FACT AND FANCY

IN

Spiritualism, Theosophy AND Psychical Research

G. G. HUBBELL

Good - if you want more words
no body to see it!
I enclosed no thanks reading of
K.C.R.



FACT AND FANCY

IN

SPIRITUALISM, THEOSOPHY

AND

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH

BY

G. G. HUBBELL

"The most helpful quality which has aided me in psychical problems and has made me lucky in physical discoveries, has simply been my knowledge—my vital knowledge, if I may so term it—of my own ignorance."—*Sir William Crookes, F. R. S., in his Presidential Address before the Society for Psychical Research*

CINCINNATI

THE ROBERT CLARKE COMPANY

1901

THE LIBRARY OF
CONGRESS,
TWO COPIES RECEIVED
JUN. 26 1901
COPYRIGHT ENTRY
June 26, 1901
CLASS a XXc. No.
12105
COPY B.

COPYRIGHT, 1901
BY G. G. HUBBELL

Dedication.

TO THE REVERED MEMORY OF

MY WIFE,

WHOSE PURE AND UNSELFISH LIFE WAS,
AND SHALL CONTINUE TO BE,
MY INSPIRATION TO HIGHER IDEALS,
AND IN WHOSE UNTIMELY DEATH THE WORLD
LOST ONE OF ITS NOBLEST CHARACTERS.

PREFACE.

The request of numerous friends that I publish, in a collected and permanent form, a series of lectures delivered before the Ohio Liberal Society of Cincinnati, is my apology for placing this little volume before the public. Not having been originally intended for publication, the treatment of the subjects therein discussed is somewhat desultory, and lacking in continuity of thought and unity of design.

The occasional repetition noticeable in some of the lectures, of matter contained in another of the series, is due to the same cause.

Very little pretension, if any, is made to originality, unless it be in the selection and arrangement of the matter, and in the literary form in which it is cast. The frequent use of the first person, as well as the somewhat rhetorical style employed, resulted from the necessity of adapting my thoughts and utterances to delivery from the rostrum.

Throughout I have endeavored to be fair and temperate; but, believing fully in freedom of thought and speech, I have not hesitated to freely express my convictions, holding with Macaulay, that "the battles of Truth should not be fought with the weapons of error," and that in the conflict with error, Truth need have no cause to fear her final triumph if she be given a fair chance.

G. G. H.

CINCINNATI, *April* 14, 1901.

CONTENTS.

PAGE

I. MADAME BLAVATSKY, THE NINETEENTH CENTURY MYSTIC. 1

II. PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND A FUTURE LIFE. 61

III. THE BEARING OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH ON MODERN MATERIALISM. 104

IV. SOME FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUALISM. . 160

MADAME BLAVATSKY,

THE NINETEENTH CENTURY MYSTIC.

One of the most interesting characters that figured prominently before the public during the last quarter of the nineteenth century was Madame H. P. Blavatsky. Many looked upon her with the reverential awe that the devout Catholic of the Middle Ages bestowed upon his favorite saint. Still others saw in her only a vulgar impostor, while to others her character, life and work appeared an enigma.

To the student of psychology and comparative mythology her life affords an interesting illustration of the manner in which religions are made, or rather initiated; for while religions, like everything else, are the result of evolution, the original impulse may have been given by some great striking personality. Such personalities were Buddha, Jesus and Mohammed. Had Madame Blavatsky lived during the Middle Ages, when ignorance and superstition were rife, she might have been the founder of a new religion and taken rank

with the founders of other great religions in the world's history. But the intellectual conditions of the nineteenth century were unfavorable, the mental atmosphere hostile, to the development of a new religion involving so large an element of so-called supernaturalism.

The Founders of great religions, seen through the perspective of the ages, their figures dim and shadowy, surrounded by the glamour shed by myth and legend, performing miracles, still appeal to the emotions of their followers. Even when the intellectual conditions that made belief in their miracles possible have disappeared and have been replaced by the spirit of rationalism produced by science and increased knowledge, there still remains in the mind a lingering belief in the miraculous. This arises in part from the difficulty of destroying childhood associations; and in our hours of weakness and mental lassitude we often find old beliefs and superstitions resuming their sway over the intellect, long since emancipated, as we supposed, from their tyranny. And, as with Madame De Stael, while we do not believe in ghosts, we still find ourselves *afraid of them*, and even after science has exorcised the demons of superstition their evil influence often lingers long after their expulsion.

But Madame Blavatsky succeeded in making but a feeble impression on nineteenth century rationalism. It was hard for the average person to believe that this homely and commonplace looking woman exercised powers over the laws and forces of Nature, here in this nineteenth century, of which ordinary mortals were totally devoid, but which he was ready enough to believe were possessed and exercised by Jesus two thousand years ago. She was therefore forced to be content with a few select followers, many of whom, however, with the blind and unreasoning credulity that has ever characterized religious fanaticism, continued to worship her and believe in her occult powers, long after she was shown to be an impostor by evidence that only the willfully blind could reject.

Helen P. Blavatsky was of noble descent, and was the daughter of Colonel Peter Hahn, of the Russian army. She was born at Ekaterinoslaw, in the southern part of Russia, on July 30, 1831, during the terrible epidemic that was decimating Europe at that time, her advent into the world being hastened by the prevailing consternation. When born, she was so weak and frail that the baptism had to be expedited, lest she should die "with the burden

of original sin on her soul." During the performance of the baptismal ceremony, which was celebrated with all the gorgeous rites of the Greek Church, a conflagration was started by the accidental igniting of the robes of one of the officiating priests, and resulted in several persons being severely burned. This was interpreted by the superstitious as a bad omen, presaging a life of misfortune for the future seeress.

Madame Blavatsky's mother died while the former was a young child, and her rearing and education were entrusted to her grandparents, with whom she took up her residence. They lived in an old mansion at Saratow, abounding in subterranean galleries, abandoned passages and weird nooks, looking more like a medieval castle than a modern structure. The young girl spent hours in roaming through its dark passages, holding converse, we are told, with the spirits of its former tenants, or delving deep into some ancient work on demonology or folklore. From earliest infancy she had shown a leaning to mysticism, listening with childish delight and credulity to narratives dealing with fairies, gnomes, hobgoblins, and those mythical beings with which the imagination of childhood peoples the rural surround-

ings. Her grandparents often found her talking apparently to herself, and on being questioned she would declare that she had been talking to a hunchback boy, or some other invisible being, and expressed surprise that her grandparents did not see him.

In those days there was some superstition connected with almost every building in rural Russia, and belief in these superstitions was almost universal among the common people. It was in this atmosphere of credulity and superstition that Madame Blavatsky was reared, the original bent of her mind to mysticism being thus strengthened and confirmed. And, if we are to credit her biographer, her psychic experiences were not confined to communion with invisible spirits. We are informed that her life was probably saved on several occasions by the intervention of some invisible power.

Once, while standing on tiptoe on a stack of books, attempting to reach a portrait hanging on the wall of the Saratow mansion, she lost her balance and fell, but was sustained and saved from injury by some invisible agency. On another occasion she would have been thrown from her horse and seriously injured

had it not been for the same invisible sustaining force.

At the age of seventeen, being challenged to find any one who would marry her — even an old man — in a spirit of pure defiance and perversity she married General Blavatsky, a man old enough to be her grandfather. The marriage ceremony was scarcely over ere she regretted her youthful folly and attempted to escape the dreaded consummation of the nuptial rites. But General Blavatsky was not to be deprived of his lawful rights, and carried his child-bride, almost by force, to his castle, and compelled her to live with him for three months, at the end of which time the youthful wife abandoned her aged spouse never to return.

The next ten years of her life were spent in wanderings all over the civilized world — India, Egypt, Greece, South America and the United States being visited. In these travels we always find her embracing every opportunity to gratify her inordinate craving for mysticism. The fakir of India, the magician of Egypt, the medicine man of North America, and even the Vodoo man being each in turn visited and made to yield his quota of occult lore.

In 1858, she returned to Russia and took up her residence with her father, Colonel Hahn.

At that time Spiritualism was attracting wide attention, and Madame Blavatsky's natural leaning to mysticism caused her to take a deep interest in a subject that dealt with the doings of ghosts and other mysterious phenomena. In fact, her entire life up to this date, if we are to credit her biographer, had been filled with marvelous events that were without parallel in the life of any spiritual medium. Scarcely a day passed without some remarkable exhibition of her psychic power taking place. These occurrences rest almost entirely on the evidence of Madame Blavatsky's sister, Madame Jelihowsky, who has published a narrative of this part of the career of the future seeress. Chairs, tables and other objects seemed to be animated and obeyed her slightest command. Her father, an obstinate skeptic and disciple of Voltaire, whose wit had been leveled against another class of superstitions in the last century, was converted, and spent many an idle hour talking to "Helen's spirits," as he called the manifesting intelligences. The piano was played upon by invisible fingers, messages rapped out by means of the alphabet, and other wonders too numerous to mention performed, apparently without the conscious agency of Madame Blavatsky.

On one occasion her younger brother laughingly ridiculed the antics performed by the invisibles, and was challenged by his sister to lift a small table which she placed under her necromantic spell. We are told that the boy's most powerful efforts were unavailing to budge it until his sister, with a wave of her hand, removed the spell, and the table became so light that the lad came very near being precipitated to the floor by the force expended in the effort to lift it.

At another time a police officer visited the residence of Colonel Hahn in search of a murderer. Colonel Hahn laughingly suggested that "Helen's spirits" be consulted regarding the murderer's whereabouts. The police officer expressed his skepticism in language more emphatic than polite, and said the "horned and hoofed gentlemen," as he facetiously called the invisible intelligences, might undertake a contract they could not perform. The raps being evoked, the information was conveyed that the murderer was at that minute concealed in a hay-loft in a certain village, the name and exact location of which were given. This information, we are told, was subsequently verified in every detail.

Instances of this kind might be multiplied

to show that Madame Blavatsky claimed to possess what the Spiritualists would regard as strong mediumistic powers; yet, at a subsequent stage of her checkered career, when Spiritualism had fallen somewhat into public disfavor, she earnestly deprecated any association of her name with the Spiritualistic faith. She claimed that Spiritualistic phenomena were produced by the "astral shells" and by the "elementals," as they are called in Theosophical parlance.

It is interesting to note how Madame Blavatsky gradually evolved from what must be regarded as a spiritual medium into a Theosophist; how the ambition to become the founder of a new religion or system of philosophy gradually took root in her mind and developed and bore fruit in the founding of the Theosophical Society; how she enlisted her psychic powers, or what the more skeptical would call her skill in jugglery, in popularizing Theosophy, by appealing to the element of wonder that is so largely developed in all human minds. This all makes a very interesting study in Psychology, but the limits of my lecture will allow only a brief reference to it.

In 1873, Madame Blavatsky arrived in New York, striking this mundane sphere inhabited

by us poor blind mortals like a brilliant meteor from the celestial regions, charged alike with electricity and divine inspiration. Soon after arriving in New York, she made the acquaintance of Henry S. Olcott, who was destined by the mysterious decrees of fate to become the active coadjutor of Madame Blavatsky in the founding of the Theosophical Society and the propagation of the new faith.

H. S. Olcott had served with some distinction in the Civil War, and at its close engaged in the practice of law in New York. He varied his law practice by occasional literary work in the way of newspaper and magazine writing. Previous to his visit to the Eddys, of which I shall speak presently, it appears that he had taken some interest in Spiritualism, which was at that time provoking quite a discussion, owing to the recent experiments of Professor Wm. Crookes, with the famous medium, D. D. Home. In this wordy conflict such intellects as Alfred R. Wallace and Professor Wm. Crookes were engaged on one side, and Professors Tyndall, Huxley and Carpenter on the other.

The Eddy brothers were at this time giving their materializations at their home at Chittenden, Vt., to which crowds of people daily

flocked. The spirits, clothed in flesh, were said to walk forth from the cabinet, and were touched, handled and inspected by the curious. The newspapers teemed with accounts of the marvelous phenomena. Colonel Olcott visited the scene of these ghostly manifestations, and soon became convinced of their genuineness. He wrote a circumstantial account of what he witnessed for the *New York Sun* and *Daily Graphic*, illustrated with sketches of the spirits. It was there that he first met Madame Blavatsky. The scarlet Garibaldian shirt and the short mop-like hair of the Prophetess attracted Olcott's attention, and, having introduced himself, the two were soon absorbed in conversation on Spiritualism, occultism and kindred subjects. Oriental occultism was new to Olcott, but Madame Blavatsky found in him an eager and sympathetic pupil, whose mind, owing to long familiarity with the doctrines of modern Spiritualism, offered a soil well fitted for the reception and growth of the more subtle and refined doctrines of Eastern mysticism.

Thus originated a friendship that continued till the death of Madame Blavatsky—a friendship that never wavered on the part of Olcott, and that disregarded the sneers, scoffs and denunciations leveled by a cold, igno-

rant and skeptical world against her whom the disciple continued to the last to regard as the wisest and purest of women. Olcott's faith in her withstood the most overwhelming evidence of imposture, the shock of public exposure, and even confession of systematic fraud—it was a sublime faith, and worthy of a better cause.

The extraordinary fascination exercised by her over the mind of an educated and intelligent man like Olcott, almost causes us to credit her with the possession of the occult powers to which she laid claim and in which the disciple firmly believed. His easy credulity in relation to everything pertaining to her alleged occult powers, is one of the most striking psychological marvels of modern times. To her intimate friends she referred to him as her "psychological baby," in allusion, no doubt, to this childish gullibility.

Olcott has given the world, in his "Old Diary Leaves," a record of his personal recollections of the Priestess, covering the period from the time of his introduction to her at the Eddy's down to a time shortly before her death. This record is full of the marvels performed by her in his presence, at various times, many of which would throw the miracles of

Jesus into the shade, and which are related with a childlike simplicity and belief in their reality that would make an interesting study in what might be aptly called the "Psychology of Credulity." He tells us that on one occasion, while sitting talking to Madame Blavatsky in her apartments, she was seen to kick her foot under the table, uttering the exclamation, "Get out, you nasty thing!" Olcott, on questioning her as to the meaning of this display of temper, was informed by the Madame that one of those nasty elementals or nature spirits was under the table. The Madame was engaged just then in hemming some towels, and Olcott suggested that the elemental be made to do the work. After some reflection this suggestion was acted upon, the toweling, with needle and thread, being placed in a darkened book case. At the expiration of ten minutes the towels were removed from the book case hemmed, though not very artistically.

On another occasion a desire was expressed for some grapes, and the Madame, pointing to some article of furniture in the room—a wardrobe, I believe—the grapes were found hanging thereon—miraculously produced by the thaumaturgic powers of the Priestess. The

probable explanation of these marvels is to be found in the supposition that the Madame had carefully arranged for their production by placing the towels and grapes where they were found, and then skillfully leading the conversation up to the subject, and thus affording an opportunity to produce a marvel off hand, and apparently originating in the suggestion of the unsophisticated Olcott. This view is borne out by the revelations made by Dr. Richard Hodgson in his report to the Psychical Research Society on the methods employed to produce various Theosophical marvels.

In September, 1875, George H. Felt delivered a lecture on the "Lost Canon of Proportion of the Egyptians," to a few persons assembled at the residence of Madame Blavatsky. Felt had been a profound student of Egyptian archæology, and professed to have discovered, in the course of his researches, the key by which the symbolism of the Egyptian monuments could be deciphered. From an examination of certain grotesque dog-headed figures on these monuments he inferred that the ancient Egyptians had knowledge of the existence of what he called the elementals or nature spirits, which are supposed by Theosophists to be an order of invisible beings inferior

to man. Felt further inferred that the initiates in Egyptian occultism were able, by certain mystical formulas, to evoke and control them and make them do their bidding. This was accomplished, I suppose, after the manner of Aladdin, who, as you remember, evoked the genius of the wonderful lamp by the simple process of rubbing it.

Mr. Felt claimed to have discovered the formula by which these elementals or hobgoblins could be evoked, and promised to disclose the secret in a future lecture. In proof of his claim Felt cited his experience on a certain occasion. While engaged in his apartments in working on a drawing of an Egyptian zodiac, the dog and cat in the room exhibited signs of great uneasiness, which satisfied him that they were subject to some occult influence proceeding in some mysterious way from the pictorial representation of the zodiac on which his mind was then concentrated. This is remarkable reasoning, and on a par with other Theosophical speculations. I fear that a little investigation would have disclosed a very mundane origin of the dog and cat's uneasiness—probably another dog or cat in the street scented by the ones in the room. Does not science, as well as common sense, demand that we look

for causes under our own noses before going to the moon for them?

That reminds me of an old Spiritualist I knew years ago—a man about eighty, simple-minded and ingenuous as a child in his faith in Spiritualistic marvels. He saw spirits in everything, and was the dupe of every impudent impostor who wore the garb of a medium. One evening, while talking to him in his apartments on his favorite topic of spirits, we were interrupted by a tapping noise outside on the porch, which came at regular intervals. The old gentleman said, "Spirits, no doubt about it." I quietly went out on the porch and ascertained that the noise was caused by the dripping of water from a leaky gutter. I have always found that a little investigation or cross-examination of the witnesses would convert these seeming marvels into ordinary commonplace incidents.

I may add, in this connection, that poor Olcott's credulity swallowed all the wild statements of Felt regarding the elementals and his power of evoking them, but he was doomed to disappointment, as Felt never produced the promised elementals. But Olcott's faith was not diminished by this failure, for he informs us that he had good reason to believe that

the elementals actually existed and formed part of the order of Nature. In support of this he tells us a little Arabian Nights' tale, in which a strange Hindoo was the chief actor, and played the character of Eastern magician. The Hindoo, whom Olcott had accidentally met on the street in New York, on the latter's invitation accompanied him to his room, and there gave him an exhibition of occult power. By certain mystical passes the Hindoo caused a strange landscape to appear in the room, about which shadowy forms flitted which Olcott was told were elementals. I suppose most of you will think that Olcott had been imbibing too freely, or had been hypnotized by the strange Hindoo.

The lecture of Felt on Egyptian antiquities led to one important result—namely, the founding of the Theosophical Society. At the close of the lecture Colonel Olcott suggested founding a society to investigate Oriental religions and the hidden laws of Nature. The suggestion met a favorable reception, and "Miracle Club" was proposed as a name. Think of a miracle club in the latter part of the nineteenth century!

After some discussion it was decided to christen the new society "Theosophical Soci-

ety." The word "Theosophy" means God wisdom, or Divine wisdom, and had been used before to designate various religious and philosophical systems. The purposes of the new society, as set forth in its constitution, were the forming of the nucleus of a universal brotherhood of mankind, without distinction of race, creed or color; to promote the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions and sciences, and to investigate unexplained laws of nature and psychical powers of man. Colonel Olcott was elected President, and Madame Blavatsky, Corresponding Secretary.

The society soon attracted a considerable membership, drawn principally from the ranks of the Spiritualists. The Theosophical movement received most of its religious and philosophical doctrines from Madame Blavatsky's fertile mind, who had borrowed them from Buddhism, Spiritualism, Neo-Platonism, the Kabballa, and numerous other sources. It appears, however, that Buddhism furnished most of the materials, such changes being made as were necessary to make it more acceptable to Western ideas and culture.

In the accession of A. P. Sinnett to the Theosophical movement, a valuable exponent of its philosophy was obtained. In fact, the

new cult owed as much, if not more, of its philosophy to this gentleman's speculative genius than it did to Madame Blavatsky's plagiarisms. In the "Occult World," "Esoteric Buddhism," "The Growth of the Soul," and in numerous articles contributed to the *Theosophist*, Sinnett expounded the philosophy of the new cult. An elaborate and fantastic system of cosmology was constructed, in which Western science was grafted on Oriental mysticism, and in which Herbert Spencer and evolution were made to support the chimera of reincarnation and kindred fantasies. We are told that the number seven exerts some mysterious power or virtue in the cosmological evolution there outlined—in the same way, probably, that the number thirteen has a fatality attached to it—the cosmical processes being influenced by the mystical seven in the same way that the individual atom called man is swayed by the fatal thirteen.

