spirits.

If sometimes the methodologies are produced by human minds, we know that certain Spirits do not fall behind. In reality there are some that elaborate absurd ideas with a marvelous skill, interweaving them with a lot of art, and building something that is more imaginary than real. This can mislead the opinion of individuals who do not make the effort to investigate or who are unable to do so given their lack of knowledge. The false ideas, no doubt, end up breaking up as a result of direct experience and logic. Prior to that, however, such ideas can produce uncertainty.

We also know that the Spirits may have a more or less accurate way of seeing things, according to their elevation; that the signatures following the communications are not always a guarantee of authenticity and that arrogant Spirits sometimes preach utopias under the cover and embellishment of respectable names. This is undoubtedly one of the greatest difficulties of the practical science against which many people have crashed.

In case of divergence the best criterion is the agreement of the teachings from different Spirits, transmitted through different mediums and that are strange to one another. When the same principle is proclaimed or condemned by the majority we must surrender to the evidence. If there is a means of getting to the truth it is certainly through the agreement as much as the rationality of the communications, added to the means that we have to attest the superiority or inferiority of the Spirits. Since the opinion is no longer individual and becomes collective it acquires a higher degree of authenticity for it cannot be considered as the result of a personal or local influence. The doubtful ones will find a basis to support their ideas because it would be irrational to believe that someone that sustains an isolated point of view is right against everybody else.

What has fundamentally contributed to give credit to the doctrine of *The Spirits' Book* was precisely the fact that it finds support everywhere given the fact that it results from a similar work. Like we said, it is neither the works of a single spirit who could be systematic nor the works of a single medium that could be deceived. It is, on the contrary, the result of a collective teaching provided by a large diversity of Spirits and mediums and whose principles are more or less confirmed all over the world. We say more or less for the reason that as we said above there are Spirits who try to make their personal ideas prevail. Therefore it is useful to submit divergent ideas to the proposed control. If Spiritism or any doctrinaire point that we profess was unanimously recognized to be wrong, we would submit to that without complaints, feeling happy for the fact that others found the truth. If, however, those points are confirmed we should be allowed to believe that we are with the truth.

The Spiritist Society of Paris will submit questions considered to be more useful to the propagation of truth to the several corresponding centers, understanding the importance of similar work and having to enlighten itself in the first place, demonstrating that by no means it wants to stand out as

an absolute judge of the professed doctrines. Those questions will be submitted via private correspondence or through The Spiritist Review, according to the circumstances.

It is clear to the Society, and given the seriousness with which it faces Spiritism, that the authority of the communications depend on the conditions in which the meetings take place, the character of the members and their objective. Provided that the communications are originated from groups formed on the basis indicated in our article about the organization of Spiritism, to the eyes of the Society the better the conditions of those groups the more weight they will have.

While waiting for the questions to be submitted at a later stage, we submit the following ones to our corresponding groups.

January 1862

Questions and Issues Proposed to Several Spiritist Groups

1st – Formation of the Earth

There are two methodologies about the origin and formation of Earth. The most common opinion, generally adopted by science, is that Earth is the product of the gradual condensation of cosmic matter in a specific region of space. The same happens to other planets. According to the other methodology, more recently preconized according to the revelation of one spirit, Earth was formed by the incrustation of four satellites of a former planet that disappeared. Such a junction would have been the result of the will of the souls of those planets. A fifth satellite, the Moon, would have refused such association, given its free will. The voids that were formed due to the absence of the Moon would have created cavities that were filled up by the oceans. Each of those planets would have brought their typical beings in a *cataleptic state*: humans, animals and plants. After the joining and an equilibrium was reached, those creatures left their lethargic state and populated the globe. That would have been the origin of the primitive races on the planet: the black race in Africa, the yellow in Asia, the red in the Americas and the white in Europe.

Which of these two methodologies may be considered as an expression of truth? We request a thoughtful and explicit solution to this issue as to the others.

NOTE: This and other related questions are naturally marginal from a moral point of view that is the essential objective of Spiritism. Therefore there is no reason to take them as object of continual concern. As a matter of fact we are aware that the Spirits do not know everything about the origin of things and that they only say what they know or believe to know. However, since the divergence of systems could lead some people to see rupture in the unity of Spiritism, particularly because those systems were formulated by the Spirits, it is convenient to compare the pros and cons in the interest of Spiritism itself, supporting the judgment of worth of certain communications on the agreement of the majority.

2nd – The Soul of Earth

The proposition below was taken from a brochure under the title *Summary of the Harmonic Religion*.

“God created man, woman and all the best and most beautiful creatures. The souls of the globes, however, were given the power of creation of inferior creatures to complete the works through the combination of their own prolific fluid known in our planet by the name of aurora boreal and through the combination of this fluid with that of the other globes. Now, the soul of the terrestrial globe, like human souls, enjoys the free will, that is the freedom of choice between the good and the bad path, having chosen the latter. Hence the bad and imperfect creations such as the ferocious and venous animals and the plants that produce poisons. But humanity will make those nasty creatures disappear when in agreement with the soul of Earth, then walking together the good path, managing the planet in a more intelligent way, rendering the creation of a more perfect population.”

Is there any truth in such a proposition? How can one understand the soul of Earth?

3rd – Seat of the human soul

The following passage was extracted from the same book as above under the title “*The Key of Life*”, page 751:

“The soul has a luminous divine nature. It has the shape of the human being that it animates. It resides at the median cerebral region that connects the two lobes of the brain on its basis. In the harmonious man and in unity the soul, a radiant diamond, is ornamented by a white and luminous crown. It is the crown of harmony.”

What is true about that proposition?

4th – Seat of the souls

In the same book:

“The Spirits are obliged to reincarnate to achieve progress, while inhabiting the planets. As long as they achieve solar regions they no longer need the reincarnation, thus progressing by inhabiting suns of superior order from where they move on to celestial regions. The Milky Way whose light is so smooth is the dwelling of the angels or superior Spirits.”

Is that true?

5th – Manifestations of the Spirits

According to the doctrine taught by one spirit, “no human spirit can manifest or communicate with people or serve as an intermediary between God and humanity since God is Almighty and is everywhere God does not need auxiliaries for the execution of His orders and God does everything on His own. In the so called Spiritist communications it is only God that manifests, taking the human form of the evoked Spirits in the apparitions and their language in the written communications, Spirits with whom we believe to communicate. Hence, since the person is dead there cannot be any relationship with those left behind on Earth before a given level of advancement in the spiritual world is achieved through the several successive reincarnations. Since only God can manifest the rude and trivial communications, the blasphemies and lies are equally produced by God but as a test, in the same way that God does with the good ones, with the objective of instructing.”

Naturally the spirit that dictated the message above says that he is God himself. Based on that he formulated an extensive philosophical, social and religious doctrine.

What should one think about such a system, its consequences and the nature of the spirit that teaches it?

6th – Rebel angels, fallen angels and lost paradise

How can we see the theory about it given by Mr. Allan Kardec above?

January 1862

About the Supernatural

By Mr. Guizot

(Second article, see the issue of December 1861)

In our last issue we published the eloquent and remarkable chapter written by Mr. Guizot regarding the supernatural and about which we wanted to make a few critical observations that in no way diminish our admiration for the renowned author.

Mr. Guizot believes in the supernatural. We need to be clear about the meaning of the words about this as well as many other points. In its literal sense supernatural means what is above nature, outside of the laws of nature. The supernatural per se is not submitted to the laws; it is an exception, a derogation of the laws that govern Creation. In one word, it is the synonym of miracle.

Those two words are used in figurative language, designating everything that is extraordinary, wonderful, and uncommon. Something that causes admiration is said to be miraculous, like something that has a great extension is said to be incommensurable; of a large number as incalculable; or even a long duration that is eternal, although and strictly speaking they can be measured, calculated and temporary as for the last one. For the same reason people qualify as supernatural everything that seems to be beyond the limits of the possible, at first sight. Those who do not understand it always commonly take the word on its literal meaning. If the word is used to describe everything whose causes are unknown, it is fine; however, in that case the word no longer has a precise meaning because something that was supernatural in the past it is no more today. How many things that were formerly considered supernatural hasn't science brought to the domain of natural laws?

Despite the progress that has been realized can we boast about knowing God's secrets? Has nature given us the last word about everything? Do not we have such proud pretension belied every day? Thus, if something that was supernatural in past is no longer today we can logically infer that something that is supernatural today will no longer be tomorrow. As for ourselves, we take the word supernatural in its amplest meaning, that is, to designate every phenomenon contrary to the laws of nature. The character of a supernatural or miraculous fact is the exception. As long as it repeats it is submitted to a known or unknown law and belongs to the general order.

If nature is restricted to the visible material world it is obvious that things of the invisible world are supernatural. However, since the invisible world is also submitted to the laws it seems logical to us that nature be defined as the *comprehensive works of creations that comply with the immutable Laws of Divinity*. If the invisible world is one of the forces of nature, as demonstrated by Spiritism, one of the powers that act upon matter, it represents an important role in nature. For that very reason to us the Spiritist phenomena are neither supernatural nor wonderful or miraculous. It follows that far from expanding the circle of the supernatural Spiritism tends to restrict it and make it disappear.

We said that Mr. Guizot believes in the supernatural but in its miraculous sense and that by no means leads to a belief in the Spirits and their manifestations. Now, since the Spiritist phenomena have nothing of abnormal to us, it does not follow that God does not breach His own laws in certain cases, considering that He is Almighty. Would God have done so? This is not the place to analyze the issue. In order to do that, we would have to discuss each individual case instead of discussing

the principle. Positioning ourselves at the same stand point as Mr. Guizot, that is the reality of miraculous facts, we will try to combat the consequence that he derives about the impossibility of religion without the supernatural and, on the contrary, demonstrate that the annihilation of religion is the consequence of his system.

Mr. Guizot starts from the principle that every religion is founded on the supernatural. That is correct if we see as supernatural anything that is not understood. If, however, we investigate the status of human knowledge at the time of foundation of each known religion, we will see how limited it was in Astronomy, Physics, Chemistry, Geology, Physiology, etc.

If a good number of known and already explained phenomena are called marvelous in our modern times with even more reason the same should have happened in former times. Besides, a figurative, symbolic and allegoric language typically used by all peoples in the Orient naturally facilitated fiction whose true meaning was not uncovered by ignorance.

We must still add that the founders of the religions, superior minds that stuck out from the crowds, knew better and had to resource to a super-human prestige to impress the masses, while certain ambitious persons exploited credulity. See Numa Pompilius, Mohamed and so many others! Imposters, you may say. Be it.

Let us look at the religions that stem out of Moses. They all adopt creation according to Genesis. Well, is there anything more supernatural than that formation of Earth, taken out of nothing and coming out of the chaos, populated by every living creature, plants and animals, all formed and adults, and all that in six days of twenty-four hours, as if from a swing of the magic wand? Isn't that a breach of the natural laws that govern matter and the progression of the beings? God could have certainly done that. But has He? Only a few years back this was stated as an article of faith and there you have science taking the magnificent fact of the origin of the world to the order of natural facts, demonstrating that it all happened according to eternal laws. Has religion been harmed for no longer having a marvelous fact in its foundation? It would undoubtedly have damaged its credit if adamant in denying the evidence, whereas it benefit by accepting the general order of things.

A much less important fact, despite the persecution that it produced, is that of Joshua stopping the Sun to extend the day for two hours. It doesn't matter if it was the Sun that stopped or Earth. The fact is still supernatural. It is the breach of a fundamental law that interconnects the globes.

Some saw a way out in the recognition that it was Earth that turned but they did not take into account Newton's apple, the celestial dynamics of Laplace and the law of gravitation. If the motion of Earth is suspended not for two hours but for a few minutes it will interrupt the centrifugal force and Earth shall precipitate against the Sun. The equilibrium of the oceans on the surface of Earth is maintained by the continuity of the motion. If the motion stops it is total destruction. Now, the history of the world does not indicate any cataclysm over that time. We do not contest the fact that God may have favored Joshua by extending the clarity of the day. How? We do not know. It could have been the aurora boreal, a meteor or any other phenomenon that would not have altered the natural order of things. It is unquestionable, however, that it was not the one that for centuries was considered to be an article of faith. It is very natural that it was believed so in the past but today it is impossible unless science is denied.

Some will say that religion is based on many other events that are neither explained nor explicable. Unexplained, yes, inexplicable is another issue. Do we know what future reserves in terms of

knowledge and discovery? Do not we already see phenomena of ecstasy, visions, apparitions, remote visions, instantaneous cures, transportation, verbal communications and others with the beings of the invisible world, under the umbrella of magnetism, somnambulism and Spiritism, phenomena that were known since immemorial times, then considered marvelous and today demonstrated to belong to the natural order of things, according to the law of formation of the creatures?

The sacred books have plenty of facts classified as supernatural. However, since we find them and even more marvelous in all pagan religions of antiquity, if the truth of a given religion depended on the number and nature of such facts we would not know which one of them would be true.

Mr. Guizot cites the formation of the first man as a proof of the supernatural, a man that was created adult because, and according to Mr. Guizot, alone and in his infancy he could not have been able to feed himself but if could made an exception by creating him adult couldn't God have made another one by giving the boy the means of survival and that without moving away from the established order? Since the animals were here prior to humankind wouldn't that be possible to turn the legend of Romulus and Remus a reality with respect to the first boy?

We say the first boy when in fact we should say the first children since the issue of a unique branch to humankind is controversial. In fact the laws of Anthropology demonstrate the material impossibility that the posterity of a single man could have inhabited the whole world in just a few centuries, yielding the black, yellow and red races, since it has been well established that those differences are due to the organic structure rather than to the climate.

Mr. Guizot suggests a dangerous thesis when stating that not a single religion is possible without the supernatural. If he places the truths of Christianity on the basis of the marvelous only he gives it a fragile support whose stones fall apart every day. We give them a more solid foundation: the immutable laws of God. Such foundation defies time and science for time and science will sanction them.

Mr. Guizot's thesis thus leads to the conclusion that at some point in time there will no longer be a religion that is possible, not even the Christian religion, if one can demonstrate that something considered supernatural is actually natural. Was it that he wanted to demonstrate? No. But that is the consequence of his argumentation. We move fast in that direction since, regardless of what we do, however much we add in thought, there will not be the belief that a fact is supernatural when it has been demonstrated that it is not.

We are less skeptical than Mr. Guizot with that respect and say that God is no less worth of our admiration, acknowledgement, and respect for not having breached His own laws, actually great for their immutability; that there is no need for the supernatural to worship God accordingly, and consequently to have a religion that will find the less non-believers the more it is sanctioned by reason in all points.

In our opinion Christianity has nothing to lose with that sanction but, on the contrary, to benefit. If something has done harm to Christianity in the opinion of many it was precisely the abuse of the marvelous and supernatural. Make people see the greatness and power of God everywhere in creation; show them the wisdom and the remarkable providence from the germination of the tiniest plant to the mechanism of the universe and the wonders will be many! Replace in their spirit the idea of an envious, enraged, vindictive and merciless God by that of sovereignly just, good and

merciful God that does not condemn people to eternal and hopeless sufferings for their temporary faults.

Have them fed by such ideas since their infancy and such ideas will grow with reason and you will make many more firm and sincere believers than if they were cradled by allegories that are literally imposed on them and later repelled, leading them to doubt and deny everything. If you want to maintain religion by the single path of the illusion of the wonderful there will only be one way: by keeping humanity ignorant. See if that is possible. Through an excessive zeal in only showing God in the prodigies and exceptions we do not show Him in the wonders before our eyes.

They will certainly take an issue with the birth of Christ that could not be explained by natural laws and that it is one of the most remarkable demonstrations of his divine character. This is not the place to examine the subject. However and, once again, we do not deny God from the power of breaching His own laws. What we contest is the absolute necessity of doing so for the establishment of any given religion.

Some will say that Magnetism and Spiritism, by reproducing the phenomena considered miraculous, are contrary to the current religion since they tend to remove the supernatural character of those facts. Nonetheless, what can one do if those facts are true? They cannot be denied since they are not the privilege of a single person and replicate all over the world. Something similar could be said of Physics, Chemistry, Astronomy, Geology, Meteorology and all sciences. We say that the skepticism of many people has no other source but the impossibility to them of such exceptional facts. By denying the foundations that support those facts they deny everything else. They shall be forced to believe once the possibility and the reality of those facts are reproduced before their eyes.

- That is the same as denying Christ the divine character!
- Do you then prefer that people believe in nothing to believe in something? Is that the only way of demonstrating the divinity of Christ's mission? Isn't his character a hundred times more in evidence from the sublimity of his teachings and the example he gave of his virtues? If his character cannot be seen but from the material acts of his practice, haven't others done the same like his contemporary Apollonius of Tyana? Why has Jesus outperformed him? The reason is that he made a miracle that is much more than the transformation of water into wine; feeding four thousand people with five breads; healing the epileptic; making the blind see and the paralytic walk. The miracle is that of having changed the face of the world; it is the revolution carried out by a man that came from a barn, during a three-year preaching period and without writing anything, just helped by a few obscure and ignorant fishermen. That is the true prodigy and that one needs to be blind so as not to see the hand of God. Have such a truth deeply accepted and that is the best way of converting people into strong believers.

January 1862

Poetry from Beyond the Grave

We wanted verses from Béranger
(Spiritist Society of Mexico, April 20th 1859)

Since I left our land of grace
I hear my name on visiting many places.
Everyone says: 'Please, come', they say with eager:
'We want the verses of Béranger.'
Allow some rest to this smiling face.
Today she lives in the ample fields of space
And to praise the Lord always full of joy her singing
Is daily mixed with heavenly gigs.
She formerly sang very frivolous songs,
But her heart was good. Her perky words
Were not badly judged by God.
She loved and prayed, disliking nobody.
If I made fun of the Nasturtium class
That also made the French laugh.
If God allows me to return to this World
I shall make you rejoice with my words.

NOTE: At this point the spirit of Béranger left us, returning after our invitation and giving us the following verses:

Alas! You kill me oh frivolous people!
Verses! Always verses! The poor Béranger doodled
Them in quantity when living on this planet.
Against them his death should protect.
But no, not at all! He must follow his fate!
I wish with my death God would repudiate.
The poor Béranger's suffering you see
And still you want to punish him for his sins!

Béranger

Trying another song
(Spiritist Society of Mexico)

I

Dear son of a beloved land,
The vision of you always at hand,
There were many skies and a regenerated soul,
Beauty, youth and love I found, though.
The apex of life is finally my shore,
Eternal world where we all reborn.
Poor spirit from this other land
Still trying another song through your hand.

II

I saw this pale goddess arriving,
Her simple name is so touching.
I only saw kindness in her eyes
We then shook hands, I was fearless.
I fell asleep and my new friendly
Soul caressed my farewell with sounds, gently.
And poor spirit from this other land
Still trying another song through your hand.

III

Go in peace, lie down on the grave
Oh happy deceased, no worries on your wake
Your closed eyes are the fallen curtains
That before a more radiant Sun will open again!
Thus, smile! By death you are invited
To the feasts of brilliant harvests.
And poor spirit from this other land
Still trying another song through your hand.

IV

The giants of glory are downed:
Slaves and kings, they shall all be confused
Since to all of us victory is the greatest
To the one who can love the most!
In that land we see what our love claims
Or the grief that on Earth remains.
And poor spirit from this other land
Still trying another song through your hand.

V

Good-bye, friends. I am back to the spaces
That can always be bridged by invitation, at your discretion.
The infinity always surrounding us
And where you shall be soon walking.
Yes, happily and renovated
We shall together have my lessons recounted.
And poor spirit from this other land
Still trying another song through your hand.

Béranger

NOTE: The President of the Spiritist Society of Mexico was visiting Paris and entrusted us with a series of communications from that Society, authorizing us to choose those that were considered of greatest utility for publication. We believe that our readers will not regret our initial choice. They will see the number of nice communications that are given all over the world. We must add that the lady who has received the poems above has no background in poetry.

January 1862

Bibliography

Spiritism in its simplest expression or the Doctrine of the Spirits made popular

The brochure that was announced with above title in our last number will be issued on January 15th but instead of the indicated price of 25 cents per individual volume it will be sold by 15 cents per volume or 10 cents per volume with the purchasing of 20 volumes, plus 2 cents for mailing.

The objective of this book is to provide a short summary of the history of Spiritism with a sufficient explanation of the Doctrine of the Spirits in order to make its moral and philosophical consequences understood. Our intention is to make it reachable by all levels of intelligence. We count on the support of every Spiritist to help with its propagation.

Bibliography

Revelations from beyond the grave

Revelations from beyond the grave by Mrs. H. Dozon, evoking medium and Mr. H. Dozon, ex-officer of the Guard, Knight of the Legion of Honor. Large volume, 2.25 francs. Ledoyen edition; Galerie d'Orleans, 31, Palais Royal.

The work contains a collection of communications obtained by Mrs. Dozon, member of the Spiritist Society of Paris, during and after a painful disease that, as she says herself, would have abated her courage if she did not have maintained her faith in Spiritism and in the evident assistance of spiritual friends and guides who supported her in the most difficult times. Thus, the majority of the communications are markedly affected by the circumstances in which they were received. The obvious objective was to raise her low morale, something that was promptly achieved. Their character is essentially religious. The communications exhale the purest, soothing and reassuring moral. Some show remarkable elevation of thoughts. We regret the fact that, given the speed that the book was published, there wasn't sufficient time to do the necessary corrections.

If the announced Library of the Invisible World were about to be published this work would have found an honorable position there.

Bibliography

A Will in Favor of Spiritism

To Mr. Allan Kardec, President of the Spiritist Society of Paris

“Dear Sir and honorable Spiritist chief,

I attach to this letter my private will in an envelope sealed with green wax indicating in that envelope what should be done after my death. From the moment I met you and understood the bottom line and objectives of Spiritism I made the decision of preparing my will. My intention was to have it done this winter, after my returning from the countryside.

In my leisure time and in the solitude of my refuge I could give serious thoughts to this, illuminated by the shining light of Spiritism, taking advantage of the teachings of the Spirits of the Lord, from all points of view, guiding me for the accomplishment of this task in the most useful way to my Earthly brothers, be it in the heart of my home, near or far from me, known or unknown, friends or foes, and in the most God pleasing way.

I remember the respectable Mr. Jobard from Brussels whose sudden death was announced by you and his profound and witty writings, in particular with respect to an inheritance of twenty million that he used to say he had been defrauded and that such a colossal fortune would have been a powerful lever to accelerate the advancement of the new era. Money that is often called and from a worldly stand point the nerve of war is in fact a terrifying instrument, powerful for good or bad, and I said to myself: “I can and I must dedicate a remarkable amount of my modest estate to support this new era, a heritage acquired for the accomplishment of my trials, with my own sweat and to the price of my health, from poverty, fatigue, study and work, and for over thirty years working as an attorney at law, in the busy days of office and hearings.

I read Lamennais’ letter again from November 1st 1832 after his trip to Rome, sent to Countess Senfft, in which he expresses his disappointment after so much effort and struggles in his search for the truth, using these words that are if not prophetic at least inspired, by announcing the new era:”

(The text is followed by several citations that are omitted here for lack of space).

The envelope contains the following notice: “This enveloped sealed with green wax contains my personal will. The seal must be broken and the envelope open only after my death and in a general session of the Spiritist Society of Paris. The President of the day will read the entire will during that session. The seal shall be broken and the envelope open by the President. The envelope will be delivered to Mr. Allan Kardec, current President, who will have it deposited into the archives of the Society. An original of the same will shall be found in the office of Mrs. xxx; another original will be found at my house. The deposit made with Mr. Allan Kardec is mentioned in the other originals.”

After communicating the fact to the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies on November 20th, 1861, the President, Mr. Allan Kardec thanked the generous intentions of the will in favor of Spiritism, congratulating the person by the way he understood its objectives and reach.

Although the author of the letter had not requested privacy in case it was considered adequate to have the name published, we understand that it is sensible to strictly respect the privacy, given the circumstances and the issue at hand.

Bibliography

Letter to Mr. Mohéry with respect to Ms. Godu

Certain strange phenomena produced by Ms. Godu have been commented lately, phenomena that would consist on the production of diamonds and precious stones through strange means. Mr. Mohéry personally sent us a long and descriptive letter about it and some people were surprised that we made no comment about it. The reason for that is the fact that we never accept a given assertion just out of pure enthusiasm. Before accepting we examine things cold-bloodedly since experience teaches us how much we must suspect certain illusions.

Had we published all the wonders that were reported to us in more or less good faith, without a proper examination, our Review might have become perhaps more enjoyable but we must preserve the serious character that the Review has always had. With respect to the new and prodigious faculty that would have been revealed with Ms. Godu, we frankly believe that the healing medium was more precious and useful to humanity and also to the propagation of Spiritism. However, we deny nothing and those who think that with such news we would rush to take the train to check the facts we respond that if something is true it shall not avoid official confirmation. It will then be the time to speak and we have no problem with being the first to proclaim it. Here is a summary of the answer that we sent to Mr. Mohéry:

“...It is true that I did not publish all the reports that you sent me about the cures operated by Ms. Godu but I said enough in order to call attention to her work. Constantly speaking about the case would give the impression that I serve particular interests. Wisdom advised the wait to have the future confirming the past. As for the phenomena that you describe in your latest letter those are so strange that I did not venture into publishing them but when I have your undeniable confirmation. The more abnormal a fact is the more caution it requires. You must not be surprised by seeing too much of that in such cases. This is also the advice from the Committee of the Society to whom I submitted your letter. The unanimous decision was to wait for the developments before we speak about it. Up until now the fact is so much contrary to any natural laws and even all known laws of Spiritism that the first feeling that it entails is that of disbelief, even among Spiritists. Speaking about it in anticipation and before being able to support them with authentic proofs would be a useless call for mockery.”

NOTE: We are postponing to the next issue the publication of several evocations and Spiritist dissertations of great interest.

Allan Kardec

February 1862

Greetings from Last Year

Several hundred letters were addressed to us towards the end of last year so that it is literally impossible for us to respond to all of them one by one. We then ask our honorable correspondents to receive here the expression of our sincere appreciation for the testimony of sympathy that they have kindly sent us. One of them, however, given its nature, requires a special response. That is the one sent by the Spiritists of Lyon, containing about 200 signatures.

Following their request we take the opportunity to provide some general advices. The Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, founded by us, not only judged it useful to everybody thus suggesting to have these advices published in *The Spiritist Review*, but also voted to have it printed in a separate brochure to be distributed to all members.

All those who have kindly written to us share the feeling of reciprocity that we express in the response and that are addressed, without exception, to all French and foreign Spiritists who honor us with the title of their chief and guide on the new path that opens before them.

We do not address only those who have sent their good wishes over the New Year but to everyone that permanently gives us touching demonstrations of their recognition for the happiness and consolation found in Spiritism, reporting their sufferings and struggles to support its propagation. Finally, to all of those to whom our work does any good in the progressive march of Spiritism.

Response to the New Year's Message from the Spiritists of Lyon

My dear brothers and friends of Lyon,

The collective message that you kindly sent me over the New Year has brought me great satisfaction, demonstrating that you have kept a good memory of me. However, what gave me an even greater pleasure out of your spontaneous act was to find representatives of almost every group among the signatures, since this is a sign of reigning harmony among them. I am happy for you for having understood the objective of that organization whose results you can already appreciate, for it is now evident to you that a single society would have been almost impossible.

I thank you, dear friends, for your good wishes. They are even more valued since I know that they come from the bottom of your hearts, and those are the ones heard by God. You must rejoice because God hears you every day by giving me the unprecedented joy over the establishment of a new doctrine, of seeing the Doctrine, which I devoted, grow and prosper in my days, with a wonderful speed. I see as a great favor from the heavens to be able to observe the good that it does. Such certainty where I receive daily testimonies pays me much more than my penalties and fatigue. I only ask God for the grace of giving me the necessary physical strength to carry on with my duties to the end, a task that is far from being accomplished. Regardless of what happens I shall always have the assurance that the now widely spread seed of the new ideas is imperishable. I feel happier than others who only worked for the future while I was given the opportunity to see the first fruits.

If there is anything to regret is the limitation of my financial resources that do not allow me to execute my plans for its faster development. If God's wisdom wished it to be different I shall leave this plan to my successors who will undoubtedly be more fortunate. Despite the strong limitation of material resources the movement of opinion that takes place goes beyond any expectation. You may believe brothers that your example has contributed to this.

I congratulate you for the way you understand and practice Spiritism. I know well the magnitude of the trials that some of you have to endure. Here on Earth it is only God that can show you their term. However, how much strength against adversity we get out of our faith in the future? Oh! Be sorry for those who believe in nothing after death since for them there is no compensation for the present evil. The unfortunate non-believer is like the hopeless patient. The Spiritist, on the contrary, is like the patient of today that is certain of a cure tomorrow.

You asked me to keep up with my advices. I gladly do so to those who ask and believe to need them. But only to those. To the others who believe to know enough and that dismiss the lessons of experience I have nothing to say but my wishes that one day they may not regret for having excessively trusted their own strengths. As a matter of fact, such pretension reveals a sentiment of pride that is contrary to the message of Spiritism. Through faulty foundations they demonstrate to be away from the truth. You are not among them, my friends, therefore I take the opportunity to bring you a few words of assurance that near or far away I am all yours.

From where we stand today and considering the march of Spiritism through a path full of obstacles that were laid down on its course, one can say that the major difficulties were overcome. Spiritism now has a place under the Sun and it is founded on bases that from now on challenge the efforts of its adversaries.

The question is how a doctrine that makes people better and happier can find adversaries. This is very natural. In the beginning the establishment of the best things always harm other interests. Hasn't that be so with all inventions and discoveries that revolutionize industry? Those who are now considered a benefit and that we cannot go without, haven't they found bloodthirsty adversaries? Doesn't every law that suppresses abuse find adversaries in those who live on the abuse? How would you then wish that a doctrine that leads to the kingdom of effective charity were not attacked by those who live on selfishness? And you know how large the number is on Earth! In the beginning they thought they could kill it through mockery. Today they see that such a weapon is harmless and that it continued with its unyielding march under the crossfire of sarcasm. Do not think that they have conceded! No, the material interest is more tenacious. Since they acknowledge that it is a more deserving power they will now throw more serious attacks that in turn will serve to better expose their weaknesses. Some will openly attack it in their words and actions and even persecute the followers individually, trying to discourage them by their intrigues, whereas others, more disguised and through indirect ways, will try to undermine them in the shadows. Be warned: the fight is not over. I am convinced that they will try a last resort. Have no fear, though, for the flag of success is in this adage that is that of every true Spiritist: There is no salvation without charity. Raise that flag way up high because to the selfish ones it is the head of Medusa.

The tactics presently used by the enemies of the Spiritists and that will be employed with a renewed fervor is that of trying to divide them, creating divergent systems, giving rise to mistrust and jealousy among them. Do not allow yourselves to fall into that trap and rest assured that regardless of the employed means whoever tries to break the good harmony cannot have good intentions. That is why I warn you to keep the strictest circumspection over the formation of your groups, not only to give you peace of mind but also for the benefit of your own works.

The very nature of the Spiritist works requires calmness and reverence. Well, that is not possible if discussions and expressions of bad feelings distract us. If there is fraternity there will not be malevolent feelings but fraternity is not possible with selfish, proud and ambitious people. The proud ones are shocked and hurt by everything; the ambitious are disenchanted when they do not have supremacy; the selfish who only think of themselves will soon introduce disagreement. With all that comes rupture. This is what our enemies wanted and that is what they will try.

If a group wants to have order, tranquility and stability it is necessary to be governed by an overwhelmingly fraternal feeling. Any group or society that is not formed on the foundation of effective charity will not have vitality; however, those formed according to the true spirit of Spiritism will see one another as members of the same family just living in different homes. Rivalry would be nonsense among them since it could not exist where there is true charity and charity cannot be understood in two different ways.

Hence, you must recognize the true Spiritist by the practice of charity in thoughts, words and actions and say to yourself that anyone who feeds in one's heart feelings of animosity, grudge, hatred, envy and jealousy is in fact lying to oneself if willing to understand and practice Spiritism.

Selfishness and pride kill private societies as they kill people and society as a whole. Review history and you will see that peoples have succumbed under the weight of these enemies of human happiness. Such happiness will be unbreakable when supported by the foundations of charity and everyone will be at peace with oneself and with one another, each one respecting their neighbors' properties and rights. That shall be the new foreseen era of which Spiritism is a precursor and for which every Spiritist must work, each one in their own sphere of activities. It is their duty. They shall be rewarded according to their performance and God will distinguish between those who only seek Spiritism for their own satisfaction and the ones who also work for the happiness of their brothers.

I must still point out another ploy of your adversaries that is to try to compromise the Spiritists by trying to keep them away from the true moral objective of Spiritism. They do this through the discussion of matters that are not of its competence thus understandably entailing susceptibilities and mistrust.

Do not allow yourselves to fall into that trap. Carefully keep away from your meetings everything related to politics and controversial matters. Discussions about these themes can only create embarrassment whereas there is nothing to object to a good moral.

Seek in Spiritism what can make you better. That is the essence. When humanity is better the really useful social reforms will follow as a natural consequence. Working towards the moral progress you will be paving the way with the solid foundations to every improvement. Let God decide about the right time for that to happen. In the interest of the still young but fast maturing Spiritism you must build an unshakable fortress against anyone who wishes to drag you along a dangerous route. Some try to discredit Spiritism with the argument that it tends to destroy religion. You are very much aware of the opposite, since most of you hardly believed in God and in the soul and now believe. Those who barely knew what the prayer was now pray with enthusiasm. Those who no longer set foot in churches and now show reverence. As a matter of fact if religion could be destroyed by Spiritism it would mean that religion would be destructible and Spiritism more powerful. By saying so it would be the same as confessing the weakness of one and the strength of the other. Spiritism is a moral doctrine that strengthens religious feelings in general and applies to all religions. It belongs to all of them and to none in particular. For that reason Spiritism does not

ask anyone to change his or her religion. Allows everyone to worship God their own way and observe those practices that satisfy their conscience since God gives more attention to the intention than to fact. Each person must attend the temple of their cult, thus demonstrating that it is a calumny when they call you wicked.

Given the physical impossibility of communicating with every group I have asked one of your colleagues to represent me more specifically in Lyon as I have done elsewhere: that person is Mr. Villon whose dedication and enthusiasm are well known as well as the purity of his feelings. Besides, his independent position gives him more freedom to carry out his tasks. It is hard work but he will not yield. I sponsored the group formed in his house during my last trip. You can find there excellent advices and healthy examples. It will be a great satisfaction to see those of you who give me the honor of your trust to gather around him, like in a common center.

If some want to form a separate group do not look at them with prejudice. If stones are thrown at you neither collect nor return them. God shall be the judge of everyone's feelings. May those who believe to be the better side to prove that with more charity and abnegation of their own self-esteem for truth could not be on the side of anyone who had forgotten the first precept of the Doctrine. When in doubt, do good always. The errors of the mind have less weight in the scale of God than those of the heart.

I will repeat here what I have already said on other occasions: in the case of divergence of opinion the easiest way of resolving the issue is to verify which gathers the majority since the crowds have a kind of unmistakable innate common sense. The error only seduces some Spirits who are blind by their self-love and a false judgment but truth always prevails. Therefore, rest assured that the error defects the enlightening rows and that it is irrational to believe that one is right against everyone else's opinion. If the principles that I profess had only found isolated echoes and had the majority repelled them, I would have been the first to acknowledge my mistake. However, when I see the number of followers grow incessantly in all layers of society and in all countries of the world I must then believe in the sturdiness of its foundations. That is why I tell you to firmly march on the path that has been delineated to you. Tell the adversaries that if they want your support they must offer you a more reassuring doctrine, more clear and intelligible, that better satisfy reason, and at the same time that provides society with a better guarantee to the social order. Your union is the strength that will frustrate the attacks of those who wish to have you divided. Finally, demonstrate by your example that Spiritism makes us more moderate, kinder, more patient, more indulgent, and that will be the best answer to the adversaries and at the same time the confirmation of the benevolent results is the best means of propaganda.

These are, my friends, the advices I have to give you, adding my good wishes for the New Year. I ignore the trials that God prepares for this year but I know that regardless you shall withstand them with determination and resignation, and like with the soldier, the reward will be proportional to the courage.

As for Spiritism that deserves more attention than that given to yourselves and whose progress I can judge better than anybody else, given my position, I am glad to tell you that the year begins with the most favorable auspices and that the number of followers will undoubtedly be seen rise at an unpredictable rate. A few more years like the ones that have just past and Spiritism will count on three quarters of the population.

Let me tell you about one fact amongst thousands.

In the vicinity of Paris there is a small town that only got to know Spiritism six months ago. In just a few weeks it reached a considerable development. A formidable opposition was soon organized against the followers even threatening their personal interests. They fought back with such a courage and abnegation worthy of the highest praises. They gave themselves in to the Providence that, in turn, has not failed them. The town counts on a large working class population where the Spiritist ideas spread day by day thanks to the opposition that has been found. An interesting fact is that the women waited for their annual bonus to acquire the books necessary to their instruction and one book seller had to send hundreds of those books to that city alone. Isn't that amazing to see simple workers using their savings for the acquisition of books of philosophy and moral instead of novels and sundries? Isn't it amazing, as well, to see men favoring such readings instead of the noisy and brutalizing pleasures of the cabarets? Ah! Fact is that men and women that suffer like we do now understand that it is not here that we realize our destiny. The curtains now open and they foresee the magnificent horizons of the future. That little town is Chauny, Aisne County. As the new children of the great family they salute you, brothers of Lyon, as their elder brothers and from now on they form one of the rings of the spiritual chain that unites Paris, Lyon, Metz, Sens, Bordeaux and others and that soon will interconnect every city of the world by a feeling of mutual fraternity since Spiritism has sown fruitful seeds everywhere and their children hold hands above the barriers of prejudice of sect, cast and nationality.

Yours truly dedicated brother and friend,

Allan Kardec

February 1862

Is Spiritism Proven by Miracles?

We received the following question from a priest:

“All those who received God given missions of teaching the truth to humanity have given demonstrations of their mission through miracles. Which miracles demonstrate the truth of your teachings?”

This is not the first time that such a question is addressed to us or other Spiritists. As it seems people give great importance to that and the solution may be the sentence that must condemn or acquit Spiritism. In this case, we must acknowledge that our situation is critical, like the poor man without a nickel facing the following: *“The wallet or your life”*. Thus, we humbly confess the absence of the most insignificant miracle to offer. Even more so, Spiritism is not supported by any miraculous fact. Its followers have not made or do not have the pretension of making any miracle; they do not consider themselves worthy of having God changing the eternal course of things by their request.

A given fact is or isn't real? That is the question. Now, if a fact is admitted to be true than there is nothing miraculous about it. Manifestations, like visions, apparitions and others, have taken place at all times. This is demonstrated by religious and profane historians and found in books of every religion. Now that the causes are known, however, that they are produced by certain laws, it is also known that they lack the essential character of miraculous events – that of exception to common laws.

Observed in our days more carefully than in ancient times; observed particularly without prevention and with the support of meticulous investigations as much detailed as those carried out during scientific studies, such manifestations demonstrate irrefutably the existence of an intelligent principle beyond matter; its survival to the body; its individuality after death; its immortality; its fortunate or unfortunate future and consequently the basis of every religion.

If the truth was proven only by miracles, one might ask why have the priests of Egypt, who were in error, reproduced before the Pharaoh the miracles of Moses? Why did Apollonius of Tyana, who was a pagan cured by the touch, gave sight to the blind, provided the spoken word to the dumb, predicted the future and was able to see things that happened far away? Wasn't that Jesus himself who said: *“False prophets will arise and perform signs and wonders”*?

One of our friends was almost instantaneously cured of a very serious and long lasting disease that had resisted every treatment, after saying a truly heartfelt prayer to his protector spirit. To him it was a truly miraculous event. After telling the story to a priest, as he believes in the Spirits, the priest said that the devil could also make miracles. *“In that case”* – my friend replied – *“if this was done by the devil I must be thankful to him.”*

Hence, the prodigies and miracles are not an exclusive privilege of the truth considering that the devil himself can do this. Then, how can one distinguish the good from the bad ones? Every idolater religion – no exception to Mohamed's – is supported by supernatural facts. This demonstrates one thing: that the founders of those religions knew natural secrets that were ignored by the crowds.

Wasn't Christopher Columbus considered super human by the savages of America for having predicted eclipses? Couldn't an envoy of God take him? Does God need to undo what has been done just to demonstrate his power? Making something that turns to the left turn to the right?

Wasn't Galileo more correct by demonstrating the movement of Earth as part of the laws of nature, than those who pretended that by a breach of those laws the Sun had to be stopped? However, we

know the price he had to pay for that, as many others, for having proven a mistake. We say that God is greater by the immutability of the laws than by their breach and if he has done so under determined circumstances this is not the only sign of truth. We refer the reader to our discussion about the subject of *supernatural* in our January issue.

Let us go back to the proofs of the truths of Spiritism.

There are two things in Spiritism: the fact of the existence of the Spirits and their manifestations and the doctrine that stems out from that. The first point cannot be questioned but by those who have not seen or did not want to see. As for the second point the issue is to know if the doctrine is just or false. It is a matter of appreciation. If the manifestation of the Spirits only took place through noises, movements, in a word through physical effects, this would not prove much since we would not know if they are good or bad.

Something that is characteristic in the phenomenon to the point of convincing the non-believers is the ability to recognize relatives and friends among the Spirits. Nonetheless, how can the Spirits demonstrate their presence and their individuality, allowing the assessment of their traits but by speaking up? It is a known fact that one of the means employed is writing through mediums. As long as they have the means of expressing their ideas they can say whatever they like. They will say things that are more or less good, fair and profound, according to their advancement. By leaving Earth they have not given up their free will. Like every thinking being they have their own opinions and like among us the most advanced give teachings of high moral content and advices impregnated by a profound wisdom. It is the collection and consolidation of those teachings and advices that form the Spiritist Doctrine.

Instead of a divine revelation, take this doctrine as a personal opinion of this or that spirit, if you like, and the question then is to determine if it is good or bad, true or false, rational or illogical. Who should be sought to help you on that? Should it be a single person or a group? No, since they can be mistaken due to their own prejudices, pre-established ideas or even for their personal interests. The only true judge is public opinion because there is no silo of interests and also because the masses have an innate common sense that is not mistaken. A healthy logic tells us that the adoption of an idea or a principle by the general opinion is a demonstration that there is some truth in it.

This is what the Spiritists do not say: *“This is a doctrine sent by God himself, revealed to a single man by marvelous means and that must be imposed upon humanity”*. On the contrary, here is what they say: *“This is a doctrine that is not ours and whose merit is not claimed by us. We adopt it because we consider it rational. You may attribute its origin to whomever you like: God, the Spirits or anybody else. Analyze it. If it is suitable to you, then adopt it. If not, leave it aside.”* One cannot be less absolute than this.

Spiritism does not come to encroach any religion. It does not impose itself. It does not come to force the consciences of the Catholics, Protestants or Jews. It presents itself and says: *“Adopt me if you find me good.”* Are the Spiritists to blame for finding it good? For receiving consolations that make us happy, that dissipates the horrors of the future that silence the anguishes of doubt and give us courage in the present? Spiritism does not address those to whom the Catholic beliefs or others are enough but to those who are not satisfied by those beliefs or whose beliefs have failed them. Spiritism leads them to believe in something and eagerly so, instead of believing in nothing.

Spiritism does not intend to be a separate group. It brings back the stray ones by its own means. If you repel them they shall be forced to stay out. Now say with your heart and conscience if it would be better to have them as atheists.

We are asked about the miracles that support our judgment of a good Spiritist Doctrine. We judge it to be good not only because that is our opinion but the opinion of millions that think like us; because it leads the nonbelievers to believe; because it turn bad persons into good ones; because it gives courage to endure the miseries of life. The speed of its propagation that is a miracle, never seen in the archives of philosophical doctrines; traveling around the world in a few years, rooting in all countries and in all layers of society; having advanced despite everything that was done to preclude its propagation; knocking down opposing barriers and increasing its strength on surpassing them. Can all that be characterize as utopia?

A false idea might find a few followers but its existence will be ephemeral and restricted; it will lose ground instead of conquering it while Spiritism gains instead of losing it. When we see it sprouting everywhere welcomed as a providential benefit it is for the fact that the finger of Providence is there. This is the true miracle – and we find it sufficient to ensure its future. You may say that to your eyes there is no providential character but a devilish one. You have the freedom of choice. And because it moves on that is the essence. The only thing to say is that if something establishes universally by the devil's power, despite the efforts of those who pretend to act in the name of God, this could lead certain people to believe that the devil is more powerful than the Providence.

You ask for miracles. Here is what one of our correspondents from Algeria sends us:

“Mr. P..., former officer, was one of the toughest nonbelievers. He had the fanaticism of the irreligion and before Proudhon⁴ he used to say: ‘God is evil’ or put differently he never admitted any god. He only admitted the void. When I saw him coming and looking for yours The Spirits’ Book I thought that he wanted to decorate the reading with some satirical elucubration as he used to do with the priests and even against Christ. It seemed impossible to me that he could be cured of such a resolute atheism. Ah! The Spirits’ Book made such a miracle, though. If you only knew that man as I do you would be proud of your work and you would see this as your greatest success. Everyone is impressed over here. Nonetheless, after being initiated in the word of truth and after having given some thought, is this outcome really a surprise?”

There is no harm in adding that our correspondent is a journalist and that he himself used to support ideas that were not much spiritualists, let alone Spiritists. Has anyone forcibly imposed upon him the belief in God and in the soul? No, that is unlikely. Was he fascinated by some supernatural phenomena? That is not the case either since he has seen no manifestation. All he did was to read, understand and find logical trains of thought that made him believe. Will you say that this one as many others are the works of the devil? If that is so then the devil has an original policy of providing weapons against himself and by letting go those who were already under his clutches. Why haven't you done such a miracle? Are you less powerful than the devil to make people believe in God?

Another issue, if you allow me:

⁴ Pierre-Joseph Proudhon (1809-1865), first French philosopher to declare himself an anarchist. (RT)

- While an atheist and blasphemer was that gentleman doomed for eternity?
- No doubt.
- How about now that he has converted to God by the devil, is he still doomed? Suppose that by believing in God, in his soul, in a happy or unhappy future life and as a consequence of such belief he becomes a better person than he was before and that he does not literally adopt the interpretation of every dogma and that even reject some, is he still doomed? If you say 'yes' then the belief in God doesn't do any good to him. If you say 'no' then what becomes of the maxim '*There is no salvation outside of the Church*'? Spiritism says: *There is no salvation without charity*. Do you believe that the gentleman is undecided between the two? Burnt by one, despite everything, and saved according to the other, the choice does not seem to offer doubts. Like every new idea, it harms certain persons, certain habits, and even certain interests, like the railroads harmed the carriage businesses and those who had fear; like a revolution counters certain opinions; like the press harmed the scribes; like Christianity harmed the interests of pagan priests. However, what to do when with our help or despite us something gets established on its own and it is generally accepted? It is necessary to take sides and like Mohamed says what is must be. What will you do if Spiritism becomes a universal belief? Will you reject all those who accept it?
- This will not happen; it cannot be – you may say.
- However, and once more, if that is the case what are you going to do? Can such a surge be halted? To achieve that one would need to stop not a person but the Spirits; blocking them from speaking; burn down not a book but the ideas; preclude the mediums from multiplying and from writing.

One of our correspondents from a town in Tarn County wrote the following:

“Our Curate makes propaganda for us; he used to shout from the pulpit against Spiritism, that it was nothing more than the works of the devil. Now he appointed me as the supreme priest of the Doctrine in our town, something that I sincerely thank him for. He also gives me the chance of discussing the subject with those who had not heard about it yet and want to know what it is about. Now there is an abundance of mediums among us.”

The result is the same everywhere whenever people decide to scream against. The Spiritist idea is now out; it is welcomed because it pleases people; it goes from the palace to the shanty and the effect of future attempts to suffocate the ones that have already been employed may assess it.

To summarize, Spiritism does not claim the action of any miracle in order to be established; it wants to impose no change in the general order of things; it sought and found the cause of certain phenomena wrongly considered supernatural; instead of find support on the supernatural Spiritism repudiates it outright; it addresses heart and reason. Logic has opened up a path to Spiritism. Logic will take it to the end.

This goes for the answer that we owe to the brochure of Mr. Curate Marouzeau.

Let us give the word to the Spirits. Here is the answer obtained through several mediums following the presentation of the question above:

“I wish to talk to you about the reality of the Spiritist Doctrine from the standpoint of the miracles whose absence seems to provide ammunition to our adversaries. The miracles necessary in the early days of humanity to shock the Spirits who needed to submit; the almost totally explained miracles today thanks to the discoveries of physics and other sciences have now become useless

and I say even dangerous since their manifestations would give rise to disbelief and mockery. The kingdom of intelligence has finally arrived although not triumphantly yet but as a trend. What do you want? Would you like to see the wands transformed into snakes again, the handicapped walking and the bread multiplied? No, you will not see that. However, you will see the nonbelievers touched and bending their rusty knees before the altar. Such a miracle is equivalent to the water springing out of the rocks. You will see a devastated person bending over under the weight of gruesome suffering giving away the charged gun and saying: 'Praise the Lord for your will raises my trials to the level of love that I owe you.' Finally, you that explain the facts with texts and the spirit with words, you will see the luminous truth established upon the ruins of your rotten mysteries."

Lazarus, medium Mrs. Costel

"In one of my latest meditation, I believe that it was read here, I demonstrated that humanity is currently progressing. Up until Jesus humanity had a body; it was certainly splendid; it was plentiful of heroic struggles and sublime virtues. Nonetheless, where was its kindness? Where was its benevolence? Antiquity had many examples of that. Read an old poem: where is the gentleness and the tenderness? You can already find that expressed in the almost entirely Christian poem Dido of Virgil, a kind of melancholic heroine that Torquato Tasso or Ludovico Ariosto would have made interesting in their songs full of Christian joy. Hence, Christ has come to speak to the heart of humanity; but know this, Jesus said it himself, He came in the flesh in the midst of paganism, and He promised to come in the midst of Christianity. Individuals may get their hearts as well as their intelligences educated. The same applies to humanity. Jesus is then the great educator. His resurrection is the symbol of His spiritual fusion with everyone and you have just started to feel that fusion, the expansion of Himself. Jesus is not coming back to make miracles. He comes to speak directly to the hearts instead of speaking to the senses. He walked passed those who wished a miracle from heavens and a few steps ahead He improvised the magnificent sermon on the mountain. Christ therefore responds to those who still demand miracles and in the name of every wise and enlightened spirit: 'Do you believe more in your eyes, in your ears and on your hands than in your heart? My ulcers are now healed; the lamb has been sacrificed; the flesh slaughtered; materialism saw it; it is now time for the spirit. I leave the false prophets; I do not introduce myself to the powerful of Earth, like Simon Magus the sorcerer but I come to those who are really thirsty; to those really hungry; to those who suffer in their hearts and not to the non-spiritualist that in fact are the true and pure materialists.'"

Lamennais, medium Mr. A. Didier

"We are asked about our miracles. It seems to me that for some time now the proofs are well evident. The progress of the human spirit has changed the face of the civilized world. Everything has advanced and those who wish to stay behind that movement are like the outcast of the new society. Given the society readiness for the events it still lacks anything that may shock reason and bring enlightenment. It is possible that at certain times God may find it useful to communicate through superior minds like in the case of Moses and others. Those great persons mark great times but the spirit of the people progressed later on. The greatest figures of God chosen envoys were like miraculous legends. Then a simple fact becomes wonderful before the sensitive crowds, ready

for emotions that only Mother Nature can bring to its ignorant children. But do you need miracles today? Everything is transformed around you. Science, Philosophy and the industry have developed all that surrounds you. Do you believe that we, the Spirits, have not taken part into those profound changes? By studying and discussing the matter you can learn better. The miracles are no longer of your time and you must overcome the tradition like prejudices stored in your memories. We will always give you the truth and our support. We enlighten you so that you become better and stronger. Love and believe and the aspired miracle shall happen on you. Through the knowledge and better understanding of the objective of this life you shall be transformed without any physical phenomena.”

“Try to touch the truth and the truth will surround and penetrate you. Hence, trust your own strength and the God of goodness that gave you the spirit will give you a formidable power. Through God you will clear the paths of your clouded intelligence and you will understand that the spirit is immortality and power. Once in touch with this divine law of progress you will no longer seek the prestige of the renowned people to give you answers and arguments against Spiritism, this true revelation, this new faith and new science that reassures and strengthens.”

Baluze, medium Mr. Leymarie

“Miracles are demanded as proof of the Spiritist Doctrine. And who is the one that requests such a proof of the truth? It is the one who should believe and teach in the first place...”

“The greatest of all miracles shall take place soon. Listen, Catholic priests. You want miracles and there you have them... The cross of Christ was crumbling before the blows of materialism, of the indifference and egotism; now you see it beautifully re-erected, shiny and sustained by Spiritism! Tell me something: isn't that the greatest miracle of all to see it erected again, surrounded by hope and charity?”

“ – Truly, priests of the Church, see and believe. The miracles surround you! How would you call this common return to the unblemished and pure belief in the Gospels, through which all philosophies will be connected to Spiritism? Spiritism shall be the glory and the focus that will illuminate the universe. Oh! The miracle will then be real and dazzling since there will be only one family down here.”

“You want miracles! See this poor and starving woman? She trembles in her shanty! The breath that she intends to use to warm up her starving children is colder and more glacial than the wind that penetrates the miserable shelter. Why so much calmness and serenity in her face before such a misery? Ah! She saw a shining star above her head; a celestial light sheds upon her refuge; she cries no more; she waits! She doesn't curse but only asks God to give her courage to withstand the trial! And there comes charity through the open doors of the hut, bringing over its benefactor hand!”

“Which doctrine will give more support and stimulus to the heart? Christianity planted the flag of equality on Earth and Spiritism raises the flag of fraternity! That is the most heavenly and divine miracle that could happen! Priests, sometimes bearing sacrileges on your own hands, you must not ask for physical miracles for your heads may be shattered on the very stones that you step over to reach the altar!

“No, Spiritism is not attached to physical phenomena; it is not founded on miracles that speak to the eyes, but it gives faith to the hearts. Tell me, isn't that even the greatest miracle?”

Saint Augustine, medium Mr. Vézy.

NOTE: Evidently this is only applicable to priests who have stained the sanctuary, like Verger and others.

February 1862

The Wind

(Spiritist Fable)

*The more impact a criticism has the greater good it does by calling the attention of the
indifferent.
Allan Kardec*

“The hurricane wished to dominate the plains,
And through its impetuous claims,
Its warm breath tortures a century old
Elm tree, its trunk huge, knotted and bold.
From its fecund branches – it said – it would sow
And seeds would sprout, germinate and grow;
A struggle is foreseen when I look forth
Full of obstacles to my great strength.
The little green plumes vacillating
Before the swings of the storm, defoliating,
Lost in the air, in a fast muddle.
The seeds, however, flee the trouble,
Escaping the blow that sweeps away their path.
And despite the odds they fixate on the earth.
Against the laws of love, science, the robustness
That spreads Spiritism – the tree of truthfulness,
The wind of incredulity
Blows, howls, and harms incessantly.
It gives rise and grows what it intends to repress:
It wants to free the germ... and helps its progress.

C. Dombre (from Marmande)

February 1862

Reincarnation in America

People are frequently surprised by the fact that reincarnation has not been taught in America and the nonbelievers do not let the opportunity go and accuse the Spirits of contradiction. We will not repeat here the explanations that were given to us and that we have published about it. We will just remind our readers that the Spirits showed their usual caution with this.

They wanted Spiritism to appear in a country that provided absolute freedom of opinion. Their essential point was to have the principle accepted and consequently they did not want to be disturbed by anything else. The same did not happen with respect to the consequences, particularly the reincarnation that would have clashed against the prejudices of slavery and color. The idea that a black person could become white, a white person could have been black, and a master could have been a slave seemed so monstrous that it would be sufficient to have all the rest rejected. Hence, the Spirits preferred to momentarily sacrifice the accessory to the main part and have always told us that a unity would be later established about that point as others as well. In fact this is what is happening. We heard from several citizens of that country that such doctrine now finds many followers there; that certain Spirits have now confirmed it, after having previously given some insight into the matter. Here is what Mr. Fleury Lacroix, an American citizen, sent us from Montreal, Canada:

“...The issue of reincarnation that you were first wanting to openly promote has taken us by surprise over here. We are now reconciled with that extension of your thoughts. Everything has become clear through this new clarity and we now see our future much more broadened in our eternal journey. However, it seemed absurd to us, as I said in the beginning. We deny today and believe tomorrow – such is humanity. Fortunate are the ones who wish to learn because they see light; unfortunate are the others who remain in darkness.”

Thus, it was logic and the power of reasoning that led them to that doctrine since it gave them the only key capable of solving problems, which up until then were unsolvable. Our honorable correspondent, however, is mistaken with respect to one important point by attributing to us the initiative of that doctrine that he calls the daughter of our thoughts. It is an undeserved honor since the reincarnation was taught to others by the Spirits and before the publication of *The Spirits' Book*.

Furthermore, the principle was clearly exposed in several other prior works, besides ours, at the time of the turning tables, like among others in the *Heavens and Earth* by Jean Reynaud and in the fascinating little book by Mr. Louis Jourdan entitled *Prayers of Ludovico*, published in 1849, not to mention that this principle was professed by the Druids who have not certainly learned from us.⁵ When it was revealed to us, we were caught by surprise and received it with hesitation and mistrust. We even fought against it for some time until evidence demonstrated it to us. Hence, we accepted rather invented it and that is very different.

⁵ See the April 1858 issue of *The Spiritist Review*, article about Spiritism among the Druids and the Triads.

This answers the objection of one of our subscribers from Antwerp, Mr. Salgues, a confessed adversary of reincarnation, who seems to think that both the Spirits and mediums that teach it suffer our influence and since the Spirits that communicate with him teach the opposite. In fact Mr. Salgues makes special allegations against reincarnation that we will one day examine in detail. While we wait we observe a fact: the number of believers grow incessantly whereas the number of opponents decreases. If that is the result of our influence it must be huge since it extends to America, Asia, Africa and Oceania. If the contrary opinion is the truth how come it does not prevail? Is the mistake more powerful than the truth?

February 1862

New American Mediums in Paris

The American mediums are now in larger numbers and strength than those of the old continent, in the case of physical manifestations. Their reputation is well established in that area, particularly after Mr. Home who seems to promise prodigies of his own.

For many people Mr. Squire was simply called American medium, a charlatan that used to travel around towns and fairs some years ago, making presentations and announcing himself as an American medium, although he was perfectly French. We have just received two others now that only have the names of mediums and that we would not have mentioned here since their art is strange to our matters but their arrival was announced with a fuss and caused a certain sensation, given the nature of their pretensions. To the benefit of our readers and to avoid been charged with partiality, we fully transcribe below the text of their flyer that has inundated Paris.

“Fun in the Parisian salons – novelty, nothing more than novelty!!! Family soirees and private sessions given by the American Mediums, Mr. C. Edwards Girroodd, from Kingstown, Lake Ontario, and Mrs. Julia Girroodd, nicknamed by the English and American press as the Graceful Sensitive.”

“An album of more than 200 pages containing compliments from the greatest dignitaries of France, from nobility, magistrates, army and literature, as well as from sixteen archbishops and bishops of France and from a large number of ecclesiasts of elevated distinction, available to persons who would like to throw soirees but who wish to carry out a previous examination of the good taste, richness and novelty of the experiences.”

“Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd, the only one to carry out the experiences in France, spent only three months in Paris and provided forty two sessions in the top notch salons of Paris and in the Tuileries on May 12th 1861, as well as in the house of several members of the Imperial family.”

“They immediately placed the experiences well above anything that they could have seen before as entertainment in get-togethers. Their magic tricks, contrary to the habit of Mr. Physicists, does not required any preparation or special arrangement and the artists easily operate amidst a circle of attentive spectators unafraid of seeing their illusion destroyed.”

“The magic acts are only a tiny part of their varied talents. The world of the Spirits obey their commandments: Visions – Ecstasy – Fascination – Magnetism – Electro Biology – Rapping Spirits – Spiritism, etc. everything that science and charlatanism invented and that stupefy the believers of our days, even giving them a robust faith in everything that is nothing but charlatanism, where are inadvertently accomplices. In one word, Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd after having shown themselves as witches – but high class witches – wise like Merlin, the enchanter, will demonstrate the secrets of their science, if needed.”

“Christian faith can only gain from the clear demonstration that everything that was not taught by that faith is nothing but brilliant charlatanism. For the little meetings or soirees with the children Mr. Girroodd hired the most skilled Physicists from the capital city and a ventriloquist nicknamed The Man of the Talking Dolls who will give sessions at a reduced price.”

As one can see the couple's pretension is not but that of destroying Spiritism posing as the defenders of the Christian faith that no doubt is much surprised by finding deception at its service. This, however, can expand a certain clientele.

They pretend to be mediums and are not careful enough to omit the title of Americans, an indispensable passport, like the names ended by the letter "i" to the musicians, and that to demonstrate that mediums do not exist since – they say – they can be reproduced with support of some skills, mechanics and some particular means that allow them to do everything done by the mediums.

All this demonstrates one thing: the fact that everything can be imitated. Illusion is a matter of skill set. Nevertheless, just because something can be imitated does not mean that it does not exist? If trickery imitated lucid somnambulism in order to deceive, should one conclude that there is no somnambulist? Fake copies of Raphael were made and taken by originals. Was Raphael an illusion? Mr. Robert-Houdin changes water into wine; he takes thousands of objects out from a hat and fills up a big box with them. Does it harm the miracle of Cana and the multiplication of bread? He does better, however, than just transforming water into wine for he produces half a dozen of delicious liqueurs from a single bottle.

All physical manifestations are wonderfully prone to imitation and these are the ones exploited by the charlatans. They do much better than the Spirits, particularly in the case of transportation, since these are produced at will and whenever they wish to do so, something that cannot be done by the Spirits or the best mediums.

As a matter of fact, justice must be done to that gentleman and that lady once they do not intend to deceive the public. They do not pretend to be what they are not. They present themselves as skillful conjurers and that is more commendable than those who pretend to be mediums and even more respectable than the true mediums that add trickery to reality in order to produce more effects and win over competition. It is true that openness is eventually politically correct but trying to demonstrate through deception that the mediums are conjurers has a touch of novelty that will be abundantly compensated by curiosity.

As we said, their skills cannot prejudice the reality of the phenomena. Far from causing any harm, it will be of great utility. To begin, it will be another trumpet calling people's attention to Spiritism, people who have not heard about it. As with every criticism, they will be willing to see the pros and cons. The result of the comparison is undisputable. An even greater utility is that of preventing fraud and subterfuge from the part of false mediums; demonstrating the possibility of imitation to those who risk ruining its credit.

If there could be something wrong found in their skills set so as to easily identify if they were true mediums. Unfortunately they are on the other side of the Atlantic and hence we do not have the privilege of observing Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd. If we can one day attend one of their sessions it will be a pleasure to inform our readers.

When we say that everything can be imitated we must take exception for the really normal conditions in which the Spiritist manifestations can be produced, hence one can say that every phenomenon that does not respect those conditions, must be considered suspicious. Now, in order to carefully judge something one needs to study it. The intelligent manifestations themselves are

not exempt from charlatanism. There are some manifestations that, given their own nature and the circumstances in which they are produced, challenge the most established skill of imitation. As an example, the evocation of the dead who reveal details of their private lives that are unknown to the mediums and to the audience. Add to this the fact that these are dissertations, consisting of many pages, written in a surge, spotless, speedily, with eloquence, profundity, wisdom and sublimity of thoughts about certain subjects, are beyond the capacity, knowledge and understanding of the medium.

To achieve such a result one would need an omnipotent individual. Well, these type of individuals are rare and do not give public showings. This is, however, what is seen every day not by a privileged individual but by thousands of individuals of all ages, sex, social condition, education and whose honorability and absolute altruism are the best guarantee of honesty since charlatanism does not give anything for free. If Mr. and Mrs. Girroodd wanted to accept any challenge from us it would be on these terms; we would gladly leave the physical manifestations to them.

NOTE: A supposedly well informed person tell us that the name Edwards Girroodd must be translated into Edouard Girod and Kingstown, Lake Ontario replaced by Saint-Flour, Cantal (France).

February 1862

Fund-Raising on behalf of the Workers of Lyon

The Spiritist Society of Paris could not forget the brothers of Lyon in their suffering. Since November the Spiritist Society of Paris has promptly established a beneficent lottery with the pledge of 260 Francs, organized by several groups of this city. But Spiritism is not exclusive. To Spiritism all human beings are brothers and sisters and owe mutual support to one another, irrespective of their beliefs. Willing to give its donations to the general contribution the Society created a fund-raising at *Rue de Sainte Anne 59* whose proceeds will be transferred to the general fund-raising account of the journal *Le Siècle*.

A letter from Lyon addressed to Mr. Allan Kardec informs that an anonymous Spiritist has just sent them directly the amount of 500 francs. May this generous benefactor, whose anonymity we respect, receive the gratitude of all members of the Society!

A spirit known by the characteristic and graceful name of *Cárita* and whose mission seems to be to stimulate beneficence towards the needy dictated the letter below that was sent to us from Lyon. Like us, the readers will also place it among the nicest productions from beyond the grave. May that letter awaken in all Spiritists their sympathy towards their suffering fellow human beings! The same seal of goodness and simplicity marks every work of *Cárita*. Once evoked at the Parisian Society she said to have been Saint Irene, the empress.

To the Parisian Spiritists who sent 500 francs to the poor of Lyon, thank you!

“Thank You! You with your generous heart were able to understand our appeal, and who have come to the aid of your unfortunate brethren. Thank you! Your offering will heal many wounds and alleviate much suffering. Thank you! You guessed that this golden fruit that you sent will be able to temporarily appease hunger and light up long ago extinct fire places.”

“Thank you! Specifically because you were able to disguise the good deed under the cover of anonymity. However, if you disguised the generous thought of being useful to your fellow human beings, like the violet occult under the leaves, there is a Lord from whom your hearts cannot keep any secret and who knows the origin of this beneficent drizzle that came to invigorate more than one overheated mind, keeping misery away from the dreaded poor mothers.”

“God, who sees everything, knows the secret of the anonymous and will compensate those who had the inspiration of helping the poor victims of circumstances beyond their control. God, my friends, likes that incense that comes out of your hearts and that also practices charity and sympathizes with the pain of others. He appreciates, above all, this devotion and this abnegation that goes shy before any portentous recognition, preferring to shelter its modesty underneath simple initials. But God has attached every blessing to the name of the benefactor because, as everyone knows, the outpouring of joy experienced by rescued hearts reaches God and as he sees those transports of joy resulting from your help he annotates the appropriate reward in the big ledger of the spirit.”

“If you could hear those kind emotions, those timid notes of sympathy issued by the miserable ones when receiving the two cents, a celestial manna falling onto their shanties; if you could hear the

child's screams who do not understand that the bread is safe for a few days, you would feel happy and say: 'Charity is kind and deserves to be practiced'. As you see, one does not need much to convert tears into happiness, particularly at the house of the worker who is not much used to frequent visits of happiness. If the poor ant that moves from breadcrumb to breadcrumb suddenly finds the whole loaf on its way, at the very moment when it was hopeless with respect to feeding its family, such a fortune seems so much incomprehensible that it only mumbles a few loose words followed by tears of tenderness."

"Therefore, my friends, help these poor workers who's sole hope is death in a hospital bed or beggary in the streets. Do it as much as you can so that when you are reunited by God, following the great avenue that leads to the great portal whose frontispiece holds the words *Love and Charity*, reuniting the benefactors and the benefited God tells you all: 'You learned to give. You were happy for receiving. Come in! May the guiding charity that drove you here introduce you to the world that I reserve to those who stand for this flag: 'Love one another.'

Cárita"

OBSERVATION: Who would believe that these words were dictated by the devil? In any case, if it is the devil that guides us to charity there is no harm in doing that.

February 1862

Spiritist Teachings and Dissertations

Faith, Hope and Charity
(Bordeaux – medium Mrs. Cazemajoux)

Faith

“I am the older sister to Hope and Charity. My name is Faith.

I am big and strong. The one who carries me is fearless of fire and chains since charity is a shield to every physical and moral suffering. I radiate upon you like a sun whose shiny beams reflect out from the bottom of your hearts and I transfer life and strength to you. They say that I transport mountains but here is what I say: I come to elevate the world since Spiritism is the lever that will help me. Join me. I invite you. I am Faith.

I am Faith! I live with Hope, Charity and Love in the world of the pure Spirits. I have many times left the ethereal regions and come to Earth to regenerate you, giving you the life of the spirit. However, apart from the martyrs of the old days of Christianity and some eager sacrifices from time to time, apart from the progress of science, literature, industry and freedom, I have not found but indifference and neglect at the heart of humanity, thus I have sadly returned to heavens. You believe that I am among you but you are mistaken since Faith without actions is a simulacrum of Faith. True Faith is life and action.

Before the revelation of Spiritism life was barren, I was a tree dried out by light that produced no fruit. Through my actions, enlighten intelligences, and strengthen hearts, I send deceiving influences away and lead you to God through the perfection of the spirit and the heart. Come to stand before my flag. I am strong and powerful. I am Faith.

I am Faith and my kingdom starts with humanity, a peaceful kingdom that will make them happy now and throughout eternity. The dawn of my arrival is pure and serene. Its Sun will be resplendent and Faith will kindly set by embracing humanity in eternal happiness.

Spiritism! Cast upon humanity your regenerative baptism. I beg you. I am Faith.”

Georges, Bishop of Périgueux.

Hope

“My name is Hope. I smile as you come to be; I follow you step-by-step. I never leave you behind except in worlds where the promises of happiness become true to you and are constantly whispered in your ears. I am your loyal friend. Do not send my inspirations away. I am Hope.

It is I coming out of the songs of the nightingales, relaying in the echoes of the forests those tearful and scored notes that make you dream of heavens. It is me who inspire the swallow to warm up

their loved ones at the shelter of your homes; it is me caressing your hair in the quick drafts of wind; it is me spreading at your feet the subtle perfume of flower from your gardens; and you almost never think of me! Do not reject me: it is Hope!

I take all forms to come close to you: I am the star in the sky; the warmth of the beam of light that gives life to you; I cradle your smiley dreams at night; I send your somber worries and thoughts away; I guide your steps towards the virtuous path; I follow you when you visit the poor, the miserable, those in suffering, inspiring in you kind and reassuring words. Do not reject me. I am Hope.

I am Hope! It is I that, in the winter grow the thick moss on the oak tree allowing the birds to build their nests; it is I that crown the apple and the almond tree with white and pink flowers in the spring, spreading them on the ground like a celestial rug, leading to the aspiration of happy worlds. I am with you particularly when you are poor and in suffering and my voice resonates incessantly in your ears. Do not reject me. I am Hope.

Do not reject me because the angel of despair fights a cruel battle against me, struggling in vain efforts to take my place by your side. I am not always the stronger side and when it is successful in keeping me away it surrounds you with its deadly wings; it veers your thoughts off God, leading you to suicide. Join me to keep its dismal influence away, allowing yourself to be gently cradled in my arms for I am Hope.”

Felicia, medium's daughter

Charity

I am Charity, yes, true Charity. I am nothing like the charity whose guidelines you follow. The one who took my name among you is fantasist, capricious, exclusive, and proud. I come to forearm you against the effects that overshadow the light and the merit of your good deeds before God. Be submissive to the lessons that the *Spirit of Truth* gives you through my voice. Follow me, my faithful ones: I am Charity.

Follow me. I know every disgrace, every pain, every suffering, and every affliction that harass humanity. I am the mother of the orphans, the daughter of the old ones, the protector and support of the widows. I cure the infected ulcers; I treat every ill person; I dress, feed and shelter those who have nothing; I visit the humblest shanty and the most miserable huts; I knock at the door of the rich and powerful for wherever there is a human being there is excruciating and bitter pain under the mask of happiness. Oh! How overwhelming is my mission! I will not be able to accomplish that if I do not have your support. Come to me. I am Charity.

I prefer no one. I never tell those who need me: 'Go somewhere else. I have my own poor.' Oh! False charity, how much harm you do! Friends, we owe one another. Believe me. Deny assistance to no one. Help one another with enough altruism to not expect recognition from the part of those that you have helped. Peace in one's heart and in one's conscience is the gentle award of my works: I am the true Charity.

Nobody knows on Earth the amount and the nature of my benefits. It is only false charity that hurts and humiliates the benefited ones. Avoid such dismal deviation. Actions of that kind have no merit before God and attract his wrath. It is only God that must know the generous impulses of your hearts when you become the dispensers of God's benefits. Hence, my friends, refrain from giving publicity to your mutual assistance; no longer give it the name alms; believe me: I am Charity.

I have so much pain and suffering to alleviate that sometimes my hands are empty. I come to tell you that I am waiting for you. Spiritism holds the flag of Love and *Charity* and every true Spiritist wants to comply with this sublime precept taught by Jesus Christ eighteen centuries ago. Therefore, follow me brothers and I will lead you to the Kingdom of God, our father. I am Charity.”

Adolph, Bishop of Alger.

Instructions given by our Guides about the three communications above

My friends, you must have thought that one of us had given their teachings about faith, hope and charity. And you were right. Our joy is not diminished when we happily see elevated Spirits frequently giving you advices that must guide your spiritual works, helping you in your Spiritist apostleship.

Hence you can attribute the communication about faith to the spirit of Georges; about hope to Felicia, finding there the poetic style that she had in life; and charity to Mr. Dupuch, Bishop of Alger and one of its eager apostles on Earth.

We still have to handle the issue of charity under another point of view. This will be done in a few days.

Your guides.

February 1862

Forgetting Humiliation

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mrs. Costel

“My dear, forgetting humiliation is achieving the perfection of the soul. It was easier for Jesus to forgive the outrage of his Passion than it is for you to forgive the slight mockery. The great soul of the Savior was used for kindness and would not conceive bitterness or vengeance; ours, when hit by little things, forget what is important.

People daily beg for God’s forgiveness that falls upon them like a beneficent drizzle, but their hearts forget that word, incessantly repeated in their prayers. Truly, I tell you: the internal pride corrupts the soul. It is the huge rock that attaches it to the ground, delaying its elevation. When criticized look inside; examine your sinful self, the one that the world ignores; probe its depth and heal your vanity through the recognition of your own misery. If the offense is more serious and reaches your heart be sorry for the unfortunate one who has done that, as you would be for an injured person whose open wound is gushing blood. Someone that annihilates his future deserves compassion.

Jesus met human suffering at the Garden of Olives but he always ignored the roughness of pride and the insignificance of vanity. He incarnated to demonstrate to humanity the type of moral beauty that should serve as their role model. Do not move away from that ever. Work onto your souls as one does with the soft material and transform your clay into an imperishable marble that God, the great sculptor, may sign.”

Lazarus

February 1862

About Instinct

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mrs. Costel

“I will teach you about the true meaning of good and evil that is frequently confounded by the spirit. Evil is a revolt of the instincts against the conscience, this inner and delicate measure that is the moral measure. What are the borders that separate it from good that is surrounded by evil all over the place? Evil is not complex; it is unique and comes out of the primitive being that wishes the satisfaction of the instincts to the price of the duties. The instinct develops in the *animal man* to care for his own wellbeing and preservation; it is the only source of evil since it is still rougher and more violent in certain people, pushing them to take what they want and accumulate what they have. The instinct that is blindly obeyed by animals, their actual virtue, must be continuously fought by the person that wishes to move up higher, replacing the unpolished utensil of need by the finely carved arms of intelligence.

Note, however, that instinct is not always bad and humanity eventually owes it sublime inspirations. Examples exist in cases where maternity and certain acts of dedication where safety replaces thoughts. My daughter, your objection is precisely the cause of the error that leads to the downfall of people who are ready to ignore the truth, always absolute in its consequences. Regardless of the good results of a bad cause, the examples must never lead to conclusions that go against premises that were established by reason. Instinct is bad because it is purely human and humanity must think of nothing else but of unloading those instincts and leaving the flesh to elevate the spirit. If evil walks shoulder to shoulder with good it is for the fact that its principle frequently leads to results opposed to itself and that go unnoticed by frivolous and sensation driven people.

Nothing truly good can come out of instinct. This sublime impulse is not devotion as an isolated inspiration is not genius. The true progress of humanity is its struggle and triumph against its very essence. Jesus was sent to Earth to demonstrate that humanely. He unveiled the truth, this beautiful spring hidden under the sand of ignorance. Keep the purity of the divine gift away from your mistakes. Believe me that those who are only good and devout just out of their instincts are bad since they are blindly dominated by something that can suddenly throw them off the cliff.

Lazarus

NOTE: Despite our respect for the spirit of Lazarus who has given us so many beautiful pages we take the liberty of disagreeing with his last propositions. One can say that there are two kinds of instinct: the animal and the moral. The first, as Lazarus says well, is organic; it is given to living beings for their conservation and that of their descendants. It is blind and almost unconscious because the Providence wanted to give a counter weight to its indifference and negligence. The same does not apply to the moral instinct that is a privilege of the humanity. It can be defined as this: An *innate propensity to do good or bad*. Now, such propensity is due to the more or less advanced state of the spirit. A person whose spirit is already purified does good without premeditation and as a very natural thing and being praised for that a cause of surprise. Hence it is

not fair to say *“those who are only good and devout just out of their instincts are bad since they are blindly dominated by something that can suddenly throw them off the cliff”*. The ones who are instinctively good and sincere demonstrate an already realized progress; those who do so intentionally, progress is still to take place and for that reason there is struggle between the two feelings. In the first group the difficulty has been defeated; in the second group it must be defeated. The first group is like someone that can read and do so effortlessly, almost unnoticeably; the second one is like someone that works on the spelling. Should one have less merit than the other just because it is late?

February 1862

Religious and Philosophical Meditations

Dictated by the spirit of Lamennais
Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mr. A. Didier

The Cross

A tall and simple cross stands amidst all human revolutions, uproars and reasoning, fixated on an altar of stones. A little child sculpted in the stone holds a little flag in his hand where it reads: Simplicity. Philanthropists, philosophers, deists and poets, come to read and contemplate that word. It contains the whole Gospel, the full explanation of Christianity.

Philanthropists, you must not invent philanthropy since there is only charity. Philosophers, you must not invent wisdom since there is only one. Deists, you must not invent God since there is only one. Poets, you must not disturb the human heart.

Philanthropists, you want to break the chains that hold humanity captive; philosophers, you erect Pantheons; poets, you romanticize fanaticism. Back up! You are from this world and Jesus said: "My kingdom is not from this world."

Oh! You belong too much to this muddy world to understand those sublime words. And if a sufficiently powerful judge asked you: Are you the Son of God? Your answer would fade in your throat and you would not be able to respond as Christ did before humanity: "You said that."

You are all gods, said Jesus, when the tongue of fire descends upon your heads and penetrates your hearts; you are all gods when you live in the name of charity on Earth, but you are the children of the world when you see the current suffering of humanity and do not consider its divine future.

Mankind! May that word be read by your heart and not by your material eyes! Christ did not erect a Pantheon. He erected a cross!

February 1862

Religious and Philosophical Meditations

Dictated by the spirit of Lamennais
Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mr. A. Didier

How blessed are the poor in spirit

The most meritorious actions to the spirit after death are those of the heart rather than intelligence. How blessed are those who are the poor in spirit does not refer to the mentally challenged only but also to those who have plenty of intellectual gifts and did not use them badly since those gifts are a powerful weapon to drag the masses.

