

Dr. Shepley Park states that the negroes on the Gold Coast had mental means of communication at a distance which were "the monopoly of a kind of secret society." Their results were obtained very simply, and by means of continual practice. It was claimed that a few of them could materialise the entire body at a distance. The records of travellers teem 5 with similar instances of occult phenomena, and Professor Lombroso gives numerous instances in his book *After Death—What?* Nor are these results confined to modern times. History records many cases. It is said that Epimenides of Crete had power to send his soul (human consciousness) out of his body and recall it at pleasure. During its absence his body 10 was as dead, being cold and inanimate. Of Hermatimus, a prophet of Clazomanae, it is recorded that his soul left his material body and wandered into every part of the world. So much was his wonderful gift of divination prized by the people that they erected a temple to him and paid him "divine honours." 15

In *Invisible Helpers*, its author gives many instances of aid given by the human consciousness, apart from the body, in attempts to help those at a distance. This method of working is, however, unsatisfactory, and highly dangerous to both parties, interfering with the individuality of those 20 influenced. This is the reason why such great precautions are taken and grades of probationary periods are considered necessary for those endeavouring to help their fellows in this mistaken way. When these would-be helpers learn how to think rightly, real and lasting aid can be safely and efficiently given by almost all of them, after a few days', indeed, after a few minutes' practice, instead of only by a few persons, and that 25 after years of study.

Amongst many others, Mrs. Besant has referred to this practice. She says: "I know of more than one person in England who can slip out of the body, remain conscious while out of it, and return into the body"¹ 30 ("Theosophy" in *Questions and Answers*).

All the above are instances of the wrong way of working, and bear clearly their fallacy on the face of them.

DANGER AHEAD

Dangerous and Useless Experiments.—One business client of mine, who for two years had been practising regularly every night in this 35 wrong way, told me that he had given it up on account of its danger, as, although conscious, he was over two hours one day before managing to get back again into his body. The body, when left, through ignorance of

¹ A number of attested cases are given in *Phantasms of the Living*, some of them having been investigated by the London Society for Psychical Research. Col. 40 Olcott refers to various historic cases of living beings leaving their bodies and working at a distance, and writes: "As to living witnesses, I am one myself, for I have seen the doubles of several men acting intelligently at great distances from their bodies, and in this pamphlet that I hold in my hand [*Hints on Esoteric Theosophy*] will be found the certificates of no less than nine reputable persons—five Hindus 45 and four Europeans—that they have seen such appearances on various occasions within the past two years. . . . And now is this double—which is nothing but what is commonly called the 'soul'—immortal? No, it is not" (Lecture delivered at Madras, April 26, 1882).

how to take it along with the "consciousness," has every appearance of death, and the man is in many cases spoken of as in a trance. Irving Bishop, the well-known thought-reader, frequently fell into these death-like trances. Finally, while in America, he was taken to a hospital, where, without waiting to see if he was really dead, they took out his brain in an attempt to discover to what his abnormal powers were due. This I was told by a friend of his, who was boiling over with fierce indignation at what he spoke of as "his murder."

Harmful Results.—Any endeavour to obtain in this way results of this sort, thought-reading, clairvoyance,¹ leaving the body, etc., is a mistake and dangerous. All so-called miraculous results must only come naturally, and through turning in thought to God, in the way science demands, and without previously picturing what is about to appear. Let "good" work. If you are doing true mental work, false, unrecognised "thoughts" will be destroyed before they take form in so-called conscious thought each day, without your worrying about the future. Then so-called good thoughts, better beliefs, will act. "Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof," the Master said (Matt. 6:34). Each day, bringing its work, brings also the power to accomplish that work.

It is sometimes rather difficult to tell to a certainty when wrong thoughts have been destroyed. When all fear is entirely gone it will almost always be found that the wrong thoughts are destroyed. Very often before this point has been quite reached, you have done sufficient work to prevent them doing appreciable harm, and it is well to consider that if you go on working, you may waste much valuable time through leaving more important calls unheeded. If you simply work when you are conscious of the wrong thought, you will lose no time.