Another class of mystics of the day claim certain occult powers by virtue of being a seventh daughter of a seventh daughter, etc. This is the same kind of vulgar superstition that recognizes virtue in certain passes of the hand and in certain geometrical figures and diagrams. Think of the grand processes of Na-

ture being influenced by such childish trivialities—the stars halting in their majestic sweep in obedience to the pass of a magician's hand.

It was at one time supposed that maiden's blood was a necessary ingredient of the fabled elixir of life. What mysterious virtues maiden's blood possesses only an alchemist can tell.

Olcott also contributes his testimony to the occult virtues of the number seven in "Old Diary Leaves." He says: "I notice in Mr. Sinnett's book the coincidence that she (Madame Blavatsky) arrived in New York on the seventh of July, 1873; that is to say, on the seventh day of the seventh month of her forty-second year (6 x 7); and that our meeting was postponed until I should have attained my forty-second year. And, to anticipate, it must also be remarked that she died in the seventeenth year of our Theosophical relationship. Add to this the further fact, recently published by me in the *Theosophist*, that Mrs. Annie Besant came to H. P. B. as an applicant for membership in the seventh month of the seventeeth year of her final withdrawal from Christian communion, and we have a very pretty set of coincidences to bear in mind." Who can resist the force of such evidence to the occult virtues of seven—only he whom a gross materialism has blinded

to spiritual truth. But I fear I am descending from the sublime to the ridiculous.

We will return to cosmical evolution, and to the important part played by seven in the orderly progression of events—in other words, leave this mundane sphere and return to the clouds.

The occult scientist, as he calls himself, tells us that the evolution of the races of man is traced in periods of seven; that the actual number of objective worlds belonging to our system is seven; that there are seven kingdoms of Nature, and that man passes through a series of seven rounds in his evolution. Man contains seven principles, called respectively the "body," "vitality," "astral body," "animal soul," "human soul," "spiritual soul," and lastly "spirit." All these principles, except the first, the body, are invisible to our gross material senses, and pass, when we die, to their corresponding spiritual spheres or planes of existence, of which there are seven.

The doctrine of reincarnation, borrowed from Buddhism, occupies a prominent place in the Theosophical system. At death, according to this fantastic system, the first three principles are released from the body and are absorbed into the surrounding atmosphere and

earth, thus losing their individuality. The fourth principle, or animal soul, passes into what is known in Theosophical parlance as "Kama Loca," or the region of desire, where it remains until it is purged of all earth desires and attractions—a kind of purgatory—where it is fitted for Devachan or Heaven. "Kama Loca" is also the abode of the astral body before it becomes disintegrated and of the elementals or Nature spirits, those slaves-of-the-lamp employed to perform occult marvels by the initiates in occultism. When sufficiently purified or divested of earth desires and attractions, the fourth principle unites with the fifth and enters into Devachan, the abode of heavenly bliss. Here the soul finds every wish gratified and bathes in indescribable bliss. Nothing that the heart desires is absent. Being only a subjective state, anything that is desired—beautiful surroundings, books, scenery, friends who still remain in the body, or anything else upon which the affections may center—are created and supplied by the mere exercise of the imagination. Here the soul may remain for years and ages until, desiring new experiences on earth, it descends and is reincarnated, finding some body that offers a fitting receptacle for its embodiment.

Sinnett says that when the soul is ready for reincarnation it puts forth a sprout or shoot, like a grain of corn, and enters the new body and gradually vegetates or develops therein in analogy to the processes in the vegetable world. We have the authority of one of the chief pillars of the Theosophical faith for the statement that this reincarnation may occur eight hundred times, there being sometimes an interval of a thousand years between each incarnation, during which time the soul bathes in the bliss of Devachan.

Strange as it may appear to us, the soul's evolution or progress is worked out through its pilgrimage on earth, each earth life serving as a stepping stone for higher and higher spiritual development, the spiritual development attained at the end of each earth pilgrimage becoming the starting point in the succeeding reincarnation. This is the law of Karma or compensation, and corresponds, we are told, with the law of conservation of energy that obtains in the physical world. And so the soul continues to progress through years, ages and cycles, always retaining its individuality amid the clash of suns and the war of worlds, each succeeding pilgrimage on earth marking a higher and higher spiritual development, until,

in the course of countless ages, all sin and earth desire being purged away, the perfected soul attains Nirvana, and is absorbed into the all-pervading soul of the Divinity—becomes one with God and returns to earth no more, and thus is accomplished—

> "The one far-off divine event
> To which the whole creation moves."

According to some interpreters of Oriental philosophy, this means annihilation. According to Theosophy, however, it means an inconceivably intensified spiritual existence—a state in which the individual soul has been merged in the All Soul, and yet retains its consciousness, I fear, however, that this is a metaphysical refinement too subtle for our minds steeped in the materialism of Western science, and we must dismiss it as one of those mysteries never intended to be solved by human reason.

This may be a very beautiful philosophy, but the question will arise, no doubt, in some of your minds, what facts are there to support it? For my part, I must confess that I have not found any. It appears to my mind, uninitiated in the mysteries of Oriental occultism, following only the feeble and uncertain light of my poor, profane reason, and guided only

by my limited experience, to be a medley of fantastic speculations, discredited alike by analogy and reason.

Theosophy does not proceed by the laborious methods employed by our poor, despised Western science—namely, induction, observation and experiment, but relies for its knowledge of man and the universe upon revelations proceeding, as its disciples claim, from the illuminated minds of the so-called Mahatmas, Masters or Adepts. These mythical gentlemen play the same part in the Theosophical scheme that the Pope does in the Catholic Hierarchy. The Theosophists repose implicit faith in their revelations, and obey their behests with the same unreasoning faith that the faithful Catholic yields to his ecclesiastical superior. This faith dispenses with the proof required by our poor Western science to support its conclusions.

The ingenious Theosophist located the Mahatmas in the solitude of the Himalayan mountains, in Thibet, a region almost inaccessible to the most daring travelers, and which but few, if any, have succeeded in penetrating since the time of Marco Polo. Like the Christian anchorites of old, they dwelt in caves, leading ascetic lives, devoting them-

selves to constant meditation, and seldom holding any communication with the outside world. By long study and meditation, and by inheritance from Mahatmas living in previous ages, they are said to have acquired a knowledge of the laws and forces of Nature by which they are enabled to do things that would be regarded as miraculous by our Western science. Just as the wonders of our science appear miraculous to the savage, so the feats of the Mahatmas appear miraculous to us. These Mahatmas are said to have Chelas, or pupils, in all parts of the civilized world, to whom they at times appear in their astral bodies, giving instructions and advice, their physical bodies reposing in the meantime in their caves in the Himalayan mountains. Colonel Olcott was privileged to see one of these mysterious beings. It occurred one evening while he was reading in his apartments in New York, shortly after the departure of Madame Blavatsky, whom he had been assisting in the preparation for the press of "Isis Unveiled." While his eyes were fixed on the book he was reading, some object flitted across the field of his vision, and, raising his head, he was startled to see what appeared to be a tall Hindoo, with a majestic and benig-

nant countenance, standing before him. Olcott tells us that he intuitively recognized the figure as that of a Mahatma known as Koot Hoomi. The spectral Hindoo took a vacant chair, and engaged in conversation with Olcott on subjects connected with occultism. He finally rose to leave, when the thought occurred to Olcott that if he had some means of determining whether the figure was an hallucination he would feel better satisfied. The Hindoo smiled, as if divining Olcott's thoughts, and removing the materialized turban from his head, laid it on the table and disappeared. Colonel Olcott has religiously preserved this turban to confound the skeptic. Madame Blavatsky was living in the same house at the time—which I think was occupied as the Theosophical headquarters—and some evil-minded critic, whose devotion to Western science had blinded his spiritual vision, hinted that she may have bribed a Hindoo to personate the Mahatma on this occasion. Be that as it may, the doubts, sneers and sarcasms of the unbelieving never shook the faith of Olcott; he simply attributed them to the ignorance, prejudice and spiritual blindness of a superficial world.

Next to the credulity of the Spiritualist

comes that of the Theosophist, which is equally blind to all evidence of fraud or delusion—

> "The alchemist may doubt the shining gold
> His crucible pours out,
> But faith, fanatic faith, once wedded fast
> To some dear falsehood,
> Hugs it to the last."

The Theosophists believe that the ancient religions, especially Buddhism, have an esoteric side—an inner or hidden meaning, as well as external forms and ceremonies. The esoteric meaning is intended for the initiated, and is generally veiled in symbols, while the external forms and ceremonies are intended for the ignorant multitude. A large part of "Isis Unveiled" is devoted to an attempt to prove this proposition. Madame Blavatsky and her disciples claim to have discovered the key by which the symbolism in which the esoteric meaning of the ancient Egyptian religion was veiled, could be read. To be sure, scholars and philologists, like Max Mueller, declare there is no esoteric meaning in the Buddhistic or Egyptian religion; that they have no meaning that is not open to the learned and unlearned, the initiated and uninitiated alike. But what avails

such statements as against the superhuman wisdom of the Mahatmas, who affirm the contrary.

The Theosophist tells us that those symbolical inscriptions found on the monuments and temples of ancient Egypt show that the ancients possessed a knowledge of the laws and processes of Nature superior to our own, and that by means of that knowledge the forces and laws of Nature could be controlled and seeming miracles worked. The Theosophist tells us further that in every age there have lived men to whom this knowledge had been transmitted, but who were afraid to give it to the world lest the ignorance and superstition of the times should cause them to be put to death as wizards or sorcerers. When these repositories of occult knowledge did venture to write on the subject, their meaning was veiled in allegory and symbol that only the initiated could penetrate.

Coming down to our own times, Bulwer Lytton, who wrote not more than twenty-five years ago, and is claimed by the Theosophists as an occultist, showed his belief, it is asserted, in so-called occultism in his novels, "A Strange Story," "Zanoni," and "The Coming Race." Fear of ridicule, it is said, caused him to

convey his opinions in the form of romance. If, then, we are to believe the Theosophists, what is known as black magic, and a belief in which has always been regarded as a vulgar superstition, is an actual fact. If belief in Theosophy became general, I fear we would be in danger of a revival of medieval superstition as degrading to the intellect as the fetish worship of the African savage.

The disciple of Theosophy believes that the so-called Mahatmas and their Chelas, or pupils, to-day possess this superior knowledge of natural laws, and that this knowledge is as superior to our knowledge as ours is to that of the savage. To a savage, our telephone, steam engine and phonograph and other scientific inventions, are miracles. It is simply ignorance on one side and knowledge on the other.

What appears miraculous to the savage is perfectly natural to us—what is miraculous to us is natural to the Mahatmas. This may be all right as an argument from general principles, but we uninitiated Occidentals must still demand the evidence of the existence of the Mahatmas, and their supernormal powers—we can not accept them on faith.

It has always struck me as very strange that, with all their boasted wisdom and power,

the Mahatmas had never given the world any useful invention, anything to promote the material well-being of mankind, while the science of Europe had achieved marvels in that direction, and entirely without any aid from the clouds.

The Theosophist will probably say that the Mahatmas are only interested in promoting the spiritual welfare of mankind. But the Church, in the past, has always professed to be interested in man's spiritual welfare, and in attempting to promote it has covered the earth with blood and tears. Just in proportion as man has neglected the gentlemen in the clouds, just in proportion as he has turned his attention to the despised earth, just in that proportion has he advanced. Civilization has kept pace with doubt, progress has followed in the wake of investigation, and to-day, when disbelief in the dogmas of theology is more widespread than ever before, morality, education, humanity and everything implied by civilization, are at their highest.

To return to the Mahatmas. Madame Blavatsky professed to be guided by these gentlemen, receiving instructions and advice from them in letters that were miraculously thrown from the air, or which were found in locked

drawers. Sometimes the Mahatmas wrote on the blank margin of letters that came through the post, or appeared in their astral bodies and communicated with her by word of mouth.

The High Priestess claimed that much of her great work, "Isis Unveiled," was written or furnished by these mythical gentlemen. Olcott relates many interesting incidents in connection with the production of this work, in which the Mahatmas frequently figure. Sometimes, while sitting at work on her great book, "Isis Unveiled," a vacant expression would come into her eyes and she would cease writing for a few minutes. When she resumed her writing, Olcott was informed by her that her master (Mahatma) had furnished her with some material, by holding before her eyes the astral duplicate of the book containing the desired information, in many cases the book being one contained in the British Museum, or perhaps one lost when the famous library of Alexandria was destroyed by Christian vandalism.

Sometimes the Mahatmas would write a dozen pages or more on blank paper placed in a drawer by Madame Blavatsky before retiring for the night. This was always found

perfect. The work is in two bulky volumes, and created quite a sensation when it first appeared, nearly twenty-five years ago. It makes great pretensions to scholarship, bristling with foot-notes, references to authorities, and learned citations in nearly a dozen languages. It received some very flattering notices, probably from persons whose lack of scholarship rendered them incompetent to estimate it at its true value. But recognized scholars like Max Mueller pronounced it a medley of plagiarisms and blunders; other critics pronounced it a hotch-potch of pseudo science and medieval superstition, in which the vagaries of alchemy and astrology were mingled with the conclusions of modern science. The work is profusely illustrated with geometrical and symbolical diagrams, supposed to have some occult significance that the ordinary mortal, infected by materialistic science, is unable to understand. In it the writer professes to have found the hidden or esoteric meaning of the ancient religions, which was veiled, the writer claimed, in symbol and allegory. It is true, Max Mueller asserts that there is no esoteric or secret meaning in the ancient religions—that

there is only one meaning, which is open alike to the ignorant and the learned.

Madame Blavatsky having launched this formidable work on the world, now took an active part in the propaganda of the new faith.

In 1878, the headquarters of the Theosophical Society were transferred from the sordid atmosphere of New York to Bombay, and subsequently to Madras, India, where the High Priestess took up her residence. The Society occupied an East Indian bungalow, in the upper part of which Madame Blavatsky's private apartments were situated. The building contained what was called an occult room, which was especially fitted up for the production of Theosophical marvels. In the occult room was located the famous shrine, which consisted of an ordinary wooden cupboard built against the wall separating the room from Madame Blavatsky's bedchamber. The shrine was surrounded by a screen, intended to prevent any one from profaning it by approaching too near its sacred precincts.

It was here that the famous "saucer phenomenon" occurred for the edification of General Morgan. When visiting Madras, in 1883, during the absence of Colonel Olcott and

Madame Blavatsky in Europe, the General was privileged to visit the shrine, being conducted thither by Madame Coulomb, the assistant librarian of the society, who, in unlocking the shrine, allowed a saucer, which stood within, to fall out, apparently by accident, and break into fragments. Some one present suggested that the Mahatmas be requested to restore the broken article. The pieces were thereupon placed in the shrine, which was securely locked. After the lapse of several minutes, the shrine being unlocked, the saucer was found whole and perfect. This phenomenon made a deep impression on General Morgan, who wrote an enthusiastic account of it for the *Theosophist*, the organ of the society.

Dr. Richard Hodgson's investigation of this alleged phenomenon showed that it was due to the cunning ingenuity of Madame Blavatsky, instead of the occult powers of the Mahatmas. According to the confession of Madame Coulomb, the whole affair was prearranged, a pair of saucers having been bought on July 3, 1883, in a shop in Madras, for two rupees eight annas each, the entry in the tradesman's account book showing the purchase on that date. A comparison of the fragments of the broken saucer with the

one by which it had been replaced showed that they were undoubtedly duplicates, evidently coming from one stock. Some confederate, initiated into the inner circle of Theosophical mysteries, and an adept in trickery rather than occultism, had introduced the duplicate saucer into the shrine through the secret panel in the rear from the bedchamber of the High Priestess. This was evidently done under the directions of Madame Blavatsky, as several of the letters subsequently given to the public through the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, which were undoubtedly written by the High Priestess, contain instructions for the fraudulent production of this phenomenon. Truly, this modern Priestess of Isis was rivaling her prototype of old who flourished on the banks of the Nile centuries ago.

Another phenomenon attested by the ingenuous Colonel Olcott was the miraculous production of a pair of vases in a locked cupboard. This cupboard was located in the occult room, and contained a secret sliding panel in the back, of the existence of which the innocent Olcott was ignorant. The following is a brief history of this marvel, taken from contemporary records:—

Extract from Colonel Olcott's diary:

"May 26th. Fine phenomenon. Got a pair of tortoise shell and lacquer vases with flowers, in a cabinet a moment before empty."

Entry in account book of M. Faciobi & Co., Madras merchants, under date May 25th: "One pair flower vases, 7 rupees; one pair flower vases, 6 rupees; sent to Mrs. E. Coulomb."

This phenomenon did not cost much.

To recount all the marvels that occurred at the famous shrine for the edification of the faithful would exceed the limits of my lecture. Suffice it to say that scarcely a week passed but some new manifestation of occult power was witnessed, a common use of the shrine being for the despatch and receipt of Mahatma letters, the letters being placed in a receptacle therein and an answer being received after the lapse of a few minutes.

We now approach the denouement of this drama—the culmination of this long series of impostures—the final act in which this High Priestess, attired in her gaudy robes and holding aloft her magic wand, makes her exit behind the painted scenes of the stage upon which she had been so long walking with the imperial tread of a master mind. This is no

mere figure of speech, for the career of this women is paralleled in audacity only by that of the notorious Cagliostro, and presents one of the most fascinating romances of modern times —abounding in thrilling incidents and dramatic situations. Bulwer Lytton's "Strange Story," Rider Haggard's "She," and Stevenson's "Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde" present no more weird situations and incidents than does the career of this remarkable woman.

The Society for Psychical Research, founded in 1883 for the investigation, by scientific methods, of psychical phenomena, appointed a committee in May, 1884, to investigate and report on the alleged Theosophical phenomena. This committee comprised seven of the ablest members of the society. The attitude of the society towards the alleged Theosophical phenomena was rather favorable than otherwise, for some of the phenomena, the reality of which the society had demonstrated by its investigations, bore some resemblance to the Mahatma apparitions or astral projections. It was therefore with minds that were rather favorably disposed towards Theosophy that the committee undertook this inquiry. This must be conceded in justice to Dr. Hodgson and the gentlemen associated

with him on the committee, in answer to the charge of prejudice with which the Theosophists received the distinctly hostile report rendered necessary by the facts. The gentlemen on that committee were possessed of the highest intelligence, education and probity, and I believe were actuated, in their investigation of Theosophical phenomena, entirely by devotion to truth. Let any disinterested person examine the evidence presented by that report and say whether their judgment is not sustained by the facts. Dr. Richard Hodgson was the person upon whom the Theosophists poured most of their vituperation. This was probably due to the fact that he was chiefly instrumental in dragging the frauds into the light of day, and unflinchingly publishing them to the world, regardless of Theosophical anathemas. The Psychical Research Society committee heard the statements of some of the leading Theosophists who claimed to bear witness to these phenomena, among them Colonel Olcott, Mr. Sinnett and D. K. Mavalankar, a high caste Indian convert to Theosophy. Olcott told of the visit paid to him in the New York headquarters by the Mahatma, who left behind his materialized turban. This turban was exhibited to the wondering eyes of the

committee, whose cross-examination elicited the important fact that Madame Blavatsky resided at the time under the same roof with Olcott. Mavalankar told of several flights made by himself in his astral body.

The committee concluded to delegate Dr. Hodgson—a gentleman well qualified by education and nature for the work—to personally investigate the phenomena said to have occurred at the headquarters in India. Dr. Hodgson proceeded to India in November, 1884, and remained there three months occupied in the investigation—interviewing numerous persons, visiting all the scenes of Theosophic miracles, gathering documents and consulting experts in handwriting—indefatigable in his efforts at arriving at the truth.

