

A PHOTOGRAPH OF THE SOUL

Daniel Clark

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WE are to some extent the creatures of circumstance, and are influenced more or less by the objects of perception, because they continually obtrude themselves upon our senses, and because it requires very little effort of mind to partially understand all, that is necessary for our comforts and wants. Yet if one man more than another happens to extend his sphere of knowledge, beyond that of his fellow mortals, he has additional happiness in himself, and it is his duty and privilege, to communicate his discoveries to others. All mankind has a community of interests. Bonds, and scourgings, and imprisonments, might force from the lips of Galileo a retraction of his belief in the Copernican system of astronomy, yet, in spite of all opposition, the old man had a mental reservation of the truth which no ignominy could eradicate. Columbus would not have deserved our gratitude, if he and his crew had concealed from mortal ken their discovery. Harvey, in the midst of much opposition, declared to the world his discovery of the circulation of the blood. Newton had "atheist" hurled spitefully at him, because he enunciated the laws of gravitation. His enemies declared he put laws, in the place of God. He conquered, and they were confounded. Franklin caught hold of the forked lightning, which flashed athwart the darkened cloud, and said to heaven's artillery "go," and it obeyed his mandate, "come," and it carried his messages from pole to pole. Yet, he told the truth to a wondering world. Simpson revealed the glad tidings, in regard to chloroform, and suffering humanity rejoiced. Although there is so much true nobility in scientific men, and so much pleasure, in exploring new fields of investigation, yet, there is only here and there a traveller." The would-be-fashionable tourist will go in raptures" romantically—as a matter of course—over the grandeur of the grandeur of Niagara, or the Yosemite. He will descant, in a stereotyped way, on the romantic and stern sublimity of Loch Lomond, the Alps, the Rhine, or the Andes, but there is no vibration of soul in the contemplation. The dandy, who struts the evanescent day in fashionable frivolity—in striking costume—in baubles, which "elude the grasp and vanish into air," or the young lady whose stretch of thought only compasses the latest fashions—the newest novelettes—the striking attitude, the latest schottische, or waltz; are gorgeous butterflies that dazzle in the sunshine, but cower, and disappear, in the fierce storms of life, or in the dark days, which try men's souls. The farmer, or mechanic, or merchant, whose aspirations rise no higher than the plough, the work-bench, the counter, is living in vain, and is only in a small degree exalted above the vegetable, or the beasts of the field, instead of being only "a little lower than the angels, and crowned with glory and honor." In our multifarious studies, and amid the harassing duties of life, comparatively few of us turn our thoughts upon ourselves "fearfully and wonderfully made." The body, the great workshop of the soul, and the soul, the immortal essence, which gives it vitality, are to many as if they were not. How we long, instinctively, to catch a glimpse of the far beyond? Won't some indulgent spirit "blab it out?" We are fettered by a gross materialism, and are wedded to a clog, which nothing but death will sever from us. We almost envy the position of a gasping victim, in the throes of dissolution, whose face is flattened against the window panes, on the outskirts of a future eternity, as he gazes into its labyrinths in wonder, whose hands are toying with the curtains which hide the mystery of mysteries, and whose spirit is pluming its wings, for a flight into the dark unknown. What an enigma in spite of all reason, and all Revelation! We often ask ourselves puzzling questions, on the great problem of life. Has the soul no knowledge of the external world, except through the senses? We can hear without the ear. We can see without the eyes. We can taste independently of the mouth. When these organs of special sense are not used, the capabilities of the others are enlarged. The soul takes loftier flights, in these so-called abnormal conditions. There is a sense which I have never seen mentioned, but I have often felt its influence. Others assert that they have felt the same, when their attention has been directed to it. I shall call it the sense of presence. You are in a room as far as you know alone. No sound breaks the silence. No sense receives the slightest impression, and yet you feel the presence of some one. You are not even greatly surprised when friend, in sport, springs suddenly into your presence, from some hidden nook. What is the medium by which you become cognizant of the fact? Does the soul ever act independently of the body, and become