Occult workers will tell you of the great dangers run in (their idea of) mental working, and theosophy teaches you not to interfere with another man's "Karma," namely, the experiences it is believed he must pass through in this "state of incarnation" on account of his life in the past. The reason for this is that they merely accentuate material thoughts, rendering them still more dangerous to all concerned, instead of mentally working, and so destroying such false thoughts. It is a good thing that in the practice of occultism and theosophy people are warned against "mental" working, because any use of the material "no-mind" in the way taught by them is fraught with increasing danger. These systems do not teach the right, and therefore the scientific, method of prayer, although they are rapidly changing. Praying in the way that is now pointed out, by turning in thought to God, and never picturing the material man, nor even the spiritual reality of any individual, you cannot possibly harm anyone, and must do good to yourself and to those you are endeavouring to help.

Dr. Franz Hartmann, the well-known philosopher and authority on occultism, writing in the *Theosophist* of October, 1909, with reference to

¹ "If you are under a very great nervous strain, if you have overworked yourself so that you are nervously weak, if your temperature goes up beyond 102 or 103 degrees, then you will tend to become clairvoyant or clairaudient" (Annie Besant in *Man's Life in This and Other Worlds*).

an article about "True and False Yoga," written by Marie Russak in the *Adyar Bulletin* of August, 1908, says: "This article has again forcibly called my attention to the disastrous results arising from meddling with occult practices without understanding their real nature. I have before my eyes a long list of friends and personal acquaintances, who, within the last few years, have become victims of their 'psychic researches,' for which they were not ripe, and in which they persisted in spite of all warning. Some of them became insane, some incurably diseased, others obsessed and morally depraved, and not a few of them ended by suicide. They were not unintelligent and uneducated people; on the contrary, one of them was a great and well-known scientist and inventor, noble-minded and generous; several were writers and poets of some distinction, and a few even public lecturers on theosophical subjects and on spiritualism—things, however, of which they had very little personal experience, and of which they knew only from reading."

How entirely different is this to the manifest results that accrue from practice of the right method of working, now known to us. Available to all seekers for truth, this is now brought to your special notice. An absolute beginner, correctly taught, can, with a proper motive, often at once, and always with absolute safety to himself and all others, get results of great variety and seemingly of the most miraculous nature,¹ while daily becoming more conscious of an increasing sense of peace and joy and harmony, both within and around. These results are obtained by the realisation of God.

THE SAFE WAY TO WORK

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The Appearance of Jesus when the Doors were Shut.²—The miracles of Jesus were not contrary to law nor the workings of the human mechanism. He utilised a power that is available to all, the power of divine Mind, which enables humanity to cast off its limitations. When the human consciousness has left the body, it then when seen, looks like the body, and can pass without difficulty through matter. This is not the right method of working, and is dangerous. The body should be dematerialised, or at all events, taken along with the "consciousness." The best-known instances of this are the sudden appearances of Jesus to the disciples, although the doors were shut. He had scientifically dematerialised the grosser substratum of human belief, named matter, or carnal body, in the grave, and the more ethereal matter, or "consciousness," could then move instantly from place to place. In other words, he reappeared to his disciples in a less material form. Sooner or later it will be found that many men will develop their so-called powers, and, like Jesus, will apparently go ethereally from place to place without the "consciousness" leaving the body.³ It is

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¹ . . . and you will have touched the hem of the garment of Jesus's idea of matter. Christ was the 'way'; since Life and Truth were the way that gave us, through a human person, a spiritual revelation of man's possible earthly development" (*Miscellaneous Writings*, p. 75. Mary Baker Eddy).

² See John 20, verse 19.

³ "Divest yourself of the thought that there can be substance in matter, and the movements and transitions now possible for mortal mind will be found to be equally possible for the body" (*Science and Health*, p. 90).