In September and October, 1884, and just before Dr. Hodgson's arrival in India, the *Madras Christian College Magazine* published a series of letters purporting to have been written by Madame Blavatsky to the Coulombs. These letters, if genuine, showed that Madame Blavatsky had been engaged in a conspiracy for the production, by fraudulent means, of Theosophical marvels. The letters contained instructions to the Coulombs for the production of these marvels, and were gener-

ally written in French, and had been turned over to the magazine by the Coulombs in a spirit of revenge for having been expelled from the society several months previously. They had been assistant librarian and corresponding secretary, respectively, for the Theosophical Society, and in these capacities had enjoyed special facilities for acting as confederates of Madame Blavatsky. Madame Blavatsky denounced the letters as forgeries concocted by the Christians to destroy the society. But the case against her does not rest entirely on the statements of the Coulombs. A careful examination by experts of the handwriting of the documents published by the *Christian Magazine* furnished striking proof that Madame Blavatsky was the author. Some of the documents were letters alleged to have been written by "Koot Hoomi," the mythical Mahatma who figured as one of the star actors in the Theosophical farce. The experts' opinion was that the letters, including those from "Koot Hoomi," or "Cute Hoomi," as he was dubbed by the wags, were written by Madame Blavatsky. A comparison of these documents with her admitted handwriting showed striking similarities in spelling,

idiom and writing that showed the ingenious workmanship of the High Priestess.

When Dr. Hodgson reached Madras he found that the Theosophists had forestalled him by demolishing the shrine; but he was enabled, with the aid of witnesses, to reproduce it so as to present a diagram of it with his report. It was found that access to the shrine was obtained by a secret panel in Madame Blavatsky's bedroom, which was concealed behind a wardrobe, and was the channel through which the Mahatma letters were conveyed into the shrine, and other miracles performed.

One of the favorite tricks by which Madame Blavatsky mystified her dupes of the Olcott species was by arranging with one of her confederates to write her a letter and send it through the post on an appointed day, the Madame preserving a memorandum of its contents. On the day on which the letter was expected to arrive, she contrived to have a crowd of people at her house, including persons that she desired, for reasons best known to herself, to convert to Theosophy. When the postman arrived and delivered the letter, the Madame, on the suggestion of some one present, would undertake to read the sealed letter by an exercise of occult power. This she did by placing

the letter in contact with her forehead and repeating its contents. The phenomenon was completed by opening the letter and ascertaining its contents. Result, several new Theosophists. At times, I suppose, these Theosophical pyrotechnics, so carefully charged with "Karma," did not explode at the proper time—in other words, the arrival of the letter was miscalculated. But when the explosion did occur as arranged, there must have been a brilliant illumination. The lost powder was well spent in the dazzling display that followed the successful exhibitions.

One word must be said in justice to Colonel Olcott. Dr. Hodgson's discoveries in connection with the Theosophical frauds perpetrated by Madame Blavatsky showed that Colonel Olcott had been guilty of nothing worse than extraordinary credulity. He may have been a passive but innocent agent in that lady's hands, but none of the evidence showed anything more reprehensible. I understand that his faith in Theosophy remained unshaken by the exposures.

I fear that it would occupy too much time—though I have no doubt the recital would prove interesting to you—to describe all the fraudulent methods and devices by which the High

Priestess and her confederates sought to propagate the new faith; how, on one occasion Mr. Coulomb, with the aid of his serviceable dummy head, personated a Mahatma and appeared in the dim moonlight to Madame Blavatsky and a party of fellow-Theosophists who were sitting on the veranda at headquarters in Bombay. This same party of Theosophists, including the "psychological baby," Olcott, afterwards making a written statement certifying to the genuineness of the phenomenon—how the Madame tried to entrap a wealthy Englishman, resident in India, into making a large donation of money to the society—how the Englishman was anxious to believe in the existence of the Mahatmas, but begged the privilege of seeing one poor, little phenomenon—how the Madame telegraphed or wrote to the Coulombs directing them to send a bogus telegram, signing to it the name of that celebrated myth "Koot Koomi," who figures almost as prominently in the Theosophical farce as did Mrs. Harris in the personal experiences of Sarah Gamp. Only one more thing was necessary to make the exposure of the Hierophant of Theosophy complete, and that was her confession, which was soon forthcoming.

V. S. Solovyoff, a Russian journalist and

literary man, interested in psychic studies, made the acquaintance of Madame Blavatsky in May, 1884, while she was in Paris, and was induced by the High Priestess to enroll himself as a member of the society. In August of the following year, while on a visit to her at Wurzburg, he made the discovery that led to her confession. In the course of a conversation with her she mentioned the name of a noted Adept, one who had attained a high degree of occult knowledge, and asked Solovyoff to get his photograph from a drawer in the room. Solovyoff, while rummaging through the drawer, found a package of Chinese envelopes which he had frequently seen enclosing Mahatma letters received by astral post. He charged her with fraud in connection with the astral letters. She at first strenuously denied, but finally, under pressure, admitted her guilt and justified herself on the ground that the only way to make an impression on men was by humbugging them, declaring, "in order to rule men it is necessary to deceive them; almost invariably the more simple, the more silly, and the more gross the phenomenon, the more likely it is to succeed." She subsequently wrote Solovyoff a letter, in which she confessed that all the Theosophical phenom-

ena, in the production of which she was concerned, were produced by trickery.

Madame Blavatsky died in London in 1891. Her body was cremated with mystic rites and the ashes were divided into three parts—one being buried in London, one being sent to New York and the other to Madras, India. Thus the new and old world, between which her activity in life had been divided, shared the honor of her last resting place.

One of the humorous incidents connected with the Theosophical movement was the claim put forward, after the death of Madame Blavatsky, by Mrs. Catherine Tingley, a well-known Theosophist, to be a re-incarnation of the dead High Priestess. The utter absurdity of the pretension did not prevent her from securing a large number of followers among the Theosophists, while by others the claim was treated with ridicule. The difference caused a split between the English and American branches of the society, and the controversy became so heated as to threaten the existence of the society.

One of the most remarkable incidents connected with the Theosophical movement was the conversion of Annie Besant. Mrs. Besant obtained considerable publicity some years ago

by her association with Charles Bradlaugh in his conflict with the English law authorities in the attempt to circulate the book known as the "Fruits of Philosophy." This work advocated prudential checks on population, and aroused a storm of protest from the conventionally respectable and orthodox. During the popular tempest that arose, Mrs. Besant stood by Bradlaugh with a heroic courage worthy of a better cause. She now passed from a materialism that saw neither God nor soul in the universe to the fantastic speculations of a system of philosophy that filled all nature with spirits and hobgoblins. She became an ardent Theosophist and a blind worshiper of its Hierophant. At one bound she passed from rationalism to supernaturalism—from science to superstition. After worshiping at the feet of such intellectual giants as Darwin and Herbert Spencer, she prostrated herself at the feet of such a clay idol as Madame Blavatsky. Such mental transformations are rare, and present an interesting study in the psychology of belief.

The defenders of Madame Blavatsky say that Theosophy must not be judged by the character of its founder—that even if she is admitted to have been an impostor, the system

of philosophy given to the world by Theosophy is not affected thereby. We must concede that there is some show of justice in this. The discovery of the law of gravitation is not affected by Newton's character. But when we find that the founder of a new religion or system of philosophy has been guilty of the grossest frauds in the promulgation of that religion or philosophy, we certainly are justified in distrusting the honesty and sincerity of her motives. What would the Christian think of the "Lord's Prayer" or the "Sermon on the Mount," if the miracles Jesus is alleged to have performed could be demonstrated to have been juggling tricks. They certainly would no longer appeal so powerfully to the hearts of Christians. So with Madame Blavatsky. Having been convicted of the grossest frauds in connection with the phenomena of Theosophy, our confidence and respect for the religious and philosophical principles promulgated by her are lessened, if not lost. At all events, that, I think, will be the judgment of the world. Frank Podmore, in discussing this subject, sums up the matter by declaring, "that the phenomena of Theosophy were concocted to float its philosophy."

In my humble judgment Madame Blavatsky

was a charlatan—a charlatan in her pretensions to occult power—a charlatan in her pretensions to intercourse with the so-called Mahatmas—a charlatan in her literary pretensions.

With all their boasted superhuman wisdom, what have the Mahatmas ever done to advance human welfare? Did a Mahatma ever invent a telephone—give us a steam engine—tell us how to lighten human toil, or how to cure a single disease? Did one of these gentlemen ever tell us how to avert a famine in India, or how to save or prolong a single human life? No, they employ their spare time in restoring broken saucers, in projecting their astral bodies where they are not wanted, or in miraculously transmitting to a distance letters filled with Theosophical twaddle. They give us a minute description of "Kama Loca" and "Devachan" and other regions inaccessible to our poor mortal vision, but not one word of practical benefit to mankind.

Theosophy, like the philosophy of ancient Greece and Rome, has been fruitful in high-sounding words, but barren of practical benefits to mankind. Are we to throw aside our noble Western science, with its grand heritage of benefits achieved, for that wordy and barren philosophy that promises much but gives little

else than high-sounding words? Shall we desert that grand trinity of intellects—Darwin, Spencer and Huxley, for a nineteenth century Cagliostro? Shall we exchange evolution and the grand teachings of science for the wild jargon of "Isis Unveiled?" Shall we cast aside the study of chemistry for the mummeries of alchemy and exchange the noble science of astronomy for the rant of astrology? Shall we explore the Heavens for horoscopes or for new stars? Shall we pursue those will-o'-the-wisps, the "Philosopher's Stone" and the "Elixir of Life," or follow the beacon light of reason and science?

While I am unable to accept the philosophy of Theosophy, and believe that its so-called phenomena rest largely, if not entirely, on fraud, I have only the highest admiration for the lofty morality inculcated by it. There can be no grander consummation than the union of all mankind in one grand brotherhood—all distinctions of race, creed and color obliterated, governed only by the simple but sublime morality of the Golden Rule, all striving for the abolition of crime, war and disease and uniting in the grand effort to realize here in this world the heaven of which poet, priest and philoso-

pher have dreamed in all the ages of the past. I believe we are little by little approaching that grand consummation. And we need not the inspiration of the prophet to assure us of this; for science also holds out to us this promise, and already we see painted on the horizon of the Twentieth Century the golden dawning of a grander era. Just as surely as man has ascended step by step from lower forms of life, passing through all the gradations of organic evolution, always struggling higher and higher in the ascending scale, till the man of to-day, with all his marvelous powers and God-like attributes, has been reached, just so surely will that progress continue till a moral, physical and intellectual perfection is reached of which every previous step in the long and bloody struggle of the past was but a prophecy.

Every fossil record testifying to the bloody struggle for existence in those primeval times when man had not yet emerged from brutedom; every transition from lower to higher life marked by each geological epoch; every advance made by man in his conflict with the hostile forces of his environment; every discovery and invention by which man's empire over nature has been extended and his condi-

tion ameliorated; every martyr's life sacrificed to truth, justice and right; every flower struggling to reach the sunlight and every human soul aspiring towards a higher ideal, has been an eloquent prophecy of the time when the world will be ruled by love, reason and justice.

PSYCHICAL RESEARCH
AND
A FUTURE LIFE.

The tendency of modern scientific thought is distinctly materialistic; all the phenomena of the universe being interpreted by it in terms of matter and force. The profoundest thoughts of the philosopher, the highest emotions of the poet, painter and musician are reduced by the cold speculations of materialistic science to molecular action in the substance of the brain. Even the soul of man, for whose possession angels and demons are said to be eternally contending, is made to depend upon the maintenance of the functions of the physical body —a diseased brain producing a diseased mind, or soul, if you will.

A small quantity of cocaine will produce an abnormal exaltation of the mental faculties, while softening of the brain is accompanied by a corresponding mental deterioration. Quickened action of the heart and circulation, up to a certain point, is followed by increased mental action, while decreased action of the heart is

followed by mental lethargy; and cessation of the heart's action, if continued long enough, is followed by cessation of consciousness. These facts are interpreted by the materialistic scientist as indicating the absolute dependence of the mind on the brain—every mental process being said to involve a corresponding physical process. This crude form of materialism finds expression in the terse formula of Büchner, "Ohne Phosphor Kein Gedanke"—without phosphorus no thought. It is the boast of the materialist that the scalpel of the anatomist does not reveal the existence of a soul, and that in this physical realm, at least, no evidence has been found of human consciousness surviving the tomb. We are further reminded by the materialist that the infant, when it comes into the world, has scarcely any mind—in fact, is said to be more helpless, mentally as well as physically, than any animal—the animal being guided and protected by its inherited instincts, of which man has scarcely any. The child's mind comes in contact with its environment and immediately begins to acquire knowledge. At first it is unable to adjust its simplest movements to surrounding objects. As its brain grows, and its experience broadens, there is a corresponding development of the mind, which

continues until the maturity of its powers is attained. Then comes physical decay, which is accompanied by more or less waning of the mental powers. Finally comes physical dissolution. What then becomes of the mind? We had no knowledge of it before its embodiment in that particular organism—has it survived the dissolution of that organism? Has it kept pace with the growth of the body and shared in all of its changes and yet *survives* the destruction of that body? From the standpoint of the materialist the presumption seems to be against this conclusion.

The materialist attempts to reinforce his position by appealing to Darwinism, according to which man's mind has been derived by a slow process of evolution through countless ages, during which the struggle for existence held ruthless sway, from the lowest forms of animal life, and ultimately from that mysterious substance called protoplasm. At what stage in organic evolution did the soul of man make its appearance, triumphantly ask our materialistic philosophers.

It is to be noted, however, that Darwin himself, as shown by his published letters, did not regard his theory of man's descent from lower forms of animal life as being *wholly* incompat-

ible with the belief in the existence and immortality of the soul; while John Fiske, one of the ablest living exponents of the theory of evolution, seems to regard that theory as strengthening the evidences of man's survival. Fiske thinks that the Power, by whatever name you may designate it—"Jehovah, Jove, or Lord," or Herbert Spencer's "Unknowable," the God of Agnosticism—which has developed man from a speck of formless protoplasm, is equal to the task of producing that crowning work of evolution—a human soul.

While the charge that science is materialistic, is, I think, true, the facts advanced by materialists in support of their view are purely negative in their character. The presumption, however, raised by those facts seems almost overwhelming. It might reasonably be said that if a thing or fact exists, the most exhaustive search of science aided by all the instruments devised by it ought to reveal its existence. But here we are met by the counter statement that we are limited by our experience, and as our experience is not coextensive with the universe, there may be modes of existence and facts beyond our limited ken. In other words, the possibilities of nature are limitless. If the child before it was born

were capable of reasoning, it would probably find it hard to believe that the time would come when it would be transferred to another state of existence where it could live almost independently of its mother. Reasoning from its limited experience, it would conclude that itself and mother were inseparably connected. I use this analogy to illustrate the inconclusiveness of negative evidence. Why, we are surrounded by forms of life too minute to be discovered without the aid of a microscope—there are atmospheric undulations so rapid that the unaided ear cannot translate them into sound—vibrations of light so rapid as to escape the eye. On every side we are met by the fact that our senses are but imperfect channels of communication with the mind—that we do not, *can not*, know the most infinitesimal fraction of what is actually going on around us in this marvelous universe. And yet the main fact relied upon by materialism is the absence of direct evidence—is entirely negative in its character. We attempt to gauge the possibilities of nature by our limited experience. It seems to me that the proper attitude of science should be agnostic, saying, "I do not know, but am willing to learn."

Plato, in the "Book of the Republic," illus-

trates, by analogy, the mistaken impressions under which we may labor regarding the material world and our position therein. He supposes the existence of a cave somewhere in the world in which prisoners have been confined from earliest infancy. From their position in the cave they are unable to see the outside world. Over and behind the prisoners burns a great fire. Between the prisoners and the fire, but out of sight of the former, people are constantly passing to and fro. The shadows of the people are cast on the walls of the cave and are seen by the prisoners, who mistake them for the reality. The application of this is readily seen. We may be like these prisoners, confined in this cave of a material world, in which we mistake the things seen by our limited vision for the reality—the shadows for the substance.

And what, after all, has been the history of scientific discovery. What is classed as impossible to-day is demonstrated to be possible to-morrow. We are constantly revising our theories in the light of later and fuller experience. The marvels of yesterday have become the commonplaces of to-day. Can it be said that the declarations of science on any subject are final, authoritative, infallible? We are more and more impressed by the truth and modesty

of Sir Isaac Newton's statement uttered when about to die: "I feel like a little child picking up pebbles on the sea shore, while the great ocean of truth lies unexplored before me."

It may be stated that theology has failed to advance any evidence of man's continued existence beyond the grave that appeals to the rationalism of to-day; hence the prevalence, *even in the church*, of avowed unbelief in a future existence. Question any of your acquaintances on the subject, and you will be surprised by the number of persons professing belief in religion who avow such an unbelief. The common thought of the day seems to bear the same relation to religion that it did in France in the latter part of the eighteenth century to the French Monarchy. On the surface there appears to be belief in religion, but under that surface of seeming belief is profound unbelief, which will require some great crisis to make manifest. The French Revolution of 1789 was the crisis which showed how shallow was the loyalty that supported the monarchy.

The ministry, I believe, is thoroughly permeated by this spirit of skepticism, and the Pulpit to-day is producing its Robert Elsmeres in every great city. Men who have the moral courage to speak out, who refuse to bow in

abject submission to the dogmas of the Church and sacrifice on the altar of superstition their intellectual manhood. Men who value intellectual honesty more than social prestige or financial success. These men honestly endeavor to reconcile dogma with truth; but if they find this impossible, the dogma must go. Cincinnati is proud to claim one at least of these fearless men who is a shining light to the clergy of this city. He has left the fogs and mists of the valley of superstition and climbed to the mountain top of intellectual freedom. Are these men doing any good? I think they are doing more good to the cause of free thought than we are. They reach a class of people by their thought who would not come to hear us, for fear of business ruin or social ostracism. These ministers can not always be as radical in their pulpit utterances as they would desire, but, like that wise and practical statesman, Abraham Lincoln, they are compelled to compromise to some extent in order to achieve some measure of success. They are not like the noble William Lloyd Garrison, who, in his deadly and uncompromising crusade against human slavery declared that he would not enter into a covenant with Hell, and reso-

lutely refused to make any concessions to the slave power, but demanded its unconditional abolition. We should not condemn them for not going far enough with us on the road of truth, but should give them sympathy and encouragement.

To return from my digression, Christianity appeals to the alleged physical resurrection of Christ, which is supposed to have occurred nineteen hundred years ago, under conditions that make its acceptance by the unprejudiced a matter of some difficulty, and to a few vague and equivocal promises contained in the New Testament, as a basis for its doctrine of a future existence. This may have satisfied in the days when unreasoning faith held sway, but to-day, when the tendency is to bring all beliefs to the test of fact and logic, something that appeals to the senses and reason is demanded. The tales of beautiful fairies and angels with wings like birds (for how could they navigate through the air without wings) were very beautiful and *real to the child*, but can the full-grown man or woman still continue to nourish his mind on them. There comes a time to the human race, as well as to the individual, when fairies and angels, and I might add other religious myths, cease to

satisfy the mind, and hard, cold facts are demanded. There comes a time when the child begins to ask awkward questions about the fairies and angels, and these incongruous images fade forever from the imagination, the age of faith disappears, and the age of reason dawns. They were pleasing illusions, no doubt, but man can not walk on crutches and be held in leading strings forever. The laws of human progress forbid!

There are some who say, "what was good enough for my father, grandfather and great-great grandfather ought to be good enough for me." What modesty, what fine argument! This reasoning, if carried to its logical conclusions, would stop the wheels of progress and turn back the hands of time. We would still be riding in stage coaches, grinding corn with a stone, threshing wheat with a flail, plowing with a stick and reaping with a sickle. Our great grandfathers did all these things. Why not we? Why not cure disease by incantations and charms, determine guilt or innocence by ordeal? Why not reduce the science of jurisprudence to the mummeries of savages, and the noble science of medicine to the gibberish of alchemy? Why not protect our houses with crosses instead of lightning

rods? Why not insure ourselves against danger and death by carrying amulets instead of insurance policies? Our venerated forefathers, in whose footsteps we are invited to tread, did these and many other wise things. Doubt begets inquiry—inquiry, knowledge—knowledge, progress. Knowledge is the product of doubt and investigation—ignorance, the result of unquestioning credulity.

The doubters, the heretics of the past, were the heralds of progress and made possible the mental pioneers of to-day. This is a thoroughly rationalistic age—anything that can not stand the scrutiny of reason must fall.

