# THE SOUL SPECTROSCOPE.

## THE SINGULAR MATERIALISM OF A PROGRESSIVE THINKER.

### Prof. Tyndall's Views More than Justified by the Experiments of the Celebrated Professor Dummkopf of Boston, Mass.

BOSTON, Dec. 13.—Prof. Dummkopf, a German gentleman of education and ingenuity, at present residing in this city, is engaged on experiments which, if successful, will work a great change both in metaphysical science and in the practical relations of life.

The Professor is firm in the conviction that modern science has narrowed down to almost nothing the border territory between the material and and the immaterial. It may be some time, he admits, before any man shall be able to point his finger and say with authority, "Here mind begins; here matter ends." It may be found that the boundary line between mind and matter is as purely imaginary as the equator that divides the northern from the southern hemisphere. It may be found that mind is as essentially objective as is matter, or that matter is as entirely subjective as is mind. It may be that there is no matter except as conditioned in mind. It may be that there is no mind except as conditioned in matter. Prof. Dummkopf's views upon this broad topic are interesting, although somewhat bewildering. I can cordially recommend his great work in nine volumes, "Koerperlichegeistwisserschaft," to any reader who may be inclined to follow up the subject. The work can undoubtedly be obtained in the original Leipsic edition through any responsible importer of foreign books.

Great as is the problem suggested above, Prof. Dummkopf has no doubt whatever that it will be solved, and at no distant day. He himself has taken a masterly stride toward a solution by the brilliant series of experiments I am about to describe. He not only believes, with Tyndall, that matter contains the promise and potency of all life, but he believes that every force, physical, intellectual, and moral, may be resolved into matter, formulated in terms of matter, and analyzed into its constituent forms of matter; that motion is matter, mind is matter, law is matter, and even that the abstract relations of mathematical abstractions are purely material.

PHOTOGRAPHING SMELL.

In accordance with an invitation extended to me at the last meeting of the Radical Club—an organization, by the way, which is doing a noble work in extending our knowledge of the Unknowable—I called yesterday at Prof. Dummkopf's rooms in Joy street, at the West End. I found the professor in his apartment on the upper floor, busily engaged in an attempt to photograph smell.

"You see," he said, as he stirred up a beaker from which strongly marked fumes of sulphuretted hydrogen were arising and filling the room; "you see that, having demonstrated the objectiveness of sensation, it has now become my privilege and easy task to show that the phenomena of sensation are equally material. Hence I am attempting to photograph smell."

The Professor then darted behind a camera which was levelled upon the vessel in which the suffocating fumes were generated, and busied himself a while with the plate.

A disappointed look stole over his face as he brought the negative to the light and examined it anxiously. "Not yet, not yet!" he said sadly. "But patience and improved appliances will finally bring it. The trouble is in my tools, you see, and not in my theory. I did fancy the other day that I obtained a distinctly marked negative from the odor of a hot onion stew, and the thought has cheered me ever since. But it's bound to come. I tell you, my worthy friend, the actinic ray wasn't made for nothing. Could you accommodate me with a dollar and a quarter to buy some more collodion?"

THE BOTTLE THEORY OF SOUND.

I expressed my cheerful readiness to be banker to genius.

"Thanks," said the Professor, pocketing the scrip and resuming his position at the camera. "When I have pictorially captured smell, the most palpable of the senses, the next thing will be to imprison sound—vulgarly speaking, to bottle it. Just think a moment. Force is as imperishable as matter; indeed, as I have been somewhat successful in showing it is matter. Now, when a sound wave is once started, it is only lost through an indefinite extension of its circumference. Catch that sound wave, sir! Catch it in a bottle; then its circumference cannot extend. You may keep the sound wave forever if you will only keep it corked up tight. The only difficulty is in bottling it in the first place. I shall attend to the details of that operation just as soon as I have managed to photograph this confounded rotten-egg smell of sulphydric acid."