However, and as Gérard de Nerval⁶ said lately, the unknown intelligence on Earth shall have a great merit before God. In fact someone that bears a powerful intelligence fighting against every unfortunate circumstance must rejoice with these words: “the last will be first, and the first will be last”. This must not be exclusively understood in a material sense but also with respect to the manifestations of the spirit and in the works of human intelligence. The qualities of the heart are meritorious because the circumstances that can preclude them are very small, rare and futile. Charity must shine everywhere, despite everything and to everyone, like the Sun shines to all. A person can preclude someone else’s intelligence from manifesting but cannot do anything against their feelings. The struggle against adversity, the anguishes of pain can paralyze the impulses of the genius but cannot halt those of charity.

⁶ Reference to a communication by Gérard de Nerval

February 1862

Religious and Philosophical Meditations

Dictated by the spirit of Lamennais
Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mr. A. Didier

Slavery

Slavery! When that word is pronounced the hearts goes cold because one sees egotism and pride. When a priest talks about slavery he refers to that slavery of the soul that diminishes the human spirit and muffles conscience that is freedom. Oh! Yes, that slavery of the soul is terrible and every day it does excite the eloquence of many preachers. But what do they say about the slavery of the helot and the black? Before such a question the priest shows the cross and says: "Wait!" In fact that is the consolation to offer to those unfortunate people and it says: "*When your body is lacerated by the whip and you die from the pain you must not think of Earth. Think of heavens.*"

We touch here one of the most serious and terrible issues faced by the human race and that throws it into uncertainty. Is the black race to the level of the Europeans and should human prudence, or even better, human justice show them emancipation as the safest way of achieving the progress of civilization? The philanthropists point to the Gospel and say: "*Has Jesus talked about slaves?*" No, but Jesus spoke of resignation and said these sublime words: "*My kingdom is not from this world.*"

John Brown, when I look at your corpse in the gallows I am taken by a profound compassion and eager admiration, but reason, this brutal reason that incessantly drags us to the whys, leads us to ask ourselves: "*What would have you done after victory?*"

Allan Kardec⁷

March 1862

To Our Correspondents

Paris, March 1st, 1862

Ladies and gentlemen,

You know the proverb: "Nobody is forced to do more than they can". It is based on that principle that I come to you. For six months now and despite my total good will it has been impossible to keep up with my correspondence that accumulates beyond all prediction. Hence, I feel like someone in debt that is trying to cut a deal with the lenders or otherwise declare bankruptcy. Whilst some debts are paid off a larger number of new ones arrive increasing rather than diminishing the backlog and right now I am behind with a load of two hundred letters. Well, since the daily average is 10 letters I cannot see a way of freeing up myself if you do not give me an unlimited time allowance.

I am far from complaining about the number of letters that I receive since that is an unquestionable proof of the reach of the Doctrine and most of them express feelings that touch me profoundly and constitute an invaluable archive. As a matter of fact, many of them contain teachings that will never be forgotten and that sooner or later will be utilized according to the circumstances hence they are immediately classified by subject.

The correspondence alone would thoroughly absorb my time although it is only a quarter part of the obligations that I have undertaken, something that I was far from predicting at the beginning of my Spiritist activities. Therefore a number of important publications are halted given my lack of time to work on them and I have thus received a *pressing invitation from my spiritual guides to get going with the urgent works without delay, leaving everything else aside.*

As a consequence and, unless I fail on the accomplishment of the work so happily initiated, I am forced to implement a kind of literary liquidation of the past and in the future restrict myself to the strictly needed answers, collectively asking my honorable correspondents to accept my most sincere gratitude for their testimonies of sympathy.

Among the letters addressed to me many carry requests for evocation or for controlling evocations done somewhere else. They frequent ask for information with respect to mediumship skills or things of material interest. I would remind you of what I said somewhere else about the difficulty and even the inconveniences of such kind of evocations in the absence of interested persons who are the only ones capable of verifying their accuracy and ask the required questions, adding to the fact that the Spirits communicate more easily and with more benevolence to their loved ones than to strangers that are indifferent to them.

For that reason and leaving aside the considerations with respect to my occupations, I cannot attend every request of that nature but on very exceptional cases and in any case never with respect to material interests. Had the persons interested in this matter thoughtfully read chapter 26 of *The Mediums' Book* and many of those questions could be avoided.

On the other hand personal evocations cannot be carried out at the sessions of the Society unless they offer subject for instructive study and of general interest. Otherwise they can only take place

at special sessions. In order to satisfy every request a daily session of two hours would not suffice. Besides, we must take into account that every medium, without exception, who give us their support do so out of pure kindness and do not admit any other condition and since they have their own commitments and hence they are not always available regardless of their good will.

I understand the importance that each person attributes to matters of their own interest and I would feel happy if I could address all of them. However, taking into account that given my position I am in touch with thousands of people one can then understand the actual impossibility of doing so.

One must also realize that certain evocations would not require less than five or six hours of work both to hold and transcribe them, and that put together all that were requested to me would render a volume like *The Spirits' Book*. As a matter of fact the mediums multiply daily and it is rare the case when one is not found in the family or among acquaintances – when the person herself is not – something that is always preferable on more private issues. It is a matter of trying in good conditions out of which, and before any attempt is made, the first one is to be well informed about the instructions relative to the practice of Spiritism, in case one wants to avoid deceptions.

As Spiritism spreads further my network multiplies and the duties associated with my position follow suit forcing me to somewhat neglect details in favor of general interests, since time and human strength have a limit and I confess that mine are fading for some time now and I cannot enjoy the necessary resting time since I am only one to take care of everything.

I beg you, ladies and gentlemen, to accept my reiterated demonstration of affectionate devotion.

Allan Kardec

March 1862

The Spirits and the Family Crest

Among all the arguments against the reincarnation doctrine, presented by certain individuals, there is one that we must examine because it seems tricky at first sight.

They say that such doctrine would tend to break family links by multiplying them and someone who held great affection towards a father would have to share it with so many others as the number of reincarnations grows. How could one then be able to reconcile that when returning to spirit world? On the other hand, what becomes of the descendent of a given predecessor if someone who believes he descended directly from the lineage of Hugh Capet or Godfrey of Bouillon has in fact lived many times? If after having been a Grand Lord, one can become a commoner? There you have a whole lineage in disarray.

To begin with, we respond that it is one or the other: either it is or it is not. If it is then whatever personal objections they have will not preclude it from being so. God does not request anyone's advice to regulate things; otherwise each one would like to have the world ruled according to their own will. Regarding the multiplicity of family links we say that certain parents have only one child while others may have ten, twelve or more. Have you already thought of accusing God of forcing them to share their affection with so many? And those children, that in turn have their children and all that forming a large family that makes grandparents and great-grandparents proud instead of feeling sorry?

You who take your family tree back five or six centuries, once you are in the spiritual world, won't you share your feelings with all the ancestors? If you find a dozen of forefathers you then have a double or a triple and that is all! However, you have a very petty image of your love since you fear that it will not be enough to feel for so many people. Rest assure, though. I will demonstrate that your feeling will be less divided with than without reincarnation.

In fact let us suppose that you counted fifty great-grandparents in your genealogy both direct ancestors and collateral, which is not much if we go back to the time of the Crusades. Through reincarnation it may well be that some among them return several times and that instead of fifty that you counted on Earth you will in reality find only half of them in the spiritual world.

Now let us move on to the issue of affiliation. With your system you get to a different result from the one that you expect. If there is no pre-existence, previous life of the soul, then the soul has not lived. In such a situation there is no relationship with any of your predecessors. Suppose you descend directly from Charlemagne. What is it that is common between you and him? What has he passed on to you intellectually and morally? Nothing, absolutely nothing. Why are you attached to him? For a series of bodies that have been decomposed, rotten and destroyed? There is nothing to be proud about it. With the pre-existence of the soul, on the contrary, you might have had real, serious and more flattering relationships with your predecessors. Therefore, with the reincarnation all that there exist is a corporeal relationship through the transmission of organic molecules of the same nature as those of the thoroughbred horses. With reincarnation there is a spiritual relation. Which one is better?

You will certainly object that with reincarnation a strange spirit may infiltrate in your lineage and that instead of counting only on gentlemen you might be able to find a shoemaker there. That is perfectly true but means nothing. Saint Peter was a poor fisherman. Wouldn't he come from a sufficiently noble house to the point of making us feel ashamed for having him in our family?

Besides, among your ancestors of brilliant names, have they all lived a spotless life, the only thing that, to a certain extent, could make us proud since their merit has nothing to do with ours? Have the lives of those paladins thoroughly investigated, the lives of those great barons who robbed the passersby without scruples; they would be simply taken to the courts for their great deeds in our days; the lives of certain lords to whom life was not worth more than a day's hunt since they were used to hang a man for the price of a habit. All these things were little sins that stained no family crest. However, an imbalanced marriage, the introduction of a plebeian blood in the family these were unforgiving sins. Now, regardless of how much one does, when the time of farewell comes – and it comes to the great as to the little ones – the fancy outfits and the parchments will do no good before the supreme judge who pronounces this terrible sentence: "*For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted!*"

If it were good enough to descend from any great person to have one's place previously marked in heavens we would be able to pay it for a low price since it would only cost someone else's merit. Reincarnation provides a more meritorious nobility – the only accepted by God – that of having animated a series of good men. Fortunate is the one who can deposit at the feet of the Eternal the tribute of services provided to humanity in each of their existences for the sum of the merits will be proportional to the number of existences. God, however, will ask the one who only provides the feats of their predecessors: "*Where are your own feats?*"

Another system could apparently conciliate the requirements of self-love with the principle of non-reincarnation. It is the one through which the father would not only transmit the body to the son but also a portion of the soul so that if you descended from Charlemagne your soul could have been stemmed out from his. Very well. Let us see the consequences of such a theory. According to this system Charlemagne's soul would have its trunk on his father's soul and so forth, link by link, until reaching Adam. If Adam's soul is the trunk of every soul of humanity that transmits to their descendants a portion of their own then the present souls would represent the product of a fractioning that would surpass all subdivisions of homeopathy. It would result that the soul of a common father would be more complete than the most complete soul of a descendant. It would result still that God would have created only one soul that would be subdivided to the infinity and thus each one of us would not be a direct creation of God.

As a matter of fact, such a system would leave a huge problem to be solved: that of the special skills. If the father transmitted the attributes of his soul to his children he would necessarily transmit his virtues and vices, talents and ineptitude, like certain genetic illnesses. How then can we explain that virtuous persons or geniuses have bad or mentally challenged children and vice-versa? Why would a lineage be mixed with the good and the bad? Say, on the contrary, that each soul is an individual; that has its own and independent existence; that progresses as a consequence of its own free-will through a series of corporeal existences, acquiring something good, leaving something bad behind in each one of them until perfection is achieved and everything is then explained, everything complies with reason and God's justice, and even to the benefit of self-love.

Mr. Salgues from Angers that we mentioned in our previous issue is not a partisan of reincarnation. After the appearance of *The Spirits' Book* he sent us a long letter in which he fought that doctrine with arguments based on its incompatibility with family links. He gives us his genealogy in the letter dated September 18th, 1857, a genealogy that goes back to the Carolingians and he asks what

becomes of such glorious ancestry with the mix of Spirits through reincarnation. We extracted the following passage from the letter:

“But what would be the point of family trees? I have my own, complete, regular. From one side since the predecessors over Charlemagne’s time and on the other since the daughter of Emir Muza, one of Mohamed’s descendants from the Abbasid Caliphate, tenth generation of her marriage with Garcia, prince of Navarra, parents of Garcia Jimenez, king of Navarra; and finally such genealogy continued through alliances and sovereigns of almost every European court, up to the time of Afonso VI, king of Castela, and then the houses of Comminges, Lascaris Vintimille, Montmorency, Turenne and finally to the Counts and Sirs Pelhasse de Salgues in Languedoc.”

“All that can be confirmed in the Art of verifying dates, in the Benedictines of Saint-Maur, in the Dictionary of French Nobility, in the Amorial, with Father Anselmo, Noreri, etc. However, if we are only connected to our parents through matter do not we find blanks and broken links all over the place? It is a path drawn in the sand that gets lots in thousands of directions.”

“We must then be allowed to believe that the spirit is not transmitted and the soul is to a person what the perfume is to a flower. Do not Swedenborg says in the Celestial Arcanes that nothing is lost in nature and that the perfume of the flowers produces other flowers in other places away from the original one? It is thus through the soul, which is not spirit, that there would perhaps be a semi-spiritual chain of generations. If it was up to my spirit to skip eight or ten generations from time to time, how could I recognize my ancestors?”

As from above, Mr. Salgues limits his system to the origin of the body. However, how to conciliate the relations among the Spirits with the non-preexistence of the soul? If there were any necessary relationship among them through affiliation how could a simple owner of the Anjou be descendant of so many sovereigns?

We do not question the authenticity of his genealogy and congratulate him for that if it pleases him but we say that we take him more for his personal virtues than those of his predecessors.

Swedenborg’s authority is very much contestable when he attributes the reproduction of flowers to their perfume. The essential and volatile oil that gives them the aroma has never had a reproductive faculty that resides exclusively in the pollen. Hence, the comparison lacks accuracy for if the soul just influences another soul with its aroma one does not create the other. However, it should transmit its own skills and in that case we cannot see why a descendant of Charlemagne would not have spread the light of his actions around the world while Napoleon would have been supported by a vulgar soul. Say, however, that Napoleon descended from Charlemagne and that he came to the nineteenth century to continue his work initiated in the eighth and one can understand. With the principle of a single existence, though, there is nothing connecting Charlemagne to his descendants but that aroma that is transmitted bit by bit upon souls that were not created. In that case how can one explain why there were so many null and unworthy persons among his descendants and why Napoleon is a much greater genius than his obscure ancestors?

Regardless of what is done without reincarnation we struggle against insoluble questions every step of the way, difficulties that are only resolved by the preexistence of the soul in a simple and at the same time logical and thorough way because it gives the reason for everything.

Here is another issue. A well-known fact is that families degenerate when the alliances do not veer off from the straight line. The same that happens to animal species also happens to the human race.

Why then the need for cross marriages? What becomes of the unit of the trunk? Isn't that a mixture of Spirits, an intrusion of alien Spirits into the family?

We will one day discuss this grave issue with all the developments that it requires.

March 1862

Conversations from Beyond the Grave

Mr. Jobard

After his death, Mr. Jobard communicated several times at the Society at sessions that, as he says, he almost always attended. Before publishing them we decided to wait until we had a series of them forming a set that would allow a better appreciation. We wanted to evoke him in our session on November 8th but he got ahead of us and gave a spontaneous communication (see his necrology published in the last December issue of *The Spiritist Review*).

Spontaneous Essay

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, November 8th, 1861 – medium Mrs. Costel

Here I am, the one who you will evoke, and I want to initially communicate through this medium that I have unsuccessfully requested so far.

To begin with I want to tell you about my first impressions at the time of separation of my soul. I felt a strange commotion and suddenly I remembered my birth, my youth, and my maturity. My whole life was vividly present in my memory. I felt a compassionate desire to be in the regions revealed by our dear belief. Then all that turmoil appeased. I was free and my body rested inert.

Ah! My dear friends, what an emotional feeling that of leaving the load of the body! How amazing the feeling of conquering the space! You must not believe, though, that I have suddenly become an elected of the Lord. No. I am among the Spirits who have learned a little and have a lot to learn still. It did not take me long to remember you, *my brothers in exile*, and I assure you that my whole sympathy and my best wishes were with you. I had at once the capability of communicating and I would have done so through this medium who feared to be deceived. She must rest assured for we love her.

Would you like to know who the Spirits that welcomed me were? What were my impressions? My friends, it was all of those who were evoked by us; all the brothers who took part into our works. I saw the splendor but I cannot describe it. I endeavored to distinguish what was true in the communications, ready to correct every wrong statement; finally, ready to be the knight of the truth in the other world as I was in yours. Hence we shall speak a lot and this is not but a preamble to show the dear medium my desire to be evoked by her and to show you my good will in coming here to respond to the questions addressed to me.

Jobard

Talk

1. When alive you made the recommendation to have you called when you had left Earth. We do so not only to satisfy your wishes but above all to renovate our testimony of a very lively and sincere sympathy, and also to the benefit of our own instruction since you, better than anybody else, have the condition to give us accurate teachings about the world where you are now. Thus, we shall be pleased in case you are willing to respond to our questions.
– A. At this time your instruction is what matters the most. Regarding your sympathy I see that and understand it more than with the ears alone and that is a sign of progress.
2. To keep the ideas and to avoid speaking vaguely and also for the instruction of persons that are strange to the Society but who are present here we begin by asking where are you located here and how would we see you if we could do so? – A. I am near the medium. You would see me with the same appearance as that of the Jobard that used to sit with you at the table for your mortal eyes sees the Spirits in their mortal appearance.
3. Could you become visible to us? If negative, what is it that precludes you from doing so? – A. The disposition, something that is entirely personal to you. A clairvoyant medium would see me. The others do not see.
4. This is the place that you used to occupy when attending our sessions and that we reserve for you. However, those who used to see you here must imagine that they would see you as you were at that time. Although you are not present here with your material body, you are with your vaporous form that looks alike. We do not see you with the eyes of the body but in our thoughts. Since you cannot communicate through the spoken word you can write with the help of an interpreter. Hence our relationship with you is not broken by death and we can communicate with you as easily and thoroughly as before. Is that accurate? – A. Yes and you know that for a long time. I will take this place many times even unnoticeably because my spirit will live with you.
5. You sat here not long ago. Does your new situation seem strange to you? Which effect does it have on you? – A. The conditions do not seem strange because there was no disruption⁸ and my disincarnate spirit enjoys such a clarity that there is no fuzziness when facing the issues.
6. Do you remember being in the same condition before your last existence and do you observe any change? – A. I remember my previous existences and I believe to have improved. I see and understand what I see. As for my previous existences as a disoriented spirit I only kept partial memory of the earthly life.
7. Do you remember the existence that preceded that of Mr. Jobard's? – A. In my previous existence I was a mechanic tormented by misery and by the desire of improving my work. As Jobard I made the dreams of the poor mechanic come true and I thank God whose infinite benevolence made germinate the seed that was planted in my mind.

Private Session, November 11th – medium Mrs. Costel

⁸ Reference to the transition to the spiritual world with death (NT)

8. Evocation. – A. I am here and delighted for the opportunity of talking to you (the medium) and you also.
9. It seems to us that you have a fondness for the medium. – A. Do not criticize me. I had to become a spirit to demonstrate that.
10. Have you given any communication elsewhere? – A. I have communicated a little. A spirit takes my name in several places. Sometimes I was present but I could not manifest directly. My death is so recent that I still suffer certain earthly influences. A perfect sympathy is needed so that I can express my thoughts. It won't be long for me to be able to communicate indistinctively. For now – I repeat – I cannot. When a somewhat known person dies that person is requested all over the place and thousands of Spirits rush into taking their identity. That has happened to me in many cases. I assure you that few Spirits can communicate just after liberation, even by a preferred medium.
11. Have you changed your mind a little since Friday? – A. My mind is absolutely the same as it was on Friday. I have not given much thought to intellectual issues in the sense that you understand it. How could I if I was overwhelmed by the wonderful spectacle that surrounds me? It was only the more powerful than you can imagine links with Spiritism that brought me back to Earth, a planet that I am not glad to have left behind since it would be an impiety, but that I leave with a profound appreciation for the conquered freedom.
12. Do you see the Spirits that are here with us? – A. I mainly see Lazarus and Erastus; then, a little bit further away the Spirit of Truth, floating in space; then a multitude of friendly, thankful and benevolent Spirits that surround you. Be happy, friends, the good influences fight for you against the calamities of the error.
13. Still one question, please. Do you know the causes of your death? – A. Let us not talk about that yet.

OBSERVATION: Mrs. Costel says that she received a communication at home in which it was stated that Mr. Jobard died because he wanted to surpass the presently established limit of Spiritism. Hence, his passage had been precipitated for that reason. Mr. Jobard himself has not mentioned that issue yet. Several other communications seem to support that opinion but what really sticks out of certain facts is a kind of mystery the surrounds the circumstances of his precipitated death that as they say will be clarified later.

Society, November 22nd, 1861

14. When alive you sustained the opinion that the formation of Earth had taken place by the incrustation of four planets that were mended together. Do you still hold that opinion? – A. It is a mistake. The new geological discoveries prove the convulsions of Earth and its successive formation. Like the other planets, Earth had its own formation and God does not require such disorder or such aggregation of planets. Water and fire are the only organic elements of Earth.
15. You also believed that humans could enter into a sort of cataleptic state for an undetermined period of time and that is how human beings were brought to Earth. – A. My deluded imagination that exceeded the limits. A cataleptic state can last long but not indefinitely.

Traditions and legends that were amplified by the oriental imagination. My friends, I have already suffered significantly when revising the illusions that fed my spirit. Make no mistake. I learned a lot and – I can say so – my intelligence always ready to absorb these vast and diverse studies had kept the love for the wonderful and supernatural since my last existence, added to the compilations taken from popular imagination.

Bordeaux, November 24th, 1861
(Medium Mrs. Cazemajoux)

16. Evocation. – A. Is it time to restart? What do you want from me then? I am here.
17. We have just learned about your death. Since you are one of the champions of our Doctrine, would you like to respond to some questions? – A. Well, I do not know who I am with but the Spirits tell me that this medium has received some messages that were published in the Review and that I liked them. I must pay back now. It has not being long since I left Earth and in a few years I will be born again here to retake the course of the mission that I had initiated since the angel of freedom interrupted it.
18. You speak of a mission that you had to accomplish on Earth. Can you elaborate on that? – A. Mission of moral and intellectual progress that still are in a germinal state. The Doctrine or Spiritist Science has the fecund elements that must develop, grow and mature with the modern ideas of freedom, unity and fraternity. For that reason one must not fear the task of giving it a vigorous impulse that will take it over obstacles which such a force that cannot be restrained.
19. By moving faster than its time shouldn't we fear to have the Doctrine harmed? – A. You will knock its adversaries down. Your low speed allows them to gain space. I do not like the sluggish and heavy rhythm of the turtle. I prefer the audacious flight of the king of the air.

Observation: This is a mistake. The followers of Spiritism gain terrain every day while its adversaries lose it. Mr. Jobard is always an enthusiast. He doesn't get it that one can reach the objective more safely with prudence whilst we risk compromising the cause by jumping head first against the obstacles.

Allan Kardec

20. How can one then explain God's designs by taking you out from Earth and so suddenly if you were such a necessary instrument to the rapid march of humanity towards its moral and intellectual progress? – A. Oh! What a leverage would that be to part of the Spiritists with my ideas! But, no. They are paralyzed by fear.
21. Could you explain God's designs by calling you back before the accomplishment of your mission? – A. I was not upset. I see and learn to become stronger for the right moment of the fight. Double your fervor and zeal for the noble and sacred cause of humanity. One existence alone is not enough to see resolve the crises that must transform society and many

among you who pave the way will reborn after some time to help again with the sacred and blessed task. I said enough tonight, haven't I? I am at your service, though. I will come back because you are a good and eager follower. Good-bye. Tonight I want to attend the session with our dear master Allan Kardec.

22. You have not responded to my question about God's designs by calling you before the accomplishment of your mission. – A. We are instruments to help God's designs. He breaks us at will and gives us a new role whenever he finds useful. Let us then submit ourselves to God's designs without any investigation since nobody has the right to tear off the veil that hides God's immutable decrees from the eyes of the Spirits. So long!

Jobard

Passy, December 20th, 1861 – medium Mrs. Dozon

23. Evocation. – A. I do not know why you have evoked me. I am nothing and owe nothing to you. Also, I will not respond to anything without the Spirit of Truth who tells me that it was Kardec who asked you to have me called. Well! I am here. How can I help?
24. It is true that Mr. Allan Kardec asked us to evoke you in order to control several communications from you, comparing one to the others. It is a study and we hope that you will support us on that in the interest of the Spiritist Science, describing your situation and your impressions since you left our planet. – A. I was not with the truth in everything in my earthly life. I start to get it now. My thoughts reach a new clarity after the bewilderment phase and I promptly retreat from the *mistakes* in my beliefs. This is a blessing from God's mercy but that comes a little bit late. Mr. Allan Kardec was not totally fond of me and that is how it should be. He is positive in his faith. I dreamed and groped beyond the borderline of reality. I am not sure about what I wanted but a better life. Spiritism came to show that to me and the most enlightened Spiritist lifted the veil of the spiritual life before my eyes. He was inspired by *The Truth. The Spirits' Book* brought a true revolution upon my soul and did me a good that is impossible to describe. However, my spirit carried doubts about many things that are presented under a completely new light today. At the beginning of the communication I told you that after the confusion the spirit shows me what I could not see before. The spirit moves away; its detachment is not complete yet but has already communicated a number of times. However, something that is likely to look bizarre to your eyes is the change observed by the evokers of the spirit Jobard.

The same medium then received the following spontaneous message:

Jobard was a research spirit always wanting to move up, always up. The Spiritist ideas seemed to show him a way to work to this path. Jobard represented the *spirit of curiosity*. He wanted to know, always to know more. Such a need, such a thirst pushed him towards

research that was beyond the limits assigned by God to you. Therefore, you must not try to unveil the mysteries of his power! Jobard reached for the top and was upset. This is a teaching. You must seek the sun but you must not be audacious enough to stare at its beams for you shall become blind. Doesn't God give you enough by sending you the Spirits? Leave to death its God given power which is to lift the veil to the one that deserves it. You will then be able of look at God, the Sun of Heavens, without the risk of becoming blind or frustrated by the power that tells you: "Do not go beyond!" That is what I have to tell you!

The Truth

Society, January 3rd, 1862 – medium Mrs. Costel

Note: Mr. Jobard manifested several times in Mr. and Mrs. P... home, members of the Society. At one point he showed up spontaneously and without having anybody given any thought to him, showing himself to a somnambulist who described him with great accuracy and gave his name although she had never met him. A conversation was established between him and Mr. P... through the somnambulist. He remembered several particularities that left no doubt about his identity. There was something that impressed them in particular: it is the fact that the only occasion that they had the opportunity to see him at the Society he stared at them during almost the whole session, as if he had identified them as his acquaintances. This fact had been forgotten and Mr. Jobard brought that up through the somnambulist. The couple had never had any contact with him during his life and hence they wanted to know the reason for the sympathy that he seemed to demonstrate towards them. The following communication was about that subject.

"Non-believer! You needed this confirmation from the somnambulist to believe in my identity! Ungrateful! You forgot me for a long time under the pretext that others remember better. Nonetheless, let us stop the criticism and talk. Let us discuss the subject that drove the evocation. I can easily explain why my attention was focused on the couple that was strange to me but who I knew through a kind of instinct, a second vision or a foresight. After my freedom I realized that we had met previously and I then returned to them – that is the word."

"I started to live my spiritual life more at peace and less disturbed by the evocations that were plentiful through indirect means. Fashion dominates, even among the Spirits. When the fashion Jobard gives space to someone else and I am forgotten by the humans I will then ask the serious friends – with that I refer the minds that do not forget – I will ask them to evoke me. We will then exhaustively discuss issues that are only superficially handled and your completely transfigured Jobard will be able to be useful to you, something that he wishes from the bottom of his heart."

Jobard

To the medium, Mrs. Costel: “I am back. You wish to know why I show preference for you. When I was a mechanic, you were a poet. I met you at the hospital where you died, Madam!”

Jobard

Montreal, Canada, December 19th, 1861

Mr. Henri Lacroix writes to us from Montreal saying that he had sent three letters to Mr. Jobard who had only received two of those. The third one arrived too late and he only responded to the first one. Learning about his death through the papers Mr. Lacroix received communications from several Spirits signed Voltaire, Volney, and Franklin assuring him that the news was false and that Mr. Jobard was very well. The *Spiritist Review* eliminated the doubts, confirming the fact. It was when the evoked spirit of Mr. Jobard gave the communication below whose accuracy Mr. Lacroix asks us to verify.

“My dear master, you say that I died. I am not dead since I speak with you. Those who told you that I was not dead certainly wanted to kid you. I do not know them yet but I will and then I will know why they acted like that. Write to Mr. Kardec and I will respond to you. I do not believe I can do that through the planchette. In any case, let us try and I will do my best. The two letters that I received from you had a strong contribution in the cause of my death. Later you will know how.”

Jobard

Mr. Jobard was evoked about this on January 10th, acknowledging as being the author of the communication, but the hypothetical portrayal made below was not his, something that we believe effortlessly since it absolutely does not look like him.

- How could the reading of those two letters have contributed to your death? – A. I cannot and I do not want to say but that the reading of the letters after a meal caused a congestion that took me or, if you like, liberated me.

Observation: While the medium wrote this answer and before it was read, another medium received from his personal guide the following answer: “Difficult explanation that he will not explain in details. There are things that Mr. Jobard cannot say.”

- Mr. Lacroix wishes to know why several Spirits have belied the news about your death. – A. Had he paid more attention, he would have noticed the intrusion. How many times do we have to repeat that which we have to almost absolutely suspect is spontaneous communications about something deliberately affirmed or denied? The Spirits only deceive those who allow that to happen.

Observation: During this answer another medium wrote the following: Spirits that like to ramble without any commitment to the truth. “There are Spirits that act like humans: receive some news and either confirm or deny them in the same way.”

It is obvious that the names who signed the denial of Mr. Jobard’s death are apocryphal. In order acknowledge that it would be enough to consider that Spirits like Franklin, Volney, and Voltaire are occupied with serious things and that details of such a nature are incompatible with their character. This should only raise doubt with respect to their identities and consequently with respect to the truthfulness of the communications. It would never be too much to repeat: it is only a serious, complete and attentive study of the Spiritist Science that can provide the means of unmasking the mystifications of deceiving Spirits that expose the novice who lacks experience.

- You only responded to the first letter from Mr. Lacroix. He would like to get the answer to the other two and specially the third one that, as he says, had a private meaning and that could only be understood by you. – A. He will get it later. At the moment I cannot answer. It would be useless to provoke it since he would certainly know that the answer was no mine.

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, February 21st, 1862 – medium Ms. Stephany

When the Society initiated a fund-raising in favor of the brothers of Lyon a member pledged 50 francs from which 25 were from his account and 25 in the name of Mr. Jobard. The latter gave the following communication about that:

“I will respond once more my dear Kardec. I am touched and thankful for not have being forgotten among my Spiritist friends. Thanks to the generous heart to have given you an offering that I would have made if I were still in your world. There is no need for money where I am now. Hence, it was necessary to take it from the purse of friendship to give material proofs that I was moved by the misery of our brothers of Lyon. Brave workers that eagerly harvest the vines of our Lord, how much you must believe that charity is not a vain word since the small and the great demonstrate their sympathy and fraternity towards you! You walk the great humanitarian avenue of progress. May God keep you there and may you be happier. Friendly Spirits will sustain you and you will triumph!”

Jobard

March 1862

Subscription to Erect a Monument in Memory of Mr. Jobard

When the papers announced the construction of a monument to Mr. Jobard, Mr. Allan Kardec notified the Society at the session on January 31st last. He considered mentioning this in the Review but postponed the announcement since the resources were scarce since most of the proceeds have been used in other areas. He also wanted to give some thought to the choice between giving bread to the poor and stones to the dead.

Once questioned about that Mr. Jobard responded:

“Certainly. But I gave some thought: Do you want to know if I like statues? To begin with give your support to the unfortunate ones and if at the end you still have some coins leftover in your pockets you then have a statue erected. That will always keep an artist alive.”

Hence, the Society will receive donations with that objective and credit the amounts to an account that was opened for that with the journal *La Propriété Industrielle* at Rue Bergère, 21 where the subscription was originated.

March 1862

Carrère, Verification of Identity

It is well-known that one of the difficulties of Spiritism resides in the identification of the manifesting Spirits and the means employed to not always yield positive identification. From that point of view the best proofs are those that come from the spontaneity of the communications. Although these proofs are not rare, when well characterized it is better to confirm them first for one's own satisfaction and as an object of study, and on another hand to respond to the objections of those who deny their possibility probably because they were unsuccessful for having being badly applied or due to their own preconceived ideas.

We repeat here what we said somewhere else that the identity of the Spirits who lived at distant times and that come to bring us their teachings is almost impossible to verify and only a relative importance must be given to the names that they use. Is their message good or bad, rational or illogical, worthy or unworthy of the names that they bear? That is the whole issue. The same does not apply to the contemporary Spirits whose character and habits are known by us, Spirits that can demonstrate their identity through particularities and details that are only rarely obtained when requested and that is necessary to learn to wait. Such is the fact reported in the letter below:

“Bordeaux, January 25th, 1862

My dear Mr. Kardec,

You know that we like to submit our works to you, entirely accepting your enlightenment and the appreciation of your experience. Thus, when dealing with cases of shocking identity, we just limit ourselves to the exposition of the details.

The following letter was sent to us by Mr. Guipon, Head Accountant of the Southern Railways Co. and leading member of the Spiritist Society of Bordeaux, on the 14th of the present month:

‘My dear Mr. Sabò,

Allow me to request the evocation, during one session, of the spirit of Carrère, Deputy Supervisor of the team at Bordeaux station, deceased while supervising a maneuver on December 18th last. I attach in a separate envelope the details of the fact that I wish to have verified and that I believe to be a serious matter of study and instruction to us. I would appreciate it very much if you only opened the envelope after the evocation. L. Guipon.’

On the 18th of the same month we carried out the requested evocation, in the presence of about ten honorable persons of our town.

- 1. Evocation of the spirit of Carrère. – A. I am here.*
- 2. What is your situation in the world of the Spirits? – A. I am neither happy nor unhappy. As a matter of fact I am frequently on Earth. I show myself to someone who is not very happy to see me.*

3. *Why do you show yourself to that person? – A. Ah! I was going to die. I was afraid and others feared for me. They searched for a Christ everywhere to help me transpose the difficult passage between life and death. There was a person to whom I show up had one but refused to lend that to me to have it placed upon my dying lips and between my hands like a token of peace and love. Well! The person will have to see me many times. She will always see me there. I must leave now. I feel bad here. Let me go. Good-bye.*

Immediately after the evocation I opened the sealed envelope that contained the following details:

‘On the occasion of the death of Carrère, Deputy Supervisor of the Bordeaux team, deceased on December 18th last, Mr. Beautey, Head of the P.V. station, had the body transported to the passengers terminal and sent one of the workers to his house to ask Mrs. Beautey for a Christ to have it placed on the corpse. That lady responded that the Christ was broken and could not lend it. On January 10th Mrs. Beautey confessed to her husband that the Christ that she had refused to lend was not broken but that she did not want to loan it to avoid experiencing the emotions that followed a similar incident, which occurred more or less in the same conditions. Next she added that she would never refuse anything to any deceased person, thus justifying: - During the whole night of that man’s death he was visible to me; for a long time I saw him around the Christ then by its side. Mrs. Beautey who had never seen that man before described him so well to her husband that he acknowledged as if he was present. In fact this is not the first time that Mrs. Beautey sees Spirits in her wake state. However, a remarkable fact is that the spirit of Carrère left a strong impression on her, something that would not happen when she saw other Spirits.’

Guipon

Down below there is the following statement:

This narrative is perfectly accurate.

Beautey, Chief of Station

I thought I should report the case of identity that I have just exposed, incidentally rare and that has certainly occurred with God’s permission, utilizing every means to challenge disbelief and indifference. In case you find it useful to publish the interesting episode you will find below the signature of all persons that attended the session. They ask me to let you know that their names can be published since it would be a mistake to keep their names incognito in this case. The names that appear in the evocation of Carrère can also be published.

Your dedicated servant,

A.Sabò

We attest that the facts reported in this letter are entirely true and we do not hesitate to confirm that with our signatures.

A. Sabò, Head Accountant of the Southern Railways Co., Rue Berennes, 13; Ch. Collignon, Rentier, Rue Sauce, 12; Emilie Collignon, Rentier; L'Angle, Employee of indirect contributions, Rue Pelégrin, 28; Widow Cazemajoux; Guipon, Inspector Accountant of the Southern Railways Co., Passage de Bègles, 119; Ulrichs, Trader, Rue des Chartrons, 17; Chain, Trader; Jouanni, Employee of Mr. Arman's shipyard, Rue Capenteyre, 26; Gougues, Trader, Passage de Saint-Genès, 64; Belly, Mechanic, Rue Lafurerie, 39; Hubert, Captain at 88th line; Puginier, 1st Lieutenant of the same regiment.

As always the non-believers will take this case as if it were imagined. They will say, for example, that Mrs. Beautey was shocked by her refusal and that she was led to believe that she saw Mr. Carrère out of remorse. We recognize that it is possible. However, the detractors who do not have the habit of analyzing before judging do not examine if there is any circumstance that escapes their theory. How would they explain her description of a man that she had never seen before? How about the evocation, will you also say that the medium was just translating his own thoughts or those of the attendees since the circumstances were ignored? Was it also chance?

- No. However, among the attendees was Mr. Guipon, author of the sealed letter and knowledgeable of the facts. Well, his thoughts would have been transmitted to the medium through the chain of fluids since the mediums are always in a state of febrile super-excitation, provoked and fed by the concentration of the attendees and his own will. Well, in such an abnormal state that is nothing else but a biological state, according to Mr. Figuier, there are emanations that escape from the brain giving exceptional perception originated from the expansion of the fluids, which in turn establish relationships between present and even absent persons. Hence, you see by this a much clearer, logical explanation. There is no need to resource to the intervention of the supposed Spirits that only exist in your imagination.
- Such reasoning, we humbly confess, is beyond our intelligence. We ask you: Do you understand that well?

March 1862

Spiritist Teachings and Dissertations

Reincarnation

The Hague envoy – medium M. le Baron de Kock

“The doctrine of reincarnation is an incontestable truth and if someone wants to only think of God’s love, wisdom and justice then one cannot admit any other doctrine. It is true that the following words are found in the sacred books: “Man will be rewarded for his works, after death”; But one does not pay enough attention to the endless quotes that tell you that it is completely unacceptable that modern man is punished for the mistakes and crimes of those who lived before Christ. I cannot go back to so many examples and demonstrations given by those who believe in reincarnation. You can do that yourself and the good Spirits will help you with that, and it will be a pleasant task for you. You can add this to the message I gave you and to those I will give you if God allows. Rest assured of God's love for humanity; God wants the happiness of His children but the only way for them to one day reach such supreme happiness is thoroughly in the successive reincarnations.

I already told you that what Kardec wrote about that fallen angels is the greatest truth. The majority of the Spirits that populate your world have always done so. If they are the same who return for so many centuries is that few have earned the reward promised by God.

Christ said: "This race will be destroyed, and soon the prophecy will be fulfilled". If you believe in a God of love and justice, how can we admit that a person who currently lives and even who has lived for eighteen centuries could be guilty of Christ’s death without admitting reincarnation? Yes, the feeling of love for God, the punishments and rewards of the future life, and the idea of reincarnation are innate in humans for centuries. Look into all stories, see the writings of the sages of antiquity, and you will be convinced that this doctrine has always been accepted by everyone who understood the righteousness of God. Now you understand the meaning of our Earth, and how the time has come for the prophecies of Christ to be fulfilled.

I am so sorry that you only find a few people that think like us. Your countrymen only think of greatness, money and name. They reject everything that can preclude bad passions. May that not withdraw your courage, though! Work for your own happiness and for the good of those who may renounce to their mistakes. Persevere on your work; always have God and Jesus in your thoughts and the heavenly beatitude will be your reward.

If the problem is examined without prejudiced, taking into account the existence of humankind in the several conditions of society and conciliate that existence with God’s love, wisdom and justice and every doubt with respect to reincarnation will disappear.

In fact, how can one reconcile that justice and love with a single existence where everyone is born in different social positions; where one is rich and great while the other is poor and miserable; where one enjoys good health while the other endures diseases of all sorts? Here joy and pleasure; sadness and pain elsewhere; a well-developed intelligence in some while it is just above the brute in others. How to believe in a God that is all love and who made beings condemned to idiotism and

madness for life? Who allows children at the spring of their lives to be taken away from the kind warmth of their parents?

I even dare ask if one can attribute love, wisdom and justice to God before those individuals that are immersed in ignorance and barbarism when compared to the civilized nations where there is the rule of law and order and where art and sciences are cherished.

It is not enough to say: "That is how God has established things in His wisdom". No, the wisdom of God that is love before anything else must become clear for the understanding of everyone. The dogma of reincarnation explains everything. That dogma given by God Himself cannot oppose the precepts found in the Sacred Scriptures. Far for that, the dogma explains the principles from which moral betterment and perfection stems out. The future revealed by Christ is in agreement with the infinite attributes of God. Jesus said: "All humans are not only children of God: they are also brothers and sisters of the same family". Now, those expressions must be well understood.

Will a worldly father give to some children what is denied to others? Will he throw one of them into the abyss of misery while the other is cumulated with wealth, distinction and dignity? Besides, since the love of God is infinite it cannot be compared to that of a man for his children. Since the different positions of people have a cause and since that cause is based on the principle of love, wisdom, benevolence and justice of God then their only explanation must be found in the doctrine of reincarnation.

God created all Spirits equal, simple, innocent, without vices or virtues, but with the free-will of controlling their actions according to an instinct named conscience, an instinct that gives them the ability to distinguish between good and bad. Each spirit is destined to reach the highest perfection after God and Jesus. In order to achieve that the spirit must acquire the whole knowledge through the study of all sciences; be initiated in all truths and purify through the practice of all virtues. Well, since these superior qualities cannot be acquired in a single existence they all have to live several lives in order to acquire the multiple degrees of knowledge.

Human life is the school of the spiritual perfection in a series of tests. That is why the spirit must know all social conditions and do what it takes to carry out the divine will in all of them. Wealth and power as poverty and humbleness are tests; pain, idiotism, madness, etc. are punishments for some bad deed of a previous life. As with the free will, the individual may pass or fail the test to which one is submitted. In the first case the reward will not be long: it consists on a progression towards the spiritual perfecting. In the second case the spirit is punished through the reparation in a new life of a lost opportunity in the preceding existence from which the spirit was not able to take advantage. Before the incarnation the Spirits wander in the celestial spheres: the good ones enjoying happiness, the bad ones regretting, victimized by the pain of being abandoned by God. However, keeping the memory of the past allow the Spirits to remember their breaches of God's laws and God allows them to choose their tests and conditions in a new existence, and that explains why we frequently find noble feelings and advanced understanding in the lower echelons of society while sometimes finding ignoble inclinations and brute Spirits in superior classes.

Can we speak of injustice when a person that has badly employed her life can repair her faults in a new existence and get to the final destination? Wouldn't injustice be in the immediate condemnation and without a possible way back? The Bible speaks of eternal penalties but that should not really apply to a single life, so sad and short, that instant, that blink of an eye when compared to eternity.

Many people ask why God would have hidden this dogma for such a long time, a dogma whose knowledge is useful to our happiness. Would God have loved humanity less than in our time?

The love of God is for the whole eternity. In order to enlighten us He sent wise people, prophets and the Savior Jesus Christ. Isn't that a proof of an infinite love? However, how has humanity received that love? Have they improved?

Jesus said: "I still have many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now"⁹. If we take the Sacred Scriptures in their intellectual meaning we will find many citations that seem to indicate that the spirit must experience several lives before reaching the end. Besides, do not we find the same ideas about reincarnation in the works of old philosophers?

The world has progressed significantly in the material aspect, in sciences and social institutions but from a moral point of view it is still crawling behind. Humanity still ignores God's law and no longer listen to Jesus' words; that is why God gives them as a last resort and as a means of getting to know the principles of the eternal happiness the direct communication with the Spirits and the teaching of the principle of reincarnation, words that are plentiful of consolation and that illuminate the darkness of the dogmas of so many different religions.

Hands on! May the search be carried out with love and confidence! Read without prejudices; think of everything that God has done to humanity since the creation of the world and you will be confirmed in the faith that reincarnation is a sacred and divine truth."

OBSERVATION: We did not have the honor of knowing Mr. Baron de Kock. This communication that agree with all principles of Spiritism is not the product of any personal influence.

⁹ John 16:12 (NT)

March 1862

Spiritist Teachings and Dissertations

Realism and Idealism in painting

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. A. Didier

I

Paintings are another art whose objective is to portray the most beautiful and elevated terrestrial scenery and eventually just imitate nature through the magic of truth. It is a boundless art, so to speak, particularly in your time. Art must not be just about personality in your days. It must be, if I can say so, the comprehension of everything that it has been in history, and the requirements of the local color, far from precluding the originality and personality of the artist, amplify their horizons, develop and purify the taste entailing the creation of interesting works to art itself and to those who want to see a fallen civilization and forgotten ideas in that art.

The so-called historical painting of your schools is not up to the demands of the century. I dare say that there is more future to the artist in their individual researches about art and history than in that avenue where some say I began to tread. There is only one thing that can save art in your time. It is a new impulse and a new school through an alliance between two said contrary principles – realism and idealism – that leads the youngsters to understand that if the masters were called so it is because they lived with nature and their powerful imagination invented where it was necessary to invent but obeyed when needed to obey.

To a large number of arts ignorant people dispositions frequently replace knowledge and observation. Thus, one can find all over persons of interesting imagination, even artists, but not painters. These shall be accounted for as very ingenious draftsmen in history. The speedily work and prompt realization of imagination are gradually acquired through the study and practice in a continuous effort, despite the fact that one may have the skills to paint fast. Art in your century, and I do not say that in every way, fortunately materializes alongside impressive efforts of renowned names of modern painting. Why such a trend? That is what I will show in the forthcoming communication.

II

To understand paintings, as I said in my last communication, one needs to successively go from practice to concept and from concept to practice. I have spent almost my entire life in Rome; when contemplating the works of the masters, I tried to capture the intimate connection, the relationships and harmony of the highest idealism and the true realism. I have rarely seen a masterpiece that meets these two principles; I saw the ideal and the sense of brevity next to a brutal truth and I said to myself: this is the work of a human mind; this is where thought and work meet, soul and body: the whole life. I witnessed the ideas and the views of the soft masters in their understanding, in their forms, their colors, their effects; the expression of their minds was uncertain, their movements banal and without greatness. It takes a long initiation to understand the secrets, the whims and sublimity of nature. It is not just the will of the painter; there is also the huge task of observation and the struggle in one's mind and in the ongoing realization of art; at some point it must bring to

the work at the hand the instincts and the sense of acquired thoughts and things, in a word it is always the two main principles: soul and body.

Nicolas Poussin

March 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

The Workers of the Lord

Cherbourg, February 1861 – medium Mr. Robin

“Time has come for the realization of what has been announced for the transformation of humanity. Fortunate the ones who have worked selflessly and without any other interest but charity in the land of the Lord! Their work shall be rewarded a hundred times more than expected. Fortunate the ones who have told their brothers: “Brothers, let us work together and let us unite our efforts so that when the master comes the work is done” for the master will tell you: “Come to me you good servants, you who muffled your envy and your disagreements to the benefit of the work!” Unfortunate are the ones, however, who have delayed the time of harvest for their quarrels since the storm will come and they shall be dragged in the turmoil! They will scream: “Grace! Grace!” but the Lord will say: “Why do you ask for grace since you had no pity on your brothers and sisters; since you refused to reach out to them; since instead of helping you smashed the weak? Why do you seek grace, you who sought your reward amidst the earthly joys and in the satisfaction of your pride? You have already gotten your reward as you wished. Ask no more. The heavenly rewards are for those who have not demanded them on Earth.”

Right now God carries out the census of the faithful servants and marks with his finger those who only have the appearance of dedication so that these do not steal the salary of the dedicated servants for God shall entrust the most difficult positions to those who do not retreat before their tasks in the great works of regeneration through Spiritism, and these words shall be accomplished: "But many who are first will be last; and the last, first in the Kingdom of Heavens!"

The Spirit of Truth

March 1862

Spiritist Teachings and Dissertations

Moral instruction

Paris, Group Faucheraud – medium Mr. Planche

I come to you, poor ones lost in a slippery terrain whose inclination claims no more than a few steps to have you precipitated into the abyss. Like the good father I extend the charitable hand to spare you from danger. My greatest desire is to lead you to the paternal and divine shelter so that you can feel the love of God and work through the Christian faith and charity, through the peace and kind pleasures of a home. Like you, my dear children, I met joy and suffering and I know all the doubts in your minds and the struggles of your hearts. I will be just but strict and forearm you against your faults and show you the obstacles that can destroy you.

From up and above the celestial spheres that I dwell my eyes dive with satisfaction into your gatherings eagerly following your sacred instructions. However, while my soul rejoices on one side on another it experiences a bitter suffering when it still sees so much attachment to earthly things in your hearts. To the majority the sanctuary of your lessons is a theater of spectacles with the expectation of wonderful things from our side. We are not assigned with the task of showing you miracles but with that of working your hearts by opening long trenches to cast handfuls of divine seeds on them. We struggle incessantly to make them productive for we know that their roots must grow from one end to the other of Earth, covering its surface. The fruits that will be born from that shall be so beautiful, so pleasing and great that they shall reach heavens. Fortunate is the one who have harvested them and satiated for the blessed Spirits will come to them and crown their heads with the aura of the chosen ones walking them through the steps that lead to the majestic throne of the Eternal, inviting them to share the incomparable happiness, pleasures and endless joy of the celestial phalanx.

Unfortunate is the one who was given to see the light and hear the word of God and who have closed their eyes and shut their ears for the spirit of darkness will embrace them with its grim wings, taking them to the empire of darkness, making them atone their disobedience to the Lord for centuries through countless torments. It is time to apply prophet Hosea's death sentence: "*Coedam eos secundum auditionem coetus eorum*".¹⁰ May these words be like vapor spreading in the air but may them capture your attention and have you seriously meditating about them. Hurry up to dedicate the few moments that you still have to God. One day we will come to ask you what have you done with the lessons and how have you utilized the sacred doctrine of Spiritism.

Therefore, Spiritists of Paris, you who can do a lot given your personal position and your moral influence, you have the glory and the honor of giving the sublime example of the Christian virtues. Do not wait for misery to knock at your door. You must march ahead of your suffering brothers; give the poor the alms of the day; dry the tears of the orphan and the widow with kind and reassuring words. Lift the Spirits of the old person abated by the weight of the years and under the yoke of iniquities, bringing out of their souls the shiny and golden wings of hope in a better future life.

¹⁰ I will make them die according to what they have heard (NT)

Spread love and consolation around you on your way. Raising your good deeds to the level of your thoughts you shall then honorably deserve the brilliant and glorious title that you are mentally attributed with by the Spirits of the country and from abroad whose eyes rest upon you, touched by admiration for the waves of light that escape from your gatherings, calling you the Sun of France.

Lacordaire

March 1862

Spiritist Teachings and Dissertations

The Vineyard of the Lord

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. E.Vézy

Finally, everyone shall come to work at the vineyard. I already see them coming in large numbers. Hands on my children! God wants all of you at work.

Sow, sow and one day you will reap abundantly. See the beautiful, dazzling and radiant Sun rising in the East! It comes to warm you up and allow the fruits of the vineyard to grow. Go on, children! The vintages shall be magnificent and each one will drink the chalice of the sacred wine of regeneration. It is the Lord's wine to be served at the banquet of the universal fraternity! All nations will gather there in a single family, singing hosannas to only one God. Take on your plows and sickles, you who want to live forever. Tie up the grapevine cords; make sure they are upright and their tips will reach heavens. There will be some who will produce a hundred cubits, and the Spirits from the ethereal worlds will come to squeeze the fruits and refresh themselves; the juice will be so powerful that it will give strength and courage to the weak; it will be the nourishing milk to feed the little ones. That is the vintage that is in preparation; it is already done; the vessels that must contain the sacred liquor are being prepared. Approach your lips, you who want to taste because this liquor intoxicate you with heavenly intoxication, and you will see God in your dreams, until reality succeeds dream. Children! Spiritism is the splendid vine that must rise to God. Eager followers, you must show it powerful and strong, and you, little ones, it is necessary that you help the strong ones to propagate it! Cut the buds and plant them in another field; they will produce new vines and other buds in all countries of the world. Yes, I tell you, everyone will drink the juice from the vine in the Kingdom of Christ with our heavenly Father! Hence, be strong and ready and do not live a life of austerity. God does not demand that you live in austerities and deprivation; God does not ask you to be covered in cilice; God wants everybody to feel the warmth of His Sun and if some beams are colder than others it is to have his power and strength understood by all. No, do not cover yourself with cilice; do not mortify your flesh by the whip of discipline. One needs to be robust and powerful to work at the vineyard. One must sustain the God given vigor. God did not create humanity to transform it into an adulterated place; God created it with the manifestation of His glory and power.

You who wish to live the true life, you shall walk our Lord's path when you have given bread to the unfortunate ones, the alms to misery and your prayers to God. Then, when your eyelids are definitely shut by death an angel of God will proclaim your deeds and carry your soul over to God on her white wings of charity, as pure and beautiful as the blossoming lily of the morning Spring day. Pray, love and do charity my brothers! The vineyard is large as is the field of the Lord. Come, come for God and Jesus call you and I bless you.

St. Augustine

March 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

Charity to Criminals – A Moral Issue

“A man is in a life threatening situation. It is necessary to risk one’s life to save him. It is known that the person is a criminal and as such if saved he could commit new crimes. Despite all that should we risk ourselves to save him?”

The answer that follows was obtained by the medium Mr. A. Didier, at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, on February 7th, 1862:

That is a very serious question that can be very naturally presented to the spirit. I will respond according to my own moral advancement since it is related to the issue of risking one’s life even for a wrongdoer.

Dedication is blind. One helps a personal enemy hence one must help an enemy of Society that is a criminal. Would you then believe that it is only death that we save him from? It could be his entire previous life. Think about this: In those rapid instants that steal the last minutes of his life the lost man sees his past life before his eyes. Death may come too soon for him and his reincarnation might be perhaps terrible. Go on, enlightened people by the Spiritist Science! Move on and subtract him from his doom and then, perhaps, that man who could die cursing you might embrace you. However, you must not ask if he will or will not do that. Just save him for by doing so you obey that voice from the heart that says: “You can save him; just do that!”

Lamennais

OBSERVATION: Out of an incredible coincidence some days ago we received the following communication from a Spiritist group in Le Havre, more or less dealing with the same subject. They tell us that after a conversation about the murderer of Dumollard, the spirit of Mrs. Elisabeth of France who have already given several messages, spontaneously dictated the following:

“True charity is one of the most sublime teachings that God has given the world. A complete fraternity must exist among the true disciples of his doctrine. You must love the miserable, the criminals as God’s creatures to whom forgiveness and mercy must be shown if they repent, like it has been done to yourselves for your faults against the law. Know this that you are more to blame than those to whom you deny forgiveness and commiseration for they frequently do not know God as you do and shall be less accountable than you. Do not judge. Oh! Do not judge my dear friends, for your judgment shall come back to you even more severely and you need indulgence to the sins that you do incessantly. Do not you know that there are many actions that are criminal to the eyes of God of purity and that are not even considered misdemeanor to the eyes of the world? True charity is not only the alms that you give, not even in the words of reassurance that follow. No. That is not the only thing that God expects from you. The sublime charity taught by Jesus Christ also consists on the benevolence towards your neighbor at all times and in all things. You can still exercise that sublime virtue towards many people that do not need alms but to whom your kind and consoling words will give courage and lead them to the Lord.

I also tell you this, the times when the great fraternity will reign in this globe are near. The law of Christ will rule the masses. He will be the only brake and the only hope and he will guide the souls to the dwellings of the blessings.

Hence, love one another as children of the same Father. Do not differentiate the other miserable ones for God wants all to be equal. Thus, you must neglect no one. God allows heartless criminals among you as a teaching. Soon, when the true laws of God govern the masses, there will no longer be the need for such teachings and all impure and revolted Spirits shall be spread out onto inferior worlds, according to their inclinations.

You own them the help of your prayers: that is true charity. One must not say of a criminal: "*That is a ingrate; Earth must be cleansed of their presence; death that is imposed upon them is too kind a punishment to someone of that kind.*" No. That is not how you should speak. Look at your model, Jesus. What did he say when he saw these type of individuals by his side? He was sorry for this very unfortunate person, reaching out to him. In reality you cannot do that but you can at least pray for that miserable person and assist their spirit over that time that they still have on Earth. Regret may touch their heart if you pray faithfully. He is your neighbor as much as the best of humanity. His strayed and disturbed soul was created like yours, to the image of a perfect God. Hence, pray for him. You must not be judgmental. Only God can.

Elisabeth of France

Allan Kardec¹¹

11 Paris, Typography Cosson & Co., rue de Four-St. Germain, 43

April 1862

Spiritualist and Spiritist Phrenology

Perfectibility of the black race¹

“Is the black race perfectible? According to some the question is judged and resolved negatively. If that is the case, if the race is devoted by God to an eternal inferiority it follows that it is useless to worry about the issue, limiting ourselves to see the black as a kind of domestic animal dedicated to the culture of sugar and cotton. However, humanity and social interest require a more detailed examination. That is what we try to do. Since a conclusion about the subject cannot be reached lightheartedly in one direction or another and must be based on serious thoughts we ask for permission to develop some preliminary considerations that will help to demonstrate once more that Spiritism is the only possible key to a number of insoluble problems with the support of data from Science. Phrenology will operate as our starting point. We will explain its foundations for a better understanding of the subject.

As it is well known, Phrenology is based on the principle that the brain is the organ of thoughts like the heart is of circulation, the stomach of digestion and the liver secretes the bile. Such idea is accepted by everybody because one cannot attribute thoughts to any other part of the body and each person feels that one thinks in the head and not in the arm or leg. Besides, there is an instinctive feeling that the seat of thoughts is located in the frontal rather than the occipital lobe: that is the place reached by the hand to indicate the occurrence of a new idea. Everybody believes that the development of the frontal part of the brain indicates more intelligence than a lower or depressed region.

On another hand anatomical and physiological experiences have clearly demonstrated the special role of certain parts of the brain on vital functions and the difference produced by a lesion of one region or another. Scientific researches leave no doubt with that respect. Those carried out by Mr. Flourens, in particular, demonstrated the specialization of the functions of the brain.

Therefore it is admitted in principle that all parts of the brain don't have the same function. It is further recognized that neural cords that stem out from the brain, ramifying to all parts of the body like the filaments of a root, are affected in different ways, according to their destination. That is how the optical nerve that reaches the eye and spreads over the retina is affected by light and colors, transmitting that sensation to a particular region of the brain; that the acoustic nerve is affected by the sounds and the olfactory nerve by the smells. If any of these nerves lose their sensitivity for any given reason the sensation is terminated: one becomes blind, mute or insensitive to odors. Those nerves, consequently, have distinct functions and cannot be replaced absolutely although a more careful examination does not show the slightest difference in their texture.

Phrenology, based on these principles, goes further: it locates all the moral and intellectual faculties, assigning each one with a special place in the brain. That is how it affects an organ with a destructive instinct that in excess becomes cruelty and ferocity; another with firmness whose excess and without the balance of judgment results in stubbornness; another with maternal love;

¹ See the July 1860 issue of the Spiritist Review: Phrenology and Physiognomy

others with the memory of places, numbers, forms, poetic feelings, the harmony of sounds, colors, etc., etc.

This is not the place to make an anatomical description of the brain. We only say that a longitudinal section of the cerebral mass shows fibrous bunches departing from the base and spreading towards the surface, presenting more or less the appearance of a vertically chopped mushroom. Each bundle corresponds to one of the convolutions of the outer surface, from which it follows that the development of the convolution corresponds to the development of the fibrous bundle. According to Phrenology, since each bundle is the seat of a sensation or a faculty it follows that the energy of the sensation or faculty is proportional to the development of the organ.

The osseous cavity is not yet formed in the fetus; in the beginning it is just a film, a very flexible membrane which is molded, therefore, on the projecting parts of the brain and maintains the footprint, as it hardens by the deposition of calcium phosphate that is the foundation of bones. From the projections of the skull, Phrenology concludes the volume of the organ, and from the volume of the organ the development of the faculty.

That is in a few words the principle of the Phrenology science.

Although it is not our objective to develop it here a few words are still necessary with respect to the method of assessment. It would be a serious mistake to believe that one can surmise the absolute character of a person by the simple inspection of the projections of the skull. The faculties balance out or attenuate with respect to each other, so that in order to judge an individual one does need to take into account the degree of influence of each faculty, given its development, and then consider temperament, environment, habits and education.

Take a man whose organ of destruction is very pronounced, showing atrophy of the organs associated to the moral and affective faculties. He will be miserably ferocious. However if benevolence, love and intellectual faculties are added destruction will then be neutralized, having the effect of giving more energy to that person who can then be a much dignified person, while a superficial observer led to judge him only based on the first organ will take him by a murderer. It then becomes clear all changes in character that may result from the influence of other faculties, like shrewdness, circumspection, self-esteem, courage, etc.

The sensation of color will make the colorist but not the painter; the sensation of forms alone will not make the drafter; the two together will make good copyist if not added by the feeling of idealism and poetry, plus the faculties of analysis and comparison.

This is enough to show that the practical observations of Phrenology present great difficulties and are based on philosophical considerations that are not available to everybody.

Having these preliminaries established, let us see the subject from another point of view.

Since the beginning two radically antagonist systems divided the Phrenologists into materialists and spiritualists. By not admitting anything beyond matter the former say that thought is the product of the cerebral substance; that the brain secretes thoughts as the salivary glandules secrete saliva and the liver secretes bile. Now, as the amount of secretion is generally proportional to the volume and quality of the organ they say that the amount of thoughts is proportional to the volume and quality of the brain; that each part of the brain secretes a particular kind of thoughts and that the multiple feelings and skills are in direct proportion to the organ that produces them.

We will not contest this monstrous doctrine that converts man into a machine, without any responsibility for his bad actions and without any merit for his good qualities and whose genius and virtues are serendipitous attributes of his physical organization.² With a similar system every punishment is unfair and every crime is justified.

The spiritualists, on the contrary, say that the organs are not the cause of the faculties but the instruments of their manifestations; that the thought is an attribute of the soul and not of the brain; that since having multiple aptitudes, the predominance of this faculty upon the other entails the development of the correspondent organ like the exercise of an arm determines the development of the muscles of that arm. It then follows that the development of an organ is an effect and not a cause. Therefore, a man is not a poet because he has the organ of poetry. He carries the organ because he is a poet, and that is very different.

This brings, however, another difficulty that stops the Phrenologist: if spiritualist he will say that the poet carries the organ of poetry because he is a poet but he does not say why the person is a poet; why, instead of a brother, although both were educated in the same conditions? And the same applies to all other skills.

Only Spiritism can provide the explanation.

In fact had the soul been created at the same time as the body and the soul of the scholar from the Science Institute would be as new as that of the uncivilized savage. Then, why do we find on Earth savages and members of the Institute of Sciences? You will say that it depends on the environment that surrounds them. Be it but then why do we have people who are born in the most hostile environments that become geniuses whereas there are others who feel the taste of science from breastfeeding and are stupid?

Don't the facts widely demonstrate that there are instinctively bad and good, intelligent and stupid people? Thus, it is necessary the existence of a seed in the soul. Where does it come from? Can we reasonably say that God has made it of all kinds and that some come without effort whereas others never do even after a systematic work? Would there be goodness and justice in that? Evidently not.

There is only one possible solution: the pre-existence of the soul; its existence before the birth of the body; the acquired development in accordance with an actual lived time span and the multiple migrations of the soul.

Thus, on uniting to the body, the soul brings along the good or bad qualities that were acquired. Hence the instinctive predispositions that allow us to say with certainty that the one that was born poet had already cultivated poetry; the one who was born a musician had already cultivated music and the other who was born criminal had already been worse. Such is the source of the innate faculties that produce in the organs affected by its manifestations an inner, molecular work that determines its development.

This leads us to the analysis of the important issue of the inferiority of certain races and their perfectibility. To begin with we establish as a principle that all faculties, passions, feelings, and skills are part of nature; they are necessary to the general harmony because God does not create anything useless; wickedness is the result of the abuse and lack of counter weight among the multiple skills. Since the faculties don't develop simultaneously it results that the equilibrium is

² See the March 1861 issue of the Spiritist Review: Garibaldi's head.

only established slowly; that the lack of balance produces imperfect people momentarily dominated by wickedness.

As an example let us take the instinct of destruction. It is necessary since nature requires that everything be destroyed in order to renovate. That is why every living species is simultaneously a destructive and reproductive agent. However, in isolation the instinct of destruction is blind and brutal. It dominates primitive peoples, savages whose souls have not yet acquired their own reflective faculties to regulate destruction at the right measure.

Will the savage acquire the missing faculties in one existence only? Regardless of the education they receive since birth can you make a St. Vincent, a scientist, a lecturer or an artist out of them? No, because that is physically impossible. However, that savage person has a soul. What is the fate of that soul after death? Is it punished for the barbarian acts that were reproached by nobody? Is it leveled with the soul of a good man? One is not more rational than the other. Is that soul then condemned to remain in a mixed state which is not that of happiness nor disgrace? That would not be fair since the achievement of further perfection was beyond that soul.

Such a dilemma cannot be solved without admitting the possibility of progress. However, how can that soul progress without other existences? One could say that the soul could progress as a spirit, without returning to Earth. But then why do we, the enlightened and civilized, are born in Europe and not in the Oceania? As white people instead of bearing black bodies? Why such a different starting point if one can only advance as a spirit? Why has God spared us from the long route endured by the uncivilized savage? Would our souls be different from theirs in nature? Why trying to make them Christians? If you make them Christians it is because you see them as equals before God. If they are equals before God why has God privileged you?

However much you try you will not reach a solution unless admitting a previous progress to us and a future progress to them. If the soul of the uncivilized must progress in the future it means that they will catch up with us. If we have progressed earlier it means that we were savages also given the fact that if the starting points were different then there is no justice and if God is not just then it is not God.

We then forcibly have two extreme existences: that of the uncivilized savage and that of the super civilized. However, wouldn't there be a midpoint between these two extremes? Check out the scale of the peoples and you will see that there is an unbreakable chain, without interruption. Once more, all these problems are unsolvable without the plurality of the existences. Say that the aborigines will reborn in a little less barbarian people and so on up until civilization and everything is explained; that instead of climbing the steps of the stairway he jump over and without a transition he arrives at our level he will provide the hideous spectacle of a Dumollard who is a monster among us but who would not be so abnormal among the tribes of Central Africa from where he should not perhaps have never left. That is how everything is darkness if limited to a single existence, everything is an unsolvable problem, whereas with reincarnation it is all clarity and everything has a solution.

Let us go back to Phrenology. It admits special organs to each faculty and we think that it is correct. But we go further. We saw that each organ of the brain is formed by a bunch of nervous fibers. We think that each fiber corresponds to a nuance of the faculty. It is true that this is just a hypothesis but that can open up the door to further observations. The hearing nerve receives the impressions of the sound and transmits that to the brain but how can a single nerve distinguish so many different tones? It is then licit to admit that each nervous fiber is affected by a different sound, in a certain way vibrating in synchronism like the strings of a harp. All sounds are part of nature. Let us imagine a hundred of them, from the highest to the lowest pitch. A person who had one hundred corresponding fibers would detect all of them; another who only had fifty would be able to detect half of them, letting go the others that would go unnoticed. The same applies to the

vocal chords to express sounds, with the optical fibers to observe colors and with the olfactory fibers to feel the odors. The same train of thoughts may be applied to all kinds of perceptions and manifestations.

Every animated body carries, unarguably, the principle of all organs although in certain individuals some are found in such a rudimentary state that are not susceptible to development and consequently as if they did not exist. Therefore these individuals cannot present manifestations and perceptions corresponding to those organs. With respect to these faculties those individuals are like the blind before light and the deaf before music.

The phrenological exam of not so much advanced peoples demonstrate the predominance of instinctive faculties and the atrophy of the organs of intelligence. Something that is an exception to the most advanced peoples is the rule to certain races. Why? Would that be an unfair preference? No, it is wisdom since nature is always provident; there is nothing useless. It would be useless to provide a complete instrument to someone that would be unable to use it. That savage spirits are still children if we can say so. They still have many latent faculties. What would an uncivilized savage do in the body of an Arago? It would be like someone completely ignorant of music standing before an excellent piano. Now, the flip side would be what the spirit of Arago would do in the body of an uncivilized savage? It would be like Liszt before a piano with just a few broken strings from which his talent would never be able to produce nice sounds. Arago's genius amongst the savage would be as intelligent as a savage can be and nothing else. He would never be a member of the Institute under a black skin. Would his spirit entail the development of the organs? The weak organs, yes; not the rudimentary ones.³

Thus, nature has adapted the bodies to the degree of advancement of their incarnating spirits. That is why the spirits of the primitive races have less vibrating strings than those of the most advanced ones. A man then has two very distinct beings: the thoughtful being, the spirit, and the body, the instrument for the manifestation of thoughts, more or less complete, potentially rich in its capabilities, according to the needs.

We now arrive at the perfectibility of the races. In a way this issue is resolved by the preceding one: we only have to deduce a few consequences. The races are perfectible by the spirit that develops through several migrations, gradually acquiring the missing faculties in each one of them. However, as the faculties amplify the spirit requires an adequate instrument, like a growing child that demands larger clothes. Now, since the actual bodies are no longer sufficient given their primitive state the spirits need to incarnate in better conditions and so forth, according to the progress.

The races are physically perfectible but it is only through cross marriages with more advanced races that bring new elements, so to speak, implanting the seeds of new elements. Such cross combination takes place in the migrations, wars and settlements. Under this point of view the races are like families that bastardize when there is no injection of new blood. As a consequence one cannot say that there is a pure primitive race for without cross-marriages that race will be always the same and since its state of inferiority depends on its nature. After certain time it would degenerate and disappear instead of advancing.

People say about the black slaves: *“These are brute creature, very little intelligent, and it would be useless to try to educate them. That is an inferior race, unchangeable, profoundly incapable.”* The theory above allows us to look at it from a different prism. Regarding the improvement of

³ See the Spiritist Review, October 1861 – The mentally challenged (cretinism)

the races we must always take two forming elements of man into account: the corporeal and the spiritual. It is necessary to get to know both and only Spiritism can clarify us with respect to the nature of the spiritual element, the most important one since that is the one that thinks and outlives the body which in turn disappears.

Thus, as a physical organization the blacks are always the same. As spirits they are undoubtedly an inferior race that is primitive. They are true children to whom very little can be taught. However, through intelligent means it is always possible to modify certain habits, certain tendencies, representing an actual progress that will be carried to the next existence, later on allowing them to take an envelope in better conditions. Working towards their betterment one works less for their present than their future and however little is achieved it is always an acquisition to them. Each progress is a step forward that facilitates new progresses.

Given the same physical structure, that is, the same instruments of manifestation, the races are only perfectible within narrow limits for the very reasons given above. That is why the black race, while black race, physically speaking, will never reach the levels of the Caucasian races but that is a different story from the point of view of the spirit: they can become and will become what we are. It is just a matter of time and better instruments. That is why the savage races, even in contact with civilized races, are always savage. However, the savage races diminish as the civilized races advance, up until their total disappearance, like the disappearance of the Caribbean, the Guanche and others. The bodies disappeared but what has been made of the spirits? Some may perhaps be among us.

We have said so and repeat: Spiritism unveil new horizons to all sciences. When the scientists consider the spiritual element in the phenomena of nature they will be surprised by the disappearance of great difficulties like from a magic touch. However, it is likely that many will require a renovation of habits. On their way back they will have had time to think and will bring new ideas. They will find things different here on Earth. The spiritist ideas that they repel today will have been sprout everywhere and will be the basis of every social institution. They will themselves be educated and fed by that belief that will open new horizons to their geniuses for the advancement of science. While they wait, while they are still here, may they seek the solution to the following problem: Why the authority of their knowledge and denials do not halt, at least for a moment, the ever faster march of the new ideas?

April 1862

Consequences of the Doctrine of Reincarnation on the Propagation of Spiritism

“The fast propagation of Spiritism is a fact that nobody can deny. When something propagates it means that it is convenient. If Spiritism propagates it is then convenient. There are several reasons for that. The first one, and without contradiction, is the moral satisfaction given to those who understand and practice it. But even the strength associated to this very reason is partially influenced by the principle of reincarnation. That is what we shall try to demonstrate.

Every wise person will always give some worthwhile thought to a future life after death. Who on Earth would give more importance to a few days than to a number of years? Even more: during the first stage of life we work, endure and suffer all kinds of restrictions so that, in the second stage, one can enjoy some rest and wellbeing.

If we are so careful with respect to some undefined years isn't that rational to be even more so with respect to our life beyond the grave, whose duration is unlimited? Why is that the majority of people work more for the volatile present than for the endless future? Fact is that we believe in the reality of the present and doubt the future. Now, one can only doubt what is not understood. Once the future is understood the issue is over.

Even to the eyes of those taught by common beliefs and who are better convinced about a future life it presents itself so vaguely that faith is not always enough to sink in that idea which is more characteristically hypothetical than reality.

Spiritism comes to destroy such uncertainty by the testimony of those who have already lived and by proofs that are in a way material.

Every religion is necessarily based on a future life and all dogmas forcibly converge to that unique end. That is the objective of the practice of those dogmas and one's faith in them is directly proportional to the efficacy that one attributes to them in order to achieve that goal.

The theory of a future life is then the keystone of every religious doctrine. If that theory has a faulty foundation; if it opens up the door to serious objections; if it is contradictory; if the impossibility of certain parts is demonstrated, everything else falls apart. To begin with doubt is established. It is then followed by absolute denial and the dogmas are dragged down with the wreckage of faith. Some thought that banning the discussion and prescribing blind faith, as a virtue would avoid the danger.

The imposition of a blind faith, however, is ignorance of the times in which we. Willing or not people think; examine by the force of things; people want to know how and why. The development of sciences and technology shows the best terrains where one must set foot on. That is why we probe that one where we shall walk after death. If we do not find it sturdy enough, that is logical and rational, we leave it alone. However much they try they will not be able to neutralize this tendency that is inherent to the moral and intellectual development of humanity. According to some

this is good. According to others, this is bad. Regardless of how we see it we must accommodate to the situation since there is no way out.

The need to be aware and understand things goes from the material to moral life. Future life is certainly not the most touchable thing like a railroad or a steam engine but it can be understood through reasoning. If the train of thoughts employed to understand it does not satisfy reason then premises and conclusions are abandoned. If we question those who deny a future life and they will all say that they were lead to disbelief by the very picture that was shown to them with its entourage of devils and flames and endless suffering.

All moral, psychological and metaphysical questions are more or less connected to the issue of the future. It thus follows that this issue depends in a way on the rationality of the philosophical and religious doctrines. Spiritism in turn does not come as a religious but as a philosophical doctrine, bringing its doctrine founded on the fact of the manifestations. It does not impose itself; it does not demand a blind faith; it meddles with people and say: "Analyze, compare and judge. If you find anything better than what I give you than take it."

Spiritism does not say: "I come to destroy the basis of religion and replace it by a new cult". It does say: "I do not address the believers and those who are happy with their beliefs, but those who have abandoned their ranks in disbelief and for the fact that you did not know how or could not retain. I come to provide a rational interpretation to the truths that they reject, leading them to accept those truths. The number of souls that I take out of the swamp of disbelief is the proof that I can do it."

Listen to them when they all say: "Had I been taught these things since my childhood and I would have never doubted. Now I believe because I understand."

Should they be sent away for the fact that they do not accept the letter, but the spirit; the form but the principle? You are free to do so. If you feel that it is a duty to your conscience, nobody will violate that. However, I wouldn't say that this is a lesser mistake. I say more: it is unwise.

As we said, future life is the essential objective of the moral life. Moral life has no foundation without future life. The triumph of Spiritism is precisely in the way it presents future life. Besides the proofs given by Spiritism, the picture that is painted is so clear, so logical and according to the goodness and to the justice of God that people say: "Yes, that is how it must be; that is how I had envisaged it and if I did not believe it the reason is the fact that I was taught differently."

However, what is it that gives such a power to the theory of the future? What is it that makes it so attractive? We say that it is its inflexible logic that solves all the up until now unsolvable issues and that it is owned to the principle of the plurality of the existences. In fact, remove that principle and there will immediately appear thousands of problems, each more unsolvable than the next. In every step of the way we are faced by many objections. Such objections were not raised in the past because nobody thought about them. Now that the child has grown up the adult wants an in-depth understanding of things; the path must be clear; people probe and balance the actual value of the arguments and if these do not satisfy their reason, leaving them in darkness and uncertainty, they are then rejected until something better shows up.

The plurality of the existences is a key that opens new horizons; that gives meaning to many things that were misunderstood; that explains what was inexplicable. It conciliates the events of life with God's justice and benevolence. That is why those who had doubted such justice and goodness now acknowledge the hand of Providence where it was ignored before.

In fact without reincarnation what can explain the innate ideas? How to justify cretinism, mental diseases, and barbarism side by side with the genius and civilization? The deep misery of some next door to the happiness of others? The premature deaths and so many other things?

From a religious point of view certain dogmas like the original sin, the fallen angels, the eternity of the penalties, the resurrection of flesh, etc. find in that principle a rational interpretation that leads to its acceptance, even by those who used to reject the word.

To summarize, modern civilization wants to understand. The principle of reincarnation illuminates what was obscure before. That is why we say that such a principle is one of the reasons that favor people to welcome Spiritism.

One could argue that reincarnation is not necessary to believe in Spirits and their manifestation. A proof of that is the fact that there are believers who do not admit such principle. It is true. We do not say that one cannot be a good Spiritist without that. We are not among those who throw stones at people that do not think like us. The only thing we say is that they have not discussed all the problems raised by the system of a single life, otherwise they would have recognized the impossibility of finding a solution to all of them.

In the beginning the idea of the plurality of the existences was received with surprise and mistrust. People then gradually familiarized with that as they recognized the impossibility of solving many difficulties without that principle, difficulties raised by psychology and future life.

There is one thing for sure. This system gains terrain every day while the other loses it. The adversaries of reincarnation these days in France – we speak of those who have studied the Spiritist science – count on a tiny number when compared to those who accept it. Even in America where they are in larger numbers for the reasons that we gave in our previous issue, such a principle begins to popularize. From that one can conclude that it is not far the day when there will be no disagreement about this point.

April 1862

Demoniacal Epidemic in the Savoie

Some time ago the papers reported an epidemic monomania that took place in the Savoie region and against which all the resources of medicine and religion failed to address. The only means that produced a more or less satisfactory result was the spreading of the individuals throughout several towns. With that in mind, we received the letter below from Captain B..., member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, currently living in Annecy:

“Annecy, March 7th 1862

Mr. President,

Willing to be useful to the Society I have the honor of sending you a brochure received from one of my friends, Dr. Caille, assigned by the minister to follow the enquiry carried out by Mr. Constant, inspector of the houses of the mentally ill, about the large number of cases of devil-mania observed in the Morzine neighborhood, Thonon county, High Savoie.

Still today that miserable population is under the influence of an obsession, despite the exorcisms, medical treatments, actions taken by the authorities and taking the patients to county hospitals. The number of cases has diminished a little bit but has not ceased and the illness is in a latent stay, so to speak.

With the objective of exorcizing those unfortunate people, mostly children, the priest has them sent to the church by strong men. He had just pronounced a few words in Latin when a terrifying scene took place: screams, fierce jerks and seizures, etc. to the point that the police and an arm regiment were called in to reestablish order. I could not obtain all the information that I wanted to send you today but the facts seemed serious enough to me and worthy of your examination.