The proof of a future existence which theology has confessedly failed to furnish, what is known as modern Spiritualism, has undertaken to produce. This movement, from its inception at Hydeville in 1848, has been banned by both science and theology, by both the learned and unlearned. The movement soon became surrounded by such a vast mass of fraud, credulity and immorality that it fell completely into disrepute, from which it has not yet emerged. The subject, strange to say, seemed to have the power of introducing discord in every family into which it entered, of arraying husband against wife in the Divorce

Court, and of producing all manner of domestic infelicity and sexual irregularities. This is a rather strange result of a belief that teaches that we are surrounded by the spirits of our beloved dead who see all we do.

Medium became the synonym of impostor and the dark seance the scene of all manner of dark deeds. Here was afforded a splendid field for the mercenary. Professional mediums sprang up everywhere and carried on a lucrative business. The fraudulent medium did not require much skill in trickery, as the credulity of the average Spiritualist was so excessive that he was ready to ascribe any and everything to ghostly agency. No amount of evidence of fraud could stagger the belief of the Spiritualist, his was a case of hopeless mental aberration on the subject. Like the Christian anchorites of old, who, by constant fasting and mortification of the body, became possessed by the delusion that they were constantly surrounded by demons who sought by every means to tempt them to some act of sin, so the Spiritualist saw in the most trivial occurrences of every-day life the action of spirits, and daily consulted his favorite medium, as did the Greeks of old their oracles. And the answers received were equally oracular—that is, am-

biguous, and framed in such general terms as to fit any case. The lucky hits would be called "remarkable tests." The assertion, attributed, I believe, to Prof. Tyndall, that some chimpanzees could reason better than the average Spiritualist, seemed to be justified. The evidence of the average Spiritualist as to what occurs at these seances is absolutely worthless, as his attitude and frame of mind are such as to prevent him from seeing what actually occurs. He may be honest, probably is, but his credulity is such as to make him guilty of the grossest mal-observation.

Some twelve years ago, learning that the well-known slate writing medium, Charles Watkins, was about to visit Cincinnati, and having read an account of experiments performed by him in the presence of Rev. Joseph Cook and others, and said to have been very startling in their character, I determined to see him. I do not know that this Watkins was the man with whom Rev. Joseph Cook made the experiments—I only know he claimed to be such. While the Rev. Joseph Cook had his prejudices against religious liberals, I do not think he was prepossessed in favor of Spiritualism, but observed the experiment closely and endeavored to report it honestly. I called

on Watkins when he arrived at the Palace Hotel, and arranged for a sitting for the following day. When I called the next day, I found a well-known business man of Cincinnati accompanied by a friend who were also there for a sitting. While waiting for Watkins, who was momentarily engaged, I entered into conversation with the business man before mentioned. He informed me that he had had a sitting on the previous day with Watkins, and stated that the manifestations were wonderful—that he had obtained writing on a slate purchased by himself—which never left his possession, and while the slate was jointly held by himself and Watkins—in fact, the process of writing was visible to his eyes. My informant being a sharp business man, I naturally attached *some* weight to this statement, but, as my narrative will disclose, he was utterly incapable of accurately observing a simple occurrence and correctly reporting it. Watkins finally made his appearance, but was at a loss to know to whom he should give the first sitting. To solve the difficulty he consulted the "spirits." The spirits who gave the information must have been evil ones, for, unfortunately for the medium, they selected me—the business man and his friend being requested to leave the room,

which they accordingly did. The medium furnished me with some slips of paper, requesting me to write the names of deceased relatives thereon, while he left the room. I did not like this, but complied. Having written the names and rolled the slips into pellets, I was requested to place them together on the table and concentrate my attention on them. I found it difficult to watch the pellets and the medium at the same time, and I think Watkins managed to read a pellet while pretending to place it in contact with his forehead, and while my attention was momentarily withdrawn from him. He then took up the slate brought by me and seated himself at the table opposite to me. Placing a pencil in his right hand, the arm soon moved and wrote automatically—that is, apparently so. The slate was held so that I could not see the writing. At the conclusion of the writing, the medium rose from the table and going to the window read aloud the message supposed to be written on the slate, after which, taking a rag rubbed vigorously over the surface of the slate, as if effacing the message. He then placed the slate on top of another of the same size, and requested me to assist in holding the slates under the table. Scratching, resembling the sound of writing being heard,

I dropped my eye on Watkins' wrist and detected the movement of the cords in his wrist, indicating that his index finger was doing the scratching. The writing ceasing, and the slate being withdrawn, I was puzzled on seeing a nicely written message. Only for a moment was I puzzled, then the trick flashed on my mind. The medium had deliberately written the message while he sat opposite me and had *only pretended* to wipe it out, as was clearly evidenced by a long streak across the lower part of the signature, produced by the rag with which the wiping was done, coming accidentally in contact with the same. When charged with the fraud he virtually confessed by offering me a roll of money which I declined. This was the wonderful thing witnessed by the business man, a simple trick which his credulity prevented him from detecting. This experience illustrates the value of the evidence of the average Spiritualist. I intend no reflection on his motives or character in this statement.

This business man was above the average in intelligence, and in his particular business it would be a hard matter to fool him—yet his mind was so thoroughly prepossessed by Spiritualism and "intense expectation," that

he readily attributed everything done by a person claiming to be a medium, to spiritual agency. To reason with him would, as Paine would say, be like giving medicine to the dead. What is the testimony of such persons worth as to the genuineness of spiritual phenomena —absolutely nothing. They do not see what actually occurs, but only what they expect to see, and a little cross-examination would convert the marvels they relate into very ordinary sleight-of-hand tricks. Does any unprejudiced person wonder that such books as "The Bottom Facts of Spiritualism," which purports to give the author's very interesting experiences with fraudulent mediums, and "The Undiscovered Country," a satire on Spiritualism, should be written and widely read, when the Spiritualists themselves furnish the material?

Spiritualists themselves are responsible for a good deal of the odium attached to their belief. They give shelter and comfort to and countenance in every manner—in fact make martyrs out of them when they are caught —all the fraudulent mediums who prey upon the credulity of the public. Their societies, instead of having committees of capable persons to investigate all mediums who sit for

the public and expose them if fraudulent—actually issue certificates to them as ministers, thus enabling them to carry on their business under the cloak of religion and avoid the payment of a license fee. Let the society of Spiritualists—if there is still one—appoint a committee of one and make Mr. Wilms chairman, and I predict the ghosts that perform with horns and various other paraphernalia in the dark circles of certain mediums in this city, will be on the run in very short order.

My remarks regarding Spiritualism may appear harsh to some of my audience, but remember that when the impurities have accumulated in the blood of an individual until his health is threatened, the first thing to be done to place him on the road to recovery is to purge him—so with Spiritualism, when it has been purged of its fraudulent mediums, it will be placed on a fair road to recovery and public recognition.

Having said this much against the dark features of Spiritualism, it is only fair to say that while Spiritualism may be a weed, as John Fiske declares, or what Tyndall coarsely characterizes as "intellectual whoredom," nevertheless, beneath a vast mass of fraud and delusion, there is a grain of truth. It is

strange, to use a common metaphor, that there should be so much smoke without *some* fire. Those who are committed to the doctrine of materialism may be unwilling to admit it, and those who see in Spiritualism only a weed, may smile incredulously and in a superior way, but let us face the question fearlessly and in a spirit equally far removed from unreasoning credulity and uncompromising hostility. It ill becomes scientific men to treat with hostility and contempt any subject, however unpopular it may be, in view of the martyrdom its own devotees have suffered in the past at the hands of the Church. No person who has carefully and dispassionately read the experiments made by Professor William Crookes, F. R. S., with D. D. Home, and described in "Researches in Spiritualism," or Count Agenor de Gasparin's "Des Tables Tournantes," or the report of the committee appointed by the Dialectical Society of London, to investigate this subject, will question the existence of that grain of truth. The grain of truth to which I allude is the movement of ponderable objects without physical contact, such movement displaying intelligence. If any fact of science can be said to be established, this fact is established beyond all con-

troversy. If the evidence supporting this fact is rejected as insufficient, then all human testimony is worthless. The fact so established is a psychic fact, so far as it implies a force in some way connected with the minds or intelligences of the experimenters. Whether it is an embodied or disembodied intelligence, is an open question. Sergeant Cox, an eminent English lawyer in his day, who carefully investigated this class of phenomena through D. D. Home, with whom he sustained intimate social relations, at first advanced the theory in his works, "Spiritualism Answered by Science," and "The Mechanism of Man," that the force emanated from the bodies of the experimenters, and that the intelligence exhibited was *their* intelligence. Finding this hypothesis inadequate to account for the facts, he was driven by those facts to suppose the existence of an inferior order of intelligent beings surrounding man who did these things, and who represented themselves as the spirits of our deceased friends. But later in life, he accepted the Spiritualistic explanation. I need only refer to the experience of Alfred Russell Wallace, who discovered and gave to the world, simultaneously with Charles Darwin, the generalization known in organic evolution as the "Survival of the Fit-

test," or "Natural Selection," which plays such an important part in the development of man and animal. Perhaps some one may say that great as well as ordinary men are subject to delusions; but is this not begging the question? It may also be suggested that on this subject no man can be expected to accept the opinion of another, however eminent in science he may be. But surely the experiments ought to stand, and the results, the same as experiments in other fields of scientific research. Otherwise no one but the person actually conducting the experiments would ever know anything definite regarding them. That the fact appears to contradict our experience is not conclusive against it. How about that well-known tropical chief who expressed great incredulity on being informed that in some parts of the world water becomes a solid mass? How about that latest marvel of science, liquid air, which seems to contradict all our notions of heat and cold?

The latest developments in psychic research tend to discredit the materialism represented by such thinkers as Büchner and Moleschott, by showing the action of the human mind at a distance from the body, if not independently of the body. The Society for Psychical Re-

search of London, the organization of which was suggested by the experiments of such men as Crookes, Wallace and Zöllner, but particularly by those of the committee appointed by the Dialectical Society of London, has published thirteen volumes of its "*Proceedings*," at the rate of one each year, covering the whole field of psychical research, and thus bringing into the field of legitimate scientific investigation a subject heretofore handled only by charlatans and sensation mongers.

The membership of the society is extensive, and contains the names of the persons most eminent in science, politics, literature and professional life in England, America, Germany and France.

Those names alone are a guarantee of honesty, sobriety of judgment, accuracy, and the possession of every quality necessary to command the respect of the world. The method by which the society prosecutes its investigations is by appointing committees of its members, each of which is entrusted with some special branch of inquiry, such for instance as "Hypnotism," "Hallucinations," so-called "Spiritualistic Phenomena," etc. These committees make written reports embodying the results of their investigations, and these re-

ports make up the bulk of the thirteen volumes of "*Proceedings*" issued by the society up to date. The work of this society, since its organization in 1882, has attracted wide attention owing to its distinguished and numerous membership and the scientific methods employed by it. In reading the reports of the committees, as well as the dissertations thereon by such able members as F. W. H. Myers, Edmund Gurney and Frank Podmore, one is constantly struck and impressed by the cold, dispassionate analysis of the facts, and the resolute avoidance of anything like sentiment or emotion in arriving at conclusions, that characterize all the work. Reason sits on the judgment seat, and the passionate pleadings of the heart and emotions are unheard and unavailing. All known natural laws are applied in attempted explanation of the facts before it is attempted to formulate new ones. Hence it was only after failure to explain by known laws of Psychology or Physics a large class of the phenomena observed, that the theory of telepathy was advanced. Telepathy, which means ability of one mind to impress or be impressed by another mind otherwise than through the recognized channels of the senses—or in a narrower sense,

thought-transference—is not entirely new, having been advanced before.

But the Society for Psychical Research is entitled to the credit of having collected the evidence and formulated the theory on a scientific basis as Charles Darwin did the theory of organic evolution, which had also been given to the world before his time by Lamarck and the authors of "Vestiges of Creation." To commence with, as a foundation, the society secured an experimental basis for the theory, which was arrived at in the following manner. A person was selected, who, there was reason to believe, was peculiarly susceptible to telepathic impressions. The subject so selected—being called for convenience the percipient—was first carefully blindfolded. A diagram or drawing of some peculiar character was then made on a paper by a member of the committee, after which all the members thereof concentrated their minds on the drawing for a short space of time, when the bandage was removed and the drawing reproduced by the percipient or subject. The number of cases in which the drawing was correctly reproduced was so remarkable as to exclude all idea of chance or guessing—in fact, these were excluded by a mathematical calculation of

chances. The same experiments were made with color and taste, with like results.

The society's committee on "Phantasms of the Living"—under which heading is included not only apparitions but telepathic impressions of the eye, ear and touch—has collected a number of cases of persons transferring their feelings, emotions, sensations, and even their own apparitions to the minds of persons at a distance. These cases are classed as experimental, as the impression or apparition was projected or transferred by a conscious exercise of the will power. The committee having charge of the subject "Phantasms of the Living," cite several cases of persons projecting a semblance of themselves to quite a distance, which is distinctly seen. In these cases the person whose phantasm is seen, is in a semi-conscious or unconscious state and has no recollection of what occurred. They also cite the case of a person who on a certain day "willed" that a certain person should remove a picture from her parlor wall, which inquiry showed that she did at that time. These and many others of a like general character are claimed as experimental, being produced by an exercise of volition. The largest class of cases are what are termed "spontaneous."

As where, for instance, a lady is awakened in the morning by the sensation of being violently struck in the mouth by some physical object, but could find nothing. Her husband, who was away, on returning, told her that he had at that very time met with an accident at sea by being struck in the mouth. Cases are cited of persons who hear themselves called by name by a voice which is recognized, and subsequently learn that at that very time that person, who was at a distance, died. Drowning persons and persons passing through some crisis of life project impressions to distant friends or relatives (this is done unconsciously) that reach the percipients as a voice, touch or human semblance. All this the committee of the Psychical Research Society calls telepathy. But what is telepathy, you may ask, that being only a word. Explain the telepathic process. Is the impression transmitted by a physical vehicle? When that point in the inquiry is reached, I fear we are entering the domain of metaphysics or the unknowable.

All that the Psychical Research Society has tried to do is to collect the cases and correlate them—draw the generalization called telepathy. We see the facts always occurring in

a certain order, sequence or relation, and draw the conclusion that they are in some way related. That is all the law of gravitation does. Phenomena are observed and explained by supposing the operation of a force called gravitation. Telepathy is established in the same way. We do not know why or how a loadstone attracts steel; all we know is the bare fact of attraction. When we try to get beyond this, we are met by the problem that confronts us in every inquiry—what is a thing in its final analysis?

The cases mentioned will probably call up a smile of incredulity, but they are supported by such an array of evidence as to make their rejection by the unprejudiced a matter of some difficulty. Always bearing in mind that the marvels that physical science is daily producing, would have been pronounced with equal positiveness, as antecedently improbable. Some phenomena are exceedingly rare, but they occur nevertheless when the proper conditions obtain.

Comets, at one time, were deemed supernatural. Until eyeless fishes were found in the Mammoth Cave, it was confidently asserted that there were none such. I am not endeavoring to make out a case in favor of these oc-

currences for the purpose of bolstering up the argument for the immortality of the soul; I ask only for that suspension of judgment, that dispassionate weighing of the evidence which is essential to the discovery of truth.

Under "Phantasms of the Living" are included all cases of apparitions seen within twelve hours after the death of the person whose apparition is seen. The reason given for this is that telepathy between living minds has been demonstrated by the experiments before described; and reasoning from the *known* to the unknown, we must assume, where there is doubt, that the phantasm, when seen a few hours after death, was projected while the person was still living, and the perception of it was, by some unknown cause, deferred. That is, the dying person projects a semblance of himself, and six hours after his mind has ceased to act, his phantasm appears to a friend. By the act of dying, we are told, he releases the psychic energy which assumes the form of a phantasm, and after appearing to a friend fades away into—well, cosmic vapor. This is stretching the telepathic theory to the breaking point, but it has the merit, we are informed, of being strictly scientific.

T. J. Hudson, in his "Law of Psychic Phe-

nomena," based on materials taken from the Psychical Research Society's reports, carries this view still further—in fact, to an almost ludicrous extreme—and we find ourselves wondering whether we are reading what purports to be a philosophical treatise or Bulwer Lytton's "Strange Story." He states, in explanation of haunted houses — which he concedes to exist—that when a person dies a violent death, or when his mind at death is burdened with some great trouble, his phantasm is projected and hangs around the scene of his former activity, haunting the locality, often being seen and heard and having an objective existence, capable of being photographed and possessing the power of articulate speech. This phantom will exist for days, months, and even years, finally becoming disintegrated when its mission is accomplished. This is not the soul, but only the semblance of the physical body projected at death and subject, like it, to all the changes of the elements. Materializing mediums, when their manifestations are genuine, produce their phantasms by an exercise of the will, Hudson asserts. These speculations Hudson carries into a later book entitled a "Scientific Demonstration of a Future Life." You may judge from the samples I have given

you how far the title is likely to be justified. Where his science fails he calls in the aid of Theology.

Frederic Myers, to whom I have before referred, one of the ablest members of the Psychical Research Society, as well as one of its founders, who has made exhaustive researches and original contributions to the literature of the subjects of investigation, finds some difficulty in reconciling with the theory of telepathy the fact that most of the death-bed apparitions collected by the society appear in their street attire—coat, pantaloons, hat, necktie and collar. If they were projections of dying persons one would naturally expect them to appear in their bed-clothes, or minus any clothing, that being their condition at the time of projection. But these ghosts generally appear to carry a wardrobe with them, or to be able to improvise one out of the surrounding elements. Our Spiritualist friends would tell us, no doubt, that this would be a very easy feat for a spirit to perform. In fact, this affords an item of evidence in favor of the Spiritualistic theory as opposed to the telepathic explanation. For, suppose the apparition seen, to be, not a projection of the dying person, but his spirit which appears after his death and

presents itself to a friend or relative, it would naturally desire to appear in decent attire and also in such a way as to be recognized, and as all spirits are amateur chemists, it could readily improvise a wardrobe from the surrounding elements. But some of my audience will no no doubt prefer a more convenient way of solving the problem—namely, by flatly denying the phantasms. But these phantasms, like the ghost seen in Hamlet, will not down. Denial of the facts was the method employed by the Church in meeting the discoveries of science that were in conflict with its dogmas. The representatives of Papal infallibility denied the existence of other planets as being in conflict with Scripture, and refused the invitation to look through Galileo's telescope to determine the truth.

Before concluding, I shall refer to the remarkable case of Mrs. Piper, of Boston, who is subject to an abnormal trance condition into which she passes voluntarily, and which has been the subject of careful and exhaustive investigation by some of the ablest members of the Psychical Research Society during the last ten years. She can not be classed as an ordinary trance medium of whom our large cities are full, who make money by preying on the

most sacred emotions of the human heart. The utmost vigilance of skillful detectives, the most crucial tests employed by Professor Lodge and Frederic Myers, of England, and Dr. Hodgson, of Boston, have failed to disclose the slightest evidence of fraud. I have yet to hear of any person competent to form an intelligent and unbiased judgment who has charged her with the conscious perpetration of fraud. The professional men who have investigated her case, unite in crediting her with the possession, in her trance condition, of what they cautiously call "supernormal power of obtaining information." Dr. Hodgson took hundreds of persons to her, many of them eminent professors, and introduced them to her by fictitious names, nearly all of them receiving information about deceased relatives, startling in its correctness. While in this trance condition, other seeming personalities than her own normal self manifest themselves through her organism—claiming to be the spirits of deceased relatives and friends of the sitters—giving names, dates and information in many cases unknown to the sitters—entering into the minutest details of incidents of domestic history, that only a subsequent reference to family records and other sources of information,

can verify. In many cases the mental peculiarities are reproduced, and the impression produced upon the minds of the professional men before referred to, that they are actually communicating with the spirits of the persons they claim to be, is so great, that they involuntarily assume that attitude in addressing them and in referring to them in their reports.