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cognizant of external things, without the aid of sensation? Is animal life a distinct thing from the soul, and may be called spirit, and only a medium—a tertium quid between soul and body, which keeps sentinel watch in the body, when the soul is indulging in flights of exploration beyond its temporary habitation? Does the soul enlarge at times its faculties, and capacities, in spite of materialism? I have not space to quote remarkable instances in proof of the truth of one of these views, yet, few but must have seen, the wonders of somnambulism. In sleep, consciousness is inert. Attention is lost. We have sensation, but not reflection. A sleeping man will wink at a candle, placed near his eyelids, and still sleep on. He will throw up his hand to defend his ear from the irritation of a tickling straw, and knows it not. He can be gently jostled in bed, until he rolls in uneasiness, but he may slumber on. He dreams in a half-awakened state, and sees, and hears, in phantasy, the most outrageous things, and to him they are a reality, for judgment is in chains and imagination is running riot. These dim vagaries of the brain

"Ne'er can fold their wandering wings
The wild unfathomable things."

In somnambulism, however, we have attention in vigorous exercise. So intensely is it exercised on one particular object, that it will rouse the will, to accomplish marvels. Here are the will, attention, memory, and sensation, in full play, and yet consciousness dormant. The eyes may be wide open, and might may fall upon the living, and sensitive retina. The image of external objects may be formed on it, but the subject sees not. The ear may still be "a sounding gallery," and the auditory nerve in tone, and vigour, but he hears not. He may be a gourmand, and an epicure, but even bitter aloes may be placed on his tongue. He will walk on housetops, on the edge of precipices, and fearlessly in places, which would make a waking man tremble. He will sing loudly, songs, and play on instruments, difficult pieces of music far beyond his powers when waking, and neither his own voice, nor the sound of the instrument, will rouse him. Why is the person thus affected, not cognizant of surrounding objects? Has soul withdrawn from the windows? Is not the soul using the body, independently of the senses?

Many persons hold, that the somnambulistic state is controlled by a second intelligence; that is, that such lead double lives. The Archbishop of Bordeaux relates the following, concerning a young priest, which bears out the idea: He was in the habit of writing sermons, when asleep; although a card was placed between his eyes and the note book, he continued to write vigorously. Did the history stop here, we should have a well authenticated case of vision without aid of eyes. But the collateral circumstances show that his writing was accomplished, not by sight, but by a most accurate representation of the object to be obtained, as will be further illustrated in our next case; for, after he had written a page requiring correction, a piece of blank paper of the exact size was substituted for his own manuscript, and on that he made the corrections, in the precise situation which they have occupied on the original page. A very astonishing part of this is, that, which relates to his writing music in his sleeping state, which it is said he did with perfect precision. He asked for certain things, and saw and heard such things, but only such as bore directly upon the subject of his thoughts. He detected this deceit, when water was given to him the place of brandy, which he had asked for. Finally, he knew nothing of all that had transpired when he awoke, but in his next paroxysm he remembered all accurately—and so lived a sort of double life, a phenomenon which we believe to be universal, in all the cases of somnambulism.

In Catalepsy, Trance-waking, we have a peculiar state of mind, in which the relations of mind and body are changed. The person, externally, may appear the same, except that the faculties, and capacities, are in a more exalted state—the former more active, and the latter, more receptive. The subject of it speaks more fluently, sings more sweetly, steps with more elasticity, and has a keener sense of the ludicrous, or pathetic. He may feel naught, but slight spasms of the body, but he loses a consciousness of past existence, in a normal condition. He remembers nothing, but what happens in this peculiar state. When he awakens he remembers nothing of what occurred when he was in this relation, and when he returns to that cataleptic state again, memory only returns to the facts relating to the last condition of trance. In fact there would seem to be two intermittent phases of consciousness, entirely distinct from one another. Some call this *two lives*, which is a term scarcely correct. This states is most remarkable, and has been closely investigated for ages by intelligent, and scientific men. The ears may not hear, but the tips of the fingers may. The eyes cannot see, but the back of the head can. The mouth