Dr. Arthaud from Lyon, an alienist doctor, wrote a report to the medical society of that city published by the Gazette Médicale de Lyon and that you could obtain through your corresponding member there. We have two ladies from Morzine undergoing treatment in that city.

Dr. Caille concluded that there is an epidemic nervous infection in town that is resistant to any kind of treatment and also to exorcism. Only isolation produced good results.

All the unfortunate ones affected by the disease pronounce dirty words in their crisis: they jump prodigiously over tables; they climb on trees, roof tops and sometimes prophesize.

If similar facts have taken place in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries at monasteries and in the country side, it is no less certain that in our nineteenth century they offer the Spiritists a subject of study from the point of view of collective epidemic, generalizing and persisting for years, given that the first observed case happened five years ago.

It will be an honor to send you every document and piece of information that I can find.

Yours, etc.

B.”

The two communications that follow about the subject were given by our customary Spirits at the Society:

“It is not doctors but magnetizers, spiritualists or spiritists that should have been sent to dissipate the legion of malevolent Spirits, misplaced in your planet. I say misplaced because they are just passing. However, the unfortunate population that was stained by their contact will suffer morally and physically.

Where is the remedy, you ask? It will leave by replacing the bad Spirits with the healthy contact from the good Spirits who will succeed them, like the dawn succeeds darkness. That poor population, unaware of any intellectual work, would not have gotten to know the intelligent communications and would not even have noticed them. The initiation and the inconveniences

caused by that impure mob opens the otherwise shut eyes and the uproar, the acts of madness are only the prelude to the initiation, since everyone must enjoy the Spiritist light.

Do not be sorry for the cruel way that things develop. Everything has a useful objective and the sufferings must yield fecund results like the storms that destroy a crop here and fertilizes another one somewhere else.

Georges, medium Mrs. Costel

“The cases of devil-mania that now take place in the Savoie are also produced in other places, particularly in Germany and most importantly in the East. This abnormal fact is more normal than you think. In fact to a careful observer it reveals a situation analogous to the one that took place during the last years of Paganism. Everybody knows that when Christ, our beloved master, incarnated in the region of Judea taking the personality of Jesus, the carpenter, that region had been invaded by legions of bad Spirits that through possession, like in our days, they took over the most ignorant social classes; controlled the weakest and least advanced incarnate Spirits, in one word the simple people that watched the herds or who were dedicated to farming work.

Do not you see a great analogy in the reproduction of these identical phenomena of possession? Ah! There is a very profound teaching in this! From that you must conclude that the predicted times are even closer and that the Son of the Man will soon expel again the mob of impure Spirits that have taken Earth and revive the Christian faith, giving His high and divine sanction to the reassuring revelations and regenerative teachings of Spiritism.

Going back to the present cases of devil-mania it is necessary to remember that the scientists and doctors of the century of Augustus treated diseases according to the methods of Hippocrates, the unfortunate possessed of Palestine, and that their whole science failed before that unknown power.

Well! Still today all of your health inspectors; the most renowned doctors, wise professionals highly skilled in pure materialism, they also fail before that exclusively moral disease; before that exclusively spiritual epidemic.

But, never mind! My friends, you who were touched by the new grace, you must know how much these transient illnesses are curable by those who have faith. Thus, wait. Wait with confidence the return of the one who has already rescued humanity. Time is near. The precursor spirit is already incarnate. The complete development of this doctrine will soon be effective; this doctrine whose insignia is: there is no salvation but through charity!

Erastus, medium Mr. D'Ambel

From the preceding we must conclude that the illness is not physical but from an occult influence. We do not need much to believe this, given the testimony of a large number of identical isolated cases due to the same cause. A proof of that is the fact that the means taught by Spiritism were sufficient to stop the obsession.

Experience demonstrates that the evil Spirits not only act through minds but also upon the body with which they sympathize and use as if it were theirs. They provoke ridiculous actions, screams and confusing movements with the whole appearance of madness or those of the devil-mania.

The explanation to all that is found in *The Medium's Book*, in the chapter about the obsession. In a future article we will mention a few facts that demonstrate that unequivocally. In fact it is a kind of madness considering that this name can be given to every abnormal state in which the mind does not act freely.

It is then necessary to distinguish between the pathological madness from obsession. The latter is produced by a disorganization of the organs associate to the manifestation of thoughts. We must notice that in such a state it is not the spirit that is mad since the faculties remain complete as demonstrated by observation. However, since the instrument for the manifestation of one's mind the expression of the thoughts is then incoherent.

In the obsessive madness there is no organic defect. It is the spirit that is affected by the subjugation of an alien spirit that dominates and commands the other. In the first case it is necessary to try to cure the faulty organ; in the second case it is just a matter of freeing the dominated spirit from the unwelcome guest, recovering the patient's freedom.

Similar cases are very frequent and are considered madness when in fact they are just obsessions to which moral means should be employed instead of showers. Due to the physical treatment and more importantly due to the contact with true mentally ill person, the obsessed have frequently acquired a real disease where there was none.

By opening new horizons to all sciences, Spiritism comes also to clarify the very obscure issue of mental diseases, indicating a cause that up until now was not taken into account, a real and evident cause, demonstrated by experience and whose truthfulness will later be acknowledged. However, how to convince about such a cause those who are always ready to send to the mad houses anyone who has the weakness of believing that we have a soul? How to convince them that the soul has a role in our vital functions, and that it outlives the body and can act upon the living beings?

Thank God the Spiritist ideas make more progress among medical doctors than one would expect, for the good of humanity, and then indications are that in a not so distant future Medicine will finally depart from a materialistic routine.

Once the isolated cases of physical obsession or subjugation are analyzed we see that, like a plague of grasshoppers, a herd of bad Spirits may descend upon a number of people, controlling them and producing a kind of moral epidemic.

Ignorance, weakness of the faculties, and a lack of intellectual culture nature offer them greater facilities and that is why they preferably act upon certain social classes although smart and enlightened persons may not always be immune.

As Erastus says, it is likely that an epidemic took place during Christ's time and the Gospels frequently talk about that. However, why His word was sufficient to send the demons away? That demonstrates that the illness could only be cured by a moral influence. Now, who could deny the moral influence of Jesus? Nonetheless, some will say, exorcism that is a moral remedy was employed and no result obtained. If it produced nothing it means that the remedy was inefficient and another one must be evidently found. If you study Spiritism you will understand the reason. Only Spiritism can provide the means of combating the damages of such a nature by pointing to the true cause of the ailment.

But when we advise people to study it we mean a serious study and not browsing around with the hopes of finding a banal recipe to be used by the first one that shows up.

What happen in Savoie and calls people's attention will possibly accelerate the time when the action of the invisible world will be recognized as being part of the phenomena of nature. Once arriving at that avenue science will hold the key to many mysteries and will witness the downfall of the most formidable barrier that blocks progress: materialism that restricts the circle of observation instead of enlarging it.

April 1862

Answers to the questions about the fallen angels

Observation: We received answers to the questions proposed in our January issue from all over the place. The extension of the material does not allow a simultaneous publication of all of them. For now we limit ourselves to the subject of the fallen angels.

Bordeaux, medium Mrs. Cazemajoux

My friends, the theory contained in the summary that you have just read is the most logical and rational. A justified reason cannot admit the creation of pure and perfect Spirits rebelling against God and trying to be His equal in power and greatness.

Before achieving perfection, ignorant and weak, the spirit is allowed to follow the path of free will and is frequently dragged by corruption, drowning in an ocean of iniquities. But it is pride that definitely loses the spirit. The spirit denies God and attributes to chance his own creation, the wonders of nature and the universal harmony. Then, ala! That spirit is a fallen angel. Instead of moving forward towards happier worlds the spirit is even exiled from the home planet, going to atone the endless revolt against God in inferior worlds.

Brothers, refrain from following them. Those are the bad angels. Do your best to avoid increasing their number. May the focus of the Spiritist faith clarify you with respect to your current duties and your future interests so that one day you can avoid the fate of the rebellious Spirits and move up in the Spiritist scale that leads to perfection.

Your spiritual guides

The Hague, Holland, medium Baron de Kock

I do not have much to say about this article other than the fact that it contains the sublimity of truth. I have nothing to add or to remove. Happy are the ones who have faith in these beautiful words and accept the doctrine written by Allan Kardec. Kardec is the man chosen by God for the instruction of those in the present times. His are the words inspired by the good Spirits, very superior Spirits. Have faith. Read and study the whole doctrine. It is a good advice that I give you.

Your spiritual guide

Sens, medium Mr. Pichon

Q. What must we think of the doctrine of the fallen angels that Mr. Kardec published in the last issue of *The Spiritist Review*?

A. That it is perfectly rational and that we ourselves would not have explained it in a better way.

Arago

Paris, private communication – medium Ms. Stephany

It is well explained but one must be honest: there is something that bothers me. Why speak about the dogma of the Immaculate Conception? Have you had any revelation about Jesus's mother? Leave these discussions to the Catholic Church. I regret that comparison as much as the priests will believe that you are willing to attract them.

A spirit sincere friend of the medium and of the director of *The Spiritist Review*

Lyon, medium Mrs. Bouillant

We formerly believed that after having inhabited the most radiant of the worlds the angels would have rebelled against God and deserved their expulsion from the Eden, their God given dwelling. We sang about their downfall and weakness and embellished them with every known flower of rhetoric by believing in this fable of the lost paradise. It offered us a theme with special charm. That first man and that first woman expelled from their oasis, condemned to live on Earth and victimized by all the ailments that surround humanity, all that was a great source of inspiration to authors and the subject was particularly useful to our melancholic ideas.

Like the others, we believed the mistake and joined our word to all others that had been said before us. Now that our lives in space allow us to judge things from a true stand point; now that we can understand how absurd it is to conceive that the spirit, after having achieved the highest degree of perfection, could suddenly fall back, revolting against his own creator, fighting against God; now that we can assess how many filtering steps are required to dehydrate the liqueur to become essence and quintessence, we can tell you what are the fallen angels and the lost paradise.

In His immutable law of progress God wants humanity to advance, advance incessantly, from century to century, at times that God determines. When the majority of the Spirits that inhabit Earth become much superior to those who inhabit their region God then commands a migration of Spirits and those who accomplished their missions with conscience are sent to designated regions but the stubborn or lazy spirit, the one that stains the picture, that one is forced to stay behind. In the process of deuration that spirit is repelled as it is done by the Chemists with the substances that were not purified. The spirit is then in contact with other inferior ones thus feeling the imposed embarrassment.

Intuitively the spirit remembers the happiness that was one day enjoyed among his equals but now the spirit feels like the exotic flower that had suddenly been transplanted to an uncultivated terrain. Such spirit revolts when understanding his superiority and tries to dominate the others around. Such rebellion transforms itself into a fight against the Creator who gave him life, unknown to him. If his thoughts could be seen he would convert the overflowing acrimony of this heart into bitter complaints, like the prisoner in his cell, suffering tremendously until the laziness and selfishness that blocked him from following his equals are atoned. These, my friends, are the fallen angels, and these are the ones who regret for their lost paradise.

You must strive to stay ahead and to avoid being left behind when the trumpet of return is played. Remember what you owe yourself. You must remind yourself of your free will.

The personality of the spirit explains why the son of a scientist is sometimes educationally challenged and why one cannot transform intelligence into inheritance. A great man may well transfer the strength of his character to his decedents but will never be able to transmit his genius. You may rest assured that every genius that came to develop their talents here was out of their own work like a wise man said: "*The mothers of Patay, Letronne and the great Arago raised those great*

men innocently.” No, my friend, the mother who gives birth to an illustrious talent has no influence upon the spirit that animates the son. That spirit was already well advanced when came to reincarnate in this crucible of purification.

Follow then the steps of the staircase, steps that are brilliant and shiny like the suns for they are illuminated by the light of God, and remember that now that you know the path you will be very guilty if you become a fallen angel. As a matter of fact, I believe that nobody would dare feel sorry for you and sing the lost paradise song to you again.

Milton

Frankfurt, medium Mrs. Delton

The only thing I will say about this interpretation of the fallen angels is that it is part of the teachings that you must receive in order to provide you with the true meaning of those things that are misunderstood. You must not think that the author of that article wrote it without assistance, as he wondered himself. He believed to have issued his personal opinion and that is why he was suspicious about it, whereas in fact he only gave form to ideas that he received out of inspiration.

Yes, he is right when he says that the rebel angels are still here on Earth and that they are the materialists and the impious that dare deny God’s power. Isn’t that extreme pride? All of you who believe in God and who say hosannas are outraged by such audacity of a human being and you are right. However, check your own conscience and verify if you yourself are not constantly revolting and thus forgetting the sacred laws of God.

You who believe in the superiority of your merit; you who are proud of the gifts that you have been endowed; you who show jealousy and envy towards the higher position, favors and authority of your neighbor?

Are you charitable, you who criticize your brother; you who cast upon him defamation and slander; who instead of kindly concealing the defects feel pleasure in bringing them up to public knowledge in order to humiliate? I truly tell you that the believers, in particular the Spiritists who behave like that are more to blame than the atheist and the materialist for the former have the light and do not see. Yes, you are also rebellious angels because you do not obey God’s laws. When the big day comes, God will ask you: What have you done with my teachings?

Paul, protector spirit

April 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

Girard de Codemberg
Bordeaux, November 1861

Mr. Girard de Codemberg, a former student at the Polytechnic School, is the author of the book entitled: "*Le monde spirituel ou Science chrétienne de communiquer intimement avec les puissances célestes et les âmes heureuses*".¹² This book contains eccentric communications with strong indication of obsessions and whose publication is lamented by the serious Spiritists. The author died in 1858 and was evoked at the Parisian Society on January 14th, 1859. The result of the evocation can be found in the April 1859 issue of *The Spiritist Review*. The evocation below was carried out on November 1861 in Bordeaux. There is a remarkable coincidence between the two evocations.

1. Could you answer a few questions that I would like to ask? – A. It is my duty
2. What is your situation in the spiritual world? – A. Happy, relatively to that on Earth, since I could not see the spiritual world but through my foggy thoughts and now I see the magnificent works of God unfolding before my eyes.
3. There is a passage in your book that I hold here in my hands that says: "*The table is asked about the name of my guardian angel who, according to the American belief, is a happy soul that had lived on Earth and consequently had a name in our human society.*" You say that such belief is a heresy. What do you think now of that heresy? – A. I said that my thoughts were unclear because I had accepted as truth things that were dictated to me by frivolous and imposter Spirits. However, in the presence of sincere and earnest Spiritists gathered here tonight I confess that the guardian angel or protector spirit is someone that has reached a moral and intellectual progress through the multiple stages of incarnations in several worlds and that the reincarnation, that I used to deny, is the most sublime and the greatest proof of justice of our Father in heavens and who wishes for our happiness instead of our loss.
4. You also mention purgatory in your book. What was the meaning that you wanted to give to that world? – A. I used to think, and rightly so, that people could not reach happiness without purifying from the stains carried over from the material life. However, instead of an abyss of flames, like I used to see it, or even better, like fear made me see it through a blind faith, purgatory is nothing more than the inferior worlds whose ranks count on our Earth and where all miseries that still slave humanity present themselves in all shapes and forms. Isn't that the explanation to the Latin word "*purgare*"?¹³

12 The spiritual world or The Christian science of intimate communication between the happy souls and the celestial powers (NT)

13 Purge - NT

5. You also say that with respect to fasting, your guardian angel said: "*Fasting is the complement of a Christian life and you must comply with that.*" What is your opinion about it now? – A. Complement of a Christian life! How about the Jews and Muslims who also fast? Fasting is not appropriate to a Christian life only. Nonetheless it is sometimes useful since it can mitigate the influence of the body and the demands of the flesh. Believe me, a simple and frugal life is better than every fasting done with the intent of showing off to others but that in fact do not change one's bad tendencies and inclinations. I see what you want from me. A complete disclaimer of my writings. I owe that to you because some of my contemporaries, who are fanatics, have a blind faith in my writings as if it were the rightful expression of truth. I am not punished for that since I acted in good faith and I was under the fearful influence of the lessons I learned in my youth that constrained my freedom of thoughts and action. Trust me, though, that very few will abandon the path delineated by Mr. Kardec to follow me. These are people that one cannot count on and who will be marked by the angel of freedom to be dragged by the maelstrom of renovation that must transform society. Yes, my friends, be Spiritists. It is Girard de Codemberg that invites you to take your place in this great fraternal banquet of brothers and reincarnation brings us together by tightening the links of fraternity in God.

OBSERVATION: Such a thought that within the great movement there must operate the renovation of humanity, those who try to hinder it and who do not take advantage of the God given warnings will be expelled to inferior worlds, such a thought is now reproduced in communications from the Spirits all over the place. The same happens to this one: The time for such transformation is now and its symptoms may be felt already. The idea that Spiritism must be the basis of that transformation is universal. Such a coincidence has something of remarkable.

A.K.

6. You say that you had evoked the Virgin Mary who gave you advices. Was that manifestation real? – A. How many among you mistakenly believe to be inspired by her? Be your own and my judge.
7. You addressed the Virgin with the following question: "*Is there, at least in the fate of the punished souls, the hope sustained by several theologians of the gradation of the punishments?*" You say that her answer was: "*The eternal punishments have no gradation. They are all the same and the flames are the executioners.*" What is your opinion about it? – A. The punishments inflicted upon the bad Spirits are real but not eternal. You have the daily testimony of that given by your parents and friends who attend your calls and give you teachings of all sorts that just confirm the truth.
8. Someone attending our session asks if the fire burns physically or morally. – A. It is a moral fire.

The spirit then continues spontaneously: Dear friends in Spiritism, God have chosen you for the sacred propagation. More fortunate than I was, a spirit on a mission on Earth has delineated a path that you must walk steadily and with determination. Be kind and fear nothing for this is the path of progress and morality of the human race. As for myself who had only sketched the actual work that your master has designed, given my lack of courage to move away from the solid terrain, I have the task of guiding you in your condition of spirit in the good and safe path that you chose. I will then be able to repair the bad I did for ignorance and help with my weak possibilities the great transformation of society. Do not worry about the brothers who move away from your beliefs. On the contrary, act in such a way that those will no longer contaminate the herd of the true

believers for they are the rancid sheep and you must avoid infection. Good bye. I will return with this medium. So long.

Girard de Codenberg

NOTE: We consulted about the identity of the spirit and our guides responded: *“Yes, my friends, he suffers for the bad influence caused by the doctrine that he published. He had, however, atoned the mistake already on Earth for he was obsessed and the disease that killed him resulted from that obsession.”*

April 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

De La Bruyère

Bordeaux Society - Medium, Mrs. Cazemajoux, November 1861

1. Evocation – A. I am here.
2. Does our evocation please you? – A. Yes since very few of you think of this poor playful spirit
3. What is your situation in the spiritual world? – A. I am happy.
4. What do you think about the current generation of people that live on Earth? – A. I think that they have not advanced much in morality and if I lived among you I would be able to utilize my characters with the same shocking truth that I used to do when alive. I find my excesses, my selfish and my arrogant people in the same condition as when I died.
5. Your characters enjoy a much-deserved reputation. What is your current opinion about your work? – A. I do not think they have the merit that you attribute to them otherwise they would have led to a different result. But I understand that when people read it they do not compare themselves to those portrayals given the fact that they carry a shocking truth. You all have a certain dose of self-love sufficient enough to defer to others your own personal defects and you never recognize yourself when you are portrayed with your true traces.
6. You have just said that the characters could have been applied today with the same veracity. You do not see a progress in humanity? – A. In general, intelligence has advanced but moral betterment has not moved a foot forward. If Moliere and I could still write we would still do the same thing that we did: useless works that warned but did not correct you. Spiritism will have a better luck. You will gradually comply with its doctrine and will reformulate the vices that we pointed out when alive.
7. Do you believe that humanity will still rebel against the warnings given by the incarnate Spirits on a mission on Earth and by the Spirits that come to help them? – A. No. Time has come for the progress and renovation of planet Earth and its inhabitants. That is why the good Spirits come to help you. I have said enough tonight. In a few days I will prepare one of my characters.
8. Could your characters also be applied to certain errant Spirits driven by identical feelings? – A. To everyone that in the condition of spirit still bear the same passions that dominated them when alive. Forgive me for my honesty but whenever you call me I will respond without going around the bushes. Good-bye.

Jean de La Bruyère

April 1862

Spiritist poetry

Spiritist Society of Bordeaux – medium Mrs. Cazemajoux

Believe in the Spirits of the Lord

Believe in us; we are the spark,
the shiny beam from a godly heart,
projecting a new era upon the souls,
who claim heavens from down below.

Believe in us; kindly flame,
errant spirit through friendly graves,
passed barriers, defeated hurdles,
placed before us by the Eternal.

Believe in us. Darkness and lies
fade away when from the skies
we see your dreams embrace
the sweet nectar of peace.

Believe in us. Here from space
we guide you. It is an instance
of our love for you... Every new hour,
Oh! Exiled, brings us closer and closer.

Elisa Mercoeur

Voices of heaven

Voices of heaven whisper in the breeze,
moan in the air, murmur in the waves,
sighs echoing from the forests
and from the grey mountains.

Voices of heaven murmur under the leaves,
in the prairies, in the woods and fields.
The poet of timid rhymes
cries by the spring, shy.

Voices of heaven sing on trees,
in the golden wheat, in the flowery garden,
in the smiley and misty blue,
in the spectral colors of the rainbow.

Voices of heaven cry in silence.
Silence! They speak to the heart.
And the Spirits, the new kingdom initiators
lead you to your Creator.

Elisa Mercoeur

April 1862

Spiritist Dissertations

The Martyrs of Spiritism

Regarding the questions about the miracles of Spiritism that had been proposed to us and that we discussed in our last issue there is also the following question:

“The martyrs have sealed the truth of Christianity with their blood. Where are the martyrs of Spiritism?”

You are very kin on having the Spiritists burning at the stake or thrown to feed the beasts! This leads to the assumption that you would be willing to do so in case it was possible. You want to sneak Spiritism in on the same level as a religion! Notice, however, that has never been the intent; that it has never pretended to rival Christianity, on the contrary naming itself the child of Christianity; that it combats its cruelest enemies: atheism and materialism.

We attest once more that Spiritism is a philosophy that rests on the fundamental basis of every religion and on the moral of Christ. If Spiritism renegaded Christianity it would be betraying itself, it would be suicidal. It is the enemies of Spiritism that present it as a new sect, giving it priests and a high clergy. They shall scream so many times that Spiritism is a religion that we will end up believing that it is.

Do martyrs require a religion to exist? Haven't sciences, arts and other disciplines had their own martyrs side by side with their discoveries? When the Spiritists are pointed at as condemned people, people to be avoided, the scum of society, when ignorance is incited against us to the point of subtracting people means of subsistence in the absence of better arguments, aren't they helping to create martyrs?

Nice victory had them triumphed! However, the seed has been sown and blossoms are everywhere. If uprooted in one place it flourishes in a hundred others. You must then try to harvest the whole planet but allow the Spirits to speak, those on a mission to answer the questions.

I

You have asked for miracles. Today you demand martyrs. You already have the martyrs of Spiritism. Get inside the homes and you will see them. You ask for persecuted. Open the heart of those eager followers of the new idea who fight against the prejudices of the world and even and frequently that of the family! Ah, their broken hearts expand and embrace a father, a mother, a brother or a wife only to find the reciprocity of sarcasm, disdain and neglect. The martyrs of Spiritism are those who hear these insulting words every step of the way: mad, senseless, lunatic! And for a long time they shall have to withstand such attacks of incredulity and other even more bitter sufferings.

Nonetheless, their reward will be beautiful as Christ has prepared a delightful place for the martyrs of Christianity and the one prepared to the martyrs of Spiritism is even more wonderful. The martyrs of the infancy of Christianity marched resigned and courageously to the martyrdom

expecting to suffer for only a few days or hours, aspiring for death as the only barrier that separated them from a celestial life.

The martyrs of Spiritism must not even seek death. They must suffer for as much time as it pleases God to have them on Earth and dare not judge themselves worthy of the pure celestial pleasures as soon as they leave life. They pray and wait whispering words of peace, love and forgiveness to those who did them harm, waiting for new incarnations in which they will be able to atone previous faults.

Spiritism will be erected as a superb temple. The first steps will be difficult to climb. Nevertheless, once the first steps are covered the good Spirits will help to overcome the others up until the simple and righteous place that leads to God. Go, go children and preach Spiritism!

Martyrs are requested. You are the first ones marked by God for you have been duly appointed and you are treated as mad and senseless because of the truth! I tell you, however, that the time of light is near when there will no longer be persecuted and persecutors. You shall all be brothers and sisters and the same feast will unite oppressed and oppressors!

Saint Augustine, medium Mr. E. Vézy

II

The progress of times has replaced physical torture by the martyrdom of conception and the birth of new ideas, daughters of the past and mothers of the future. When Christ came to destroy the barbarian costume of sacrifices; when he came to proclaim equality and fraternity between the simple clothes of the worker and the noble outfit the altars were still smoking the blood of the immolated victims; the slaves trembled before the caprices of their master and the peoples ignored God's justice, forgetting his greatness.

In such a low moral state Jesus' words would have been impotent and neglected by the crowds if they had not been screamed out of his injuries and become sensitive by the ulcers of the martyrs. In order to be accomplished the mysterious law of similarities required that the blood gushed out of the ideas was rescued by the bloodshed of brutality. Today peaceful people ignore physical torture. It is only their intellectual being that suffers in the struggle between the traditions of the past and the aspiration to new horizons.

Who could describe the anguishes of the present generation, its pungent doubts, uncertainties, impotence and its extreme lassitude? Uneasy presentiments of superior worlds, pains ignored by the material antiquity that only suffered when unable to enjoy; pains that are the modern torture and which will transform in martyrs those inspired by the Spiritist revelation who will believe but will not be believed; they shall speak and be censored; they will march and be repelled.

Have no fear. Your enemies themselves prepare you an award that shall be the more beautiful the more they have sowed in your way.

Lazarus, medium Mrs. Costel

III

As you correctly say, the beliefs have always had martyrs, at all times. However, one must say that fanaticism was frequently on both sides and almost always there was bloodshed. Today, thanks to the moderators of passions, to the philosophers or even with this philosophy that began with the writers of the eighteenth century, fanaticism put its fire out and laid down its weapon down. In our days one can hardly imagine the spade of Mohamed; the gallows of the Middle Ages; the burning at the stake and tortures of all kinds, in the same one that magicians and witches are no longer invoked.

Other times other costumes says a wise proverb. The word costume here is very elastic, as you see, and according to its Latin etiology it means habits, way of life. Well, it is not our costume to cover ourselves in cilice in our century, as it is not our habit to pray hidden in the tombs and dissimulate our prayers to the powerful and to the magistrates of Paris.

Hence Spiritism will not see the axe swinging and the fire devouring its followers. The blow of ideas, books, commentaries, eclecticism and theology now abates people but St. Bartholomew shall not happen again.

Certainly there could be victims in the underdeveloped world but the civilized nations will only see the struggle of ideas and ridicule.

Therefore, no more axes, bundled wood and the boiling oil but to be aware of the badly understood spirit of Voltaire. That is the executioner. It is necessary to prevent it but not defy it. It laughs instead of threatening; it casts ridicule instead of blasphemy and its sufferings are the tortures of the spirit that succumbs when braced by modern sarcasm.

Nonetheless, not displeasing the little Voltaire of our days, the youth will easily understand these three magic words: freedom, equality and fraternity.

As for the sectaries these are more terrible because they are always the same, regardless of time and anything else. They can sometimes do harm but they are lame, masked, old and grumpy. Now you who met the source of youth and whose soul flourish and renew, have no fear for they shall lose to their own fanaticism.

Lamennais, medium Mr. A. Didier

April 1862

Spiritist Dissertations

Attacks to the new idea

As you see people are now discussing the Spiritist ideas even in courses of theology and the *Catholic Review* has asserted that current Spiritism is the works of the devil, as one can see in the article entitled "Satanism in Modern Spiritism" in the magazine mentioned above. Ala! Let them speak! Let them act! Spiritism is like steel and all serpents will try to bite it with their fangs.

Nevertheless there is something worth mentioning: it is the fact that in the past they refused to get involved with those who moved tables and chairs whereas in our days they are really involved with those innovators whose ideas and theories are raised to the level of a doctrine. Ah! The fact is that such a doctrine; such a revelation opens cracks in all previous doctrines, in every old philosophy insufficient to satisfy the needs of human reason. Hence, priests, scientists and journalists come down to the arena holding their pens to reject the new idea: progress. Never mind! Isn't that an undeniable proof of the propagation of our teachings? Well, one cannot discuss and combat but those ideas that are really serious and sufficiently well engrained not to be treated as utopias, like chimeras coming out of sick minds. As a matter of fact, better than anybody else you can see the speed with which Spiritism recruits followers every day and that even in the enlightened military ranks among officers of all arms. Do not be afraid of all these unfortunate people who roar for nothing since they ignore their actual condition. They are embarrassed. Their certainties and probabilities fade away under the lights of Spiritism because from the bottom of their hearts they feel that we are the ones with the truth. I say we because today Spirits and incarnate Spirits we have only one objective: the destruction of the materialistic ideas and the regeneration of the faith in God, to whom we owe everything.

Erastus, medium Mr. d'Ambel

April 1862

Spiritist Dissertations

Persecution

Well done! Bravo my children! Seeing you gathered, eagerly and persistently fighting satisfies me. Courage! Work hard in the field of our Lord for I tell you that time will come when one will have to preach the sacred doctrine of Spiritism beyond closed walls. The flesh has been beaten. It is time to work on the spirit. Truly I tell you that when that happens you will be ready to sing grace in unison and it will be the eve of the day when we will hear the same voice around the world. But I tell you this: before the age of gold and the kingdom of the spirit great suffering will come in tears and teeth grinding.

Persecution has begun. Spiritists! Be firm and stand up. You are marked by the unction of the Lord. You shall be called senseless, mad and visionary. The oil will not boil, the gallows will not be erected and the stake will burn no more but the fire that will be used to lead you to renounce your beliefs will be even more intense and vivid.

Hence, Spiritists, get rid of the old self for it is the old self that they will make suffer. May your new tunics be white! Adorn your own heads with the crowns and be prepared to the struggle. You shall be cursed. Let your brothers show contempt; in turn pray for them and keep away the punishment that Jesus promised to whoever showed contempt towards their brothers and sisters!

Be prepared for the persecutions through the study, prayer and charity. The servants will be expelled from the houses of their masters and treated like mad people but at the door they shall find the Samaritan and although naked and poor they will share their garments and the last piece of bread. Before such a spectacle the masters will ask: *“But who are these people who we expelled from our house? They only have a piece of bread for tonight and they still give it away! They only have one house and still share it with a stranger!”*

Their doors will then open again for you are the servants of the Lord. But this time they will welcome you and will embrace you. They will ask you to bless them and to teach them to love. They will no longer call you slaves or servants but will say: *“Brother, come and seat at the table with me. There is only one and the same family on Earth and there is only one and the same God in heavens.”*

Go, go my brothers! Preach and above all be united. Heaves is ready for you.

St. Augustine, medium Mr. Vésy

April 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Bibliography

Spiritism, in its simplest expression, which has already sold about ten thousand volumes, has a new print right now with several important corrections. We know it has been already translated into German, Russian and Polish. We invite the translators to adapt to the text of the new edition. We have received the German translation from Vienna, Austria, where there is a Society organizing under the auspices of the Parisian Society

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The second volume of "*Revelations from beyond the grave*" by Mrs. H. Dozon is printing.

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We call the attention of our readers again to the interesting brochure by Ms. Clemence Guerin, entitled: Biographic essay by Andrew Jackson Davis, one of the main spiritualist writers of the United States of America. Ledoyen Edition, price 1 franc.

Allan Kardec¹⁴

May 1862

Last Rites of Mr. Sanson

Member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies

Mr. Sanson, one of our colleagues, died on April 21st, 1862 after more than a year of painful suffering. Foreseeing his death he addressed the Society with a letter dated August 27th, 1860 from which we extracted the following passage:

“Dear and honorable President,

In case of surprise for the separation of my soul from the body, I have the honor of reminding you of a wish I expressed around a year ago: the evocation of my spirit as soon as possible and as many times as you consider adequate so that, as a very useless member of our Society during my current life on this planet, I can be useful in the other world, by allowing you to study phase per phase in these evocations the several circumstances that follow what is vulgarly called death and that for us, the Spiritists, is nothing more than a transformation under the impenetrable sight of God, but always useful to the proposed objective.

Besides this authorization and request to give me the honor of this kind of spiritual autopsy that my insignificant advancement as a spirit will perhaps render sterile, a situation in which your wisdom will stop the evocations after a certain number, I personally dare ask you and all of my colleagues to beg the Almighty so that I may have the assistance of the good Spirits with their benevolent advices, particularly St. Louis, our spiritual president, with the objective of guiding me with the choice and moment of a reincarnation, since this is already reason for a great concern on my side. I tremble before the possibility of deceiving me regarding my spiritual strength, and to ask God, and too soon, and too presumptuously, for a bodily condition in which I could not justify the divine goodness, which, instead of serving to my own advancement would extend my station on Earth or elsewhere in case I failed.”

.....

“However, having total confidence in our Creator’s indulgent equity and kindness and of his divine son, and finally waiting humbly and with resignation the atonement of my faults with the exception of those forgiven by the Eternal’s mercy. I also repeat that my greatest concern is the overpowering fear of making a mistake regarding the choice of reincarnation, in the event that I am not helped and guided by benevolent and saint Spirits, that might consider me worthy of their intervention. I also hope that your evocations and support will help me in this selection in the event that I am making this decision alone. Thus, I take the liberty of recommending myself to you, dear President, and to all of our honorable colleagues from the Spiritist Society of Paris...”

.....

In order to comply with the wishes of our colleague to be evoked as soon as possible after his passing we went to the mortuary chamber together with a few members of the Society and the following conversation took place in the presence of the body, one hour before the burial. Our

objective was twofold: the satisfaction of his last wishes while observing once more the situation of the soul at a time so close to death and all that in an eminently intelligent and enlightened person, profoundly conscious of the Spiritist truths. We wanted to attest the influence of such beliefs upon the state of the spirit by collecting his first impressions. As it will be seen our wait was not useless. Everybody will find, as we did, an elevated teaching stemming out of his description of the instant of transition. We must add, however, that not all Spirits would be able to describe that phenomenon with such clarity as he did. Mr. Sanson witnessed his own death, his own rebirth, a rare circumstance thanks to the elevation of his spirit.

1. Evocation. – A. I attend your appeal, following my promise.
2. My dear Mr. Sanson, it is our pleasant duty to evoke you as soon as possible after your death, as you requested. – A. It is a special grace from God that allows my spirit to communicate. I thank your kindness but I am weak and trembling.
3. You were so ill that I think we can now ask you how you felt. You still feel the pain? What are your current sensations compared to two days back? – A. My situation is very fortunate because I no longer feel any of the former pain. I feel regenerated, as in a new state as you use to say. The transition from the earthly life to the life of the Spirits in principle was incomprehensible to me for sometimes we need days to recover lucidity. However, before dying I prayed to God asking him to allow me to speak to my loved ones and God listened to me.
4. How long did it take you to recover your clear ideas? – A. It took me eight hours. I repeat: God had given me a proof of His goodness. He found me sufficiently worthy and I could not thank Him enough.
5. Are you really aware that you no longer belong to our world? How do you know? – A. Oh! Certainly. I no longer belong to your world. However, I will always be near you to protect you and support you in the preaching of charity and abnegation that were the guides of my life. Then, I will teach the true faith, the Spiritist faith that must exalt the belief of the righteous and good one. I feel strong, very strong, in a word, transformed. You would not recognize the old patient that was supposed to forget everything and leave aside all pleasures of life. I am a spirit. My home is the space and my future is God that irradiates in the infinity. I would like very much to be able to speak to my children for I would teach them what they always resisted to believe.
6. What is the sensation that the sight of your body here causes on you? – A. My body, poor and insignificant remains, you must return to dust while I keep the kind memory of all of those who loved me. I see this poor deformed flesh, dwelling of my spirit and atonement of so many years! Thank you my poor body! You purified my spirit and the ten times sacred suffering give me a well-deserved place to the point that I have immediately found the ability of speaking to you.
7. Have you maintained your ideas up to the final moment? – A. Yes, my spirit kept its faculties. I was unable to see but I had a presentment. My whole life unfolded before my memory and my last thought, my last prayer was to beg to be able to speak with you, as I do now. I then asked God to protect you so that I could see my dream come true.
8. Were you aware of the very last moment when your body exhaled the final breath? What happened then? What were your sensations? – A. Life breaks down and the vision of the spirit extinguishes. We meet the emptiness, the unknown, and led by some sort of artifice we find ourselves in a world where everything is joy and greatness. I was feeling no more; I was not aware but an ineffable happiness took me over. There was no more pain.
9. Are you aware of what I intend to read by your grave?

OBSERVATION: These first words had just been pronounced and the spirit responded even before the question was completed. Moreover he answered and without being asked about the concern voiced by some attendees and about the suitability of reading such a communication at the cemetery, considering that certain people did not share our opinions. – A. Oh! My friend, I know because I saw you yesterday and I see you today and I greatly appreciate it. Thank you! Thank you! Speak so that they can understand me and may like you. Have no fear since they respect death. Speak so that the non-believers have faith. Good-bye. Speak up. Have courage and confidence and I hope my children convert to this revered belief!

So long!

J. Sanson

During the funeral ceremony at the cemetery he dictated the following:

“Have no fear of death my friends. It is just a phase if you lived your life well; it is a fortune if you have atoned and accomplished them well. I repeat this to you: Courage and good will! Give just a mediocre importance to earthly wealth and you shall be rewarded. One cannot enjoy too much without causing harm to the well being of others and without causing great harm to oneself. May Earth be a light burden! ”

NOTE: After the ceremony some members of the Society got together and spontaneously received the following and far from expected communication:

“My name is Bernardo and I lived in Passy which was just a village in the year 96 (1796). I was a poor devil. I used to teach and God knows the difficulties I had to endure. What a prolonged nuisance! Long years of concern and suffering! I cursed God, the devil and people in general and women in particular. None of them came to me and said: Courage, patience! I had to live alone, always alone, and evilness made me evil. Since those days I wonder around places where I lived and where I died. I heard you today. Your prayers touched me profoundly. You followed a good and honorable spirit and everything that you did and said touched me. We were in large numbers and we all prayed for you, for the future of your sacred beliefs. Pray for us who need help. Sanson’s spirit that followed us promised that you would send us your thoughts. I wish to reincarnate so that my trial can be useful and adequate to my future in the world of the Spirits. So long my friends. I say so because you love those in suffering. I wish you good thoughts and a happy future.”

It seemed to us proper to mention this episode because it was related to the evocation of Mr. Sanson and because it contains a great subject for our instruction. We believe it is our duty to recommend this spirit to the prayers of every true Spiritist. Those prayers can fortify him in his resolutions.

The conversation with Mr. Sanson continued during the session at the Society on the first Friday after April 25th and must still continue. We take the opportunity of his good will and his enlightenment in order to obtain new clarifications about the invisible world as accurate as possible when compared to the visible one and particularly about his transition from one to the other, something that is of general interest since everyone and without exception must go through this. Mr. Sanson kindly offered to be at our services with his continued benevolence.

His answers form a detailed instruction set whose importance is even greater given that it comes from the personal experience of someone that has just gone through the transition, analyzing his sensations and expressing them with elegance, profoundness and clarity. The set of communications will be published in the next issue.

Something important that must be pointed out is the fact that the medium who served as intermediary on the very day of his funeral and the following days, Mr. Leymarie, had never seen Mr. Sanson before and did not know his character or customs. He did not know whether Mr. Sanson had children and even less so if they shared his ideas about Spiritism. He then refers to that in a very spontaneous way and his character is expressed through the pencil without any influence of imagination.

This fact demonstrates that communications are not based on the thoughts from the source medium. Bernardo, the medium, had no background on Mr. Sanson and yet scribed the communication from Sanson. Everyone thought that it would likely come from one of his customary Spirits like Baluze or Sonnet. In time we would ask who would have produced any thought that could somehow reflect in that communication.

Speech given by Mr. Allan Kardec at the funeral services of Mr. Sanson

Ladies and gentlemen and dear colleagues from the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies:

It is the first time that we bring a colleague to his last dwelling. This one to whom we came to say farewell is familiar to you and you were able to appreciate his eminent qualities. By remembering them here I would just say what is known by all: eminently righteous heart, unyielding loyalty, his life was that of a good man in the full extent of the word. I believe he shall not be rebuked by anyone. Those qualities would shine even further for his great goodness and extreme benevolence. Given that, would there be the need for him to have practiced remarkable actions and have left a name to posterity? It would not give a better place in the world where he lives now. If now we do not lay garlands onto his tomb all of us here who met him deposit wreaths of sincerity from their Spirits and the most precious crowns: love and respect.

Know this, ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Sanson was a man of rare intelligence and of a great fairness in his appreciations, augmented by a broad and profound education. A man of a remarkable simplicity he found in his inner self the elements for a strong intellectual activity in his researches and inventions that were certainly very ingenious but that unfortunately did not bring him the expected results.

He was one of those men who never got upset. Although his position had prevented him from enjoying the sweetness of life, he always had a good sense of humor. I believe it is not an exaggeration to say that he was the true philosopher: not the cynical philosopher but the one who is always happy with his condition and never tempted by what he lacks.

Deep inside himself he maintained a strong character but in his final years it was significantly strengthened by his Spiritists beliefs. These ideas helped him to withstand long and cruel sufferings with a Christian patience and resignation. There isn't a single one among us that has not learned from his calmness and unalterable serenity. He had forecasted his end long ago but far from showing desperation he looked forward to that as the moment of his liberation.

Ah! At these moments of truth the Spiritist faith provides a strength that only those who have it understand. And Mr. Sanson had it in the highest degree.

What is the Spiritist faith then? Some of you who hear me now may be asking.

The Spiritist faith is an intimate conviction that we have a soul; that the soul or spirit, that are the same thing, outlives the body; that the soul is happy or unhappy according to the good or bad that was practiced during one's life. Some may say that everybody knows that. Yes, with the exception of those who believe that everything ends when we die and these count on larger numbers than one would think in this century! Thus, in the opinion of the latter, the mortal remains before us that some say shall be reduced to dust are all that is left from the one we are saying farewell now. Then, what is it that we are paying tribute to now? A cadaver? Since of his intelligence, his thought, the qualities that made him love, nothing will remain, everything will be annihilated. The same will happen to us when we die.

Hasn't this idea of obliviousness waiting for us something very overpowering and glacial?

Who before this open grave does not feel the goose bumps just by thinking that tomorrow perhaps the same may happen to us and that after a few shovels of earth thrown over our body it will all be over forever; that there will be no more thoughts, feelings and love? However, besides those who deny there is an even larger number of those who doubt for not having a positive certainty and to whom doubt is a torture.

All of you who firmly believed that Mr. Sanson had a soul what is it that you believe that has become of him? Where is he? What is he doing? Ah! You say, if we only knew there would never be any doubt in our heart! Probe well the bottom of your hearts and convince yourselves that more than one among you have already spoke from your inner self about a future life: "And if it were not like that?" You say that because you do not understand it, because the idea you have about it cannot be conciliated with reason.

Spiritism comes to explain it, so to speak, making it so tangible and evident that one can no longer deny it as one cannot deny light.

What has become of the soul of our friend, then? It is here, by our side, hearing us; penetrating our minds and judging our thoughts and feelings that animate each one in this sad ceremony. The soul is not what people commonly believe to be like a flame, a spark, something vague and undefined. You will not see it wondering around at night like in the superstitious stories. No. It has a form, a body as it had when alive, but a vaporous body, invisible to our rough senses but that in certain cases becomes visible. When alive the soul had a secondary envelope, heavy, material and destructible. When this envelope is worn out and cannot function any more it breaks down like the skin of a ripe fruit and the soul leaves as if leaving behind old working clothes. It is that envelope of Mr. Sanson's soul that made him suffer and that lays down there on the bottom of the grave. It is all that remains from that body. But he kept his ethereal, radiant and indestructible envelope, a body that is no longer subjected to ailments and diseases. That is how he is among us.

But you must not believe that he is alone. There are thousands here in the same situation, watching our farewell and congratulating the newcomer for having been liberated from the miseries of Earth, in such a way that if the veil that covers them right now could have been removed we would see a whole crowd around us, elbowing us and among them we would see Mr. Sanson no longer weak

and lying down on his sick bed but strong, alert and moving around effortlessly at the speed of thoughts and without the barrage of any obstacle.

These souls or Spirits constitute the invisible world in which we also live unconsciously. That is how our lost relatives and friends are closer to us than if they had gone to a distant country when alive.

What Spiritism does it to put that invisible world in evidence through the relationships that can be established with that and because we find our loved ones there. Then it is no longer a vague memory: it is a positive proof. Now, a proof of the invisible world is a proof of a future life. Once that certainty is acquired the ideas change completely for the importance of our earthly life diminishes as that of the forthcoming life increases. That is the faith that Mr. Sanson had in the invisible world. He saw it and understood it so well that death to him was no more than a portal that must be transposed from a painful and miserable life to a blessed one.

Hence the serenity of his final moments was at the same time the result of his absolute confidence in a future life that he had already foreseen and an irreproachable conscience telling him that he owned nobody or nothing.

He acquired such a faith with Spiritism for it is necessary to say that before the time when he got to know this reassuring science he was not exactly materialistic but he was skeptical. His doubts, however, disappeared before the evidence of the facts that he witnessed and since then everything changed for him.

Placing himself aside from the material life in his thoughts he saw this life but like an unfortunate day among an infinite number of happy days. Far from complaining about the hardships of life he blessed the sufferings as trials that were necessary to accelerate his progress.

Dear Mr. Sanson! You are the witness of the sincerity of all us who met you and whose affection remains. In the name of all of my present and absent colleagues; in the name of all of your relatives and friends I say goodbye but not an eternal goodbye since it would be blasphemy against the Providence and a negation of future life. We the Spiritists less than anybody else we must not pronounce such a word.

Therefore, so long my dear Mr. Sanson. We wish you may enjoy now the deserved happiness in the world where you are and come to reach out to us when our time comes to move to that world.

Allow me, ladies and gentlemen, to say a short prayer by this grave before it is sealed.

“May your mercy Almighty God reach the soul of Mr. Sanson that you have just claimed! May the trials that he has endured on Earth count on his favor and our prayers mitigate and shorten the penalties that he might still suffer as a spirit. Good Spirits who came to receive this soul and particularly you, his guardian angel, assist this soul helping him with the separation from matter. Give him light and consciousness of himself in order to move him away from the confusion that follows the passage from the corporeal to the spiritual life. Inspire in him regret for the faults that he may have committed and may he have the desire to repair them so as to speed up his progress towards a blessed eternal life.”

“Soul of Mr. Sanson that have just entered the world of the Spirits, you are here among us. You see and hear us since between you and us there is only the perishable body that you have just left behind

and that will soon become dust. That body, instrument of so much pain, is still by your side. You see it like the prisoner sees the chains from which he has been freed. You left the dense envelope subject to the vicissitudes and death and you kept the ethereal envelope, imperishable and unreachable by the sufferings. If you no longer live the life of the body you live the life of the spirit that is exempt from the miseries that afflict humanity.”

“You no longer bear the veil that hides from our eyes the splendors of the life of the spirit. From now on you can contemplate new wonders while we are still surrounded by darkness.”

“Go freely and explore the spaces and visit the worlds while we drag down here on Earth, retained by the material body like a heavy burden to us. The horizon of infinity will unfold before you and before such a greatness you will understand the vanity of our earthly desires, of our worldly ambitions and futile joys that humanity transforms into delights. Death is no more than a short material separation between us. From this exile where the will of God still keeps us and the duties that we still must carry out we follow you in our thoughts up until the moment when we are allowed to meet you again as you have yourself reunited with those that preceded you. If we cannot go to where you are you can come to us. Come then to those that love you and were loved by you. Help them in the trials of their lives. Wake for those who are dear to you. Protect them according to your possibilities and mitigate their sorrows through your thoughts that you are now happy and through the reassuring certainty that we shall one day meet again in a better world.”

“We hope that from now on and for your own future happiness that you become unreachable by the worldly resentments! You must then forgive those who did bad deeds against you as they forgive you for your own faults against them! Amen” ¹⁵

May 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

15 This prayer was inserted into The Gospel According to Spiritism, Chapter XXVIII, item 60

Captain Nivrac, deceased on February 11th, 1862
Evoked by request of his friend, Cap. Blou, member of the Society
medium Mr. Leymarie

Mr. Nivrac was a man of broad, serious education and a remarkable intelligence. Captain Blou had briefly spoken to him about Spiritism and offered him the whole collection of books about the subject. He used to look at all these things as utopias and those who follow them as dreamers.

On February 1st he was walking with one of his comrades discussing this subject as usual when walking by a shop window they saw the book *Spiritism in its simplest expression*.

Good inspiration, said Mr. Blou. He bought it. He would certainly not have bought it if I were with them.

From that day Mr. Nivrac read *The Spirits' Book*, *The Mediums' Book* and some issues of *The Spiritist Review*. He was touched in his heart and spirit. Far from attacking it, he now came to ask me questions and among the officers he became an eager advocate of Spiritism to the point that for eight days Spiritism was the only subject of his conversations. He really wanted to take part in one session when death surprised him without any apparent cause from a disease. On Tuesday, February 11th, he was having a shower and ended up dying in the arms of a doctor.

“Isn't that the hand of God”, asks Captain Blou, “...allowing my friend to have his eyes opened to the light before his death?”

1. Evocation. – A. I understand why you wish to speak to me. I am glad for this evocation and gladly come to you since it is a friend that calls me and nothing else could be more enjoyable to me.

OBSERVATION: The spirit advances the question that was going to be asked which was: “*Although we do not have the pleasure of having met you, we asked you to come in the name of your friend and our colleague, Captain Blou, thus we would be delighted if you could speak with us in case you are okay with that.*”

2. Are you happy...? (the spirit does not allow us to finish the question that would terminate like this: *for having met Spiritism before your death?*) – A. I am happy because I believed before I died. I remember the discussions I had with you, my friend, because I rejected every new idea. In reality I was shaken. I used to tell my wife, my daughter that it was madness to listen to that kind of stupidity and that I considered you to be disturbed. That is how I used to think but fortunately I was able to believe and wait. My position is happier because God allows me a much anticipated advancement.
3. How come a little brochure of only a few pages had more authority upon you than the words of your good friend that you must have trusted? – A. I was shaken because the idea of a better life is at the bottom line of every religion. I believed instinctively but the ideas of the soldier had modified my thoughts. That is all. When I read the brochure it touched me. I thought that those concepts revealed such a clear and concise doctrine that God came to me in his goodness. Future seemed less somber to me. I believed because I should and the brochure touched my heart.

4. What was the cause of your death? – A. I died of a stroke. Several reasons were given: it was an effusion of the brain. It was my time and I had to leave.
5. Could you describe your sensations at the time of death and later after your awakening? – A. The transition from life to death is painful but quick. We have a presentment of everything that may happen. Your whole life shows up before you like in a mirage. We feel like recovering the past in order to clear up the bad days. Such thoughts follow us in the spontaneous transition from life to death and death is nothing more than another life. The light stuns you. I was confused with ideas. I was not a perfect spirit. Nonetheless I was able to recover awareness and I thank God for having enlightened me before I died.

OBSERVATION: Such an image of the passage from life to death has a shocking analogy with the one given by Mr. Sanson. Notice, however, that this is a different medium.

6. Would your current situation be different if you had not known and accepted the Spiritist ideas? – A. No doubt but I was a good-natured and honest man and although not much advanced it is not less certain that God rewards the good decisions including the last one.
7. Is it useless to ask you if... (the spirit here does not allow the conclusion of the question which would be: visit your wife and daughter but you cannot be seen or heard. Would you like us to transmit any message to them?) – A. No doubt, I am always near them. I encourage them to be patient and say: Courage, my friend! Dry your tears out and smile to God who will give you the strength. Think that my existence is an advancement, a purification and that I need the support of your prayers. With all my heart I wish a new incarnation and despite the fact that the physical separation is painful remember that I love you and that you are alone and need good health and much resignation to keep up. However, I will be by your side to encourage you, bless and love you.
8. We are sure that your comrades from the regiment would also be happy to receive some words from you. I add another question to this one that perhaps you may include it in your answer. Up until now Spiritism has almost not propagated with the army with the exception of a few officers. Do you think it could also be useful among the soldiers? What would be the result? – A. It is necessary that the mind becomes serious so that the body may follow suit. I understand that the officers were the first to accept these philosophical and sensible solutions given in *The Spirits' Book*. Through that reading the officer understands better his duty; becomes more serious and less prone to mock people's families; he gets used to an internal order and eating and drinking are no long the main drivers of his life. The sub-officers will learn from them and propagate Spiritism. They will do it if they wish to do so. I tell them this: March on! Always forward! This is a new battlefield of humanity but without casualties, without the machine gun and with harmony, love and duty at all times. The soldier shall become a liberal person, in the good sense. There will be courage and good-will that make the worker a good citizen, a person of God. Therefore, follow the new route! Be apostles according to God and address seek the tireless propagator of Spiritism, the author of the little book that enlightened me.

OBSERVATION: On a different occasion the following communication was given with respect to the influence of Spiritism upon a soldier:

“A soldier that becomes a Spiritist is easier to be commanded, more obedient, more disciplined for obedience will be a duty with the sanction of reason whereas in the majority of cases it is no more than the result of embarrassment. They will no longer be given to the excesses that very frequently lead to sedition and disrespect to authority. The same happens to all those who are subordinate, regardless of their classes: workers, employees, and others. They will carry out their duties with more consciousness when they become aware of the causes that led them to that position on Earth and the rewards that wait for the humble ones on the next life.

Unfortunately only a few believe in the next life and that is why they do everything to the present one. If disbelief is a social ulcer that is even more so in the lower classes of society where there is no counter balance of education and respect to other’s opinion. When those who are invited to the exercise of authority, regardless of their title, understand it through the Spiritist ideas, they will make every effort to drive their subordination through the right path.

Be patient though! This will come.

Lespinasse

May 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

A passion from beyond the grave
Maximilian V..., a twelve year old child commits suicide for love

It was published in the Siècle on January 13th, 1862:

“Maximilian V..., a twelve year old young man, lived with his parents at Rue des Cordiers and was employed as a upholsterer apprentice. He had the habit of reading series of novels. Every break in his job was utilized for his readings that super excited his imagination and inspired in him ideas beyond his age. That is how he imagined to have fallen in love with a young lady that he had the occasion of seeing from time to time and who had never thought that she could have inspired such a feeling in the young man. Hopeless to see the dreams produced by his readings come true, he then decided to kill himself. Yesterday a servant of the house where he was doing his training found him lifeless in a little room on the third floor where he was working alone. He had hung himself with a rope that he had tied on a beam with a huge nail.”

The circumstances of that death at such an early age made us think that the evocation of that boy could provide us with matter for a useful study. The evocation was carried out at the Society on January 24th last through the medium Mr. E. Vézy.

There is a difficult moral problem in this case that is impossible to be solved by the arguments of common philosophy and even less so by a materialistic philosophy. They may say that everything can be explained by assuming that it was a premature child. But this explains nothing. It is absolutely the same as saying that the day breaks because the sun is up. Where does this early maturity come from? Why do certain children go beyond their normal age on the development of passions and intelligence? This is one of the difficulties that stop every philosophy because its solution always leaves an unsolved question and we can always ask why. Once the existence of the soul and its development before this existence is admitted and everything else is explained in the most natural way. With such principle we go back to the actual cause and the source of everything.

1. (To the spiritual guide of the medium) – Can you tell us if we are allowed to evoke the spirit of the young man that we have just mentioned? – A. Yes. I will guide him because he suffers. May this communication be a lesson and serve you as an example.
2. (To Maximilian) – Are you aware of your situation? – A. I do not know well where I am. There is something in front of me like a veil. I speak but I do not know how and how I am heard. But what was until recently obscure I can see now. I was suffering but at this moment I feel relieved.
3. Do you remember well the circumstances of your death? – A. It is all too vague to me. I know I was committing suicide without a reason. Nonetheless as a poet from another incarnation I had a kind of intuition of my previous life. I created dreams and chimeras. I was in love.
4. How could it be that you got to such an extreme? – A. I have just responded to that.
5. It is remarkable that a 12 year old boy could be led to suicide particularly for a reason like that one. – A. You are a strange people! Haven't I said that I was a poet in another

incarnation and that my faculties had become ampler and more developed than on others? Oh! In the darkness that surrounds me I see this sylph of my worldly dreams passing by and that is the punishment that God inflicts upon me; I see her going by, beautiful and frivolous as always and I, intoxicated by madness and love I want to throw myself... but ah! I feel like I am in chains... I call... but that is in vain. She does not even turn to look at me... Oh! I suffer so much!

6. Can you describe your sensation when you recognized yourself in the world of the Spirits? – A. Yes, now that I am in touch with you I can. My body was there, inert and cold and I was gliding around it. I cried warm tears. The tears of a soul must surprise you. Oh! They are scorching hot! Yes, I cried because I had just acknowledged the enormity of my mistake and the greatness of God! Nevertheless, I was not sure about my death and I thought that my eyes could open. Elvira! I called... supposing that I could see her... Ah! I love her since long ago. I will always love her! Who cares if I have to suffer forever if I can one day have her in other incarnations?
7. What are your sensations for being here? – A. It does me good and bad at the same time. It is good because I know you share my suffering. It is bad because despite my desire to please you accepting your prayers I cannot do that because I would be forced to follow a different route, different from that of my dreams.
8. What can we do to help you? – A. Pray because prayer is the divine drizzle that refreshes the heart of our poor souls in punishment and suffering. Pray. However, I feel like you remove my love from my heart, replacing it by God's love... I do not know... I believe... Look! I cry now... Ah! Pray for me!
9. (To the guide of the medium) – What is the punishment of this spirit for having committed suicide? Given his age, is his action as liable as others who commit suicide? – A. The punishment will be terrible because his is more liable than others. He already had great faculties; the power of loving God and doing good. If those who commit suicide suffer long punishments God punishes even more those who kill themselves with great ideas in their minds and hearts.
10. You said that Maximilian's punishment will be terrible. Can you tell us how it is going to be? It seems that it has already started. Will it be worse than his current sufferings? – A. No doubt since he feels a devouring fire and it will only stop through the works of prayer and repentance.

OBSERVATION: He feels a devouring fire. Isn't that the image of the flames of hell, presented as a material fire?

11. Is there a possibility of having his punishment alleviated? – A. Yes, by praying for him and particularly if Maximilian joins your prayers.
12. Does the object of his passion share his feelings? Are these two beings destined to unite one day? If so, what are the conditions of such a union and what are the obstacles that preclude it now? – A. Do the poets love women on Earth? They believe so for an hour or a day. What they really love is the ideal; a chimera created by their eager imagination, a love that cannot be satisfied but by God. When they meet a beautiful child who will never be theirs they say that reality has taken over the dream. If they get back to their senses, however, they fall from the ethereal regions of matter and since they no longer recognize the object of their dreams they then create other fantasies.
13. (To Maximilian) – We would still like to ask you a few other questions that might bring you some comfort. What was the time when you lived as a poet? Was your name well known? – A. During Louis XV kingdom. I was poor and unknown and loved a woman,

an angel that I saw strolling at the park on a spring day. Since then I have only seen her in my dreams and my dreams promised me that she would be mine one day.

14. The name Elvira sounds very romantic to us leading us to think that it is a fictitious name. – A. Yes, it was a real woman. I know her name because a gentleman that passed by called her Elvira. Ah! She was exactly like the woman in my imagination. I still see her, always beautiful and astounding nice. She can make me forget God just to see and follow her.
15. You suffer and can still suffer for a long time. It is up to you to shorten your misery. – A. Who cares about my sufferings? You do not know what an unaccomplished desire is! Are my desires bodily like? Nevertheless they burn me just by the thought of her, even stronger than if I thought of God.
16. We are sincerely sorry for that. You must become useful and think more of God in order to work towards your own advancement. It is necessary that you request a reincarnation just to repair your mistakes and the uselessness of your last existences. We are not asking you to forget Elvira but that you think of her less exclusively and a little bit more of God who can abbreviate your torments if you do what it takes. We will support you in your endeavors through our prayers. – A. Thank you! Pray and try to remove Elvira from my heart. I will perhaps thank you one day.

May 1862

Causes of disbelief

Dear Mr. Allan Kardec,

I read your first publications about Spiritism with a lot of suspicion, even with a feeling of disbelief. Later I read them again with great attention like I did with your next publications, as they appeared.

I must go straight to the point and say that I used to belong to the materialistic school of thought because out of all philosophical sects it was the one that showed more tolerance and never resorted to arms to defend a God who said through the Master: "...they will prove to be my disciples by loving one another." In addition, the majority of those who taught religion and moral to the young minds seemed to be more determined to scare the souls than teach them to be good and wait for the reward to their sacrifices and sufferings.

Hence the most materialistic people of all times and particularly the philosophers of the last century, the majority of which illuminated Arts and Sciences, increased the number of their proselytes since education emancipated people. The void was chosen when compared to the eternal sufferings.

It is natural that the miserable person makes this comparison. If the comparison brings advantages then one will doubt everything else. In fact when we learn to see vice in the opulence and virtue in misery and when one does not have a reasoned doctrine proven by facts than desperation takes over one's soul and the question that follows is what is the benefit of virtue and one does attribute the scruples of conscience to prejudices and to our initial education.

Since I ignore what you are going to do with this letter I wish you to feel free to do whatever you like but I believe to be useful to let people know the causes that led to my conversion.

I had a vague idea about magnetism. Some considered it something serious and real, others treated it as something foolish. Therefore I gave no importance to the matter.

Later I heard about the dancing and talking tables all over the place but everyone handled that subject as they did with magnetism hence I gave no importance either.

Nevertheless a totally unforeseeable circumstance brought to my knowledge the "*Treatise of Magnetism and Somnambulism*" by Mr. Aubin Gauthier. I read the book with a biased mind against its content to the point that the explanations given there seemed extraordinary and impossible to me.

However, when I got to the page in which that honest man says: "*We do not want people just to believe in our word. Try it following the principles that we indicated here and if you confirm the veracity of what we advanced in the book all we want is that you act in good faith and agree with us.*"

That language with such a logical certainty, only possible in a practical person, paralyzed me, submitted my mind to reflection and forced me to carry out the experiments.

I initially started with a sixteen-year-old teenager of my own family, attaining results that were beyond expectation. As it is difficult to describe the confusion that it caused in my mind, I suspected myself and asked if that boy was not tricked me who was horse playing and making fun and confusing me since he could detect my intentions.

Just to make sure, I employed some indicated precautions and found a magnetizer. I got confirmation that the boy was under magnetic influence. That first experiment encouraged me so much that I totally dedicated myself to the science. I had the opportunity to observe every phenomenon while I could also attest the existence of an invisible agent that produced them.

Which agent is that? Who controls it? What is its essence? Why it is not visible? These are questions that I could not answer but that led me to read everything that was written pro and con the turning tables since I said to myself if there is an invisible agent that can produce the effects that I witnessed than another agent or even perhaps the same agent could produce the effects that I was observing from which one can conclude that it was all possible. Today I believe although I have not seen anything yet.

Given the effects that are produced all these things are as remarkable as Spiritism and the critics very frankly opposed and in a way that it would not shake any conviction.

Nonetheless what really characterize this doctrine from the material effects are the moral effects. To me it is evident that every person who is honestly involved with this doctrine becomes better if a good person or is forcibly led to modify her character if a bad person.

In the early days hope was not more than the gallows where miserable people were hung. With Spiritism hope is consolation, suffering is an atonement and the spirit patiently withstand the miseries instead of rebelling against the designs of Providence, without cursing God or humanity and always marching towards perfection. Had I learned these principles and I certainly would not have gone through the school of materialism that I have fortunately left behind!

As you see, dear Sir, regardless of the brutality of my own struggles I have converted and you are one of those who contributed to that the most. Make a note of that in your records because that is not one of the smallest. From now on you can count on me as one of your followers.

Gauzy, former military officer
Rue Saint-Louis 23, Batignolles, Paris

Note - This conversion is another example of the most common cause of unbelief. As long as things that reason repels are said to be absolute truths there will be unbelievers and materialists. To make one believe, it is necessary to make one understand. Our century so desires and we must march with the century if we do not want to succumb. But to make one understand, everything must be logical: principles and consequences. Mr. Gauzy enunciates a great truth in saying that the individual prefers the idea of nothingness, which puts an end to his sufferings, to the prospect of endless torments, to which it is so difficult to escape. Thus, one tries to enjoy as much as possible while on Earth. Ask a man who suffers greatly what he prefers: to die immediately or to live in pain fifty years; his choice will not be dubious. Who wants to prove too much, proves nothing; by the force of exaggerating the penalties, we end up no longer believing. We are sure that there are many people who agree with us, saying that the doctrine of the devil and eternal punishment made the

largest number of materialists; that the belief of a God who created beings to destine the vast majority of them to hopeless tortures, for temporary faults, made the largest number of atheists.

May 1862

Response of a Lady to an Ecclesiastic on Spiritism

A lady's answer to a priest about Spiritism

Our friends from Bordeaux tell us that a vicar from that city wrote the letter below on January 8th to a very ill and elderly lady. We are formally authorized to publish it as well as the reply that followed.

“Madam,

I am sorry that I could not have exchanged some private ideas yesterday about certain religious practices that are contrary to the teachings of the sacred Church. There was a lot of talk about that in your family and in another circle. I would feel happy, Madam, to learn that the only thing you feel about such diabolical superstitions is repugnance and that you are always and sincerely connected to the unchanging dogmas of the Catholic religion.

Yours sincerely, etc.

“X”

Response

“My dear Vicar,

Since my mother is too ill to be able to personally respond to your kind letter dated 8th of the current month I promptly do it for her and in her name in order to satisfy your solicitude with respect to the dangers that might surround her and her family.

Dear Sir, in my house there is no religious practice that might bother the most devout Catholics unless the respect and faith towards the dead, my faith in the immortality of the soul, a boundless trust in the love and mercy of God and a strict observation of the sacred doctrine of Jesus, as much as allowed by my human nature, unless they are reproachable practices before the sacred Catholic Church.

“With respect to what people may say about my family, even in a circle, I am appeased. Not there or elsewhere they will never say that any of us has done things that will shame them or make them hide as I am not ashamed and I do not hide for the admission of the development and clarity that the Spiritist manifestations spread, to me and many others, about points that were obscure to my intelligence regarding everything that seemed to be part of nature. To those diabolical superstitions I owe a sincere belief, with acknowledgment, in all miracles that the Church gives us as articles of faith and that up until now I kept as symbols, or better saying, I confess, as fantasies. I owe them the quietness of my soul, unreachable up until now irrespective of my efforts. I owe them my faith, a limitless faith, without reflection, without comments, the same faith that the Church commands its children, as the Lord must demand from His creatures, such as the one that the divine Savior preached by word and example.

Thus, rest assured my dear Sir! The Good Shepherd gathered around the indifferent sheep, those who followed mechanically and out of habit, and that now follow him and will always do with love and appreciation. The divine Master forgave St. Thomas for not having believed before seeing. Then! Still in our days he comes to allow the non-believers to touch him and feel his hands and it is with an immense love that those who were skeptical now approach in order to kiss his bleeding feet and thank the good and merciful father for allowing that these immutable truths become touchable so as to strengthen the weak and clarify the blind who even refused to see the light that has been shining for many centuries.

Allow me now to rehabilitate my mother to the eyes of the sacred Church. In my whole family it is only me and my husband who are fortunate to follow such a path that each one has the freedom of judging from their own standpoint. I then quickly reassure you about that.

As for myself I personally found a lot of strength and consolation in the touchable certainty that those who we loved and cried for are always around us, preaching the love of God above all, the love to our fellow human beings, charity in all of its facets, abnegation, forgetfulness of calumnies and paying evil with good (which does not seem to distant from the dogmas of the Church).

Whatever happens down here I cling to what I know, to what I have seen, asking God to send His consolations to those like myself who dared not think about the mysteries of religion, afraid that this poor human reason that cannot admit but what it can understand could destroy the beliefs that habit made me look like I had.

I then thank our Lord whose unquestionable might and benevolence allow the saints and angels to become visible now to rescue people from denial and doubt something that the devil had the permission to do in order to veer them off the good path since the creation of the world.

To God everything is possible, even miracles. I now recognize that with joy and confidence.

Receive, my dear vicar, my sincere thanks for your attention towards us and believe me that I eagerly wish to see the same faith and love that I now strongly feel penetrating everyone's hearts.

Yours sincerely,

Émilie Colignon”

OBSERVATION: There is no need for us to comment this letter, allowing each person to appreciate it as they will. The only thing we must mention is that we are aware of a large number of them with the same meaning. The passage that follows from one of those letters may summarize them if not with respect to the terms but at least with respect to the meaning.

“Although I was born and baptized in the Roman Catholic Church thirty years ago, that is since the first communion, I had forgotten my prayers and the path to the Church. In short I believed nothing but the reality of the material life. For a grace of Heavens, I finally see Spiritism opening my eyes. Today the facts spoke with me. I not only believe in God and in the soul but also in a future life that can be fortunate or unhappy; I believe in a fair and good God that punishes bad deeds and not wrong beliefs.

Like a mute person that recovers the ability to speak I now remember my prayers and I pray but no longer with the lips and without understanding what I am saying but with my heart, intelligence, faith and love. Not long ago I even admitted to carrying out an act of wickedness as long as I sought the sacraments of the Church. Today I believe that I humbly do a God-pleasing good deed. You reject me even in the tribunal of penitence. Before anything else you demand from me a formal denial of the Spiritist ideas. You want to renounce to the opportunity of talking to my beloved son who I lost and who came to bring me such reassuring and sweet words. You want me to declare that the child that I recognized as if he were alive right before me that he was the devil. No! A mother cannot be so grossly mistaken.

However, Mr. Vicar, I was convinced about a future life by the very words of that child that led me back to the Church! How come you want me to believe that it was the devil? If that had to be the last word of the Church we then ask what is going to happen when everybody is Spiritist?

You stigmatized me from the heights of your pulpit; you pointed your finger at me; you led a crowd of fanatical against me; you forced a poor woman that shares my beliefs to lose her bread winning job, telling her that she would get help if she stopped seeing me, expecting to beat her by hunger. Honestly, Mr. Vicar, would Jesus Christ have done the same?

You say that you act according to your conscience. Do not be afraid for I will not commit any violence but in turn be happy considering that I behave according to my own.

You sent me away from the Church. I will not try to force my way back there because the prayer pleases God everywhere.

Let me just tell you about the causes that have kept me away from the Church for a long time; that raised doubt in my spirit and from there total denial. If now I am cursed, as you say, you will see who bears the responsibility..."

OBSERVATION: The reflections that come out of such things can be summarized in two words: Fatal imprudence! Fatal blindness!

We browsed a manuscript entitled "Memories of a non-believer". It is a curious report of the causes that lead people to materialistic ideas and the means by which they can be guided back to faith. We still do not know if the author will have it published.

May 1862

The merciless baker - suicide

A correspondence from Crefeld, Prussia, dated January 25th, 1862 and inserted in the “*Constitutionnel*” on February 4th, carries the following fact:

“A poor widow, mother of three, comes to a bakery and insistently requests that a bread be sold to her on the basis of a future payment. The baker refuses. The widow diminishes her request to half a loaf and finally to a pound of bread so that she can feed her starving children. The baker refuses once again and leaves the place moving towards the back of the bakery. Believing that nobody was watching the woman grabs the bread and leaves. The theft, however, is promptly witnessed and the case taken to the police.

A police officer goes to the widow’s house and surprises her as she is slicing the bread for her children. She does not deny the theft and apologizes given her dire situation. Although criticizing the harshness of the baker, the officer insists that she follow him to interview with the police chief.

The widow asks for a few minutes so that she can get changed. She goes to her room. After some time and after losing his patience, the officer decides to open the door. The unfortunate widow was lying down on the floor covered in blood. She had ended her own life with the same knife that she was using to cut the bread to her children.”

The news was read at the session of the Society on February 14th, 1862 and a proposal was made to have the poor lady evoked when she spontaneously manifested herself giving the communication that follows. It is common to have Spirits communicating in such a way when their names are discussed in the sessions. There is no doubt that they are attracted by our thoughts that is a kind of tacit evocation. They know that we are talking about them and so they come. If they find an adequate time or a medium, they will communicate. From that it follows that there is no need to be a medium or even a Spiritist in order to attract the Spirits that populate our thoughts.

“God was good to the poor hallucinated and I come to thank you for your demonstrations of sympathy. Ah! Before the misery and hunger of my poor little ones I lost it and failed. I said to myself: If you are not capable of feeding your children and the baker refuses the bread to those who cannot pay; if you have no money or work, then die! If you are no longer with them someone else will come to help them.

In fact public charity has now adopted those poor orphans. God forgave me because he saw that I lost my mind in the fierce desperation. I was the innocent victim of an evil society, very badly organized. Ah! Thank God for having allowed you to be born in this great county of France where charity will find and mitigate all miseries.

Pray for me so that I can soon repair my own fault that I did not cowardly but out of maternal love. Our protector Spirits are so nice! They reassure me, give me strength and courage saying that my sacrifice did not displease the Great Spirit that under the eyes and the hand of God presides over the destinies of humanity.”

Poor Mary
(Medium Mr. d’Ambel)

After this communication, Spirit Lamennais made the following assessment of the fact in question:

“That unfortunate woman is a victim of your world, of your laws and society. God judges the souls but also the times and circumstances; He judges forcible actions and desperation; He judges what is behind the appearances. I dare say that the miserable woman did not die out of a crime but for her scruples, fear and shame. When human justice is inexorable, it judges material facts but the divine justice probes the bottom of one’s heart and the conscience.

It would be nice that in certain privileged minds a special gift could be developed not for the courts but for the advancement of certain persons. The gift is a kind of somnambulism of the mind that can frequently uncover hidden things but that is neglected and attenuated by those used to a routine of negligence and a lack of faith.

It is certain that a medium of such a kind, when examining that poor lady would have said: The woman is blessed by God for she suffers and the man is cursed since he refused the bread. Oh God! When shall we have all of your gifts recognized and practiced? The one who refused the bread shall be punished to the eyes of your justice because Jesus said: *Truly, I say to you, as you did feed one of the least of these my brothers, you did it to me.*

Lamennais, medium Mr. A. Didier

May 1862

Spiritist Dissertations

To the members of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies that are leaving to Russia

Spiritist Society of Paris, April 1862
medium Mr. E. Vezy

Note: Several well-known Russian personalities had come to spend the winter in Paris, specifically with the intent of completing their Spiritist instruction. They were received as members of the Society with that objective so that they could attend the sessions regularly. Some had already left, among them Prince Dimitry G... Others were about to leave. Such a circumstance gave rise to the following spontaneous communication:

Go and teach, said the Lord. Tonight I address you, children of the great family in formation. Go back to your homeland and to your families. At home remember that another father, the Heavenly Father, wanted to communicate and become known to you. Go and, most importantly, always have the seeds ready to be sowed in the fields that you are going to open in the land. Your homeland is called upon to become great and strong not only through literature and sciences, by the geniuses and the numbers, but still for its love and devotion to the Creator of all things.

May your charity then spread widely and strongly! Have no fear when openly spreading it around you. Know that the practice of charity requires the alms but also the heart. That is the immense source of good, the source of emanations that will warm up those who suffer around us! Go and preach the Gospel, you the new apostles of Christ. God gave you a higher place so that you can be seen and heard and your words understood.

However, you must always keep an eye on Heavens and on Earth, that is, God and humanity, so that you can achieve the great objective that you have proposed and count on our support.

The field is vast. Go, then, and sow so that we can harvest soon.

You can announce around that the great kingdom will come soon, a kingdom of happiness and satisfaction to all of those who wish to believe and love.

Before you leave take this advice, the last one we give you under this beautiful and beloved skies of France! This is a good-bye of friends who will continue to help you in your tough journey. Our invisible hands, however, will make it easier to you and with courage, perseverance and good will you will see the obstacles tumbling before your eyes.

There will be much admiration and awe when these words are heard from you: *we are all brothers who must help one another in our journey!* They will smile when realize the doctrine that you profess and will whisper this: *They say beautiful things, but aren't they like the milestones that indicate the way without covering the full length of the pathway?*

You must show them. Show them that the Spiritist, this new apostle of Christ, is not in the middle of the road just to point the direction but to take the axe face the toughest forests to clear the way and move the thorns away from those who follow behind.

Yes, the new disciples of Jesus must be strong; must walk steadily with active hands. There is no barrier ahead. They must all tumble before their efforts and blows. The clingers and creepers of the dense forest will break yielding a skylight!

That will be the consolation and happiness.

What a reward you are receiving! The blessed Spirits will say: Bravo, bravo! My dear children, you will soon join us and soon we will call you our brothers because you accomplished the mission that you voluntarily called upon yourselves. God has great awards to those who work in His field. He gives the harvest to everyone who has contributed to the great work!

Go in peace then. Go with our blessings. May our blessings bring you happiness and courage! Do not forget your brothers from the Society of France. They all support you and your homeland that Spiritism will strengthen. Go. The good Spirits assist you!

St. Augustine

May 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Friendly relationship between the dead and the living ones

Spiritist Society of Alger, medium Mr. B...

Q. Why do we feel embarrassed in our conversations with the Spirits of persons that were very dear to us, an embarrassment that we would never feel when they were alive? – A. Because you are material and we are not any more. I will make a comparison that, like all others, will not be absolutely exact but it will be enough to explain what I mean. Suppose you fall in love with a woman, like in one of those novels, that only the romantic writers are capable of creating while to us it does not differ much from what we know in the infinity of spaces. Let us continue with the supposition. After having had the ineffable happiness of speaking and seeing her every day a given circumstance happens where you will no longer see her and that you must be content for being able to hear her. Do you believe that your love would resist without any significant reaction to a situation like that, prolonged indefinitely? Be honest with yourself that it would somehow be shaken or diminished. Let us continue. You not only cannot see that beautiful companion but you can no longer hear her because she was kidnapped. You are not allowed to get close to her. Now you extend this situation for a few years and you will see what happens.

Let's continue with this line of thinking. Imagine now that the woman that you loved is dead. She has been buried in the darkness of the tomb for a long time now. A new change happens in you. I do not mean to say that the passion is over but what I mean to say is that it has at least been transformed. It is such that if, for a frightening moment, you were able to see the woman for whom you cry so much and not as a hateful specter that rests in the cemetery but with the form that you loved and cherished her so much, are you sure that your first impression before the apparition would not be that of profound horror? As you see, my friend, the passions and vivid affections are not possible in their full extension but among creatures of the same nature like among living worldly beings and among the Spirits. I do not mean to say that your affection is erased with death. I say that it changes with nature and takes on another form. In a word I want to say that in your world you keep a good memory of those that you loved but the material world in which you live does not allow you to understand or practice a love that is not materialized and that such a kind of love is naturally impossible between you and us, thus making you feel awkward and cold in your relationship with us. If you still need to be convinced just read again some Spiritist conversation among relatives, friends and acquaintances. You will find it so cold that it could freeze the inhabitants of the arctic. We do not do that willingly and that does not make us sad as long as we are sufficiently elevated in the Spiritist hierarchy to notice and understand it. However, it is unavoidable that it may have some influence on our behavior towards you. Do you remember *Hanifa's* story who was able to communicate with her dear daughter that she missed so much, asking her this first question: *Is there a treasure in this house?* What a nice mystification she received! That one was not stolen.