The authors of the telepathic theory, however, account for all this as a species of telepathy or thought-transference from the minds of the sitters to the mind of Mrs. Piper while entranced. They claim—and I believe have collected evidence that sustains the claim to some extent—that everything that enters the mind through the channels of the senses is registered in the memory, but only a part of it is consciously remembered, some vividly and some vaguely, but the largest part of which is forgotten—that is, not consciously remembered; but it is there and will come to the surface—or, as Mr. Myers would say, rise above the threshold of consciousness—when the proper conditions obtain. This is exhibited in planchette and automatic writing and inspirational speaking, so-called, in which cases the mind acts unconsciously or semi-unconsciously, and reproduces its forgotten

knowledge. This is well illustrated by the case of the illiterate woman, who, while in a fever, spoke Greek and Hebrew. An investigation of her antecedents showed that she had at one time lived with a clergyman, whose practice it was to read aloud in those languages while walking up and down on his portico or in the house. The woman heard this, perhaps mechanically, so to speak, and her mind with its faculties sublimated by the fever, phonograph-like reproduced it.

The mind of Mrs. Piper in her trance condition, is supposed to be peculiarly susceptible to telepathic impressions, as the mind of a hypnotic subject is to suggestion by the operator. Thus there is established a rapport between the mind of Mrs. Piper in her trance condition with its supernormal powers, and that vast region of knowledge lying latent in the mind of the sitter. The result is the startling messages from the supposed spirits. But here the theory of telepathy encounters a stumbling block, in the fact that things that are uppermost in the minds of the sitters are often not referred to by Mrs. Piper in her trance; but other things of which they had no conscious recollection, and information often at the time supposed to be incorrect, being given.

How is it that a thing on which the mind is concentrated is not transferred to Mrs. Piper's mind? Again, information unknown to any one present, or to Mrs. Piper, is often communicated. Hence the telepathic theory is strained by its authors almost to the breaking point, when we are told that Mrs. Piper's mind in its trance condition, reaches out and gathers, by the telepathic process, the information from *some* living mind *somewhere* in the world. But, it may be suggested, is that *other mind* in rapport with Mrs. Piper's mind—else how does she reach it?

These telepathic theorizers, in their anxiety to avoid reference of the phenomena to the agency of spirits of the dead, here call to their aid another extremely hazy and nebulous—what shall I call it—speculation—yes, that will do. They say that perhaps we are surrounded by a kind of "Universal Mind Stuff"—in capital letters—(that might be a good thing to deify, since Science has expelled a personal God from the universe, and man's heart, we are told, craves something to worship)—a "Universal Mind Stuff," upon which is recorded an impression of all that occurs in the world, as the events of an individual's life are impressed on his memory, or like the record made on the

wax cylinder of the phonograph. Mrs. Piper's mind in the trance could reach out and gather such pieces of information as she desired to use from this universal store house of knowledge, and unconsciously retail it as spirit messages.

While telepathy may account, as we shall assume, for the information given by Mrs. Piper in her trance condition, how are we to account for the various personalities that manifest themselves through her organism? These personalities, or whatever you may choose to call them, are always consistent in the roles they play, and always show the same peculiarities. Mr. Myers of the Psychical Research Society has advanced the theory of dual personality or multiplex-consciousness — which, interpreted into plain English, means that Mrs. Piper's mind or consciousness is divided into a number of fragments which manifest themselves as so many different personalities when she is entranced—or her own mind when entranced, unconsciously to her normal self, acts the role of these different personalities.

Some time ago Mrs. Piper's case assumed a new phase—a personality would use her vocal organs to speak and at the same time another and entirely different personality

would use her hand to write—both on different subjects and with different persons—on several occasions both hands and also the voice being all used simultaneously.

Frederic Myers and other members of the Society admit that the telepathic theory does not satisfactorily account for the facts of Mrs. Piper's case; but they prefer that theory to the Spiritualistic, because it has an experimental basis, as they claim. I suspect that they are also influenced, in rejecting the Spiritualistic explanation, by the odium attaching to Spiritualism. They repeatedly declare that they will exhaust all known natural causes, even if they are compelled to stretch them to the breaking point, before they will admit that Mrs. Piper's trance personalities are what they prima facie appear to be—namely, manifestations of the spirits of deceased persons.

I omitted to state that the experiment was made of having Mrs. Piper read the contents of a letter written by a lady interested in psychical research, which was written and sealed by her on her death-bed and handed to a friend for delivery to Dr. Hodgson. Thus no *living* mind knew the contents of the letter. Mrs. Piper in her trance condition utterly failed to read it correctly, thus

bearing out, in a negative way, the theory of telepathy.

Dr. Richard Hodgson, one of the ablest members of the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research, has made a careful personal study of Mrs. Piper's case, extending over a period of ten years, and is better qualified to pronounce upon its character than any one else. It was he who personally conducted an investigation in India into the claims of Madame Blavatsky to occult power, and discovered and reported the fraudulent character of the marvels which her disciples claimed she had worked. Dr. Hodgson at one time accepted telepathy as the explanation of Mrs. Piper's case, but has finally rejected it as being inadequate. He says, in his last report, printed in the thirteenth volume of the "*Proceedings*," recently published, that the "spirit theory" is the most plausible. These are his words: "Holding the hypothesis of telepathy from the living for several years, and the spirit hypothesis also for several years, I have no hesitancy in affirming with the most absolute assurance, that the spirit hypothesis is justified by its fruits, and the other hypothesis is not." He bases this conviction

partly on evidence obtained by personal contact with these trance personalities, and partly on communications too personal for publication. In his report he goes into a minute and exhaustive analysis of the facts, and seems to make out a good case for what he calls the "spirit hypothesis."

My auditors are no doubt wondering what connection all this talk about telepathy, phantasms, and ghostly wardrobes improvised from the air, has with the immortality of the soul. The connection is not so clear as might be desired for scientific precision, but admitting the facts (and I must confess it rather hard to reject them supported as they are by such a body of evidence), we find ourselves confronted by a fact, or inference, if you prefer, of tremendous significance—namely, the action of the human mind at a distance from the physical organism. In other words, the fundamental contention of materialism—namely, that body and mind are so connected and related, that the action of the mind is entirely confined to the limits of the body and dies with the body, is shaken, if not overthrown. At all events, the presumption heretofore existing against a future existence, may be considered rebutted.

Some of the more serious minded may think

[L. of C.

these things too trivial to occupy the attention of science; but would it have been wise for Columbus to have turned back upon nearing the end of his momentous voyage of discovery because of the driftwood and floating rubbish indicating the approach of the new world, supposing these things could not come from a country worth discovering? The strata of the earth are full of bones and other fossil remains, which to the vulgar mind are unmeaning, but are full of significance to the mind imbued with the spirit of scientific discovery. The greatest discoveries of science, our most wonderful mechanical inventions, were discovered by some slight hints which had previously escaped observation.

I have seen the question asked from the materialistic standpoint: When, in the process of organic development, did man become the possessor of a soul? When these objectors inform me at what stage in organic evolution man ceased to be an animal and became man, possibly some light may be thrown on this important problem. Again, we are told that if a man lives after death, why not animals? I ask, why not? Admitting that man has nothing that animals do not possess—which is a stu-

pendous assumption—until it is proved that animals do not survive, how can we infer that man's destinies end at the grave? There is a fatal flaw in such logic.

And to-day we are still pondering the problem that perplexed the philosophers of old—the problem that has agitated the human heart and engaged the speculations of the human mind "ever since the Pleiades looked down on a breaking human heart"—"if a man die shall he live again?" Is the answer to our questionings to-day any more certain than of old? Has nature labored through all the countless ages of the past to bring man from the lowest forms of life—from a mere speck of protoplasm floating on the shoreless sea—to be the crowning work of creation—only to blot him out at last? How full of mighty suggestions is that thought! Blot out the mind that produced the divine melodies of a Beethoven, the speculations of a Newton, the dramas of a Shakespeare, the sublime thoughts of a Milton!

Blot out the intellect that penetrates into infinite space, measures and weighs planets and analyzes the light coming from the most distant stars! Ah! These are the pleadings the heart has uttered ever since love and affection played their divine melody in the human heart!

Everywhere around us we see stupendous waste. Countless forms of life are brought into existence only to live a minute or two, and but few survive. The rocky records of the earth bear testimony to the awful tragedy of life that has filled the earth with blood and pain through all these countless ages. Worlds and systems of worlds, suns and systems of suns, have been evolved in the cycles of time through which the universe has run only to be resolved at last into vapor. What then is man, what these suns and systems of suns, what is a human life, what the life of a system of suns—only a spec—only a moment.

"O yet we trust that somehow good
Will be the final goal of ill,
To pangs of nature, sins of will,
Defects of doubt and taints of blood;

That nothing walks with aimless feet;
That not one life shall be destroyed,
Or cast as rubbish to the void,
When God hath made the pile complete;

That not a worm is cloven in vain;
That not a moth with vain desire
Is shriveled in a fruitless fire
Or but subserves another's gain.

Behold we know not anything,
I can only trust that good shall fall
At last—far off—at last, to all,
And every winter change to spring.

So runs my dream; but what am I?
An infant crying in the night:
An infant crying for the light;
And with no language but a cry."

BEARING OF PSYCHICAL RESEARCH ON MODERN MATERIALISM.

This is an age of profound and far reaching changes. An age in which nothing has escaped the disintegrating effects of that spirit of doubt and inquiry that pervades every department of life and knowledge. A secular age, in which we have removed our eyes from the clouds, the abode of the gods, and fixed them upon the earth, the abode of man. A materialistic age, in which we are disposed to interpret all the phenomena of nature in terms of matter and force, and to look upon mind as only a function of the brain, to be extinguished by death. A rationalistic age, in which every belief and opinion must appear before the bar of reason for judgment, and in which the domain of the supernatural is constantly narrowing as day after day witnesses some new discovery in Science. An industrial age, in which energies heretofore occupied in preparing for Heaven, are now devoted to making *this* life as happy as possible.

Psychical Research and Materialism.

We are living in an age in which we are constantly called upon to revise our theories, readjust our ideas, and even to remodel our facts to make them conform to the new order of things disclosed by later discoveries. To the truly liberal mind, imbued with the spirit of truth, and not irrevocably committed to some particular system, this is an easy mental process. But to the narrow and bigoted, to him whose mind is fossilized, it is a more difficult matter. The habit, long cultivated, of looking at a thing from a certain standpoint, makes it extremely difficult to see it in any other aspect. We find it hard to believe that the earth's motion causes the sun to appear to revolve around the earth, and in spite of ourselves, we habitually speak of the sun as rising and setting, and it is only by a strong effort of the mind, and by constantly keeping in mind the Copernican system, that we are prevented from falling into the vulgar error. To the great mass of mankind, who mistake appearances for reality, the sun daily revolves around the earth. These same people say that the earth is flat; "can't you see that it is, what is the use of talking about it?" is the argument with which they clinch the matter. The little baby in its mother's arms also

thinks that the shining moon is within its reach, and makes frantic efforts to catch it. We are constantly mistaking appearances for the reality. The history of intellectual development is only a record of these errors—the mistaking of appearances for reality—a record of the long and painful struggle of the human intellect to emancipate itself from the deceptive appearances by which man is surrounded.

During the long night of History, when the human mind was in its infancy, man became the dupe of the most childish superstitions. The sun was a small ball of fire, and the stars were tiny lights placed in the heavens for man's sole use. Earthquakes, pestilences, comets and eclipses were produced by evil spirits or gods, to be propitiated by sacrifice and prayer. This marks the origin of religion. These spirits, and the gods who were their lineal descendants and legitimate successors, were like their worshipers, and possessed the same physical, mental and moral characteristics. They liked what their worshipers liked, and hated what they hated. In the course of time, a class of persons arose, a little more intelligent than the others, who professed to have the power of securing the favor of these gods and averting their ill-will by sacrifice and prayer. These

were the priests. They became the mediators between the gods and their worshipers—the ambassadors at the court of the gods. They interposed their sacred persons between the gods and their victims. They offered prayers and made sacrifices—sometimes by burning a lamb or other animal—or they flattered or cajoled the gods, as occasion required. If the gods proved refractory, they occasionally transferred their allegiance to a rival god. And we are told, on the very best authority, that once upon a time, many years ago, the people so far forgot themselves as to abandon their god and worship a golden calf. What a degrading spectacle! And to be candid, I suspect that these same people continue to worship that golden calf even unto this day.

These gods were very ignorant beings—though some of them, we are told on the very best authority, wrote a history of the earth in which they displayed remarkable knowledge of geography, astronomy and geology. The priests who looked after their sacred persons were equally ignorant, and their worshipers, if possible, still more ignorant. There were little gods and big gods, gods with one head and gods with three heads, gods with two arms and gods with four arms—these extra

arms and heads were, I suppose, symbolical of the power and wisdom of these particular gods. So, you see, there was a germ of truth even in these rude superstitions. One species of gods had a solitary eye in the middle of his forehead. I trust the ladies will pardon me for speaking of these gods in the masculine gender—it is not my intention to slight the fair sex. To those of you who are familiar with the science of symbolism, the god with this solitary eye in his forehead, no doubt has a meaning unknown to the uninitiated.

Occasionally, at this day, a rude stone god will be dug up and placed in a museum, and we look at it and ask ourselves if it is possible that our ancestors actually worshiped this grotesque monster. Perhaps, if we were to dig into the literature of Christian theology prevalent two hundred years ago, we might find, among the fossils of dead creeds and dogmas, an equally cruel-looking monster to whom our ancestors made daily sacrifice, and who was the lineal ancestor and blood relative of the one worshiped by us to-day.

In course of time the gods grew in knowledge, became less arbitrary and cruel—in a word, more civilized. Like the kings, whom they greatly resembled, they yielded more and

more to the demands of their worshipers. Little by little the dominions over which the gods ruled became smaller and smaller, until to-day, the territory left to them is shockingly small, and from that they will be shortly driven into ignominious exile, friendless and homeless wanderers. We may then exclaim, in the words of William Kingdom Clifford :—"The dim and shadowy outlines of the superhuman deity fade slowly away before us; and as the mist of his presence floats aside, we perceive with greater and greater clearness the shape of a yet grander and nobler figure—of Him who made all gods and shall unmake them. From the dim dawn of history, and from the inmost depths of every soul, the face of our father Man looks out upon us with the fire of eternal youth in his eyes, and says, 'Before Jehovah was, I am!'"

I have no quarrel to pick with these gods, any more than with the law of gravitation for dashing me to pieces when I fall from a building. They are but a link in the chain of progress, a step in the scheme of evolution, and express the feelings and thoughts of their day. We must have the rude pictures of savages, without perspective or expression, before we can reach the grandeur of a Raphael. We

must pass through the rude discord of the barbarian, before we can reach the sublime harmony of a Beethoven or a Mozart. The rude cosmogony of primitive man, with its reign of spirits and gods, must precede the later and grander conception of a universe governed by immutable law. These crude attempts, these blind gropings of early man, are but the manifestations of that same spirit of inquiry that distinguishes man from the lower animals, and which has culminated in the grander discoveries of the Nineteenth Century.

It would require volumes to describe those discoveries—a mere passing reference is all that the limits of my lecture will permit. Has any previous century witnessed such a transformation of ideas, such an overturning of accepted theories, such a remodeling of facts, such an awakening of intellect? To a person living two hundred years ago the marvels achieved by science during the last half century would read like the tales of the "Arabian Nights' Entertainments." Imagine the air of incredulity, the smile of derision with which even Sir Isaac Newton would have received the statement that the human voice could be transmitted a thousand miles so as to be audible, or could be "bottled up" and heard

centuries later; or what would be his wonder on hearing of the marvels of modern photography, the X-ray, wireless telegraphy, or liquid air. He would have found "no niche in his mental fabric into which to fit such things," as John Tyndall said, speaking of the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism. But the marvels of one age become the commonplaces of the next, and the wise man no longer assigns limits to nature's possibilities. We are beginning to learn to hold all our opinions open to the revision often made necessary by later and fuller knowledge. Any person who is unable to do this, whether scientist or theologian, has a fossilized mind.

Science has its fetiches as well as theology, which must be destroyed as ruthlessly as the religious idols of old. The so-called scientific men have often assailed new theories with as much rancor as the theologians of old. They have their "Index-Expurgatorius" and their "Confessions of Faith," to which all must subscribe on penalty of being stigmatized as heterodox. They have no dungeons, no inquisitions from whose subterranean chambers the cries of the helpless victims resound, no racks on which to break your bones, and no thumbscrews with which to strengthen your weakening faith, but

woe to him who strays from the beaten path! If science has canonized its votaries, it has likewise made martyrs as well as religion.

For years scientific men denied the existence of meteoric stones. Lavoisier, speaking in the name of the French Academy of Science, declared, "There are no stones in the skies; therefore none can fall upon the earth!" This statement, the very quintessence of theological dogmatism, remained unchallenged until 1803, in which year a very large meteoric stone fell in France, where the phenomenon was witnessed by several thousand people. The French Academy despatched one of its members to investigate the occurrence, and upon his return with a fragment of the stone, the most skeptical became convinced of the reality of meteoric phenomena. For centuries these stones had been falling upon the earth, all over the world, in full view, and yet it was not until 1803 that science condescended to inquire into the phenomenon, and finally admit its occurrence. This seems scarcely credible, yet it is an undisputed fact, forever warning us against rash and hasty conclusions.

The subject of "Hypnotism" suffered the same fate, having received scant attention from scientific men until its investigation was under-

taken by James Braid, an English medical man, in 1841, who directed the attention of the medical world to its therapeutic power in a paper read before the British Association in Manchester. Subsequently, the experiments and researches of Bernheim and Leibault, and finally of Charcot, took the subject out of the field of charlatanry and placed it where it received full scientific endorsement and recognition. Having long occupied, in the estimation of orthodox science, the same category as astrology, alchemy and similar delusions, and having been relegated to town-hall lecturers and self-styled professors who employed it to amuse children and old women, the subject was now placed by these patient and fearless men in a position of respectability. Thus, mesmerism or quackery, became, in the dress of science, Hypnotism. Later, the subject was taken up by the Society for Psychical Research, and has acquired a new interest in view of the light it has thrown on many of the obscure problems under investigation by that society.

On a former occasion, I delivered a lecture before your society entitled "Psychical Research and a Future Life." On that occasion my treatment of Psychical Research was necessarily brief, and I fear, to some of my au-

dience, somewhat obscure. The subject being in a measure removed, by reason of the mysticism and occultism by which it is supposed to be surrounded, from every-day thought, it will require a fuller exposition than I gave it in my former lecture, to bring it to the comprehension of my entire audience.

The Society for Psychical Research was organized in 1882. Its organization was suggested by the experiments of Prof. William Crookes, and particularly by those of the "Dialectical Society of London," which showed conclusively that ponderable objects could be moved without the intervention of any known natural force. The objects of the society being the investigation of the possibility of thought-transference, so-called haunted houses, authentic reports of apparitions, hypnotism, clairvoyance, Spiritualistic phenomena—in a word, all the phenomena roughly classed as psychical. The circular issued by the society stated: "From the recorded testimony of many competent observers, past and present, including observations recently made by men of eminence in various countries, there appears to be, amidst much illusion and deception, an important body of remarkable phenomena, which are prima facie inexplicable on any gen-

erally recognized hypothesis, and which, if incontestably established, would be of the highest possible value. The task of examining such residual phenomena has often been undertaken by individual effort, but never hitherto by a scientific society organized on a sufficiently broad basis." Prof. Sidgwick, of Cambridge, was the first President of the society, and in his presidential address stated that it was a scandal to science that the occurrence of such marvelous phenomena as it was the proposed object of the society to investigate, should be so hotly debated, when the question was susceptible of answer by simple observation and experimentation. He said, "the primary aim of our society, the thing which we all unite to promote, whether as believers or unbelievers, is to make a sustained and systematic attempt to remove this scandal in one way or another. Some of those whom I address feel, no doubt, that this attempt can only lead to the proof of most of the alleged phenomena; some, again think it probable that most, if not all, will be disproved; but regarded as a society we are quite unpledged, and as individuals we are all agreed that any particular investigation that we may make should be carried on with a single-minded desire to ascertain

the facts, and without any foregone conclusion as to their nature."