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has no taste, but if bitter or sweet ingredients are put on the pit of the stomach, the different tastes are at once known, by the patient, although ignorant of their nature before. The perceptive powers are marvellous. Such discern objects, through mountains, walls, houses; and distance, however far, is no impediment to their vision. Their own bodies are to them transparent as crystal, and so are the bodies of others. They can read the thoughts of others without a blunder. It matters not whether these are near, or far away. Matter, however dense, is no obstacle. Space, however boundless, has no distance. Time, far in the future, is to them an eternal now. They have a sort of prescience, and can foretell to a certainty future events. It would seem as if the body was a telegraph office, and the clerk in charge of it, merely, animal life, and the soul was taking aerial flights, laying its telegraph lines as it went, and, quick as human thought, sending back to its head-quarters, accounts of its explorations. This is mere hypothesis, which inductive philosophy may yet substantiate. I am aware that Mesmer, Hon. Robert Boyle, and others who flourished at the beginning of this century, held to the opinion that there was a subtle fluid, analogous to electricity, or magnetism, or perhaps a modification of these, or one of them, which, in its manifestations, they called Od force. This they divided into two kinds, negative and positive; we presume to correspond with electrical conditions. This force, they held, produced all the manifestations of mesmerism. Those under its influence, in a superabundant degree, were subject to the will of the operator. His will was theirs. His emotions influenced them. His sensations, and theirs, were merged in one. In short, the duality became a unity, by a blending of this subtle power. At the same time, if the patient was more than ordinarily effected, a trance state ensued, and feeling was lost. Cloquet, the justly celebrated French surgeon, has left on record, a case of a woman who had cancer in the breast, and who, by mesmeric influence brought to bear on her, for several days successively, fell into a death-like trance, and, had the diseased breast removed, without the least consciousness of pain, although the operation lasted twelve minutes. The prejudice in Paris was so strong against Cloquet, that he had to discontinue such practices. The stupidity of ignorance prevailed. Since that time (1829) the operations of this subtle force have been manifested in tens of thousands, and have been taken advantage of by the devotees of humbug, to accomplish sinister purposes, and have consequently been wilfully despised by men of research, and science, although it may yet be the vestibule to an arcana of untold blessings to mankind. This Od force seems to be governed by some of the laws which operate in magnetism. Mons. Petetin caused seven persons to form a circle. Two of these held the hands of a cataleptic person, who could hear nothing, but, by the tips of the fingers. When Dr. Petetin whispered to the fingers of the most remote person, the patient heard the words, and sentences, distinctly. When a stick was made part of the circle, it was the same in results. If a glass rod, or a silk glove intervened, the communication was destroyed. This mysterious agency is not discommoded by distance, for as far as the patient is concerned, it is annihilated, and mind is read in all its wonderful phenomena as if it were a book printed in the largest characters. Dr. Mayo, in his work on "Popular Superstitions," tells of being at Boppard, in Prussia, as an invalid. He wrote to a friend in Paris. This friend put the letter in the hands of Alexis, a trance patient in the city, who knew nothing of Dr. Mayo, and asked him to tell what he knew about him. He told at once Dr. Mayo's age, stature, disposition, and illness. He said he was crippled, and at that time of day, half-past eleven, a.m., in bed. he said that Dr. Mayo was living on the sea-shore. This was not correct, but the doctor delighted to go down to the banks of the Rhine, and listen to the surge of waves made by the wheels of passing steamers, as the noise reminded him forcibly of the sea waves beating on the shore. The friend told Alexis this was not true, and the patient, after a few minutes' reflection, corrected himself, and said, "I was wrong, he does not live on the sea-coast, but on the Rhine, twenty leagues from Frankfort." This influence, through some medium, call it what you will, can be exercised at great distances. In other words, two persons can have an influence potently exercised upon one another, although many miles distant, there is a current of something passing between them, so that the thoughts, feelings, or sensations of the weaker party, become temporarily subservient to the stronger. Dr. Foissac, in his able work on "Animal Magnetism," among other cases, gives the following: He was in the habit of mesmerising one Paul Villagrand, in Paris. This subject desired to return to Magnac-jeval, Haute Vienne, his native place. This place was about 300 miles distant. After he left, the Dr. wrote to the young man's father, a letter, saying, "I am magnetising you, on the 2nd of July, at 5 1/2 o'clock, p.m. I will awake you, when you have had a quarter of an hour's sleep." The father was directed to give the letter to his son. he, however, neither gave, nor did he inform him of its contents, being somewhat opposed to this—to him—sort of legerdemain. Nevertheless, at ten minutes before six, Paul being in the midst of his family, experienced a sensation of heat, and considerable uneasiness. his shirt was wet through, with perspiration. He wished to retire to his room; but they