My friend! I believe I have said enough to explain the causes of discomfort that necessarily exists between you and us. I could have said more. I could have said, for example, that we see all of your imperfections and the impurities of your body and your soul and that in turn you are aware of what we know. Confess that this is embarrassing to both sides. Put together two lovers inside this glass box where everything is out both morally and physically and you can then imagine the result.

As for ourselves, driven by a feeling of charity that you cannot understand, we are to you like that good mother to whom the filth and the ailments of her crying child that keeps her awake do not allow her to forget even for a moment her sublime maternal instincts. We see you weak, ugly and bad, however we love you and do our utmost to help you advance. You are not fair, though, since you fear more than you love us.

Désiré L'église,
Algerian poet deceased in 1851

May 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The two teardrops

Spiritist Society of Lyon, Group Villon, medium Mrs. Bouilland

A spirit was forced to leave Earth, a place that he could not have visited given the fact that he was from a much inferior region. He had, however, asked to endure a trial and God did not refuse his request. Well! His hopes when coming to this world did not come true and his brute nature dominated him every day, staining his passage with greater faults. For a long time the guiding Spirits of mankind tried to veer him off from the bad path but then, tired of the attempt they finally left the unfortunate spirit on his own, almost fearing for any contact with him.

Nonetheless, everything comes to an end. Sooner or later everything comes out in the open and the repressive justice of the world imposes the *eye for an eye* penalty. This time it was not a head for another head though. It was one for a hundred. Yesterday, after having spent fifty years on Earth that spirit would return to the space and meet the Supreme Judge that weighs in one's faults much more inexorably than people would do on this planet. The guardian Spirits hopelessly tried to avoid the penalty by trying to introduce some regret in that rebellious soul. They hopelessly brought to him the Spirits of his whole family. Each one tried to extract at least a sigh of sorrow from him. The fatal moment was near and nothing moved that soul of bronze, somewhat inhuman. Yet, a single sign of regret before leaving this life behind could have mitigated his sufferings, already condemned to lose his life by the worldly justice, and condemned by God to an endless remorse, a horrible torture like the vulture devouring a heart that revives incessantly.

While the Spirits worked tirelessly to bring out of him at least a thought of repentance, another spirit, an enthralling spirit, highly gifted with sensitivity and sublime tenderness glided around a very dear head, a head that was alive and said: "*Think of the unfortunate who will die; tell me about him.*"

When charity is sympathetic, when two Spirits agree as if they were one, the mind is kind of charged with electricity. Soon after that the incarnate spirit said to the messenger of love: "*My child, try to inspire a little remorse in this miserable that is about to die; go and console him!*"

And thinking of everything that the miserable man would have to suffer in his atonement, a sneaky teardrop escapes from the eyes of the one who alone at that early hour awoke thinking of that impure creature who would momentarily meet his fate. The gentle messenger collected that charitable teardrop in the palm of his little hand, and in a quick flight carried it over to the tabernacle containing similar relics, and prayed like that:

"Lord, an impious is about to die; you condemned him, but you said: "*I forgive where there is remorse and I grant indulgence when there is repentance.*" Here is a teardrop of true charity, which has gone through the heart in the eyes of the person I love the most in the world. I bring this teardrop: it is the price of suffering; give me the power to soften the heart of the cold soul that will atone for his crimes.

- *Go, replied the Master; go my child. This blessed teardrop can pay many ransoms.*

The sweet child left and went to the place of execution of that criminal. What the child said to that man only God knows; what happened in the mind of that pariah of society nobody understood but he opened his eyes to light and saw before him a horrifying past. The very man who feared no instrument of death, who smiled before his condemnation, he raised his eyes and a thick and painful teardrop dropped like lead from his eyes.

After this mute demonstration that her prayers had been heard the angel of charity extended her white wings over the miserable man, collected the teardrop and seemingly said: *“Oh unfortunate one! You will suffer less. I take your redemption with me!”*

What a contrast can be inspired by the charity of our Creator! The most abject creature, at the bottom of the stairwell, and the purest angel about to enter the world of the elected ones, and just a sign is needed to extend her visible protection upon that scum of society.

From the Almighty tribunal, God blessed that touching scene and all of us surrounding the child said: *“Go and collect your award.”*

The gentle messenger rose to heavens and with the scorching hot teardrop in her hands she could say:

- Lord, he cried. Here is the proof!
- That is fine, said the Lord. Keep that first drop of dew from that hardened heart. May this fecund teardrop water the spirit that has been dried by evilness! But keep this first teardrop that has been brought to me and may this simple drop of water turn into a pure diamond for it is the stainless pearl of true charity! Give this example to the peoples and tell them: *“Look and see! Here you have a teardrop of love for humanity and a teardrop of remorse obtained by prayer. These two drops will be the most precious of the vast treasure of charity.”*

Cárita

May 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The two Voltaires

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, Group Faucherand, medium Mr. E. Vézy

It is me alright but not that mocking spirit of other times. The little king from the eighteenth century who dominated through his mind and genius so many sovereigns no longer bears that sarcastic smile on his lips, a smile that used to scare friends and foes alike! My cynicism has gone before the revelation of the great things that I thought I knew but that I really found in the grave!

Poor minds, too narrow to contain so many wonders! Humans, be quiet and humiliate yourselves before such a supreme power! Observe and admire! That is what you can do. How come you want to penetrate the secrets of God and his work? Despite all of your efforts, doesn't your reason shatters before the atom and the little grain of sand that cannot be defined?

I spent my life looking for and trying to understand God and His principle. My reason failed me and I came to the point not of denying God but His glory, His might and greatness. I explained Him as if developing with time. A heavenly intuition told me that I should reject such a mistake but I did not listen and became the apostle of a false doctrine... Do you know why? Because in the confusion and turmoil of my thoughts, in that constant struggle I could only see one thing: my name, engraved at the entrance of the temple of all nations! I only saw the glory promised by the universal youth that surrounded me seemingly enjoying the delightful essence of the doctrine that I taught them.

Pushed, however, by I do not know which kind of remorse in my conscience I wanted to stop but it was too late. Like every utopia, we are dragged by every system that we embrace. It first follows the currents but later it drags and breaks us down, and the downfall is sometimes quick and brutal.

Believe me, all of you here who are seeking the truth, you will find it when you uproot from your hearts the love for the shinning metal, the silly self-love and pride that make your eyes shine.

Have no fear to fight and defy the error on the new avenue where you walk now, whenever it presents itself to you. Isn't that monstrous to preconize a doctrine against which one would dare not defend by the simple fact that people know that we made disciples and that they have gone beyond our beliefs?

As you see my friends, this Voltaire is no longer the same as that one of the eighteenth century. I am more Christian for I am here to make you forget my glory and remember what I was in my youth and what I loved in my childhood.

Oh! I loved so much to get lost in the world of my thoughts! My lively and eager imagination visited the vales of the Middle East looking for the one you call the Redeemer... I enjoyed visiting

the places where he had been. And that Christ seemed great and sublime to me amidst the crowds! I believed to hear his powerful voice, teaching the peoples of Galilee, at the shores of Tiberias and Judea!

Later on, in my sleepless nights, how many times did I stand up to open an old Bible and read its sacred pages once again! I then bended by forehead to the cross, this eternal symbol of redemption that unit Earth and Heavens, the creature to the Father! How many times did I admire God's power, breaking into many parts in a way, and whose spark incarnates to become so small and just to deliver its soul at the Calvary in atonement! August victim whose divinity I denied and yet who made me say:

Your God that you betrayed,

Your God to whom you say blasphemes;

To you, to the universe,

He died in those places!

I suffer but I atone the resistance that I used to oppose to God. My mission was to instruct and clarify. I did that in the beginning but my focus disappeared from my hands when the time came for the illumination.

Fortunate children of the nineteenth century, you are given the opportunity to see the light beam of truth.

Make sure you see that light in the right way for it will show heavenly shades to you and its clarity will be divine.

Voltaire

My friends, I allowed one of your great philosophers to speak for me, the one who was the principal architect of the error. I wanted him to tell you where to find light. What do you think? They will all come to tell you: "There is no wisdom without love and charity". Tell me which doctrine can teach better than Spiritism? It would never be too much to remind you that love and charity are the two supreme virtues that bond together the creature to the Creator, as Voltaire says. Oh! What a mystery and what a sublime bond! Minuscule germ from Earth that can become so powerful that in their glory they can reach the throne of the Eternal!

St. Augustine

Allan Kardec

June 1862

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies

Speech given by Mr. Allan Kardec
Opening ceremony of the social year, April 1st 1862

Ladies and gentlemen, dear colleagues,

The Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies has begun its fifth year on April 1st, 1862 and admittedly it has never done so under better conditions. This is not only important from our personal point of view, but it is especially important from the point of view of the doctrine in general for it unequivocally demonstrates the intervention of our spiritual guides. It would be superfluous to remind you of the humble origins of the Society, and the somehow providential circumstances of its constitution; circumstances that an eminent Spirit, who was then in power and has since re-entered the world of Spirits, told us to have contributed significantly himself.

The Society, as you will remember, ladies and gentlemen, has had its vicissitudes. It had its own elements of dissolution coming from a time when people were recruited much too easily, and its very existence was even compromised at some point. At that time I questioned its real value, not as a mere meeting place, but as a formal society. Tired of those conflicts, I was determined to retire; I hoped that once free from the obstacles sown on my way I would work better in the great work that I had initiated. I was discouraged by many spontaneous communications that were given to me from several places; there is one, among others, whose substance seems to be useful to let you know today because the events have justified the predictions. It was given as follows:

"The Society formed by us with your support is necessary; we want it to stay and it will stay, despite the reluctance of some, as you will acknowledge later. When there is evil it cannot be cured without a crisis; that is so from the small to the great: at an individual level as in societies; in societies as among peoples; among peoples as it will be with humanity. We say that our Society is necessary; when it ceases to be in the current form it will then transform as everything else. As for you, you cannot, you must not leave; However, we do not pretend to chain your free-will; we only say that if you leave it would be a mistake that you would one day regret, since it interferes with our plans ... "

Since then two years have passed, and as you can see, the Society is fortunately out of that temporary crisis in which all the incidents were reported to me, and from which resulted in a lesson of experience that we have learned and that have led us to implement measures for which we now congratulate ourselves. Freed from the concerns inherent to its previous situation, the Society was able to continue its studies unhindered. It also advanced fast and grew visibly; I do not say that it grew in numbers although it is larger than it has ever been, but rather in importance. Eighty-seven participating members have been on the annual contributions list of the year that has just ended, not including honorary members and correspondents. It would have been easy to double or even triple that number if revenue were the target; it would be just a matter of facilitating admissions. Far from diminishing those difficulties, the Society has increased them, because for being a study Society it did not want to veer off from the very principles of the institution, and that it has never entertained material interests. Since it has never sought accumulation a slightly larger or smaller

number of members was indifferent. Its ascendance, therefore, has nothing to do with the number of members; it is in the ideas it investigates, develops and spreads out; it does not seek active propaganda; it has neither agents nor emissaries; it invites nobody to become a member and what may seem extraordinary, it owes its influence to this very reservation.

Here is the reasoning behind it: If the Spiritist ideas were false nothing would allow them to take root because any misconception has a transient existence; if they are true, they will become ingrained through conviction despite anything else, and the worst way to spread it would be by imposition because every idea that is imposed is suspicious and betrays its own weakness. True ideas must be accepted by reason and common sense; where they do not germinate is that the time is not right; we must wait and simply throw the seed to the wind, for sooner or later some will fall on a less arid terrain. The number of members of the Society is therefore a very secondary issue because today more than ever before the Society could not pretend to absorb all followers.

Its purpose is to provide insight into the various parts of the spiritualist science, to investigate the causes of the phenomena, and to collect all the observations likely to clarify the important issue and so much exciting interest of the state of the invisible world, of its action upon the visible world and the countless derived consequences to humanity, through conscientious studies made without prejudice and without bias.

Given its location and large network of contacts it is in the most favorable conditions to observe well and a lot. Its purpose is thus essentially moral and philosophical; but what especially gave credit to its work is the serenity and seriousness applied to those studies. At the Society everything is discussed calmly, without passion, as any person that in good faith seeks enlightenment must do. People know that it is only concerned about serious things; finally, it is the impression that many foreigners that have eventually come from distant countries to attend the meetings have taken away with respect to the order and dignity of its sessions.

Thus, the guidelines followed by the Society bear fruits. The professed principles, based on conscientious observations, are now a role model to the vast majority of Spiritists. You have successively seen before the experience the downfall of most systems that were hatched earlier on, and only a few still have some followers. This is unquestionable. So what are the ideas that grow, and which ones decline? It is a matter of fact. The doctrine of reincarnation is the principle that has been the most controversial, and its opponents have spared nothing to try and discredit it, not even insults and vulgarities, the supreme argument of those who have run out of good reasons; it has nevertheless made its way because it is based on an inflexible logic; that without this lever we run against insurmountable difficulties, and finally because it has found nothing more rational to replace it.

There is, however, a system that spreads now more than ever: the diabolical system. Unable to deny the manifestations, a party claims to prove that they are the sole work of the devil. The fury that such a system brings demonstrates that it is not so sure to be right. The Spiritists in turn are not impressed the least by those demonstrations of power and just let them wear out. At this point that system fires to all sides: speeches, small brochures, large publications, newspaper articles. It is a general attack to prove what?

That the facts that we bear witness to the might and goodness of God testify instead the power of the devil; whereby since the devil is the only one that can manifest that it is more powerful than God. By assigning to the devil everything that is good in the communications is the same as denying God from what is good and paying homage to the devil. We believe to be more respectful towards the divinity. Besides, as I said, the Spiritists do not worry with that outcry whose result will be the destruction of Satan's prestige a bit sooner.

The Society of Paris, without the use of material means, and although numerically limited by its own will, has not made less propaganda by the force of the example, and the proof of that is the incalculable number of Spiritist groups that form through the same process, that is to say, according to the same principles it professes; it is the number of regular societies that organize themselves and request to be sponsored by our Society. There are groups in several cities in France and abroad, Algeria, Italy, Austria, Mexico, etc., and what have we done for this? Have we sought that? Have we solicited them? Have we sent emissaries or agents? Not the least; our agents are the books. The Spiritist ideas spread in a community; they first find a few echoes then, step-by-step, gain terrain. The followers feel the need to get together, less to make experiences than to talk about a subject that interests them; hence the thousands of particular groups can be called family of groups. In their number some gain greater numerical importance; we are asked for advice, and that's how unnoticeably they form this network that already has milestones on all points of the globe.

Here, ladies and gentlemen, I must naturally make an important observation about the nature of the relationship between the Society and the meetings or societies that were founded under its auspices, and that should not be considered branches. The Society of Paris has no authority over them but that of experience, but, as I said on another occasion, it does not interfere in any way in their business; its role is limited to informal advice when it is asked. The link between them is thus a purely moral link, based on sympathy and similarity of ideas; there is no affiliation between them, no material solidarity; the only maxim is the one that must unite the whole of mankind: charity and love towards the neighbor, a peaceful and trustful axiom.

The majority of members of the society lives in Paris. Some, however, live in the country or abroad, and very rarely attend the meetings, and there are even some who have never been to Paris since its foundation, and yet they have the honor of being members. In addition to the members themselves, the Society has correspondents, but their purely scientific reports are intended to be used to keep it abreast of the Spiritist movement in different localities, and provide me with documents for the history of the establishment of Spiritism, a material that I have been collecting.

Among the followers, there are those who distinguish for their enthusiasm, selflessness and dedication to the cause of Spiritism; who pay personally, not in words but in actions; the Society is pleased to pay them a particular expression of sympathy by giving them the title of honorary member.

Hence, over the last two years the Society has grown in credit and importance; but progress is also indicated by the nature of the communications received from the Spirits. For some time, in fact, these communications have gained proportions and developments that have far exceeded our expectations; they are no longer, as before, short fragments of banal moral, but essays where the

highest level of philosophical issues are dealt with in a breadth and depth of thoughts that convert them into true speeches. This is what most readers of the Review have observed.

I am pleased to report further progress regarding the mediums. We have never, at any other time, seen so many take part in our work, since we happened to have up to fourteen communications in one session. But what is more valuable than the quantity is the quality that can be judged by the importance of the communications given to us. Not everybody appreciates mediumship in the same way. Some assess it by the effect; for them, the swift mediums are the most notable and the best; for us who seek instruction, above all, we attach more value to what satisfies the mind than what meets the eye. We therefore prefer a useful medium with which we learn something to an amazing medium from whom we learn nothing. With that respect we have nothing to complain, and we must thank the Spirits for keeping their promise of not leaving us deprived. Wanting to expand the circle of their teachings they also had to multiply the instruments.

But there is still one more important point, without which such teaching would not have produced fruits or produced little. We know that all Spirits are far from knowing the whole science and that they may be wrong; that they often issue their own ideas that can be true or false; that the superior Spirits want us to exercise our judgment to discern right from wrong, what is rational from what is illogical; that is why we will never accept anything with our eyes closed.

There can therefore be no profitable education without discussion; but how to discuss communications with mediums who do not accept the slightest controversy, which are hurt by a critical remark, a simple observation, and become upset if we do not applaud the things they receive, even those blemished by gross scientific heresies? This claim would be out of place if what they write were the product of their own intelligence; it is ridiculous since they are only passive instruments, because they look like an actor who would be offended if one was to criticize her for the verses that must be said. Since the medium cannot feel offended by a criticism of something that cannot reach her than it is the communicating spirit that is hurt and transmits that feeling to the medium.

For that simple reason the spirit betrays its influence since wanting to impose ideas through a blind faith and not by reasoning, or what is the same, because the spirit wants to be the only one to think. The result is that in such a situation the medium is under the influence of a spirit that deserves little trust for showing more pride than wisdom. We do know that the Spirits that belong to such category usually keep the mediums away from centers where they are not accepted without reservations.

Such caprice in mediums that are subjected to that type of influence is a great obstacle for the study. If we were only looking for the effects, this would be of minor importance to us; but as we seek instruction, we cannot avoid the discussion even by taking the risk of displeasing the mediums. Hence, that is how some have left in the past and for a non-confessed reason, since they could not have imposed themselves upon the Society like exclusive mediums and infallible interpreters of the heavenly powers. To my eyes, the obsessed are those who do not question their communications. Some take their susceptibility to the point of being offended by the priority given to the reading of the communications that was received by other mediums. Why is a communication received by another medium preferred over the one s/he received? What about the embarrassment that follows when s/he is found out? Fortunately, and in the interest of the Spiritist science, not

everyone is like that and I promptly take the occasion to, in the name of the Society, thank those who support us with their service with such enthusiasm and devotion, without measuring effort or time and, without taking sides in their communications. They are the first ones to openly discuss the controversy that they may create by doing so.

In summary, ladies and gentlemen, we can only congratulate the state of the Society from the moral point of view. Everyone has noticed a significant difference in the dominating environment compared to what it was in the beginning, whose impression each one feels instinctively, in many circumstances translated by positive facts. It is undeniable that there is less discomfort and less stress, surrounded by a feeling of mutual benevolence. It seems that the disturbing Spirits, seeing their inability to sow distrust, took the wise decision of leaving.

We can also only applaud the great idea of several members to organize private meetings in their homes. They have the advantage of establishing more intimate relationships. Besides, they are convenient meeting places to a variety of people who cannot make it to the Society; where they can have a first initiation; where they can make a multitude of comments that later on will converge to the common center. Finally they are nurseries for the formation of mediums. I sincerely thank the people who gave me the honor of offering me to lead those meeting, but that is materially impossible to me; I regret very much not being able to go there as often as I would like. You know my opinion regarding particular groups; I therefore wish for their multiplication, in the Society or outside the Society, in Paris or elsewhere, because they are the most active agents of propaganda.

Our treasurer gave you the report of the financial situation of the Society. Our budget, as you know, ladies and gentlemen, is simple and just requires that there is balance between income and expenses since we do not seek profit from our endeavors. Let us then ask the good Spirits who assist us, in particular our spiritual president, St. Louis, to continue to offer us their benevolent protection so visibly received up until now of which we will strive more and more to become worthy.

I still have to tell you, ladies and gentlemen, something important. I want to talk about the thousand francs that was sent to me about two years ago by a subscriber of *The Spiritist Review* and who wanted to remain anonymous. It was a donation to be employed in the interest of Spiritism. You certainly remember that the amount was given to me in person, without formalities and documentation, and without the need of any expense report.

When I communicated the fortunate event I declared in the session of February 17th, 1860 that I would not avail from the trust that was deposited in me and wishing that the funds be used to the benefit of the Doctrine I added: "*This money will form the Trust of Spiritism, a special fund that has nothing to do with my personal affairs. It will grow further by the addition of sums that can come from other sources, and exclusively dedicated to the purposes of the doctrine and the development of the Spiritists ideas. One of my priorities will be to ensure the supply of material to the Society for the consistency of its work, and the creation of a special library. I asked several colleagues to kindly accept the control of that trust, and the verification of the useful application of the funds on specific dates to be determined subsequently.*"

The commission, now dispersed in part by the circumstances, will be completed when needed, and all documents will be supplied to the commission. Meanwhile, and considering the absolute

freedom that was given to me, I thought it proper to apply that amount on the development of the Society and it is to you, ladies and gentlemen, that I think I ought to report its application, both out of my personal duty and for your edification. I would especially like you to understand the physical impossibility to take on these funds for current expenses; however, the urgency is felt every day due to the extension of the work required by Spiritism.

The Society, as you know, ladies and gentlemen, strongly felt the inconvenience of not having a special room for its meetings, and where it should have its archives at hand. For work like ours, you need a kind of sacred place where nothing can disturb the worship; everybody deplored our situation, meeting in a public institution, with little harmony with the seriousness of our studies. So I thought I should do something useful by giving them the means to have a more suitable room with the funds that I had received.

On the other hand, considering that the progress of Spiritism brings to my house, a growing number of domestic and foreign visitors, a number that can be estimated from twelve to fifteen hundred a year, it was better to receive them at the main office of the Society, focusing and concentrating there all business and all documents relating to Spiritism.

I would add that dedicating myself entirely to the doctrine, it was somehow necessary to avoid any waste of time and that I would have my home there or at least in the neighborhood. For me personally, I did not need it, as I have in my house a room that costs me nothing, more pleasant in all respects, and where I also live and stay as long as required by my obligations. A second apartment would have been for me an unnecessary and expensive burden. So without Spiritism, I would happily be at home, at Ségur Avenue, and not here where I have to work from morning to night and often from night to morning, without being able to take a rest that sometimes is much needed; because you know that I'm alone to accomplish a task that you would hardly imagine the extension and which necessarily grows with the development of the doctrine.

This apartment meets the desirable requirements for its internal facilities and its central location. Without being lavish it is very convenient; but since the resources of the Society are insufficient to pay the full rent, I had to make up the difference with funds from the donation; otherwise the Society would remain in the precarious, petty and inconvenient situation where it was before. Thanks to this contribution the Society was able to carry out the duties that are of public domain thus supporting the doctrine well. So that is the past application and the future destination of the funds from the donation received and that I feel I must share with you.

The rent for the apartment costs 2,500 francs per year, and with the accessories 2,530 francs. Contributions are 198 francs, totaling 2,728 francs. The Society contributes 1200 francs so the outstanding balance is 1528 francs. The lease was made for three, six, or nine years, beginning April 1st, 1860. A six year lease would add up to 9,168 francs with the addition of furniture and installation costs of 900 francs, tips and miscellaneous expenses of 80 francs for a grand total of 10,148 francs and not including unexpected expenses, to be paid with the donated capital of 10,000 francs. So at the end of the lease, that is to say in four years from now, there will be an excess of expenditure. As you see, ladies and gentlemen, there is no possibility of deviating the least amount if we want to reach the end. What should we do then? What pleases God and the good Spirits, who have told me not to worry about anything!

I point out that the amount used to cover equipment and installation costs was only 900 francs, a rigorously needed portion of the capital. If we had to purchase all the furniture that is here today, and I am speaking only of the reception rooms, it would have taken three or four times that amount, and the Society would then have a three year lease instead of six. So this is mostly my own personal furniture and that would have been worn out by the use.

In summary the 10,000 francs that some believed to be inexhaustible, is almost entirely absorbed by the rent that was important to guarantee for some time, before anything else, without any possibility of diverting any amount to other uses, including the purchase of ancient and modern works, French and foreign, necessary for the formation of a large Spiritist library as it was my project; that alone would cost not less than 3,000 to 4,000 francs. As a result, all expenses outside the rent such as travel and a host of other costs associated to Spiritism, which does not amount to less than 2,000 francs per year, are covered by me personally and that amount is significant on a limited budget that is balanced on order, economy and even deprivation.

Do not think, ladies and gentlemen, that I want to be credited with merits; in doing so, I know I serve a cause to which material life is nothing and before which I am willing to sacrifice my own; perhaps one day I will face limiting factors. In fact I am well rewarded by the results that I have obtained. If I regret anything it is the limitation of my own resources that do not allow me to do more for with sufficient and well employed means in the right order and in really useful things we would advance half a century in the definite establishment of the doctrine.

June 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

Mr. Sanson

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, April 25th, 1862
medium Mr. Leymarie

1. Evocation. - A. My friends, I am close to you.
2. We are pleased with the conversation we had with you on the day of your funeral and with your permission we would like to complement it for our continuing education. - A. I am ready and feel happy that you thought of me.
3. Anything that can shed light on the invisible world and help us to understand is a great opportunity because it is the misconception that people have of that world that generally leads to disbelief. Hence do not feel surprised with the questions that we will ask you. - A. I will not be and I look forward to your questions.

4. You described with extreme clarity the transition from life to death; you said that when the body breathes the last breath life is broken and the vision of the Spirit extinguishes. Is such a moment followed by a painful sensation? - A. No doubt because life is a continual succession of pain and death is the complement of all that pain; thus a violent rupture as if the spirit had to make a superhuman effort to escape from its envelope. It is that effort that absorbs all energy and makes the spirit lose the knowledge of what it becomes.

OBSERVATION - This is not the general case. The separation can take place with some effort, but experience shows that not all Spirits are aware of that because many lose consciousness before expiring. The convulsions of agony are usually purely physical. Mr. Sanson presented a very rare phenomenon in which the spirit witnesses his last breath.

5. Do you know if there are Spirits to whom such a moment is more painful? Is it more difficult, for example, to the materialist, for those who believe that everything ends at that time for them? - A. That is correct considering that the prepared spirit has already forgotten the suffering, or rather is used to this experience and he knows what is ahead. Moral suffering is the strongest and its absence at the time of death is a great relief. He who does not believe is like the prisoner condemned to death row and whose thoughts are only the knife and the unknown. There are similarities between this death and that of the atheist.

6. Are there materialists who believe that at this supreme moment they will be plunged into the abyss? - A. There is no doubt that some believe in the void up until the last hour; but at the time of separation, the spirit goes through a deep return; doubt seizes him and tortures him as he wonders what is going to happen; he wants to grab something and cannot. The separation cannot be done without this impression.

OBSERVATION - A spirit has given us, in other circumstances, the following description about the end of the non-believer: "*In the last moments the devote non-believer experiences anxieties of those terrible nightmares where you can see the edge of a precipice and you are about to fall into the abyss; useless effort is made to escape without being able to walk; you want to hold on to something, grab a foothold but you feel slipping; you want to call someone but you cannot articulate a sound; that's when you see the moribund twisting, tense hands and muffled cries, sure signs of the living nightmare. In the ordinary nightmare you are brought back when you wake up and you feel happy to recognize that it was just a dream; but the nightmare of death often extends for a long time, sometimes years even after death, and what makes the sensation even more painful is the darkness in which the spirit is sometimes plunged.*" We were even able to observe a number of similar cases what demonstrates that this description is no exaggeration.

7. You said that at the time of death you did not see but rather you perceived. It is understandable that you could not see but were you able to anticipate the clarity of the spiritual world before life was extinguished? - A. That's what I said earlier. The moment of death gives foresight to the spirit; the eyes see no more, but the spirit that has a much deeper vision and immediately discovers that unknown world. At that time, the spirit sees the truth and momentarily gives the spirit an ineffable joy or an indescribable sorrow, according to the state of his conscience and the memory of his past life.

OBSERVATION - It's about this time when the spirit loses consciousness, which explains the use of the word *momentarily*. *These* same pleasant or painful impressions continue when the spirit wakes up.

8. Can you tell us what was it that you saw when your eyes reopened to light? Could you describe the appearance of things that were offered to you? - A. When I could see myself and see what I had before my eyes I was dazzle. I did not understand it well because lucidity had not immediately recovered. But God, who gave me a deep sign of his goodness, allowed me to recover my faculties. I saw myself surrounded by many loyal friends. All the protective Spirits that assist us surrounded me with a smile; an unparalleled joy animated them and me, feeling strong and healthy, I could effortlessly carry myself through space. What I saw has no words to describe in human language. In fact I will come back to speak more broadly of my whole happiness, without moving beyond the limits established by God. Know this that happiness as you see it is a fiction. You ought to live wisely, saintly, and with the spirit of charity and love, and you will be prepared to receive impressions that even your greatest poets could not express.

OBSERVATION: - Fairy tales are probably full of absurd things; but wouldn't they be, in some points, the painting of what happens in the world of Spirits? Doesn't the story of Mr. Sanson look like that of a man who fell asleep in a poor and obscure cabin and woke up in a beautiful palace amidst a brilliant court?

Third conversation on May 2nd, 1862

9. Under which aspect have the Spirits presented to you? Was it under their human form? - A. Yes, my dear friend, the Spirits had taught us on Earth that they kept in the other world the transitional form they used to have in your world; and that's the truth. But what a difference between the heavy engine that drags painfully with its entourage of trials and the wonderful fluidity of the body of the Spirits! There is no ugliness because the lines have lost the hardness of expression that forms the distinctive character of the human race. God beatified all these graceful bodies that move elegantly; language has untranslatable pitches to you and the eyes show the depth of a star. Try mentally to see what God can do in His omnipotence, the architect of the architects, and you'll have had a faint idea of the form of the Spirits.

10. Personally, how do you see yourself? Do you recognize a limited, circumscribed form, although fluid like? Do you feel the head, the trunk, the arms, and legs? – A. Having the spirit retained the human but deified, idealized form, the spirit has undoubtedly the members that you mentioned. I feel perfectly my legs and fingers because out of our own will we can become visible, shake your hands. I am near you and I shook hands with all my friends, without their knowledge because our fluidity can be anywhere without disturbing the space, without any sensation, if that is our wish. At this very moment you have your hands crossed and I have mine on yours. I tell you, I love you but my body does not occupy the place, light passes through it, and what you would call a miracle if it were visible is to the Spirits a continuous action, at all times. The sight of Spirits has no relation with human sight, as the body has no real resemblance, because everything is changed in appearance and substance. The spirit, I repeat, has a divine insight that reaches everything, since it can even guess your thoughts; that is how it may also take the form that can best identify with your memories. But in fact the superior spirit whose trials have ended prefers the form that was able to drive that spirit to God.

11. The Spirits do not have sex. However, since a few days ago you were a man, in your state do you hold a male like nature more than a feminine one? Is it the same with a spirit that left his body a long time ago? - A. We are not bound to a male or female nature. The Spirits do not reproduce. God created them out of his will, and if from his wonderful wisdom he wanted the Spirits to reincarnate on Earth, he had to establish the reproduction of species by the male and female. But you feel it, without the need for any explanation, that the Spirits cannot have sex.

OBSERVATION: It has always been said that the Spirits do not have sex. The sexes that exist are only necessary for the reproduction of the body. Since the Spirits do not reproduce, genders for them would be useless. Our question had not intended to state the fact, but due to the very recent death of Mr. Sanson, we wanted to know if there was an impression of his worldly state. The purified Spirits are perfectly aware of their nature, but among non-dematerialized, inferior Spirits, there are many who still believe to be what they are on Earth, and keep the same passions and the same desires; those will still believe to be men and women, and that's why there are some who have said that the Spirits have sex. Thus some contradictions come from the more or less advanced state of the Spirits

who communicate. The error is not from the part of the Spirits but from their interrogators that do not bother to investigate the subject.

12. Among the Spirits who are here, you see our spiritual President Saint Louis? - A. He is always near you, and when he is absent he always leaves a superior spirit that replaces him.

13. Do not you see other Spirits? - A. I'm sorry. I see the Spirit of Truth, St. Augustine, Lamennais, Sonnet, St. Paul, St. Louis and other friends that you evoke in your sessions.

14. How does our session look like to you? Is it the same now as it used to be when you were alive? Do people look the same to you? Is everything as clear and as clean? - A. Much clearer because I can read everyone's minds and I feel very happy. The good will of the Spirits gathered here causes a good impression. I wish the same agreement can be found not only in Paris, by the union of all groups, but also throughout France where there are groups that break away and are jealous of one another, driven by disturbing Spirits who like disorder, while Spiritism must be the complete and absolute renunciation of the self.

15. You said that you can read our minds; could you help us understand how such a transmission happens? - A. That is not easy. In order to explain that to you, this singular miracle of the sight of the Spirits, it would be necessary to open up a whole arsenal of new agents to you and you would be as enlightened as we are, and that cannot be because your faculties are bounded by matter. Patience! Become good and you will get there. You currently have what God allows you to have in hopes of a continual advancement. Later you will be like us. Try to die better so that you can learn a lot. Curiosity, which is the stimulus of a person of thoughts, quietly leads to the death, reserving you the satisfaction of all your past, present and future curiosities. Meanwhile, I'll tell you somehow responding to your question: The air around you, untouchable as we are, carries the character of your thoughts; the breath you exhale, so to speak, is the written page of your thoughts that are read and commented by the Spirits who are constantly around you, like the messengers of divine telegraphy from which nothing escapes.

16. As you see, my dear Mr. Sanson, we stretched the permission you have given us to do your spiritual autopsy. We are not going to abuse. On another occasion, if you wish, we will frame questions of a different order. - A. I am always happy to make myself useful to my former colleagues and their worthy president.

June 1862

Family conversations from beyond the grave

Child Jesus among the doctors
Last painting of Ingres

Mrs. Dozon, a colleague of ours from the Society, received the following spontaneous communication on April 9th, 1862:

"The Child Jesus found by his parents preaching in the Temple, among the doctors. (Luke, Nativity.)

This is the subject of a painting inspired to one of our greatest artists. In this work of a man there is more than genius. In that work, we see this shining light that God gives the souls to enlighten them and lead them to celestial regions. Yes, religion has illuminated the artist. Was such lightning visible? Has the worker seen the flashover from the sky falling down onto him? Has he seen the head of the Child God deifying under his brushes? Has he knelt before that creation of divine inspiration and has he cried like the old Simeon: Lord, will you let your servant die in peace, according to thy word, since my eyes have seen the Savior you give us now, and that you intend to be exposed to the eyes of all peoples?

Yes, the artist can say that he is the servant of the Lord, for he comes to execute an order of his supreme will. God wanted that in times when skepticism reins the crowds would stop before that figure of the Savior! More than one heart shall depart carrying a memory that will lead them to the foot of the cross where the Divine Child gave his life for humanity, for us, uncaring crowd.

On contemplating Ingres' painting, the eyes reluctantly move away from the figure of Jesus, where there is a mixture of divinity, childhood and also something flowery; the draperies, the dress in fresh colors, young, delicate, recalling sweet colors swinging on the fragrance of branches. Everything deserves to be admired in the masterpiece of Ingres. But our soul especially seeks the contemplation of two characters: Jesus and his divine mother. Once more we feel the need to greet her by these angelic words: *Hail Mary, full of grace.*

We dare cast an artistic look to that noble and deified figure, the tabernacle of God, wife of a man, virgin by purity, a woman predestined to the joys of heavens and the agonies of Earth. Ingres understood all that and we will not pass before the Mother of Jesus without saying: *Mary, very sweet virgin, in the name of your son, pray for us!* One day you will study it. I saw the first brush strokes go on that blessed canvas. I saw the figures coming up one by one, the poses, the doctors; I saw the guardian angel of Ingres inspiring in him to drop the scrolls from the hands of those doctors because, my God, that is a revelation! The child's voice will also destroy the laws that are not his, one by one.

I do not want to do art here as former artist. I am a spirit and only religious art touches me. Also I have seen in these graceful ornaments of vines the allegory of God's vineyard where all humans must quench their thirst and I said to myself with profound joy that Ingres had just matured one of his beautiful bunches. Yes master! Your Jesus will also speak before the doctors who deny His law, before those who fight it. But when they find themselves alone with the memory of the Divine Child, ah! More than one will tear apart the scrolls on which the hand of Jesus will write: Wrong!

Look then how all the workers get together! Some come voluntarily on ways already known; others are led by the hand of God, who will find them in their places and shows them where to go. There are others still that arrive, without knowing where they are, attracted by a charm that makes them sow flowers of life to raise the altar where the infant Jesus comes still today for many, but who under the outfit of sapphire color or under the tunic of the crucified, he is always the same, the only God.

David, painter.”

Neither Mrs. Dozon nor her husband had heard about that painting. Discussing the matter with several artists, none was aware of that to the point that we started to believe in a hoax. The best way to clarify the matter was to go directly to the artist, to inquire whether he had done this. It was what Mr. Dozon did. As soon as he entered the artist’s workshop he saw the painting that was completed only a few days back, and hence still unknown to the public. This spontaneous revelation is all the more remarkable since the description given by the spirit shows perfect accuracy. Everything is there: vines, scrolls fallen on the ground, etc. This painting is now on display in the hall of the *Boulevard des Italiens*, where we went to see it and as everyone else we were in awe before that sublime page, unquestionably one of the finest of modern painting.

In terms of execution it is worthy of the great artist who, we believe, has done nothing like this before, despite his advanced age of eighty-three years. But what makes it an exceptional masterpiece is the dominating feeling, the expression, the thought that springs out from all those figures, from whom we read surprise, amazement, enthusiasm, doubt, the need for denial, and irritation for being beaten by a child. It is all so true, so natural, that we begin to put words in each one’s mouth.

As for the child, it is of such perfection that it leaves far behind everything that was done so far on the same subject. It is not a speaker that talks to an audience. He is not even looking at them. We guess the organ of a heavenly voice in him.

The genius is no doubt present in all that conception but there is unquestionably inspiration. Ingres himself said that he had not painted that work under ordinary conditions; he began, he says, by the design, which is not his style. Then the characters came, so to speak, to ask themselves for a place under his brush, without premeditation on his part. We have reasons to believe that this work is related to things that we will have the key later, about which we still have to remain silent, as on many others.

The above fact was reported to the Society. On that occasion, the spirit of Lamennais spontaneously dictated the communication that follows.

About Mr. Ingres’ painting

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, May 2nd, 1862
Medium Mr. A. Didier

I recently told you about the child Jesus among the doctors, and I singled out his divine illumination amid the wise darkness of the scholarly Jewish priests. We have here another example that spirituality and the works of the soul constitute the most brilliant phase in art. Without knowing the Spiritist Society it is possible to be a great spiritualist artist. Ingres shows us in his new work the divine study of the artist, but also the purest and most perfect inspiration. This is not about a false idealism that deceives so many people and that is hypocrisy in art without originality, but idealism drawn from simple and true nature, and therefore beautiful in every sense of the word.

We, the Spirits, we applaud the spiritualist works as much as we condemn the glorification of materialistic feelings and bad taste. It is a virtue to feel the moral and physical to that extent. That is a clear indication of harmonious feelings in heart and soul. When the sense of beauty is developed at that level it is rare that the moral sense is not developed also. This is a great example from that eighty-year-old man who, in a corrupted society, represents the victory of Spiritism, with an always young genius and pure faith.

Lamennais

June 1862

That is how history is made – the millions of Mr. Allan Kardec

We were informed that in a large business town, where Spiritism counts on many followers and where it is mostly present among the working class, a cleric became the propagator of certain rumors that some charitable souls were quick to amplify and pass on. According to those claims we are worth millions; in our home everything shines and we rest our feet on the most beautiful d'Aubusson carpets. They met us when we were poor in Lyon but today we have a four-horse carriage and we live in Paris enjoying the status of a Prince. All that fortune would come from England since the time when we got involved with Spiritism, and our agents in the provinces are highly paid. We sold the manuscripts of our works at a high price and still receive royalties for the publication, which does not prevent us from selling them at crazy prices, etc.

Here is the response we made to the person who sent us these details:

"My dear Sir, I laughed a lot about the millions that Abbe V ... so generously gratifies me with; all the better that I was far from suspecting all that good fortune. The report given to the Parisian Society before receiving your letter, published above, unfortunately reduces such an illusion to a much lesser golden reality. As a matter of fact, that is not the only inaccuracy in that amazing story. To begin with I have never lived in Lyon so I do not see how someone could have gotten to know me poor over there; as for my four-horse carriage I am sorry to say that it is reduced to the nags of a cab that I only take five or six times a year for economy. It is true that before the railways I made several trips by stagecoach. It is certainly a misunderstanding. But I forget that at that time I was not involved with Spiritism yet and it is to Spiritism that, according to the vicar, I owe my immense fortune. So where have they found all that story if not in the arsenal of slander? It would be all more plausible if taken into account the nature of the population where these rumors propagate.

We should agree that one must be running very short of good reasons to be reduced to such ridiculous expedients to discredit Spiritism. The vicar does not realize that it all goes right against his very objective because if Spiritism had enriched us at this point it would be the same to admit that it is immensely spread and, if it is spread, it is because people like it. Hence what he wanted to use against the person works to the benefit of the doctrine.

So try to make believe that a doctrine capable of providing millions in a few years to its promoter is utopia, a shallow idea! Such a result would be a true miracle because it is unprecedented that a philosophical theory has ever been a source of fortune. Generally, as with the inventions, one consumes the little that is available, and that is more or less my case. If you knew how much this work does cost me. I have vowed and sacrificed taking all my waking, resting time and health to do so. But my principal is to keep it to myself. It takes much personal discipline not to shout about it from the rooftops. To be impartial the Church's vicar should have made compared what financial resources the convents subtract from the Church's faithful. Spiritism, in turn, measures its impact on the good it does and the number of people in suffering that it consoles and not the money that it accumulates.

With a princely status it goes without saying that an elegant table is needed. What would Mr. Vicar say if he saw my most sumptuous meal, the one with which I receive my friends? He would find them very meager when compared to the elaborate meals of certain dignitaries of the Church who would reject them as the most austere fasting. Since he ignores it, I will tell him to spare the comparison that Spiritism is not, and cannot be, a means of enrichment; that Spiritism repudiates any speculation that might involve its name; that it teaches to give little importance to material means and to be happy with the necessary and do not seek superfluous happiness that is not the path to heavens; that if everyone were Spiritists there would not be envy, jealousy and mutual exploitation; there would be no slander or calumny against the neighbor since Spiritism teaches this maxim from Jesus: "*Do to others what you would have others do to you.*" It is to practice that maxim that I do not spell out the full name of Mr. Vicar... Spiritism also teaches that the wealth is a deposit that one will have to report and that the rich will be judged in accordance to the application given to the fortune. If I had only the one thing attributed to me and if I owed that mainly to Spiritism, I would betray my principles if I used that attribution to the satisfaction of pride and enjoyment of worldly pleasures. Instead I use it to serve the cause that I have embraced.

But what would skeptics say about your works? Haven't you sold the manuscripts dearly? Just a moment! This is an invasion of privacy and I do not give anybody the right to interfere. I will always honor my business, no matter the price of what sacrifices and what privations. I do not owe anything to anyone, while many owe me, otherwise I would have more than twice as much what I have now hence instead of climbing the ladder of fortune I have descended.

So let us make it clear that I do not have to disclose my business to anyone. However, just to give a little satisfaction to some curious people that have nothing better to do than to meddle in what does not concern them, I will say that if I had sold my manuscripts I would have simply exercised the right of every worker to sell the product of their labor. But I have not sold a single one. Some I have even purely and simply given away in the interest of the cause and those are sold as they wish and without the return of a single penny to me. Only manuscripts of well-known books are sold at higher prices whose profits are guaranteed in anticipation but there aren't complacent enough publishers who would pay dearly for books of hypothetical returns. In such cases they do not even want to take the risk of printing. From that point of view a book of philosophical nature has a hundred times less value than certain novels signed by certain names.

To give you an idea of my great profits I tell you that the first edition of *The Spirits' Book* that I took the risk and costs of publication, since there was no interested editor, after having paid the bills and sold out the edition, having some volumes sold and others donated, it yielded about five hundred francs that can be demonstrated by documentation. I do not know of any kind of carriage that can be bought by that price.

Given my limited resources and still not having the millions attributed to myself and before the difficulties to face the costs of all my publications, and especially the attention required by sales, I temporarily transferred the publication rights with a copyright calculated as a few cents per unit sold. I did this so that I became totally foreign to distribution details and the transactions that the intermediaries can carry out with the batches sent by the publishers to their representatives. As such, I deny any knowledge of these transactions and being obliged, as far as I am concerned, to

render accounts to the publishers, at a stipulated value, of all books withdrawn, sold or considered lost.

As for the proceeds from the sales of my books, I do not have to report or say how I use them. I certainly have every right to dispose of that as I please. However nobody knows if that product has a specific destination that cannot be diverted. This will be known later because if someone has an interest in writing my bibliography then the facts above will have to be accounted for and truth completely restored. That is why I will leave behind detailed accounting records of all my businesses and relationships, especially with respect to Spiritism, in order to spare future storytellers the blunders in which they often fall on the basis of hearsay of unscrupulous people interested in altering the truth, to whom I leave the pleasure of gossiping at will so that their ill-faith becomes evident later.

I would not be personally concerned in the least if from now on my name were not intimately linked to the history of Spiritism. Regarding my contracts, I naturally possess the most authentic documents that one can have. I was able to follow the doctrine in all of its phases of development, observe all the events and foresee the consequences. For everyone who studies this movement, the latest evidence is that Spiritism will mark a phase of humanity; it is then necessary that later on people may know the vicissitudes it had to endure, the obstacles it encountered, the enemies that tried to annihilate it and the weapons that were used to fight it. It is also important to know how Spiritism triumphed and who were those that through their enthusiasm, dedication and sacrifice have effectively contributed to its propagation. There will be persons whose names and deeds deserve to be reported for the acknowledgement of posterity. I have taken upon myself the duty of registering in my own archives. This story, understandably, cannot appear anytime soon; Spiritism has just been born and the most interesting phases of its establishment have not been fulfilled yet. It might as well be, however, that among the Saul of today's Spiritism there would later be the St. Paul. Hopefully we will not have to register Judas.

Such are, my dear Sir, my thoughts suggested by the strange rumors that came to me; if I have refuted them I did not do it for the Spiritists of your city who know well where they stand on my behalf and were able to judge when I visited with you; they can tell if they detected in me personally the tastes and manners of a great lord. So I do that on behalf of those who do not know me and that could be misled by this way more lighthearted way of making history. If Abbe V ... just wants to tell the truth I am ready to verbally provide him with all necessary explanations for his enlightenment.

All yours,

Allan Kardec

June 1862

Spiritist Society of Vienna

On announcing a German edition of the brochure "*Spiritism in its simplest expression*" in Vienna we spoke of the Spiritist Society of that city. We received the following letter from the President of that Society:

"Mr. Allan Kardec,

The Spiritist Society of Vienna has given me the task of informing you that you have just been appointed as its Honorary President, requesting that you accept this title as a symbol of its respectful and elevated consideration towards you. Although unnecessary to add, Sir, I felt an impulse to let you know that, from the bottom of my heart, I am entirely at your service.

Allow me, Sir, and without wasting your precious time, to add a few words about our Society. It has just entered its third year and although with a still limited number of members, I can tell you that in the private circle of its activities it proportionally does a lot of good. I have high hopes that when the time is right for its expansion it will produce abundantly. It is my sincere wish.

Last year, during the celebration of the first year, our protector spirit told me in his profound laconicism: *You sowed the good seed. Bless you.* This year he said: *For the year that is about to start this is the maxim: With God and to God.* Last year was a reward to the previous one. This year it is an encouragement to the future. Hence this year I prepared more direct means to face public opinion. To begin with the translation of your excellent brochure has paved the way. I then thought of the publication of a journal in German as a safer way of speeding up the results. There will be no lack of material, particularly if you allow me to utilize the treasures contained in *The Spiritist Review* when I will then take the necessary and sacred steps of indicating the source of passages and articles that I might have translated.

Finally and to crown the work I intend to bring to the reach of German speakers your precious and indispensable *The Spirits' Book*. Thus, Sir, with no fear of bothering you since I am persuaded that every good thought corresponds to your own thought, I come to request your permission to allow me to do the German translation, if that has not yet been granted to someone else. These are, Sir, the projects that I am entertaining to give a greater impulse to the propagation of Spiritism among us. I dare request the healthy advices of your experience which will certainly have a great influence on my decision.

Yours, etc.

C. Delhez

This letter was followed by the following diploma:

Spiritist Society, said charitable, from Vienna, Austria

Commemorative session, May 18th 1862

In the name of the Almighty God and under the divine protection the Spiritist Society of Vienna on the occasion of its second anniversary and willing to give its parent Society of Paris its testimony on the person of its worthy and courageous President, with the reverence and acknowledgment inspired by his permanent efforts and his precious works for the sacred cause of Spiritism and the triumph of a universal fraternity, by proposal of its president and with the approval of the spiritual guides, assigns by acclamation Mr. Allan Kardec, President of the Parisian Spiritist Society, with the title of Honorary President of the Spiritist Society, said Charitable, of Vienna, Austria.

Vienna, May 19th 1862

The President

C. Delhez

After insistent requests we thought to be our duty to publish literally the two pieces above as a demonstration of our profound gratitude for the honor given to us by the Spiritist brothers and sisters of Vienna, an honor that we were far from expecting and because we see in that not a tribute to us personally but to the regenerating principles of Spiritism. It is a proof of the credit it has conquered in France and abroad. Leaving aside the flattering remarks in the letter what is really reassuring is the observation of the eminently serious, religious and humanitarian objectives proposed by the Spiritist Society of Vienna to whom our support and dedication will not fail. The same applies to other societies formed in several other places and that accept the principles of *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book* without restriction.

Among the ones that were organized lately we must mention the African Society of Spiritist Studies, in Constantine, that decided to be placed under our sponsorship, and the Parisian Society that already counts on 40 members. We shall come back to this subject with more details.

Given the general movement and unstoppable growth of public opinion, the adversaries of Spiritism will finally understand that any effort to halt it will be useless and that the best thing to do is to accept it, from now on considering it as a fact of life. The weapon of ridicule faded away in its vain struggles for it is impotent. Will the doctrine of the devil, that some try to retrieve at this very moment with some sort of aggravation, will that be more fortunate? The answer is in the effect that it produces: Laughter. In order to be effective the ones who propagate it should be convinced about it. We can certainly affirm that there are many among them that believe in that as much as we do. It is the last blow whose result will be the acceleration of the propagation of the new ideas, first because it makes them widely known, exciting people's curiosity, and then because it demonstrates the lack of really serious arguments.

June 1862

Vital principle of the Spiritist societies

Dear Sir,

In the April 1862 issue of *The Spiritist Review* I see a communication signed by Gérard de Codemberg where there is the following passage: “*Do not worry about the brothers who move away from your beliefs. On the contrary, act in such a way that those will no longer contaminate the herd of the true believers for they are the rancid sheep and you must avoid infection.*”

Regarding the rancid sheep I found it to be not much Christian and even less Spiritist and completely beyond this charity to all that the Spiritists preach. Not to worry about the brothers who stay away and keeping ourselves from their infection is not the best way to bring them back. It seems to me that up until now our spiritual guides have shown more benevolence. Will this Gérard de Codemberg be a good spirit? If yes, I doubt it.

Forgive me for this kind of control that I have just done but I do so with a serious objective. One of my friends, a beginner Spiritist, has just read that article and stopped before those few lines for not finding the charity that she has so far observed in the communications. I consulted with my own guide about this and here is what he said: “No my child, an elevated spirit does not utilize such expressions. Leave it to the incarnate Spirits the roughness of the language and always acknowledge the worth of the communications in the elevation of the words and more importantly of the thoughts.

(It is then followed by a communication that one supposes to be a spirit that impersonates Gérard de Codemberg)

Where is the truth? Only you can tell.

Yours sincerely,

E. Collingnon

Response:

There is nothing that demonstrates that Gérard de Codemberg is a much-advanced spirit. The book he published largely demonstrates that he wrote it under evident obsession. That notwithstanding, however little advanced the spirit was, he could not be so much mistaken with respect to the value of the revelations that he obtained in life as a medium, nor accept as sublime things that were obviously absurd. Does it follow that he is a bad spirit? Absolutely not. His behavior during his life and his language after his death demonstrate that.

He is in the large category of intelligent, good but not sufficiently elevated Spirits capable of dominating the abuse of obsessing Spirits since he was unable to recognize them. All that with respect to the spirit.

The key point is not to know if the spirit is more or less advanced but if the advice is good or bad. Here I insist that there is no Spiritist meeting without homogeneity. Wherever there is divergence of opinion there is the tendency of making one's opinion prevail; the desire to impose one's idea or one's willpower, and from there the discussion, dissension and later on dissolution. That is unavoidable and happens in every society regardless of the objective, in which each one is willing to walk a different path.

What is needed in other gatherings is even more so in the serious Spiritist meetings in which the first condition is calmness and reverence. Without this discussions are impossible and lead to a waste of time with useless matters. That is when the good Spirits begin to leave the field open to disturbing Spirits. That is why smaller groups are preferable: the homogeneity of principles, of likes, characters and habits, essential condition of a good harmony, is much easier to achieve than in large assemblies.

What Gérard de Codemberg calls rancid sheep are not the persons of good-faith that seek enlightenment before the difficulties of the science or about something that they do not understand, through a peaceful, moderate and restrained discussion, but those who come with preconceived ideas of systematic opposition, that initiate untimely discussions all the time in order to disturb the works! When the spirit says that it is necessary to keep them away he is right because the very existence of the meeting depends on that. He is also right when saying that there is no reason for concern for their personal opinion, if false, these individuals will not preclude the truth from prevailing. The meaning of that sentence is that their opposition must not be reason for concern.

Second, if the one who thinks differently sees their opinion better than the others; if that person is satisfied by that; if the person is adamant, why countering it? Spiritism must not be imposed. It must be freely accepted and in good faith. Spiritism wishes no conversion through embarrassment. As a matter of fact experience demonstrates that it is not by insistence that people will change their opinion.

It is necessary to be fully devoted to the one who seeks light in good faith; one must not spare anything; it is a productive and well-employed dedication. With the one that does not seek light or who thinks to own the light it is a waste of time and the same as sowing on rocks.

The expression "do not worry about them" must then be understood in the sense that one must not bother nor violate them in their convictions. Such an action is not a lack of charity. Is there an expectation that they will yield to better ideas? It would be okay to have it done privately, through persuasion, but never as a source of disruption to the meeting. It would otherwise be disrespectful to the others and would not make any difference to those one is trying to persuade.

The spirit of Gerard de Codemberg clearly and perhaps bluntly issues his opinion without any regard to speech and undoubtedly counting on the common sense of those to whom he addresses his message to mitigate it in its application, observing the civility and adequacy of the recommendations. However, notwithstanding the form of his language, the bottom line of his thoughts is identical to what is found in the following communication given under the title Philosophical Spiritism, received by the same person who raised the question. It reads as follows:

“Watch carefully around you and see if you do not find curious, false, and skeptical brothers. If you do find them kindly and in a charitable way ask them to leave. If they resist then pray with eagerness to have them enlightened by the Lord and do not allow them back next time. Surround yourself by simple brothers who seek the truth and progress.”

This is a nice way of saying that you should keep away those who hinder your progress.

In open sessions where one is free to receive anybody that is easier than in formal societies in which the members have their own right to speak and vote. Thus, one cannot be cautious enough in order to avoid such disappointment.

The system of free members adopted by the Parisian Society is the most adequate to prevent the inconveniencies since it only admits candidates on a provisional basis and with no right to vote on the businesses of the Society during a period that allows the observation of their enthusiasm, dedication and conciliatory Spirits.

It is essential to form a core of founding members united by a perfect communion of visions, opinions and feelings and establish strict rules that must be forcibly observed by those who later want to take part in the Society.

We recommend the bylaws of the Parisian Society to be followed for that matter as well as the instructions that we gave about it. Our dearest wish is to see the spread of union and harmony among the groups and societies that form all over the place. That is why we believe to be our duty to give advice out of our own experience to those who believe to be their duty to take advantage of those advices.

For now we say that without homogeneity there is no sympathetic union among members nor close relationships; without union there is no stability; without stability there is no calmness; without calmness there is no serious work from which we conclude that homogeneity is the vital principle of every Spiritist society or Spiritist gathering. That is what Gérard de Codemberg and Bernardin rightly said.

Regarding the spirit that was taken by a substitute of the first one his communication has every indication of an apocryphal communication.

June 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

Philosophical Spiritism

Bordeaux, April 4th, 1862 – medium Mrs. Collignon

My friends, we speak of Spiritism from a religious point of view. Now that it is well established that it is not a new religion but the consecration of that universal religion whose bases were established by Christ and crowned by him today we will then look at Spiritism from a moral and philosophical point of view.

To begin with let us be clear about the true meaning of the word philosophy. Philosophy is not the denial of the religious and God given laws but far from it. Philosophy is the search for wisdom and for what is more accurately reasonable. And what can be wiser, more reasonable than the love and acknowledgment that are due to the Creator and, consequently the worship, regardless of the cult, that can demonstrate to God such acknowledgement and love. Religion and everything that can derive from that is a philosophy because it shows human wisdom in the docile and joyful submission. Having said that let us now see what can be extracted from the serious practice of Spiritism.

What is the objective of every human being regardless of his or her current position? To be better off. Alas, in order to achieve such objective people run in all directions, get lost in the majority of the cases because they are blinded by pride and dragged by ambition. They do not see the only route that can lead to that betterment. They seek it in the satisfaction of their pride, ambition, and brutal instincts whereas it can only be found in due love and submission to the Creator.

Hence Spiritism is telling everyone: leave those deceitful paths alone, paths full of cliffs, surrounded by thorns and weeds. Enter the path that leads to the expected happiness. Be prudent in order to be happy. Understand this my friends that the earthly means are just traps to be avoided. They are the hurdles from which you must stay away. That is why our Lord allowed you to finally see the light of that lighthouse that will guide you to the harbor.

The pains and sufferings endured with impatience and revolt are the burning iron that the surgeon applies upon the open ulcer, avoiding the gangrene to spread further to the whole body.

What is your body, my friends, to a Spiritist? What is it that your body must save? What is it that the body must keep from contamination? What is it that must be cured by every possible means if not the ulcer that corrodes the spirit; the ailment that halts the spirit, hindering it from moving radiantly to the Creator?

Always turn your eyes to this philosophical thought, that is, full of wisdom: We are an essence that has been created pure, but has fallen. We are from a homeland where everything is purity. Guilty we have been exiled for some time but only for some time. Let us then strive the best way we can

to diminish that time of exile. Let us endeavor by utilizing all means that the Lord has given us to reconquering the lost homeland and abbreviate the time of absence. (See the January 1862 issue of the Review: Doctrine of the fallen angels).

Understand this. Your future fate is in your own hands; the duration of your trials depends entirely on you; the martyr always is entitled to the palm and that one does not need to feed the beasts to be a martyr, like the first Christians. Be the martyrs of yourselves. You must break and destroy every carnal instinct that rebels against the spirit. Carefully investigate your inclinations, your tastes and your ideas. Be suspicious of everything that is reproached by your conscience. However low that voice may sound – because it can be sometimes rejected – that voice of your guardian will tell you about everything that can harm you. The voice of your guardian angel speaks to you constantly but how many times have you failed to hear? Today, my friends, Spiritism comes to explain the cause of that inner voice. It comes to speak positively, show you and allow you to touch your fate and if you listen carefully, to show you what you must fear if the voice is rejected. There you are, my friends, the philosophical note to everyone: the teachings of how to find your own salvation.

My children do not seek, like the ignorant ones, material distractions and satisfaction of your curiosity. Do not evoke completely Spirits who will not do you any good. Be content with the attention and love of your spiritual guides. They will never fail you.

When united by a common objective, that is the betterment of humanity, and your heart goes out to the Lord may that be to ask for his blessings and the assistance of the good Spirits that have been entrusted to you. Watch carefully around you and see if you do not find curious, false and skeptical brothers. If you do find them, kindly and in a charitable way, ask them to leave. If they resist then pray with eagerness to have them enlightened by the Lord and do not allow them back next time. Surround yourself by simple brothers who seek the truth and progress.

When assured about the brothers that gather in the presence of the Lord, evoke your guides and request their instructions. They will always give you their advices in the measure of your needs and according to your understanding. However, do not try to satisfy the curiosity of the majority that request evocations. They almost always leave less convinced and more inclined to mockery.

May those who wish to evoke relatives and friends never do so unless with a useful and charitable objective. Evoking the Spirits that are around us is a serious, very serious undertake. If faith and reverence are not present the bad Spirits will replace the ones that you expect; they will trick you and lead you to big mistakes and sometimes lead you to terrible downfalls.

Therefore, my friends, do not forget that Spiritism, from a religious point of view, is just the confirmation of Christianity because Spiritism falls entirely within these words: *Love the Lord your God with all your heart and your brother like yourself.*

From a philosophical point of view it is the straight and wise line of conduct that must lead you to the happiness that everyone expects and such a line is delineated from a safe starting point that demonstrates: the immortality of the soul to arrive at another unquestionable point: God!

That is what I have for today, my friends. We will soon continue our intimate conversations.

OBSERVATION: This communication is part of a series dictated under the same title: Spiritism to Everyone – all of them marked by a paternal depth and simplicity. Since they cannot all be published in the Review they will take part of special collections. Some are sent to us by other mediums of Bordeaux and other cities. These publications will produce better results when published with method and order than if published carelessly. Some communications are excellent when applied privately but would not have any purpose if made public. Others require comments and discussions to avoid misinterpretations.

It is often necessary to take into account the personal opinion of the spirit that gives the communication who, if not much advanced, may create systems and form ideas that are not very accurate about peoples and things. If such ideas are published without restriction they can only cast discredit upon Spiritism, forearm the adversaries and sow doubt and uncertainty among the beginners.

The comments and explanations given about the subject sometimes turn an error into instruction. Without that people could accuse the Doctrine by every utopia given by certain Spirits that are more proud than logical. If Spiritism could be delayed in its march it would not be by the open attacks of the declared enemies but by the reckless zeal of imprudent friends. Consequently, it is not a matter of producing indigestible collections where everything stacks up without an order that would bore the reader before any minor inconvenience. It is necessarily to carefully avoid anything that may raise false opinions about Spiritism. Well, it all requires the kind of work that justifies a delay in such publications.

June 1862

An apocryphal Spiritist in Russia

Philosophical Spiritism

Prince D...K... sends us a flyer in Russian that begins by the following phrase:

“Obouan Bruné, a renowned magician, magnetizer and member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, will have the honor of throwing a fantastic performance, as announced, in the theater of this town, on April 17th, 1862.”

It is then followed by a list of tricks that the said Bruné proposes to carry out. We thought that the common sense of the large number of followers of Spiritism in Russia would have made justice to this gross imposture. The Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies does not recognize that individual that in France would have been taken to court for impersonating false skills.

Allan Kardec¹⁶

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

July 1862

The point of view

Everybody must have observed how things change depending on their point of view. Not only the appearance changes but also the importance. When we position ourselves at the center of anything, if a small thing, it will appear large. If we position ourselves outside it will then be very different. When an object is seen from the top of a mountain it seems to be insignificant but when observed from down below it seems huge.

That is an optical illusion that also applies to moral things. A whole day of suffering will seem like an entire eternity but as the end approaches one becomes surprised for having suffered so much for so little. The disorders of infancy also have their relative importance. To the child they are as bitter as those of maturity. Why would they seem so futile then? Because we are no longer in the infancy while the child is totally immersed in that phase and cannot see beyond that limited circle of activity. The child sees the suffering from within that circle. We see that from outside.

Let us suppose someone observing us in a similar condition as we are with respect to the child. That person will judge things from a similar standpoint and will find our concerns foolish. Another driver insults a driver. They argue and fight. If a driver insulted a Grand-Lord he would not feel offended and would not fight. Why? Because he positions himself outside of that sphere. Consider himself so much superior that such an offense cannot reach him; however, if he sinks to the level of the offender, if gets into the same mindset he will then get back and fight.

Spiritism shows us a much more important application of that principle with respect to its consequences. It shows us the worldly life for what it is worth, placing us at the stand point of a future life; Spiritism transports us mentally to that position through the material proofs that are offered to us, by the clear, logical and accurate intuition that it gives us and by the examples that we are given; we see and understand life; it is no longer a vague idea, uncertain and problematic, that we learned about the future and that involuntarily gave us doubts; it becomes an acquired certainty and a reality to the Spiritist.

Spiritism does even more: it shows us the life of the soul, the essential being, the thinking being, going back to an unknown era and moving indefinitely forward to the future in such a way that the earthly life, even if it last a whole century, is nothing more than a dot in that lengthy path. If the whole life is so little when compared to the life of the soul what then should we think about the incidents of life?

Nevertheless, when a person is located at the center of this earthly life she becomes so concerned as if this life would last forever; everything acquires colossal proportions; feels to be hurt by a mountain when hit by a little pebble; a deception is reason for desperation; an upset is reason for abating; a single word is reason enough to become furious.

Her vision is limited to the present and on what can be immediately touched, thus exaggerating the importance of the minimal incidents; a failed business transaction is reason enough to lose appetite; an issue of precedence sounds like affairs of state; an injustice is reason enough to make her mad.

The target of every endeavor is triumph but what is triumph to the majority? Is it the establishment of a tranquil life through honest means if there aren't other means of living? Is it the noble undertaking of acquiring talent and developing intelligence? Is it the desire to leave behind an honorable name and carry out useful tasks to humanity? No. Triumph is to surpass the neighbor, to overshadow and keep her away or even overturn her to take her place; and it is for that beautiful triumph that death may not allow you to enjoy for twenty four hours after so much trouble!

How much distress! The amount of which is so often wasted talent that could have been better employed! Then, how much rage and how many sleepless hours if not successful! The fever generated by the success of a rival! Then comes self-blame and the finger pointing to one's bad luck and fatal destiny when bad luck is frequently lack of skills and incapacity.

We can say that people take the task of making their few moments spent of Earth as miserable as possible. These moments that cannot be controlled since one can never be sure about the following day. Ah! How much all these things change in the view of those who leave the narrow vale of this earthly life, and their minds ascend through the radiant, splendid and incommensurable life of beyond the grave! It is then that people regret so much the voluntary misery created by themselves! They see the petty and futile ambitions, the jealousy and susceptibilities and the useless satisfactions of pride! It is like the observation of childhood games at a mature age, like the one that observes people in the vale from the top of a mountain.

From that standpoint will the observer voluntarily become a toy in the hands of an illusion? No. Such a person is experiencing the reality while for her an illusion is the perception of those who see things from an earthly standpoint.

In fact nobody on Earth gives more importance to something that will last a day only when compared to something else which would last a long time; nobody prefers a momentarily happiness to a long lasting one. People do not give much importance to a transitory distress when in fact the continual normal life is what really matters.

If we now elevate our thoughts so that we can foresee the life of the soul we will forcibly see, as a consequence, that our earthly life is a passing station; that the spiritual life is the real one for it is indefinite; that is an illusion to take the part for the whole that is the transient life of the body for the eternal life.

A person that sees things exclusively from a terrestrial point of view is like the one who cannot assess the importance and the form of a construction just by looking from the inside the house. The judgment is based on false appearances because its entirety cannot be seen whereas someone that observes from the outside sees the whole and that is the one that can assess correctly.

It may be argued that in order to see things that way it is necessary to have an uncommon intelligence, a philosophical spirit that is not found in the crowds, thus it would necessarily lead to

the conclusion that apart from rare exceptions humanity would be doomed to drag its feet on the dust.

That is a mistake. Nobody needs exceptional intelligence to have a close connection with a future life nor does one need to make huge efforts of imagination since each person carries the intuition and the desire for that life. However, the way such a life is generally presented is not very inviting since it offers the flame of hell as the alternative or even the eternal contemplation. Both lead people to choose the void; hence the absolute incredulity of some and the skepticism of a larger number.

What was missing up until now was an irrefutable proof of a future life, a proof given by Spiritism and no more by a vague theory but by positive facts. Spiritism goes further by showing such a life in a way that can be accepted by the strictest logic since it explains and justifies everything and resolves all the open issues. Since it is clear and logical everyone can reach it; that is why Spiritism brings back so many people who have been away, turning them into believers again.

Every day Spiritism demonstrates how many simple workers, peasants and uneducated people understand this train of thought effortlessly. The more they find an immense consolation and the only possible compensation to their laborious and painful life the more they feel assured by this new point of view.

If such a way of seeing worldly things became generic wouldn't it consequently destroy the ambition that stimulates great undertakings, that creates more useful work and even the work of the genius? If the whole humanity only dreamed of a future life wouldn't everything perish in this world? What do the monks do in their monasteries other than think of heavenly things? What would happen to Earth if everybody became monks?

Such a state of affairs would be catastrophic and the inconveniences greater that one can suppose since people would be lost on Earth and conquer nothing in heavens; however the result of the principle that we have just explained is completely different if not partially understood as explained below.

The corporeal life is necessary to the spirit, or soul which is the same thing, so that it may accomplish in this material world the functions designated by the Providence: it is one of the engines of the universal harmony. The activities unsuspectingly carried out by the spirit who believe to be self-driven help in the development of the intelligence and facilitates its advancement. Since the spirit's happiness in the spiritual world is proportional to its advancement and to the good deeds that were done when incarnate it then follows that the more a person sees the importance of the spiritual life the more that person feels the need to do whatever may be necessary to guarantee the best possible place in that future life.

The experience of those who have already lived demonstrates to us that a useless earthly life or a badly employed life does no good to the future and those who only seek the satisfaction of their material needs here pay a high price for that be it through their suffering in the spiritual world or be it by the obligation that they feel to restart their tasks in more difficult conditions than those of the past; such is the case of many who suffer on Earth.

Hence, when considering the things of this world but from an extracorporeal point of view, far from being stimulated to carelessness and idleness, people understand better the need for work. From an earthly standpoint such a need is an injustice to them when compared to those who can live and do nothing; people then envy them and feel jealous. From a spiritual point of view such a need makes sense and has its utility and it is then accepted without complaints since people understand that without work one would remain indefinitely inferior and hindered from the aspired supreme happiness which could not be reached but through an intellectual and moral development.

From that point of view it seems that many monks do not understand well the objective of the earthly life and even less the conditions of a future life. In their rigorous isolation they curtail the means of becoming useful to their fellow human beings and many of those who are in the spiritual world today have confessed to us to be completely mistaken and that they now suffer the consequences of their error.

Such a point of view has another huge and immense importance to humanity: it turns the miseries of life more endurable. It is very natural and nobody is prohibited from seeking their well being and to spend their time on Earth in the best possible way. However, knowing that one is only momentarily here and that a better future awaits, one does not give so much importance to the deceptions that are experienced and seen things from above one then sees the difficulties in a more favorable way; remains indifferent to traps that may be found on the way created by jealous and envious people; diminishes the ambition to its fair value and remains above the little susceptibilities of self-love.

People are then free from concerns created by others who are limited to their restrictive spheres, and see the grandiose perspective that unfolds ahead, and contrary to others, feel freer to dedicate to a work that is beneficial to all. The embarrassments, the diatribes, and the wrong doing of the enemies are nothing more than imperceptible clouds in the immense horizon. One then no longer worries about these things more than one would with the flies that hum on the ear for one knows that soon one will be free from all that; in the same way, every misery that runs their way becomes like the water rolling on the granite.

From the stand point of an earthly life the same person would perhaps get irritated and seek vengeance. From an extraterrestrial point of view those things are negligible as the little splash of mud onto an unconcerned walker. They are like thorns thrown on the path and that one does not even care for removing to avoid delays to achieve a more serious and pre-established objective.

Far from having hard feelings towards the enemies one is thankful for the opportunities given in order to exercise patience and moderation, thus benefiting one's own future advancement whereas the fruits would be lost if one would lower to the level of revenge. One is then sorry for others having caused so many useless difficulties and tells oneself that they are the ones stepping on thorns for their concern in doing harm. That is the difference between the points of view from which life is seen: one gives you concerns and anxieties; the other calmness and serenity. To the Spiritists who face deceptions, leave Earth for a moment in your thoughts; ascend to the high regions of infinity and look at them from above and you will see what they really are.

Sometimes you hear this: “You who suffer look down below and not above and you will see people even more unfortunate”. That is true but many also say that other people’s ailments do not cure yours. The remedy is always in the comparison and it is only there for those who have difficulties to look to those better off and say: “Why do those have what I do not?”

On the contrary, once we stand on the point that we mentioned above that we will soon be forced to do, people would be well above those who they could possible envy because seen from there they would seem much too small.

We remember having watched about forty years ago, at the Odeon, a play entitled *Ephemeral*, whose author we do not remember, but although still very young that play left a strong impression on us. The act took place in the country of the ephemeral whose lives would last only twenty-four hours. In that twenty-four hour interval we saw them growing from childhood to adolescence, from youth to maturity, from maturity to elderly age, decrepitude and death. During that span of time they covered all situations of life: baptism, marriage, public and private businesses, etc. but since time was short it was necessary to hurry up. Everything happened prodigiously fast but that did not preclude them from gossiping around and suffering a lot to satisfy their ambitions and outperform one another.

As it can be seen that play had a profound philosophical content and the spectator who would involuntarily observe every stage of life unfolding before their eyes thought: How silly these people causing so much trouble to one another given the little time to live! What is left of their hourly ambition? Wouldn’t they do better if they lived in peace?

There you have a perfect picture of a human life seen from high above. The play, however did not outlive its heroes since it was not well understood. If the author is still alive, something that we do not know, he would be a Spiritist today.

A.K.

July 1862

Statistics of suicide

It was published in the *Siècle* ... May 1862:

“We find this curious statistics of suicide in the Comédie sociale ou dix-neuvième siècle¹⁷ by Mr. B. Gastineau, published by Dentu Edition:

It is estimated that since the beginning of the century the number of suicides in France is no less than 300,000. That estimate, however, is likely more as complete data is only available starting in 1836. In the period of seventeen years from 1836 to 1852 there were 52,126 suicides or an average 3,066 per year. In 1858 there were 3,803 suicides (853 women and 3050 men). And finally and according to the latest statistics found during 1859 there were 3,899 people who committed suicide (3,057 men and 842 women).

Attesting that the number of cases of suicide grows every year, Mr. Gastineau eloquently deploras this perceived monomania which seems to have taken over the human race.”

There you have a short eulogy for the unfortunate ones who commit suicide.

The issue, however, seems to be much more serious to us and deserves a careful examination. Given the situation described it seems that suicide is no longer an isolated and accidental fact. In fairness it may well be classified as a social disease, a true calamity. An ailment that takes the lives of three to four thousand people per year in one country and that follows a growing trend is not due to chance. It must have some rational cause, similar to when one sees a large number of people dying from the same disease. A situation like this draws the attention of science and authorities alike.

In such cases the attention is drawn to the kind of death and the means employed while the essential element is neglected, the only one reason that could give us a hint of the remedy: the root cause reason for each case of suicide. In this way we can find the fundamental cause. With the exception of well-characterized circumstances, it seems simpler and more convenient to attribute them all to the class of monomaniacs.

There are undoubtedly cases of suicide caused by monomania, carried out beyond the boundaries of reason like those that follow madness, elevated fevers and intoxication. In such cases the cause is purely physiological. Besides those, however, there is the much larger number of the voluntary suicides, premeditated and total awareness.

Certain people believe that the one who commits suicide is never in control of their own mental faculties. It is a mistake that we shared in the past but that has proven wrong after careful observation. In fact it is very natural to believe that the instinct of preservation is part of nature; that the voluntary destruction of oneself is not natural. That is a why that we often see instinct take over the desire to die at the very last moment and from this we conclude that in order to carry out such an act one must have lost their mind.

¹⁷ Social comedy of the nineteenth century (TN)

There is no doubt that many people who commit suicide are taken by a kind of vertigo at that moment and succumb at the first moment of exaltation. Some wake up and cling back to life excited by the instinct of preservation at the very last moment but it is also evident that many kill themselves cold-bloodedly and with remorse. A proof of that is in the plan and in the calculated order of actions that are not symptoms of madness.

We shall mention in-passing a characteristic trait of suicide: these actions are exceedingly rare and in completely isolated and uninhabited places. A person lost at sea or in the desert may die of deprivation but will not commit suicide even when there is no hope of finding help. Someone, however, who voluntarily wants to leave this life behind finds a lonely spot in order not to be seen but the act is done, preferably in populous centers of cities where there is at least a chance of having the body found. That person may jump from the top of a downtown monument but not from the top of a cliff where there would be no trace left; another one would hang himself at the “*Bois de Boulogne*”¹⁸ but not in a forest where he would never be found.

The one who commits suicide does not wish to be stopped but does wish that sooner or later that the suicide is known. It seems that such a memory from people keeps them somehow attached to the world that they wanted to leave and that is so much true that the idea of the absolute void has something of more terrifying than death itself. Here is a curious example that supports this theory:

Around 1815 a wealthy Englishman visited the Rhine Falls. He became so much impressed that he returned to England, organized his businesses and months later he came back to throw himself in the voracious precipice. It is unquestionably an original act but we doubt very much that he would do the same at Niagara Falls so that nobody would ever know. A singular trait of character caused the action but the thought that people would talk about him was determinant in the choice of place and time. Had his body been never found at least the memory of him would not vanish!

In the absence of official statistics that might indicate the exact proportions of the several modes of suicide there is no doubt that the majority of cases are determined by the setbacks of fate, deceptions, and sorrows of all sorts. In such cases suicide is not an act of madness but of desperation.

Side by side with those motives that could be called serious, there are some that are evidently futile not to mention the undefined displeasure of life amidst its pleasure, like the one that we just mentioned. What is certain is the fact that all of those who commit suicide, with or without reason, get to such an extreme because they are not content.

There is no doubt that nobody can fix that first cause but it is necessary to deplore the easiness with which, for some time now, people succumb to such a fatal temptation. That is above all and from our point of view what has to be addressed and that is perfectly remediable.

¹⁸ A famous forest park in the outskirts of Paris (TN)

People frequently ask if there is courage or cowardliness in suicide. There is unquestionably cowardliness before the trials of life but there is also courage to face the pains and anguishes of death. These two points, at it seems, comprise the whole issue of suicide.

However pungent the crises of death people fight back, face and withstand them when excited by the example. That is the case of the recruit, for example, that would step back before the line of fire but that becomes excited by seeing others move on and without fear. The same happens to the one who commits suicide. The vision of those who freed themselves by such a means from the displeasures and troubles of life lead them to believe that such a moment passes rapidly. Those who could have been stopped by the fear of pain tell themselves that if so many do it, they can do the same; that it is better to suffer for a few moments than do so for years. That is the only contagious aspect of suicide.