The society proposed to investigate the subjects before mentioned "without prejudice or prepossession of any kind, and in the same spirit of exact and unimpassioned inquiry which has enabled Science to solve so many problems, once not less obscure nor less hotly debated." Speaking of the attitude of so-called scientific men on this subject, Prof. Sidgwick, in the course of his presidential address, further said: "Thirty years ago it was thought want of scientific culture was an adequate explanation of the vulgar belief in mesmerism and table tipping. Then, as one man after another came forward with the results of individual investigation, there was quite a ludicrous ingenuity exercised in finding reasons for discrediting his scientific culture. He was said to be an amateur, not professional; or a specialist, without adequate generality of view and training; or a mere discoverer, not acquainted with the strict methods of experimental research; or he was not a Fellow of the Royal Society, or if he was it was by an unfortunate accident. Or, again, national distrust came in; it was in America that these things went on; or, as I was told myself, in Germany, some years ago,

it was only in England, or America, or France, or Italy, or Russia, or some half educated country, but not in the land of Geist."

It was distinctly understood that the society, as a body, was not to be responsible for the opinions of individual members thereof. The subjects which the society proposed to investigate were now to be taken from the field of charlatanry and receive a systematic, impartial and scientific treatment, thus commending the results to the serious consideration of the thinking public. The names of the eminent men from every walk of life who were associated with the movement, were alone a guarantee of honesty, impartiality and sobriety of judgment.

Among the founders of the society may be mentioned the names of Prof. Henry Sidgwick, of Cambridge; Prof. Balfour Stewart, one of the joint authors of the "Unseen Universe" and a Fellow of the Royal Society; Arthur J. Balfour, M. P., also a Fellow of the Royal Society; Edmund Gurney and F. W. H. Myers, who by their indefatigable labors and original contributions to the literature of the society, soon took rank as two of its ablest members. Mr. Myers has written a number of works on literary subjects, but will be chiefly known by his lucid, exhaustive and

original speculations on the "subliminal self" or sub-consciousness, of which I shall speak more fully later. The membership of the society soon comprised the most eminent literary, scientific and professional persons, as well as distinguished laymen, of England, America, Germany, France, and in fact, every part of the civilized world. Later a branch of the society was established in the United States, including among its members Prof. S. P. Langley, of the Smithsonian Institution; Professors Bowditch, Pickering and Royce, of Harvard, and Prof. William James, also of Harvard, who has written several works that are regarded as high authorities on Psychology. Prof. O. J. Lodge, well-known in England by his experiments in wireless telegraphy, has been an active and valuable member almost from the inception of the society. Sir William Crookes, Fellow of the Royal Society, with whose name many of you are probably familiar, as being one of the first scientific men who had the courage to investigate Spiritualism, has long been an active and efficient laborer in the field of Psychical Research.

I shall conclude this list of names of distinguished members of the Society for Psy-

chical Research with a name that might carry great weight with many persons — if any name could carry weight in problems largely speculative—that of William E. Gladstone, who declared that the work being done by the society was by far the most important of the age.

My audience may doubt the feasibility of bringing this subject within the sphere of scientific investigation. You may wonder how a ghost can be caught, and if caught, how analyzed or dissected. If one should be caught, could it be bottled and preserved in the society's museum to confound hard-headed materialists? Some time ago, a piece of very delicate, gossamer-like material was shown to me in a hermetically sealed bottle by a prominent Spiritualist, who informed me that he had cut it from the dress of a spirit that materialized at a recent seance. Why not perform the same feat with a ghost? The efforts of the Psychical Research Society to investigate haunted houses may provoke your derision; our bold inquirers venturing out on the boundless and unknown sea like the explorers of old, may even suffer the fate of the eminent philosophers who undertook the capture of the celebrated Cock-Lane ghost. While the sub-

ject may be surrounded by the same kind of difficulty that Buckle encountered in trying to found a science of history, still I believe it amenable to scientific treatment. At all events, the persons who founded the Psychical Research Society, so thought. That this belief was justified is shown by the results of the eighteen years' labors of which I shall give a brief summary.

The society, to facilitate its work, divided up its active members into committees, to each of which was assigned some special subject for investigation or experimentation. Thus there were committees on "Phantasms of the Living," "Haunted Houses," "Hypnotism," "Alleged Spiritual Phenomena," etc. Each committee, after having made a careful and exhaustive examination of its special subject, prepared and submitted a written report embodying the results of its work as well as the conclusions at which it had arrived. These reports were read at the meetings of the society, and were subsequently printed in its published "*Proceedings*," thenceforth becoming part of its permanent literature. These reports, the written criticisms thereon, and the articles on the various subjects discussed, and contributed from time to time by members, or read

before the society, make up the bulk of the thirteen volumes of "*Proceedings*" published up to date. They constitute a rich mine of information on the subject of abnormal Psychology, of which such writers as Thomas Hudson, in "The Law of Psychic Phenomena," and R. O. Mason, in his "Telepathy and the Subliminal Self," have largely availed themselves in the preparation of those popular works.

F. W. H. Myers, whom I have frequently cited, has contributed, from time to time, a series of intensely interesting and suggestive papers on what he calls the "subliminal self." These papers cover the entire period of the society's existence, and open up an entirely new field in experimental Psychology, and entitle Mr. Myers to a high rank as a profound and original thinker in that science. He may be considered as the leading representative of the society of what may be described as the "spiritualistic interpretation" of some of the more puzzling phenomena brought to light by the society's labors. I must not be understood to mean by this that he sees the action of "spirits" in the more occult phenomena—I here use the word occult as meaning difficult to explain by reference to *known* physical or psychical laws —but he thinks that they indicate, with more

or less force, the survival of human consciousness in some form or other—that they point to the possibility, if not probability, of the existence of a world of mind which has points of contact with this world of which we know, whose orbit, to use a comparison borrowed from astronomy, occasionally intersects the orbit of our physical world, as the earth's orbit crosses, at times, the path through which the meteoric matter travels around the sun and draws down into its atmosphere showers of meteoric dust which appears to us as bright lights, commonly called shooting stars, which have excited our wonder and superstition in the past; so also, when contact occurs between this world and the world of mind we have psychical phenomena that also in the past excited the wonder and superstition of the ignorant.

In a recent paper entitled "Psychology and Mysticism," Prof. Münsterberg, of Harvard, disparages the work of the Psychical Research Society as a dabbling in mysticism. The words mystical and occult have been abused almost as much as the word supernatural. Nothing is mystical, occult, or supernatural in any other sense than not being understood. Everything that occurs is a fact of nature, and occurs in conformity to some law or laws or order of na-

ture. That a phenomenon is occult, that is, not understood, is all the more reason why science should investigate its cause and the laws that govern it. The history of science is but a record of the work it has done in tracing every phenomenon to its causes, circumscribing the domain of the supernatural, and reducing all facts to an orderly system.

In his papers on "Phantasms of the Dead" (which comprise all those cases of apparitions seen more than twelve hours after the death of the person), Mr. Myers analyzes the evidence by which they are substantiated, and considers telepathy as a possible explanation. He finds much in these cases indicating survival of human consciousness and this view he elaborates in his little volume, "Science and a Future Life." Mr. Myers combines in these speculations boldness and caution; but the imaginative faculty, so largely developed in him, and which is so essential to bold, original thinking, is always held within proper bounds by his cautious and critical spirit.

Frank Podmore, one of Mr. Myers' collaborators in the preparation of the work "Phantasms of the Living," is the exponent of the opposite, or materialistic, interpretation of the phenomena, holding that none of the phenom-

ena indicate anything beyond telepathy or thought-transference and the action of the subconscious mind. His views are ably maintained in the papers contributed by him, at various times, to the published "*Proceedings*" of the society, and are summarized in his published works, "Studies in Psychical Research" and "Apparitions and Thought-transference."

Both Myers and Podmore agree, however, that apparitions seen within twelve hours after death (the limit was fixed at twelve hours rather arbitrarily, because a line had to be drawn somewhere) are of telepathic origin—that is, that at death the psychic energy that is stored in every living person is released, and in some cases, where the conditions are favorable, as the Spiritualists would say, is projected in the form of a semblance of the dying person, and appears, perhaps, to some relative or friend of whom the dying person was earnestly thinking at the time of death. In some instances the apparition is not seen at the very moment of death, but some hours afterward—which would, at first thought, seem to indicate a survival of human consciousness for at least a short time after physical dissolution. But both Myers and Podmore concur in the view, that when the appearance of this phantom is de-

layed not more than twelve hours, it is simply a case of deferred percipience, or to use a more familiar word—perception. The mind of the person to whom the apparition manifests itself, may not, at the time the telepathic impression or phantasm is projected, be in a condition favorable to its perception, therefore the impression does not become visible to the physical senses until more favorable conditions obtain, which may not occur until several hours later. This condition obtains when the mind is in a reverie, abstraction, sleep, or half sleep, or hypnotic trance—in a word, when all external stimuli are absent. This is the passivity the necessity of which the Spiritualists emphasize. Even those cases where the apparition is seen by more than one person at the same time—the society's records contain many such—both these gentlemen agree are telepathic, the telepathic impression being received at first by one and then unconsciously conveyed by him to the mind of his companions. Mr. Myers, however, thinks the telepathic impression is received directly by all the percipients, and not transferred by the mind of one to the other. I am inclined to think that some of my audience may think the original telepathic impression rather attenuated, and that the trans-

fer of it from one mind to another renders it still more attenuated. The Spiritualists will readily recognize in these phantasms denizens from the "Debatable Land," while I have no doubt the materialists will see in them nothing more than a "dominant idea."

But when the apparition is seen a month, or a year, or several years after death, the difficulty of accounting for it on the theory of telepathy becomes almost insurmountable. Rather than abandon his favorite theory and have recourse to the agency of the so-called dead, Mr. Podmore, in his papers on "Phantasms of the Dead," attempts to trace all of these cases to other sources which involve no new hypothesis; but, in trying to follow his reasoning, we often find ourselves confronted by greater difficulties than those presented by the spiritistic explanation. I fear that Mr. Podmore's devotion to his "telepathic hobby," and his strong repugnance to see any evidence of man's survival in these phenomena, often blinded him to their real significance. By pursuing this line he may have been enabled to hold fast to his materialistic moorings, but I fear he was not so likely to arrive at the truth as Mr. Myers, his fellow worker in the field of Psychical Research. We must

admit, however, with Mr. Podmore, that the "spiritistic explanation" involves the stupendous assumption that the mind, which appears, according to all the known facts of physiology, to be a mere function of the brain and nervous system, persists after their dissolution. Mr. Podmore, therefore, thinks we ought to exhaust every other explanation, however far fetched or seemingly improbable, before we regard these ghosts as other than a mere passing phantasmagoria, or as photographic impressions made on the "Mind Stuff" by which we are perhaps surrounded, which are destined to grow fainter and fainter as time passes, and finally to become altogether obliterated.

The opposing views taken by these representative thinkers may be the result of temperament or training, or may be the result of some unconscious bias—which of these I am unable to determine. They are both very able and fair minded and have a large following.

The great result accomplished by the Society for Psychical Research, which stands out prominently, and alone justifies its existence, is the establishment of telepathy, or, in a narrower sense, thought-transference. Nearly all the supernormal — not supernatural — operations of the human mind are correlated and explained

by the generalization known as telepathy. Telepathy, it may be said, is supported by the same kind of evidence as the law of gravitation. Certain phenomena are found to occur in a certain order or sequence, and the inference is drawn that they are in some way related to each other. Why or how they occur in that way we do not know—we only know the fact of their occurrence. How the loadstone attracts steel we do not know—all we know is the bare fact of such attraction. Telepathy is a comparatively rare occurrence; but if we knew all the conditions necessary to its occurrence it would not tax our credulity so much. You may ask, why does it not occur to every one? I can only answer that the psychical conditions must be present. There must be a mind to project the telepathic impression and one favorable to its reception. How often will we find these two conditions concurring?

In order to account for the transmission of light from the heavenly bodies to our earth, physical science has been forced to assume the existence of a very subtle fluid to which it has given the name of ether, and which is supposed to fill interstellar space. This is the physical vehicle by means of which vibrations of light

are carried from the most distant stars to our eyes. So the psychical interaction observed to-day in various forms is called telepathy. For, as Tennyson, with prophetic intuition, expressed it:

> "Star to star vibrates light; may soul to soul
> Strike thro' some fine element of her own?"

But in the case of telepathy, science has not yet determined the nature of the vehicle by which mind communicates with mind independently of sense. That the vehicle is some form of matter, however sublimated, all the analogies of science and nature seem to indicate.

Camille Flammarion, the French scientist, in his recent work, "The Unknown," inclines to the view that in some form of vibration the solution of this difficult problem may be found.

The tuning fork that vibrates in unison with another in the same key, and the transmission of messages by wireless telegraphy, as well as the wonderful penetrative power of the X-Ray, are suggestive physical analogies. It is in the experimental study of these subtle forces of nature that a possible solution of these obscure psychical phenomena may lie.

Telepathy, then, may be defined to be the communication of one mind with another in a

manner other than through the recognized channels of the senses. I will give you a simple case, one out of seven hundred, illustrating the operation of this law. Mrs. S. is suddenly awakened in the morning by experiencing the sensation of being struck in the mouth by some object, and, on investigation, can find nothing, but is informed by her husband, who was absent at the time, that, at the very time she had her experience, he was accidentally struck in the mouth by an oar while at sea. This is a typical case of telepathy. You may perhaps smile in your superior wisdom and declare that this is simply a coincidence. But this is only one of about seven hundred cases selected by the society from several thousand collected by the committee, to whom was assigned this subject for investigation. All the cases have been carefully studied and are well authenticated. Mr. and Mrs. Sidgwick, two of the ablest members of the society, have made a mathematical calculation of the cases, and found that the cases, where the apparition of a person is seen on the day of his death, are four hundred and forty too numerous to be explained by chance.

Sometimes the telepathic impression comes as a recognized voice conveying warning of

danger, or information of some distant event, or death—affecting some one known to the percipient, or the person receiving the message. Sometimes the telepathic impression is only felt as a vague feeling of danger or distress. But in all of these cases—some seven hundred—an event, such as death, accident, or other crisis of some kind, is found to coincide with the telepathic impression. Time and date always correspond in such a way as to exclude the idea of chance.

Adolph D'Assier, a member of the Bordeaux Academy of Science, has written an interesting volume entitled "Posthumous Humanity," in which he dissects these ghosts, classifies them, and traces them to their sources. While a vein of levity and sarcasm seems to pervade the work, it is evidently very serious, although some of the conclusions the writer draws are rather fantastic. His notion that ghosts that haunt certain localities are a semblance of some person who died there by violent means or whose mind was greatly burdened at death, has been adopted by Thomas Hudson and elaborated in his "Law of Psychic Phenomena," a work with a very pretentious title which is not justified by its contents. These ghosts, we are told, are a semblance of

the person, projected at death, and continue to haunt the locality, having an objective existence, being seen and heard and capable of being photographed, and possessing the power of articulate speech. They are not the soul or spirit, or the psychical entirety of the person, as they seem to have memory of but few incidents of earth life, and are subject to the disintegrating effects of the elements, and in time become dissipated when their mission has been accomplished. Thus, you see, the stories of haunted houses and ghosts are not all superstitions, and Crowe's "Night Side of Nature" may not be a collection of old women's tales.

The society's records contain a number of cases of persons projecting a semblance of themselves by an exercise of will. The phantasm is projected while the person is asleep, or in a semi-unconscious condition, and it is seen and recognized. These cases are no doubt authentic, as they were received first-hand from persons of undoubted veracity and intelligence. I suppose the materialists among my audience will smile at them, but let them remember that their philosophy is not the Alpha and Omega of human knowledge. If it is the authority of great names you want, let me remind you that these things are vouched

for by persons eminent in every department of human knowledge. Remember that the meteoric stones fell upon the earth for seventeen hundred years before Science took note of them. I shall now dismiss these ghosts, the aristocracy of the air, as Colonel Ingersoll calls them, and take up the subject of the "subliminal self."

The "subliminal self" is a phrase, coined, I believe, by Frederic Myers. It is also called sub-consciousness, secondary self or subjective mind. Mr. Myers is entitled to the credit of having opened this vast store-house of psychological knowledge to the world. It furnishes a key to many hitherto unsolved problems in Psychology, it explains many previously obscure phenomena, and brings within the operation of law what had once been deemed manifestations of the supernatural. Many of the occurrences recorded in History from the earliest times down to the present day, which the ignorant and superstitious have looked upon as supernatural, are, in the light of the discoveries of the "New Psychology," nothing more than supernormal—not supernatural—psychical manifestations. Just as comets and eclipses, which were comparatively rare occurrences, whose causes were unknown,

were once regarded as supernatural, so these other psychical phenomena, being also rare and more difficult to trace, were also deemed supernatural by the superstitious.

The Greeks and Romans had their oracles who claimed the possession of prophetic power; later came Mohammed who communed with the angel Gabriel, and in modern times Swedenborg, to whose eyes the other world was opened as a book, and later still, in 1841, Andrew Jackson Davis, the "Poughkeepsie Seer," an illiterate shoemaker, who wrote that extraordinary book, "Nature's Divine Revelations," being a complete history of the earth and solar system, showing a knowledge of astronomy, geology, sociology, comparative religion and general history that could only be acquired ordinarily by laborious study. The Spiritualists ascribed this book to spirits, the unbelieving to fraud, but in the light of the discoveries of Psychical Research, neither is correct. Mr. Myers would say that it was Davis' "subliminal self" or subconscious mind, with its superior powers and knowledge, that produced it. I repeat, all these strange phenomena, which have occurred in every age and among every people, savage and civilized, and which the ignorant and superstitious have

deemed supernatural, are now traced to telepathy and the action of the subconscious mind.

According to the view of Mr. Myers, everything that enters the mind through the channels of the senses makes an impression on the mind and is stored up therein, but only a small fragment of it is consciously remembered or becomes a part of the normal, every day self, or consciousness. The mind, to use a rather rude analogy, is like the earth, consisting of a number of strata or layers, each of which represents and contains a record of the mind's various stages of development, or phases of its history during life. Each of these layers or strata of the mind contains a complete chain of memories and incidents, or impressions pertaining thereto, and constitutes in itself a separate and individual self, to all of which Mr. Myers has given the name of "subliminal self." This subliminal or secondary self lies below the threshold of our normal, every day consciousness—that is, it constitutes no part of our normal, waking or every day consciousness. The "subliminal self" has superior powers of perception called clairvoyance, where the vision is extended to distant events, or exercised independently of the physical senses, or what is called clairaudience, where sounds or voices

are heard from a distance, independently of the bodily ear. In some individuals, peculiarly constituted, the "subliminal self" quite frequently comes into play and displaces, for the time, the normal self. We see this exhibited in trance, or the so-called inspirational speaking of the spiritual medium. At other times it is only manifested in some crisis of life, as at death, or in time of great personal danger. When a person is drowning, his whole life is said to flash before his mind like a panorama. The extreme crisis through which he is passing evidently causes an upheaval of his subconscious mind, or "subliminal self," with all of its latent memories accumulated during the entire lifetime—as a volcano causes an upheaval of the earth's interior, disclosing the strata underneath with their rocky records, long hidden from human eye.

In some cases the "subliminal self" sends messages to the supraliminal or every-day consciousness, which find expression in automatic and planchette writing and in the trance or inspirational utterances of the spiritual medium. Sometimes the "subliminal self" assumes control, for the time being, and displaces the normal consciousness; this is exhibited in automatic and planchette writing and trance utter-

ance. This is called automatism by Mr. Myers, because it takes place without a conscious exercise of the mind or will power. In some cases this condition is induced by hypnotism, and in others it is self-induced, as in the case of the spiritual medium who goes voluntarily into a trance. In all of these cases the mind exhibits superior powers which have hitherto been ascribed by the Spiritualists to spirit control, which, however, the "New Psychology" now demonstrates, for the first time, to be the result of the operation of previously unknown psychical laws. Thus, the learning and eloquence displayed by Andrew Jackson Davis in "Nature's Divine Revelations;" the poetry written by Henry Kiddle's little girl by the aid of a planchette and purporting to come from Shakespeare, Byron and other deceased poets; the beautiful and elevated sentiments of Edmunds and Dexter's book on Spiritualism, purporting to describe the spirit world and written automatically; even the mathematical prodigy, who, without previous training and in a twinkling, solves the most difficult mathematical problems, all show the exercise of the supernormal powers of the "subliminal self." The immense store-house of knowledge, which lies latent in the sub-conscious regions of the

mind, is thus drawn upon and exhibited to the astonished world as a miracle or supernatural revelation.

