



The Story of Atlantis

W. Scott-Elliot

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PREFACE

By A. P. SINNETT

For readers unacquainted with the progress that has been made in recent years by earnest students of occultism attached to the Theosophical Society, the significance of the statement embodied in the following pages would be misapprehended without some preliminary explanation. Historical research has depended for western civilization hitherto, on written records of one kind or another. When literary memoranda have fallen short, stone monuments have sometimes been available, and fossil remains have given us a few unequivocal, though inarticulate assurances concerning the antiquity of the human race; but modern culture has lost sight of or has overlooked possibilities connected with the investigation of past events, which are independent of fallible evidence transmitted to us by ancient writers. The world at large is thus at present so imperfectly alive to the resources of human faculty, that by most people as yet, the very existence, even as a potentiality, of psychic powers, which some of us all the while are consciously exercising every day, is scornfully denied and derided. The situation is sadly ludicrous from the point of view of those who appreciate the prospects of evolution, because mankind is thus wilfully holding at arm's length, the knowledge that is essential to its own ulterior progress. The maximum cultivation of which the human intellect is susceptible while it denies itself all the resources of its higher spiritual consciousness, can never be more than a preparatory process as compared with that which may set in when the faculties are sufficiently enlarged to enter into conscious relationship with the super-physical planes or aspects of Nature.

For anyone who will have the patience to study the published results of psychic investigation during the last fifty years, the reality of clairvoyance as an occasional phenomenon of human intelligence must establish itself on an immovable foundation. For those who, without being occultists--students that is to say of Nature's loftier aspects, in a position to obtain better teaching than that which any written books can give--for those who merely avail themselves of recorded evidence, a declaration on the part of others of a disbelief in the possibility of clairvoyance, is on a level with the proverbial African's disbelief in ice. But the experiences of clairvoyance that have accumulated on the hands of those who have studied it in connection with mesmerism, do no more than prove the existence in human nature of a capacity for cognizing physical phenomena distant either in space or time, in some way which has nothing to do with the physical senses. Those who have studied the mysteries of clairvoyance in connection with theosophic teaching have

been enabled to realize that the ultimate resources of that faculty range as far beyond its humbler manifestations, dealt with by unassisted enquirers, as the resources of the higher mathematics exceed those of the abacus. Clairvoyance, indeed, is of many kinds, all of which fall easily into their places when we appreciate the manner in which human consciousness functions on different planes of Nature. The faculty of reading the pages of a closed book, or of discerning objects blindfold, or at a distance from the observer, is quite a different faculty from that employed on the cognition of past events. That last is the kind of which it is necessary to say something here, in order that the true character of the present treatise on Atlantis may be understood, but I allude to the others merely that the explanation I have to give may not be mistaken for a complete theory of clairvoyance in all its varieties.

We may best be helped to a comprehension of clairvoyance as related to past events, by considering in the first instance the phenomena of memory. The theory of memory which relates it to an imaginary rearrangement of physical molecules of brain matter, going on at every instant of our lives, is one that presents itself as plausible to no one who can ascend one degree above the thinking level of the uncompromising atheistical materialist. To every one who accepts, even as a reasonable hypothesis, the idea that a man is something more than a carcass in a state of animation, it must be a reasonable hypothesis that memory has to do with that principle in man which is super-physical. His memory in short, is a function of some other than the physical plane. The pictures of memory are imprinted, it is clear, on some nonphysical medium, and are accessible to the embodied thinker in ordinary cases by virtue of some effort he makes in as much unconsciousness as to its precise character, as he is unconscious of the brain impulse which actuates the muscles of his heart. The events with which he has had to do in the past are photographed by Nature on some imperishable page of super-physical matter, and by making an appropriate interior effort, he is capable of bringing them again, when he requires them, within the area of some interior sense which reflects its perception on the physical brain. We are not all of us able to make this effort equally well, so that memory is sometimes dim, but even in the experience of mesmeric research, the occasional super-excitation of memory under mesmerism is a familiar fact. The circumstances plainly show that the record of Nature is accessible if we know how to recover it, or even if our own capacity to make an effort for its recovery is somehow improved without our having an improved knowledge of the method employed. And from this thought we may arrive by an easy transition at the idea, that in truth the records of Nature are not separate collections of individual property, but constitute the all-embracing memory of Nature herself, on which different people are in a position to make drafts according to their several capacities.