The infection is not in the fluids or in the attractions but in the example that familiarizes people with the idea of death and with the employment of means to carry that out. That is so much true that once there is a suicide of a given kind it is not rare to have it followed by others of the same type. The story of the famous lookout post where fourteen soldiers committed suicide within a short time interval has no other cause. The means was there, in the open. It seemed convenient and since they had the inclination of terminating their lives, they did it. The simple vision could have accelerated the idea. When Napoleon was told about that he had the fatal post burned down. The means was no longer there. The problem stopped.

The publicity given to suicide has the effect of the lookout post. It excites, encourages and familiarizes people with the idea and even provokes it. From that point of view we consider the details found in the press as one of the causes that elicits suicide: they give the courage of death.

The same happens to those crimes that excite public curiosity. They produce a truly moral infection. They have never stopped a single criminal. On the contrary, they have created more than one.

Let us now examine suicide from another point of view. We said that regardless of the particular motives they always have displeasure as one cause. Now, someone who is certain of not been unhappy but only for one day and to be better on the following days becomes patient. Such a person only gets desperate if there is no limit to the sufferings. What is then a human life before eternity if not just a single day? But the one who does not believe in eternity; who believes that everything finishes with death, whenever oppressed by sorrow and misery, that person can only see an end to all that with death. Since there is no other expectation it seems extremely natural to abbreviate sufferings through suicide.

Disbelief, the simple doubt about the future, the materialistic ideas, these are in a word the greatest drivers of suicide. They give into *moral cowardliness*.

When we see scientists using the authority of their knowledge striving to prove to their audiences or readers that there is nothing to be expected after death, isn't that a guide to the conclusion that when unhappy there is nothing better to do than to kill oneself?

What could they say to convince people otherwise? Which compensations could they offer? Which hope could they give? Nothing beyond the nothingness. From that we must conclude that if the

nothingness is a heroic remedy, the only perspective, than it is better to fall immediately than later and thus suffering for a shorter time.

The propagation of materialistic ideas is then the poison that inoculates in many people the idea of suicide and those who become their apostles carry a terrible responsibility.

It is possible that some will dispute this by saying that not every person that commits suicide is materialistic since there are people who kill themselves with the objective of getting to heavens earlier and others to reunite with the loved ones sooner. It is true but that is unquestionably the lower number and something that would be easy to demonstrate if there would be serious statistics of the causes of suicide.

Nevertheless people who yield to such a thought and believe in a future life evidently have a false idea of that life and the way they are presented with that life is not in general much adequate to give them a more accurate idea.

Spiritism not only confirms the idea of a future life but also demonstrates it through the most illustrative facts that can be presented: the testimonies of those who live there. It does even more: Spiritism shows that life to us with such rational and logical colors that faith is then supported by reason. Since doubt is no longer accepted life then changes completely. Its importance diminishes in proportion to the acquired certainty of a more prosperous future. To the believer life extends indefinitely beyond the grave, hence the patience and resignation that preclude the idea of suicide; hence *the moral courage*, in a word.

From that point of view Spiritism leads to another very positive result and perhaps to an even more determining factor. Religion well says that suicide is a mortal sin that meets punishment. How come? In the eternal flames that nobody believes. Spiritism shows us those who committed suicide, face-to-face, coming to us to report their unfortunate condition but with the difference that the punishments vary according to the attenuating or aggravating circumstances, more in agreement with a divine justice. That instead of being uniform, the punishments naturally follow the provoking causes and one must see there the sovereign justice impartially distributed.

Among those who commit suicide there are some whose suffering, although momentary rather than eternal, is not less terrifying so that whoever may entertain the idea of leaving Earth earlier than God's wishes is led to think again. The Spiritist then has several points that counterbalance the idea of suicide: the certainty of a future life in which the believer knows that the greater the misery and resignation on Earth the more prosperous such life will be; the certainty that by abbreviating life the person obtains an absolutely opposite result than the one that is expected; that the person will not be able to meet the loved ones again in the other world. It follows that suicide is totally against anyone's own interests.

Hence the considerable number of suicides avoided by Spiritism from which one can conclude that when everybody becomes Spiritist there will no longer be voluntary suicides and that is going to

happen sooner rather than later. Comparing the Spiritist doctrine to materialism and only from the point of view of suicide it can be noticed that the logic of the latter leads to suicide whereas the logic of the former deviates from that and that is confirmed by experience.

They will ask if by the same means one can destroy hypochondria, the cause of so many unprovoked suicides, of this unbreakable displeasure of life that nothing seems to justify. Such cause is eminently physiological whereas the others are of psychological nature. Since it is physiological it is then in the scope of science and we could put it to rest and say: we take care of matters related to us. Why do not you then heal the other one considering that it is your business? Nevertheless we have no problem in giving a positive response to this question. Certain organic ailments are evidently fed and even generated by psychological dispositions. The disgust of life, most of the time, is the result of satiation. A person that has experienced everything and who sees nothing else beyond is in a similar situation of a drunk that has emptied the whole bottle and since there is nothing left he breaks it. The abuse and excesses of all kinds forcibly lead to a disturbance and weakening of vital functions. From there a number of diseases of unknown sources believed to be the cause when in reality are the consequences. It is also followed by monotony and lack of courage. What is it that a hypochondriac person misses to fight the melancholic ideas? An objective in life, a driver towards action. Which objective one can have when believing in nothing?

The Spiritist does more than just believing in the future. One knows, and not through the eyes of faith but by the examples that one has before oneself, that the inescapable future life is happy or unhappy according to the employment given to the corporeal life and that happiness is proportional to the good that has been done. It is then natural that such a person wishes to be as happy as possible in that life given the certainty of life after death and a much longer life when compared to that on Earth. There is also the certainty, on another hand, that one will be unhappy there if no good is done here or even if the person is not bad as such but does nothing instead. One feels the need to get busy, the best preservative against hypochondria. The certainty about the future gives an objective. Doubt gives nothing. One is taken by boredom and terminates life since there is nothing else to look for.

Allow me a perhaps trivial comparison but one that serves as analogy. A man spent an hour at the theatre. By thinking that the play was over he stands up and leaves. However, if he knew that something even better and of longer duration will be presented he would have stayed, even if seating in the worst place. Fatigue will be overcome by the wait of something better.

The same causes that lead to suicide also lead to madness. The remedy to one is the remedy to the other, as demonstrated. Unfortunately, while medicine only takes into account the material side it will be deprived from the enlightenment that the spiritual element carries and that plays a very active role in a large number of ailments.

Spiritism besides reveals the primary cause of suicide and that could only be done by Spiritism. The troubles of life are at the same time atonements of faults from the past and trials to the future. It is the spirit that chooses them in order to advance but it may happen that during the execution of the task one may find too heavy a burden and give up before the conclusion. That is when one reaches out to suicide and finds delay instead of advancement.

There is also the case where a spirit committed suicide in a preceding incarnation and as atonement meets the trying fight against the tendency of suicide. If the spirit succeeds there will be progress. If the spirit fails there will be the need to restart a new life perhaps more difficult than the previous one and so on, fighting until victory is achieved for any reward in the next life is the result of victory and victory means fight.

Hence, given the certainty that the Spiritist has about that state of things he or she acquires a will power that no other philosophy can give.

AK

July 1862

Moral inheritance

One of our subscribers writes the following from Wiesbaden:

“Dear Sir, I study Spiritism carefully from all of your books and despite the clarity of the material there are still two points that do not seem well explained to some people. These are: 1. inherited faculties; 2. the dreams.”

“In fact how can we reconcile the system of pre-existence of the soul with that of inherited skills? They do, however, exist although not in absolute terms. We see them every day in the privacy of our homes. We also see them in a more elevated order with talent succeeding talents and intelligence following intelligence. Racine’s son was a poet. Alexandre Dumas’ son was a renowned writer. In dramaturgy we see the tradition of talents in the same family and in the art of war we see a clan like that of the Duke of Brunswick, for example, yielding a series of heroes.”

“Idleness, vices and crime also keep up with the tradition. Eugene Sue cites families in which several generations successively experience murder and the guillotine.”

“The creation of the soul by an individual would explain these issues even less. I appreciate that but I must confess that either doctrine is prone to the attacks of materialists who see no more than a concentration of nervous forces in those skills.”

“With respect to the dreams in the Spiritist Doctrine this also does not reconcile well with the system of the wandering soul during the sleep with the common opinion that attributes the dreams to simple reflexes of impressions that are perceived during the waking state. This latter opinion could seem to be the true explanation of dreams whereas the wandering soul would just be an exceptional case.”

(The above is followed by several supporting examples)

“Let me make it clear, Mr. President, that I do not wish to make here any personal objection but it seems useful to me that The Spiritist Review should discuss such issues even if only to provide the means of responding to the nonbelievers. As for myself, I am a believer and just seek my enlightenment.”

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The subject of dreams will be analyzed later in a special article. Today we will only take care of the psychological inheritance leaving the discussion to the Spirits and just adding a few preliminary observations.

Regardless of what is said about this subject, the materialists will not be convinced either way because if they do not admit that the principal exists then they do not acknowledge its consequence either. Before anything else, it would be necessary to have them converted to Spiritualists. That is not how we should start this discussion. Hence we cannot treat their objections.

Starting from the existence of an intelligent principle beyond matter, in other words, the existence of the soul, the question to be addressed is if the souls proceed from the souls or if they are independent. We believe we have already illustrated in our March issue of the Review entitled “The Spirits and the family crest” the impossibility of the creation of a soul by another soul. Truly, if the soul of a child were part of the father’s soul the child would always bear the same qualities and imperfections, as a consequence of this axiom it would mean that the part has the same composition of the whole. Experience, however, demonstrates the opposite every day. It is true that there are examples of moral and intellectual similarities that seem to be due to inheritance and, hence, conclude that there was a transmission. Nevertheless why wouldn’t such a transmission take place all the time? Why do we constantly see essentially good parents with vicious children, and vice-versa? Since it is impossible to turn moral inheritance into a general rule it is then necessary to explain the cause of similarities with the system of the reciprocal independence of the soul. This could be no more than a difficulty but that would not have the presumption of the pre-existence of the soul and the plurality of the existences, since such a doctrine is demonstrated by hundreds of positive facts and against which it is impossible to raise serious objections.

Let us give the word to the Spirits who were kind enough to analyze the matter. Below are two communications that were obtained about it.

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, May 23rd, 1862 – medium Mr. D’Ambel

It has already been said many times that there was no need to erect a system based on simple appearances. It is a system of that nature that deduces from family similarities a theory contrary to the one that we gave you about the existence of the souls before their terrestrial incarnation.

It is true that many times they had never had any relationship with the means and with the families in which they reincarnate. We have told you a number of times that the physical similarities are due to a material and physiological cause, absolutely independent from a spiritual action and that with respect to the similarity of tastes and skills these do not result from the procreation of a soul by another but due to the fact that similar Spirits attract one another, hence the families of heroes or the casts of warriors.

Therefore, admit, in principle, that the good Spirits prefer to choose for their new stage on Earth a terrain that has already been paved and a family of advanced Spirits where they have they are assured to the material means necessary to their future progress. By the same token the inferior Spirits, still prone to vices and the uncivilized tastes of the brute, stay away from elevated groups of moralized families and incarnate, on the contrary, where they expect to find the means of satisfaction of their still dominating passions. Hence, and as a general principle, spiritual similarities do exist because similar attract similar whereas corporeal similarities are due to procreation.

However, it is necessary to add the following: It is common to have vicious and evil individuals incarnating in righteous families that are sent there as a test to the family. On other occasions, they still come on their own with the hopes that they will leave behind the bad habits, which up until

then have dragged them down. These Spirits hope to progress by being in the presence of those moralizing and virtuous environments.

The same happens to morally advanced Spirits, like the young lady from Saint-Etienne that was mentioned last year, reincarnating into obscure and inferior families in order to show them the path of progress. You have not forgotten, I am sure, the angel of white wings that she had apparently transformed to the eyes of her loved ones on Earth when these returned to the world of the Spirits. (*The Spiritist Review*, June 1861 – Family conversations from beyond the grave – Mrs. Anaïs Gourdon).

Erastus

At the same session, medium Mrs. Costel

I come to explain to you about the important issue related to the inheritance of virtues and vices in the human race. Such transmission generates doubt in those who do not understand the magnitude of the dogma revealed by Spiritism.

The intermediary worlds are inhabited by Spirits waiting for the trial of reincarnation or getting ready again according to their level of advancement. In those incubators of eternal life the Spirits are grouped and divided into groups, some advanced and others delayed with respect to progress. Within these groups each chooses among human families those who are sympathetic to their acquired faculties that can only advance and never move backwards.

The incarnating spirit chooses the parents whose example will generate progress and that spirit absorbs, elevating or weakening, the talents of those who gave him the corporeal life. In both cases sympathy exists before birth and later as it is developed through family life and by imitation and habit. After the family inheritance, my friends, I want to reveal the origin of disagreements that separates individuals of the same race, suddenly illustrated or dishonored by one of its members that became strange to the ambient.

The vicious brute that incarnates in an educated family and the luminous spirit that incarnates among uncivilized people obey both the mysterious harmony that blends the divided parts of the whole and conciliates the infinitely small with the supreme greatness. A guilty spirit expects to grow from learning the virtues of the earthly procreators. If it fails still, the spirit acquires the knowledge of good by the example and returns to the spiritual world less burdened with ignorance and better prepared to sustain a new fight.

The advanced Spirits foresee the glory of Jesus and look forward to taking on the chalice of sublime charity. Like him they want to guide humanity to the sacred objective of progress and are born in the low social echelons where they fight in chains against vices and ignorance from which they raise either winners or martyrs. If this answer is not enough to clarify you please ask again my friends.

St. Louis

July 1862

Spiritist poetry

Spiritist Society of Boudreaux, medium Mr. Ricardo

The child and the vision

Mom, night has come
and I feel sleepy now.
Take me to my pink home
or I will sleep in your arms.

Child, say a prayer to God,
come and join me on your knees.
Let us pray for your Dad
in heavens, far from you and me.

Way up there, right Mommy?
Yes, close to God who wished so!
Only the bad ones get angry
but your father is an elected soul.

God understands you, my dear daughter.
He hears your wishes!
Let us pray so your father
gets rest and happiness.

For you as well, oh mother!
I pray to God: Almighty,
now that you have taken my father
please do not take my Mom away!

Thank you, Gabriela.
What a heart in such a young age!
Your father guides you from up there.
I see his soul in your face.

Ah Mommy since Daddy can hear
I wish so much he will
come back from the other sphere
to kiss his little girl!

Ask God to come our way,
to us who suffer in this place!

Have the soul of the dead sway
his little daughter's cradle!

Night has come, Mommy
and I fell asleep...
Take me to the pink bed.
Good night, Mom, I am going to sleep.

No, wait! I can see... it is Daddy!
He is just here, by my cradle.
Come quick Mommy,
he looks at us with a smile on his face!

I feel his kiss on my forehead;
his hands touching my hair!
He closes my mouth as you had
and goes back to heavens!

Night has come, Mommy!
Your daughter will not sleep!
Daddy has promised to come back to me
by the pinky bed once again we will meet!

Your guardian angel

July 1862

Double suicide for love and duty – moral study

The following was published in the “*Opinion Nationale*” on June 13th last:

“Last Tuesday two bodies were taken together to the Church of the Good News. Both followed by a man who showed a profound pain and by a considerable crowd showing sadness and reverence. Below is a short report of the events that led to the double funereal ceremony.”

“Ms. Palmira was a beautiful, good natured fashion designer who used to live with her parents. She used to receive many marriage proposals. Among the many candidates she chose Mr. B... who fell in love with her. Although she also loved him very much she decided to respect her parent’s wishes and marry Mr. D... whose social position seemed much more advantageous to them when compared to the rival candidate. The wedding took place four years ago.”

“Mr. B... and Mr. D... were close friends. Although they did not have much in common they used to see each other frequently. The love between Mr. B... and the now Mrs. D... had not died and despite their effort to minimize it, in fact, it only grew given their forceful separation. Mr. B... got married in order to try to forget that love. He married a very nice lady with excellent qualities and did his best to love her but he soon realized that his heroic effort was useless. For four years neither Mr. B... nor Mrs. D... failed in their committed vows. One cannot describe what they went through for Mr. D... , who truly loved his friend, always enticed him to the house and when he wanted to escape he forced him to stay.”

“Then when they were finally and serendipitously brought together the two lovers no longer resisted the passion that so strongly dragged one towards the other. As soon as the bad deed was over they were taken by a tremendous remorse. The young lady threw herself sobbing to her husband’s feet as soon as he came back and said: - Quick ! Kill me! I am no longer worthy of you!”

“Since he remained full of horror and pain she told him about her struggle, her suffering and everything she had to do to avoid falling earlier. She told him that she had been dominated by an illegitimate love and that she had always kept the highest respect and consideration that he deserved.”

“Instead of cursing her the man cried. Mr. B... arrived at that very moment and also confessed in the same way. Mr. D... stood them up and said: - You are two loyal and generous hearts. You became guilty by a fatality. I saw sincerity in your eyes. Why should I punish you for an irresistible force that overtook your moral strength? The punishment is in your very sorrow. Just promise me that I will no longer see you and you will still have my esteem and affection.”

“The two unfortunate souls were quick to swear as requested. The way their confession was received by Mr. D... made their pain and remorse worse. They confessed to one another their state of mind and agreed that only death could heal their shattering pain. They decided to end their lives together setting the date for the following day since Mr. D... would be away for most of the day.”

“After having made all the preparations they wrote a long letter whose summary read: - D... our love is greater than any promise. We could succumb, despite everything else. We will not lead a guilty life. Our atonement is to demonstrate that our fault must not be attributed to our will but to the enticement of a passion whose power was beyond our strength.”

“They ended that touching letter by asking for forgiveness and the two lovers begged for the grace of being reunited at the grave.”

“When Mr. D... got home he was surprised by the painful and terrifying spectacle. Amidst the thick smoke produced by a portable furnace he saw the two lovers well dressed and braced to one another in bed. They were both dead.”

“Mr. D... respected their final wishes and made sure that both received the prayers at the church and that they were buried together.”

“Mr. Cure of Good News thought appropriate to deny the admittance of the two bodies at the church given the opposition of the canonical laws.”

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After this report was read as a matter for moral study at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies two Spirits made the following consideration:

“That is the works of your Society and your costumes! Nonetheless, progress will take place. Some more time and fact of such a nature will no longer take place. Certain persons are like plants in an enclosure. They miss air, cannot breathe and spread their perfume. Your laws and costumes established limits to the expansion of certain feelings that sometimes lead two similar and sympathetic souls that given their different situations give themselves to all sorts of trickeries to be together.”

“What have you done of love? You reduced it to the weight of a metallic cylinder. You put it on the scale. Instead of king, love becomes slave. Your customs transformed a sacred link into an iron chain whose links smash those who were not born to live in shackles.”

“Ah! If your societies were walking on God’s avenue your hearts would not be broken by transient flames and your law makers would not have been forced to submit your passions to the control of the laws. Nevertheless there is progress and time will come when all of you will live the true life, the life of the heart. When heart beats are no longer constrained by the cold calculation of material interests you will no longer see such horrible suicides that from time to time belie your social prejudices.

St. Augustine, medium Mr. Vézy

The two lovers who committed suicide cannot respond to you yet. I see them. They are taken by confusion and scared by the breath of eternity. The moral consequences of their fault will punish them for successive migrations in which their departed souls will seek one another incessantly and

suffer the double chastise of presentiment and desire. Once the atonement is over they shall stay united forever at the heart of the eternal love.

Georges, medium Mr. Costel

Eight days later the spiritual guide of the medium was consulted about the possibility of the evocation of those two Spirits thus responding: - *Last time I told you that you could evoke them at the next session. They shall respond to the appeal of my medium but will not see one another. A deep darkness will keep them apart for a long time.*

St. Augustine, medium Mr. Vézy

1. Evocation of the lady. – A. Yes, I will communicate with the help of the spirit that is here that helps me and to whom I obey.
2. Do you see the beloved one with whom you committed suicide? – A. I see nothing, even the Spirits that wonder with me where I am. What a darkness! What a darkness! What a thick veil covering my face!
3. What was your sensation when you woke up from death? – A. Strange. I was cold and felt burning. I had ice in my veins and fire on my face! Strange thing! Strange mixture! Ice and fire as if extinguishing me! I thought I was going to succumb a second time.
4. Do you suffer a physical pain? – A. My whole suffering is here and here!
5. What do you mean by here and here? – A. Here in my brain and here at my heart.

OBSERVATION: It is likely that if we could have seen the spirit we would have seen the hand moving from the forehead to the heart.

6. Do you believe that you will always be like that? – A. Oh! Always, always! Sometimes I hear hell like laughter that shouts these words to me: “Like this forever!”
7. Now, we can assure you that it shall not be always like that. Repent and you will find pardon. – A. What are you saying? I do not understand.
8. I repeat that your suffering will come to an end and that you can speed that up by repenting and we will help you through our prayers. – A. I only got one word and vague sounds. The word is grace. Is it what you are talking about? Oh! Adultery and suicide are two hateful crimes. You mentioned grace. That is certainly addressed to the child by my side, a poor child that is crying and waiting.

OBSERVATION: A lady member of the Society said that she had just said a prayer begging God for that unfortunate woman and that was not doubt what touched her; that in her thoughts she had implored for the grace of God to that creature.

9. You say that you are in darkness. Can't you see us? – A. I am allowed to hear a few words but the only thing I see is a dark shade on top of which I sometimes see a crying head.

10. Since you do not see your loved one, do not you feel his presence near you considering that he is here? – A. Ah! Do not mention him. For the moment I must forget him if I wish to have the image forming on the shade fading away.
11. And which image is that? – A. A man in suffering and whose moral existence I have destroyed for a long time on Earth.

OBSERVATION: As demonstrated by the facts, darkness frequently follows the punishment of criminal minds. It immediately follows death and its duration is variable according to the circumstances, ranging from a few months to centuries. The horror of a similar situation is understandable for the guilty one can't perceive anything except the memories of errors and by the silence increased by one's solitude and uncertainty, anxiety and remorse. When we read that report we sought attenuating circumstances first even looking at it as heroic action since a feeling of duty provoked it. As it can be seen, though, it was judged differently and that the punishment of the offenders will be long and terrible because they voluntarily sought refuge in death trying to escape the struggle. Their sensation of duty was undoubtedly honorable and it will certainly be taken into account later but the true merit would have been to get over the attraction whereas their attitude was like the defector that runs away as soon as there is fire.

As seen, their penalty consists on seeking one another for a long time and without success be it in the world of the Spirits or on other earthly existences. This has been aggravated by the fact that she momentarily thinks that her state is supposed to be forever. Since such a thought is part of the punishment she was not allowed to hear the words of hope that we addressed to her.

Those who see such a punishment to harsh and long lasting and particularly for the fact that it can only end after several reincarnations we say that the duration is not absolute and that it will depend on the way they withstand their future trials in which we can help through our prayers. Like any other guilty spirit they shall be the referees of their own destinies.

Isn't that better than the hopeless and eternal fire to which they would be inexorably condemned according to the doctrine of the Church that considers them so much destined to hell that it refused to give them the last prayers since they were certainly useless?

Certain Catholics criticize Spiritism for the fact that it does not admit hell. In fact Spiritism does not admit the existence of a localized hell with its flames and spears and the corporeal tortures brought back from the Paganism of Tartarus. Yet the situation of the unfortunate Spirits that is described by Spiritism is not much better but with the radical difference that there is nothing irrational with respect to the nature of the penalties and that the duration, instead of irrevocable, is subordinated to regret, atonement and reparation which is at the same time more logical and more in agreement with the doctrine of God's justice and benevolence.

Would Spiritism have been an efficient remedy in this case to prevent suicide? There is no doubt. It would have given those two Spirits such a confidence in the future that it would have changed completely their way of seeing this earthly life and consequently it would have given them the moral strength that they lacked.

Supposing that they had faith in the future, something that we ignore, and that their objective by killing themselves would have been that of speeding up their encounter and they would have known from similar examples that they would find the opposite result and would then be separated by a much longer time than that one here on Earth since God would not reward them for breaching His laws. Hence, certain that their wishes would not be granted but instead that they would find a situation a hundred times worse they would be advised by their own interest to be patients.

We recommend to them the prayers of every Spiritist so that they can find the strength and resignation to support them in their new trials thus accelerating the end of their punishment.

July 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

Sympathetic union of souls

Bordeaux, February 15th 1862, medium Mrs. H...

Q. You have already told me a number of times that we will reunite and no longer part ways. How can that be? Wouldn't the reincarnations, even those that take place on Earth, separate us for a more or less long time? – A. I told you already: God allows those who love one another from the bottom of their hearts and that endured their trials with resignation to reunite first in the spiritual world where they advance together so as to be granted incarnations in superior worlds. Hence, when requested in earnest they can leave the spiritual world together and reincarnate in the same places and through a sequence of previously established circumstances unite again through links that are most convenient to their hearts.

Some will ask to be a father or a mother of a spirit that was sympathetic to them and that they will have the privilege of guiding on the good path, surrounding them with the caring hands of family and friendship. Others would have requested the grace of marriage and spend together many years of happiness and love. I speak of marriage as the intimate union of two Spirits who no longer wish to stay away from one another.

In the superior worlds, however, marriage is not understood, as it is known by you. In those regions of happiness, freedom and joy, the links are made of flowers and love. And they are not less long lasting because of that. The sublime unions are maintained by heart and love. Free and happy unions; marriages of souls before God that is the law of love in the superior worlds! The privileged beings of those blessed regions feel more strongly connected than the inhabitants of Earth who frequently neglect the most sacred commitments; there one doesn't see the spectacle of disturbed unions, contaminated by vices, inferior passions, instability, envy, injustice, rejection and all sorts of inclinations that lead people to bad and to the violation of the most solemn vows. Well! Those God blessed unions are the reward of those that nurtured a profound love in their sufferings and who have asked the Lord of justice and goodness to be able to continue to love one another in the superior worlds, without the fear of a forthcoming and painful separation.

What is it that is difficult to accept and understand? Couldn't God who loves all his children have created such a perfect happiness to the worthy ones who have endured harsh trials together? What could God have done more in agreement with the sincere wishes of a loving heart? From all the rewards that have been promised to humanity is there anything similar to such a thought, such a hope or even certainty of the eternal union to the loved ones?

Believe me, my dear child, our secret wishes, this mysterious but irresistible need of love, of long lasting love, of eternal love were only placed in our hearts by God because the promise of a future allows us such a sweet hope. God will not make us go through the pain of a broken heart. Our hearts long for happiness and beat thanks to our pure affections. The only possible reward is to have our loving dreams come true.

By the same token, in the condition of poor Spirits destined to trying times we have been in the position of asking for and sometimes choosing the toughest trials; we also choose when in the

position of regenerated and happy Spirits, with a new life expected to help us to purify further, adding to the summation of happiness conceded to an advanced spirit.

There you have, my beloved daughter, a quick picture of future happiness. We shall have many opportunities to come back to this pleasant subject. You must understand how much the perspective of such a future makes me happy and how nice it is to me to confide my hopes to you!

Q. – Shall we recognize one another in those new and fortunate existences? – A. Would our happiness be complete otherwise? It is no doubt happiness because in those privileged worlds every creature is destined to be happy. However, would that be the perfect happiness to those who get suddenly separated in the most beautiful time of life and ask God to get together again in His heart? Would that be our dreams and hopes coming true? No. You think like me. If a veil were cast upon the past there would not be a supreme happiness, the ineffable joy of seeing one another again after the sadness of absence and separation. There wouldn't be, or at least we would not be aware of our long lasting fondness that strengthens our bonds even further. Thus, like two dear childhood friends like to meet again in your Earth and in society, seeking one another much more than if their relationship dated a few days only, the Spirits who deserved the favor of meeting again in superior worlds are both happy and appreciative to God for such a new encounter as an answer to their dearest wishes.

The worlds superior to Earth in the scale of perfection are plenty of favors that contribute to the perfect happiness of their inhabitants. Past is not hidden from them since the memory of their past suffering and many mistakes atoned to the price of much suffering and the even more lively memory of their sincere loving relationships ensure that their current life is a thousand times sweeter, protecting them against faults that could be incurred due to the existence of any minor weakness. Those worlds are paradises to the inhabitants of Earth, destined to lead humanity to the divine paradise.

OBSERVATION: It would be a terrible mistake to see in this communication a criticism to the laws that regulate marriage and a sanction to ephemeral and extra official unions. From the point of view of laws God's laws are the only ones that are immutable. The human laws, however, appropriate to the customs, uses, climate, and degree of civilization are essentially mutable and it would be bad if otherwise and if the peoples of the nineteenth century were governed by the same laws of our predecessors. Hence, if these laws have changed from their time to ours, they will also change from our time to that of our descendants. Every law has its reason of being and its utility when it is elaborated but it is possible that it is good today and no longer is tomorrow. Given the state of our customs, our social demands, marriage must be regulated by law and a proof that such a law is not absolute is that it is not the same to every civilized country. We are then led to believe that in the superior worlds where there isn't the same kind of material interests to be protected; where there is no evil, that is to say, where bad Spirits are denied incarnation; where the unions consequently result from sympathy rather than calculation, the conditions must be different. However, what is good to them could be bad to us.

Besides, we must take into account that the Spirits dematerialize as they advance and purify. It is only in inferior worlds that incarnation is material. There is no more material incarnation to the superior Spirits and consequently there is no procreation once procreation is a function of the body and not the spirit. Pure love is then the only objective of a union and hence it does not require the sanction of a certified judge as with friendship on Earth.

July 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

A roof tile

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, medium Mrs. C.

A man is walking outside. A roof tile falls by his feet. He says: "How lucky! One step further and I would be dead." Generally speaking this is the only appreciation to God. Soon afterwards that same man, however, is taken by an illness and dies in bed. Why has he been spared by the roof tile and died a few days later like everybody else? The unbeliever would say that it was by chance as he said it himself: "How lucky!" What good has it done to him to escape the first accident succumbing to the next? In any case, if he was favored by luck, it did not last long.

The Spiritist answers this question by saying that we escape accidents all the time and that we find ourselves separated from death by a thin line. Do not you see a warning from the heavens to prove to you that life is hanging on a thin thread and that we are never sure that we will live to see tomorrow and that we must always be ready to leave?

What is it that you do when you go on a long journey? You take every precaution; you take care of businesses; you take with you the provisions and everything that is necessary during the journey and you leave behind everything that can stall or delay your trip. If you know the destination and if you have friends there, you leave without fear and certain that you will be welcome. Otherwise you study the map of the region and take letters of recommendation with you.

Suppose you are forced to undertake such a journey overnight and that there is no time to make preparations, whereas, if you were informed well in advance you would have everything prepared to attend to your needs and give you comfort.

Well! Every day you are exposed to the greatest and most important of all journeys and one that will inevitably have to be realized and you do not think of that more than if you had to live indefinitely on Earth! God out of His benevolence warns you by many nearly fatal incidents and all you have to say is: What luck!

Spiritists! Be aware of the preparations you have to make for the great journey that has much more important consequences to you than any other that you do here on Earth as your future happiness depends on how you make those preparations.

The map that will guide you in the country that you are going to visit is the initiation into the mysteries of a future life. Through this the country will no longer be strange to you. Your provisions are the good deeds that you have done. Those will be your only passport and your letter of recommendation.

As for the friends that you are going to meet that you know them. Bad feelings, that is what you must leave behind for unfortunate is the one who is taken by surprise by death and still has hate in his heart like the one who falls on the water and dragged to the bottom by a stone tied to the neck.

The business which you must set in order is the forgiveness to your offenders and the reparation of mistakes made to your neighbor. These amendments allow you to conquer and forgive for bad deeds. These debts are paid by forgiveness. Hurry up since the departing time may come sooner rather than later and there would not be time for consideration.

I truly tell you that the falling tile by your feet is a sign to warn you to always be prepared to leave at any time so that you are not taken by surprise.

The Spirit of Truth

July 1862

Spiritist teachings and dissertations

Cesar, Clovis and Charlemagne

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, January 24th 1862

Proposed subject

Medium Mr. A. Didier

This is not only a material subject but it is also very much a spiritualist one as well. Before going into the main subject there is another one to be discussed first.

What is war? War, we say for starters, is allowed by God since it exists, has existed and will always exist. While educating one's mind it is a mistake to consider Cesar as a conqueror only; to see Clovis as a Barbarian and Charlemagne a tyrant whose senseless dream was to create a large empire. Ah! God! As people generally say, the conquerors themselves are toys in the hands of God.

They got to these positions out of their geniuses and audacity and saw around them not only armed men but also ideals, progress, civilizations that had to be brought upon other nations. They left like Cesar to take Rome to Lutetia; like Clovis to spread the germs of a monarchic solidarity; like Charlemagne to sow the seeds of Christianity to blind peoples, to nations already corrupted by the first times of the Church.

This is what happened:

Cesar, the most self-centered of these three geniuses, imposed military tactics, discipline and the law, imposing them all to Gaul. Behind his army, there was the immortal idea. The conquered and untamable populations endured the oppression of Rome; they became Roman provinces. Would the proud Marseille have ever existed without Rome? Laudanum and so many other famous towns became huge centers, focuses of light, science, arts and humanity. Cesar is then a great propagator, one of those universal men that use man to civilize man, one of those who sacrifice people to the benefit of ideas.

Clovis' dream was to establish a monarchy, foundations, and a rule for his people. However, since he was not yet illuminated by the grace of Christianity, he was a barbarian propagator. We must see him in his conversion. Out of his active, febrile and bellicose imagination, he saw a gift from God in his victory against the Visigoth and from there on and certain that he was always with God he was baptized. Baptism then propagates in the Gaul and Christianity expands even further. It is time to repeat with Corneille that Rome was no longer Rome. The barbarians had invaded the Roman world.

After the Romans had shaken all civilizations there is a man whose dream is no longer to spread around the world the mysteries and prestige of the Capitol but the formidable beliefs of Aix-la-Chapelle. That is a godly man or a man that believes to be with God. The barbarians still practice a hateful cult, a rival to Christianity. Charlemagne takes those people over and Wittekind falls after a succession of battles and victories, humbly surrendering and receiving the baptism.

That is, no doubt, a gigantic picture in which so many facts, so many acts of Providence, so many downfalls and victories take place. But what is the conclusion? Isn't the propagation of the idea, its universalization, not stopping before family breakdowns, people's sadness and having everywhere the fundamental objective of the implantation of the cross of Christ in all corners of the planet, isn't that a spiritualist fact?

It is then necessary to see these three men as great propagators that either out of ambition or belief brought light to the Occident when the Orient was about to succumb in a perplexing laziness and inactivity.

Now, Earth is not a planet where progress takes place rapidly and through persuasion and kindness. Do not be surprised by the fact that it is many times necessary to raise the sword instead of the cross.

Lamennais

Q. – You said that wars will always exist. However it seems that moral progress will make it disappear by destroying its causes. – A. It will always exist in the sense that there will always be struggle. But the struggle will change in form. It is true that Spiritism must spread peace and fraternity around the world. But you know well that despite the triumph of good there is always a struggle. Spiritism will evidently increase the understanding of the need for peace but evil is always present. It will still be necessary to fight for good for a long time on Earth. The struggles will become rarer and rarer.

Same subject, medium Mr. Leymar

The influence of geniuses upon the future of the peoples is incontestable. They are instruments in the hands of the Providence to abbreviate the great reforms that without them would only come much later. They are the ones who sow the germs of the new ideas and they often come back some centuries later bearing different names to continue or complement the work that was initiated. Cesar, that great figure of antiquity, represents the genius of war and organized laws. His stretched to the limit passions shook the Roman society profoundly. It changes its face and, in the evolutionary process, everything changes. The peoples feel their former constitution changing. The ruthless strength of his power unites what should not have been separated according to the time of Cesar. Gaul is transformed by Cesar's triumphant hands and after ten years of war a powerful unity is formed. The decadence of Rome begins at that time, though.

The force that trembled the world was taken to the excesses and made the mistakes of the extreme power.

Anything that grows beyond the limits designed by God must also fall. The great empire was invaded by a cloud of peoples originated from unknown regions up until then.

Together with the weapons, the celebrity of Cesar had taken the new ideas to the North and the peoples precipitated upon him like a torrent.

You then see those barbarian tribes invading the provinces where the Sun was better, the wine sweeter and the women more beautiful. Those tribes crossed the Gaul, the Alps and the Pyrenees establishing colonies everywhere and thus breaking down the body of the so-called Roman Empire.

It was only the genius of Cesar that was required to take his nation to the summit of power. That is the period of renovation when all people mix and fight one another, seeking other formations, other elements. During several centuries there was a lot of hatred, a lot of wars. How many crimes! How much blood!

Barbaret

The barbarian hand of Clovis should set the starting point of a new era for the people. He obeyed the customs and would not back up before anything in order to form a nation. He formed it with the sword and astuteness. He created a new element with the baptism and initiated his soldiers in a new belief. After him there was chaos and despite the idea, despite Christianity, there was still the need for Charles Martel, Pepin and later Charlemagne.

Cheers to this powerful figure, this energetic figure that like a new Cesar knows how to bring together all the peoples that were disperse, knows how to change ideas and organize what was chaos. Charlemagne is greatness in war, law, politics, and in the forthcoming morality, which should combine the people, giving them the intuition of conservation, unity and solidarity. The great principles that were the foundations of France come from him. Our sciences and our laws come from him. He was a reformer, marked by the Providence to become the link between Cesar and the future. He is also called The Great because he employed terrible means of execution in order to shape the union of barbarian peoples who would obey no one but the strong and powerful.

Barbaret

NOTE: Since this name was unknown the spirit was asked to provide some clarification about himself.

I lived in the time of Henry IV. I was simple among all others. Lost in this Paris where someone like me is so easily forgotten, someone who was just concerned with the study, feeding my own thoughts and forming my own ideas. I was poor and the daily labor gave me that ineffable joy called freedom. I used to copy books and created wonderful vignettes, prodigies of patience

and knowledge which were only enough to grant me the daily bread and water. Nevertheless I studied, loved my homeland and sought the true science. I liked history and wanted freedom to my beloved France. I wished I had the realization of every aspiration dreamed in my humility. Since then I am in a better world and God rewarded me for my abnegation giving me this peace of mind where there is no place for the obsessions of the body and I cherish my country, the whole world, our Earth, love and freedom.

I come here many times to see you and to listen to you. I like your works and take part in them with my whole heart. I want to see you happy and satisfied in the future. May you all be happy is what I wish. However you will not be if you do not get rid of the old outfit that since long ago dresses this whole world. I speak of selfishness. Study the past, the history of your country and you will learn more from the suffering of your fellow countrymen than from any other science.

To live is to know, to love and help one another. Go then and do according to your spirit. God sees you and judges you.

Barbarete

July 1862

Notice

A large manuscript of a book was sent to us with the title “*Love –Revelations of the Spirit of 3rd order of the angelical series*” to Brother P. Montani. The package was not followed by a letter so we do not know who to thank for that. If the person has access to this issue of the Review we kindly ask you to identify yourself so that we can thank you adequately. While we wait, we can say that the work has excellent contributions and is based on the soundest moral concepts and on the fundamental principles of Spiritism. There are, however, several points that are adventurous theories and that require a serious criticism. From our side we could not accept everything that it contains hence we did not find it appropriate to publish without changes.

Allan Kardec¹⁹

19 Paris, Typography of Cosson and Co., Rue de Four-St.-Germain, 43

August 1862

Conference by Mr. Trousseau, professor at the faculty of medicine

Given at the Polytechnic Association for the Free Teaching of Workers
May 18th, 1862 (Brochure In-8th)

If the devil's horns were hopelessly used to disrupt Spiritism, here is reinforcement to the adversaries: Dr. Trousseau comes to give the final blow on the Spirits. Mr. Trousseau unfortunately does not believe in the Spirits but he does not believe in the devil either. You should disregard the partner if he can defeat the enemy. There is no doubt that this new champion will say the last word of science about Spiritism. That is the least expected from someone so highly placed for his knowledge. By attacking the new ideas he would not like to leave a single argument without replica. He would not like to be accused of talking about something that he doesn't know. He will undoubtedly take on every phenomenon and research them, analyze, comment, explain and destroy them, demonstrating in detail why they are all illusions.

Ah! Spiritists! We must brace ourselves! If Mr. Trousseau were not a wise man and if he were just a quasi-wise man he could well forget something. But a true wise man would not like to leave the work incomplete. He would like to see full victory. Let us listen and tremble!

After a comment about people who are led by banners, here is what he says:

“In reality people who are capable of assessing things in general are not the majority. Mr. Sartines wanted to have a charlatan arrested for selling his drugs at the New Bridge and selling them well. He had him brought over for questioning and asked him:

- *Smart guy, what is it that you do to attract so many people and make so much money?*
- *Sir, the man responded, how many people do you think walk by the New Bridge every day?*
- *I do not know.*
- *I will tell you, about ten thousand. How many do you think are smart among them?*
- *Well, maybe a hundred, said Mr. Sartines.*
- *That is too many but I do not mind them and deal with the remaining nine thousand and nine hundred.”*

“The charlatan was very modest and Mr. Sartines too harsh with the population of Paris. There is no doubt that more than a hundred smart people crossed the New Bridge of Paris and the most intelligent might have stopped by the charlatan's stand with the same confidence as the crowd because, ladies and gentlemen, I would say that the higher classes suffer more from the influence of charlatanism.”

“I would mention the Institute²⁰ among our scientific societies. Take the Academy of Sciences that certainly counts on the elite of our country’s scientists. Among those there are about twenty who look for charlatans.”

This indicates the depth of trust that they have on their comrades as they would rather seek the charlatans.

“These are people of great merit. It is true that they are good mathematicians, chemists or renowned naturalists but they conclude that they are also good doctors and believe to be perfectly capable of judging things that they know nothing about.”

This is a proof of his knowledge and not of his modesty and opinion. Many jokes have been produced about the wise men of the Institute. I do not know a single one more sarcastic than this. It is then likely that the Professor is only talking about of what he knows.

“We, who are just doctors, sometimes remain modest so that, if we were to present on the great theorems of Math and Physics, we expose our ignorance and incompetence. But true wise men never deny their competence about anything, particularly with respect to medicine.”

Since the doctors declare ignorance about things that they do not know, we have here a guarantee that Mr. Trousseau will not discuss matters of Psychology, particularly in a public lecture as that he is not exactly an expert in those matters. Such knowledge will certainly give him irrefutable elements to support his arguments.

“It is sad to say that pretenders always have access to intelligent people. I had the honor of being a close friend of the illustrious Béranger. In 1948 he had a small eye ailment to which Mr. Bretonneau had advised the use of a certain eye drop. Although the disease was initially cured, it returned. Mr. Béranger was found to have a disposition for viral infections. As a result, Mr. Béranger then sought a Polish priest who healed eyes issues with a secret medication. In those days at the faculty, I was the president of the committee who did the assessment of health agents. Since the priest had matters to handle with the police for having damaged a few eyes, the priest wanted to get certified. He then looked for support from. Mr. Béranger to become officially recognized as a health agent. This would allow the priest to freely treat his customers’ eyes.”

Since Mr. Béranger had been cured by Mr. Bretonneau, why would he look for someone else? It is natural to have more confidence in someone that has cured us and that has experience in leading with us than in a stranger. In reality the diploma is a safe-conduct that not only allows the health agents to remove the eyes of their customers but also the doctors to kill them without remorse or responsibility. That is certainly the cause that leads the wise comrades, as confessed by Mr. Trousseau, to seek pretenders and charlatans.

“Béranger came to me and said:

20 The Academy of Sciences and Arts in Paris of the XIX century (TN)

- *My friend, I need a great favor. You need to help me to have this poor devil approved. His only subject is eyes and despite the fact that the examination of the health agents covers all healing fields please be indulgent and kind. He is a refugee and he cured me after all and that is a stronger reason.*

- *Send me your man, I said.*

The Polish priest came to my house.

- *A man to whom I owe a lot recommended you to me, I said. He is my dearest friend. Besides, he is Béranger and that is more important. Two of my colleagues and I are decided to help in any way we can; it is only the exam that is public but it will be okay to cover our ears a little but that is the least important. Let us see. I will be generous. I will ask about anatomy and you will know as much as I do about anatomy. My questions will be about the eye.*

The man seemed embarrassed. I then continued:

- *Do you know the eye?*
- *Very well.*
- *Do you know what the eye lid is?*
- *Yes.*
- *Do you know the meaning of cornea?*

The man showed hesitation.

- *How about pupil?*
- *Ah! Sir, the pupil that one I know well.*
- *Do you know the crystalline, the vitreous humor, and the retina?*
- *No Sir. Why would I need that? My only concern is eye disease.*

I will tell you:

- *This is good for something and I guarantee that one would even almost suspect the existence of a crystalline particularly if one wants to operate on cataracts, as it seems to be the case.*
- *I do not operate.*
- *But if you ever considered operating one...*

There was no way out. The poor devil wanted to practice the art of ophthalmology without any notion of the anatomy of the eye."

It is really difficult to be less demanding to give this poor man the right of legally perforating someone's eyes. However, it seems that he did not operate – although he could be led to that – and who only had a medication to cure ophthalmic diseases whose absolutely empirical application does not require special know-how. For that reason, it is not exactly the art of the ophthalmologist. In our opinion the most important thing was to make sure that the medication was harmless. He had cured Mr. Béranger and that was a positive indication. It could be useful

to allow its use for the general interest. The man could have the knowledge of anatomy good enough to obtain the diploma but that alone would not make the medication good, in case it were bad. However, thanks to the diploma he could prescribe it freely regardless of how dangerous it was.

Jesus Christ, who cured the blind, the deaf and handicapped probably did not know more anatomy than that man and Mr. Trousseau would undoubtedly have denied his right of making miracles. How many fines he would have to pay today if he did not have the right to cure without a diploma! None of that has any relationship to the Spirits but these are the premises of the argumentation that he is going to use against his adversaries.

“I told Mr. Béranger the story and he said: - poor man!”

It is likely that he would have said to himself: *He cured me though!*

Far from excusing charlatans and sellers of panaceas all we want to say is that it is possible that efficient formulas may exist outside the existing structure; that the uneducated who has infallible secrets to treat snake bites know nothing about the circulation of the blood or the difference between venous and arterial blood. We would like to see Mr. Trousseau refusing their help after being bitten by a serpent or a coral snake just because they do not hold a diploma. In a next article we will talk about healing mediums that seems to multiple for some time now.

“I said: - My dear Béranger, I have been your doctor for eight years. Today I will charge you my fees.

- *And how much is that?*
- *I want you to compose a song for me but I will give you the refrain.*
- *Ah! Fine. But what is that?*
- *It goes like this: Ah! Wise people are so silly!*
- *We agreed that he would no longer speak to me about his Polish priest. Isn't that said to see someone like Béranger to whom I said these things, not understanding that his protégé could have done a lot of harm and that he was absolutely incapable of doing anything useful to the simplest disease of the eyes?”*

It seems that Béranger was not convinced about the infallibility of the certified doctors and he could repeat the refrain: Ah! Wise people are so silly!

“As you see ladies and gentlemen, intelligent people are the ones who fall first. Remember what happened towards the end of last century. A German experimentalist used electricity, still not very well known in those days. He subjects some women to the action of that fluid and some nervous accidents are observed. He attributed to the propagation of a fluid from his own body. He then establishes a bizarre theory then called Mesmerism. He then moves to the center of the great Paris, at Vendôme Square. It is the place where the wealthy and the aristocracy of the capital gather around the little wand of Mesmer who in fact is the inventor and the importer of that wonder called somnambulism that is one of the greatest shames of empiricism.”

“In fact what can one say about somnambulism? Hysterical generally lost young ladies join forces with any charlatan on duty and simulate ecstasy, catalepsy, sleep and there you are with a show of well-paid and well accepted tricks, believed with such a faith that is more robust than the advices of the most enlightened doctor.”

What is the point in being smart if they are the first ones to be tricked? What is it that one needs to avoid to be tricked? To be a wise man?

- No.
- To be a member of the Institute?²¹
- No, since a good number of those show the weaknesses of preferring the charlatans to their own comrades. It is Mr. Trousseau who says that.
- To be a doctor?
- No, since a good number of them are involved with the absurdity of animal magnetism.
- What is it then that is necessary to share common sense?
- One needs to be Mr. Trousseau.

There is no doubt that Mr. Trousseau has the right to his opinion; he can believe or not believe in somnambulism but isn't he crossing the line when he says that every somnambulist is a lost young lady associated to a charlatan?

It is inevitable that there will be abuse in this as with everything else from which even the official medicine does not escape. There is no doubt that there might be simulation of somnambulism but for the fact that there are false believers should we conclude that true belief does not exist?

Mr. Trousseau ignores the fact that there are respectable and married ladies among professional somnambulists; that the number of the low profile ones is much larger; that they may be found in the heart of the most respectable and wealthy families; that many duly certified and renowned doctors are now true champions of magnetism applied to a number of cases that do not respond to common medicine.

It is not our intention to make Mr. Trousseau change his opinion by proving the existence of magnetism and somnambulism since it could well be a waste of time. As a matter of fact, this would veer us off from our objective. We only say that if attacks and sarcasm are shameful weapons of science it is even more disgraceful to stain the name of a science that is now accepted all over the world, recognized and practiced by the most renowned persons, throwing the lowest insults at those who profess it. All we can do is to feel sorry for such banal and harmful expressions thrown at the cathedrals of knowledge.

You are surprised by the fact that such tricks, as you call them, are more believed with more faith than that on the advices of the most enlightened doctor. The reason for that is given the large amount of mistakes made by those very doctors, from which we will mention two examples.

21 Parisian Institute of Sciences and Humanities (TN)

A lady of our acquaintance had a four to five year old son with a tumor of the knee as a result of a fall. The situation became so serious that she thought appropriate to consult with a renowned medical doctor who then declared that an amputation was not only necessary but also urgent in order to save the child's life. The mother was somnambulist. Finding herself unable to make any decision about the case whose success was doubtful she decided to treat the boy herself. After one month the cure was complete. A year later the child was healthy and strong. She went back to the doctor and said: "Here is the boy you said was going to die if his leg was not amputated. "What is it that you want? Nature has unforeseeable resources."

The other case is personal. Twelve years ago I was almost blind to the point that I could not read or write and even recognize the persons with whom I shook hands. I consulted with the top notch doctors among which Dr. L..., professor of clinic of eyes diseases. After a very careful and attentive examination he declared that I suffered of an amaurosis and that I should resign to the fact. I then saw a somnambulist who said that it was not an amaurosis but an apoplexy of the eyes that could degenerate into an amaurosis if not taken care properly. She said she would take care of that. You shall feel slightly better in fifteen days, she said; in about a month you will begin to see again and in two or three months there will be nothing left. It all happened as she said and today my vision is completely reestablished.

Mr. Trousseau continues:

"- Still in our days there is an American person that evokes the Spirits giving voice to Socrates, Voltaire, Rousseau, Jesus Christ, you name it! And where does it take place? At the shanty houses of a few drunks?"

The professor is really remarkable in his choices of expressions.

"No, he makes them speak in palaces, at the senate, in the most aristocratic theaters of Paris. And there are decent people who say: "Yes, I saw it and I felt an invisible hand touching me; the table moved up to the ceiling!" They say and repeat themselves. During seven or eight months the knocking Spirits amazed men and women who threw nervous fits. Such a nameless stupidity; such stupidity that even the most uncivilized person would be ashamed of acknowledging was accepted by enlightened people, even more so, by people from the highest social echelons of Paris."

Mr. Trousseau could have added: and all over the world. It seems that he ignores the fact that such a nameless stupidity did not last only seven or eight months but persists still and propagates everywhere; that the evocation of the Spirits is not a privilege of an American but of thousands of people of both sexes, of all ages and in all countries.

Up until now and following a good logic the adherence of the masses and particularly of educated people had been considered as having some value. It seems, however, that it does not hold any value and that the only sensible opinion is that of Mr. Trousseau and of those who share his ideas.

With respect to the others, regardless of their social position and education, regardless if they live in palaces or occupy the highest positions of state, they are below the most uncivilized man because such a man would be ashamed of accepting those ideas.

Whenever an idea is so much spread as Spiritism is; when instead of fading away it progresses rapid and prodigiously, when it is accepted by the elite of society, if such idea is false and dangerous it is necessary to combat it with a full reservoir; it is necessary to fight it with contrary arguments.

- Alas, as it seems Mr. Trousseau has one argument only: *Ah! Wise people are so silly!*

August 1862

Necrology – death of the Bishop of Barcelona

We got a letter from Spain about the death of the Bishop of Barcelona the very one who had three hundred Spiritist books burned by the hands of the executioner on October 9th, 1861; he died on the 9th of the current month followed by the habitual pageantry of the chiefs of the Church. It is just nine months after the event and the act of faith already produces results presented by everyone; the acceleration of the propagation of Spiritism in that country. In fact the repercussion of that act, unthinkable in this century, brought the attention of a multitude of people to Spiritism, people who had never heard about it and the press, regardless of their position, could not remain quite about it.

The exhibition of such apparatus was important enough to excite the curiosity of the masses attracting them to the forbidden fruit. This happened given that nobody does something like this if it has no importance or something that is just a hopeless dream.

It is also natural that their thoughts travelled back in history a few centuries ago remembering that in the same country they used to burn not only books but people. What could then be contained in such books to have deserved the solemnity of being burnt at the stake? That is what they wanted to find out.

The result in Spain was the same as everywhere else where Spiritism was attacked. Without the mockery or the serious attacks that Spiritism suffered it would count on ten times less followers than it actually does. The more insistent and violent the criticism the more it becomes relevant and developed. Senseless attacks go blank whereas the shining beam awakes even the most dormant soul who wants to see what is going on. That is all that we ask, assured in anticipation about the results of a serious examination. That is a positive fact for every time that in a given location the anathema falls upon them from the top of the cathedra we are sure that this will enlarge the ranks of our followers and see them surging if they were not there before.

Spain could not have escaped such a fate. Hence, there isn't a single Spiritist who was not happy for having learned about the act of faith of Barcelona, soon followed by the Alicante where more than one adversary deplored an act from which religion had nothing to gain.

We daily see the irrefutable proof of the progress of Spiritism amidst the most educated classes of that country where it already counts on numerous and eager followers.

One of our corresponding members from Spain suggested to us that we evoke the Bishop of Barcelona. We were prepared to do that and even had prepared some questions when he manifested spontaneously to one of our mediums, responding in anticipation to all questions that we intended to address to him even before they were asked. His communication of an absolutely unforeseeable character, contains the following passage among others:

“Helped by your spiritual leader I could come to teach you with my example and say: do not reject any of the announced ideas because one day, a day that shall last and weigh like a century, such compiled ideas will scream like the voice of the angel: Cain, what have you done to your brother? What have you done out of the power that should elevate and console humanity? Someone that voluntarily lives blind and deaf in spirit, as others live in their bodies, will suffer, atone, and be reborn to begin again the intellectual work avoided by laziness and pride. That terrible voice said to me: You burnt the ideas and the ideas will burn you!

Pray for me. Pray for God is pleased by the prayers addressed to him by the persecuted in favor of the persecutor.

The one who was a bishop and is no more than a penitent.”

That contrast between the words of the spirit and those of the man is not surprising. Every day we see people who think differently after their death from what they thought when alive, once the blindfold drops from the eyes and that is a proof of superiority. The only ones to persist on the error and on the prejudices of the earthly life are the inferior and vulgar Spirits.

When alive the Bishop of Barcelona saw Spiritism through a particular prism that altered its colors or better saying that he did not know. He now sees it in its true light and he probes its depth. Since the veil has fallen it is no longer a matter of opinion to him or an ephemeral theory and can be buried in the ashes. It is a fact. It is the revelation of a natural law, an irresistible law like gravity, a law that through the force of things must be accepted by all as everything else that is natural. That is what he understands now and that embarrassed him to say that “*that ideas that he wanted to burn will now burn him*” or in other words they shall prevail upon the prejudices that led him to condemn them.

We cannot wish it to be so for the threefold reason that a true Spiritist does not desire it to anyone, does not keep hard feelings, forgetting the offenses and, following the example of Jesus, forgive the enemies. Second because far from harming us he served us. Finally because he claims from us the prayer of the persecuted for the persecutor as being the most pleasing to God, a thoroughly charitable thought, worthy of the Christian humility revealed in his final words: “The one who was bishop and who is no more than a penitent”. Beautiful image of the earthly treasures left at the border of the grave by the soul who must present itself to God undressed from earthly imposed harnesses.

Spiritist, let us forgive him for the harm he intended to cause us as we would like to have our offenses forgiven and let us pray for him on the anniversary of the act of faith in Barcelona that took place on October 9th, 1861.

August 1862

Necrology – death of Mrs. Home

We read in the Nord, on July 15th, 1862:

“The famous Mr. Dunglas Home was in Paris these days. Not many people saw him. He had just lost his wife and sister of Countess Kouchelew-Bezborodko. However painful such a loss has been to him he said that it is less painful than to another man not because he loved her less but because death does not keep him away from the one who used to bear his name on Earth. They see one another and talk as lively as they used to do when together they inhabited the same planet. Mr. Home is Catholic and his wife, before exhaling her last breath, abjured her Greek religion in the presence of the Bishop of Périgueux. It took place at the Castle of Laroche, residence of Count Kouchelew.”

The tabloid – since it is just a tabloid like the Pre-Catalan where the note above is found – is signed by Nemo, one of the critics who did not spare the Spiritists from his mockery regarding the pretension of talking to the dead. Isn't that funny, Sir, to believe that our loved ones are not lost forever and that we will see them again? Isn't that ridicule and even silly and superstitious to believe that they are right beside us, that they can see us and listen to us, even if we do not see them, and that they can communicate with us? Mr. Home and his wife see one another and talk as vividly as if they were together. How absurd! And to think that right here in the XIX century, the century of lights, there would be people believing in such stupidities, much like in the novels of Perrault!

Have Mr. Trousseau answer that. The nothingness, talk to us about that! What is logical! We are free to do whatever we want in this life. At least we have no fear for the future. Yes, but where is the reward to the miserable ones? Nemo²², a singular pseudo name for the occasion!

22 Literally from Latin: no man, no one, nobody (TN)

August 1862

Spiritist Society of Constantine

Notice: We speak of the society that was formed in Constantine with the title *African Society of Spiritist Studies* under the auspices of the Parisian Society. We transcribe below a communication that was received at that Society when it was established:

“Although the works carried out by you up until now are not exempt of criticism, we do not wish to go over that given your heartfelt good will. We take intention into account before facts. Before anything else you must be aware of the greatness of the task here initiated and do your utmost to successfully achieve the results. That is the condition to have you assisted by superior Spirits.”

“Let us look into some points of the matter and see if you have not done any wrong. To begin with you made the great mistake of utilizing all of your mediums in the private communications. What is the general evocation if not an appeal to the good Spirits to communicate with you? Then, what you do? Instead of waiting after the general evocation, giving the good Spirits time to communicate through this or that medium according to the sympathies that might exist, you immediately move on to the private evocations. You must realize that this is not a good way of receiving spontaneous evocations as it is done in other societies. Thus, wait for some time and collect the general communications that will always teach you some needed truths. You can then pass on to the private evocations. In that case you must employ one medium only. Do not you know that only the superior Spirits may communicate through multiple mediums? You must not allow more than one medium for each private communication and if in doubt with respect to the truthfulness of the given answers then on another day you may employ another medium. You are just at the beginning of the Spiritist Science and you cannot harvest all the fruits given to the experimented followers. You should not, however, feel discouraged for your efforts to improve and propagate the immutable truth of God will be taken into account.”

“Hence, my friends, go on and may the ridicule that you will face more than once in your path not veer you off from the straight-line of the Spiritist belief.”

Jacques

The Spiritists of Constantine requested our intervention to ask Saint Augustine for his sponsorship of their Society. He gave us the following communication about it:

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, June 27th, 1862 – medium Mr. E. Vézy

First addressing the members of the Parisian Society he said:

“Our children from the New France did well in associating with you. They did well by not separating from the trunk. Be always united and the good Spirits will be with you.”

He then continues, now addressing those of Constantine:

“Friends, I feel happy for having been chosen to be your spiritual guide. Since I am connected to Earth through the great mission of its regeneration, I am pleased to be able to give you encouragement and even more so to a group of thinkers who are involved with the great idea and for being able to preside over your works. Thus, have my name in front of yours and the Spirits of my order will come to keep away those other Spirits who always surround assemblies that discuss moral laws and laws of progress.”

“May fraternity and concord be with you! Remember that all men are brothers and that the great objective of Spiritism is to have them one day united at the same home and have them seating at the table with the same father: God.”

“That is such a beautiful mission! It is a great joy to come to you to let you know about the divine designs! To reveal to you the wonders from beyond the grave! But you that are already initiated in these sublime truths spread the seed around you and your reward will be great. You shall enjoy its premises on Earth. What a joy! March on, always on the path of enlightenment, love and charity.”

“Pronounce my name with confidence at times of fear or doubt. Your hearts will soon be relieved from the pain and bitterness that it might contain. Do not forget that I will be with you anywhere you go on Earth to spread the evangelical apostolate. I will keep you all in my soul so that one day I can transfer you to a greater and stronger one. I will always be with you as I am here now. My voice will carry the sweetness that you will recognize for I do not like the screams or the acute sounds. You will always hear me saying: Love one another! Spare me the need for the whip that must hit the evil one. Although this may sometimes be needed may you never count among those! There will be a time when humanity will kindly march under the command of the good shepherd. I you, children, the ones who must help us in that regeneration and who must listen to the first call for here is the gathering herd and here is the shepherd.”

OBSERVATION: The spirit refers to a revelation of great importance made for the first time in a Spiritist group of a small African town in the middle of the desert, through a completely illiterate medium. The revelation that was transmitted to us immediately came from multiple places in France and abroad. Since then numerous very characteristic and detailed documents came to give it a kind of consecration. We will make it public in due course.

“Hence you must work and have courage. Discuss the matters in your meetings without emotions. Ask for our advice, our opinion, so that you do not make mistakes, or conclude heretic things. Above all do not make it an article of faith or a dogma. Keep in mind that God’s religion is the religion of the heart; that it is founded on one principle only that is charity and its development is based on the love of humanity. Never cut a single branch of the tree. It is stronger with all its branches and these branches perish when separated from the original trunk.”

“Keep in mind that Jesus wanted his church to be based on a stone in order to be solid in the same way that he commands that Spiritism must have one root only so that it may be stronger spread on the whole surface of the soil however arid and dry it may be.”

“An incarnate spirit was chosen to drive you, to guide you. Obey him with respect; not for his laws as they do not command you, but his wishes. Through your submission you will demonstrate to

your enemies that you are disciplined enough to take part in the new crusade against the error and superstition, the necessary spirit of love and obedience to march against barbarism.”

“Be then surrounded by this modern flag: Spiritism under one chief only and you will destroy these ideas of horny heads and long tails that must disappear. I will not tell you the name of that chief. He moves on and shows no fear before the bites of the serpents and the reptiles of envy and jealousy around him. He shall stand up for we have blessed him so that he will be always strong and robust. Follow him then. Storms shall fall upon your heads and some of you will not find refuge or shelter. These must show resignation like the Christian martyrs and understand that life and the awakening of dormant nations is the great work that claims their suffering, and that one day they shall be rewarded in the kingdom of our Father.”

Saint Augustine

The following passage was extracted from a recent letter sent to us by the President of the Constantine Society:

“We are all concerned, Europeans and Indigenous peoples alike. Several groups are formed around us and people get involved with Spiritism everywhere. The creation of our Society will at least have the merit of having drawn the attention to this new science. We still face some embarrassment but we are sustained by the Spirits to urge us to be patient, telling us that these are atonements that will result in victory of the society at up to a certain extent it will come out strengthened. We also face external opposition. The Church on one side and the Mosque on the other, claiming that we are under the influence of Satan and that our communications come from hell. We also have the mockers against us, given to sensuality and careless about their own fate, materialists or skeptical who reject everything related to this new life whose existence they deny. They keep their eyes and ears shut, calling us charlatans, trying to silence us by force or ridicule. We, nevertheless, proceed through the thorns. We do not lack very interesting mediums that daily come to us. We receive communications of multiple kinds and unforeseen incidents capable of convincing the fiercest unbeliever like an answer given in Italian by a person who ignores that language; answers to questions about the formation of Earth by a lady medium who did not study geology. Another group received messages with charming poetry.”

OBSERVATION: As seen the Muslim priests also brought the devil to the picture. It is remarkable that the priests of all denominations give him such a power that we can hardly know which part they attribute to God or how they understand God’s omnipotence. If it is absolute than the devil could not act without God’s permission; if it is partial then God is not God. Fortunately we have more faith in the infinite benevolence of God than His infinite vengeance and the devil became much discredited after having being taken to all theaters to play a role from comedy to opera. Thus the word devil today does not have more effect upon people than the images that the Chinese used to hand on the walls so as to send away the European barbarians. The unstoppable progress of Spiritism demonstrates the inefficacy of such means. One needs to find another one.

August 1862

Spiritist Society of Constantine

Letter from Mr. Reynaud to the Journal of Debates

The following letter was published in the Debates on July 06th, 1862:

“To the chief-editor,

Neuilly, July 2nd 1862

Dear Sir,

Allow me to respond to two accusations made by Mr. Franck in today's paper, accusing me of being a follower of pantheism and metempsychosis. I not only deny such accusations wholeheartedly but those who have honored me by reading my book entitled Earth and Heavens could see that my ideas are totally in opposition to the ideas found in my accusations. With respect to pantheism I will only say that the principle of God's personality is the starting point of my ideas and that not giving importance to what the Jews may think I believe like the Christians that creations proceeds from the whole trinity as I indicated on page 226 of the mentioned book; even better, I cite the actual text of St. Augustine whose authority I respect and I add: - If by staying away from the Middle Ages, with respect to the age of the world I had the minor chance of falling into the abyss of those who confuse God and the universe in some sort of unity with respect to eternity, I would stop. However, can I have the slightest doubt about it? Regarding the second accusation and with no concern if I think differently or share the ideas of Mr. Salvador, I will simply say that metempsychosis in how it is understood, in its vulgar sense, is the doctrine that exposes humanity to inhabit the body of animals after death. I deny it as the daughter of pantheism as I deny pantheism itself. I do believe that our future destiny is essentially based on the permanence of our personality. The feeling of such permanence may be temporarily eclipsed but never lost and the plentiful enjoyment is the first character of that blessed life to which all of us are continuously invited to in the more or lengthy course of our trials. Human's personality stems out very naturally from that of God.”

“On page 258 of that book one is asked: - How come God would not have created to his own image what he wanted to create at the plenitude of his love? And still in this point I refer to St. Augustine whose beautiful words I cite textually: - Considering then that we were created to the image of our Creator and like the prodigious son of the Gospels let us return to him after having stayed away from him through our sins.”

If the book Earth and Heavens distances itself from the ideas accepted by the Church it is not by the thesis of substance as intended by Mr. Franck, but only and if one can say so in a matter of time. It is taught that the duration of creation is proportional to its extension so that infinity reigns equally in both directions. It is also taught that our present life instead of representing the summation of the trials through which we are empowered to participate plentifully of the blessed life, being just one of the terms of a more or less lengthy series of analogous existences.”

“There you have, Sir, what can lead Mr. Franck to mistakes and whose criticism seemed to me the more fearful the more his character of loyalty is known by everyone.”

“Yours sincerely, etc...”

Jean Reynaud”

We can see that we were neither the only ones nor the first ones to promote the doctrine of plurality of the existences or the reincarnation. The book *Earth and Heavens* was published before *The Spirits’ Book*.

The same principle may be explicitly found in a brilliant brochure written by Mr. Louis Jourdan entitled *Les Prières de Ludovic*, whose first edition was published in 1849 by *the Livrarie-Nouvelle, Boulevard des Italiens*.

Fact is that the idea of reincarnation is not new. It is as old as the world and it is found in old as well as modern authors. To those who say that it is contrary to the dogmas of the Church we respond that it must be either one: reincarnation does exist or does not. There is no alternative. If it does exist it is a law of nature. Now if a dogma is contrary to one natural law we need to know which one is right, the dogma or the law. When the Church said anathema and expelled the ones guilty for the heresy of believing in the movement of Earth, it did not preclude Earth from moving and that everybody believe in that today. The same will happen to reincarnation. Then it is not a question of opinion but a question of fact. If the fact is a reality whatever people may do or say about it will not impede its existence and sooner or later the most skeptical will accept it. God does not ask about inconveniences to regulate the order of things and the future will prove who is right and who is wrong.

August 1862

**Pandus and Kurus
Reincarnation in ancient times**

One of our subscribers writes the following from Nantes:

“I found a passage of the Mahabharata in a book that discusses works written in Sanskrit. The text is about people’s beliefs in those remote days. I was greatly surprised in finding reincarnation there, a doctrine that seemed to be well understood at that time. This is the fact that allows the god Krishna to explain the theory of the Brahmans to the chief of the Pandus:

“Since the war had broken between the descendants of the Pandu, legitimate heirs to the throne, and the descendants of Kuru, the takers, the Pandus commanded by the hero Arjuna charged against the takers. It was a long and still uncertain battle. A truce allowed both armies to recover their strengths. Suddenly the trumpets sounded and both groups prepare for battle. White horses pulled the car of Arjuna, having the god Krishna by his side. The hero suddenly stopped between the two fields and extends his eyes to the enemy. Brothers against brothers, he says to himself; relatives against relatives to the point of slaying one another over the cadavers of their brothers! He then says, taken by a profound melancholy and a deep pain:

- *Krishna! These are our beloved relatives, standing and ready to destroy one another. Look! My body trembles, my face is pale, my blood is cold; a deadly cold runs in my veins giving me the goose flesh before the gruesome image. My hand cannot hold the bow; I hesitate; I cannot move forward or backward and my soul, taken by horror, seems to abandon me. Oh god of golden hair, tell me! Shall I be happy after I killed all my relatives? What shall be of the victory, the power and life when the very ones that I want to preserve have died in combat? Oh celestial conqueror, even if the price of their deaths were a triple world I would not like to have them dead for this miserable globe. No, I do not want that even if they are prepared to kill me ruthlessly.*
- *Those whose death you cry – responded the god – those do not deserve your pain; may they live, may they die, the wise man has no tears for life or death. There was no time when I did not exist, when you did not exist or when these warriors did not exist, and there will never be a time of death. The soul dressed in our bodies goes through youth, maturity and decrepitude and moving on to new bodies it restarts its journey. An eternal and indestructible god spreads out with his hands the universe where we are. Who would destroy a soul that he created? Who could destroy the works of the indestructible? The body is a fragile envelope that changes, is worn out and dies, but the soul, the eternal soul that we cannot conceive, that one never dies. To the fight, Arjuna! Charge your horses to the fight. The soul does not die. You do not destroy souls; the soul will not die; it cannot die or be born. It knows nothing about the present, the past or the future. It is old, eternal, always virgin, always young, immutable, and unchangeable. What is the meaning of a combat, of killing the enemies if not just to remove someone’s outfit? Go! Have no fear!*

Have no scruples to undress a worn piece of outfit; do not feel bad when you see your enemies and your brothers leaving behind their perishable outfits and their souls repainted with new forms. The soul is something that cannot be penetrated by the spear, that is not destroyed by the fire or deteriorated by the waters and it cannot be dried by the southern winds. Stop trembling.”

OBSERVATION: The idea of reincarnation is very well defined in this passage as, in fact, all Spiritist beliefs were in former times. There was only one missing principle: Charity. It was up to Jesus Christ to proclaim this supreme law, source of all earthly and celestial happiness.

August 1862

Planet Venus

An intermediary point

Spontaneous essay – medium Mr. Costel

Planet Venus is an intermediary point between Mercury and Jupiter. Its inhabitants have the same physical structure as you do. The only difference is in the beauty and perfection of the form. In Venus the subtleness of the air comparable to the high mountains is not adequate to your lungs. There is no disease there. Its inhabitants eat only fruit and dairy; they ignore the barbaric custom to feast on dead animals, ferocity that only exists in inferior planets; as a result, coarse needs of the body are eliminated, and love entails all passions and all perfections only dreamed on Earth.

Much like at dawn when the forms are indecisively dressed and covered by the morning mist, the almost perfection of the soul lives the ignorance and the desires of a happy infancy. A veiled happiness is surrounded by nature itself. The soft and round shapes do not show the stiffness and aggression of the earthly fields; the profound and still oceans ignore storms; the trees do not yield to the pressure of the winds and the winter does not subtract their greenness; nothing is noisy; everything smiles, everything is smooth. The quiet and kind customs do not require repression to remain pure and strong. Family expression takes a political form. Each tribe or group of individuals has a leader who is elected out of the elderly. The old age is the apogee of human dignity there since it approaches the desired objective. Exempt of diseases and ugliness it is calm and radiant like a beautiful afternoon in the autumn. Earthly industry that responds to the restless search for the well being disappears in the superior regions where they hold no meaning. They are replaced by a sublime art that cannot be imagined by your gross feelings. Outfits are uniform. Long white and harmoniously pleated tunics cover the bodies. Everything is easy to those who only wish to reach God, undressed from material interests, living with simplicity and almost luminous.

Georges

Questions about the preceding essay

Parisian Society, June 27th, 1862 – Medium Mr. Costel

1. You described Venus through your favorite medium. We are delighted with its agreement with respect to what has been said although with less accuracy. We beg you to complement it by responding to a few questions. To begin with tell us how you know about that world.
– A. I am in errant²³ but inspired by superior Spirits. I was sent to Venus on a mission.

²³ A spirit that is not incarnate but requires future incarnations to achieve perfection. After perfection is achieved there is no need for reincarnation and the spiritual world is the definite and permanent dwelling of the spirit. (TN)

2. Can Earth inhabitants incarnate there directly after having left our planet? – A. After leaving Earth the more advanced experience a more or less lengthy erraticism²⁴ that frees them from the imperfectly broken carnal links by death.

OBSERVATION: The question was not about the possibility of incarnating there to the inhabitants of Earth but if they could do so directly, that is to say, without going through intermediary worlds. The answer indicates that it is possible to the more advanced ones.

3. Does the state of advancement of Venus' inhabitants allow them to remember their passage through inferior worlds and by that the establishment of a comparison between the two situations? – A. Humans look to the past with the eyes of the mind glancing at something that is extinct. Thus, an advanced spirit sees with the same speed of the movement, faster than electricity, a beautiful discovery closely related to the Spiritist revelation. Both contain the material and intellectual progress.

OBSERVATION: In order to establish a comparison it is not absolutely necessary to know the position that someone has occupied. It is sufficient to know the material and moral condition of inferior worlds where one might have inhabited to identify the difference. Thus, taking into account what we are told about Mars we should be glad for no longer being there and, without leaving Earth, we can just look at the barbarians and ferocious peoples to know that we must have gone passed through that state and feel much happier. We only have hypothetical information about other worlds but it is possible that in those more advanced worlds one may have a greater degree of certainty than we have here.

4. Is life duration there proportionally longer or shorter than that of Earth? – A. In Venus reincarnation lasts much longer than on Earth. Without human violence, embedded in a vivifying influence the soul experiences wings that takes it to glorious planets like Jupiter and other similar ones.

OBSERVATION: As we have already noticed the duration of corporeal life seems to be proportional to the progress of the worlds. In his goodness God wanted to abbreviate the trials in inferior worlds. There is a physical reason to be added to that: the more advanced the world the less devastated the bodies by passions and diseases that are their consequence.

5. According to your description we are led to believe that given the character of Venus' inhabitants there are no wars, disputes, hatred and envy there. – A. The human being only becomes what is expressed in words and their limited minds cannot reach infinity. Hence you even attribute your passions and inferior motives to the superior planets; these are viruses placed in your own beings for the harshness of the starting point, from which you only heal slowly. Divisions, disagreements and wars are unknown in Venus as much as anthropophagy is unknown among you.

24 The state of being errant as above (TN)

OBSERVATION: Given the multiple social echelons Earth, in fact, shows a large number of types that can give us an idea about the worlds where each of those types constitute the normal state.

6. What is the status of religion in that planet? – A. Religion is the constant and active adoration of the Supreme Being. Adoration, however, exempt of any mistake, of any cult of idolatry.
7. Are all the inhabitants at the same levels or, like on Earth, some are more advanced than others? In such a case that inhabitants of Earth correspond to the least advanced there? – A. Proportionally there is the same inequality among the inhabitants of Venus and Earth. The least advanced are the stars of planet Earth that is your geniuses and virtuous people.
8. Are there masters and servants? – A. Servility is the first degree of initiation. The slaves of antiquity, like those of modern America, are creatures destined to advance in an environment superior to their previous incarnation. Inferior creatures are subordinated to superior ones everywhere but in Venus such subordination cannot be compared to the physical subordination that exists on Earth for the superior ones are not lords but fathers of the inferior ones. Instead of exploiting they help them to advance.
9. Has Venus arrived gradually to the present position? Has it gone through the current levels of Earth and Venus? – A. There is remarkable unit in the whole divine work. Like the creatures, like everything that is created, animal or vegetable, the planets inevitably advance. Life in its multiple expressions is a perpetual ascension to the Creator. It develops the levels of its eternity in a huge spiral.
10. We received agreeing communications about Jupiter, Mars and Venus. Why have we only got contradictory messages about the Moon that does not allow a unique opinion? – A. This void will be filled out soon and you will have revelations about the Moon that are so clear and accurate as you have about the planets. Later you will understand the reasons why they have not been given yet.

OBSERVATION: This communication about Venus does not certainly have the absolute characters of authenticity and that is the reason why we publish it with a conditional title. What has already been said about that planet, however, gives this message a certain degree of possibility but regardless it contains the picture of a world that must necessarily exist to any person who does not hold the proud and pretentious belief that Earth is the apogee of human perfection; it is rather a link in the chain of planets and an accessible level to those who are not strong enough to promptly inhabit Jupiter.

August 1862

Letter to the journal of Saint-Jean-d'Angély

We found the letter below in the journal of Saint-Jean-d'Angély on June 15th, 1862:

“To Mr. Pierre de L... editor of the journal Le Mellois.

In a letter addressed to the Le Mellois from June 8th last you issued a challenge to what you call the little church of Saint-Jean-d' Angély. Shocked by the fact that you were rejected by Mr. Borreau who did not want to receive you, you turned against your comrade in Spiritism to question him. Although I am not the remarkable medium that you mentioned I take the liberty of sending you a few observations.

What could have been your objectives on challenging first Mr. Borreau and later the Spiritists of Saint-Jean-d' Angély to have the spirit of Jacques Bujault evoked? A joke to terminate the civil and organic war that seems to stain the fertile fields of Poitou with blood? If that is so I do believe that you must understand that the honor of serious and rightful people who firmly believe in the principles established about the phenomena, whose certainty they acknowledge, force them not to get into your game. Like the skeptical, you certainly have the right to laugh at those theories. You know well Sir that people laugh at everything in France. Nonetheless, and however good your joke, it is not new and among others a certain journalist of the paper to whom I address this letter had already used it.