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detained him. In a few minutes he was entranced. In this state, he astonished the person present, by reading, with his eyes shut, several lines of a book taken at hazard from the library, and by telling the hour, and minute, indicated by a watch, the face of which he did not see.

Dr. Mayo, while residing temporarily at Boppard, in the winter of 1846, sent a lock of hair, of one of his patients, to an American gentleman residing in Paris. That patient was unknown to anyone in the city. He took this lock to a man who was under the influence of Od force. The somnambulist said, that the hair belonged to a person, who had partial palsy of the hips, and legs, and that for another complaint he was in the habit of using a catheter. This statement was strictly true. The volume could be filled with illustrations of this kind. The prescience of such is remarkable. The extended powers of discerning occurrences, at great distances is strangely true. Mr. Williamson, who investigated these things with acumen, asked one of his patients to tell him about the moon, but the answer was, that as he approached it, the light was too bright to be tolerated. Alexis, mentioned before, was asked about the condition of the planets. He said they were inhabited, with the exception of those, which are either too near to, or too remote from, the sun. He said that the inhabitants of the different planets are very diverse; that the earth is best off, for that man has double the intelligence of the ruling animals, in the other planets. This may be a shrewd guess, but it may be the truth. Of all the inhabitants of this solar system, man may be the highest intelligence. Analogy, and inductive philosophy do not lay any stumbling-blocks in the way. The former does not veto a possibility, and the latter throws no doubts in the way of inferential probabilities. Sir Wm. Hamilton says, in his lectures on Metaphysics and Logic, of Waking Trance, especially of somnambulism, "that it is a phenomenon still more astonishing (than dreaming). In this singular state a person performs a series of rational actions, and those frequently of the most difficult and delicate nature, and, what is still more marvellous, with a talent to which he could make no pretensions when awake. (Ancillon, Esaias Philos. II. 161.) His memory, and reminiscences supply him with recollections of words, and things, which, perhaps, never were at his disposal in the ordinary state—he speaks more fluently a more refined language. And if we are to credit, what the evidence, on which it rests, hardly allows us to disbelieve, he has not only perception of things through other channels than the common organs of sense, but the sphere of his cognition is amplified to an extent far beyond the limits to which sensible perception is confined. This subject is one of the most perplexing in the whole compass of philosophy; for, on the one hand, the phenomena are so remarkable that they cannot be believed, and yet, on the other, they are of so unambiguous and palpable a character, and the witnesses to their reality are so numerous, so intelligent, and so high above every suspicion of deceit, that it is equally impossible to deny credit to what is attested to such ample and unexceptionable evidence." Muller, the distinguished physiologist, strongly disbelieved because he could not understand, and yet, in the "Physiology of the Senses," he says, "that the mental principle, or cause of the mental phenomena, cannot be confined to the brain, but that it exists in a latent state in every part of the organism." That accepts all that is necessary to establish the abnormal (if it can be called such) state of mind, and body, in the state referred to.