We must remember that our every-day consciousness constitutes but a small part of the immense reservoir of psychical life and experience that lies below the threshold of our consciousness. This submerged consciousness comes into play only when conditions are favorable to its emergence. The crisis through which a drowning person is passing appears to cause a dissociation between the currents of his being, or a liberation of his "subliminal self," which appears to a distant percipient as a phantasm or is heard as a voice, or perhaps, the conditions not being very favorable to its perception, only succeeds in impressing the percipient with a vague sense of evil or misfortune. In some cases—as in that of S. H. B., cited in "Phantasms of the Living," where a semblance of the person was projected by an exercise of the will and seen on two different occasions by two ladies in whose bed-chamber it appeared—no recollection was retained by the person, on waking, of what had occurred. It seems that the "subliminal self" had appeared to the ladies and acted in a dream-like way, and when S. H. B. awakened—for it was dur-

ing sleep that the projection took place—his normal self knew nothing of what had occurred to his "subliminal self." The same peculiarity is noted in hypnotic trance and in somnambulism, the subject on waking, retaining no recollection of what he said or did while in that condition, but on being subsequently restored to the same condition, again remembers everything he said and did on the former occasion. This shows that there are two or more distinct streams of consciousness in every individual, each with its own peculiarities, chain of memories, etc.

A case that attracted considerable attention in the medical world was that of Felida X., reported by Dr. Azman, of Bordeaux. This person had two distinct personalities, each with its own characteristics and chain of memories, etc. The normal or primary personality was morose and indolent, the other bright and cheerful. The secondary personality spoke of the other or normal self as a stranger or third person. An equally interesting case was that of Ansel Bourne, an evangelist who lived in Rhode Island. On January 17th, 1887, he went to Providence to attend to some business. Having transacted his business, he went to Boston and from there to Morristown, Pa. Here he opened

a small stationery store, living in the back part of it, which he had partitioned off for that purpose. In this business he was known as A. J. Brown. He remained there, running the store, until March 13th. On the night of that date, at the close of business, he retired as usual. On awakening the next morning from his night's sleep in the rear of his store, he found himself in what appeared to be a strange place. Thinking he had broken into the place, he went out into the hall and rapped on a door which he found. His landlord opened the door and said, "Good morning, Mr. Brown." "Where am I?" asked Mr. Brown. "You are all right," replied his landlord. "I am all wrong, and my name is not Brown. Where am I?" "You are in Morristown." "Where is Morristown?" "In Pennsylvania." "What day of the month is it?" asked Mr. Brown. "The 14th," said the landlord. "Does time run backward here? When I left home it was the 17th." "Seventeenth of what?" asked the landlord. "Now it is the 14th of March." His relatives were communicated with and he was taken back to Rhode Island. Everything that had happened to him while at Morristown was a blank in his memory. Dr. Richard Hodgson and Prof.

James, of Harvard, hearing of this case, investigated it and had him put into a hypnotic trance, when he immediately became Brown, the other personality assuming full sway, and gave a detailed account of his journey to Morristown and everything he did there until March 14th, when all again became blank. This was repeated several times with like results. Each one of these personalities had its own chain of memories, beliefs and affections as complete as if it were a separate individual. These cases are given as illustrating the subject of duplex-personality rather than the subject of the "subliminal self;" but they exhibit a species of subconscious action of the mind which makes a very interesting study.

In 1884, the Society for Psychical Research appointed a committee to investigate Theosophy, and particularly the claims of the so-called Adepts or Masters to the possession of superior powers over the material world and the forces of nature. The tales which were constantly floating through newspaper and magazine of the marvels occurring in India, and which seemed to have the support of intelligent and credible witnesses, seemed to justify an investigation. The Theosophical Society was founded in New York in 1875 by

H. S. Olcott and Mme. Blavatsky, the latter of whom was a native of Russia, and had at one time posed as a spiritual medium. She became famous as the High Priestess of Theosophy and authoress of that medley of ignorance and learning, "Isis Unveiled." Theosophy soon had numerous votaries, among the most noted being A. P. Sinnett, who expounded the new philosophy in the "Occult World," published in 1881. Dr. Richard Hodgson, one of the committee appointed to investigate this subject, was sent to India to there personally prosecute the investigation. Dr. Hodgson was well qualified both by nature and education for this work. Born in Australia, graduating in the University of Melbourne, where he took the degrees of M.A. and LL.D., he completed his education at the University of Cambridge, England, where he subsequently became lecturer on literary and scientifie subjects. He was one of the founders of the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research, of which he was secretary, and, I believe, still occupies that position. He has for years been an earnest, conscientious and fearless worker in the field of Psychical Research. His mind is logical, his judgment judicial and cautious, and his methods painstaking, critical and thorough. He

pursues an investigation carefully and exhaustively and without prepossessions for or against it, and when he arrives at the conclusion to which the facts point, he announces the result fearlessly and with utter disregard of the storm of criticism that may be provoked thereby. The sarcasms and pleasantries of Prof. Münsterberg and his class, about founding a theory of a future life on the gossip of an "abnormal woman," do not deter him from looking for facts even in the most obscure places, and placing on them what he considers their most reasonable interpretation, undaunted by the anathemas of so-called orthodox science and its self-sufficient champions. With him a fact is a fact, whether it comes in all the regal pomp and purple robes of orthodox science, stamped with due authority, or in humble garb and over hitherto unknown roads timidly asking for recognition. He does not forget that the law of gravitation that welded into one coherent and orderly system all the celestial phenomena, and which made the Copernican conception of the universe possible, was announced by the simple fall of an apple. I may state, as throwing some light on his attitude on philosophical and scientific subjects, that Dr. Hodgson is an ardent

disciple of Herbert Spencer and believer in evolution.

Dr. Hodgson accordingly proceeded to the headquarters of the Theosophical Society at Adyar, Madras, in India, where he soon discovered that most of the marvels were produced by fraudulent means. The shrine, where the mystic rites were performed, contained elaborate secret arrangements for the production of these marvels. Back of the shrine was a secret panel, access to which was obtained through the adjoining room, which was occupied by Madame Blavatsky as a bed-room. This panel was concealed by a mirror. It appears that Madame Blavatsky, assisted by confederates, was the principal actor in the perpetration of these frauds. Letters containing instructions written in a mixture of French, Italian and English, for the perpetration of the frauds, were unearthed, and made the case against the Theosophists conclusive. Dr. Hodgson, on his return to England, wrote an exhaustive report of his investigations, which was read at the regular meeting of the society and printed in its published "*Proceedings*."

I shall now devote some attention to that most perplexing psychological phenomenon of this century, or any century, I might say with-

out exaggeration, Mrs. Piper, of Boston, of whom I have before briefly spoken. I trust, when I tell you that she is what is commonly called a trance medium, in considering her case you will divest your mind of any preconceived notions on that subject, and forget for the time, that large class of persons who prey upon the credulity of the public under that name. It has been almost fifteen years since Mrs. Piper became known to the public as being subject to an abnormal trance condition into which she enters voluntarily, and during which she loses consciousness, her organism being then used by other seeming personalities who claim to be the spirits of deceased persons. Her vocal organs will sometimes be used by one personality while each of her hands will be used by another to write messages, all simultaneously and with different persons on different subjects. She was introduced to the notice of Dr. Hodgson some ten years ago by Prof. William James, of Harvard. Dr. Hodgson has made a careful study of her case covering a period of ten years, during which time he has taken or sent hundreds of persons to see her under fictitious names, to nearly all of whom, in her trance condition, she has given names of relatives and friends, living and de-

ceased, incidents of domestic and personal history of the most intimate and confidential character, and otherwise exhibited the possession of what some of the scientific men who examined her cautiously called "supernormal power of acquiring information." Fraud, as a possible explanation of her powers, is entirely out of the question, as no amount of watching by skilled detectives has ever resulted in bringing to light anything in the slightest degree justifying such a solution, even if the suspicion were not repelled by the upright character, daily demeanor and associations of the lady. Until recently, a trance personality calling himself Phinuit, purporting to have been a French doctor, acted in most cases as intermediary, using Mrs. Piper's voice while entranced and delivering messages to the "sitter" from spirits of relatives, who he claimed were there and unable to control the vocal organs of Mrs. Piper. Occasionally a personality would use Mrs. Piper's voice and talk without the intervention of Phinuit, in which case many of the emotional and mental characteristics of the person, as known during life, were discernible.

One of the principal objections to considering these personalities as "spirits," or to be

accurate, the principal difficulty in regarding Phinuit as the spirit of a once living person, is the fact that no amount of investigation has enabled those interested to find any trace of such a person ever having lived in France. Diligent inquiries were prosecuted without avail. Phinuit's French is such as an American would speak. In communicating he has frequently been caught fishing for information. He shows some knowledge of medicine, his diagnoses being generally correct. It may be stated, however, once for all, whatever Phinuit may be, whether a fragment of Mrs. Piper's consciousness or a spirit, she knows nothing whatever of what he says or does except by report after coming from her trance.

Sometime in 1892, a personality purporting to be the spirit of a friend of Dr. Hodgson, who had recently been killed by an accident in New York, commenced controlling Mrs. Piper. During life he was devoted to intellectual pursuits, and he and Dr. Hodgson had frequently discussed questions of science and philosophy. Dr. Hodgson speaks of him in his report on Mrs. Piper's case as George Pelham, that being a fictitious name adopted to hide his identity from the public. The Pelham personality disclosed such a detailed knowledge of

things of which no other living person knew anything, such as confidential conversations with Dr. Hodgson, and the most intimate family matters unknown outside of his immediate family, that Dr. Hodgson has been gradually driven to adopt what he calls the "spirit hypothesis" in explanation of the phenomena. This conclusion he unhesitatingly announces in his exhaustive report printed in the thirteenth volume of the "*Proceedings*," in which he considers the various explanations heretofore advanced, and rejects them as being inadequate to account for the facts, and gives his reasons for inclining to the spiritistic hypothesis. He considers telepathy or thought-transference, from the minds of the sitters or distant persons to the mind of Mrs. Piper while entranced, as unsatisfactory; inasmuch as much of the information coming from the trance personalities is unknown to the sitters. In some cases it contradicts what was in their minds, and only a subsequent reference to family records or other sources of information, proves it to be correct.

Telepathy relates to the sources of information, but does not attempt to account for the various personalities manifesting themselves. These are supposed, by some persons who

have studied the matter, to be fragments of Mrs. Piper's own mind which act the role of spirits of deceased persons unknown to Mrs. Piper's waking consciousness. But these personalities have of late years become so numerous, each with its own chain of memories, incidents, emotions and characteristics, in many cases such as the person possessed while in the body, always when communicating appearing the same, that Dr. Hodgson says he is unable to regard them as so many fragments of Mrs. Piper's mind.

In November, 1889, Mrs. Piper visited England at the request of the Society for Psychical Research. There she gave a series of sittings under the supervision of Dr. Walter Leaf, Professor Lodge and Mr. Myers, all of whom became convinced that she had supernormal powers of acquiring information, but did not agree as to the explanation of the phenomena. Dr. Walter Leaf adopted the theory that Dr. Phinuit was a "secondary personality, assuming the name and acting the part with the consistency and aptitude which is shown by secondary personalities in other known cases," and that the information given was obtained from the sitters by thought-transference. Professor Lodge, however, con-

sidered this explanation insufficient and asserted, to quote his own language, that "telepathy from distant persons, if that is in any way feasible, telepathy from deceased persons as a last resort, but telepathy of some kind, as distinct from any conceivable method of extracting information from persons present," was the necessary inference to be drawn from her case.

In order to account for the information displayed by Mrs. Piper's trance personalities, those who are disposed to ascribe it to thought-transference are forced to stretch telepathy to the breaking point. Much of the information given is not in the conscious recollection of the sitters, and in some instances information is conveyed of which the sitters never had any knowledge whatever; it then becomes necessary to assume that the information was in the mind of some distant person, from whose mind it was obtained by Mrs. Piper while entranced. They do not tell us, however, how Mrs. Piper's mind is able to find, from the many millions of minds, what particular mind has the requisite information—in other words, how she comes into rapport with that mind. In following this method and in adopting this explanation, they say that they are reasoning from the known

to the unknown, and are acting in accordance with scientific methods. Thought-transference having an experimental basis, in accounting for Mrs. Piper's trance phenomena by reference to it, they introduce no new hypothesis into the field of investigation. It is only, they assert, after having exhausted every other explanation, however improbable or far-fetched, that we are justified in resorting to the agency of the dead. I omitted to state, as I should, in fairness, that names and information are not always correctly given. Dr. Hodgson, however, regards this as strengthening his view instead of discrediting it. He calls attention to the difficulties of communicating through a strange organism in which the message is communicated by being thought out, and in which everything, however irrelevant, that passes through the communicator's mind, tends to be registered in the writing or speech. He says that the very limitations and failures of the communications coming through Mrs. Piper are such as he should expect if they were what they *prima facie* appear to be — namely, messages from the spirits of deceased persons. Understand, Dr. Hodgson advances this view very cautiously, with full appreciation of its transcendent significance to mankind, and not in a spirit

of dogmatism. Nor is he influenced, he affirms, by sentimental or emotional considerations in arriving at this conclusion, but solely by the facts.

Prof. James Hyslop, of Columbia University, and Prof. Romaine Newbold, of Pennsylvania University, have had a number of sittings with Mrs. Piper in recent years. Prof. Hyslop inclines to the "spiritistic hypothesis," as shown by his recent papers on the subject published in *The Independent*. Prof. Newbold's report, in which his experiences are described, appears in the fourteenth volume of the "*Proceedings*" of the Society for Psychical Research, and forms part of the more elaborate report of Dr. Richard Hodgson on the same subject. While Prof. Newbold found much in Mrs. Piper's case that he was unable to explain, even on the far-fetched theory of telepathy from the minds of distant living persons, he also found much that, in his opinion, was irreconcilable with the "spiritistic hypothesis." Dr. Hodgson's report on this remarkable case will be continued in future numbers of the "*Proceedings*," when more light may be expected on the subject.

We now come to a consideration of the question of what bearing the facts disclosed

by Psychical Research have on modern materialism. I do not think any of us ought to dogmatize on this subject, but our attitude should be one of receptiveness, of hospitality to all facts, however humble or strange the garb in which they may appear. I will therefore content myself by saying, that it seems to me that the fundamental postulate of materialism, namely, that mind and brain are indissolubly connected, and that the mind is confined in its operations to the material organism, has been shaken, if not overthrown, by telepathy and cognate facts. Or, may we go a step further, and say that as the mind can act at a distance from, if not independently of the body, may it not be possible that it survives the destruction of the physical body? It must be conceded that every mental change is preceded or accompanied by a physical change — in a word, that mind appears to have a purely physical basis. But it is not possible that when molecular action in the brain or nervous system accompanies mental action, that it is simply a concomitance of physical change with mental change, and that the relation between these changes is not one of cause and effect. We have no right to assume dogmatically that such is the relation.

The materialism represented by such thinkers as Büchner, and expressed by his famous dictum, "Ohne Phosphor kein gedanke," —"without phosphorus no thought" — has been seriously discredited by the facts brought to light by Psychical Research. To say that nothing can be positively known about a future life, that the subject is not amenable to scientific treatment, is begging the question. We have obtained all our knowledge by the slow, laborious methods of science, and if we are ever to know anything definite on this momentous subject, it must come by the same methods of observation and experiment so fruitful in other fields of scientific research.

The founding of the Society for Psychical Research marks an epoch in the history of scientific research. Prior to the organization of that society no continuous, systematic effort, by scientific methods, had been made to solve the problem of a future life. The field had been abandoned to theology, metaphysics, and superstition mongers, with the result that we were, twenty years ago, no further advanced than in the days of Plato. A vast mass of unsifted, ill-attested facts, that seldom reached a higher level than anecdote, but which seemed to have some bearing on the question of the

survival of human consciousness, had been accumulated. These facts often suggested to candid minds the question whether, to use a common metaphor, there was not some fire where there was so much smoke. It remained for the conscientious and painstaking labors of this society to discover that *there was a good deal of fire.* There are many — probably the larger part of the reading, thinking public — who still declare that there is no fire—that it is all an illusion. In this movement History is simply repeating itself. It is the old story of ignorant, dogmatic denial that has always greeted every discovery in the past, to be followed later by grudging acquiescence, and finally by complete acceptance.

Those scientific men, like Prof. Münsterberg, of Harvard, who still refuse to examine the facts collected by the Society for Psychical Research, because they consider those facts *a priori* impossible, are in the unenviable position of those priests who refused to verify the existence of Jupiter's moons by looking through Galileo's telescope, alleging that the existence of other worlds was contrary to Scripture.

How changed the universe we look upon today, from that of old. There are, indeed, the

same stars that guided the mariner's course, and upon which the Chaldean shepherds gazed, in veneration and awe, centuries ago! The same moon circles around the earth that shed her silvery radiance upon the Garden of Gethsemane and the walls of Jerusalem as in the days of Christ! The same sun daily marks the beginning of human toil, lights up palace and cottage, and sheds his glory on hill and valley, worshiped by the Persians of old! Nightly we gaze upon the same constellations, forever wheeling through space to some unknown and far-off destination, under which Socrates and Plato pondered the same great question of "whence and whither," that baffles the philosophers of to-day. There stands the same Sphinx in solitary grandeur, upon which the Pleiades looked down four thousand years ago; the same Sphinx that witnessed the rise and fall of Roman and Grecian civilization; the emblem of time and eternity, the riddle of the ages! But all else how changed! The universe is no longer the insignificant universe of Ptolemy, of which the earth was the center and the stars but little lights set in the firmament—all created by a personal God for man's sole benefit—but the vast immeasurable Cosmos of Copernicus and Galileo, abounding in planets and systems of

planets, suns and systems of suns, all revolving around some unknown center, in obedience to eternal law. And when we turn our attention to the earth, we find equally marvelous changes. The geologist has penetrated the bowels of the earth, and wrested therefrom the secrets of its history — deciphered from the rocky record the story of man's progress through fish, and bird, and mammal, to the grandeur of a Shakespeare and a Bacon. When we survey the world of thought and speculation, what a revolution has been wrought by the genius of Herbert Spencer and Charles Darwin! Herbert Spencer has exhibited to us the world of phenomena, physical, moral, intellectual, aesthetic—in a word, the entire Cosmos—as an orderly succession of events, a development of cell to fish, of fish to bird, of bird to mammal, of mammal to man; of nebula to sun, of family to tribe, of tribe to state; of inarticulate animal cries expressing animal desires, to human speech expressing the profound speculations of a Newton and the sublime emotions of a Milton; of the rude music of savages to the sublime harmonies of a Beethoven or a Mozart; of savage superstition, in which animals were wor-

shiped, to the noble religion of the Golden Rule.

No previous century has witnessed such enormous advances as science has made in the closing years of this century. Has she a still greater boon in store for mankind? Is the crowning achievement of this century to be scientific proof of immortality? Or have all the discoveries that science has made in this century only led, step by step, to the more certain conviction that death ends all? Who shall say?

"Are God and Nature then at strife,
That Nature lends such evil dreams?
So careful of the type she seems,
So careless of the single life;

"That I, considering everywhere
Her secret meaning in her deeds,
And finding that of fifty seeds
She often brings but one to bear,

"I falter where I firmly trod,
And falling with my weight of cares
Upon the great world's altar-stairs
That slope thro' darkness up to God,

"I stretch lame hands of faith, and grope,
And gather dust and chaff, and call
To what I feel is Lord of all,
And faintly trust the larger hope.

"'So careful of the type?' but no.
From scarped cliff and quarried stone
She cries, 'A thousand types are gone;
I care for nothing, all shall go.

"Thou makest thine appeal to me:
I bring to life, I bring to death:
The spirit does but mean the breath:
I know no more.' And he, shall he,

"Man, her last work, who seem'd so fair,
Such splendid purpose in his eyes,
Who roll'd the psalm to wintry skies,
Who built him fanes of fruitless prayer;

"Who trusted God was love indeed,
And love Creation's final law,—
Tho' Nature, red in tooth and claw
With ravin, shriek'd against his creed,—

"Who loved, who suffer'd countless ills,
Who battled for the True, the Just,
Be blown about the desert dust,
Or seal'd within the iron hills?

