

Transcription, June 2017:

Golden Gate (San Francisco) 4(23) (25 June 1887): 4a (anon.).

[p. 4a]

‘Scientific Spiritualism.’

No fact of nature once demonstrated to the world can remain long unrecognized by the masses. Ignorance and prejudice may put away for a time the acceptance of the truth, but all must soon come to see and adopt it.

Science consists of the arrangement and classification of facts relating to any given subject. Thus, in the science of geology, astronomy, natural history, botany, etc., we have a vast array of classified facts which are familiar to every student in those sciences.

The facts of Spiritualism may not at present be subject to such critical analysis as other and more stubborn facts in nature, for the reason that they depend upon conditions that are yet but comparatively little understood; but quite enough is known to establish a basis for a scientific structure. There are masses of facts that need arranging and classifying.

While there have been many works written upon the subject of Spiritualism, and various phases of the phenomena have been successfully and satisfactorily demonstrated, the writers have occupied the position rather of explorers than of scientists. What we need now is a standard text-book of psychical or spiritual phenomena. Our facts should be classified and condensed in a manner to commend the subject to all thoughtful minds. The investigator should not be required to wade through a mass of undemonstrated statements to reach a conclusion of evidence.

And just here it occurs to us that Prof. Alfred R. Wallace might make this the crowning work of his life. His habits of thought and method of manner, coupled with rare opportunities for the investigation of psychical phenomena, especially fit him for this task. And then his high standing as a writer and thinker would give to his statements a weight and influence that would attach to but few other writers.

We are inclined to think that if the spiritual press of the world should urge the matter, Prof. Wallace could be induced to undertake the preparation and publication of a work entitled, say, “The Scientific Basis of Spiritualism,” that would command the attention of thinkers of all lands. In the present eager desire of intelligent man for knowledge, and of a vast and rapidly increasing number to know the truth concerning the facts upon which Spiritualists base their claims to a future life, such a work could not fail to command an immense sale. It should be amply illustrated, and made exhaustive of the subject in all phases of psychical phenomena; hence, it might be necessary to extend it to two or more volumes.

We can conceive of no grander finish to a noble and busy life than the one we here suggest. Prof. Wallace is just the man for this task. Let the world but once know that he has consented to undertake it, and it would receive an amount of free advertising at the hands of the secular, as well as the spiritual press, that would place it at once prominently before the world; while Spiritualism would receive an impulse that would give it a stronger hold than ever upon the consideration of all thoughtful minds.