If the issue was raised in all seriousness, allow me to say that you have not taken a good route to achieving your objective. The mockery contained in your first article would not have Mr. Borreau convinced of your sincerity. He was in his own right to doubt and not give you the opportunity for a discussion about the evocation of the prior whom you know. Your satire about the uselessness of Spiritism and the dissidence that divides the followers will not convince Mr. C... about your good faith with which you claim its lights. If you truly wish to solve such a problem then the best, simplest and most convenient way in my opinion is to come to the Upper Room, and there, stripping from any preconceived ideas, making a clean sweep of any previous prevention, coldly examine the phenomena that will take place before you, and submit them to the criterion of certainty. If once or twice you believe to have being exposed to hallucinations then repeat the experiences. Spiritualism will tell you like Christ did to Thomas:

Empty pedes, empty manus,

Noli esse incredulus.²⁵

And if such experiments always lead to the same result, you must trust the testimony of your senses, according to every rule of logic, unless you are reduced to a Pyrrhonian skepticism something that I am far from believing. If, on the contrary, your articles were nothing more than a game to

25 From the Latin, “empty feet, empty hands, do not be unbeliever” (TN)

entertain local disputes fed by the clumsy vote of the Agricultural Society of Niort, you may than continue your funny jokes, brilliant attacks admired by us, the uninterested spectators. Then allow the Spiritist to keep their faith. In fact, mockery is not always right. The aphorism: 'ridicule kills' is not perfectly accurate and one could say about such cruel weapon, particularly among ourselves, what was said to a character of a comedy: 'all those that you killed are doing fine'.

*People have laughed at all great things and have treated them as madness but that did not preclude them from taking place. The existence of another continent was laughed at but America was still discovered; the steam engine was disdained and here we are in the century of the railroads; people laughed at the *Pyroscaphe*²⁶ and at Fulton the inventor and now they navigate oceans and rivers; they laughed at – show reverence Sir – Jesus Christ and his sublime madness, the madness of the cross, conquered the whole world. Thus, if Spiritism is momentarily exposed to the epigrams of the descendent of Voltaire, it nonetheless follows its path. Future will tell. If this system is founded on truth, neither passions nor jokes will prevail against it; if it is nothing more than a mistake – a generous mistake, one must confess – it will meet obliviousness like the many thousands aberrations of the spirit in this century of materialism, aberrations that have veered off the human spirit under multiple and strange names.*

Please receive, Sir, the expression of my sincere courtesy.

A follower.”

OBSERVATION: This is not the first time that a follower accepts the challenge issued by a derider against Spiritism and more than one among them realized that they were facing adversaries that were stronger and in larger number than they thought. Many now understand that the best thing to do is to be quiet. One must then say that the Spiritist ideas have crossed the fence achieving the opponent's field where they begin to feel outdated and then wait. Spiritism these days is no longer professed in secrecy. We now openly say that we are Spiritists as we would say that we are French, English, Catholic, Jewish or Protestant, partisan of this or that other Philosophy. Any puerile fear has vanished. Then, may all Spiritists have the courage of sustaining their opinion because that is how the detractors will shut up and have food for thought. Spiritism grows incessantly like a rising wave that surrounds a formerly great island and that soon will be reduced to a point. What will the detractors do when they find themselves standing on that little island continuously reduced by the new ideas? We see the dragging wave growing. That is why we are no worried. One day, though, those standing terrified on the little island will reach out to us and seek help.

²⁶ The first steam-powered ship the *Pyroscaphe* was a paddle steamer; it was built in France in 1783 by Marquis Claude de Jouffroy. (TN)

August 1862

Punishment of a greedy man

François Riquier was a very simple, old bachelor who died in C... about four or five years ago, leaving a considerable fortune to relatives. He was formerly a property owner for a place inhabited by one of our colleagues, Mrs. F... The lady had completely forgotten him. Lately her daughter who is subjected to crises of catalepsy followed by spontaneous magnetic sleep saw Mr. Riquier in that sleeping state when he then said that he wanted to approach her mother. A few days later the young lady who also was a good writing medium wrote the message below in which Mr. Riquier accurately provided his name and address. Since the young lady did not know such address she was surprised by the accuracy after verification. Here is the communication that is an example of the penalties reserved to guilty Spirits. Since the communication was spontaneous and he indicated his interest in speaking to Mrs. F... he was then asked this:

- Q. What is it that you want from us?
- A. I want my money that was taken by those miserable ones who split it among themselves. The dismantling of my estate as if it were not mine. They sold my farms, my houses and divided everything. Do me justice since they cannot hear me and I cannot witness such outrage. They say I was greedy and yet they keep my money! Why do not they want to give it back to me since they believe it is bad money?
- Q. But you are dead, poor man. You no longer need money. Ask God for a new life as a poor person in order to atone the greed of this last one.
- A. No. I cannot live in poverty. I need my money to live. As a matter of fact I do not need a new life for I am alive now.

The question below was asked with the intent of bringing him back to reality.

- Q. Are you suffering?
- A. Oh! Yes. I suffer horrendous tortures, worse than the cruelest disease, because it is my soul that endures such tortures. The iniquity of my life is always present in my mind, iniquity that was reason for scandals to others. I know well that I am a miserable person, unworthy of anybody's pity so much so that I need your help to leave such a miserable state.
- Q. We will pray for you.
- Thank you. Ask God that I may forget my earthly wealth without which I could never repent. Good-bye and thank you.

Francois Riquier
Rue de la Charité, 114

OBSERVATION: This example and many other analogous demonstrate that the spirit may keep the idea of still being in the corporeal world for many years. Such an illusion is not a privilege of cases of violent death. It seems to be a consequence of the level of materialism of the earthly life and the persistence of such a materialistic feeling that cannot be defeated is a torment to the spirit. Besides, we find here a proof that the spirit is a being similar to the corporeal one with the difference that it is fluid because in order to keep the idea that he is still in this world and that he is still or believe to be in business it is necessary that there is a form, a body like when alive. If there were only a breath left, a smoke, a spark, the spirit would not be fooled by the situation. That is how the study of the even vulgar Spirits enlightens us with respect to the real condition in the invisible world and confirms the most important truths.

August 1862

The merit of prayer

The same person mentioned in the preceding fact one day spontaneously received the following communication but in principle not understanding its origin.

“You have not forgotten me and I had never had your forgiveness. It is true that I caused a lot of harm but I have been punished for a long time. My suffering has not ended. I see you going about doing your duties with so much courage to provide for the needs of your family and envy ceaselessly devours my heart. Your...”

We stopped here to ask who that person was. The spirit added:

“Do not interrupt me. I will give you a name when I finish. I followed your resignation and that was one of my greatest sufferings. Have some compassion on my soul if you are really a disciple of Jesus. I was too much alone on Earth although surrounded by relatives and envy was my greatest fault. It was envy that made me dominate your husband. It seemed that you regained control over him when I met you and that was when I put myself between the two of you. Forgive me and have courage. God will have mercy on you. My sister the one that I oppressed my whole life was the only one to pray for me but yours are the prayers that I miss the most. The others do not bring me the seal of forgiveness. Good-bye. Forgive!”

Angele Rouget”

The lady then adds: *“I then remembered perfectly well that person deceased some twenty five years ago and to whom I have given no thoughts for a long time. I ask myself how much wouldn't her sister's prayers, a virtuous, kind, resigned and dedicated person, be more fruitful than mine. You must certainly realize that I have forgiven and prayed.*

Answer: The spirit explains that when says *“prayers form others do not bring me the seal of forgiveness”*. In fact since that lady was the one particularly offended by the deceased, her prayers were dressed in forgiveness and that would certainly touch even more the guilty spirit! Her sister was in a way doing her duty; on the other side there is an act of charity. The offended had more rights and merit to request grace; her forgiveness must then alleviate the spirit. Now, we know that the main effect of prayer is to act upon the moral side of the spirit as much to calm down as to lead the spirit to good. By doing so the prayer expedites the clemency of the Supreme Judge who always forgives the repentant sinner.

Imperfect as it is before the divine justice, human justice frequently offers some similar examples. If a person is taken to the court by the offenses addressed to someone, there is nobody more capable of granting acquittal to that person than the offended who may generously withdraw the complaint.

Having the message above been read at the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, the following question was framed by one of the members:

“Q. The Spirits constantly ask for prayers from the mortals. Would that be the case that the good Spirits do not pray in favor of those in suffering? And, in that case, why would our prayers be more efficient?”

The following answer was given by St. Augustine in the same session, through the medium Mr. E. Vézy:

“Pray always, my children; I have told you already: the prayer is like a beneficent drizzle than can turn the over dried earth less arid. I come still to repeat and add a few words as an answer to the question. You ask why the suffering Spirits prefer to ask for your prayers rather than ours. Are the prayers of the mortals more efficient than those of the good Spirits?”

Who told you that your prayers were capable of spreading consolation and giving strength to weak Spirits who cannot go to God but with effort and many times without courage? If they beg for your prayers it is because they have the merit of the earthly emanations that voluntarily rise up to God. They always appreciate it since they come from your charity and love. The prayer is an act of abnegation to you; to us it is a duty. The incarnate who prays for the neighbor accomplish the noble task of pure Spirits; without having their courage and strength, realize their wonders!

It is an attribute of our life to console the spirit that suffers but one of your prayers is a collar that you take from your neck to give to the beggar; it is the bread that you take from your table to give to the hungry and that is why your prayers are pleasing to the one who receives them. Doesn't the father always yield to the prayer of the prodigal son? Doesn't he call all servants to kill the beautiful veal to celebrate the return of the guilty son? How would he not do even more for the one who would kneel and say: Oh Father! I am wicked but I am not asking for myself; forgive my repentant brother, who is weaker and less culpable than me!”

Oh! That is when the father acknowledges; that is when every gift of love is taken from the heart to the son. He says: “You were full of iniquities; you said yourself that you were a criminal; but, understanding the greatness of your faults you have not asked for grace towards you; you accept the suffering of my punishment and despite the tortures you find enough strength to ask in favor of your brother!” Well, then! The father doesn't want to be more charitable than the son: he forgives both; he will hold their hands so that they can move on and follow the straight line that leads to his glory.

Now you know, my children, why the suffering Spirits that wander around you beg for your prayers; *we must pray*; you *can pray*. Prayer from the heart is the soul of the souls if I can say so; it is the sublime quintessence that rises virgin, beautiful and radiant to the vastest soul of God.”

Saint Augustine

August 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The conquest of the future

Group from Sainte-Gemme-Tarn, medium Mr. C...

The Spiritist idea is growing. It will soon cover the French soil from North to South, from East to West. The milestones are set apart accordingly. You are the landmarks. You shall have the honor of delineating the route to be followed by your neighbors with our advices. Be united not only through a common thought but also with a common action. The phase of experimentation and observation is over. Now is time for application. You must act and act fearlessly. Do not look backwards. On the contrary, stare at the future and contemplate the objective and the obstacles in your way. If you waste time counting your steps instead of advancing rapidly you will fail your mission. Take the traveler's cane and move on! But do not travel alone. May the whole Spiritist army, this vanguard of the evangelical doctrine, travel together.

Unite, consult one another and fly towards the conquest of the future.

Hippolyte Fortoul

August 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The Pentecost

Group from Sainte-Gemme-Tarn, medium Mr. C...

The Spirit of God breathes upon the world so as to regenerate His children. If God does not show up any more like tongs of fire as in the time of the apostles He is not less present among you. Pray with all your heart to the Almighty so that you are worthy and take advantage of the moral benefits and every imperishable gift that God found adequate to spread over the heads of the apostles of Christ. Ask and you shall be given, and nothing that you may ask to the benefit of your moral progress will be denied. Once more, pray with all your heart but allow your heart to speak and not your lips; or even if your lips move may they only repeat what your heart is saying. Once animated by the Spirit of God your happiness will be so great that you cannot imagine. It depends on you to achieve that. From that moment your days will be just considered as a stretch of the path to achieve the destiny and where, at the end of the day, are going to receive your meal and a shelter for the night. The small amount of relative importance that you must associate to the earthly things must not distract you from your very serious material duties. In the eyes of God it is a serious mistake if you do not consciously perform your everyday duties. Nothing that has come out of God's hands must be neglected. Within limits you must enjoy the material assets that you were given. Your duty is to share them with your brothers and sisters who were precluded from them and do not keep them exclusively to you. A pure conscience, a boundless charity and a limitless humility, that is the best prayer to attract the Saint Spirit. It is the true *Veni Creator* but that does not mean that the one sung at the church is not a prayer that will be blessed whenever it comes from the heart; as it has been said many times the intention is everything, the form is nothing. Pray through your actions so that the Saint Spirit comes to visit you and spill upon your soul the strength that gives you the faith necessary to overcome the miseries of human existence on Earth and to reach out to those brothers and sisters whose weaknesses of spirit preclude them from seeing the light, without which you can only grope around, risking to shock against every obstacle spread on your way. The true happiness sought by everyone is there, reachable by everybody. It is a matter of will to reach it.

Make your firm and good resolutions and then you shall not lack the Spirit of God, rest assured. Love your neighbor as yourself for the love of God and you will have dignified the very day when the Saint Spirit came to visit the apostles of Christianity.

Hyppolyte Fortoul

August 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Forgiveness

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. A. Didier

How can one find the strength to forgive? The sublimity of forgiveness is the death of Christ on the Golgotha. I have already told you that Jesus summarized in his life all human struggles and anguishes. All of those who deserved the Christian name died with forgiveness in their lips. The defenders of the oppressed liberties, the martyrs of great causes and truths have understood so much the elevation and sublimity of his life that they did not fail at the last minute and forgave. If Augustus forgiveness is not entirely sublime historically, the Augustus of Corneille, the great tragic, owns himself and the universe for he forgives. Ah! How petty those who owned the world and did not forgive! How great the one who had all spiritual humanities in the future centuries and forgave! Forgiveness is an inspiration and sometimes an advice given by the Spirits. Unfortunate are those who shut their ears to that voice. They are punished, as the Scriptures say, because they had ears and did not hear. Then! If you want to forgive, if you feel weak before yourself, contemplate the death of Christ. The one who knows oneself easily wins the battle against oneself. That is why a great prince of old wisdom knew to know himself, before anything else. The athletes were taught the safe ways of winning the great battles before they were sent to the fields of war. In the academia Socrates taught that there was a Supreme Being and later on and centuries before Jesus he taught the whole Greek nation to die and forgive.

A vicious and weak person does not forgive. Someone used to the personal fights, to the fair thoughts and reflections easily forgives.

Lamennais

August 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Vengeance

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. de B...M...

Vengeance pleases the heart, said the poet. Oh! Blind people who give free ride to the ugliest passions. You believe to harm your neighbor with your blows and do not notice that they come back against you. It is not only a crime but also an absurd misunderstanding. Brothers, it is like bad feelings, hatred, jealousy, children of pride, the means utilized by the Spirits of darkness to attract to them those who they feel may escape them. It is the most infallible instrument of moral ruin that could reach human's hands by the enemies who rejoice with their moral defeat.

You must all resist, children of Earth, to this wicked attraction, and rest assured that if someone has deserved your rage, it is not in the heat of the anger that you will find peace of mind. Deliver it to the hands of the Almighty and He will pronounce with respect to your rights and the justice of your cause. There is something degrading and impious to the spirit in vengeance. No, vengeance is not compatible with perfection. While someone keeps such feelings they will stay in the basements of the spiritual world. But you shall not be the eternal toy of that unfortunate passion. I guarantee that the abolition of the false notion of the eternal hell, or better saying, the eternal penalties that have served as a pretext or at least as an excuse to acts of vengeance, it will be the dawn of a new era of tolerance and kindness that shall not be long to extend even to regions that lack a moral life.

Could humans condemn vengeance when God was presented to them as someone jealous and vindictive that personally promotes the eternal tortures? Stop people; stop insulting the Divinity, transferring to God your own ignoble passions. You shall then be, oh inhabitants of Earth, a God blessed people. You who hear me you must proceed in a liberating way, a way that frees the soul from the shameful actions contrary to charity so that you may deserve to be admitted at the sacred sanctuary whose doors can only be opened by charity.

Pierre Ange, protector spirit

August 1862

Bibliography

Spiritism in Lyon

Communications from beyond the grave, select manifestations from the Spiritist Society of Brotteaux with the epigraph: “Spiritism is not imposed; it is reached by necessity”. Allan Kardec, *The Spiritist Review* 1861. Brochure in-8° 32 pages, followed with four mediumistic drawings. Price 75 cents. At the main bookstores in Lyon and at the Ledoyen in Paris.

This is the first of a series of brochures to be published at undetermined times. It contains a collection of messages received in the Brotteaux group directed by Mr. Déjoud, manager at an atelier. All those communications are in full agreement with the doctrine found in *The Spirits' Book* and breathe the healthiest moral with the unquestionable sponsorship of good and benevolent Spirits.

The style is simple, family-like, perfectly adapted to the environment where they were given and do not carry abstract ideas. The good Spirits want to instruct, before anything else, hence they position themselves at the level of the audience, giving little importance to the satisfaction of those who appreciate pompous styles and do not take advantage of the lessons. To them the essential thing is that the instruction is good and penetrates people's hearts. Our understanding is that from that point of view the collection fully achieves the objective.

We happily take this opportunity to congratulate Mr. Déjoud, leader of that group, one of the largest in Lyon, for his enthusiasm and perseverance in the propagation of Spiritism among the workers, his brothers.

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The third volume of “Revelations from beyond the grave” by Mrs. Dozan will be published soon.

Allan Kardec²⁷

27 Paris, typography of Cosson and Co., rue de Four-St-German, 44

September 1862

Inauguration of a Spiritist Center in Bordeaux

Despite certain resistance, Spiritist centers multiply daily. It is a duty and a pleasure to present to our many readers the inaugural speech given in one of those by its founder Mr. Condat on March 20th, 1862.

The way in which the serious question of Spiritism is presented demonstrates how much it is understood with respect to its objective and true social reach. We are pleased to say that such a feeling is now general for curiosity is replaced by the search for instruction and betterment. That is what we verified in our visits with several towns.

We saw them dedicated to instructive communications, and the mediums who received them appreciating their value. It is a characteristic fact in the history of establishment of Spiritism. We do not know the referred group but we can assess its tendencies based on the inaugural speech. The speaker would not have used such a language before a lighthearted and superficial audience just gathered for distraction. Serious meetings are the ones that give a serious idea of Spiritism and that is one it is never too much to incentivize their multiplication.

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“Ladies and gentlemen,

I would like to thank you for accepting my invitation. Now please allow me to address you with some words about the reason for our gathering. Given my lack of presentation skills. I hope you will still find the conviction of a man profoundly dedicated to the progress of humanity. Frequently the fearless traveler willing to reach the mountain summit finds the narrow path obstructed by a rock; on other occasions during the ages when humanity tries to approach God an obstacle is found: the rock is materialism. Humanity stations for some time, perhaps for centuries, but obeying the invincible power that acts in proportion to the resistance, it wins the battle against the obstacle and humanity. As humanity is always required to move forward, it reestablishes the march with greater inspiration. Hence, ladies and gentlemen, let us not be surprised by the announcement of one of those great ideas that better illustrates the celestial nature of the human beings; when one of those prodigious facts takes place, coming to confuse restrictive calculations and limited observations of the materialistic science.

Let us not be amazed and above all let us not be discouraged by the resistances that oppose anything that serves to demonstrate that humans are not just formed by a little bit of clay whose elements return to earth after death. Instead, let us attest and attest joyfully, we the followers of Spiritism, the children of the nineteenth century, a century that was the most comprehensive manifestation of skepticism and its discouraging consequences; let us attest that humanity advances!

Behold the ongoing progress of Spiritism in this great, beautiful and intelligent town. Look around and see the doubt-giving place to the clarity of this new science.

Let us count, ladies and gentlemen, and let us sincerely confess how many among us still, even yesterday, bore a smile of disbelief in our lips, and today we are on our way, the hearts resolved not to back down. It is understandable since we follow and are dragged by the flow.

What is this doctrine then ladies and gentlemen? Where will it take us?

Awake human courage, support humanity in those weak moments, fortify humanity against the vicissitudes of life, cheer up people's faith and demonstrate the immortality of the soul not only philosophically but also through the facts, that is the doctrine and where it takes us!

Which other doctrine can produce better moral and intellectual results? Will it be the denial of a future life that would be offered as a preferable alternative in the interest of humanity and towards a moral and intellectual perfection of every one individually?

Taking by principle the following words that summarize materialism, what can be produced other than the void? – *Everything is over when the grave is open.*

I have a painful feeling, a kind of shame for having established a parallel between these two extremes. The hope of finding a better world, our loved ones whose souls opened their wings, the invincible horror that we feel and even the atheist feels when thinking that it will all be annihilated with the last breath of the material part of our being, all that would be enough to keep away any idea of comparison.

Nonetheless, ladies and gentlemen, if all the reassurance contained in Spiritism were only a matter of belief; if it were just a purely speculative system, an ingenious work of fiction, as objected by the apostles of materialism, saying that the objective is to submit certain weak intelligences to some rules arbitrarily called virtues and by doing so keeping them away from the seductive appetite of matter, a compensation that on a pitiful day the author of this fatal order of things, who gives everything to some and suffering to the majority just as a distraction.

Wouldn't those ingenious combinations, ladies and gentlemen, established as a consequence of an unfounded principle and as a sole result of imagination, wouldn't they be another torment added to the fatality that the strong and rational intelligences cannot avoid?

Demonstration, no doubt, is something remarkable. It tests, before anything else, human reason and soul, the abstraction of matter. But until now its only starting point has been Descartes saying: '*I think hence I exist.*'

Today Spiritism came to give a huge push to the principle of immortality of the soul, based on tangible and irrefutable facts.

All the above explains why and how we gathered here. However, ladies and gentlemen, allow me to describe an impression that I have always had, a constantly renewed desire every time I found a society whose objective was the moral betterment of human race. I wish I had taken part in the first group, the first communications from soul to the soul of the founders; I wish I had presided over the development of the germ of the idea that, like the grain that turns into a giant, later produced abundant fruits.

Well, ladies and gentlemen! Today that I can gladly propose the formation of a new Spiritist group my idea has plentiful support and I beg you to join me and keep in your minds and hearts this day March 20th.

Now, ladies and gentlemen, it is time to put hands on and I might be late. Without transition to fix the waste of time much dedicated to a relief I will touch the objective of our meeting, asking you to be forewarned against an objection that will naturally occur to you as it did to me about the indispensable need of mediums in the formation of a Spiritist group. That is an apparent but not a true difficulty. In the beginning the absence of mediums in our sessions will not make them sterile, believe me. Here is an idea that I would like to submit to your advice:

The first part of each session would be dedicated to the reading of *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book*. The second part would be dedicated to the formation of mediums among us and believe me, ladies and gentlemen, if we follow the advices given by our venerable Mr. Allan Kardec in these books the mediumistic faculty will soon develop in most of us. Our works will then receive their greatest and kind reward because God, the creator of all things, the infallible judge, will make no mistake with respect to the righteous use of that we intent to make of the precious mediumistic faculty. He will certainly give us the most beautiful reward, allowing us to have among us one medium at the same level as the several mediums that we are fortunate to have among us tonight.

Our dear brothers Gourgues and Sabo that I have the honor of introducing to you, wanted to give our inaugural session the highest degree of importance by attending it. We beg them to give us the hope of visiting us with the frequency that is possible. Their presence will strengthen our faith and stimulate those among us that could feel discouraged before any initial disappointments in their first mediumistic attempts.

In particular, ladies and gentlemen, let us not take the wrong path. Let us be clear about the precise nature of our endeavor and its objective. It would be a regrettable mistake by anyone who wanted to take part in our organization just in the hopes of finding here futile distractions and misaligned with the good moral preached by the good Spirits.

'The essential aim of Spiritism', said our honorable chief, 'is the betterment of people. In Spiritism one can only look for what can help the moral and intellectual progress. Let us not forget that the belief in Spiritism is only beneficial to the person that may say: Today I am better than yesterday'.

Let us not forget that our planet is a purgatory where we atone in our current existence the faults carried out in previous ones. This demonstrates, ladies and gentlemen, that none of us may be considered perfect since we will reincarnate whilst there are faults to be atoned. Hence, our presence on Earth attests our imperfection.

Spiritism placed the landmarks of the route leading to God. Let us move on keeping our eyes on them. The line delineated by the good Spirits, geometricians of God, is sided by cliffs and thorns. Let us not fear the bruises. What are the ulcers compared to the eternal happiness that shall welcome the traveler at the end of the trip.

Such an objective, ladies and gentlemen, has been the object of my meditations for a long time. Looking back into my past and recognizing the thorn bush that hurt me, the obstacle that made me

stumble, I could not but do what every person must do at least once in their life time: the balance of joyful moments and disappointments, the good moments of courage and those of discouragement. With a tranquil mind and a free soul, I said to myself: Human existence is just a dream, but a horrible dream that begins when the soul or incarnate spirit of the child is illuminated by the first sparks of intelligence to terminate at the moment of death. Death! This disgraceful word to so many people in reality is just the awakening from that bad dream, the compassionate benefactor that frees us from the unbearable nightmare that followed us every step of the way since birth.

I speak in general but not in absolute terms. The life of a righteous person has a different character. The great deeds, the great and useful things illuminate their dreams. For such a person the transition from life to death is not painful. Nothing that could compromise the future spiritual life is left behind, a future life that is the reward for the good deeds.

To the voluntary blind ones who had their eyes closed to good, who denied the existence of God, who refused to contemplate God's divine works as well as the proofs and manifestations of His goodness, His justice and His power, to those I say that the awakening will be terrible, full of bitter regrets, particularly for having neglected the healthy advices of their Spiritist brothers. The moral suffer that they will endure will last until a true repentance takes place and God will have pity on them through the concession of a new incarnation.

Many people still see the works of the devil in the Spiritist communications. Their number, however, diminishes on a daily basis. Such a fortunate reduction is due to the curiosity of visiting Spiritist groups and reading *The Spirits' Book* for among the curious there are people who become convinced particularly those who read the book.

Make no mistake, ladies and gentlemen, you will not make many followers by just bringing them to our sessions. I have a strong conviction that a person completely strange to Spiritism will not be convinced by what they may see in our activities. Such a person will, on the contrary, tend to laugh at the phenomena instead of taking them seriously.

As for myself, ladies and gentlemen, I believe I have done much more for Spiritism by leading someone to read *The Spirits' Book* than taking that person to one of our sessions. When I am sure that the book was read and that it gave good results, something that cannot be different, then I am pleased to take that person to a Spiritist group. I am positive that at that moment the person will understand everything that is happening and the one who would possibly laugh will experience opposite feelings. I do not mean to say that the person will cry.

The best way to finish this is with a citation from *The Spirits' Book*. This will convince the ones who do not believe in the truthful foundation of the Spiritist beliefs more than with my words.

‘Those who say that the Spiritist beliefs threaten to invade the world are for that very reason attesting its power for an idea that completely lacks logic will not become universal. If then Spiritism is established everywhere, if it recruits particularly in the enlightened echelons of society, as everybody acknowledges, the reason is its true foundation. The efforts of the detractors will be vain against such tendency. A proof of that is that the ridicule that they try to impinge on Spiritism

far from stopping it seems to give it a new breath. Such a result totally justifies what the Spirits have told us many times: - Do not worry about the opposition. Everything that will be done against you will revert in your favor and your greatest adversaries will unwillingly serve your cause. The will of humans will not prevail against God's will.”

Condat

September 1862

Letter from Mr. Dombre to a preacher

Having the Dominican Friar F... preached in Marmande in the last month of May he decided to throw some stones against Spiritism in one of his last sermons. Mr. Dombre would like to have the opportunity to discuss the subject in a broader way and that instead of having Friar F... attacking with banalities that he should touch matters of substance. Fearing that his name would not have the necessary prestige to convince the Friar he then sent him the letter below, signing with the pseudo name *A Catholic*.

“Dear Mr. Preacher,

I follow closely your dogmatic instructions every evening. Given a deplorable fatality I arrived later than usual on Friday and learned after leaving the Church that you had started with a harsh attack against Spiritism. I feel happy for that in the name of every devout Catholic.

If I learned right, these are the points that were discussed:

- 1. Spiritism is a new religion, from the XIX century;*
- 2. It is unquestionable that there are communications with the Spirits;*
- 3. In the well-established and attested communications with the Spirits you have demonstrated, after long and serious studies about Spiritism, that the Spirits who give communications are nothing else but the devil;*
- 4. Finally that it would be dangerous, from the point of view of salvation of the soul, to deal with Spiritism before the Church pronounces about it.*

I do appreciate this fourth item but if one recognizes beforehand that it is the devil then the Church has nothing else to do.²⁸

²⁸ Since the Church has not yet pronounced the issue of the devil, it is no more than a matter of personal opinion without legal support and that is so much so that not all priests share that opinion. We know many in that group. Until ampler information is available the doubt is allowed and one can already see that the doctrine of the devil has little influence over the masses. If the Church officially proclaimed it, one could fear the same result as that of the declaration of heresy and condemnation formerly applied to the movement of Earth, like in our days the anathemas against science with respect to the six periods of creation. We believe that it would be wiser and more prudent that the cleric did no rush into liquidating the matter by affirming something that provokes more smiles and disbelief than fear these days and in which – we can attest – many priests believe no more than us for the fact that it is illogical. By exposing the Church to a contradiction in the future having to confess the mistake will harm the moral authority of the Church that proclaims the infallibility of its teachings. It would be better to abstain. As a matter of fact regardless of what is said about Spiritism experience is here to demonstrate that its march is irresistible. It is an idea that spreads everywhere with a remarkable speed since it simultaneously satisfies reason and heart. In order to stop it one would have to oppose another doctrine that would give even more satisfaction and that would not certainly be the doctrine of the devil and the eternal penalties.
Allan Kardec

There we have four important questions that I would like to see resolved at once, to confound pseudo Catholics and Spiritists who neither believes in the devil nor in the eternal penalties but who admit God and the immortality of the soul, as well as the materialists who believe in nothing.

With respect to the first question – Is Spiritism a religion? – The Spiritists respond: No, Spiritism is not a religion and does not wish to be. Spiritism is based on the existence of an invisible world, formed by incorporeal entities who populate the space and who are just the souls of those who have lived on Earth or on other planets. Those beings surround us incessantly and, regardless, exert a great influence upon us humans. They represent a very active role in the moral world and, to a certain extent, in the physical world too. Spiritism is part of nature and one can even say that to a certain order of things it is a force of nature like electricity and gravitation are from another point of view. Spiritism unveils the invisible world to us and that is not news since the history of all peoples shows that. Spiritism is founded on general principles, independent of any dogmatic issue. It has moral consequences, that are true with respect to Christianity, but it has no cult, temples or ministers. Anybody can transform his or her opinions in a religion but there is a great distance from that to the constitution of a new church. Hence, Spiritism is not a new religion. Here is what the Spiritists say, Mr. Preacher, about this issue:

“The false Catholic and materialists laugh at this question. The former, if among the fortunate ones of this world, laugh with a pale smile since the doctrine that incorporates the plurality of existences or reincarnations harm their pleasures and their pride. It is horrible to think about a return perhaps in inferior conditions! The Spiritists tell them: That is real justice, true equality. But such equality is not convenient to them. The materialists, strong Spirits formed by pseudo wise men, laugh out loud because they do not believe in the future. Their deaths are absolutely the same thing and they prefer that way.

With respect to the second question: Is there communication with the Spirits, the Spiritists and us, the devout Catholics, are in agreement. The false Catholics and the materialists bear the smile of disbelief.

The third question: It is only the devil that communicates, the Spiritists laugh in turn; the materialists also laugh, mocking the ones who believe in the communication and those who attribute them to the devil. The false Catholics go quiet seemingly saying: You deserve each other.

Regarding the fourth question: Is necessary to wait for the Church to pronounce, the Spiritists say: “It is certain that a day will come when the belief in Spiritism will be so much spread that the Church will be forced to follow the flow, unless it decides to remain isolated. Spiritism and Catholicism will then melt.” The materialist say to this question: Who cares! The false Catholic feels a sort of spite. As I said before, this one will not be able to accept such doctrine. It shocks their pride and selfishness. It rejects the possibility of such a fusion and says: It is impossible. Spiritism is a pure utopia that will not walk four steps in the world.²⁹

²⁹ There are true and false Catholics and materialists that use this language. It would be understandable to have it said some years ago. However in the last four or five years Spiritism has walked so many steps and it does so every day that it will soon achieve its objective. Given this unprecedented result of propagation, against which all the attacks and mockery are shattered and that grows in proportion to the violence of the attacks, it is really very naïve to say that

Respectfully, etc.

A devout Catholic”

Mr. Dobre then sent the following letter to Bordeaux:

“Friar F... sought to know who was the Spiritist and not the devout Catholic who had sent him that letter. His envoys came to me and said:

Friar F... would need seven or eight sermons to respond but he lacks the time. He then wanted to know who you were. Here is how I responded: I guarantee that the author of the letter will show himself in case he wants to respond.

It seems over here that the more people speak against Spiritism the more proselytes happen so that they preferred to remain quiet for Friar F... left without returning to the subject.

You will certainly say that it is somewhat dangerous to enter into such a debate. I know this place well: noise is needed.

The systematic or interested adversaries of Spiritism just want mutes and I want to make them deaf with the debate. There are always indifferent people or people interested in learning around the non-believers and those take advantage of the struggle to learn about Spiritism.

You may perhaps say: - But do you expect to leave such polemic debates honorably?

Oh God! When someone is a subscriber to the Spiritist Review and has read all the books of the doctrine; when completely in line with the argumentation and the teachings of the Spirits, we are like Minerva, fearlessly armed from head to toe.

OBSERVATION: They say: You believe in reincarnation but the plurality of existences is contrary to the dogmas that only admit one. That is why you are out of the Church.

We respond to that with what we have said hundreds of times:

- You formerly expelled from the Church, said anathema, excommunicated, and condemned as heretic those who believed in the movement of Earth.

They will then respond:

Spiritism is just a fad. If that is the case why so much anger? Let it fade away by itself. We are the ones standing at the vanguard, watching it moving ahead, following along troubles and developments and foreseeing its conclusion. It is then our turn to laugh. AK

- That was in times of ignorance.
- Be it. But if the Church is infallible it should have been in the past as it is today and its infallibility cannot be subjected to the fluctuations of mundane science. Hasn't the Church lately and in this century of lights condemned scientific recoveries with respect to the formation of the planet? What happened there? And what would happen if the Church persisted in expelling from its core all those who believed in these things? There would be no more Catholics or the Pope. Why then had the Church to give in? Because the movement of the planets and their formation are part of nature and because against the laws of nature there cannot be a sustained opinion.

As for the reincarnation it either does exist or it does not. There is no compromise. If it does exist it is because it is in the laws of nature. If a dogma says otherwise then we need to know if reason follows the dogma or nature that is the works of God.

Reincarnation then is not a matter of opinion, or a system like a political or social opinion that we can admit or reject. It is a fact or it is not. If it is a fact then regardless of how much it goes against people's taste there is nothing that they can say that will change the fact.

We firmly believe that reincarnation, far from being contrary to the dogmas, provides a logical explanation to the successive lives that makes them acceptable to the majority of those who rejected them because they did not understand. The proof of that is the large number of people brought into religious beliefs through Spiritism.

Let us admit the incompatibility though if you wish to do so. We then present the following question: When the plurality of the existences is acknowledged – and that will not be long – as a natural law; when everybody recognizes that law as the only one compatible with God's justice and as the only one capable of explaining what was inexplicable, what are you going to do?

You will do what you did with the movement of Earth and the six days of creation and it will not be difficult to conciliate the dogma with the law.

Allan Kardec

September 1862

Spiritism in a distribution of prizes

One of our colleagues from the Parisian Spiritist Society sent us the letter below that he addressed to the board of directors of a boarding school where one of his two daughters is enrolled:

“Dear Madams,

With your permission I would like to send some thoughts about a speech given during the distribution of prizes in this boarding school. In my condition of a breadwinner and in particular as the father of one of your students I believe to have the right to give you my appreciation.

The author of the speech, a stranger to your organization, and according to what I was told a professor at C... College, allowed himself – and I do not know why – to mock the Spiritist Science and the mediums at length. I would understand that if he had given his opinion about the subject in any other circumstance but before the audience that he had and in the presence of youngsters who were trusted to your care, allow me to say that the subject was misplaced and badly chosen to achieve success.

Among other things the gentleman said that ‘people who show interest for experiences with tables and other Spiritist phenomena or of psychological nature are lighthearted, silly or stupid’.

I am myself, ladies, among those interested in the subject and I do not hide it. Besides, I am sure that I was not the only one in the event. I have no intent to be a wise man, like your speaker, hence in his point of view I might be stupid. The expression, however, is very rude when referring to people that are unknown and when generalizes ideas but my position and my character certainly shelter me from the epithet of lightheartedness. That gentleman seems to ignore that such stupidity today counts on millions of followers around the whole world and that the supposed “silly” people are found in the highest echelons of society without which he could have thought that his words could have reached more than one of his listeners. If through his inopportune jokes he demonstrated a lack of sensibility and elegance he also proved that he was talking about something that he ignores.

As for myself, ladies, I have been studying and observing these facts for four years and the result of my observations have convinced me as so many others that under certain circumstances our material world can enter into communication with the spiritual world. I have thousands of proofs about this from several places and from all countries that I have visited and know this that I also have them and many of them in my family with my wife who is a medium but not silly and with relatives and friends that like myself were seeking the truth.

Do not you think ladies that I just believed at first sight and without examination! As I said I studied and observed with criterion, coldly, in calmness and without any preconceived idea and only after

mature thoughts I was fortunate enough to convince myself about the reality of these things. I say fortunate because, I must confess, the religious teaching that I had received had not been sufficient to clarify my reason and I had become a skeptical. Now, thanks to Spiritism and to the positive proofs presented by Spiritism, I am no longer skeptical since I was able to assure myself about the immortality of the soul and its consequences. If this is what that gentleman calls stupidity, he should at least abstain from saying so in the presence of your students who can sooner than you think be aware of the phenomena that has now been uncovered. For that the only thing they need is to enter real life. The new science advances in great and quick strides out there, I guarantee.

Hence one should not fear when they have the following thoughts: If we were led to make mistakes about these matters; if they wanted to hide the truth from us, couldn't have them deceived us about other points also? When in doubt the most elemental prudence recommends abstention.

In any case that was not the time or the place to discuss such a subject. Ladies I found it to be my duty to communicate my impressions to you. I beg you to receive them with your customary kindness.

Respectfully,

A.Gassier, Rue de la Chaussée, 38 – d'Antin

OBSERVATION: Spiritism spreads everywhere so that it is not rare to find at any given time and place a certain number of followers. Producing sickening jokes about an opinion that grows incessantly; utilizing rude expressions before an audience that is unknown is the same as to expose oneself to hurt respectable people and sometimes to face reproach. Do that in a gathering that for its very nature and more than any other requires strict observation of conveniences in which every word must carry a teaching is a big mistake. If one of those youngsters whose parents were interested in Spiritism told them: “*you are lighthearted, silly and stupid*” couldn't she be justified by saying: That is what we were taught during the distribution of prizes?

Would that gentleman do the same thing against Protestants or Jewish calling them heretic or mad or against this or that political opinion? No because there are only few colleges where there aren't students whose parents profess different political or religious opinions and he would fear to have them harmed. Well! He should know that today, particularly in France, there is the same amount of Spiritists as there are of Jewish and Protestants and that soon there will be as much a Catholics.

As a matter of fact, the result in that place as everywhere else will be the opposite as intended. There you have a large number of naturally curious young ladies many of who have never heard about such things and that will be willing to get to know it at the first opportunity. They will experiment with mediumship and some will unmistakably be successful; they will talk to their friends and so forth.

When forbidden to look into these things; when you are scared away with the idea of the devil that will be one more reason for them to do it in hiding since they will want to know what the devil is going to tell them. Do not they hear about the devil every day, the pink devil? That is the danger

because without experience and a good, enlightened and experienced tutor they could find themselves under bad influences from which they would not know how to escape. Much more serious inconveniences may result from this since they would not dare say a word about it for being afraid of the prohibition and the punishments.

Would you prohibit them from writing? That is not always easy. The teachers of the boarding school know that well. But what are you going to do to the ones who become clairvoyant or hearing mediums? Could you cover their ears and have them blindfolded? That is, Mr. Speaker, what your unwise speech may produce, a speech that may have made you very happy.

The result is absolutely the opposite on those children raised by parents who support those ideas. To begin with they have nothing to hide and that protects them against the dangers of inexperience. It then gives them a reasoned compassion that fortifies later on. They become kinder, more submissive, more respecting. The certainty about the presence of the dead around them and with whom they communicate and receive wise advices operate in them as a powerful brake for the healthy fear that is inspired.

When the generations are educated in the Spiritist beliefs there will be another youth, more conscientious and less tempestuous. This can already be assessed in the effect produced in the youngsters who are already following these ideas.

September 1862

Persecutions

Considering the mockery that has been shattered against the armor of Spiritism and that it serves better to its propagation than to its discredit, the adversaries rehearse of another ploy is not going to give better results and will eventually create new proselytes. Such a ploy is persecution. We say that it will help more for a very simple reason. The fact is that the importance of Spiritism grows in proportion to the importance that it is given. Besides, the more a cause is beaten the more we feel attached to it. The readers will undoubtedly remember the beautiful communications given about the martyrs of Spiritism published in *The Spiritist Review* of April last. The Spirits announced such a phase long ago. They said:

“When they see the uselessness of ridicule they will try persecution. There will no longer be bloody martyrdoms but many will suffer in their interests and affections. They will try to separate families, reduce the number of followers by persecute them. This is a situation that will be worse than death. However, they will still find some unmovable and devout souls who will know how to face the miseries of the world in hopes of a better future that waits for them. Remember those words from the Divine Savior: *Blessed are those who mourn for they will be comforted.*³⁰ Rest assured, however, that the time of persecution is close but it will be short and your enemies will only harvest shame out of that because the weapons that they utilize against you will turn against them.”

The predicted time has begun. We see in several places regrettable things done by the ministers of a God of charity and peace. We shall not speak of the violence against consciences by expelling from the Church those who are taken there by Spiritism. Since this has led to more or less negative results they sought other more efficient practices.

We could mention places where people were threatened to lose their jobs; others where the followers were marked by public scorn, persecuted by gangs of youngster; others still were kids were spelled from schools for the reason that their parents sympathized with Spiritism; another one where a poor professor was fired and left in misery because he had a copy of *The Spirits' Book* at home.

We received from this latter one a touching prayer in a poem, full of noble feelings and the most sincere resignation. We must add that a benefactor Spiritist reached out to him and that he was victim of an infamous treachery from the part of a man who he had confided and who seemed to be interested in the book.

During the last Lent and in a small town where Spiritism counts on a good number of followers a missionary said from the pulpit: “*I trust that there are only good faithful people in the audience without any Jews, Protestants or Spiritists.*” It looks that he was not very much confident in the power of conversion of his words.

30 Mathew 5:4 (TN)

In a community near Bordeaux people wanted to forbid five or more Spiritists to get together saying that it was forbidden by the law. A superior authority, however, drove the local authority to behave according to the actual law. The result of that little annoyance is that today three quarters of that community are Spiritists.

Spiritists of several towns wanted to gather in the Department of Tarn-et-Garonne and were accused of conspiring against the government. Such ridicule accusation was soon dropped as it should and provoked laughter.

As a compensation to all that we were told that a magistrate said: *“I wish that by the will of God everybody were Spiritist”*. He has thus announced a great and profound truth for one can already observe the moralizing influence that Spiritism exerts upon the masses. Isn't that a wonderful result to see people renouncing to alcoholism, mockery, all sorts of degrading excesses, and suicide? Violent men become well-behaved, kind and peaceful and good family members! People who used to say blasphemies against God now praying with their hearts and approaching altars? These are the people that you are expelling from the Church!

Ah! If there still are many days of atonement on Earth may God allow the existence of many Spiritists because these have learned to forgive their offenders and consider reaching out to them instead of stepping on them to their first duty as Christians!

A bookseller from Charente sent us the following:

“I was not afraid of openly declaring my Spiritist opinions. I put the petty worldly things aside without worrying if that would harm my business. I was, however, far from expecting what did happen to me. If all that was reserved by evilness were jokes that would not be anything. Ah! Thanks to those who hardly understand religion I became the ugly sheep of the flock, the plague of the district. I am pointed at as the precursor of anti-Christ. They threw everything at me, including calumny, to take me down, to scare my customers away in a word and to ruin me. The Spirits speak of persecutions, of martyrs of Spiritism. I am not proud of that but I am certainly among them. It is true that my family also suffers with that but I am fortunate to have a wife who also shares my Spiritist convictions. My children will soon be at an age that will allow them to understand such a beautiful doctrine. I intend to enlighten them with our belief. May God allow me to do so – regardless of what people do otherwise – and have them instructed and prepared to fight, if necessary! The events reported in the May issue of your The Spiritist Review has a shocking analogy with what has happened to me. Like the author of the letter I was disgracefully expelled from the confessionary. Before that the vicar wanted me to renounce to my Spiritist ideas. The result of his imprudence is that he will never see me again in the religious ceremonies. If what I am doing is wrong he is the one to blame.”

The following passages were extracted from a letter sent to us from the Vosges region. Although authorized to name the author and the place we will not understandably do so but the letter is in our hands and will use it whenever necessary. The fact is identical to all others mentioned above and according to its greater or lesser importance they will later belong to the history of the establishment of Spiritism.

“I am not very savvy in literature to treat the subject accordingly. Nevertheless I will try to make myself understood as long as you forgive the imperfection of my style and my writing for I have been eager to write you for months since my son sent me the books containing the Spiritist Doctrine and the one about the mediums.

I was returning from the fields when I saw the books brought by the mailman. I was quick with the dinner and immediately started reading them under the candle light by the bed thinking that I would read until I felt sleepy but I read all night long and so keenly that I never felt like sleeping.”

He then describes the reasons that had led him to the absolute religious disbelief here omitted for a matter of respect.

“..All these considerations populated my mind daily; I was taken by a feeling of displeasure; I was led to a state of harsh skepticism; in that solitude, boredom and despair I had decided to end my misery through suicide. Ah! Sir, I do not know if anyone will ever make an idea of the effect that The Spirits’ Book had on me. The trust was reborn; the love of God took my heart over and I felt embedded in a kind of divine balsam. In my whole life I sought the truth and God’s justice to only find abuse and lies, and now in my advanced age I am fortunate enough to find that so much desired truth. What a change in my situation! From sadness to kindness. I am now continuously in the presence of God and his blessed Spirits, my Creator and the loyal protector Spirits.

I believe that the most beautiful poetic expressions are insufficient to describe such a pleasant situation. When allowed by my weak chest I sing hymns and songs that might please them. Finally I am happy because of Spiritism. I sent I letter to my son, the one who sent me the books, telling him that the books made me happier than if he had sent me the greatest fortune.”

Below follows a detailed report of tests of mediumship with the results carried out by followers in a village. Several mediums appeared among them and one seems to be remarkable. They evoked parents and friends who gave incontestable proofs of identity and also superior Spirits who gave them excellent advice.

“All these communications were taken to the Cure and manipulated by gossipers. On May 18th, one of these mediums hurled thousands of insults against the house of C... (one of the main followers) and against myself during a ceremony of first communion while teaching catechism.

He then said to a child of C...: I do not want you here but in two years you shall be strong enough and my advice is that you leave your parents who are not capable of giving you good examples. What a beautiful catechism! In the same afternoon he took the word to the pulpit and repeated the same sermon given to the students earlier by saying that we could not identify hell and that we were not afraid of being involved with robbery to become richer at the expenses of others; that we were given to superstitions from the Middle Ages and a thousand more inventions.

By the way I wrote a letter to the Imperial Commissioner of M... but before sending it I wanted to consult with the spirit of St. Vincent of Paul in the first meeting. That good spirit had the medium

writing the following: Remember these words said by Jesus Christ: Father, forgive them for they do not know what they are doing. After that I burnt the letter.

The noise about this doctrine spreads around all neighboring villages. Many have requested books that I do not have. All of those who understand the texts a little want to know it better and pass the books from hand to hand.

After I read The Spirits' Book and The Mediums' Book I wanted to know if I was a medium. Since nothing happened in the first eight days I communicated the lack of success to my son. He lived near a magnetizer who proposed to send me a magnetize letter with which I would be able to evoke my wife. The poor magnetizer could not imagine that he was supplying me with a whip to have him beaten. After that I became a hearing medium. I had myself prepared to write again and I was then told: "People are trying to deceive your son". I heard that for three days, finding myself distracted from what I was doing. I wrote a letter to my son about the event warning him about a certain man. He then wrote back criticizing me for the doubts I had about that man who had his full trust. A few days later he sent me another letter in a different tone saying that he had sent the miserable invader away and that he abused his apparent honesty to deceive his victims. He showed him my letter who had painted them so well even a hundred leagues away."

Observation: This letter needs no comments. We can see that the sermon of Mr. Cure has produced an effect on the villagers, like it has elsewhere. If in that case it was the devil who took the name of St. Vincent de Paul that Mr. Cure must be thankful to him. Aren't we right by saying that the adversaries themselves do the propaganda and unwillingly serve our cause? We must say, however, that facts like these are rather exceptions. At least that is how we prefer to think. We know many honest priests who reject such actions and consider them unwise and politically wrong.

If we are told so many deplorable things we also learn about many other events of truly ethical character. A vicar was telling one of his penitents who asked about Spiritism: *Nothing happens without God's permission. Hence, these things only take place for His will.*

A dying person sent for a priest and told him: Father, I have been away from the Church for fifty years and I had forgotten God. I was brought back to Him by Spiritism and that is why I called you. Will you give your pardon? *My child*, said the priest, *God's designs are impenetrable. Say grace for having received this lifeline. Die in peace.*

We could mention a hundred other similar cases.

September 1862

Reconciliation through Spiritism

Spiritism has demonstrated many times its beneficial influence by reestablishing the harmony among families and individuals. We have many examples in private cases that were entrusted to us and cannot be revealed. Such a case, however, does not apply to the story below.

A merchant marine captain from Le Havre, one of our personal acquaintance, is a devout Spiritist and a good medium. He had a large number of men under his command initiated in matters of Spiritism and was really pleased with their order, discipline and good behavior. His eighteen-year-old brother and a nineteen-year-old pilot were aboard, both mediums of strong faith who happily received the wise advices given by the good Spirits. One evening though they had a falling out that started with words and ended with a fist fight. Next thing they did was to propose a time and place to fight again early in the morning or the day after. At night both felt like writing and each one received from their spiritual guides a serious reproach about the uselessness of their discussion and advice about the beauty of their friendship with an invitation to reconcile their differences. Moved by the same feeling, both youngsters left their places and embraced one another in tears. Not a single cloud stained their mutual understanding since that occasion. The captain himself reported that to us. We saw their notebooks of Spiritist communications as well as the ones belonging to the young men where anyone has access to read.

The event below happened to the same captain in one of his sea crossings. It is a pleasure to transcribe it below.

It was high sea with great weather when he received the following communication: *“Take every precaution because tomorrow at 2am there will be a thunderstorm and your ship is in great danger.”*

Since there was no indication of bad weather the captain soon thought it was a premonition. In any case and to avoid any reason for complaint he took some measures. He had no reason to regret his actions because a violent storm took place at the very time that was predicated. For three days the ship faced the greatest dangers that it had ever endured. Thanks, however, to the previously taken precautions it was over without incident.

The event that happened brings forward the following thoughts:

As one of the outcomes of a well-understood Spiritism – we insist on the expression well-understood – is the development of a charitable feeling. However, as it is well known, charity itself is a very elastic concept that ranges from simple alms to loving the enemies, which is the sublimation of charity. One can say that charity summarizes all noble impulses with respect to the neighbor. A true Spiritist, like a true Christian, may have enemies. Wasn't that the case with Jesus? But a true Spiritist is not anybody's enemy for he or she is always prepared to forgive and to pay back evil with good.

If two true Spiritists had reasons for animosity in the past their reconciliation will be easy because the offended forgets the offenses and the offender acknowledges his action. From then on there will no longer be any dispute between them because they will be reciprocally indulgent and will make

concessions both ways. None will try to impose a humiliating forgiveness on the other, a forgiveness that causes more harm than peace.

If two individuals live in perfect harmony under those conditions then the same may happen to a large number of individuals who will then be as happy as it is possible on Earth since most of our tribulations are caused by the contact with evil. Now suppose a whole nation guided by such principles. Wouldn't that nation be the happiest in the world?

Some will say that what is possible to some individuals is impossible to the masses unless there is a miracle. Well, Spiritism has already made such miracles many times in a small scale with broken families in which peace was reestablished. The future will demonstrate that the same can be done at a large scale.

September 1862

Answer to the Spiritists of Lyon and Bordeaux (to Mr. Sabô)

My dear brothers and Spiritist friends of Lyon,

I wish to promptly tell you how much I am touched by the testimonies of sympathy that you have just given me with the kind and welcome invitation to visit you this year also. I happily accept that because it is always a pleasure for me to be among you.

Friends, it is a great joy to see the family grow so markedly. It is a very positive message in the face of the silly and dishonorable attacks against Spiritism. It seems that popularity only increases their rage for I have received today a letter from Lyon announcing an article in the *La France Littéraire*, a newspaper of that city, with aggressions towards Spiritism in general and my books in particular, in a very unpleasant way, when I am then asked if I should respond through the press or take this issue to court. I say that the answer must be the use of indifference.

If Spiritism were not advancing, if my books were unpopular then nobody would worry about it and nothing would be said. It is our success that bothers the enemies. Let them spill their powerless rage that only shows how close they are to their own defeat. They are not so stupid to the point of attacking an aborted idea. The fiercest their attacks the least they should be feared because they are ignored by righteous people, only demonstrating that they have nothing serious to oppose but their rage.

Go on then my friends with the great work of regeneration that has been initiated under such fortunate auspices and you will soon harvest the fruits of perseverance. You must demonstrate and particularly through the practice of good your union and that Spiritism is the Divine gift of peace and concord to humanity and make sure that people will see you and say that they wish everybody were Spiritist.

My friends I am happy to see so many groups united by a common feeling, marching together towards the noble objective that was proposed. Since that objective is the same to all there could not be any division. You must be guided by one and the same flag that reads: ***Without charity there is no salvation.*** Rest assured that the whole humanity will feel the need to gather around charity when tired of the fights engineered by pride, envy and greed. This maxim, true lifeline of salvation, where fatigue rests, will have the glory of having been proclaimed first by Spiritism. Have it written in all meeting places and at home. May it be from now on the word of union among all human beings who sincerely want the best to all, without hidden intentions! But you can do even better: have it inscribed in your hearts and since that day you will already enjoy the calmness and serenity that will be experienced by future generations when it becomes the foundation of all social relationships. You are the pioneers. You must set the example so that the others feel encouraged to follow you. Do not forget that the tactics of the *incarnate and disincarnate enemies* is your division. Give them assurance that it is a waste of time to try to cast any feeling of envy or rivalry upon you, the apostasy of the true Spiritist-Christian Doctrine.

The 500 signatures that subscribe the invitation that you have kindly sent me is a manifestation against such an attempt and there are many others that will be a pleasure to see there. It is more than a simple formula to me. It is a commitment to walk on the path delineated by the good Spirits. I will keep them as a jewel because they will one day be part of the archives of Spiritism.

One more additional words, my friends. I have a request for my visit with you: there should not be any banquet for a number of reasons. I do not want to see my visit costing you and preventing me from the pleasure of having some of you around and everyone united. Times are hard. We must not incur useless expenses. I tell with all my heart that what you would do for me in such a circumstance could be the reason for deprivation of many and that would spoil the pleasure of our gathering.

I am not going to Lyon for any exhibition or to receive any tribute but to be with you, to carry consolation to those in need, to encourage the weak and help you with my advices as much as possible. What you can offer me that would give me the most pleasure is to be able to witness the spectacle of your good, frank and solid union. Believe me that the kind words in your invitation carry more value than any feast in the world, even if offered in a palace. What would have I left out of a banquet? Nothing whereas your invitation remains as a precious memory of your caring love.

So long, my friends.

God willing I will have the pleasure of warmly shaking your hands.

AK

To Mr. Sabô, from Bordeaux

I feel touched by the wishes from the Spiritists of Bordeaux to have me visiting you still this year. Unless there is an unforeseen obstacle I have the intention of paying you a short visit at least to thank you for the warm welcome of last year. However I would like to make it clear to you that I would not like to attend any banquet. I am not going to visit you to receive applauds but to give instructions to those who feel the need and with whom I will be honored to meet. Some wanted to give the name of pastoral visit to my trip. I do not want it to have any other meaning. Believe me when I say that I feel more honored with a simple, frank and cordial welcome than with a pompous ceremony, which is not in agreement with my character, habits, and principles.

If they were not united the union would not be produced by a banquet. On the contrary, if it does exist, it can be manifested in a different way other than a party where there would be opportunity for self-love. That situation would not touch a true Spiritist where these type of expenses could be redirected to mitigate sufferings.

If you want you can join forces and count on me with my two cents. But instead of eating the money may it serve to alleviate those who lack the necessary. It will then be a party of the hearts and not of stomachs. It is better to be blessed by the unfortunate ones than the cooks.

The sincerity of the union is translated by actions and even more by quiet actions rather than flamboyant demonstrations. I wish I could see peace and agreement ruling the great family. May

each one leave their susceptibilities and rivalries aside, puerile children of pride! May all have the sole objective of the propagations and the triumph of the doctrine and may everyone endeavor to achieve that with perseverance and selflessness, without any personal interest or vanity. That is what is going to be a true party to me; that is what will have me rejoicing of pleasure and will allow me to keep the kindest and most remarkable memory of my second visit to Bordeaux.

Please convey my intentions to our Spiritist brothers, etc.

AK

We thought to be our duty to publish the answers above so that people will make no mistake with respect to our intentions during our visits with Spiritist Centers. We take the opportunity to thank those of other towns who also send similar invitations. We regret the fact that time is short for us to go everywhere. We will do that in due course.

In time we have just received the kindest and most considerate invitation in the name of the members of the Spiritists of the Society of Vienna – Austria. We truly regret the absolute impossibility of attending it this year.

AK

September 1862

Spiritist poetry

Pilgrimage of the soul

A little drop, the minimal part,
As blood circulates from the heart,
Our life stems out of Divinity,
Flowing in space for eternity.

Earth is a place of test and suffering;
It shelters our pains, our crying;
It is our hell, our place of freedom,
Where our past returns in right proportion.

Thus, each of us leaving behind this globe
Elevates more or less to reach another orb.
Depending on the impurity that contains
The creature evolves or here in chains remains.

Fact is that nobody is chosen
Before atoning the bad deeds,
If bitter remorse, prayer, and pain
Have not exalted goodness above the weeds.

Like a wandering spirit, still stained and filthy,³¹
A new body incorporates to feel the pain,
Reborn to virtue in a human family,
To improve, refine and die once again.

31 This fifth stanza is missing in the original for the month of September, later corrected by Allan Kardec in November of the same year.

It is out of devotion that chosen souls
Incarnate among us, by the Almighty's will,
Servants of a good Father, preaching us
The law of love, and our bodies heal.

Once the sacred mission is over
God soon assigns them with a task of
Heavenly grade from where the higher
Souls sing in the infinite choir of love.

Thus, when our trials one day end
And through love we reach sacred regions,
Triumphantly our hearts will lend
More righteousness to the noble legions.

There, oh happiness, the grace
Of God reunites us with our loved ones;
In a holy encounter we embrace
One another, blessed sons.

Through sublime and beauty our transformation;
We are then transferred to the sacred city
Where there is true appreciation
For the conquered treasure: we are happy!

From the graded worlds, following the immense scale,
Through many lives we grow; no more devils,
We arrive where our beginning is pale,
Pure love, brilliant angels.

We will then pioneer a new race

As the guardian souls of the future;
God's will shall be our base,
Faithful keepers of a forming nature.

God's power is so present and real
In the lengthy path of humanity.
Let us then worship and kneel
Singing hosanna throughout eternity.

B. Joly, herbalist from Lyon

OBSERVATION: The strict critics may have severe restrictions to these verses. We leave that task to them and only consider the idea whose accuracy from the Spiritist point of view is undeniable. It is really about the soul and its peregrinations through the purifying work to finally achieve endless happiness. There is, however, a very orthodox point that we could not accept. It is expressed in the sentence: *Flowing in space for eternity*. If by that the author understands that the soul rises indefinitely it results that perfect happiness is never achieved. Reason tells us that if the soul is a finite being its ascension towards the absolute good must have a term; that arriving at a certain level the soul will not remain in eternal contemplation, as a matter of fact very little attractive, completely useless; on the contrary, that the soul will have endless and blessed activities as an auxiliary power to Divinity.

September 1862

Spiritist poetry

African Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Ms. O...

The guardian angel

Poor humans in suffering on Earth,

Rest reassured; cry out loud

No more. The torment around roars but you feel the girth

Of the guides protecting you in their shrouds.

The Father, the Almighty,

Gave us all a brother, an angel

With a kind voice, a true sanctuary

Of happiness in their mantle.

After this life; we want you happy,

We want you in heavens

In the plains of charity.

Ah! If you could see our smiles

When your first steps we detect;

If you could see our sorrow

When behind you are left!

All we want is to teach

The secret of good

So that angel you may reach

Joining the guardians' brotherhood.

Yes, after enduring penalties and trials

And been duly purified
The Lord sends you back to Earth
On a mission of progress; you are assigned!
Embracing the little ones like a dove,
In a kind and subtle way,
Pure like the maternal love,
You then guide with a stern sway
To the hopes of a heavenly stay.

Dulcis

OBSERVATION: These verses and others of a certain extension and not less remarkable with the title *The Child and the Atheist*, to appear in our next issue, were published in the *Echo de Sétif*, Algeria, on July 31st 1862, preceded by the following note:

“One of our subscribers sent us the two following poems received by a medium from Constantin in the initial days of this month. Although we do not find them immune to criticism from a technical point of view, we published them because they explain, at least partially, the Spiritist Doctrine that tends to spread all over the globe.”

This medium seems to have the gift of poetry. He has already received a large number of verses written with an incredible agility, without doodling and not knowing the rules of metric. We met a member of the Constantin Society who witnessed the writing.

September 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Cosmological studies

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. Flammarion

The three communications below are in a certain way the initiation of a young medium. One can see what they promise for the future. They are the introduction of a series of studies dictated by the spirit who proposes to develop them under the title “Cosmological studies”. We leave it up to the reader the appreciation of the form and substance of the text.

I

It has been announced for some time here, elsewhere, and by several Spirits that you would receive revelations about the system of the globes. I have been tasked to contribute to such a prediction in the order of my own destiny. Before starting what could be called cosmological studies it is important to make the first principle very clear so that the edifice may last long and rest on a solid foundation.

That first principle, the first cause is the great and sovereign power that gave life to the worlds and creatures; the preface to any serious meditation is God. Everything bows before such a venerable name and the ethereal harp of heavens vibrates its golden strings.

Oh! Children of Earth, you who have mumbled that great name for such a long time without understanding it, how many adventurous theories were written since the beginning of times of the human philosophy! How many wrong interpretations of the universal consciousness came to be through crazy beliefs of ancient peoples! And today in the very splendor of the Christian era what is the idea that people have of the first of all beings, of the one who is by excellence?

Haven't we seen the proud pantheism arrogantly rising to the one considered to be the whole, from where everything has come out and to where everything must return and confound as one, without distinction or individuality?

Haven't we seen crude atheism shamefully propagating skepticism and corrupting intellectual progress, despite what has been said by their sophist defenders?

We could mention the endless mistakes made with respect to the primary and eternal principle and these thoughts are sufficient to demonstrate that the human mind will always be wrong on trying to explain this unsolvable problem even to many discarnate minds.

What you must do, or better saying, what we all must do is to humbly bow before the Great Being. All we have to say, children, is that it is up to us to rise up to the idea of an Infinite Being and that must be enough to prevent anybody from the proud pretension of staring directly at the Sun light without becoming immediately blind by the dazzling splendor of God in His eternal glory.

Pay special attention to this for it is the prelude of our studies: believe in God, Creator and Organizer of the cosmos; love God, Creator and Protector of souls and we can then humbly enter together and respect the sanctuary where He has disseminated the gifts of His infinite power.

Galileo

II

Having established the first point in our thesis the second question to be addressed is the power conventionally called *nature*. After the word that summarizes everything comes the other that represents everything. However, what is nature?

Let us hear first the definition of the modern naturalist. He says *nature is the exterior throne of the divine power*. I will add the definition that encompasses the idea of all observers: *nature is the effective power of God*.

Notice two explanations for the same word and that through a remarkable subtleness of language represents two apparently different things. In fact nature in the first definition represents the effect whose cause is expressed in the second one.

A sight of the endless horizon; of exuberant trees showing the rising sap of life; of the fields covered in beautiful perfumed flowers, crowned by the sun; that is what is called nature. The power that controls the spheres in space and gets a single grain to germinate is still nature.

May all this be a source of profound reflections to you; that if we utilize the same word to represent cause and effect it is because in reality they are the one and the same thing! The globe attracts the globe in space following laws that are inherent to the constitution of the universe and the force of attraction is identical to the very force exerted by itself. That is cause and effect.

The solar ray reaches the flower that feeds the bee. Here still the ray is the effect and the cause. Wherever you set your eyes on Earth there you will find such a duality in nature.

We must conclude that if nature is, as defined, the effective power of God, it is at the same time the throne of that very power; it is simultaneously active and passive, effect and cause, material and immaterial force; it is the creative law, is the law that governs, the law that embellishes; it is the creature and the image; it is the manifestation of the creative power, infinitely beautiful, infinitely admirable, infinitely worthy of the very power that it represents.

Galileo

III

The theme of our third study is going to be space. Many definitions have been given to space but this is the main one: the separation between two bodies. From that some sophists have then concluded that if there aren't bodies there is no space. That is the foundation of thinking of some theologians who established that the space is then finite since the number of bodies is finite there could not be an infinite space between them. The space has also been defined as the place navigated

by the globes, the emptiness where the matter acts, etc. Let us leave all these definitions in the treatises where they belong and defining nothing.

Space is one of those words that represent a primitive and axiomatic idea, evident by itself and that several other definitions do no more than obscure its meaning. We all know what space is and I only wish to reestablish its infinity so that future works do not find obstacles to the investigation of our point of view.

Now I say that space is infinite because it is impossible to provide any boundary and because, despite the difficulty of the idea of infinite, it is easier for us to travel eternally in our thoughts than to stop at a point beyond which there would not be anything.

In order to try to imagine limitless space in our minds, let us suppose that we travel from Earth, lost amidst infinity, towards any given point in the universe at the speed of an electrical spark that travels thousands of leagues³² in a split second. After having just left this planet and travelled millions of leagues, we would have reached a point from where Earth would look like a pale star. An instant later and following in the same direction we get to faraway stars that we can hardly see from Earth. Even your Sun will be invisible from there, hidden by the huge distances that separate us. Still at the same lightning speed we pass by systems of planets as we advance in space, islands of ethereal lights, galaxies, sumptuous sceneries where God has spread globes with the same profusion as plants were sown on Earth's soil.

Well, we have been travelling for a few minutes only and we are already millions and millions of leagues away from Earth; we have already seen millions and millions of globes and still, listen to this: in reality we have not walked a single step in the universe. If we continue for years, centuries, thousands of centuries, millions of secular periods and endlessly at the same speed of light, we would not have advanced much! And that applies to any direction of our choice, starting from this single and invisible particle called Earth.

That is what space is.

Galileo

32 Unit of length used in the 18th hundreds; 1 league is approximately 5 km (TN)

September 1862

Vacation of the Spiritist Society of Paris

Society, August 1st 1862

Medium Mr. Vézy

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. Flammarion

You are now going to spread out for some time but the good Spirits will always be with those who ask for their help and support. If each and every one of you leave the master's room that is not for leisure only but still to serve the great human cause wherever you are and under which flag you found shelter. You know well that there is not a right time for the study to a sincere Spiritist. Your whole life is not more than an hour and that is still short for the work to be done: the intellectual development of the human race! The branches do not separate from the trunk just because of their growth. On the contrary, they give rise to new impulses that further unite and tie them together.

Take this opportunity of vacation that will separate you to become stronger in your faith following the example of the apostles of Jesus. Leave this place of worship strong and courageous. May your faith agglutinate around you thousands of believers who will bless the light shining around you.

Courage! Courage! On the day of gathering when the golden flag of Spiritism call you to the struggle, unfolding upon your heads, may each one have followers around you and the good Spirits will call your number and take it to God!

Be awake, Spiritists, at the time of your resting. Watch and pray! I have already told you and other voices will repeat: The clock of the centuries is ticking and there is a vibration felt. It calls for those who are in darkness and unhappy will be the ones who do not wish to listen!

Oh Spiritists! Go, wake up the sleepy ones and tell them that they shall be surprised by the sea waves with their terrible roars. Tell them to pick up a well-lit and solid base for the stars are shooting in space and the whole nature moves, trembles and agitate! But there is light after darkness and those who did not listen and did not want to see will migrate to inferior worlds when the time comes so that they can atone and wait for a long, very long time for the new rising stars who will enlighten them.

Time will seem like an eternity to them for they shall not accomplish their tasks until the day when they begin to believe and understand.

Spiritists, I shall no longer call you children but valiant and courageous people! Soldiers of the new faith, fight bravely. Have charity as your weapon and your body covered with the armor of love. Go on! Be alert! Have lies and mistakes behind and reach out to whoever asks: Where is light?

Tell them that those who are guided by the lights of Spiritism are not weak; that they are not dazzled by mirages and do not accept rules that are not dictated by a cold and sound reason; that their task is charity and that they support their brothers in the name of a universal charity and not to reach a

paradise that they know can only be achieved after the required atonement! May they get to know God and understand, before anything else, that God is immutable in His justice and hence He cannot forgive a life plentiful of errors over a split second of repentance as He cannot punish one hour of sacrilege with an eternal suffering!

Yes, Spiritists, you may count the years of mistakes by the number of the stars but know this that the golden years will come for those who have learned to count them!

Go, then, workers and soldiers, and that each and every one brings back the brick or the stone that will help in the construction of the edifice. Truly I tell you that this time there will be no confusion when erecting the crowning tower to God. On the contrary, God will reach out to you on your way, sheltering you from the storms.

This is the second hour of the day. These are the servers that come again from the part of the Master looking for workers. If you are available come and do not wait for the last hour!

St. Augustine

September 1862

To the Spiritist Centers to be visited

The large number of centers that we intend to visit together, given the distances to be covered, does not allow us to dedicate the amount of time we would like. We believe we should take advantage of the opportunity and utilize the time for instruction. Given that it is our objective to respond as much as possible to questions that require clarification. We learned that when we propose this during the meetings people generally do not know what to ask or go quiet for being shy or have difficulties to collect their thoughts. In order to avoid such a double inconvenience we ask you to previously prepare the questions in writing and send that to me before the meeting. We can then methodically classify them, eliminate repetitions and respond everyone in a more satisfactory way, at the same time providing refutation to objections to Spiritism.

September 1862

To Mr. E.K.

I am completely unaware of the inscription mentioned in your letter dated August 2nd and sent from Guingamp. In short, I have never been to Brittany. In addition, I have never heard about this *Manè*, *Thécel*, and *Pares* of another gender as you call him. If he was able to produce in you a positive impression you must thank the unknown author. In any case, it will be a pleasure to welcome you when visiting Paris but I will only be back in the beginning of October. It will be a pleasure to give you all the explanations you wish in person.

Allan Kardec

October 1862

Apollonius of Tyana

With the exception of highly educated, Apollonius of Tyana is almost only known by name. His name is not popular for a lack of widely available historical descriptions. There were only a few translations based on a Latin version of inadequate format. We must then thank the wise Hellenist that has just published a judicious translation of the original Greek text and the editors of that publication for having filled out such a regrettable blank.³³

There is no accurate date about the life of Apollonius. According to some calculations he would have been born two or three years before Jesus Christ and died at the age of ninety-six years old. He was born in Tyana, a Greek city of the Cappadocia, Asia Minor. He soon demonstrated to have a great memory, remarkable intelligence and strong dedication to learning. From all philosophies that he studied he chose that of Pythagoras whose precepts he followed strictly until the time of his death.

His father was one of the richest men in Tyana, leaving him a considerable fortune that he shared with his relatives saying that a wise person must be content with little.

He traveled a lot to get educated. He visited Assyria, Scythia, India where he met the Brahmins, Egypt, Greece, Italy and Spain, and everywhere he taught wisdom. He was loved by all for his kind character and honorable virtues, recruiting a large number of disciples who followed his steps to hear his words, some even followed him in his travels. One of them, though, envious of his superiority and credit, became his detractor and mortal enemy, spreading endless calumnies against him with the intent of isolating him to only bring shame upon himself.

Apollonius remained unaffected always and far from keeping hard feelings he was always sorry for his weakness, paying back his evilness with good.

The young Assyrian by the name of Damis of Nineveh, on the contrary, got associated to him with an unbreakable dedication and happiness. He was his frequent companion on his journeys and as a faithful depositary of his Philosophy he was responsible for most of the information that we have.

The name Apollonius of Tyana confounds with every legendary character that human imagination has dressed up with marvelous attributes. Regardless of the exaggeration of events attributed to him it becomes evident that besides the fables there is a shadow of truth that could have been more or less altered.

33 Apollonius of Tyana, his life, travels and prodigies, by Philostratus. New translation of the Greek text by Mr. Chassang, master of ceremonies of the Normal School. In-12 volume, 500 pages, by 3.50 francs. Didier Co., Quai des Augustins, 35 - Paris

No one could with certainty pose any doubt about the existence of Apollonius of Tyana. It is equally certain that he must have done remarkable things otherwise nobody would speak of them.

To have the Empress Julia Domna, wife of Septimius Severus,³⁴ asked Philostratus to write about his life was necessary that he had done amazing things for it is not likely that she would have requested such a romance about an imaginary or obscure man.

It is likely or even certain that Philostratus amplified the facts that were already amplified when sent to him, at least some of them that are out of question. However, what is not less certain is the fact that he collected the fundamental data from almost contemporary descriptions that must have had sufficient credibility to deserve the Empress' attention. The difficulty sometimes lies in the distinction between fable and reality. In that case, there are people who prefer to simply deny everything.

Characters of such a kind are appreciated in very different ways. Each person judges them according to their own opinions, beliefs and even according to their interests. Apollonius of Tyana must have fed controversy more than anybody else given the time of his appearance and the nature of his skills. Among other things he was attributed with the gift of healing, foresight, premonition, the ability of mind reading, of expelling demons, of transporting himself instantly from place to place, etc.

Few philosophers have enjoyed as much popularity during their lives. His prestige was even augmented by his austerity, kindness, simplicity, selflessness, good character and the reputation of wisdom. Paganism was then breathing its final breaths, fighting against the recently born Christianity that wanted to transform him into a god. Mixing some Pagan and some Christian ideas some took him by a saint and the least fanatic only saw a Philosopher in him. That is the most reasonable opinion and the only title that he accepted since he did not see himself as the son of Jupiter as considered by some.

Although contemporary to Jesus it seems that he had not heard about him because he never made any reference to what was happening in Judea.

Among the Christians that later judged him, he was declared mad and imposter by some; others pretended that he was acting under the influence of the devil, since they could not deny the facts, not thinking that the condemnation was an acknowledgement of those very prodigies, turning Satan into the rival of God, given the difficulty to distinguish between divine and diabolic prodigies.

The author of the translation remained in a wise neutrality. He did not take any sides to allow each reader to appreciate them, indicating with strict zeal every source that could be consulted, giving each person the freedom to arrive at their own conclusion by comparing the pros and cons of the arguments, limiting himself to a faithful and judicious translation.

The magnetic and somnambulist Spiritist phenomena cast today a new light onto the facts that were attributed to that character, demonstrating the possibility of certain effect up until now relegated to

34 Severan dynasty of the Roman Empire, 170 AD -217 AD (TN)

the dominion of the fantastic and marvelous, thus allowing the separation between possible and impossible.

For starters, what is marvelous? Skepticism responds: It is everything beyond the natural laws, the impossible. Then adding: The fact the history abounds with reports of such a nature is due to the love of humanity by the marvelous. However, where does such a love come from? That is what skepticism does not answer and those we are going to try to explain. This will not be useless to our interests.

What is typically called marvelous by humanity is what transposes people in their thoughts beyond the limits of the known and it is the inner inspiration towards a better order of things that leads them to eagerly search for what can provide a connection to that, giving them an idea about that condition. That aspiration is derived from the intuition that such an order of things must exist. Since it cannot be found on Earth it is then sought in the domain of the unknown.

Wouldn't that very aspiration, however, be a providential hint that there is something beyond the corporeal life? It is only given to humanity, for the animals do not expect anything hence cannot seek the marvelous, the wonderful. People intuitively understand that there is a power beyond the visible world, a force that is more or less understood according to each individual's intellectual development and that force is naturally seen in every phenomenon that is not understood.

Then, a number of facts that were considered marvelous in the past are now perfectly explained and enter the domain of the natural laws. It resulted that those who were gifted or had superior knowledge were considered to have a portion of that invisible power or to be able to dominate that power. They are called magicians or witches.

The Church's position made asserted the idea that such a power could only come from an evil spirit when occurring outside of its domains. During barbarian times and times of ignorance the Church burned these supposedly magicians and witches. The progress of science brought them back to humanity.

The nonbelievers ask: where are the majority of the wonderful stories found? Isn't that in antiquity, among the savages, in the least enlightened classes? Isn't that a proof that they are the consequence of superstition and ignorance?

As it relates to ignorance, this is incontestable for one simple reason. The peoples of antiquity that knew less than we do today were not less shocked by the phenomena. Since they knew about the true nature of causes, they sought supernatural causes for natural things. With the help of imagination and supported by fear on one side and animated by a poetic genius on the other, these people created fantastic stories that were amplified by the taste for allegories embedded in the culture of the Orient. As an example, Prometheus stole the fire of heavens that was supposed to burn him; he had super human powers and was punished for his actions and for the mockery against Jupiter. Franklin, the modern Prometheus, is just a wise man for us. Montgolfier would be considered an Icarus in mythological times. How about Mr. Poitevin on his rising horse?

Science significantly reduced the number of wonderful facts by bringing them to the natural order of things. But has science explained everything? Are all the laws that govern the globes already known? Isn't there anything else to be learned? Such a proud pretension betrays us daily.

Since not all secrets of God have yet been unveiled, it stands to reason that many other facts of the past were not fully explained. By admitting what is possible only by what science can explain, it is then easier to call the others unexplainable phenomena as supernatural. Before science all of those who produced such phenomena were either myths or imposters and would face a sentence similar to Apollonius of Tyana.

It is here that the Church admits these works but as acts of Satan and scientists who only accept him as a skillful charlatan.

The law of universal gravitation opened up a new avenue to science and incorporated a number of phenomena where absurd theories were created. The law of molecular attraction allowed a new advancement. The discovery of the microscopic world opened up new horizons. Electricity, in turn, came to reveal an unsuspected power. Science saw difficulties being resolved one by one with each of these discoveries and, as with many problems, unsolved mysteries that were falsely interpreted.

However, how much more is still to be learned? Wouldn't it be possible to admit the discovery of a new law, a new force that may come to shed light onto some still obscure points?

Well Spiritism comes to reveal a new force. This force is the action of the invisible upon the visible. By showing that action as a natural law, Spiritism moves even further the limits of the wonderful and super natural because it explains a number of things that seemed inexplicable, just like other areas that seemed inexplicable before the discovery of electricity.

Is Spiritism limited to the admission of the invisible world as a hypothesis and a means of explanation? No, because that would be the same as explaining the unknown by the unknown. Spiritism demonstrates that through positive, irrefutable facts, just like the microscope demonstrated the existence of the infinitely small.