The most remarkable of all these wondrous states, is that of complete insensibility to all external impressions, however potent. The windows of the body are darkened. The curtains are drawn down, and the shutters are closed, and inertia of the material tabernacle is the result. The ego, however, is in full activity, and all the more so, by being partially free from the incubus of mortality. No stimulant can rouse the patient. No electric shock can stir the physical frame. The charge of the fluid may, by its influence on the nerves, produce violent muscular action, enough in the waking moments, to produce acute pain, and even imperil life, but, in this state, the soul defies the subtle aura. A limb may be amputated, an eye extracted, but there is no response of consciousness. There is no inhalation, nor exhalation, of air in connection with the lungs. The body, if not disturbed is a motionless corpse. The heat of the body falls many degrees. Commonly the muscles are relaxed, as in the recently dead, and occasionally there is rigidity, as of a dead body. In epidemics, such, are often buried alive, as all physical signs indicate death. Physicians, qualified to judge, say "that this state is more frequently produced by spasmodic, and nervous illness, than by mental causes. It has followed fever, and has frequently attended parturition. The patient remembers all his ideal life, and knows that it differs from that of dreaming, in being consistent, and in never indulging in the wildest extravaganzas. The judgment, and attention are in active exercise, and the imagination, by these balance wheels is kept in reasonable subjection. So real are the impressions, subjectively considered, that fanatics, under all circumstances, believe them to be direct, positive, and admonitory revelations from God. There is intense light within, but the world without is shut off in darkness. The soul is so intent upon itself, that it has no

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opportunity for explorations beyond itself.

There is a modification of this state. The affected person seems in a profound sleep. The breathing and the heart's action are regular. The temperature of the body is normal, but the pupils are distended to their utmost size, and fixed, in that position, in spite of the most intense stimulation, by means of light. I have seen numbers of such cases, especially hysterical patients. It often follows fever, and would seem as a rest for nature, and as an alternative to death. Intense excitement will cause it. The actings of a tragedy, whether real or histrionic, the mental tensions of religious excitement, and the sudden alarms of impending danger, will produce trance coma, all of which are purely physical impressions, acting upon the brain, and being excited, secondarily, by reflex action of the mind, thus operating, mutually on the three-fold nature of man—body, mind, and spirit. Rev. George Sanby, in his work on Mesmerism, tells that "George Fox, the celebrated father of Quakerism, at one period lay in a trance for fourteen days, and the people came to stare, and wonder at him. He had the appearance of a dead man; but his sleep was full of divine visions of beauty, and glory." There is a story told of Socrates, the philosopher, to the same effect. Being in military service in the expedition to Potidea, he is reported to have stood for twenty four hours, before the camp, rooted to the same spot, and absorbed in deep thought, his arms folded, and his eyes fixed upon one object, as if his soul were absent from the body. The newspapers of to-day give us information of such cases every few months, and evidenced by unimpeachable testimony of medical men. Need I say, that in the dark ages, these manifestations were supposed to be demoniacal, and witches, and wizards, were roasted forthwith. The poor unfortunates, themselves, not being able to explain the physical, and psychological phenomena, thought themselves possessed of devils, and even acknowledged to their latest hour that such was the case. In the present day, the other extreme is reached by many otherwise intelligent persons, and all such unusual manifestations, during religious excitement, have been traced directly to divine and spiritual influences. The affected believe, that it is such, and often become changed in life, and practice, for the better: but a student of nature sees in it all, a species of walking trance, brought about by intense attention, to fervid eloquence, or, in nervous persons, to fear for themselves, or sympathy for others.