I do not say that the one thought necessarily ensues as a logical consequence of the other. Occultists know that what I have stated is the fact, but my present purpose is to show the reader who is not an Occultist, how the accomplished Occultist arrives at his results, without hoping to epitomize all the stages of his mental progress in this brief explanation. Theosophical literature at large must be consulted by those who would seek a fuller elucidation of the magnificent prospects and practical demonstrations of its teaching in many directions, which, in the course of the Theosophical development, have been laid before the world for the benefit of all who are competent to profit by them.

The memory of Nature is in reality a stupendous unity, just as in another way all mankind is found to constitute a spiritual unity if we ascend to a sufficiently elevated plane of Nature in search of the wonderful convergence where unity is reached without the loss of individuality.

For ordinary humanity, however, at the early stage of its evolution represented at present by the majority, the interior spiritual capacities ranging beyond those which the brain is an instrument for expressing, are as yet too imperfectly developed to enable them to get into touch with any other records in the vast archives of Nature's memory, except those with which they have individually been in contact at their creation. The blindfold interior effort they are competent to make, will not as a rule, call up any others. But in a flickering fashion we have experience in ordinary life of efforts that are a little more effectual.

"Thought Transference" is a humble example. In that case "impressions on the mind" of one person--Nature's memory pictures, with which he is in normal relationship, are caught up by someone else who is just able, however unconscious of the method he uses, to range Nature's memory under favourable conditions, a little beyond the area with which he himself is in normal relationship. Such a person has begun, however slightly, to exercise the faculty of astral clairvoyance. That term may be conveniently used to denote the kind of clairvoyance I am now endeavoring to elucidate, the kind which, in some of its more magnificent developments, has been employed to carry out the investigations on the basis of which the present account of Atlantis has been compiled.

There is no limit really to the resources of astral clairvoyance in investigations concerning the past history of the earth, whether we are concerned with the events that have befallen the human race in prehistoric epochs, or with the growth of the planet itself through geological periods which antedated the advent of man, or with more recent events, current narrations of which have been distorted by careless or perverse historians. The memory of Nature is infallibly accurate and inexhaustibly minute. A time will come as certainly as the precession of the equinoxes, when the literary method of historical research will be laid aside as out of date, in the case of all original work.

People among us who are capable of exercising astral clairvoyance in full perfection--but have not yet been called away to higher functions in connection with the promotion of human progress, of which ordinary humanity at present knows even less than an Indian ryot knows of cabinet councils--are still very few. Those who know what the few can do, and through what processes of training and self-discipline they have passed in pursuit of interior ideals, of which when attained astral clairvoyance is but an individual circumstance, are many, but still a small minority as compared with the modern cultivated world. But as time goes on, and within a measurable future, some of us have reason to feel sure that the numbers of those who are competent to exercise astral clairvoyance will increase sufficiently to extend the circle of those who are aware of their capacities, till it comes to embrace all the intelligence and culture of civilized mankind only a few generations hence.

Meanwhile the present volume is the first that has been put forward as the pioneer essay of the new method of historical research. It is amusing to all who are concerned with it, to think how inevitably it will be mistaken--for some little while as yet, by materialistic readers, unable to accept the frank explanation here given of the principle on which it has been prepared--for a work of imagination.

For the benefit of others who may be more intuitive it may be well to say a word or two that may guard them from supposing that because historical research by means of astral clairvoyance is not impeded by having to deal with periods removed from our own by hundreds of thousands of years, it is on that account a process which involves no trouble. Every fact stated in the present volume has been picked up bit by bit with watchful and attentive care, in the course of an investigation on which more than one qualified person has been engaged, in the intervals of other activity, for some years past. And to promote the success of their work they have been allowed access to some maps and other records physically preserved from the remote periods concerned--though in safer keeping than in that of the turbulent races occupied in Europe with the development of civilization in brief intervals of leisure from warfare, and hard pressed by the fanaticism that so long treated science as sacrilegious during the middle ages of Europe.

Laborious as the task has been however, it will be recognized as amply repaying the trouble taken, by everyone who is able to perceive how absolutely necessary to a proper comprehension of the world as we find it, is a proper comprehension of its preceding Atlantean phase. Without this knowledge all speculations concerning ethnology are futile and misleading. The course of race development is chaos and confusion without the key furnished by the character of Atlantean civilization and the configuration of the earth at Atlantean periods. Geologists know that land and ocean surfaces must have repeatedly changed places during the period at which they also know--from the situation of human