Having demonstrated then that the invisible world exists and that it surrounds us formed by the souls of those who lived, it is easily conceivable that it may represent an active role in the visible world and that it may produce phenomena of a particular order. These same phenomena are the ones that are called fantastic, marvelous by science, as they cannot be explained by the known natural laws.

Since these phenomena are ones from the law of nature, they must have happened at all times. Now considering that they are based on the action of a force beyond humanity and, as all religions are bound to pay tribute to that force, it has served as the foundation of all religions. That is the way the old reports, as well as in every theology, there are plenty of allusions and allegories concerning the relationship between the visible and the invisible world. These areas are unintelligible if such relationships are not known. Any attempt to explain these phenomena without such an understanding is the same as to trying to understand the electric phenomena without electricity.

This particular law is the key that will open up the mysterious sanctuaries of antiquity. Once it is acknowledged, the historians, the archeologists and the philosophers will unfold a completely new horizon and the light will shine upon the most obscure points. If that law still finds opposition, it is in a common place to everything else that is new. In the first place, this is also due to the materialistic mind that dominates our times and, in second place, because people make up such false assumptions concerning the invisible world that disbelief is a consequence. Spiritism not only demonstrates its existence but it also presents it in such a logical way that there is no room for doubt to whoever takes the burden of seriously studying it.

We do not ask the scientists to believe but since Spiritism is a philosophy that occupies a large space in the world that even if it were a dream, it does deserve a serious examination at least to understand what it is about. We only ask one thing: study it, but study it in depth, so that it is not charged with something that it does not profess. Later on, believing or not, apply it as a simple hypothetical lever and try to solve the thousands of historical, archeological, anthropological, theological, sociological, moral, social etc. problems... before which have not been solved and the scientists will see the result. Expecting faith from these scientists would be too much.

Let us go back to Apollonius. Ancient peoples incontestably knew magnetism. We have proof of that from certain Egyptian paintings. They equally knew somnambulism and second sight or remote viewing since these are natural psychological phenomena; they knew about the various categories of Spirits, considered gods, as well as their relationship with humans. Healing, clairvoyant, speaking, hearing mediums must have existed then, as even today we can see several examples among the Arabs. With such data at hand and with the knowledge about the properties of the perispirit, the fluid corporeal envelope of the Spirits, we can understand perfectly well several facts attributed to Apollonius of Tyana without resorting to sorcery, witchery or deception.

We mentioned "several facts" because there are some that Spiritism demonstrates to be impossible. That is why it is useful to distinguish between truth and mistake. Let those who have done a serious and complete study of this science the task of distinguishing between the possible and the impossible, something that will be easy for them to do.

Let us now look at Apollonius from another point of view. Besides being a medium, making him an almost supernatural being in those days, he was also a philosopher and a wise man. His philosophy reflected his habitual kindness, his character, and his simplicity in everything. He can be judged from some of his quotes.

Having been reproached by the degenerate and effeminate Spartans, who took advantage of his advice, he wrote to the Ephors: "*Apollonius to the Ephors, greetings. Real men should not make mistakes; but it is only men of heart that acknowledge them when they do.*"

The Spartans, who received a letter of criticism from the emperor, were undecided whether they should ward off anger or answer with pride; they consulted Apollonius about their response; he came to the meeting and said these words: "*If Palamedes invented writing it is not only so that one could write, but so we knew when we should not write.*"

The Roman Consul interrogated Apollonius asking:

- When you approach the altar what is your prayer?
- I ask the gods to have justice reigning; the laws respected; that the wise people be poor; that the others may be enriched but through honest means.
- What? Asking so many things do you expect to be exalted?
- No doubt because I ask for all that in a single word and approaching the altar I say: Oh gods, give me what is due! If I am part of the just I will be granted what I asked. Otherwise the gods will have me joining the bad ones, will have me punished and I will not be able to complain to the gods If I am not good and I am punished.

On talking to Apollonius about the way he should govern when crowned emperor Vespasianus said:

- Once I saw the empire shamed by the tyrants that I just mentioned to you. I wanted to hear your advice about how to bring it back to the respectability of all.
- One day – said Apollonius – one of the most skillful flutists sent his students to the bad players to teach them how they should not play. You now know, Vespasianus, how one must not govern. Your predecessors taught you that. Let us now think about a way of governing well.

One day in jail in Rome, during the times of Domitian, he gave the following speech to the prisoners, reminding them about courage and resignation:

All of us here are prisoners during a period called life. Our soul, attached to this perishable body, endures several diseases and is slave of all needs of a human condition.

Responding to an envoy from Domitian who induced him to accuse Nerva in exchange for his freedom he said: *My friend, if I am in shackles for having told the truth to Domitian what will happen to me if I lie? The emperor believes that honesty deserves the shackles but I believe that it is the lie that does.*

In a letter to Euphrates he says:

- I asked the rich if they had concerns.
- How could we not have them? - They responded.
- What is the source of such concerns?
- Our wealth.
- I am sorry Euphrates but you have just become rich.

At the same time: *The wisest men are the ones with the shortest speeches. If the blabbers suffered what they make others suffer they would not talk so much.*

Another to Critton: *Pythagoras said that Medicine is the most divine of all arts. If Medicine is the most divine of all arts, it is necessary that the doctor look into the soul at the same time as the body. How can someone be healthy when the most important part is sick?*

Another one to the Platonic: *If Apollonius is offered money and it is apparently legitimate, he will have no problem in accepting, however, little he needs. But he will never accept payment for his teachings however much he needs.*

Another to Valerio: *Nobody dies but apparently as nobody is born. In fact what is called birth is the passage from the essence to the substance. Death, on the contrary, is the passage from substance to essence.*

To the proffers of Olympia: *The gods do not need sacrifices. What do we need to do to please them? If I am not mistaken one needs to acquire wisdom and as much as possible do good deeds to the ones who deserve them. That is what pleases the gods. The impious themselves can make sacrifices.*

To Ephesus from the temple of Diana: *You maintained all the rituals of sacrifices, the pageantry of royalty. You are unbeatable as joyful attendees and partygoers but how much can you be criticized as neighbors of the goddess night and day? Isn't that from your group that the swindlers, the hooligans, the slave traders, and all the impious and unfair people come? The temple is a safe haven to thieves.*

To those who believe themselves wise: *You call yourselves my disciples? You then must add that you are always home and that you never go to the roman baths; that you do not kill animals; that you do not eat meat; that you are free from all passions: envy, malignity, hatred, calumny, bad feelings; that you finally are part of the freemen. Do not do like those who utilize false speeches to make believe that they live in a way when in reality they live in a completely opposite way.*

To his brother Hestieu: *People see me as divine everywhere; in some places they even consider me a god. In my homeland, on the contrary, up until now I am unknown. Any surprise? You yourselves my brothers are not convinced that I am a superior to many others through my word and habits. How can it be that my countrymen and my relatives are mistaken about me? Ah! That mistake is painful to me. I know that it is beautiful to consider the whole Earth as your homeland and everyone as brothers and friends since all descend from God and have the same nature; because all equally have the same passions; all are equally humans, Greek or barbarians. When in Catania, Sicily, he said to his disciples in a lecture about the Etna: Under this mountain there is a giant that hears you, Titho or Enceladus, vomiting all this fire in his long agony. I agree that there have been giants for we have found skeletons in several places that lead us to believe showing people of extraordinary physical structure but I could not admit that they fought the gods. If that much they would have vandalized their temples and statues, is it not sensible to believe that they would have risen to heavens and expelled the gods. Another fable that seems more irreverent towards the gods and that we must not kid about is that Vulcan works at the foundry in the depth of Etna constantly ringing the anvil there. In several places around Earth there are volcanoes but nobody believes that there are other giants.”*

Certain readers would rather have us citing and explaining the prodigies of Apollonius. Before anything else, however, we wanted to show the philosopher and wise man instead of the magician. One can always accept or reject the wonderful facts attributed to him but it seems difficult that a person that says such things and professes and lives according to such principles may be a juggler or a swindler or even someone dominated by the devil.

As for the prodigies we shall mention only one that gives enough proof of one of his gifts.

After a thorough description of Dominican's murder, Philostratus adds:

“Although these events took place in Rome, Apollonius saw them in Ephesus.

Domitian was attacked by Clement around noon. On the very same day and at the same time Apollonius described them in the gardens by the rocks. He suddenly lowered his voice as if horrified. He continued to speak but his voice had lost the strength compared to that of someone that speaks about a thought. He then went quiet as if lost in his thoughts, then he stared at the ground with a scared face, walked three or four steps away and said: ‘Hurt the tyrant, hurt him!’ – it was possible to say that he was not watching the image as if in a mirror but that he witnessed the fact itself.

Ephesus – since he heard the speech of Apollonius – was impressed. Apollonius stopped as if waiting to see the conclusion of a doubtful event. He finally said: ‘Courage Ephesus. The tyrant was killed today. What am I saying? Today? He has just been killed, right now when I stopped.’

Ephesus thought that Apollonius had lost his mind. They eagerly wanted to have him telling the truth but they were afraid that there could be something dangerous behind that speech. ‘I am not surprised, said Apollonius, that you still do not believe me. Rome itself does not know that yet. But that will come. The news is spreading and thousands of citizens do believe. That brings joy to them, to twice as many people, to four times as many as those people. The news will get here. You may put off the sacrifice that is due to the gods in such occasions. As for myself I will worship them for what I have seen.’

Ephesus was still in disbelief. Soon, however, messengers brought the good news and gave testimony of Apollonius' foresight. The murder of the tyrant, the day and time, the author who was encouraged by Apollonius, every detail was perfectly in line with those described by Apollonius on the very day that the gods had revealed them to him in his speech to Ephesus.

In those days there would not be the need for anything else to make him a divine man. In our days the scientists would treat him as a visionary. For us he had the gift of a second vision whose explanation is provided by Spiritism (see the theory of somnambulism and second sight in *The Spirits' Book*, #455).

His death was something as well. One afternoon he entered the temple of Dictynia, in Linde, Isle of Crete, and despite the ferocious dogs that guarded the gates, which were actually very friendly to him, he was arrested by the guards of the temple and put in chains for being a magician. At night he disappeared before the eyes of the guards without leaving a trace behind him and his body was never found. Some say that voices of young ladies were heard when singing, as if encouraging him to leave Earth and move on to superior regions: *Leave Earth. Go to heavens! Go!*

Here is how Philostratus finishes his description of Apollonius' life:

“Even after his disappearance Apollonius sustained the immortality of the soul and taught that what is said about it is correct. In those days there was a certain number of youngsters who loved

Philosophy. Most of their discussions were about the soul. One of them could not accept the idea of an immortal soul, saying:

- *I have been asking Apollonius to tell me the truth about the immortality of the soul for the last ten months but he is dead and my prayers are useless. He has not appeared to me even to demonstrate that he is immortal.*

Five days later he spoke of the same subject with his colleagues and then dozed off at the very place of discussion. He suddenly stood up as having a fit of dementia. He was sleepy and covered in sweat.

- *I believe, he screamed. His friends asked him what was going on and he said: Do not you see the wise Apollonius? He is here with us; he listens to our discussions and sings harmonious songs about the soul.*
- *Where is he? – The others asked – since we cannot see him and we would rather see him than have all the wealth of the world.*
- *It seems that he came to me only. He wants to teach me what I refused to believe. Listen now, listen to the divine songs that he brings to us. ‘The soul is immortal; it is not yours but belongs to the Providence. When the body is fatigued like the fast runner after transposing the barrier the soul precipitates into the ethereal spaces neglecting the rude and sad slavery left behind. However, what does it matter to you? You will know them when you are no longer alive. Why try to penetrate such mysteries while amongst the living ones?’*

That is the clear oracle given by Apollonius about the destiny of the soul. Knowing our inner nature he wanted us to march joyfully to achieve the aim established by the Parcae.”

The apparition of Apollonius after his death is considered to be a hallucination by the majority of commentators, Christian and others who pretended that the young man had his imagination affected by his own desire of seeing him thus leading him to believe that he had seen. Church has, however, admitted such kind of apparition at all times. The Church cites several examples taken as authentic.

Spiritism comes to explain the phenomenon based on the properties of the perispirit, the fluid envelop of the spirit, that through some sort of condensation becomes visible and, as it is known, may become tangible. Without knowing the law about the constitution of the Spirits, the phenomenon is wonderful. Since the law is known the wonderful disappears giving place to a natural phenomenon (see *The Mediums’ Book*, theory of visual manifestations, Chapter VI).

Admitting that the youngster had been victimized by an illusion the detractors would still have to explain the words that he attributed to Apollonius, sublime words in opposition to the ideas that he sustained moments earlier.

What did Apollonius lack in order to be a Christian? Very little based on what we observe. It would not please God if we established a parallel between him and Jesus. What demonstrates the uncontestable superiority of the latter is the divine character of his mission, the worldwide revolution brought about by his doctrine, an obscure master with as obscure apostles, while Apollonius’ doctrine died with him.

It would be a transgression to present him as a rival of Christ! But if we pay attention to what he said about Paganism we will see that he condemns superstition fiercely attacking and replacing them by more healthy ideas.

Had he spoke like that over the time of Socrates he would have paid with his life as he did for what was considered wickedness.

However, in his time the Pagan ideas were already spread and he was heard. He prepared the Pagans around him to receive the Christian ideas with less difficulty through his moral teachings and serving as a transition. We believe we are right when we say that the served as a link between Paganism and Christianity. This might have been his mission. He was heard by the Pagans but not by the Jewish.

October 1862

Answer to Abeille Agénaise by Mr. Dombre

We found the following in the *Abeille Agnaise* on May 25th, 1862:

“We have in hand a remarkable article by the title Spiritist Conversations. The author, Mr. Cazenove de Pradines, former president of Agen Agriculture, Science and Arts Society, tasked Mr. Magen with the pleasure of reading it in our Academy. It is not important to mention how much interest it has drawn. Mr. Cazenove summarizes the doctrines of the new sect taken from The Spirits’ Book as below:

- 1. The Spirits of a superior order do generally have a short passage on Earth.*
- 2. The vulgar Spirits are in a sedentary mode here, so to speak, and constitute the mass of the population of the invisible world. They more or less preserve the same tastes and inclinations as when they embodied the corporeal envelope. Since they can no longer satisfy their passions they take advantage of those who enjoy them and, hence, exciting such passions upon them.*
- 3. It is only the inferior Spirits that can regret the pleasure that stems out of the impurity that is in line with their nature.*
- 4. The Spirits cannot decline; they can remain stationary but cannot regress.*
- 5. Every spirit is prone to perfection.*
- 6. The imperfect Spirits try to control and dominate people; they feel happy for the failure of others.*
- 7. The Spirits are attracted in proportion to their sympathy by the moral stage of those who evoke them. The inferior Spirits sometimes take fake names to better deceive and manipulate.*

According to these concepts Mr. Cazenove, with his habitual talent and sagacity, composed two conversations in which both extremes of the social fabric are touched. Through a hypothetical medium on one side he evokes inferior Spirits, impersonated by a celebrity swordsman from Cartouche, bringing them to a singular conversation that demonstrates the perversity of such a doctrine. On another hand there are Spirits of a superior order that enter communication with contemporary people. The contrast is undoubtedly sharp and nobody could translate it in a better and more faithful way everything that the Epicureanism summarized in the spirit of Horace and Lucretius. We are very sorry for not being able to reproduce the whole work of Mr. Cazenove here. We are certain that our readers would not only applaud the impeccable and perfectly academic work of the text but also the elevated moral thought that it contains for it straightforwardly condemns a system that is full of seduction and true dangers.

J. Serret”

Answer from Mr. Dombre

Mr. Editor,

I was the first to appreciate the fine and delicate observations by Mr. Cazenove de Pradines about Spiritism. The text under the title Spiritist Conversations that came to my hands and was mentioned in your appreciated periodical on Sunday, May 25th, is really of a charming sagacity and does not fail to fulfill the witty character and talent of the author. It is a flower whose colors and shine I admire and whose kindness I avoid altering at this time through any minor

word of candid criticism. However, your enthusiasm towards those spicy dialogues, more witty than offensive to the doctrine, led you to make mistakes. As such, it is the duty of any good Spiritist to remind you about these.

*To begin with I must say that the chosen citations from here and there in *The Spirits' Book* are grouped with art so that the doctrine is presented unfavorably but any prudent and good faith person will be willing to read the whole book and mediate about it.*

- 1. You mentioned the doctrines of the new sect. Allow me to tell you that Spiritism is neither a religion nor a sect. Spiritism is a teaching brought to humanity by the Spirits that populate the space and who are no more than the souls of those who lived. We suffer their influence all the time, regardless. They are a force of nature, like electricity, but from a different point of view. Their existence and presence are observed through positive and tangible facts.*
- 2. You say: '- the perversity of such doctrine.' Careful! Spiritism is not but the purity of Christianity; its flag holds this statement only: 'Love and Charity.' Would that be perversity?*
- 3. Finally, you speak of a system full of seduction and dangers. Yes, it is full of seductions and attractiveness because it is beautiful, great, fair and reassuring, and from every point of view it is worthy of God's perfection. Where are the dangers, then? Useless to seek that in the practice of Spiritism where only consolation and moral betterment are found. Ask around in Paris, Lyon, Bordeaux, Metz, etc. about the effect produced on the masses by such a belief. Lyon in particular will tell you about the source of resignation and strength found by the jobless workers to face deprivation of all kinds.*

*I do not know if the bookstores in Agen carry books like 'What is Spiritism, *The Spirits' Book*, *The Mediums' Book*', but I sincerely wish that your short report wakes up those who are indifferent, leading them to look for those books and inspire them to initiate a Spiritist Group in our county. This doctrine, destined to regenerate humanity, marches on with huge steps. Would Agen be one of the last cities where Spiritism will claim citizenship? I consider your short report like the stone brought to the construction of a building and once more I am impressed by the means utilized by God to achieve the final objectives.*

Your impartiality and desire to get to the truth through this discussion are a guarantee that you will welcome this letter in the columns of your journal as a response to your article published on May 25th.

Respectfully,

Dombre (from Marmande)

The editor replied to this letter on June 1st with the following text only:

'Mr. Dombre from Marmande sent us a letter about our reflections regarding The Spirits' Book and the dialogues suggested to the honorable Mr. Cazenove de Pradines. That new teaching, as Mr. Dombre prefers to call it, does not hold to us to the same value and prestige in the same way it seems to impress our witty correspondent.'

Note: Mr. Dombre had sent contributions several times to that newspaper as stories and poetry.

'We respect the beliefs of our contradictors, even when based on wrong principles, but we believe it to be a mistake, but we consider to be a duty, regardless of the loyal and sincere attempted defense by Mr. Dombre, to maintain our position about a system that is completely away from the truth.'

Hence the Abeille Agénaise could not be used to propagate essentially wrong ideas and Mr. Dombre will understand our reasons for not supporting his wishes.

J. Serret'

OBSERVATION: Using the right of attacking and not providing the right of response is a convenient way of being right. It is still to be determined if this is the best way to get to the truth. If a doctrine whose foundations are charity and love to the neighbor; that betters humanity, leading people to renounce to their habits of disorder; that brings faith to those who believed nothing; praying the ones who never prayed; that reestablishes union amidst broken families; that precludes suicide; if such a doctrine, we were saying, is perverse, what would then be the others which are impotent to achieve such results? Mr. Serret is afraid of helping the propaganda through the discussion and that is why he decided to speak for himself. May he do so but the result shall not be different as it has been everywhere: call the attention and recruit followers to the doctrine.

A.K.

October 1862

Honorary members of the Parisian Society

In order to demonstrate our sympathy and gratitude to those who work in service to the cause of Spiritism, through devotion and selflessness, and expose themselves to danger, when necessary, the Spiritist Society of Paris award them with the title of honorary members. The Society then has the pleasure of acknowledging the contribution of chiefs and founders of societies and groups to the common task under the same flag and directed by the principles of serious Spiritism in order to achieve moral outcomes. Their guiding motives are more actions than words. They not only exist in several cities of France and Algeria but also in Italy, Spain, Austria, Poland, Constantinople, America, etc.

Mr. Dombre from Marmande who has always been an open propagandist and defender of Spiritism since his initiation deserved this distinction. When we announced his nomination as we asked for his permission to publish his letter to father F... (See articles from previous month). His answer deserves to be mentioned here for showing how certain followers understand their role:

“Marmande, August 10th 1862

Mr. Allan Kardec,

I thankfully accept the title of honorary member of the Spiritist Society of Paris. To deserve such a distinction represents a commitment and the testimony of sympathy on the part of the members of this Society who awarded me with this title. I will always and everywhere do my best to help, as much as I can, in the proliferation of a doctrine that makes me happy here on Earth and will in a distant future do the same to those who still want to keep their eyes covered by the veil of disbelief. I see no harm or inconvenience in the publication of my answer to the director of the Abeille Agénaise and my letter to father F... My letter to the latter one was signed: A Catholic. I think that not a single reader will believe that the author wanted to remain anonymous since I have no fear for people's judgment. I laugh at those who laugh because I am with the truth. Every true Spiritist must energize the timid followers through the example, holding high and strong the flag of one's belief.

Please, Sir, extend my most sincere acknowledgment to the honorable Society to which I congratulate myself for taking part... etc.

Dombre, owner”

The fear for what others might say about Spiritism now diminishes significantly and the number of those who hide their opinion is minimal. It is reduced to those who are afraid of losing their jobs and among them there are more priests than one can imagine. We personally know of more than a hundred.

Yet we notice in all social positions, among public servants, military officers of all patents, medical doctors, etc., many people who just a year ago would not declare their opinion but who now feel honored by doing so. Such courage of opinion that faces mockery has as its first consequence the encouragement of the timid; it then shows that the number of followers is larger than originally

assumed and finally it imposes silence to the individuals surprised by hearing the word Spiritism from all sides and pronounced by people that one thinks twice before kidding. Hence, it has been observed that the jesters have lowered their voice for some time now. A few years more and their role will be over for their will be defeated by the opinion of all sides.

Mr. Dombre has courage. He faces the adversaries with resolution and challenges them to the discussion. It is here where we have the refusal of a journalist revealing weakness and a preacher to whom he offers the best occasion to promote his arguments, bashing the doctrine who sneaks out saying that he has no time to respond. Is not that desertion from the battlefield? If he were sure of himself and if religion were at stake here why not stay to defeat the adversary? In such occasions abandoning the game is the same as losing the match. A preacher has a huge advantage against a lawyer. He speaks without a contradictor. He can say whatever he likes and nobody will contradict. As it seems that is the way that the adversaries of Spiritism understand controversy.

At the moment, Mr. Dombre was not the only one to keep his cool. Bordeaux, Lyon and many other less important cities and even several villages have given us many individual examples that grow on a daily basis. Everywhere the followers show firmness and energy the adversaries show moderation.

Up until now such courage of opinion and action is more widely found in the middle and more obscure classes than in the more elevated ones but if a celebrity person who is fairly loved and honored for talents or social position embraces the Spiritist cause and openly holds its flag high would others dare to call such a person mad, a person whose genius and talent have been glorified? Wouldn't such a voice impose silence to the cries of disbelief? Such a person will come, I guarantee. The dissidents will join in with their voices, yielding to the influence of moral authority. Such a person will also have a providential mission like all others who help with the advancement of humanity; a general mission like many others that are private and local. The latter ones, although more modest, do not have a lesser value because they pave the way. That is when Spiritism will sail at full power affecting and profoundly modifying the customs because the new ideas are different in all points. We sow and they will harvest because many more will follow the example.

Spiritists you must sow, sow in abundance so that the harvest be more abundant and easier. The past guarantees your future!

October 1862

What should the history of Spiritism be?

Several persons have sent us multiple reports of manifestations with respect to the history of Spiritism, which we have already addressed. To those who believed to have brought a brick to the construction of the edifice, we thank them for their intention but we must say that Spiritism is about something more serious than a catalogue of phenomena found in books.

Since Spiritism has marked its presence in the archives of humanity it will be interesting for future generations to know how it was started. It will then be the history of these events that characterized its first steps; the struggles endured; the obstacles erected and progress made throughout the world.

The true merit is modest and does not seek to impose. Humanity must know the names of the pioneers of the work, of those whose abnegation and devotion deserve to be inscribed in the archives; of the cities who were in the vanguard; of those who suffered in the name of the cause so that they can be blessed; of those who brought suffering to others so that we can pray for them to be forgiven. In a word, the history behind its dedicated friends and confessed or hidden enemies.

One must ensure that intrigue and ambition do not take the place where it is not theirs or the acknowledgement and honor that they do not deserve. If there is any Judas, they must be unmasked.

A part that will not be any less interesting is that of the revelations that successively announced all phases of this new era and the events that followed them.

To those who believe the task to be presumptuous, we say that, given our exceptional position, we have documents that belong to nobody and are safe from any eventuality. Considering that Spiritism is unquestionably called up to perform a great role in history, it is important that such a role is not diluted and that an authentic history be shown as opposed to apocryphal stories that could be fabricated for personal interests. When will that history be shown? It will not be soon and perhaps not in our lifetime since it is not supposed to satisfy our immediate curiosity. If we talk about that in anticipation it is so that nobody make the mistake about its objective. As a matter of fact Spiritism is at its beginning and many other things will happen before then. It is therefore necessary to wait until everything occupies its place, right or wrong.

October 1862

Arsène Gautier – memory of a spirit

Mrs. S... from Cherbourg sent us the following story:

A mariner from the Navy called Arsène Gautier returned to Cherbourg fifteen or sixteen years ago very sick as a result of an illness acquired along the African coast. He came to the house of one of my son-in-laws that was knowingly friends with his brother, a captain of the Merchant Navy who would arrive at this port in a few days. We welcomed him and, since he was sick, my daughter J... who was then fourteen or fifteen years old asked me to invite him to come closer to the fireplace to warm up and take some medication, which he would not find in his hostel as he waiting for arrival of his brother. My daughter had compassion and took good care of him. He died after returning to his house and since then nobody thought anymore about this event. Even the name that was placed on top of the spontaneous communication that he gave through my daughter, who is a medium today, did not help us to remember. We only recognized him by the details that he provided. He was a man of very limited intelligence and he had led a very tough life. Precluded from the loving care of his relatives, he had resigned to everything. Here is the communication:

“Arsène Gautier. You forgot me long ago, my friend, and I have not lost sight of you since I left this Earth for you are the only person, the only sympathetic spirit that I found on this Earth of pain. I loved you with the full strength of my heart when you were still a child and had but a feeling of compassion for me due to the terrible illness that should become my end. I am happy. That was the first life that God had given me. My spirit was young and since I did not know any others I had a strong connection with you. I am happy and about to return to Earth in order to carry on towards the Lord. I have hope in my heart. The path, so difficult to some, seems wide and easy to me. A good start like my previous life is a great encouragement. God shall help me. You will pray for me so that my shortcoming trial be useful to me as the other one was. I am not advanced but I will get there.”

We had no idea about the identity of the spirit who gave that communication, asking one another who that person was. The spirit responded: “I am the brother of a former captain from Nantes, who was friends with a relative of yours (that gave us a hint – the spirit continued). “Thank you for remembering me. I only regret the fact that in my new life I will be away from you for some time. Good-bye. I love you very much.

Arsène Gautier.”

OBSERVATION: This communication was read at the Parisian Society and we asked one of our spiritual guides if it was possible that it was the first incarnation of that spirit, as he said himself. Here is the answer:

“His first incarnation on Earth is possible but not as a spirit. In their first incarnations the Spirits are almost unconscious and although little advanced he is far from his origin. He is one of those good Spirits who followed the good path. His progress will be fast for he will only have to eliminate his ignorance and will not have to fight bad tendencies like those who follow the other way.

October 1862

Can a spirit step back before a test?

A lady friend writes the following:

“One day my daughter received the following spontaneous communication from a spirit that started signing the name Euphrosine Bretel. Since the name did not ring the bell we asked: - Who are you? A. I am a poor suffering spirit. I need prayers. I come to you because you know me since I was a child. We dug up our memories and I acknowledged that the family name was that of a nine or ten-year-old child that was from the same school as my daughter and had become sick just before the arrival of my daughter. Her father picked her up and the girls kept the memory of that sick and moaning child. She died at home. Her desperate mother soon followed her. The father became blind and died within the same year. As soon as we recognized the name the spirit wrote: - It is I. My last existence should have been a terrible test but I stepped back cowardly and since then I suffer. I beg you to ask God to provide me with the grace of a new trial. I will submit to that however hard it may be. I am so unfortunate. I love my father and my mother but they hate me. They run away from me and my punishment is to go after them to find myself rejected. I came to you because your memory of me is not totally extinct and you can pray for me and you are the only one who knows Spiritism. Good-bye. Do not forget me. We will see one another soon.”

My daughter then asked her jokingly: That means that I will die soon then? To what the spirit responded: “Time that is long for you, has no measure to us.”

We later verified that the name and surname were perfectly correct. I now ask myself if a spirit can step back before a test that has been initiated.”

We respond:

Yes, the Spirits can frequently retreat before chosen trials and that they do not have the courage to withstand and even face them when the time comes. That is the reason behind the majority of suicide cases. They also recede when desperate and suffering thus losing the benefits of the test. That is how Spiritism by revealing the cause, the objective and the consequences of life's tribulations gives at the same time so much consolation and courage and keeps the thoughts away from the idea of shortening life. Which philosophy has produced such effects upon humanity?

October 1862

Answer to a mental question

An excellent medium from Maine-et-Loire, whom we know personally, sent us the following letter:

“One of our friends, one amongst the least believers but with a huge desire to learn, one day asked us if we could evoke an anonymous spirit and if that spirit could answer questions that he would frame in his mind and without the medium knowing about them. We answered that it was possible, as long as the spirit wanted and that is not always the case. Next I got the following answer:”

“I cannot tell you what you want because God does not allow it. However, I can tell you that I suffer. It is a generalized pain in all limbs, what must surprise you since, after death on Earth, the body rots. But we have another spiritual body that does not die. That makes us suffer as much as if we had our corporeal body. I suffer but I hope I will not suffer forever. Since we must satisfy God’s justice we need to resign in this life or in the next. I did not preclude myself enough on Earth and that forces me to repair the wasted time. Do not imitate me since that would cost you centuries of suffering. Eternity is a serious thing and we do not think enough about that. How unfortunate that we forget such an important subject like salvation! Think about that!

Your friend, cure A... T....”

“It was that cure that our friend wanted to evoke and these are the three questions that he wanted to make:”

“What to think about the divinity of Jesus Christ?”

“Is the soul immortal?”

“What can one do to atone the faults and avoid punishment?”

“We recognized perfectly the former cure by the style. The words corporeal body, in particular, shows that it is the spirit of a good provincial cure whose education was incomplete.”

OBSERVATION: Answers to mental questions are very common and more interesting to the good faith believer as it provides one of the most concluding proofs of the intervention of an occult intelligence. However the majority of the Spiritist phenomena are rarely obtained at will but do occur spontaneously at every step.

In the case described above the spirit offered himself willingly what is very rare for it is known that the Spirits do not like to answer questions about curiosities or to be submitted to tests. They only agree when there is utility and frequently do not evaluate things as we do. Since they do not submit to the caprices of people it is necessary to wait for the phenomena according to their good will or their capacity of producing them. It is necessary to understand and not provoke them. One then

does need patience and perseverance and that is why the Spirits recognize the serious observers and those really wanting to learn. They give very little importance to those who are superficial and who think that it is just a matter of asking to be immediately attended.

October 1862

Spiritist poetry

African Spiritist Society, medium Ms. O...

The child and the atheist³⁵

A beautiful soul, boasted nonbeliever,

Strolled one day with a little boy

By the banks of a little river

Sheltered from the solar envoy.

The wise man sees the water running away

And asks his little friend:

What do you believe

This flow will one day end

When this valley it leaves?

Ah! The boy says, certainly this little creek

Will end at a placid lake.

This is where every river meets

And the eventful journey abates.

Poor boy! Says the coach,

Your mistake is bold!

You now learn and I teach

³⁵ See note about the guardian angel in the previous issue

That everything is finite in this world.

When the water leaves the head

Bubbling waves out of the fountain

The aim is to find its final bed

Lost in the oceans where it shall remain.

The same happens to our pride

When we leave this seductive globe,

Nothing stays from this short ride

And the great hollow we all probe.

Oh God! Says the boy with a trembling voice,

Then it is true! That is in our way!

What? Will I never again rejoice?

With my mother when she passes away?

I used to think that her kind soul

Could still protect her little boy

Mitigating this life's woe

Uniting one day around the Almighty's joy!

You must always keep that belief,

Whispers his guardian seraph.

Yes, my dear, happiness is brief

Without hope in this Earth.

Time went on. Many years passed.

Our wise man transposed the portal of death.

Crazy thoughts always cherished,

He died denying God's breath.

The young boy became old,

And the fearlessly man encountered death.

His faith was shinny as gold,

Returning to God in an eternal oath.

Look around, watch the devout crowd

Welcoming him from their heavenly isle:

Pure Spirits in their sacred shroud

Receiving their brother from his exile.

But who is that abandoned human

That seems to hide from everyone?

It is the unfortunate soul of the wise man

Who perceives happiness but enjoys none.

Ah! The master endured suffering, bitter and broad

When he saw the Almighty,

The strict judge, the very God

He denied, refusal to believe for eternity!

Ah! The hot tears of pain

Breaks the spirit that prides enslave!

He taught that hope was in vain,

To the little boy probing beyond the grave!

But the paternal kindness of God

Did not wish, oh no, to punish him forever.

Soon the regretful and humble soul asks the Lord

To once more to Earth return to endeavor.

Later on the redeemed and purified

Soul taken by the purest joy, returning

To heavens happy and satisfied

Will kneel forever before the Everlasting.

Dulcis

October 1862

Spiritist poetry

The pumpkin and the sensitive

(Fable)

What is your kind of diet, oh poor sensitive?

Asked a pumpkin to a delicate flower,

To remain light and slim, what is imperative?

I am afraid your power

Weakens with your sensitivity;

You shall die before the season;

The sun hides in the horizon,

Sleeping filaments: So little!

A dismal fear travels the style

Before the slightest breeze.

A simple touch cannot appease

The crisis; your life is a torment.

Why the pain of such greatness?

Follow my example of sweet quietness.

Whatever happens around me

do not shake my ground;

I am only committed to hold still

With no intention to feel

The mysteries of heavens.

The clear light of dawn,

Heat and cold, moist and dark

It is all the same spark!

Sure, my round and sturdy shape

Inspires the observer to state:

The pumpkin vegetates.

I am not bothered by the saying

And in a well-fed bed I remain

Anxious to keep my ground

And with my size I abound.

Our tastes are different, says the little flower.

The only thing that matters

To you is the material life.

But I do better and strive

And even abbreviating my time

I choose for preference

The pleasures of life and intelligence

All lived in abundance.

Dombre (de Marmande)

October 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The soul and the evil spirit

Group de Sainte-Gemme, medium Mr. C...

Of all the works of Humanity, the most preferred are the ones that closely link human beings to the Creator and when the human being is constantly led to admire the divine works created by God omnipotent hands. It is a human duty to continually adore and worship the One who gave our Spirits the means of improvement to achieve supreme happiness, which is the final objective of all of us.

Even though intellectuals give humanity the means of elevating in intelligence, there is great danger with this advantage. History demonstrates that danger and how many evils it may engineer.

You are gifted with a superior intelligence. In that regard you are closer to the Divinity than your brothers and sisters in humanity and even though you are capable of denying that very Divinity or to think of Divinity in a way that is exactly the opposite of reality. It is never too much to say: Pride is the worst enemy of the human beings. If you had a thousand mouths, they all should repeat that endlessly. God created you all simple and ignorant.³⁶ You must advance in the safest possible way. That is entirely on you since God will never deny a grace to the one who asks for it in good faith.

Every human condition may equally lead you to the desired objective if you walk the path of justice and if you do not bend your conscience before the will of your caprices. Nevertheless, there are conditions in which it is more difficult to advance than in others. Hence God will take into account those who have chosen a slippery path but who walked through that without tripping or at least who have done their humanly possible to avoid slipping and to stand still.

There is where sincere faith is needed, an uncommon strength to resist the calls to leave the just path; that is also the opportunity to provide great help to the unfortunate brothers and sisters in journey. Ah! There is great merit to the one who touches the swamp without staining the clothes or oneself. It is necessary that a very pure flame shines internally. What a reward is then reserved after leaving this earthly life!³⁷

36 This statement relative to the primitive state of the souls was formulated for the first time in *The Spirits' Book* and is nowadays repeated in the communications everywhere. It is thus consecrated both by the agreement and the logic since no other principle would better explain God's justice. By giving everyone the same starting point it also gave them the same task to achieve the target. Nobody is privileged by nature. Given the free-will some progress faster than others. Such principle of justice cannot conciliate with the theory of creation of the soul at the time of birth of the body. That principle contains in itself the plurality of the existences for if the soul precedes the body it means that it has lived already.

37 Some are surprised by the fact that the Spirits may choose a reincarnation in one of those environments surrounded by corruption. Among those living in such lower condition of society there are some who are there for sympathy and to satisfy their ignoble inclinations; others are there on a mission or on duty in order to help their brothers and sisters out of the quagmire and to have more merit themselves by fighting the dangerous

May those in a similar condition give serious thoughts to these words; may they understand well their meaning and a true revolution will take place with the subtle impulses of the heart replacing the pressures of selfishness. Who shall transform the old self into a new self, as asked in the Gospels? What is needed to accomplish such a miracle? They must report their thoughts to what they are destined to be after death.

They are all convinced that tomorrow may not come but horrified by the somber and gloomy pictures of the eternal penalties in which they refuse to believe out of intuition. They let it go and follow the currents of present life. They are led by the febrile greed of always accumulating by all means, licit or not. They ruthlessly ruin the life of a breadwinner and nourish their vices with resources that could feed a whole town for a few days. Their eyes are deviated from the fatal day! Ah, if they could face it cold-bloodedly they would change so much! How fast would they return the stolen black bread to the legitimate owner, the bread that was unjustly used to grow an unjust fortune!

What is it that is necessary then? The Spiritist light is needed. One must say as the great general said about a great nation: *Spiritism is like the sun. It blinds those who cannot look at it!* Those who call themselves Christians and who reject Spiritism are perfectly blind people.

What is the mission of the doctrine that is currently sowed by the invincible hands of the Creator? It is to bring the unbelievers to faith, the desperate ones to hope and the selfish to charity. They believe to be Christians and say anathema to the doctrine of Jesus. They say that it is the disguised devil preaching such a doctrine in this world. Blind and miserable ones! Poor sick people! May God, in His inextinguishable goodness, stop their blindness and illnesses!

Who told you it was the evil spirit? Who? You know nothing about it. Have you asked God to clarify you about this? You did not or if you did it was with a preconceived idea. The evil spirit! You know who told you that? It was pride, the evil spirit itself – that is revolting! – make you condemn the Spirit of God represented by the good Spirits, God's envoys to regenerate the world!

Analyze the issue and according to the established rule, condemn or acquit. Ah! If at least you wanted to give a hard look to the inevitable results brought about by Spiritism! If you wanted to see people embracing one another like brothers and sisters, convinced that sooner or later they shall come to terms with God regarding their own personal missions! If you wanted to see charity replacing selfishness all over the place, work replacing laziness since work is part of human nature. God turned work into a duty from which one cannot escape without breaching the divine laws. If you wanted to see the miserable ones who say on one side: *“Since we are damned in this world and in the next let us be criminals and enjoy; and those who take away other people's fortune say: the soul is just a word. God does not exist. If there is nothing to expect after death let us just enjoy this life. The world is made up of exploiters and exploited. I would rather be among the former than the latter. After me are just the floods.”*

invitations. Their reward will be proportional to the fierceness of the battles. It is the same situation of the worker that is paid in proportion to the dangers of the job.

If you look at these two characters that represent pillage and deception, the kind of deception that leads to jail; if you saw them transformed by the belief in the immortality of the soul taught by Spiritism, would you still say that it was the evil spirit?

I see disdain in your lips and I can even hear you saying: *“We are the ones who preach the immortality and we have the credit for that. They will always trust us better than those empty dreamers who are if not deceivers at least dreamers who believe that the dead left their graves and came to communicate with them.”*

We always give the same answer to that: Investigate and, if convinced in good-faith, there will be no lack of that if you are sincere and instead of slander you will praise. That will be much more in agreement with God’s law.

God’s law! You believe to be the only depositary of those laws hence it surprises you that other people take the initiative that according to your beliefs should be exclusively yours. Listen to what the Spirits who are the envoys of God have to say:

“The ones who seriously face their duties will be blessed for they will have accomplished the works advised and determined by the divine Master. The ones who saw a human objective in priesthood will not be damned although they might have cursed others, but God reserves a more just punishment for you. A day will come when you will have to publically explain the Spiritist phenomena and that day will come soon. You will then meet the judgment since you have built your own tribunal. Who is the judge? God Himself since nothing happens without His consent. Now you see where the evil spirit, that is pride, has led you! Instead of worshiping and praying you resist against the will of the only one that has the right to say: I wish. Nonetheless you say that it is the devil saying: I wish! And now, if you insist that it is just the manifestation of the bad Spirits remember the words of the Master who was accused of expelling the evil Spirits in the name of Beelzebub: *Every kingdom that is divided against itself shall be destroyed.*”

Hippolyte Fortoul

October 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The crow and the fox

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, August 8th, 1862 – medium Mr. Leymarie

Be suspicious of the smarmy ones. Race of liars. Incarnations of two faces that lie to deceive. Unfortunate are the ones who listen to them and believe for the concept of truth is perverted in them. Nevertheless, how many people are misguided by that deceitful adulation! They pay attention to the villain who praises their own weaknesses whilst rejecting the sincere friend to tell them the truth and give them good advice; they attract the false friend and keep away the real and selfless one. These people are satisfied by adulation, by the approval of everything, getting applause even for the most absurd of all things. And – this is really strange – they refuse really sensible advice and believe in the lies from the first one that shows up as long as those lies flatter their own ideas. What would you expect? They want to be deceived and so they are. They often acknowledge the consequences but the evil is done and sometimes without remedy.

Where does it come from? The causes are numerous. First and without denial it is pride that blinds these individuals as they consider themselves infallible. They easily consider themselves the model of commonsense. Then comes a lack of judgment that does not allow them to separate right from wrong. Pride is also there to stain their poor judgment. Without pride they would mistrust themselves seeking the advice of those with more experience. You must understand also that the bad Spirits are not oblivious to the situation and take the opportunity to mystify and trick them.

Who would more easily fall into those traps than the flattered proud one? Pride to them is like a lack of armor as greed is to others. They are skillful in taking advantage of that but they also make attempts with the stronger ones from a moral point of view.

Do you want to avoid the influence of the bad Spirits? Rise, rise in virtue to the point where they cannot reach you and then they are the ones who are going to fear you. However, if you stick to the tip of the rope they will find ways of forcing your defeat; they will call you with sweet voices, they will flatter your plumage and like the crow you will drop the cheese.

Sonnet

October 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Style of the good communications

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies, August 8th, 1862 – medium Mr. Leymarie

Seek moderation and conciseness in the word; a few words, many things. Language is like harmony: the more we try to complicate it the less melodious it will be. True science is always the one that touches the mass of intelligent people rather than a few proud sybarites, intelligent people that for a long time have been veered off from the true beautiful path, a path of simplicity. Following the example of their Master, the disciples of Jesus acquired this profound knowledge of speaking well, sober and concisely and their speech, like that of the Master, was marked by such subtleness, by a depth that in our days when we see ourselves surrounded by lies those words still turn the voice of Christ and the apostles into inimitable role models of concision and accuracy.

But truth came down from above. Like the apostles of the first days of the Christian era, the superior Spirits come to teach and guide us. *The Spirits' Book* contains a whole revolution because it is concise and sober: a few words, lots of things; no flowers of rhetoric or images but only great and strong thoughts that give strength and consolation. That is why its reading is enjoyable and easily understood. That is the trait of the superior Spirits who dictated it.

Why then there are so many communications coming from Spirits that call themselves superiors, full of insensible things, plentiful of empty phrases, pages that say nothing? Rest assured that these are not superior Spirits but pseudo-wise Spirits who believe in replacing their lack of thoughts by empty words; the depth of ideas by obscurity. They cannot seduce anyone except who believe to have gold when they actually have brass and judge the beauty of a woman by her shinning outfit. Be suspicious then of the Spirits that use complicated and confusing language that requires a lot of effort to understand. You will acknowledge true superiority in the concise, clear and intelligible style that does not require power of imagination. Do not measure the importance of the communications by their extension but by the summation of ideas that they contain in a short text. To assess real superiority you must account for the words and ideas – I refer to just, sound and logical ideas – and the comparison will give you the exact measure.

Barbarete, familiar spirit

October 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Reason and the supernatural

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. A. Didier

The human being is limited in intelligence and sensations. Without being able to understand things beyond certain limits the human being pronounces the sacramental word: *Supernatural*.

The word supernatural in the new science that you are studying is a conventional word. It does exist but explains nothing. In fact, what is the meaning of the word supernatural? Outside of nature; beyond what is understood by us. Nothing is more insensible than the application of that word to everything that is beyond us. To someone that thinks the word supernatural is not definitive. It is vague; it induces presentiment.

The banal phrase of the ignorant unbeliever is well known: “*It is supernatural. Reason tells us...etc.*” But what is the reason? Ah! When nature grows and acts sovereignly showing us unknown treasures reason becomes irrational and absurd since it persists despite the facts. Well, if something happens it is allowed by nature. Nature has certainly sublime manifestations to us but these are still very restrictive if we enter the domain of the unknown. Ah! You want to excavate nature, find the origin of things – the rerum³⁸ cause – and still believe it to be unnecessary to keep your trivial reason aside? You must be joking, ladies and gentlemen. What is human reason other than the way of thinking in this world? If you travel from planet to planet do you believe that your reason should follow you? No, ladies and gentlemen. The only reason that you must have amongst all these phenomena is to keep cold blood and observation and start from that point of view and not from the point of view of disbelief.

We have touched very serious subjects lately as you remember but we have not concluded from this that it is only evil that comes from humanity. After many struggles and discussions we also see good thoughts, a new faith and new hope. Spiritism, as I told you recently, is the light that from now on must illuminate every intellectual being devoted to progress.

Prayer shall be the only dogma and the only practice of Spiritism, that is, harmony and simplicity. The art shall be new for it will be fertilized by new ideas. Believe that every work that is inspired by a philosophical-religious idea is always a powerful and sound manifestation. Christ shall always be humanity but not the suffering humanity: He will be the triumphant humanity.

Lamennais

Allan Kardec

38 The cause of all things (TN)

November 1862

Spiritist trip in 1862

We have just come from a visit to several Spiritist Centers in France feeling sorry for not having enough time to have visited all others that invited us or for not having had the time to stay longer with those who we did visit, considering the warmth and fraternal welcome addressed to us everywhere. During a journey of more than six weeks covering a total length of 693 leagues³⁹ we visited twenty cities and attended more than fifty meetings. The result gave us great moral satisfaction both on the collected observations and from witnessing the huge progresses of Spiritism.

The report of this trip that mainly contains the instructions given by us to the several groups is too extensive to be published in *The Review* since it would almost require two volumes. We will publish a separate brochure in the same format as *The Review* and that can be attached to it if necessary.⁴⁰

In our journey we visited the possessed of Morzine, Savoie, and there we also collected important and very instructive observations about the causes and modes of obsession in all degrees, confirmed by isolated and identical cases seen in other places and about the means of fighting it. This will be the subject of a special and lengthy article that we intended to have published in this current issue but since time did not allow us to finish it has been postponed to the next number. As a matter of fact it is going to be better since it will be done without rush. Besides, several recent facts came to shed light into the subject opening up a new horizon to pathology. The article will respond to all requests of clarification that frequently come to us regarding similar cases. It seems appropriate to us to take the opportunity and rectify an opinion that appeared to be wide spread to us.

Several people, including those in the Province, thought that the cost of this trip was covered by the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies. We had to correct the mistake every time the issue was mentioned. To those who still believe in that we remind what was said on another occasion (*The Spiritist Review*, June 1862) that the Society only covers the ongoing expenses and does not keep any savings. In order to accumulate resources, the Society would focus on increase the quantity. This is something that the Society does not do and will not do since its objective is not speculation and quantity does not add value to its activities. Its influence resides in the moral and serious character of the meetings, which gives outsiders the impression of a serious, reverent assembly. This is the most powerful means of propaganda. Hence the Society could not cover those kind of expenses. The costs of these trip as well as all other areas required to support our relationships within Spiritism are covered by our own personal savings and resources. Without this support and sales of our books, we would not be able to pay all the required expenses. I can say that, without

³⁹ Unit of length measuring approximately 5 km or 3 miles – the length associated to this unit changed a few times in France of the 18th and 19th centuries (TN).

⁴⁰ Large brochure in-8, type and format like *The Spiritist Review*. Price 1 franc. Free postage in France. In printing.

any vanity, but rather to pay tribute to the truth and to provide clarification to those who believe that we are enriching ourselves.

November 1862

To our correspondents

Upon returning from the trip, we found such a volume of correspondence that it would require one month of our exclusive attention without handling anything else. Considering that every day there is a new contingent of correspondence, one must understand the physical impossibility of working on this without affecting our daily and compulsory obligations. We have already said and repeat here that we never complain about the number of letters we receive for they demonstrate the immense extension achieved by Spiritism and the moral and philosophical point of view under which Spiritism is understood wherever it penetrates. These are precious archives for Spiritism. However, once more we are forced to beg for your indulgence for the delay in our response. Only this work would require the time of two persons and we are only one. The consequence is that many activities suffer causing delays in the publication of several announced works. We hope that time will come when we will have a permanent and assiduous support so that everything will advance well. The Spirits promise it to us. There is no alternative while we wait: it is necessary to delay the correspondence or other works that multiply as Spiritism grows.

November 1862

The mysteries of St. Michel's tower in Bordeaux

Story of a mummy

In the undergrounds of St. Michel's tower there is a certain number of mummified cadavers that, as it seems, go back two or three centuries. It constitutes one of the curiosities of the city always sought by visitors. All bodies have their skin fully parsed. They are preserved in a way that makes it possible to distinguish faces and physiognomic expressions. Some exhibit remarkable preservation in their nails, clothing, and other fine fabrics. Amongst all the mummies, there is one in particular that deserves attention. It is a man whose contraction of body, face and arms leave no doubt about the kind of death he had. It is obvious that he was buried alive, dying in a terrible fate.

A new periodical from Bordeaux publishes a novel-feuilleton with the title *The Mysteries of St. Michel's tower*. The only thing we know about the work is the name and the posters hanging on the walls of town portraying the undergrounds of the tower. Hence we do not know the mind frame that conceived it or the source from where the author collected the described facts. What we are going to report here at least has the merit of not having been produced by human imagination since it comes directly from beyond the grave something that its author may laugh at it. Nonetheless we believe that the episode is not one of the least shocking ones that took place there. The Spiritists will read it with as much interest as the profundity of the lesson it contains.

It is the story of the man who was buried alive and two persons linked to the case obtained in a series of evocations carried out at the Spiritist Society of Saint-Jean d'Angély last August, a story that we were told when visiting that town. We will discuss the authenticity of the facts in the observation that wraps up the article.

Saint-Jean d'Angély, August 9th 1862

Medium Mr. Del... through typtology. ⁴¹

1. Question to the protector guide: Can we evoke the spirit that animated the body found in the undergrounds of St. Michel's tower in Bordeaux that seems to have been buried alive? – A. Yes and may this serve as a lesson to you.
2. Evocation – the Spirit gives sign of his presence.
3. Can you tell us the name you used when animating the body in question? – A. Guillaume Remone.
4. Was your death atonement or a test chosen for your advancement? – A. My God! Why, in your goodness, pursue your sacred justice? Know this that the atonement is always

41 The language of signs, raps and tilting - alphabetical typtology (TN)

compulsory and the one who committed a crime cannot avoid it. I was among those and that is all I have to say. After much suffering I came to acknowledge my mistakes and I experience the necessary regret to find the grace of the Eternal.

5. Can you tell us about your crime? – A. I murdered a woman in her bed.

August 10th, medium Ms. Guerin through psychography

6. Before your reincarnation when you chose the kind of atonement did you know that you would be buried alive? – A. No. The only thing I knew was that I would to commit a terrible crime that would bring a lot of burning remorse to my life and that this life would end in horrific pain. I will reincarnate soon. God had compassion on my pain.

Observation: The phrase “I knew that I would to commit a terrible crime” is explained in questions 30 and 31 below.

7. Has justice found someone guilty for the death of your wife? – A. No. They believed that it was a subtle death. I suffocated her.
8. What was it that led you to such a criminal act? – A. Jealousy.
9. Were you buried alive by mistake? – A. Yes.
10. Do you remember the moments just prior to death? – A. It is something horrible, impossible to describe. Imagine yourself in a grave covered by ten feet of earth, wanting to breath with no air, wanting to shout: “I am alive!” and feeling the voice muffled; seeing oneself dying and incapable of asking for help; seeing oneself with plenty of life but scratched out from the roll of the living ones; feeling thirsty and incapable of attending to that; feeling hungry and incapable of feeding yourself; in a word, die in a damned rage.
11. In such a crucial moment did you think that it was the beginning of your punishment? – A. I thought of nothing. I died enraged, hitting the walls of the coffin, trying to live at any price.

Observation: This answer is logical and justified by the contorted cadaver that explains how the individual had died.

12. Once separated, did your spirit see the body of Guillaume Remone? – A. Just after death I still saw myself on Earth.
13. For how long did you still remain in that state, that is, with the spirit connected to the body but not animating it? – A. Approximately fifteen to eighteen days.
14. Where did you find yourself after leaving the body? – A. I saw myself surrounded by many Spirits in pain like myself. They did not recognize the need to raise their hearts to God. Their hearts were still linked to Earth and hopeless to any form of forgiveness.

Observation: Connected to his own body and still suffering the tortures of the final moments, since he found himself among suffering Spirits, isn't that hell with the crying and gridding of teeth? Will it be necessary to build a furnace with flames and tridents? As it is well-known, the belief in the eternal sufferings is a punishment to guilty Spirits. Such punishment lasts until the Spirits would last forever if the Spirits would never repent as God only forgives the repented sinner. As soon as a seed of regret enters their hearts a ray

of hope allows them to foresee the possibility of an end to their sufferings. But simple regret is not enough. God wishes the reparation and atonement and it is through successive incarnations that God gives the imperfect Spirits the possibility of betterment. They make decisions in erraticism⁴² and try to execute them in their corporeal life. That is how they leave behind some impurities in each existence and progressively move one step ahead towards eternal happiness. The door is never closed to them who achieve happiness in a relatively long time interval and according to the will-power and the work done for themselves. One cannot admit God's omnipotence without prescience. Hence the question is why God when creating a soul and knowing that the soul should fail without the capacity of standing alone, why God took that soul from nothing and sent the same soul to the eternal sufferings? Did God want to create unhappy souls? Such notion is irreconcilable with the idea of an infinite goodness that is one of God's essential attributes. It must be either one: God knew or did not know. If He did not know then God is not omnipotent. If He did know then that God is neither fair nor good. Now, subtracting any portion God's infinite attributes is the same as denying His divinity. On the contrary, however, everything is conciliated with the possibility of allowing the spirit to make up for his faults. God knew that the spirit would fail as a consequence of the free-will but He also knew that the spirit would stand up again. God knew that the being would delay the arrival to the objective by choosing the bad path but He also knew that sooner or later the spirit would get there. God multiplies the warnings about the journey to help us to get there faster. If the spirit does not listen is for one's own fault hence deserving the elongation of the tests. Which one is the more rational doctrine?

A.K.

August 11th

15. Are our questions unpleasant to you? – A. They remind me of painful memories but now that I got the grace through repentance, I feel happy for being able to use my life as an example in order to forearm my brothers and sisters against the passions that could drag them as they did to myself.
16. Comparing the kind of death you had to that of your wife we are led to suppose that the “eye for an eye” rule was applied to you, realizing Jesus' words: “For all those who live by the sword shall die by the sword.” Could you tell us how you suffocated your wife? – A. In bed, as I said, between two pillows after having muzzled her so that she could not scream.
17. Did you enjoy good reputation with your neighbors? – A. Yes. I was poor but honest and well liked. My wife was also from an honorable family. I was up all night out of jealousy since I had seen a man leaving her room. I was mad of anger and did not know what I was doing and perpetrated the crime that you know.

42 Life of the spirit between incarnations until perfection is achieved and there is no more need for progress or atonement in the material world (TN)

18. Have you seen your wife again in the spiritual world? – A. It was the first spirit that I saw as if to criticize me for my crime. I saw her for a long time and she was unhappy also. It was only after the fact that my reincarnation was decided that I was freed from her presence.

Observation: The continual vision of the victims is one of the most common punishments imposed on criminal Spirits. Those surrounded by darkness, something that is very frequent, cannot always escape. They see nothing but what reminds them of the crime.

19. Have you asked for her forgiveness? – A. No. We were always running away from each other to find ourselves face to face again torturing one another.
20. However have you had to ask for her forgiveness when you repented? – A. Since the time I repented I have not seen her any more.
21. Do you know where she is now? – A. I do not know what happened to her but it would be easy for you to find out through your spiritual guide, St. John the Baptist.
22. What have you suffered as a spirit? – A. I was surrounded by desperate Spirits. I thought I would never get away from that miserable state. There was not a spark of light shining upon my brute soul. The sight of the victim was the coronation of my martyrdom.
23. How were you guided to a better situation? – A. From amidst my brothers in desperation one day I envisaged an end that could only be achieved through regret.
24. What was that end? – A. God, from whom everybody has an idea willing or not.
25. You have already mentioned twice that you are supposed to incarnate soon. Would it be an indiscretion to ask you about the kind of test that you have chosen? – A. Death will take always all those who are dear to me and I will suffer the most abject diseases.
26. Are you happy now? – A. Relatively yes since I foresee an end to the suffering. Effectively, no.
27. From the time when you passed away in lethargy until the moment when you woke up in the coffin did you see or hear what was happening around you? – A. Yes but so vaguely that it seemed like a dream.
28. In which year did you die? – A. In 1612.
29. (To St. John the Baptist) – G. Remone was not certainly forced to confess his crime as a punishment in our meeting. This seems to result from his first answer when he speaks of God's justice. – A. Yes. He was forced but he was resigned in good faith for he saw another way of pleasing God by serving you in your studies.
30. The spirit was certainly mistaken when answering the sixth question he said: "*The only thing I knew was that I would to commit a terrible crime*". He would likely know that he would be exposed to commit a crime but given the free-will he could have resisted the temptation. – A. He did not explain it well. He should have said: "*I knew there would be plenty of remorse in my life.*" He had the freedom of choosing the kind of test. Now, in order to feel remorse it is necessary to admit that he would do something bad.
31. Could it be the case that he would only have the free-will by choosing this or that test but once chosen he would no longer have the freedom of not doing the action and hence the crime would necessarily have to be committed by him? – A. He could have avoided it. He had his free-will as a spirit as well as an incarnate soul. Consequently he could have resisted but he was dragged by his passions.

Observation: It is evident that the spirit was not aware of his precise situation. He had confused the test, that is, the temptation of doing something with the action of doing it. Since he succumbed he believed that there was an unavoidable fate chosen by himself a fact that would not be rational. Free-will is the most beautiful privilege of the human spirit and a wonderful demonstration of God's justice by turning the spirit the judge of their own destiny since it depends on each one the abbreviation or the prolongation of sufferings by greed and bad will. The assumption that the spirit could have lost his moral freedom when incarnate would be the same as subtracting his responsibilities for his actions. From that we can see that after a mature examination one cannot admit certain answers given by the spirit when not supported by logic in all points.

A.K.

32. Should we understand that a spirit can choose a life of crimes as a test since the spirit has chosen remorse which is a consequence of a breach of the divine law? – A. The spirit may choose the test of being exposed to that but due to the free-will the spirit may not fail. G. Remone had chosen a life full of domestic displeasures that would excite the idea of a crime and then remorse had he committed the crime. He therefore wanted to face that trial in order to be victorious.

Your language is so much in disharmony with the way the Spirits communicate that sometimes it does happen that certain phrases employed by the mediums must be rectified particularly by the intuitive mediums. We transmit our ideas to them by the combination of the fluids that translate our thoughts more or less well according to a better or worse combination between the fluids of our perispirit and the animal fluid of the medium.

Mrs. Remone, August 12th

33. (To St. John) – Could we evoke the spirit of the wife of Mr. G. Remone? – A. No. She is incarnate.
34. On Earth? – A. Yes.
35. Since we cannot evoke her as a spirit could we do that to the incarnate spirit? Couldn't you tell us when she is asleep? – A. You can do that right now since nights for that spirit are days for you.
36. Evocation of the spirit of Mrs. Remone (the spirit manifests).
37. Do you remember the existence when you were Mrs. Remone? – A. Yes. Oh! Why do you make me remember my shame and my unhappiness?
38. If our questions make you suffer we will stop. – A. Please continue.
39. Our objective is not to make you suffer. We do not know you and perhaps we will never do. All we want is to do Spiritist studies. – A. My spirit is tranquil. Why agitating it with painful memories? Can't you do that with Spirits in erraticity?
40. (To St. John) – Should we stop the questions that seem to bring up painful memories in this spirit? – A. I advise so. It is a child still and the fatigue of the spirit would lead to a

- painful reaction of the body. In fact, she would more or less repeat what was said by her husband.
41. Have G. Remone and his wife forgiven one another? – A. No. For that they need to achieve a high degree of perfection.
 42. If these two Spirits met on Earth as incarnate Spirits what would be their mutual feelings? – A. Just antipathy.
 43. If G. Remone saw his body, like a visitor, in the cave of St. Michel would he experience a sensation that would be unknown to the other curious people? – A. Yes but such a sensation would seem natural to him.
 44. Has he seen his body again after he was removed from Earth? – A. Yes.
 45. What were his impressions? – A. None. You must understand that once separated from the material envelope the spirit sees things differently from here when compared to the incarnate ones.
 46. Could we have more information about the current condition of Mrs. Remone? – A. Ask.
 47. What is her gender now? – A. Female.
 48. What is her motherland? – A. She is in the Antilles as the daughter of a rich tradesman.
 49. The Antilles belong to several nations. What is hers? – A. She lives in Havana.
 50. Can we know her name? – A. Do not ask me that.
 51. What is her age? – A. She is eleven years old.
 52. What are her trials? – A. She will lose her fortune and will live an illegitimate and hopeless love added to misery and hard labor.
 53. You say illegitimate love. Will she love her father, brother or another family member? – A. She will love a man of God, she will be alone and without any hope of being corresponded.
 54. Now that we know the trials of that spirit couldn't we evoke her from time to time in her sad days and give her some advice to reestablish her courage and help her to wait in God? Would that influence the resolutions she would make in the vigil state? – A. Very little. That young lady already has a huge imagination and is knuckle headed.
 55. You said that in the country where she lives their nights are our days. But between Havana and Saint-Jean d'Angély the time difference is only five and half hours. At the time of evocation it was 2 pm here and 8:30 am in Havana. – A. Well, she was asleep when you evoked her while you were up long before that. In those regions rich people sleep longer hours and there isn't much to do.

Observation: Several lessons are found in this evocation. If the incarnate spirit cannot remember the past in the ordinary life the situation changes when unleashed during the sleep. Hence there is no rupture in the life of the spirit that during times of emancipation may look at the past to previous existences and carry over an intuition that may guide them in the vigil state. On several occasions we have pointed out the inconveniences produced by an accurate memory of the past in the present life. These evocations give us an example. It was said that if G. Remone and his wife met they would have a mutual feeling of antipathy. What would happen if they remembered their former relationship! It would break an inevitable reciprocal hatred. Instead of just two antipathetic or indifferent persons towards one another they would perhaps be mortal enemies. In their ignorance they are

more themselves and follow their new journeys more freely. The memory of the past would disturb them, humiliating them before others and themselves. The oblivion state does not impair their experience since they are born with the acquired intelligence and morality. They are what they have made. It is a new starting point. It would be an atrocious pain if the memory of the latest death would join the new trials to be endured by G. Remone and God wanted to avoid that by casting a veil onto his past.

A.K.

Jacques Noulin, August 15th

56. (To St. John) – Can we evoke the accomplice of Mrs. Remone? – A. Yes.
57. Evocation – the spirit indicates his presence.
58. Do you swear in the name of God that you were Remone's rival? – A. I will swear in the name of whatever you like.
Swear in the name of God! – A. I swear in the name of God.
59. You do not seem to be a much advanced spirit. – A. Mind your own business and let me go.

Observation: Since there are no closed doors to the spirit if he asked to be left alone and go it means that a superior power forces him to stay certainly for his own instruction.

60. We mind your business because we want to know how in the next life virtue is awarded and vice is punished. – A. Yes my dear, each one receives reward or punishment according to their works. Make sure you do the right thing.
61. Your jokes do not intimidate us. We have trust in God. But it seems that you are still much delayed. – A. As in the past I am always the Big John.
62. How come you cannot respond to our serious questions? – A. Oh serious people, why me? I am always more prepared for laughing than philosophy.
63. (To the guardian angel of the medium) – Can you give us some information about this spirit? – A. He is not sufficiently advanced to provide you with good reasons.
64. Would there be any danger in communicating with him? Could we lead him to better feelings? – A. It could be more advantageous to him than to you. Try it. You may perhaps convince him to see things from another point of view.
65. (To the spirit) – Do you know that the spirit must progress? That through successive incarnations the spirit is supposed to get to God from whom you seem very separated? – A. I never thought of that and that is why I am so far away from that objective. I have no intention of initiating such a journey.

Observation: Here is a spirit that for his lightheartedness and little advancement is not concerned with reincarnation. When the time is right for him to initiate a new existence what will be his choice? It will evidently suit his habits and character so that he can continue in another incarnation instead of atoning, until such time he is advanced enough to understand his consequences. It is like the story of the unexperienced boy who tries every adventure and experiences on his own. We must remember here that the little

advanced Spirits who are incapable of making a fully informed choice there are compulsory incarnations.

A.K.

66. Do you know G. Remone? – A. Yes, in reality his is the miserable one.
67. Were you suspicious that he could have murdered his wife? – A. I was a little selfish thus more worried about myself than others. When I learned about her death I honestly cried but I did not try to know the cause of death.
68. What was your position then? – A. I was a simple auxiliary court clerk; an office boy as you say.
69. After the death of that lady, have you thought of her again? – A. Do not remind me of all that again.
70. We want you to remember because you seem to be better as a person than you initially showed us. – A. I thought of her a few times. However, since I was naturally lighthearted the memory of her would come and go.
71. What was your name? – A. You are very curious. If I were not forced to stay I would have walked away already leaving you behind with your sermons.
72. You lived in a religious century. Haven't you ever prayed for that woman who you loved? – A. Yes I did.
73. Have you ever seen G. Remone and his wife again in the spiritual world? – A. I went back to meet the guys like me and when those crying babies wanted to show up I turned my back on them. I do not like the drama...
74. Go on. – A. I am not so talkative like you. I will stop here if you like.
75. Are you happy today? – A. Why not? I have fun by pranking the oblivious ones who believe to be dealing with good Spirits. When they deal with us we trick them nicely.
76. That is not happiness. The proof that you are not happy is that you said yourself that you were forced to come here. Well, one cannot be happy when forced to do something that is unpleasant. – A. Do not we always have superiors above us? That does not preclude us from being happy. Everyone seeks happiness where they can find it.
77. With some effort, particularly through prayer, you could reach the happiness of those who command you. – A. I did not think of that. You will make me ambitious. Aren't you tricking me? Do not disturb my poor spirit for nothing.
78. We are not tricking you. You must work for your own advancement. – A. That requires a lot of sacrifice and I am too lazy.
79. When someone is too lazy a friend may help. We will then help you by praying for you. – A. Pray then so that I may decide to pray myself.
80. We will pray but join us. – A. Do you believe that if I prayed I would have thoughts similar to yours?
81. No doubt but pray on your side. We will evoke you on Thursday to see the progress that you might have done and give you advices if you agree. – A. So long then.
82. Can you tell us your name now? – A. Jacques Noulin.

The following day the spirit was evoked again and was asked different questions about Mrs. Remone. His answers were very little educational and similar to the first ones. After

being asked about it St. John said: *“You were mistaken by disturbing this spirit and awakening his former passions. It would have been better to wait for the scheduled day. He was in a new kind of confusion. Your evocation had placed him in a new level of thoughts completely different from his common ideas. He was not able to make a firm decision yet although he was prepared to try the prayer. Wait until the proposed day. From now to that day if he listens to the good Spirits who want to help you in your good tasks you may obtain something.”*

Thursday, 21st

83. (To St. John) – Has Jacques Noulin made amendments after the last evocation? – A. He prayed and there was light in his soul. He now believes that he is destined to become better and he is prepared to work.
84. What should we do to help him? – A. Ask about the current state of his soul and make him look inwardly so that he can detect the change.
85. (To Jacques Noulin) – Have you given any thought to what you promised and can you tell us how do you see things today? – A. Before anything else I want to thank you. You spared me many years of darkness. Since a few days now I understand that God is my objective; that I must strive to be worthy of him. A new era is presented before me. Darkness is over and I can now see the path ahead. My heart is full of hope and I am sustained by the good Spirits who help the weak. I will follow this new avenue in which I have already found tranquility and that must lead me to happiness.
86. Were you really happy as you said? – A. I was very unhappy. I can see now. But I was happy as everybody else who does not look upwards. I did not think of the future and wandered around on Earth as a lighthearted person, not giving any serious thought. Oh! How much regret for the blindness that made me waste such a precious time! You made a friend, do not forget that. Call me whenever you want and I will attend if I can.
87. What do your former peers think of you now? – A. They make fun of me for having listened to the good Spirits whose presence and advices are hated by them all.
88. Would you be allowed to go and see them? – A. I am now devoted to my progress. As a matter of fact, the good angels who care for me now do not allow me to look backwards but to show my wickedness only.

Observation: Undoubtedly there is no material means of confirming the identity of the Spirits who gave these communications. Hence we will not state it in absolute terms. We offer this as a disclaimer to those who believe that we blindly accept everything that comes from the Spirits. If anything we fail due to over scrutinizing as opposed to mistrust. Fact is that we must be careful not to take by truth something that cannot be controlled. Now, in the absence of positive proofs we must limit ourselves to discuss the possibility and seek the moral proofs in the absence of material ones.

The answers in the case above have a character of likelihood and particularly of elevated morality. There is no contradiction; none of those less logical answers shock common sense or reveal deception; everything concatenates perfectly; everything confirms what has been shown

by experience. It is certain that it is not a novel created by people but a piece of mediumistic work. If it were the fantasy of a spirit it would have come from a frivolous spirit for the good Spirits do not enjoy writing novels and the frivolous ones always reveal their objective.

We add the fact that the Spiritist Society of Saint-Jean d'Angély is one of the most serious and better administered centers. It was started by very serious people who were highly commended for their character. This can be assessed by the wisdom and by the method utilized in the formulation of the questions. Hence all communications obtained there attest to the superiority of the manifesting Spirits. The evocations above were performed in excellent conditions both with respect to the ambient and the nature of the mediums involved. For us it is at least a guarantee of the most absolute sincerity. Besides the veracity of the report was explicitly confirmed by the best mediums of the Parisian Society.

Looking at this from a moral point of view only, there is a serious issue. Here we have two Spirits Remone and Noulin brought from their condition to a state of better feelings through the evocation and advices that were given to them. One can ask if they would remain unhappy in case they had not been evoked and what happens to all other unfortunate Spirits who are not evoked? The answer has already been given in "*The story of a naughty spirit*" published in *The Spiritist Review*, 1860. We add that since these two Spirits had arrived at a point to be touched by regret and were prepared to receive light, their evocation was provoked by providential circumstances, although fortuitous, contributing to their improvement and instruction. The evocation was the means but, in the absence of God, it does not lack other resources to come to the rescue of the unfortunate ones. We must also rest assured that every spirit that is willing to advance will always find assistance one way or another.

A.K.

November 1862

Medication prescribed by the Spirits

The title above will provoke laughter on the nonbelievers. Never mind! They laughed at many other things that did not preclude them from being acknowledged as true. The good Spirits care about the suffering of humanity. Hence it does not come as a surprise the fact that they try to bring us relief and they have proved on many occasions that they can do it when they are elevated enough to have the necessary knowledge since they can see what the human eyes cannot and foresee what people cannot foresee.

The medication in question was given to Ms. Ermance Dufaux⁴³ in the circumstances below – she sent us the formula with an authorization to have it published in favor of others who could benefit from that. One of her relatives who had died long ago had brought it from America. This prescription was a balm that was highly efficient in the treatment of ulcers and wounds. With his death the prescription that was not passed on to anybody was then lost.

Ms. Dufaux was affected by an old and serious illness in her leg that had been resisted to all sorts of treatments. Tired of the uselessness of so many medicines one day she enquired her protector spirit if would there be any possible cure in her case.

- Yes, he said. Use the balm of your uncle.
- But you know that the prescription was lost.
- The spirit then dictated the following:

“Saffron, 20 centigrams, cumin 4g, yellow wax 31-32g, oil of sweet almond 1 spoon. Melt the wax and then add the oil; add the saffron and the cumin in a little cloth bag and simmer for ten minutes. Spread the ointment on a piece of cloth and cover the wound. Renovate the procedure every day. Before applying the medication, it is necessary to wash the wounded area with mallow water or another refreshing lotion.”

Ms. Dufaux followed the instructions and very soon thereafter her leg was healed and, since then there has been no other incident. A lady that does laundry works for her was also cured of a similar illness. A worker that was injured by a shrapnel from a sickle and that penetrated deeply in his leg presented significant swelling to the point of being told that there would be the need for the leg to be amputated. After the application of the same ointment the swelling disappeared and the piece of metal was removed from the wound. The man totally recovered and was back to work in eight days. When applied onto abscessed boils, it suppurates and heals in a very short time. It acts by removing the morbid principles from the ulcer then healing it by allowing the removal of slivers when applicable, like a speck of bone, wood, etc. It seems also to be good to herpes and all affections of the skin in general. Its composition, as seen above, is very simple, easy and inoffensive. One can then try it without worries.

43 Medium who wrote the story of Joan of Arc

November 1862

Spiritist poetry

Bordeaux, medium Mrs. E. Collignon

My will

Despite the rhyme it will not be inferior,

Let us be clear. What is superior

Is not the rhyme which is poor!

It is the spirit... doom the slang.

It is not the word that is strange.

Please understand that well: it is only the spirit that gives

Life and that is how I perceive.

I am not one of them but soon I shall be

At least I hope – this is my plea:

As a spirit I want to be not a fool

But a poor, humble and repentant soul,

Depositing all my hopes in the Lord

Expecting to share the elected ward

Much more from His goodness

Much less from my own virtues!

I explain it better for I am always wrong;

The Grace of God omnipotent and strong

Is all that I claim in this sense

Before I hear the sentence

Be it punishment or mercy

I need to rectify on my knees
Old debts that I must please.
Some of them – I whisper the confession –
Are alive in my heart. It is in my possession
The best solution to the evil deeds.
There is no difference in the creed.
First, when my spirit is separated from the body
A good prayer I shall need
For the poor dead it will lobby.
After the dust returns to Earth
It is the funeral that comes first.
I know you are not touched
By the modest burial granted.
In fact I was always shocked
To see the piled gold
On top of tombs and vaults
When the dead reach the ground
And their remains in the soil found.
Why should we worry
About such a futile glory?
So many have been lost!
Their minds in madness tossed.
Pray to God they should
Meet His mercy they would!
My belief, my hope
That is how I cope.

But why pray more for ones than others?
Will the ornaments help this brother?
Why the miserable one, like myself,
Is not granted any prayer or relief?
Why showing off expensive decoration
That only attracts envy but no liberation?
Is it to deceive people or to conquer heavens?
If it is deception, anathema is the only lesson!
If the intention is to convince the Father
Pray instead for the misfortune of your brother
Excluded from everything
That wealth is giving us.
If you suffered a lot
Be worthy of this gesture whose cost
Means nothing to you! Hear me well:
All I seek is God's dwell
Even if my spirit when this planet left
Was considered mad. The heft
Of a real prayer – the only that the Almighty hears,
Is in the sincerity of the heart. Have no fear,
Take me so, quietly and peacefully
And instead of the usually
Sad, may your eyes radiate with joy!
Instead of crying please employ
Happy words in my farewell.
For sadness is a bad spell!

Thank God we are believers!
Do not you think, my dear, that the fever
For money made me so speak!
During my life I did not seek
Wealth so much let alone after I passed!
The arms of the scale I want leveled.
May the luxury that is used
To ornate the dust of this body
Repair my faults and wrong deeds.
I want this death covering attire
To every piece of ornament retire.
It is always the same hand
Shearing our days in this land!
It is the door to heavens
That I want open
Not the Louvre
That I ask St. Peter.
May the silent eloquence of the wooden cross
Veer off the vengeance of the offended Lord.
I want my soul rising in simplicity
And all this gold covering the nudity
Of the child, the old, my brothers
In life, perhaps more before God.
Let us all beg on our knees
To the blessed and elected ones!
Before I finish I have a sound advice

That may be useful here;
May charity illuminate you and hear
No more the opinion of fools!
Be always suspicious of rules
Enforced by proud people.
The really fortunate and happy
One is the one who does his duty.
Support the oppressed in their weakness.
Listen to the scream of sickness.
Be always prepared to relief
Your brothers from their diseases.
With the little gold that I share with you
Save the treasures for your journey
From which there is no way
Back for the virtuous spirit.
Spread benefits, ask the Lord to split
With you the clarities of Light.
Go and find the terrible plights
Of your brothers in their misery.
May God give you in his great mercy
The ability to stay on the path of charity!

November 1862

Multiple fables and poetry

By a rapping spirit⁴⁴

Although typology is a very slow means of communication with some patience it is possible to obtain lengthy pieces of work. Mr. Jaubert, from Carcassonne, sent us a collection of fables and poetry that he obtained through that process. If not all of them are masterpieces – something that does not offend Mr. Jaubert since he does not discuss the merits of the work – some are remarkable leaving aside the interest about their origin. Here is one that although not part of the collection was dedicated by the spirit to the Spiritist Society of Bordeaux, giving an idea about the traits of that spirit.

The monologue of the little donkey

(Fable)

A little donkey – pay attention to that

For I mean what I say, you can bet –

A legit donkey of the kind that one shears,

A harnessed donkey in no fear

Watched the train at the station;

His shiny eyes, his lively attention.

“Is that you – he screams – now that you sleep?

If I believe in a certain sheep

You travel with no harness, no horse or mule

Roaring over the dunes

Your carriages crossing winds.

44 Vol. in-18, 2 francs. In Carcassonne, L. Labau; in Paris, Ledoyen, Palais-Royal.

A miracle! – They say – Nah! In my mind
Times have changed. Those who mock
Me now know that I stick out from the flock.
I like good food, I appreciate the good stuff.
These iron feet will not take you far off.
I have my own rule: I give a lot of thought.
Traveling without horses? One would dare not!”
The donkey – we can see – was wakened
By reason – a light by pride erased
Like the wise man that becomes a fool.
Deny it oh scholars, the spark of the soul;
Can you deny the sublime design?
The origin of it all, can you decline?
Like the engine that demands power
The evoked dead do need prayer,
But the true prayer, the one that really
Comes from the waves of love and charity.