The Professor stirred up the offensive mixture with a glass rod, and continued:

"While my object in bottling sound is mainly scientific, I must confess that I see in success in that direction a prospect of considerable pecuniary profit. I shall be prepared at no distant day to put operas in quart bottles, labelled and assorted, and I contemplate a series of light and popular airs in ounce vials, at prices to suit the times. You know very well that it spoils a ten dollar bill now for the lady to hear "Martha" or "Mignon" rendered in first-class style. By the bottle system, the same notes may be heard in one's own parlor at a comparatively trifling expense. I could put the operas into the market at from eighty cents to a dollar a bottle. For oratorios and symphonies I should use demijohns, and the cost would of course be greater. I don't think that ordinary bottles would hold Wagner's music; it would be necessary to employ carboys. Sir, if I were of the sanguine habit of you Americans, I should say that there were 'millions in it.' Being a phlegmatic Teuton, accustomed to the precision and moderation of scientific language, I will merely say that in the success of my experiments with sound I see a comfortable income, as well as great renown.

A SCIENTIFIC MARVEL.

By this time the Professor had another negative, but an eager examination of it yielded nothing more satisfactory than before. He sighed and continued:

"Having photographed smell and bottled sound, I shall proceed to essays on a plane as much higher than this as the reflective faculties are higher than the perceptive, as the brain is more exalted than the ear or nose."

"In what direction?" I asked.

"I am perfectly satisfied that elements of mind are just as susceptible of detection and analysis as elements of matter. Why, mind is matter.

"The soul spectroscope, or, as it will better be known, Dummkopf's duplex self-registering soul spectroscope, is based on the broad fact that whatever is material may be analyzed and determined by the position of the Fraunhofer lines upon the spectrum. If soul is matter, soul may thus be analyzed and determined. Place a man in the strong rays of the electric or calcium light, and the minute exhalations or emanations continually proceeding from his soul—and these exhalations or emanations are, of course, matter—will be represented by their appropriate symbol lines upon the face of a properly arranged spectroscope.

"This, in short, is my discovery. How I shall arrange the spectroscope, and how I shall locate the subject with reference to the light is of course my secret. I have applied for a patent. I shall exhibit the instrument and its practical workings at the Centennial. Till then I must decline to enter into any more explicit description of the invention."

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE DISCOVERY.

"What will be the bearing of your great discovery in its practical workings?"

"I can go so far as to give you some idea of what these practical workings are. The effect of the soul spectroscope upon every day affairs will be prodigious, simply prodigious. All lying, deceit, double dealing, hypocrisy, will be abrogated under its operation. It will bring about a millennium of truth and sincerity.

"A few practical illustrations. No more bell punches on the horse railroads. The superintendent, with a smattering of scientific knowledge and one of my soul spectroscopes in his office, will examine with the eye of infallible science every applicant for the position of conductor and will determine by the markings on his spectrum whether there is dishonesty in his soul, and this as readily as the chemist decides whether there is iron in a meteorolite or hydrogen in Saturn's ring.

"No more courts, judges or juries. Hereafter Justice will be represented with both eyes wide open and with one of my duplex self-registering soul spectroscopes in her right hand. The inmost nature of the accused will be read at a glance and he will be acquitted, imprisoned for thirty days, or hung, just as the Fraunhofer lines which lay bare his soul may determine.

"No more official corruption or politicians' lies. The important element in every campaign will be one of my soul spectroscopes, and it will effect the most radical and, at the same time, the most practicable of civil service reforms.

"No more young stool pigeons in tall towers. No man will subscribe for a daily newspaper until a personal inspection of its editor's soul by means of one of my spectroscopes has convinced him that he is paying for truth, honest conviction, and uncompromising independence, rather than for the false utterances of a hired conscience and a bought-in judgment.

"No more unhappy marriages. The maiden will bring her glibly promising lover to me before she accepts or rejects his proposal, and I shall tell her whether his spectrum exhibits the markings of pure love, constancy and tenderness, or of sordid avarice, vacillating affections and post-nuptial cruelty. I shall be the angel with shining sword (or rather spectroscope) who shall attend Hymen and guard the entrance to his Paradise.

"No more shams. If anything be wanting in the character of a man, no amount of brazen pretension on his part can place the missing line in his spectrum. If anything is lacking in him, it will be lacking there. I found by a long series of experiments upon the imperfectly constituted minds of the patients in the lunatic asylum at Taunton——"

"Then you have been at Taunton?"

"Yes. For two years I pursued my studies among the unfortunate inmates of that institution. Not exactly as a patient myself, you understand, but as a student of the phenomena of morbid intellectual developments. But I see I am wearying you, and I must resume my photography before this stuff stops smelling. Come again."

Having bid the Professor farewell and wished him abundant success in his very interesting experiments, I went home and read again for the thirty-ninth time Prof. Tyndall's address at Belfast.