Rev. Le Roi Sunderland, in *Zion's Watchman*, N. Y., Oct. 2nd, 1842, says:—

"I have seen persons often 'lose their strength,' as it is called, at Camp meetings, and other places of great religious excitement; and not pious people alone, but those also who were not professors of religion. I saw more than twenty affected in this way, in Ennis, Mass. Two young men, by the name of Crowell, came one day to a prayer meeting. They were quite indifferent. I conversed with them freely but they showed no signs of penitence. From the meeting they went to their shoe shops, to finish some work, before going to the meeting in the evening. On seating themselves, they were both struck perfectly stiff, I was immediately sent for, and found them sitting paralysed (that is, they were in a cataleptic, or trance state) on their benches, with their work in their hands, unable to get up, or to move at all. I have seen scores of persons, affected the same way. I have seen persons lie in this state forty-eight hours. At such times they are unable to converse, and are sometimes unconscious of what is passing around them. At the same time, they say they are in a "happy state of mind." Others jerk around like a fish out of water, or, as if, they were kept in lively exercise by, impinging pins, or goaded to activity by the application of hot irons. These seizures happened in Kentucky and Tennessee years ago, in New York at the revivals of 1852, and in Ireland about ten years ago. So spasmodic were the actions of the affected, that in common language they were called the "jerks." The eccentric Loronzo Dow, in his journal, tells, that when he was preaching at one time in Knoxville, Tennessee, before the governor, and a large audience, these seizures commenced "I have seen," said he, "all denominations of religion (including Quakers) exercised by 'jerks'—gentleman and lady, black and white, young and old, without exception. I passed a meetinghouse, where I observed the undergrowth had been cut down for camp meetings, and from fifty, to a hundred saplings were left for the people, who were jerked to hold by. I observed where they had held on, they had kicked up the earth, as a horse stamping flies." The Earl of Shrewsbury, in 1841, saw two religieuses in Italy, who lay in a cataleptic state, and were believed by the people to be lying in a sort of divine beatitude. Their devotional posture, the clasped hands, the upturned eyes, the wonderful intuitions, and the quietude, were to the ignorant, signs of heavenly illumination. Science tells another story. Others thus afflicted have paroxysms of excitement, and honestly believe themselves possessed of evil spirits. An epidemic of this kind swept over large districts of Europe, in the 16th century. It was called the "wolf sickness," for those influenced, thought themselves wolves, and were owned by an invisible master. Some thought themselves dogs, others fiends incarnate. Some believed their shoulders were adorned with wings and that on

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broomsticks, or wooden horses they navigated the air, quickly, as thought, and thus the furore raged for centuries, from Druidesses to witches, and from fanatics to enthusiasts. Even good and conscientious men have been led away by these appearances of "something uncanny," for only in 1743 an associate Presbytery in Scotland was for renewing the fires of persecution, and moved for "the repeal of the penal statutes against witchcraft, contrary to the express laws of God, and for which a holy God may be provoked, in a way of righteous judgement, to leave those who are already ensnared to be hardened more and more, and to permit Satan to tempt and seduce others to the same wicked and dangerous snare." ("Edinburgh Review," Jan. 1847.) Mesmeric influences were brought about by these, so called witches, by friction, by induced excitement on hysterical women,(wizards were few), and by narcotics, and thus illusions, and hallucinations were produced, and at last became realities to the consciousness of the victims. Sir Walter Scott, Draper, Carpenter, De Boismont, Langlois, and others, give numerous examples of individuals, who, by a mere act of the will, could conjure in the imagination spectra as real to them as any tangible object, in the external world, did not judgment, and experience, tell them of the nature of the phantasmata. These are some of the phases of the human soul, spirit, and body. I may revert to the subject in a future number. We conjecture much, but are sure of more. Mystery is enshrouding this field of exploration, but glints of light is being cast athwart the gloom. The soul is giving us evidences of its capabilities, for nobler flights, even when fettered by mortality. What will it do when emancipated from thralldom! Now, we see as "through a glass, darkly" but the effulgency of eternal day will give to the truly emancipated, the universe for a heritage, and the smiles of our Creator as the benisons, for true nobility of soul. "It doth not yet appear what we shall be," but "there shall be no night there."