The medium and Dr. Imbrogio

Come! Come! Dear Dr. Imbrogio
The planchette moves on its own: that is visible.
Never mind! I will prove in a folio
That this thing is impossible!

We will make an observation about the qualification given to the spirit that dictated the poem above. Rightly so, the serious Spirits decline the adjective of rapping Spirits for this title is more adequate to those who could be called professional rappers, malevolent or lightheartedly Spirits that use raps to entertain or torment others and who are not concerned with serious things. Typtology, however, is a medium for intelligent communications, like any other, and the more advanced Spirits utilize

it in the absence of an alternative, given the fact that they would prefer to write since it responds faster to the speed of thought. It is true that in such a case they are not the rapping ones. They transmit the ideas, leaving the material execution to subordinate Spirits, like the artist requiring the help of the worker to carve the marble. The following letter was sent by Mr. Jaubert to Mr. Sabô, from Bordeaux. It is a pleasure to have it published to demonstrate the bonds established amongst the Spiritists of several places and to encourage the fearful.

Dear Sir,

I am touched by your letter. I gladly accept that title you give to the Spiritist Society of Bordeaux. I accept it as a reward to my little work, my profound conviction and – why not to say? – to the endured hardship. The new faith is greatly misunderstood until today. The scientists surge against; the ignorant follow them; the clergy scream out that it is the devil and some believers remain quiet. In this century of materialism, of crude appetites, of fratricide wars, of blind and uncontrolled appeal of material things, God intervenes: the dead speak, invite and give us encouragement. That is why each one of us must inscribe their names on the flag of the sacred cause.

We are always the soldiers of Christ. We proclaim the greatness and immortality of the soul, the tangible links that bond the living ones to the dead; we preach love and charity. Why should we have anything to fear? To be weak is to be guilty. That is why, Sir, to the limits of my own strength, I have accepted the task imposed by God and by my own conscience. Once more let me thank you very much for having accepted me among you. Be my interpreter together with the brothers of Bordeaux and be assured of my sincerest and fraternal feelings.

M. Jaubert, Vice-President of Civilian Court

Observation: Spiritism today counts on a large number of followers among magistrates and lawyers as well as public servants but not all of them dare face public opinion. That fear, however, diminishes daily and very soon the jesters will be surprised by having pointed their fingers and disrespectfully called honorable and knowledgeable people mad.

November 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The duel

Bordeaux, November 21st, 1861 – medium Mr. Guipon

1st – General Considerations

The human being or the incarnate spirit may be on your Earth on a mission, in progress of punishment. Having said that, you must know once and for all the state of mission, progression or punishment must accomplish the term designed by the supreme justice otherwise a new test must be reinitiated. Hence anticipating the return to the world of the Spirits by oneself or through provocation is an enormous crime. The duel is an even bigger crime since it is simultaneously both a premeditated murder and a suicide. Do you believe in fact that the challenger and the challenged are not committing moral suicide when they voluntarily expose themselves to the mortal attacks of the adversary? Do you believe that they are not both murderers when they mutually seek to destroy the life of one another, life that was chosen by them or imposed as atonement or trial by God? Yes, my friend, I tell you this: the duelist is a double criminal to the eyes of God; their punishment shall be twice as terrible for there will be no excuses once everything was cold-bloodedly premeditated and calculated. I read it in your heart, my child, because you were also a criminal and here is my answer: In order to avoid failing before such a terrible temptation the only thing you need is humility, sincerity and charity towards your brother in God. On the other hand, pride and ostentation will lead you to failure.

2nd – Spiritual consequences

The one that, like Jesus, humbly forgave and supported the greatest grievances and who had forgiven in their heart for the love of God will conquer, in addition to the celestial reward of a new life, peace in this life and an indescribable happiness for having respected God's work twice. The one who had demonstrated fraternal love in the charity to the neighbor will have granted the protection and support of the glorious mother of Jesus for she loves and blesses those who obey the commandments of God; those who follow and practice the teaching of her son.

The one who, despite the attacks, had respected the life of a brother and his own life will find millions of legions of good Spirits in the ethereal world, demonstrating their devotion and sympathy in his first steps in the new life, like true friends and brothers that he would have conquered. Together they will thank God through their actions for the mercy of having one brother resisting temptation.

I tell you this: the one that resists these temptations may wait not for changes in God's designs, which are immutable, but for the sincere and affectionate benevolence of the Spirit of Truth, the son of God, who will in an incomparable way inundate their soul with the happiness of having

understood the Spirit of perfect justice and infinite goodness and consequently spare him or her of any similar trap.

The ones instead, challenged or challengers, who have succumbed may rest assured that they will experience the greatest moral tortures by the continual presence of the dead body of their victims as well as their own. Eaten by remorse for centuries for having disobeyed so miserably the celestial laws, persecuted by the horrible spectrum of the double bloody corpses up until the time of atonement.

Still fortunate if they relieve their pain through sincere and profound repentance that opens their souls for reason that they will at least envisage an end to their punishments, understanding God and begging for strength in order to never again provoke the severe justice.

3rd – Human consequences

The words duty, honor and courage are sometimes considered matters of life and death by human beings, thus justifying their actions and crimes. Do they always understand their meaning? Do not they assume and self-interpret Jesus' intentions? Why changing their meaning then? Why returning to barbarian times?

Unfortunately human beings, in their majority, are still under the influence of pride and ostentation. They amplify the words duty, honor and courage as excuses to themselves, not realizing their meaning: execution of God's commandments, wisdom, charity and love. They use those words, however, to strangle their brothers, to commit suicide and to find themselves lost. What a blindness! They consider themselves strong for having triumphed over someone weaker. They are blind in believing that the agreement of other blind like themselves will bring human consideration! The society where they live reproach them and it will soon curse them for the kingdom of fraternity is near. Meanwhile sensible people stay away from them as if running away from beasts. Let us check a few cases and see if reason justifies their interpretation of the words duty, honor and courage.

A man is heartbroken and his soul is full of sorrow because he found irrefutable proofs of misconduct from the part of his wife. He then challenges one of those who seduced the poor miserable woman. Would such a challenge be the result of his duties, his honor and courage? No because his honor will not be reestablished. His personal honor was not and cannot be achieved. This will be vengeance. In addition, to demonstrate that his pretense honor is not at risk his misfortune is ignored and would remain ignored if not made public by a thousand voices provoked by the scandal of the vengeance.

Finally, if his misfortune were known he would count on the sympathy of every sensible person and would only be laughed at by malevolent and indifferent people who are nevertheless insignificant.

In any case his honor would not be reestablished or damaged. Hence it is almost only pride that guides the duelists and not honor.

Do you really believe that it is just a single word; a false interpretation of a statement or the involuntary and invisible touch of an elbow in motion; or even a yes or a no or eventually the way someone may look at another person that will make the duelist to the pretense demand for reparation through murder or suicide? Ah! Make no mistake. Pride and certainty about one's power are the only drivers sometimes boosted by pride as the duelist wants to show off, demonstrate courage and knowledge and sometimes generosity.

Ostentation! Ostentation I repeat because the only thing they know is about the duel itself whilst courage and generosity are lies.

Would you like to present this courageous swordsman with a real test? Offer him a rival who bears a huge reputation, much above his own, although less educated and he will go pale and try everything possible to avoid the combat. Conversely placing him before a much weaker and uninformed opponent and he will look ruthless, proud and arrogant even when forced to show mercy.

Is that courage?

Let us now talk about generosity. Would a man who is confident in his own strength be generous after provoking the weak and then sparing his life, allowing for continuous humiliation and ridicule? Would a man who desires something be generous by provoking someone in order to obtain that and be rewarded by his generosity? Would the criminal be generous by sparing the lives of those who they have offended?

Would he be generous by giving demonstrations of generosity to a husband or a brother to whom he caused profound harm and who are now exposed to suicide by despair? Know this my friends: the duel is a terrible invention of bad and malevolent Spirits, a barbarian invention that affects our good Father.

It is up to you, Spiritists, to fight against and destroy this sad habit, a crime proper to the angels of darkness. It is up to you, Spiritists, to give a noble example of renunciation to this dismal evil, despite everything. It is up to you, sincere Spiritists, to make understood the sublime words duty, honor and courage and God will speak through your voices. Finally, it is up to you to sow the seeds of Spiritism among your brothers, seeds so much ignored by us in our earthly lives.

Your father, Antonio.

Observation: Pistol duels are increasingly rarer – at least in France – and if we still see painful examples from time to time their number is not comparable to those of the past. In the old days a man would not leave home without expecting an encounter for which it was necessary to take precautions. A characteristic and traditional habit in those days was to carry defensive or offensive weapons openly or hidden. The abolishment of such a habit demonstrates the softening of customs and it is curious to follow its evolution since the time when the knights would never ride without their armors and spears up until the simple use of the sword more like an ornament than a weapon so to speak. Another milestone in the evolution of things is that in the past the duels would take

place out in the street before the crowds that would make room for the combat and now they are hidden. Today the death of a person causes commotion. In the past, people would not pay attention. Spiritism will erase these last vestiges of barbarism by introducing in people the spirit of charity and fraternity.

November 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Foundations of the social order

Lyon, September 16th, 1862 – medium Mr. Émile V...

Note: This communication was obtained in a private session presided by Mr. Allan Kardec

Here you are gathered to see Spiritism at its foundation, to face this idea and to appreciate the huge waves of love that overwhelm those who get to know it. Spiritism is moral progress; it is the elevation of the spirit on the way to God. Progress is fraternity in its infancy for complete fraternity as imaginable by the spirit is perfection. Pure fraternity is a perfume from above, an emanation from the infinite, an atom of celestial intelligence; it is the basis of all moral institutions and the only means of achieving a sustainable social order and producing the effects worthy of the cause that you have embraced. Hence, be brothers and sisters in humanity if you want the seeds sowed among you to develop and become the tree that you seek. Union is the sovereign power that comes to Earth and fraternity is the sympathy in the union, it is the poetry, the enchantment, the positive ideal.

You must be united to be strong and be strong to cast the foundations of an institution that is solely based on the truth, the so-much admirable, touching, simple and sublime truth. When divided, the strength disappears. When united, it becomes stronger.

When we think about the individual progress of each person, about the love and charity that comes out of each heart the power shall be much greater. Under the sublime breeze of this ineffable breath, family bonds become stronger and the social links so vaguely defined become bolder, get closer and establish a unique stream with all kinds of thoughts, wishes and objectives.

What can you see without fraternity? Selfishness and greed. Each one with their own objective; each one concerned with themselves only; each marching separately and every one inexorably dragged to the abyss in which human dreams have been drowning for centuries. With union there is only one objective since there is only one thought, one desire and one heart. Hence, my friends, unite and that is what the voice of our spiritual world repeats incessantly. Unite and you shall reach the objective more rapidly.

It is particularly in this entirely sympathetic meeting that you must make the irrevocable resolution of being united by a thought common to every Spiritist on Earth to offer the tribute of your acknowledgement to the one who has opened to you the path to the supreme good; the one who brought happiness to your minds, joy to your hearts and faith to your souls. Your acknowledgment is your present reward. Therefore do not refuse that and make your offer in one voice only walking the first step of true fraternity.

Léon de Muriane, protector spirit.

Observation: This name is totally unknown, even to the medium. This demonstrates that to be an elevated spirit it is unnecessary to have one's name inscribed in the archives of history and that there are many unknown Spirits among those who communicate.

November 1862

Spiritist dissertations

Here lie eighteen centuries of light

Lyon, September 16th, 1862 – medium Mr. Émile V...

Mr. Émile who received the previous communication and many others equally remarkable, is very young. He is not only an excellent writing medium but he is also a painting medium even though he had not ever learned drawing or painting. He oil paints landscapes and multiple themes choosing and combining the required colors. From the point of view of quality his paintings are certainly not perfect since there have been many seen in exhibitions but have not been taken noticed. They lack finishing touch and subtleness and the shades are crisp and too accentuated. However, when we look at how they are created, it is quite remarkable. Who knows if he will not become a true painter with practice and acquire the skill that he lacks, like the worker of Bordeaux who barely writes his name but who writes as a medium and ended up developing a nice handwriting for his personal use without any teacher other than the Spirits? When we saw Mr. Émile he was finishing an allegoric painting where one can see a funeral that reads on top: *Here lies eighteen centuries of light*. We allowed ourselves to criticize such inscription first for not understanding the meaning of such allegory by placing eighteen centuries of lights in a coffin since, we said, thanks to Christianity humanity is now more enlightened than in those days. That happened in the session on September 16th when he received the communication above.

The spirit then responded to our observations adding the following: The expression *here lies* is placed there intentionally. The subject is not the number 18 representing centuries, rather it is a summation of centuries, a collective idea as if there was a time interval lasting 18 centuries. You may tell your grammarians that they should not confuse a collective idea with the idea of time span.” Do not they say to themselves when referring to the crowds that may be formed by an incalculable number of people that it may dislocate? That is enough about the subject. That is how it must be for this is the idea.

Let us now talk about the allegory. Eighteen centuries of lights in a coffin! This idea represents all the struggle endeavored by truth during this time, struggles always endeavored by the spirit of party and by selfishness. Eighteen centuries of lights at daylight would have been eighteen centuries of happiness for humanity, eighteen centuries that just begin to sprout on Earth and that would have had its development. Christ brought truth to Earth and made it available to all. What happened to that? It was taken over by human passions and thrown in a coffin from where Spiritism has just recovered it. Such is the allegory.”

Léon de Muriane

November 1862

Spiritist Dissertations

Role of the Spiritist Society of Paris

medium Mr. Leymarie

Paris is the port of arrival for the world. Everyone comes here to collect an idea or an impression. When I was among you I used to ask myself why this great city, meeting point of the world, did not shelter a large Spiritist gathering but as large as that allocated in the largest amphitheaters. Sometimes I used to think that the Parisian Spiritists were much too devoted to having fun. I even thought that the Spiritist faith was an amateurish pleasure, a distraction among many continuously offered by Paris. However, from a distance and nonetheless so close to you I see and understand better. Paris seats on the riverbanks of the Sena but in fact Paris is everywhere and its powerful mind revolves the world daily.

Like Paris, the central Society spreads its thoughts throughout the universe. Its strength is not in the circle where the sessions take place but in all countries that follow its dissertations, in all places where it becomes law given its intelligent teachings. It is like the sun whose beams reach the infinite. For that very reason the Society cannot be a common group. Its points of view are predestined and greater is its apostolic mission. It cannot be restricted to a small space. It needs to reach the world for its nature is invasive. In fact, today it pacifically conquer cities, tomorrow kingdoms and later on the whole world.

When visited by a stranger you welcome him or her with warmth and dignity so that the person may carry a great idea of Spiritism, this powerful weapon of civilization that must pave every way and defeat every resistance and destroy every doubt. That is needed so that everyone may have their Spirits nourished by a food that transforms everything in its mysterious passage for the new belief is strong like God, great like Him, charitable like everything else that comes from a superior power, that harms in order to send consolation, giving in the works of humanity prayer and pain in anticipation.

Blessed may you be, my dear Society, you that always give with benevolence, you that carries out tough task without looking at the obstacles on the way. You have deserved a lot from God. You will not be and cannot be an ordinary center but on the contrary – I repeat – you must be the beneficent spring where suffering will always come to find the healing balsam.

Sanson,

(former member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies)

November 1862

Spiritist dissertations

The origin of the language

Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies – medium Mr. d'Ambel

My dear and beloved friends and listeners, you have asked today that I ask my medium about the history of language. I will try to satisfy you. You must understand, however, that it would be impossible for me to handle this important issue in a few lines only, an issue to which another even more important is forcibly connected that is the origin of the human races. May the Almighty God, so benevolent with the Spiritists, give me the necessary lucidity to keep away from my explanation any source of confusion, obscurity and mistakes!

I enter the subject by saying that we must initially admit in principle this eternal truth: The Creator gave all creatures of the same race a special but safe way of understanding each other. Yet, that means of communication called language was all the more restricted the lower the species. That is why savage and less civilized peoples have such primitive languages to the point that many words used in more developed regions cannot find equivalence in their language. It is in consequence of this law that progressing nations create new terms for new findings and new needs. As I said elsewhere humanity has already gone through three great periods: the Barbarian phase, the Hebraic and Pagan and the Christian phase. The great Spiritist period whose foundations we prepare with you will succeed the latter.

Let us then examine the first phase and the beginning of the second one and only repeat here what I have already told you. The first human phase that we can call pre-Hebraic or Barbarian dragged on for a long time and slowly experienced the horrors and convulsions of a terrible time. Humans there were hairy like wild animals and like the beast used to shelter in caves and under trees; subsistence is based on raw meat and human flesh in the most absolute period of anthropophagy. There was no society or family! A few groups wandering here and there in complete promiscuity always ready to devour one another. That is the picture of this cruel time. There is no cult, no tradition and no religious ideas. There is only the bodily need to be satisfied and that is all! Imprisoned in a brute matter the soul remains in a latent condition in its carnal jail. The soul could not do much as this primitive envelope surrounded it and, as such, the intelligence can hardly expand within the limited ability of this underdeveloped brain. Fuzzy eyes, heavy lids, thick lips and a cramped skull all capable of producing a few throaty sounds that constitute their language.

There is no indication that the forefathers of the Hebraic and Pagan races came from that brute animal. Nevertheless, with time, there became the need to defend themselves against other carnivores like the lion and the tiger whose terrible fangs and sharp claws easily dominated an isolated man. It was the password for the realization of the first social progress. Nevertheless, it remained as the period of matter and brute force for this whole period. Do not seek feelings or reason or even language in the people of those days. There is only blind obedience to immediate

material needs and the only objective is survival through eating, drinking and sheltering. Nothing beyond. We can say that the intelligent creature is in its germ state but is not there yet. Nevertheless, it is possible to find among the brute some superior creatures, incarnate Spirits with the mission of leading humanity to its objective and speed up the appearance of the Hebraic and Pagan races.

I must add that besides those incarnate Spirits the planet was constantly visited by those ministers of God whose memory was kept by tradition as angels and archangels that almost daily were in contact with the superior and incarnate Spirits that I mentioned. The mission of some of those angels continued during a great part of the second human phase. I must add that the quick picture above of the initial times of humanity teaches you a little about the strict laws to which the Spirits are submitted in going through the exercise of inhabiting planets of recent formation.

Language, properly speaking, as well as social life, only starts to incorporate a structured character in the Hebraic and Pagan era during which the incarnate spirit, always subjected to matter, begins to rebel and break down some links of the heavy chain. The soul ferments and agitates in its carnal prison; it fights hard against the physical limitations of the brain whose matter is made sensitive by the soul itself; there is permanent work through which the performance of the brain and its faculties improves and consequently the physical organs are developed; finally thoughts can be transmitted through clear and limpid eyes. We are now far from the flattened craniums! It is the beginning of the self-identification of the soul and the human being begins to understand that there is something beyond the body.

The soul feels and acknowledges itself and is aware of oneself and begins to understand that it is independent of the body. It is the beginning of the struggle against the oppression of the greatest rival. Humans begin to experience significant change and intelligence moves more freely in a more developed brain. Yet people are still marked and sold like cattle and man is the slave of man; slavery is consecrated by the God of the Hebrew as much as by the Pagan gods and Jehovah, like Jupiter and Olympic, demand blood and live victims. This second phase offers curious aspects from a philosophical point of view about which I have already provided a quick description that will be soon communicated to you by the medium. In any case and to return to the main subject you must rest assured that it was only during the long patriarchal and pastoral periods that human language established a regular progress adopting special forms and sounds.

During that primitive era in which humanity was just leaving the cradle and beginning to mumble in its infancy only a few words were needed for communication for people without any science and whose needs were restricted and whose social relationships stop at the entrance of the huts, primitive families and later on tribes. It was the time when the father, the shepherd, the elder or the patriarch had absolute domination with the right of life and death.

The primitive language was uniform; as the number of shepherds increased they broke away from the paternal protection and founded other regions that were still inhabited with new families and tribes.

Their languages followed different patterns and progressed and from generation to generation modified from the original paternal structure; that is how the several languages were created. Furthermore, and with the disclaimer that my intention is not to provide you with a course on

linguistics, it should not go unnoticed that in the most distant and different languages you will find radicals that have almost not changed and whose meanings are almost the same. On another hand since you have the pretension of being from the old world the same reason that corrupted the primitive language is still very much present in your France so much proud of its civilization where you see the terms and meanings varying not from town to town but from county to county. I call the attention of those who have visited Bretagne as well as those who traveled to Provence and Languedoc. There is a variety of idioms and dialects that surprises anyone wishing to compile a single dictionary.

Once primate people, helped by the missionaries of the Eternal, gave certain special sounds to some special ideas the spoken language was created and the modifications suffered later were always the result of human progress; hence and according to the richness of a given language, one can easily establish the degree of civilization of the people that speak that language. I can add that humanity marches towards a common language as a forced consequence of a communion of moral and political ideas and most importantly religion. That shall be the task of the new Spiritist philosophy that we are teaching you today.

Erastus

November 1862

Answers

To Mr. B. G. à La Calle, Algeria.

The Spirits' Book and *The Mediums' Book* are not yet translated to Italian.

To Mr. Dumas, from Sétif, Algeria

I received the Echo of Sétif and read with attention the two remarkable scientific articles about Spiritism that were published in that Journal. I will discuss them in detail in the next issue. I am pleased for having seeing that honorable Journal taking the cause of the doctrine into account and for having treated it seriously.

November 1862

Erratum⁴⁵

Allan Kardec

⁴⁵ There should be an errata here with the correction of typos found in the poem *Pilgrimages of the soul* in the September issue. Not reproduced since the corrections were directly implemented.

December 1862

Studies about the possessed of Morzine

The causes of obsession and the means of fighting it

The observations we have made about the terrible epidemic that impacted the region of Morzine, in the commune of Haute-Savoie, and continues to impact these regions leaves little doubt as to the importance of our cause. However, in order to support our opinion, we must provide some explanations that support the comparison between the disease and other identical cases so that the origin leaves no doubt to those familiar with the Spiritist phenomena. These observations illustrate the results of the invisible world upon humanity.

It is necessary to go back to the source of the phenomenon and track its evolution starting from the simplest cases and at the same time explain how it happened. From that we will be in a much better position to fight the illness. Even though this subject is addressed in *The Mediums' Book* in the chapter about obsession and in several articles from this Review, we will provide a few new considerations that will make it easier to understand.

The first point necessary to be understood is about the nature of the Spirits from a moral point of view. Since the Spirits are no more than the souls of people and since not everyone is good, it is not sensible to admit that the spirit of a bad person will suddenly change. Otherwise the punishment of a future life would be unnecessary. Experience confirms this theory, or even better, the theory comes from experience. It shows us the relationship with the invisible world together with Spirits of sublime wisdom and knowledge and others that are ignoble and still full of vices and human passions.

After the death the soul of a good person will be a good spirit as a good spirit when incarnate will be a good person. For the same reason a perverse spirit will be a perverse spirit in the spiritual world and a perverse spirit when incarnate could not be a virtuous person and all that up until the time when the spirit would not have improved yet or felt the need to improve because from the moment that the spirit enter the path of progress there is a gradual improvement and the spirit undresses from the bad instincts and continually rises in the hierarchy of the Spirits until achieves perfection that is accessible to all of us for God could not have created beings eternally devoted to evil and misfortune. Hence the visible and invisible worlds interpenetrate alternately and incessantly if we can say so in two different states. This consideration is very important to better understand the solidarity that does exist between them.

Since the Earth is an inferior world, meaning there has been little advancement, it seems reasonable that the large majority of the Spirits that populate the planet both in the spiritual world as incarnate, must be composed of imperfect Spirits that do more bad than good, hence the predominance of evil on Earth. Now since Earth is also a place of atonement it is the contact with evil that make people unhappy, otherwise if all were good, everyone would be happy. This is a level not yet achieved by our planet which is the destination assigned by God. All the tribulations experienced here by good

individuals or Spirits are the natural consequence of its state of inferiority. We may say that Earth is the *Botany-Bay*⁴⁶ of the worlds. There you find the savage primitivism and civilization, criminality and atonement. It is then reasonable to imagine the invisible world as formed by a huge and compact population, so to speak, involving Earth and agitating like in a vessel. As the air at the bottom is heavy and unhealthy, the moral ambient is also unhealthy, for it is corrupted by the incarnation of impure Spirits. To resist all that one needs is a powerful moral strength. Let us say that such a state of affairs is inherent to the inferior worlds but that these worlds follow the law of progress and once the required time is done God cleans them and expels the imperfect Spirits that will no longer incarnate there and be replaced by other more advanced ones who will then ensure the kingdom of happiness, justice and peace. It is a revolution of that kind that is in preparation right now.

Let us now examine the mode of reciprocal action between incarnate and discarnate Spirits.

We know that the Spirits are covered by a vapor like envelope that operates like a true fluidic body that we call the “perispirit” and whose elements are taken from the universal or cosmic fluid, the principle of all things.

When the spirit unites with the body it lives there with its perispirit and serves as a link between the spirit and corporeal matter. The perispirit is the intermediary of the sensations perceived by the spirit but the perispirit is not confined in the body like inside a box. Due to its fluidic nature it irradiates externally and forms a kind of atmosphere around the body like a vaporous cloud. But the fluids around an unhealthy body are also unhealthy and it contaminates the air in places where there is a gathering of many unhealthy individuals. Since those fluids are infused by the qualities of the body, the perispirit is also infused by the qualities of the thoughts of the spirit and hence irradiates such qualities around the body.

Another area to respond to immediately is about the theory that Spiritism offers concerning the state of the soul. Spiritism is accused of materializing the soul whereas according to religion the soul is purely immaterial. Like the majority of objections this one results from an incomplete and superficial study. Spiritism has never defined the nature of the soul. Spiritism does not state that the perispirit is the soul. The word “perispirit” actually means the opposite for it indicates the presence of an envelope around the spirit.

What does *The Spirits’ Book* say about it? “*The human Being is composed of three things: the soul or the spirit, the intelligent principle; the body, a material envelope and the perispirit, a semi material, fluidic envelope that serves as a link between the spirit and the body.*”

From the fact that the soul keeps its fluidic envelope after death one cannot deduce that the soul and the envelope are one in the same thing, in the same way that the body and its outfit are not the same or the soul and the body are not the same. Spiritism does not subtract anything from the immateriality of the soul. Spiritism only gives it two envelopes instead of one during the physical life and only one after the death of the body. This is not a hypothesis but the result of observation.

46 Reference to a place of punishment in those days, equivalent to saying Alcatraz, for example, in the USA of modern times (TN)

It is with the support of such envelope that one can better understand the individuality of the soul and better explain its action upon matter.

Let us return to our subject.

Perispirit for its fluidic nature is essentially mobile and flexible. It is placed directly into action as an agent of the spirit and projects rays by the will of the spirit. It is through these rays that it allows the transmission of thoughts since in some way it is animated by the intelligence of the spirit. Since the perispirit is the link that unites the spirit to the body, it is through the perispirit that the spirit transmits to the body the movements that express its will. It is also through the perispirit that the bodily sensations are transmitted to the spirit. After the body is destroyed by death, the spirit no longer acts and no longer feels but through its fluidic body or perispirit. For that reason, it acts more easily and freely considering that the body is an obstacle. All this is the result of observation.

Suppose now that two persons are side by side each involved by their own perispiritual atmosphere – allow us the neologism. Those two fluids get in touch. If they are antipathetic they will unsuspectedly feel a kind of uneasiness when approaching one another. If, on the contrary, they were moved by a kind and good feeling there will be attraction. That is why two persons understand one another and even foretell their thoughts without speaking. Something tells us that a given person that is before us may be feeling this or that. That “something” is the expansion of the perispiritual fluid of the other person that gets in touch with ours, a kind of electrical conductor of our thoughts. From that one can understand that the Spirits whose fluidic envelopes are much freer than in the state of incarnate do not need articulated sounds to understand one another.

The perispiritual fluid of the incarnate is thus activated by the spirit. If, by its own will the spirit say casts its rays upon a given individual the rays penetrate the individual. Hence the more or less powerful magnetic action that follows the will; more or less beneficial according to the nature of the rays if good or bad, more or less reassuring because they can penetrate and act upon the organs and in certain cases reestablish the normal state. The influence of the moral qualities of a magnetizer is well-known. What an incarnate spirit can do by throwing one’s own fluid onto another person the spirit can equally do when discarnate since it has the same fluid. Hence the spirit can magnetize and, according to its good or bad nature the action may be good or bad.

Therefore, we easily realize the nature of the impressions that we receive according to the environment where we are located. If a meeting is formed by persons driven by bad feelings the ambient air is impregnated by their thoughts. As a consequence, the good souls will experience an uneasiness analogous to a physical discomfort caused by ill exhalations: the soul is asphyxiated. If, on the contrary, the persons are driven by pure intentions we find ourselves in a vivifying atmosphere with a healthy air. The effect will also be similar in an environment full of Spirits depending if they are good or bad.

Having that well understood we then arrive to the material action of the errant Spirits upon the incarnate Spirits and from there to the explanation of mediumship.

If a spirit wishes to act upon a person, the spirit approaches and surrounds that person as to speak with its own perispirit as if with a mantle. The fluids mix; the two thoughts and will confound and

then the spirit may utilize that body as if his; make the body act, speak, write, draw and etc. These are the mediums. If the spirit is good the action will be kind and beneficial and the spirit will only bring good things; if the spirit is bad then evil things will be provoked; if perverse and malicious the person may be embarrassed as in a trap; it can even paralyze the will and reason which are muffled by the fluids of the spirit like a fire that is put out with a blanket of water; the spirit incites the person to think, speak and act, driving the person against his/her own will and even to extravagance and ridicule. In a word the spirit magnetizes the individual and lead him/her to a kind of moral cataleptic state transforming the person in a blind instrument of the Spirits' will. Such is the cause of obsession, fascination and subjugation that show in several degrees of intensity. The name of possession is generally given to the paroxysm of subjugation. It must be noticed that in such a state the individual often has conscience of the ridicule and embarrassment of what is forced to do as if forced by a stronger person to move arms, legs and tongue against one's own will.

Here is an interesting example.

In a small meeting that took place in Bordeaux and during an evocation the medium who was quite civil and of gentle character suddenly begins to knock the table, stands up and looks around with a threatening expression showing his fists to the attendees, speaking in a foul language and wanting to throw an inkpot at the audience. This scene both shocking and unexpected lasted for approximately ten minutes after which the young man recovered his customary calm apologizing for what had just happened saying that he knew very well what he had done but that he could not avoid it.

When we learned about the fact we asked for explanation in one session at the Parisian Society. The answer we got was that the spirit who had provoked the event was more of a deceiver than a bad spirit and that he just wanted to have fun with the fear of the audience. A proof of the veracity of the explanation is that it did not happen again and the medium continued to receive excellent communications as before. It is important to clarify that what has likely excited the verve of that jester spirit. Mr. Beck, a former administrator of the Bordeaux theater orchestra, experienced a singular phenomenon several years before his death. Every evening before leaving the theater he had the impression that a man would jump on his back, riding on his shoulders all the way up to his house when the supposed individual would get off from his shoulders and he would feel free. Some people wanted to evoke him in that session and ask for an explanation. That was when the con spirit decided to replace Mr. Becker and make the medium represent a diabolic scene because he undoubtedly found the necessary fluidic conditions to support him. What was just an accident on that occasion sometimes takes a more permanent character when the spirit is bad victimizing the individual and giving the appearance of madness. We say appearance because madness properly speaking always results from an alteration of the brain whilst in this case the organs are healthy as in the case of the young man that we have just mentioned. Therefore, there is no real madness against which the medication of conventional therapeutics is useless as demonstrated by experience. Besides, they can produce what does not exist. The homes of alienated people count on many individuals of this kind to whom the contact with other disturbed patients can only be very damaging because this state always denotes a certain moral weakness. Together with all varieties of pathological madness it is then convenient to add the obsessive madness that requires special treatment. However, how can a materialistic doctor establish or even admit the difference?

Bravo! Our adversaries will celebrate. Impossible to describe in a better way the dangers of Spiritism and that is why we are right in prohibiting it.

Wait a moment! What we said demonstrates precisely its utility. Do you believe that the bad Spirits that dwell among the human beings wait to be called in order to exercise their bad influence? Considering that the Spirits exist since the beginning of times they represent the same role for such a role is in their nature. The proof of this fact is in the large number of obsessed or possessed people even before mentioning the subject of Spirits or Spiritism or mediums. The action of the Spirits, good or bad, is then spontaneous. The action of the bad ones produces a significant disturbance in the moral and even physical organization and which are attributed to wrong causes for ignorance of the cause. The bad Spirits are invisible enemies that are more dangerous the less we are suspicious of their action. By bringing them to the open Spiritism reveals a new cause of certain illnesses of humanity. Once the cause is known, people will no longer try to combat the problem through means that we now know are useless, looking instead of other more efficient ways. Who led to the discovery of that cause? Mediumship. It was through mediumship that those occult enemies betrayed their presence. Mediumship did to those Spirits what the microscope did to the infinitely small: revealed a new world.

Spiritism does not attract the bad Spirits. Spiritism discovered them and provided the means of paralyzing their actions and consequently keeping them away. Spiritism did not attract evil since this has always existed. On the contrary it brought the remedy to the evil by showing its causes.

Once the action of the invisible world is recognized it will provide the key to a number of misunderstood phenomena and science, now enriched with this new law, will see new horizons opening up ahead. When is that going to happen? When science no longer professes materialism as materialism hinders its advancement and imposes an impassable barrier.

Before we talk about the remedy, let us explain a situation that impacts many Spiritists, particularly in the cases of simple obsessions. The first type of interaction is one that occurs frequently and manifests itself through writing or hearing. The second type occurs less frequently and happens when a bad spirit interrupts a good spirit in the middle of a communication. The question is if the bad Spirits are more powerful than the good ones.

Refer to what we said in the beginning about the way the spirit acts and let us figure out a medium that is involved by the perispiritual fluid of a bad spirit. To have the fluid of a good spirit acting upon the medium, it is necessary that the fluid penetrates that envelope and it is clear that light can hardly penetrate a thick fog. According to the level of obsession the fog will be permanent, tenacious or intermittent and consequently easier or more difficult to dissipate.

Our Parma correspondent, Mr. Superchi, sent us drawings made by a clairvoyant that perfectly represents this situation. In one of them we can see the hand of the medium surrounded by a thick dark cloud, an image of the perispiritual fluid of the bad Spirits trespassed by a light beam that illuminates the hand. It is the good fluid that drives the hand and opposes the action of evil.

In the other one, the hand is in the shadow and light is around the mist that cannot be penetrated. What limits the hand in the drawing must be extended to the whole body of the medium.

There is still the question of knowing if the good spirit is less powerful than the bad one. It is not the good spirit that is weaker. It is the medium that is not strong enough to get rid of the wrapping mantle and to stay away from the tightening arms with which – it must be said – the medium sometimes enjoys. In such a case it is clear that the good spirit cannot dominate since the other one is preferred.

Let us now admit that there is in the medium the wish of relieving oneself from this wrapping fluidic envelope like an outfit that is wet. The desire is not enough and not even the will is always sufficient. This is about a fight against the adversary. Well, in a fistfight it is the stronger one that succeeds. In this case the fight is between Spirits. It is still the stronger that will be victorious. Here the strength is in the authority of the spirit and such authority is subordinated to a moral superiority. Moral superiority is like the sun that dissipates the mist through the power of its rays. Endeavor to be good; to become better if already good; to purify one's imperfections; in a word to morally rise as much as possible such is the way of acquiring the necessary power to command inferior Spirits in order to keep them away. They will otherwise laugh at your attempts. (*The Mediums' Book*, #252 and #279).

Some people may ask why the protector Spirits do not force the bad Spirits removal. There is no doubt that they can do so and sometimes they do. However, by allowing the struggle they also allow the merit of the victory. If they let people experience the merit after the struggle is to test their resolve and help them to acquire more strength in good. To them it is a kind of moral exercise.

Here is the answer we gave to Mr. P... colonel of the Austrian Army who consulted us about an illness that he attributed to the bad Spirits and apologizing for calling us friend since he only knew us by name:

“Spiritism is a fraternal link in its very fabric and you are correct by thinking that those who share such a belief and even without knowing one another must be treated as friends. I thank you for thinking highly of me and for giving me such a title. I am glad for having in you a sincere and devout follower of this reassuring doctrine. However, for the very reason that it is reassuring it must give moral strength and resignation to withstand the trials of life that, most of the time, are atonements. The Spiritist Review gives you a large number of examples. With respect to the illness that affects you I do not see evidence of the influence of bad Spirits who could obsess us. Let us hypothetically admit that for a moment. There would be only one moral power capable of opposing the other power and that can only come from you. Against a spirit it is necessary to fight spirit-to-spirit and the stronger shall win. In similar cases it is necessary to acquire the most possible summation of superiority by one's willpower, energy and moral qualities to have granted the right of saying: Vade retro!⁴⁷ Thus, if you are in that position it is not with the sword of the colonel that you are going to win but with the sword of the angel that is virtue and prayer. The kind of horror and anguish that you feel in those moments is a sign of weakness of which the spirit takes advantage. Control fear and with a strong willpower you shall win.

47 Latin expression meaning: “Step back Satan”, a Medieval Catholic exorcism formula (TN)

A.K.”

There is no doubt that certain persons would prefer an easier recipe to expel the Spirits: some words to say or signs to make for example and that would be easier than correcting one's own failures. We are sorry but we do not know a more efficient way to win a fight against the enemy but to be stronger. When we are sick we must yield to the need of taking medication however bitter it may be. But after having the courage of telling them how good and strong we feel! We must persuade ourselves that there aren't sacramental words to achieve the objective or formulas or talisman or any other signal. The bad Spirits laugh at this and sometimes even like to indicate some that are infallible according to them in order to gain the trust of those who are abused by them because these now confident in the rightfulness of the process give themselves without fear.

Before expecting to dominate the bad spirit, it is necessary to dominate oneself. From all means of acquiring the necessary strength to achieve it the most efficient is the willpower seconded by prayer, the prayer from the bottom of the heart – be it understood – and not that of words in which the mouth participates more than the mind. It is necessary to ask one's guardian angel and the good Spirits who help us in the struggle. But is not enough to ask them to send the bad spirit away. It is necessary to remember the maxim: *Help yourself and heavens will help you*; ask them, above all, for the strength that we lack to win over our own bad inclination that for us are worse than the bad Spirits since those very inclinations are the ones that attract them like the rotten food attracts the vultures. Praying for the obsessing spirit is to pay evil with good and be better than the other and that is already a demonstration of superiority. With perseverance we end up in the majority of the cases by leading them to better feelings, transforming the obsessing spirit into a grateful spirit. To summarize sincere prayer and true efforts to improve oneself are the only means of keeping the bad Spirits away, Spirits that acknowledge those who practice good as their teachers whilst formulas make them laugh. Rage and impatience excite them. It is necessary to tire them by being more patient than they are.

Sometimes, however, the subjugation reaches the point of paralyzing the willpower of the obsessed hence there could be no expectation of a positive reaction. That is when the intervention of a third party becomes necessary be it through prayer or through magnetic action. But the power of such intervention also depends on the moral superiority that the intervener may have upon the Spirits otherwise the intervention will be useless.

In the case of intervention, the magnetic action penetrates the fluid of the obsessed with a better fluid therefore disconnecting the fluid of the obsessing spirit. When operating the magnetizer must have the double objective of opposing a moral strength against another and to produce on the patient a kind of chemical reaction – using a material comparison – then replacing one fluid by another. Thus this is not just a healthy separation but the strengthening of weakened organs by a long and sometimes vigorous domination.

As a matter of fact one must understand that the fluidic action is not only in proportion to the willpower but above all in the quality of the fluid and, as we said, such quality depends on the instruction and moral qualities of the magnetizer. It follows that a common magnetizer who would act mechanically in order to magnetize would produce little or no effect. It is extremely necessary to have a Spiritist magnetizer with knowledge about these causes, with the intention of producing

the effects that we have just described instead of induce somnambulism or producing an organic cure.

Besides, it is evident that a magnetic action applied in such a way will also be useful in cases of ordinary obsession because if the magnetizer is then supported by the willpower of the obsessed the bad spirit will be fighting two adversaries instead of one.

It is still necessary to say that we often blame strange Spirits for wrong doings on which they have no responsibility. Certain morbid states and certain aberrations that are attributed to an occult cause are sometimes exclusively to the spirit of the individual. Interactions normally concentrated on oneself and particularly broken hearts have led to many eccentric attitudes that are wrongly attributed to obsession. Many times the person is his own obsessing spirit.

We must finally add that certain tenacious obsessions, particularly of worthy persons, are sometimes part of the tests to which they are submitted. *“Sometimes it happens that the obsession, when simple, is a task imposed onto the obsessed that must work to improve the obsessing spirit like a father does to an addicted son.”* We refer the reader to *The Mediums’ Book* for more details.

We must still talk about collective or epidemic obsession and, in particular, that of Morzine. This, however, requires considerations of a certain amplitude to demonstrate by facts its similarity with individual obsessions. The proof of that is in our own observations and in those described in medical reports. Besides we must examine the effect of the applied means and later the action of exorcism and the conditions in which it can be efficient or null. The extension of this second part forces us to transform it in the subject of a special article to be published in the next issue.

December 1862

Spiritism in Rochefort

An episode from Mr. Allan Kardec’ trip

Rochefort is not yet a stronghold of Spiritism although it has some eager followers and numerous sympathizers of the new ideas. But there, less than anywhere else, there is the issue of courage of opinion and many believers stay on the sideline without committing. When they finally show

themselves we will be surprised by their number. Since we were supposed to go there to see a few isolated persons we expected to spend a few hours only. However, a passenger that was in the same train recognized us by a picture that he had seen in Marennes and warned his friends about our arrival. We then received an adamant and very kind invitation from the part of the several Spiritists who wished to get to know us and receive instructions. Our departure was delayed to the following day and we had the pleasure of spending the evening in a meeting with sincere and dedicated Spiritists.

During the session we received another invitation in no less friendly terms from a high level public official and other several notabilities from the city expressing their wishes for another meeting on the following evening, a fact that determined another postponement of our departure. We would not have mentioned such details if they were not necessary to the explanation that we are compelled to provide below with respect to a local newspaper. In this last meeting, we gave the following speech at the beginning of the session:

“Ladies and gentlemen,

Although our intention was only to spend a few hours in Rochefort I was flattered by your desire to hold this session and in particular by the kindness of your invitation so that I could not refuse to attend. I do not know if every person that honors me with their presence in this meeting are already initiated in the Spiritist Science. I suppose many are still neophytes in that matter and I could perhaps even find some who are hostile to Spiritism. Given the false ideas that they may have about Spiritism that is unknown to them or to their imperfect knowledge the outcome of this meeting could cause disappointment in those who would not find here what they are seeking. I must consequently explain my objective very clearly so that there is no misunderstanding. To begin with I must inform you about my objective with the excursions. I am only visiting Spiritist centers and giving them the instructions that they might need. It would be, however, a mistake to believe that I am going to preach Spiritism to the unbelievers. Spiritism is a whole science that requires serious studies like the other sciences plus numerous observations. In order to develop Spiritism, it would be necessary a course about its foundations. Spiritist instruction cannot be done in one or two classes similar to a Physics or Astronomy course. I am force to refer those that avoid learning about the basic foundations to the source, that is, to the study of the works where one can find all the required teachings and the answer to the questions that they might ask and that are often referred to the most elementary principles. That is why in my travels I address those who already know and that do not need the basic notion but need supplemental lessons. I will never hold what is called a session or invite the public for demonstrations and even less make exhibitions of the Spirits. Those here who could be expecting similar things are completely mistaken and I must promptly clarify with them otherwise. Hence the session tonight is exceptional and rather unusual.”

“For the very reasons above I cannot have the pretension of convincing those who would take issue with the bases of my principles. There is only one thing that I want from them: in the absence of conviction, please understand that Spiritism is something serious and worthy of their attention for it also attracts the attention of the most enlightened people in all countries. You may not accept it without examination and that is understandable. But it would be presumptuous to take a false position against an opinion that counts on numerous followers in the elite of Society.”

“Sensible people say: there are so many new things that surprise us and that a century ago would sound absurd; we daily witness the discovery of new laws and the revelation of new forces of nature that it would be illogical to admit that nature would have given us the final word. Hence it is then wise to study and observe before denying.”

“In order to judge something it is necessary to understand it. Criticism is only allowed to those who know what they are talking about. What would we say about a person who criticizes opera not knowing music? Or that criticized a book when ignoring the first notions of literature? The same happens to the majority of the detractors of Spiritism. They judge with incomplete information and sometimes even from what they heard. Hence their objections indicate the most absolute ignorance of the subject. Our only answer is: study before judging.”

“As I had the honor of telling you, ladies and gentlemen, it would be materially impossible to develop here all the principles of Spiritism. As for the satisfaction of curiosity of anyone some of you know me well enough to know that I have never represented such a role. However, given the impossibility of exposing everything in detail, it would perhaps be useful to let you know the objective and the trend. That is my proposal. You will later judge if the objective is serious and if there is space for censorship.”

“I then ask for your permission to read some passages of the speech I gave during the great meetings of Lyon and Bordeaux. For those who only have an incomplete idea about Spiritism there is no doubt that the main principle remains hypothetical since I address the initiated follower. In the hopes, however, that the circumstances have transformed such hypotheses in truth you will be able to see their consequences and the significance of the instructions that I give and from that assess the character of the meetings that I attend.”

*“I must, however, say that there is nothing hypothetical about Spiritism. From all principles formulated in *The Spirits’ Book*, without exception, and in *The Mediums’ Book*, none is the product of a personal system or opinion. All of them and without exception are the result of observation. I could not claim a single one as the product of my initiative. Those books contain what I have learned and not what I have created. Well, what I have learned others can also learn as I did. But like me they must also work. The only thing I did was to spare them the effort of the first works and the initial research.”*

After this introduction we read some passages from the speech given in Bordeaux and Lyon followed by a few explanations necessarily much summarized about the fundamental principles of Spiritism, about the nature of the Spirits and the means they utilize to communicate, particularly concerned with pointing out the importance of the moral influence that results from the manifestations and their implication in our future life and the effects of such a certainty in our present life.”

Based on the introduction it would be impossible to make it more transparent with respect to our objectives and to avoid any misunderstanding. We had to take these precautions because we knew that the audience was far from being homogeneous and entirely sympathetic. That, however, did not satisfy those who were waiting for a session like those produced by Mr. Homes. One attendee declared very politely that it was not exactly what he was expecting. We believed that without any

effort because instead of satisfying curiosity we were talking about moral things. He was so relentless in asking for proofs of the existence of the Spirits that we were forced to say that we did not have them in our pocket to show. He almost said: "Look again!"

One journalist that was present at the meeting believed that it was adequate to make a report under the pseudo name Tony in the *Spectateur*, a journal about theaters dated October 12th. He begins like that:

"Seduced by the announcement of a Spiritist party, I was quick to attend and hear one of the most accredited hierophant of that science... that is how the followers classify Spiritism. A packed auditorium anxiously waited for the development of the foundations of such a science... for there is science. Mr. Allan Kardec, author of *The Spirits' Book* and *The Mediums' Book* would initiate us in terrible secrets! Driven by a much understandable feeling of curiosity, which was not hostile at all, we expected to leave the session with half of a conviction if the professor, a man of undeniable skills, would have bothered explaining his doctrine. Mr. Allan Kardec thought different, regrettably. He was not asked to evoke Spirits but to at least provide clear or even elementary explanations of how to *facilitate* such experimentation."

This initial text characterizes well the mind frame of certain attendees who saw themselves as viewers. What they wanted were clear explanations to facilitate the experimentation. In other words, a recipe so that each one could have fun at home by evoking Spirits.

Then follows a comment about the basis of *Spiritism*: charity and other maxims that he says come straight from Christianity, not teaching anything new. If that gentleman one day decide to read, he will know that Spiritism has never intended to bring to humanity any other moral but that of Jesus and that Spiritism does not addresses those who already practice it in its essence. However, as there are many who do not believe in God or in the soul or in the teachings of Jesus Christ or at least doubt them and whose moral is limited to each one concerned with oneself, by demonstrating the existence of a future life Spiritism gives a practical and meaningful sanction to that moral. We want to believe that Mr. Tony does not need it; that his faith is lively and his religion is sincere for the takes on the defense of Christianity against Spiritism given that there is a bad word around accusing him of being a little materialistic. We want to believe, we were saying, that he practices charity as a true Christian; that following the example of Christ he is kind and humble; that he has no pride or vanity or even ambition; that he is good and indulgent to everyone even to his enemies; in a word that he bears all the virtues of the divine role model but at least that he does not bother others.

He goes on by saying:

"Spiritism has the pretension of evoking the Spirits. It is true that they do not submit to caprices and demands. If necessary they can utilize a body that is recognizable, including clothes, and only enter into communication with the mediums on the condition of being surrounded by a layer of fluid of the same kind... and why not an opposing kind like with electricity? The Spiritist science does not explain that."

Read and you shall see.

“I do not know if the followers left the place satisfied. But there is no doubt that the ignorant ones who wanted lessons got nothing out of that session only the fact Spiritism cannot be demonstrated. Is it the professor’s fault or Spiritism only unveils its secrets to its followers? We will not respond... it is obvious.”

Tony

Conclusion: Spiritism cannot be demonstrated. Mr. Tony should have explained it more clearly – since he likes clear explanations – because Spiritism is demonstrated to millions of people who are not fools and ignorant. Take the burden of studying it and he will know if he is willing to learn as he says. But since he gave himself the right to promote a public trial of a gathering that had nothing of public as if it were a report about a spectacle that people watch after being seduced by ads he should, to be impartial, refer the words we used in the beginning of the meeting.

Nevertheless we must be thankful for the good level of civility that presided over the meeting and take this opportunity to address the eminent Mr. La Maison with our thanks for his warm welcome full of benevolence and cordiality and for his initiative in offering his living room to our service. It seemed useful to demonstrate to him and to the elite that gathered in his house the moral tendencies of Spiritism and the nature of the teachings that we give in the visited centers.

Mr. Tony ignores if the followers were satisfied. From his point of view, the session had no result. As for us we prefer to have left on the attendees the sensation of a boring moralist than that of someone that produces spectacles. It is an unquestionable fact that not everyone shares his opinion. Not to mention the followers that were there and gave us warm testimonies of sympathy. We will mention two gentlemen that at the end of the session asked us if the instructions from the Spirits that were read would be published, adding that they had an entirely different idea about Spiritism but that now they saw it differently, understanding the serious and useful side and that they were prepared to study it in depth. We would already be satisfied if that was the only result. “It is cheap”, says Mr. Tony. He ignores, however, that two grains germinate and multiply. In fact, we are certain that all others that we sowed on that occasion will not be lost and that the wind blew by Mr. Tony will have carried some to a fertile terrain.

Mr. Florentin Blanchard, a bookseller from Marennes, understood that he had to respond to the article published by Mr. Tony by a letter that was published in the *Tablettes des deux Charentes*, on October 25th. Mr. Tony replies with the following conclusion:

“Spiritism super excites harmfully the minds of believers; it worsens women nervous irritability, making them mad or killing them if persisting in the aberrations. Spiritism is a disease and must be fought as such. Besides it enters the roll of unhealthy things studied by public moral and hygiene.”

Here we caught Mr. Tony in flagrant mistake and contradiction. In his first article above he said that he came to the session “*driven by a very understandable feeling of curiosity and that there was nothing hostile*”. How can something that is not hostile be unhealthy, a disease etc.?

Later on he says that he was expecting clear explanations or even elementary to facilitate the experimentation by profane people. How can he have such expectations from something that as he says may make people mad and kill? Why has he come? Why hasn’t he precluded his friends from

coming to participate of something so harmful? Why is he sorry for the fact that the teaching did not achieve his expectations or was not as thorough as he wished it would have been? Since he considered it so dangerous he should have congratulated us for being so brief instead of criticizing us.

Another contradiction. If he came to the meeting to learn about what Spiritism can do, what it is and what is its intent; if he criticizes us for not having taught him it means that he does not know Spiritism. Now, if he did not study it how come he knows that it is so dangerous? He then judges without knowing. Thus, in his private authority, he decides that it is something unhealthy and that can kill just after declaring that he does not know what it is about. Is that the language of a serious person?

There is some criticism that contradicts itself so much that one just need to point it out and they should not be given any importance. On other occasions an allegation such as that of killing could have been accused of calumny since it makes an accusation of extreme relevance against us and against a class that today is immensely large of honorable people. That is not all. The second article was followed by others in which he develops his thesis. This is what appeared in the *Spectateur* on October 26th on the occasion of the first letter by Mr. Blanchard:

The *Spectateur* received a letter signed by Mr. Florentin Blanchard from Marennes with a response to our first article from the 12th edition. The editor apologizes for the fact that the limited space does not allow for a full write-up on the subject of Spiritism. By specific request from the *Spectateur* it is published in full in the *Tablettes*. We abstain from answering by impulse here and decided not to yield, as the author did, to the inspirations of an inconvenient spirit.

Tony”

After a second letter from Mr. Blanchard, this time published in the *Spectateur*, one reads:

“It is a pleasure to welcome you, Mr. Blanchard. Your letter today accuses me of not having studied Spiritism. How do you know? Why do not you respond to some propositions in my last article instead of accusing me so vaguely? This lengthy correspondence, and without interest, must stop if you allow me. I will soon come back to my series of articles about Spiritism but only from time to time considering that the limited size of the *Spectateur* does not allow for long engagements on this subject.

Regardless of how much you try, Mr., we will not take the Spiritists seriously and we cannot consider Spiritism a science.

Tony”

Thus it is all clear. Mr. Tony wishes to attack Spiritism, drag it down into the mud, classify it as unhealthy, and say that it would kill without saying how many were killed but he does not want the controversy. His newspaper is large enough for his attacks but too short for replies. Speaking alone is more convenient. He forgot that as a consequence of the nature and character of his attacks the law might force him to allow for a response of double size, despite the limitation of this journal.

With respect to the particulars of our journey, we wanted to show that we do not seek and did not solicit in that meeting, and, consequently, we do not seduce anybody to come to listen to us and that is why we are careful in saying with all letters and from the beginning our intention. Those who did not like it had the freedom to leave. We now congratulate ourselves for the fortuity of the occasion or even providential occasion that made us stay, as it provoked the controversy that only serves the cause of Spiritism allowing it to be known for what it is: something moral and not for the appeal that it does not want to be: a spectacle for the satisfaction of curiosity; and for once more giving the critics an occasion to show the logic of their arguments.

Now, Mr. Tony, a couple of words please. In order to publicly sustain things like those that you wrote it is necessary to be really certain about the facts and you must have the courage to prove them.

It is very convenient to discuss alone, however, I do not intent to establish any controversy with you. I have no time for that and, on the other hand, your periodical is too small to convey criticism and refutation. Hence no offense its influence will not go far. I offer you something better: come visit the Society that I preside in Paris and before a hundred and fifty persons, come to sustain and prove what you are affirming. If you are sure that you are telling the truth you must fear nothing and I promise you, with my word, that through our Spiritist Review your arguments and the effects produced by them will reach from China to Mexico passing by every European capital. You may notice that this is a beautiful proposal since it has no hopes of converting you – something that is not absolutely part of my intentions – and you will be entirely free to keep your convictions. We want to offer you an occasion to provide your ideas with an extensive development.

In order to forewarn you about the audience that you are going to find the Society is composed of lawyers, businessmen, artists, people of arts, scientists, medical doctors, investors, officers, princes, etc., all that surrounded by respectable ladies what gives you assurance of civility; but all of them up to the neck like the five or six millions of followers with this unhealthy thing that must be studied by public hygiene and moral and that you so eagerly wish to cure.

December 1862

Is Spiritism possible?

Extracted from the *Écho de Sétif*, September 18th, 1862

That is the title of a profoundly scientific article signed by Jalabert, published under the epigraph “*Mens agitat molem*”⁴⁸ in the *Écho de Sétif* one of the most respectable newspapers in Algeria. We regret the fact that the extension of the text does not allow us to publish it in full and any interruption would sacrifice the connection between the arguments through which the author discusses from the creation of the body and the spirit by God to the action of the spirit upon matter and later the possibility of communication between the free spirit and the incarnate. His deductions are so logical that unless one denies the existence of God and the soul it is virtually impossible not to say: it cannot be different. We will only cite a few arguments and in particular the conclusion.

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When Fulton exposed his system to Napoleon I about the use of steam power for navigation he promised to demonstrate that since his system was true in theory it could not be less true in practice. What did Napoleon say? That his idea was not feasible in theory and with the objective of denying them upfront without taking into account the experiments already carried out by the notable mechanic, not even those that he had ordered and that were realized, the great Emperor not even heard Fulton and his system up until the day when he saw the first steam boat in the horizons of St. Helen.

Strange thing, particularly in a century of physical observations, of material sciences and positivism! More than once a fact has been denied simply for representing an exception, for being extraordinary, new and unsuspected. That is how we hear serious and educated people laughing at conscious reports of certain witnessed manifestations or manifestations in good faith attested by intelligent persons and then saying: Leave your Spiritism, your manifestations and your mediums! What you are telling us is not possible!

- Not possible, be it! But gracefully oh transcendental geniuses, remember the statement of the former celebrity and before you attack us with your supreme disdain do listen to us. Kindly read these lines in full – seriously and attentively – and then with all your heart dare denying the possibility and rationality of Spiritism!

You say that you cannot understand this mystery. To us, however, as to you, the material movement produced the spiritual movement; matter agitated by the mind; the body driven by the spirit is incomprehensible! Yet, incomprehensible does not mean impossible. Deny such an action; deny such an influence; deny such a communication! There is no creation, no incarnation, no redemption, no distinction between body and soul, there is no variety in the

48 Latin expression meaning “the mind moves the matter” (TN)

unity! There is no God, no spirit, no religion and no reason. It is still chaos and always chaos or even worse it is pantheism or nihilism.

Summarizing: Philosophically, physiologically and religiously Spiritism is not irrational or absurd. Hence it is possible.

A person acts:

- Upon oneself through the inner self or will power and senses;
- Upon the neighbors through the word and equally through the senses.

Why then would the person not be able to communicate with God, with an angel or with the Spirits through the inner self, in a word with any other incorporeal being by nature or accidentally detached from the physical senses?

The spirit is a power, a force that acts upon matter, that is, upon a body that is exterior, inert and unintelligent. However, there are communications between the Creator and the creation, between the angel and man as well as the between the soul of the man with the body of the man and through the body with the exterior world.

What is it that can preclude a reciprocal communication spirit to spirit? If the spirit communicates with beings of a very different nature, it is conceivable that the same spirit cannot communicate with others of the same kind.

- Where does the obstacle come from? From the distance?
- But there is no distance between the Spirits. "The air has plenty of them" said St. Paul when explaining in a certain way that the Spirits enjoy a divine ubiquity.
- Would it come from a hierarchical difference?
- Hierarchy, however, does not play a role. If they are Spirits then their very condition requires that they act and communicate with one another.
- Would it come from their momentary rest when bonded to the body?
- In this case apart from the means of communication it still does occur. My spirit communicates with yours and your spirit, like mine, inhabits a body. A free spirit that is disconnected from matter, be it the spirit of a person or the one of an angel, will have even more reason to be able to communicate.

There is more. Far from precluding such communication everything favors it. "God is love" and everything that is part of the divine takes part in that love. Love lives on communications, on communions. God loves His creatures thus communicates with them: at the Eden through the word; at the Sinai through writing; at the stable of Bethlehem and at the Calvary through the incarnate verb; at the altar through His transubstantiated verb in the Eucharistic bread and wine.

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Make no mistake that the communications from soul to soul, spirit to spirit are even more possible than those between spirit and matter. Now, what is the instrument, the means of communication between the creatures? Between the corporeal beings the communication takes place through

motion that is like the verb of the body. Among the purely spiritual creatures it is through their thoughts or their inner words that is like the movement of the Spirits. Now between the spiritual and corporeal beings it happens through the transmission of those thoughts covered by a sign that is simultaneously spiritual and exterior through the word. It is the inner word manifesting exteriorly through a material sign.

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And what is that signal? It is every material object that moves in a given time in a preconceived motion under the direct or indirect influence of the willpower or the inner word of the spirit with whom we want to communicate.

-o-

We recommended this article to Mr. Tony from Rochefort. There you have one of his comrades that says everything contrary to what he says. One says white the other says black. Who is right? There is a difference between the two: one knows, the other do not. We leave that to the reader to judge the logic of the two arguments. The same newspaper published several articles about the same subject from other authors that like this one are characterized by profound observations and serious study. We shall discuss them in due course.

December 1862

Charles Fourier, Louis Jourdain and the reincarnation

The following passage was extracted from a letter sent by a friend of the author:

“Imagine my surprise when I recognized the theory of Fourier about the soul, the future life, the mission of the human being in this current life and the reincarnation of the souls in the Spiritist Doctrine from which I had no idea at all. It says:”

“The human being is attached to the planet. He lives his life and remains here even after death.”

“The human being lives two existences: the current life that Fourier compares to the sleep and the other life that he calls aromatic, the other life that is in a word the wakening. The soul travels alternately from one to the other and periodically returns to incarnate in the present life.”

“In the present life the soul has no recollection of previous lives but recovers that in the aromatic life and sees all the preceding lives. The punishment in the aromatic life is the fear that the soul has of incarnating in the body of a miserable person. The reason being, says Fourier, the fact that many beggars that knock on the doors of castles asking for a charitable hand were their very owners in the past, adding: “If people were really convinced of the whole truthfulness of what I am exposing to the world they would work for everybody’s happiness.”

“You can see through this short excerpt, my dear friend, how much Spiritism is close to the doctrine of Fourier and that since I belong to a Phalanstery⁴⁹ it would not be difficult to turn me into a follower of Spiritism.”

It is impossible to be more explicit about the chapter of reincarnation. It is not only a vague idea of successive existences in several worlds. It is in this world that people are reborn to deplete and atone.

We find everything there: the interchangeability between the spiritual life that he calls aromatic and the corporeal one; the momentary obliviousness about the previous lives during this life and the recollection of the past during the spiritual life and the atonement through the vicissitudes of life.

His picture of the miserable ones that come to beg at the doors of the castles that were theirs in preceding existences seems to be based on the teaching of the Spirits.

Why then those who violently attack the doctrine of reincarnation today said nothing when Fourier made it one of the keystones of his theory?

⁴⁹ A type of association designed for a utopian community and developed in the early 19th century by Charles Fourier (TN)

The reason being is that to them such a theory seemed to be confined to the Phalanstery whilst today it goes around the world in addition to other understandable reasons that we do not need to discuss.

As a matter of fact, he was not the only one to have the intuition of this law of nature. The germ of this idea is found in a number of modern writings. Mr. Louis Jourdan, editor of the *Siècle*, formulated that unequivocally in his remarkable little book entitled *Prères de Ludovic*, published for the first time in 1849 hence before the advent of Spiritism and it is well-known that the book is not about fiction but about conviction.

One can find in the book, among other things:

“For me, I confess, I believe, but I believe strongly, passionately as one used to believe in former times that each and every one of us is preparing their future transformation in the same way that our present existence is the result of previous ones.”

The book is thoroughly based on this principle.

Let us now face the issue from another point of view in order to answer a question that has been addressed to us several times about it.

Some people consider the doctrine of reincarnation contrary to the dogmas of the Church and consequently concluding that therefore it does not exist. What can one say?

The answer is very simple. Reincarnation is not a system that depends on people adopting it or not like one does to a political, economic or social system. If it does exist then it is in nature; it is a law inherent to humanity like eating, drinking and sleeping; it is an alternative of the life of the soul like the sleep and the vigil state are alternatives to the life of the body. If it is a law of nature, there is no favorable opinion that can make it prevail as there is no contrary opinion that can impede its existence.

Earth does not turn around the Sun because we believe that it does but because the planet obeys a law and the anathema that were cast against such a law did not preclude it from turning. The same happens to reincarnation. It is not the opinion of a few persons that will block them from being reborn if they have to be.

Having established that the reincarnation is a law of nature let us suppose that it cannot conciliate with a given dogma. We then need to know if reason is with the dogma or with the law. Who else but God is the creator of a natural law? In this case I say that it is not the law that opposes the dogma but it is the dogma that counters the law since any law of nature precedes the dogma and human beings reincarnated before the dogma was established.

If there was an absolute incompatibility between a dogma and a law of nature this would be a proof that the dogma comes from humans who did not know the law since God could not contradict Himself by undoing on one side what was done on the other. The act of sustaining such incompatibility is the same as processing the dogma. Does it mean that the dogma is false? No but that it is susceptible to interpretations as the Genesis was interpreted when people then realized that

the six days of creation could not conciliate with the law of formation of the planet. Religion will benefit from this since there will be less unbelievers.

The open question is to know if the law of reincarnation is true or not. To the Spiritists there are thousands of proofs against one that is useless to repeat here. I will only say this that Spiritism demonstrates that the plurality of the existences is not only possible but also necessary and indispensable finding its proof in an innumerable multitude of moral, psychological and anthropological phenomena, letting alone the revelation from the Spirits.

Those phenomena are effects that have a cause. By seeking the cause, we find it in reincarnation brought to evidence by the observation of those phenomena like the presence of the Sun is brought to evidence by daylight although hidden by clouds. To demonstrate that this law is wrong or that it does not exist it would be necessary to explain better and through other means everything that is explained by that law and this is something that has not been done by anybody yet.

If someone had announced that it was possible to communicate with someone else fifty miles away before the discovery of the properties of electricity there would be plenty of scientists that would prove it to be physically impossible since they would not know other laws. It was then necessary to have the revelation of a new force. That is the case with reincarnation. It is a new law that sheds light upon a number of obscure issues and that will profoundly modify the beliefs when it is known.

Thus it is not the opinion of a few persons that demonstrate the existence of that law. It is the facts. If we invoke its testimony is to demonstrate that such law had been foreseen and suspected by others before the advent of Spiritism that instead of being its inventor just developed the law and deduced its consequences.

December 1862

The lodge and the lounge

Study of Spiritists customs

We found this timely letter related to the preceding article among our old correspondence.

“Paris, July 29th 1860

Dear Sir,

I take the liberty of communicating to you some thoughts about two events that I have observed and, that with good reason, could be qualified as studies of Spiritist customs. You will see here that I give high importance to moral phenomena.

Since I began studying Spiritism it seems that I now see a hundred more things than before. This is something that makes me think and that I would not give any importance in the past. I find myself – one could say – before an endless spectacle in which each individual plays a role providing me with an enigma to be deciphered. It is true that with the key provided by Spiritism some of them are so simple that there is no merit in discussing.

Others offer more interest because with Spiritism we feel like we are in a country where we do not speak the language. That turned me into a thoughtful person and an observer since now everything has a cause to me. A thousand and one facts that in past seemed to me to be the result of chance and would go unnoticed but now have a reason and utility. Something of no importance in moral terms now attracts my attention and teaches me something. But I almost forgot that it is about a lesson that I want to talk to you.

I teach piano. Some time ago when visiting the house of one of my pupils from a high society family, I found myself at the entrance hall. There was an impressive looking lady at the corner with her fists on the waist. I saw her reproaching her daughter for her behavior, a fifteen-year-old girl whose manners showed shocking contrasts as compared to her mother's.

- What has Ms. Justina done – I asked – to make you angry like that?
- You won't believe, Sir, this little lady pretended to act like a duchess! She does not like to wash the dishes believing that it will spoil her little hands and make them smell bad; and if you think that she was raised with the cows in her grandmother's house. She is afraid of harming her nails and needs perfume for her scarf! I will show you the perfume! I... then she slapped her on the face making her move back a few steps.
- Ah! My dear Sir one needs to correct the kids while they are little. I never spoiled mine. All my kids are good workers and I want this little one to get out of this posture of a great madam.

After having given some advice of kindness to the mother and submission to the daughter I went upstairs to give a lesson to my student, not worrying any more about the family issue that I had observed.

I then saw the counterpart of that scene and by coincidence. The mother who was an educated and good mannered lady was reproaching her daughter for a different reason.

- Behave, Sofia – she said – you do look like a cook. I am not surprised. You have some sort of preference for the kitchen where you feel better than in the living room. I guarantee that the porter’s daughter, Justina, would feel ashamed for you. One can say that you swapped the cradle.

I had never noticed those particularities. I needed the two events together to notice it. Ms. Sofia, my student, is a young eighteen-year-old lady who is nice but that shows some vulgar features; she shows commonly manners, without distinction; her posture and her movements are heavy and awkward. I was not aware of her inclination towards the kitchen. I then started comparing her to the little Justine of aristocratic instincts and asked myself if that was not a remarkable example of innate inclination given the fact that education alone was powerless to modify the two girls. Why one of them educated in a wealthy family has vulgar tastes and manner while the other that has lived in rough conditions since her early days presents a sense of distinction and a fine taste despite her mother reprimands to fix her? The philosophers who wish to probe the innermost secrets of the human heart should explain these phenomena without the previous existences. To me it is evident that the two young ladies have the instinct of what they were in the past. What do you think about it my dear master?

Respectfully...

D.

We believe that Ms. Justine, the porter, could well be a variant of what Charles Fourier says: “*many beggars that knock at the doors of castles asking for a charitable hand were their very owners in the past.*” Who knows if Ms. Justine was not the lady of that palace and Ms. Sofia who is now the great lady would have been her porter?

Such idea revolts certain people who would not accept the idea of having been less than they are now or to have been the servant of their servant. Therefore, what becomes of the pure blood races that some people were so careful in not to mix? Console yourself. Your forefathers blood runs in your veins for the body comes from the body. As for the spirit, though, it is different. What can one do if things are as they are? For the simple fact that a person is irritated by the rain, he shall not avert rain. There is no doubt that it is humiliating to think that one has changed from a master to a servant and from rich to a beggar but there isn’t anything easier than avoiding such a situation. Leave pride and vanity aside and you shall not be downgraded; be good and generous so that you are not reduced to beg for what you denied others. To be punished for what one’s bad action, isn’t that the most just of the justices? Yes, from great we can become little but when one is good one cannot come back bad. Now, isn’t that better to be an honest worker than a vicious rich?

December 1862

Spiritist dissertations

All Saints

I

Paris, November 1st 1862 – medium Mr. Perchet, Sargent of the 40th line of the casern of Prince Eugene, member of the Parisian Society of Spiritist Studies).

My dear brother, in this day of celebration of the dead I fell happy for being able to communicate with you. You cannot imagine the pleasure that it gives me. Call me more frequently for our mutual benefit. I cannot always come here since I am frequently with my sisters and especially with my little daughter that I have asked the mission to follow closely. Yet, I can often respond to your calls and it will always be a real pleasure to help you with my advices.

Let us talk about today's celebration. There is plenty of reverence in the approximation of the invisible to the visible world and there is joy and sadness. There is joy due to the devout feeling that unites the disperse members of the same family. On this day the child comes close to her tomb to meet her mother that waters the sepulchral vault with her tears. The little angel blesses her and blends thoughts and wishes into the drops that roll over on the face of the beloved mother. Ah! Praise the Lord with these pure prayers, seasoned by faith and absence! May these prayers reach the feet of the Eternal like the subtle perfume of flowers and from up there in heavens may God cast his merciful eyes upon this corner of Earth and send one of His good Spirits to console this suffering soul by saying: *"No more suffering good mother. Your beloved son is in the mansion of the blessed ones; he loves you and waits."*

I said: Day of happiness – and I repeat that because through the religion of the missed ones they pray and do know that the prayer is not useless and that one day they will see the loved ones again from whom they are just momentarily separated. Day of happiness because the Spirits see with joy and tenderness the dear ones soon deserving to share their happiness for their confidence in God.

On this day of all saints the dead who courageously endured all trials imposed by life, who got rid of the mundane things and educated their children in the faith and charity willfully come to join in, I repeat, in the prayers from those who were left behind, inspiring in them perseverance in walking the good path. Children, parents and friends kneeling by the graves experience intimate satisfaction since they know that the remains under the gravestone are just a memory of the beings that inhabited them and who are now free from the human miseries. These are the happy ones my dear brother. So long.

II

My dear friend here I am faithful to my promise to you. As I told you last night, I went for a visit to the cemetery. I examined the several suffering Spirits. I feel sorry for them. The shocking spectacle would bring tears to the eyes of the toughest heart. Those souls, however, are relieved in large numbers by the living ones and by the assistance of the good Spirits, particularly when

regretting their earthly faults and striving to get rid of their imperfections that constitute the sole reason of their sufferings. They now understand the wisdom, benevolence and greatness of God and ask for the favor of new trials to satisfy the divine justice while atoning their faults and building a new and better future.

Therefore, my dear friends, pray from the bottom of your hearts for those repented Spirits that have just been clarified by a spark of light. Until now they never believed the eternal joy for in their punishment it was too much of punishment if they had to wait. You can imagine their delight when the veil was torn apart and the angel of the Lord opened their eyes up, eyes that were blind to the light of faith.

Nonetheless they feel happy now but without illusions as for the future. Many among them do know that they will have to endure terrible trials. Hence they constantly claim the prayers from the living ones and the assistance of the good Spirits so that they can withstand the tough task to be imposed on them with resignation. I tell you once again and this is never too much to repeat to have you convinced about this great truth; pray from the bottom of your heart for all the Spirits that suffer, without distinction of social position or belief because we are all brothers and sisters who deserve mutual support.

Fervent Spiritists, in particular, who know the situation of the suffering Spirits and understand the phases of life; who understand the difficulties in their paths, please come to help them. It is a nice act of charity to pray for the unknown brothers and sisters that are frequently forgotten and whose acknowledgement you cannot assess when they find help. Prayer does to them what the drizzle does to earth punished by heat.

Watch a stranger fallen in a dark night on any obscure stretch of the way. The feet bleeding after the long walk. He feels the pain of starvation and thirst. A moral torture adds up to the physical suffering. Desperation lies ahead. His painful screams are heard all over the place but no friendly echo responds to his desperate appeal. Now imagine that at the very moment when this miserable being gets to the extreme suffering a compassionate hand kindly rests on his shoulder, bringing him the help that the situation claims. If possible try to imagine the happiness of that man and you will have a slight idea of the relief brought upon the unfortunate Spirits by prayer, Spirits who live the anguish of punishment and isolation. They shall be eternally grateful to you and rest assured that in the spiritual world there aren't ungrateful Spirits as there are humans on your Earth.

I told you that All Saints is a solemnity that arises from sadness, a really great sadness, since it also draws the attention of those Spirits devoted to materialism and selfishness in their earthly existences; Spirits that had no other gods but the miserable vanity of their own worlds; Spirits who fearlessly employed every means of boosting their wealth and frequently throwing honest people in the gutter of misery.

My dear brother how horrible torment to those! It is exactly as it is in the Scriptures: "There will be weeping and gnashing of teeth". They shall dive into the deep abyss of darkness. These miserable are vulgarly called the "damned" ones and although it would be more precise to call them the

“punished” ones they suffer no less the terrible tortures assigned to the damned amidst the flames. Surrounded by the thickest darkness of a chasm that seems unfathomable to them since it is not circumscribed as you are taught, they experience indescribable moral sufferings until they open their heart to regret.

Oftentimes some remain in such a state for centuries incapable of foreseeing the end of their torments, thinking of themselves as eternally condemned. Such a wrong opinion has found dwelling among you for a long time. It is a serious mistake for sooner or later those Spirits open their hearts to regret and then God have mercy on their disgrace and send them an angel with reassuring words opening before them a path that is the wider the more prayers they have received at the feet of the Eternal.

Brothers and sisters, you can see that your prayers are always useful to the guilty one and although they cannot alter the immutable designs of God they nonetheless provide relief to the suffering Spirits by bringing them the kind thought of being in the memory of charitable souls. It is like the excitement of the prisoner when he sees through the bars in his cell the face of a friend or a relative that has not forgotten his misery. If the suffering spirit is too hardened, too material so that the prayer may reach his soul, a pure spirit collects it like a precious aroma that is deposited in a celestial amphora until the day they can serve the spirit.

To have the prayer bearing fruits it is not good enough to mumble the words as the majority of people do. The only prayer that pleases God is the one that comes from the heart, the only that is taken into account and that alleviate the suffering Spirits.

From the sister that loves you,

Marguerite

Question asked at the Society:

How can we interpret this passage from the communication: “...rest assured that in the spiritual world there aren't ungrateful Spirits as there are humans on your Earth”? Since the human souls are incarnate Spirits they carry along their vices and virtues. Human imperfection comes from the imperfections of the Spirits as the acquired qualities do. Given that and considering that the most ignoble vices are found in the Spirits one cannot understand the fact that in the spiritual world there isn't ungratefulness as it is found on Earth.

Answer through Mr. Perchet:

No doubt that there are ungrateful Spirits in the spiritual world and you can single out the malicious and obsessing Spirits that do everything in their power to give you their perverse thoughts despite your good deeds through your prayers in their favor. Their ungratefulness is, however, just momentary because the time of regret will sooner or later come to them. Then their eyes open to light and their hearts also open to regret forever. That is not the case in your planet as all the time you find people that despite the good that you do to them their only payback is the darkest

ingratitude. The passage that provoked this observation is only obscure because it lacks elaboration. I was only looking at the issue from the point of view of the Spirits open to regret and able for that very reason to immediately collect the fruits of prayer. Since those Spirits are committed with the good path and since they cannot retrograde it is clear that acknowledgement could not be extinguished in them. To avoid confusion, I will then re-write the phrase that caused the observation as: *“They will be eternally grateful to you for rest assured that those among the Spirits to whom you have guided to the good path could not be ungrateful.”*

Marguerite

Observation: These two communications as many others of high morality were obtained by Mr. Perchet in his casern where he counts on several comrades who share the Spiritist beliefs to which they accommodate their conduct. We ask the detractors of Spiritism if the military could receive better moral advices in the cabaret. If that is the language of Satan, he became an eremite. It is true that he is too old!

We take the opportunity to ask Mr. Tony the witty and particularly very logical journalist from Rochefort that believes Spiritism to be one of the evils that came out of Pandora box and one of those evil things studied by moral and public hygiene, we ask him as we were saying what is wrong and contrary to hygiene in this communication and if the military have lost moral support and health by renouncing to bad places in favor of prayer.

December 1862

Magnetic dispensary

Founded by Mr. Canelle, Rue Neuve-des-Martyrs, 11 - Paris

The first article of this issue points out the existing relationships between Magnetism and Spiritism and shows the help that in many cases the magnetizer may obtain from the Spiritist knowledge, cases in which a materialistic idea could only paralyze the healthy influence. These relationships will be even more highlighted in the second article to be published in the next issue.

By bringing to the public the information about the establishment directed by Mr. Canelle that we know in person and from a long time as an experienced magnetizer not only spiritualist but a devout Spiritist, we are pleased for giving him the testimony of our sympathy.

The treatment is provided by him and several other magnetizer medical doctors. There are special sessions dedicated to free magnetization. See the prospects for more detailed information.

December 1862

Response to a gentleman from Bordeaux

A gentleman from Bordeaux sent us a letter, in fact a very polite one, but with some criticism from a religious point of view regarding the article published in the November issue about the Origin of Language, an article that one must say found numerous admirers. Since the letter bears no signature or address we did what is done to any anonymous letter: we burned it.

Erratum⁵⁰

Allan Kardec

⁵⁰ There should be an erratum here that adds a procedure to the application of a balsam prescribed to Ms. Ermance Dufaux and that appears in the article Remedy given by the Spirits in the November issue. We are not reproducing it here because the correction was already implemented (Revising Team).