"No more? A monster then, a dream,
A discord. Dragons of the prime,
That tear each other in their slime,
Were mellow music match'd with him.

"O life as futile, then, as frail!
O for thy voice to soothe and bless!
What hope of answer, or redress?
Behind the veil, behind the veil."

SOME FACTS ABOUT SPIRITUALISM.

Since the publication of the report of the Seybert Commission, in 1887, the popular interest in the subject of Spiritualism has been on the wane. This was owing, probably, to the rival claims of Theosophy, as well as to the adverse character of the Seybert report, added to a growing tendency in the popular mind to materialism resulting from the latter-day discoveries of physical science, and that fierce industrial struggle for existence that absorbs all of our energies and occupies us exclusively with the affairs of this world. The average man had little time to devote to an inquiry into spiritual existence; he was more concerned with the practical problem of how to keep body and soul together in the present life. He was content to let the future take care of itself, so long as his present means of life were secure. Thus, the social and economic problems have been displacing the religious questions; the membership of the economic clubs has been constantly on the increase, while that of the churches has been diminish-

ing, and the ministers have been forced to mix a little sweet with the bitters of Theology, to make it more palatable to the taste.

Moreover, if the future life was to be but a continuation of this life, with its pains and evils, there arose in most minds a serious doubt of its desirability. Religion, with its vague promise of a happier life, where the evils of this life were to be adjusted,

> "Some safer world in depth of woods embraced,
> Some happier island in the watery waste,"

had lost its hold on the average man. He still continued to attend church, either from social or business motives, or from force of habit, but belief in its dogmas had degenerated into a mere verbal assent, a lip-service, as it were, which had no more vitality in it than the Egyptian mummies from which life had departed centuries ago. Religion, with most of its professors, had become a mere mechanical bending of the knee, a perfunctory moving of the lips, as devoid of force and meaning as the fingering of the rosary by the Catholic. Then, again, Science had done much which at first sight appeared to discredit man's hope of a future life. Copernicus and Galileo, by their discoveries in astronomy, had destroyed the Biblical myth which represented

the earth as the center of the universe and man as the aim and end of creation.

Darwin's theory of man's descent from lower forms of life placed man in the position of a more highly developed animal, instead of a perfect being created by an anthropomorphic God, and showed that the difference between the mind of man and that of the higher animals was quantitative instead of qualitative. That man, instead of coming into existence in obedience to the fiat of omnipotence, endowed with an immortal soul, was the product of countless ages of evolution, bearing yet on his body the indelible marks of his lowly origin. Medical science had shown the intimate, if not indissoluble connection of the mind and brain, thus striking another blow at the dual theory of man's nature. These various causes have contributed to the decline in the interest in the problem of another life. Finally, among the causes that have co-operated in producing this lack of interest in Spiritualism, might also be reckoned the conclusions reached by the Society for Psychical Research. For, while many of the subjective phenomena, such as clairvoyance, automatic writing and trance utterance, have been found to have some basis in fact, they have been traced to non-spiritual sources;

while, on the other hand, the so-called physical phenomena have rarely been found to stand the test of rigid scrutiny or scientific proof.

The flood of rationalism that followed the discoveries of physical science in the last half of the nineteenth century, especially those associated with the names of Darwin, Huxley, Spencer and Lyell and with a host of lesser names, did much to complete the destruction of theological beliefs which had already become archaic owing to causes which had been in operation since the days of Luther and the Protestant Reformation. Silently and imperceptibly, the intellectual and industrial influences, stirred into activity by the invention of printing, sapped away the vitality of medieval theology. The principle of private judgment enunciated by Luther, carried to its logical conclusions, discredited all mere ecclesiastical authority, and resulted in the rejection of all beliefs that failed to stand the test of reason; and the intellectual revolt that commenced with a denial by Luther of the right of the Pope to sell indulgences, had its culmination in the rejection of dogmas that had, from the earliest days of the Church, been regarded as an essential part of Christian theology.

The doctrine of a future life had been so intimately associated with the whole body of religious belief, and appeared to be such an essential part of it, that it did not escape the general decadence that overtook religious doctrines. Certainly there continued to be an assent, more formal than real, to the old order of ideas, but the undercurrent of unbelief was profound and widespread, though seldom avowed and aggressive.

It was during this period of mental transition, when incense was still being offered, in a perfunctory way, to the old idols, while ingenious theologians were occupied in endeavoring to twist Scripture into harmony with Science, and while the illusions of the old theology were slowly dissolving like beautiful fairy tales and leaving a feeling of void in the hearts of that large class of persons in whom the emotions dominate the intellect, that modern Spiritualism challenged the attention of the thinking world.

Modern Spiritualism made its appearance and appealed, not to miracles supposed to have occurred nearly two thousand years ago in a remote part of the world, but to phenomena that were said to be occurring around us every day, and which we were asked to believe, not at the command of Pope, priest or Bible,

but on the evidence of our own senses. We were asked to investigate and believe, not to have faith and believe.

It is the boast of the Spiritualists that their peculiar belief had a birth as humble as that of the founder of Christianity, being ushered into life in 1848 by what were known as the "Rochester rappings." It soon spread all over the civilized world, the claim being made that it numbered millions among its converts, including crowned heads and scientific men, as well as the lowly. Among its believers, it was claimed, could be found such names as Judge Edmonds; Professor De Morgan, the eminent English mathematician, whose wife published the results of their joint investigations in a book entitled "From Matter to Spirit"; Wm. Howitt, the distinguished literary man and author of the "History of the Supernatural"; Professor William Crookes and Alfred R. Wallace, the former of whom gave the results, in "Researches in Spiritualism," of certain experiments conducted with the famous medium, D. D. Home, with the aid of scientifically constructed instruments, and which seemed to conclusively establish the existence of a force hitherto unrecognized by orthodox science. Wallace, who had distinguished himself and earned

recognition with Charles Darwin by his labors in the field of natural history, came well-nigh forfeiting the respect of his scientific contemporaries by entering into the heated controversy then prevailing, as the champion of the Spiritualists. He published his "Miracles and Modern Spiritualism," which must be conceded to be a complete exposure of the fallacy of the "argument from experience," which the great skeptic Hume had hurled, over a century ago, at the belief in miracles. The work of Wallace was a piece of dialectics of which the Spiritualists were justly proud. According to Hume's argument miracles were opposed to the uniform experience of mankind; therefore, what had the uniform experience of mankind against it, could not happen. The fallacy of his reasoning is sufficiently shown when we remember that every new fact—such, for instance, as the telephone, X-ray or phonograph —has had the uniform experience of mankind against its possibility. Wallace declared that the negative experience of mankind could not outweigh the affirmative testimony of disinterested, intelligent and competent witnesses to a fact, however improbable the fact. This was the argument of Wallace, briefly and familiarly stated.

To the names already mentioned might be added those of Dr. Robert Hare, Professor of Chemistry in the University of Pennsylvania, who claimed to have obtained communications from the spirit world with an apparatus especially designed for that purpose; Edward W. Cox, the eminent English lawyer, who claimed to have thoroughly tested, at his own home, the alleged supernormal powers of D. D. Home, the results of his experiments being given to the public in his works, "Mechanism of Man" and "Spiritualism Answered by Science." In the last named work, Cox undertook to account for the phenomena by referring them to the operation of a new force in nature, to which he gave the name "psychic force." I shall conclude this list of names of eminent Spiritualists with that of Robert Dale Owen, whose "Footfalls on the Boundary of Another World" and "Debatable Land," were at one time standard authorities in Spiritualistic literature. At one time the periodicals advocating Spiritualism numbered upwards of a hundred, issued weekly or monthly.

The lecture field was soon crowded with lecturers who, week after week, poured forth torrents of bombast that passed as inspired eloquence among the credulous disciples of the

new dispensation. These lecturers usually claimed to be inspired by the spirit of some great man. Theodore Parker and Thomas Paine seemed to be great favorites with them, and appeared to occupy most their time in delivering addresses that were noted chiefly for lack of ideas, abundance of high-sounding words and bad grammar.

These orators, inspired by the cream of the intellect of the spirit world, would tell us all about the beauties of the Summerland, the occupation of the spirits, and the constitution of the spheres; they would even venture to tell us about the inhabitants of Jupiter or some other member of the solar system; or, when laboring under the influence of some very exalted spirit, they would soar to the far-off milky way or penetrate into prehistoric times and tell us about the mound builders or the lost tribe of Israel, or they would give us information on some equally obscure question, but not one item of information would they vouchsafe on anything that could be verified, not one jot of information did they ever convey that was of any practical use to mankind. One of the best-known of these so-called inspirational speakers was Mrs. Cora L. V. Tappan–Richmond, these various names representing, I sup-

pose, the various stages in her matrimonial career so peculiar to spiritual mediums.

The spirits sometimes wrote doggerel that passed for poetry among the faithful. The story, "Edwin Druid," which was left unfinished by Dickens' death, was completed by the spirits who used a medium as an amanuensis, and the resemblance to Dickens' other literary works was said to be so striking as to leave little doubt in the minds of the Spiritualists that it was truly what it claimed to be. "Nature's Divine Revelations" was the lofty title of an ambitious work published in 1848, having been previously delivered to a select few in a series of lectures. Andrew Jackson Davis, an illiterate shoemaker, subsequently known as the "Poughkeepsie Seer," was the instrument through whom it was communicated while in a trance mesmerically induced. It has been surmised by critics that the work was the production of a man named Wm. Fishbough, who used the "unsophisticated youth," as he called Davis, as the innocent instrument of his gigantic deception. Some critics characterized the work as a conglomeration of Fourierism, St. Simeonism, Swedenborgism and Spinozism, and intimated that the author, in producing it, had laid under tribute every infidel writer from

Aristotle down to La Place. Davis might aptly be called a nineteenth century edition of Swedenborg. His voluminous works, written in the usual diffuse style that is sometimes mistaken for eloquence, were at one time high authorities on questions of Spiritualistic faith.

Davis and his works have shared the same fate that has overtaken Spiritualistic literature in general—they have fallen into "innocuous desuetude."

The mercenary soon found an immense field in the credulity fostered by Spiritualism, and fraudulent mediums sprang up like noxious weeds, and carried on a lucrative business, their only capital being unlimited impudence and a few clumsily performed tricks. The credulity exhibited by the average Spiritualist on his hobby, was a psychological marvel to which history furnishes no parallel since the epidemic of superstition that prevailed in the Middle Ages. Any vulgar impostor claiming to be a medium secured a ready passport to the confidence of the Spiritualist, who immediately became blind to all evidence of fraud. If caught in the act he might confidently count on the enthusiastic support of all good Spiritualists; nay, more, his name was inscribed on the roll of martyred mediums, and subscriptions were

set on foot for his benefit. No explanation to account for the suspicious circumstances under which he was caught was too preposterous for the confirmed Spiritualist—his was a case of hopeless insanity on the subject. He simply hugged his delusion the closer.

Some years ago Mrs. Mellon was one of the most successful materializing mediums in England, and was so clever in her peculiar line —her specialty to use a mercantile expression— that she long escaped detection. One of the common features of her seances was the appearance of the spirit form of a little girl familiarly called "Sissy," who would walk out among the audience and eat candy handed to her by some of the frolicsome spectators. One evening, while in the act of taking candy, "Sissy" was suddenly seized, and, the lights being turned on, Mrs. Mellon, the medium, was found on her knees, having come from the cabinet in that position, personating "Sissy." A false beard, pieces of linen and other accessories were found on her person, and her shoes and stockings were discovered in the cabinet. Mrs. Mellon explained that "Sissy" was made up of matter drawn from her own physical organism, and that when "Sissy" dematerialized her form returned to the medium's or-

ganism. When "Sissy" was seized, she was unable to return and be absorbed into Mrs. Mellon's body, so the medium was compelled to go to her, which she did instantaneously, and thus the spectators found her on her knees, "Sissy" having been absorbed into her body. As to the false beard found in her bosom, it was well known that ladies used it for certain purposes which delicacy prevented her from fully explaining. The presence of her shoes and stockings in the cabinet she explained by saying that "Sissy," in making up her spirit form, drew on the lower limbs of the medium to such an extent that they shrank and allowed the shoes and stockings to drop off. The Spiritualists not only adopted this explanation, but elaborated it.

Then, again, the spirit world is full of evil spirits, who delight in playing pranks on us poor mortals, and personating other good spirits and delivering messages in their names; so that when the medium is caught in trickery, the evil spirits are used as scapegoats. The medium is not guilty of trickery; no, it is these bad spirits who do the mischief, They seem to loaf about the spirit world waiting for an opportunity to gratify their evil propensities. They have even been known to enter a

medium to get drunk. If a skeptic goes to a seance intent on detecting fraud, he draws these spirits by the mysterious law of affinity, and he is made the subject of their pranks.

There are various phases of mediumship. There is the clairvoyant, who, in a deep trance, gives you a description of some spirit friend in such general terms that it will fit almost any one, and asks you if you recognize the name of Mary, Carrie, Lucy, etc. Unless you are a skeptic, and proof against conviction, you certainly will remember some one bearing one of these names. I attended a seance at which a spirit announcing herself as Mrs. Smith was recognized. It was a remarkable test, remarkable! After receiving a lot of information from these spirits of no value to any one, should we venture to ask for the full name of the communicating spirit, we are told it is too weak, and must depart. I have always considered the credulity that could swallow such stuff as the most wonderful part of the whole performance.

I often found that the spirits were very talkative on generalities, giving such choice bits of information as "you are going to make a change," or "you will shortly receive a letter," but when asked for information of which they

were presumably ignorant, they invariably took refuge in sudden and unceremonious departure. Occasionally the spirits adopted the role of questioners, and did a little fishing on their own account, using a kind of drag net for the purpose, when the following conversation would take place:

The medium: "I get the name of Harry, or Mary, or something like that; does any one recognize the spirit?" An old lady present: "It's Carrie; yes, I recognize. Has she any message?" The medium: "She says she is happy, and that there is a change in prospect for you." Old lady: "Thanks, dear spirit." "Can she tell me what caused her death?" asks the old lady. "Some trouble up here," replies the medium, with an upward gesture that takes in the abdomen, chest and head. "Was it the heart?" suggests the old lady. "Yes, her heart; but her trouble is over now." "Good bye, dear spirit, good bye." I submit this as an unvarnished description of what daily takes place at these seances.

Some time ago, while in the store of Mr. Wilms, I met an elderly gentleman, who came to tell Mr. Wilms of the marvelous table-tipping produced by his wife. The mercenary motives to deception being absent—for she

made no charge—it was decided that I should make a preliminary visit to her, a sort of skirmishing expedition, and if I found the enemy strongly intrenched, Mr. Wilms, the veteran demolisher of ghosts, should visit the field of action in person, and rout the enemy. So, being armed, as usual, with my two eyes, I proceeded to the lady's house, thinking on my way thither that possibly I had at last found the genuine article of which I had seen so many base imitations. Arrived at the house, I ascended two flights of stairs, and found myself in the humbly furnished apartments of the table-tipper. She proved to be a rather spare lady of sixty, or thereabouts, anything but ghostly looking. She required some persuasion to exhibit her wonderful psychic powers; but finally consenting, sat down beside a large oak extension table, resting both of her hands, palms downward, on the upper surface thereof. I sat in a chair about three feet away, with my eyes fastened on the field of operations. After some preliminary creaking, the table began to move, first slowly and cautiously, then violently, on the castors with which its legs were armed. The movement was forward, then backward toward the medium. I quietly noted that when the table was pushed for-

ward, her hands showed that she was imparting the push, and that when it came back in her direction, the muscles of her hands were strained in the same direction. The only way in which the table tilted—that is, rose from the floor—was at the opposite end, the spirits, though urgently requested to do so, obstinately refusing to raise the end on which her hands rested. To test the matter thoroughly, and thus remove any suspicion of fraud, I requested that the table be moved in a way that could not be accomplished by the medium without changing the position of her hands. Again the spirits became refractory, and the effort had to be abandoned. The husband, who stood by, a silent and awe-stricken spectator of his wife's superhuman powers, asked me if I did not think it wonderful. Politeness, in the house to which I had been invited to witness an exhibition of psychic power, prevented me from expressing my opinion; my mental comment, however, was, that the most wonderful part of the performance was the woman's collossal impudence and the man's boundless credulity. I had added another chapter to my study of human nature.

In this case, the medium had no pecuniary motive to practice deception, but was probably

actuated by a desire to excite wonder and attract attention to herself. I believe that Madame Blavatsky was largely influenced by these vulgar motives in the systematic frauds practiced by her in the name of Theosophy.

Having received a glowing description of the marvels performed by an Indianapolis medium, I determined to call on her, if I should ever visit that city. I was told by my informant that this wonderful medium could not only produce so-called slate writing that would convince the most skeptical, but that the spirits would communicate with you, with their own voices, in the full light, and in a manner that would leave no room for doubt even in the mind of a gentleman like our friend, Mr. Wilms. In short, that there was no way to account for what was produced through her mediumship except by reference to spirit agency.

Having occasion, shortly after, to visit Indianapolis, I proceeded to the residence of this medium, armed only with my eyes and some little experience in the line of unmasking bogus mediums. After a few minutes' ride on the electric car, I arrived at her home, a modest two-story frame. My summons was answered by a stout lady about thirty-five years old,

who announced herself as the lady for whom I inquired. After scrutinizing me through the screen door, she stated, before I had disclosed the object of my visit, that she gave no "sittings" on Sunday. Suspecting that she was trying to determine whether I was a Spiritualist, I assumed a very dreamy, Spiritualistic look, inwardly wishing that my hair was a trifle longer. This had a magical effect, for she thereupon invited me to enter, stating that her fee would be two dollars, to which I cheerfully assented, mentally resolving that I would not pay her a cent, if I detected her in trickery. Walking into a neatly and tastefully furnished double parlor divided by folding doors, I sat down, and noted the evidences of culture and refinement in the surroundings in the form of books, pictures and bric-a-brac.

The medium having excused herself for a few minutes, my eyes roamed around the room in search of contrivances to aid the spirits in materializing, but finding such a multiplicity of objects in the room, I gave up the effort in despair. While wondering whether beings so ethereal as spirits would manifest themselves amid such mundane surroundings, the lady appeared, attired in a clean wrapper. She evidently had some misgivings about me, for, as

she moved about the room arranging things for the seance, she cast apprehensive glances towards me, while I tried to disarm suspicion by looking as meek and gullible as possible.

Presently, everything being arranged, she produced from the back parlor an old center table, and earnestly requested me to thoroughly examine the same. This looked fair and calculated to invite confidence, but I remembered that all tricksters allow you to examine their paraphernalia, always carefully concealing from your inspection the point where the trick comes in. I found it a very simple, innocent-looking affair, with nothing suspicious about it, except a slot about six inches long by three wide, in the side. I noted that she turned the side with the slot towards herself when sitting down beside the table. This slot was a very harmless-looking thing that a good Spiritualist would not notice; but I remembered that the most important results often turn upon the veriest trifles, and that Pearl Bryan's murderers had been detected and convicted through the mark on her shoe.

Having seated myself at the opposite side of the table, I was furnished with a small piece of paper and a lead pencil, and requested to write no less than three names of deceased friends

thereon, adding my own at the bottom. This was supposed to be for the information of the spirits, who were ignorant of my desires. The medium having voluntarily left the room, I wrote the name of my deceased wife in full and that of my aunt, and added my own at the bottom, whereupon the medium returned and again sat down opposite to me at the table. I was now instructed to fold the paper once, lay it on the table in front of me, and cover it with both of my hands. This done, the lady produced a small double slate, asking me to rub my hands over the surface thereof. Interpreting this to be a device to get my hands from the paper, and possibly afford her an opportunity of reading its contents, I carefully held my left hand over the paper and did the rubbing with my right. I felt that this was very exasperating to the kind spirits, but I was relentless. Having finished these preliminaries, the slate was held under the table by the medium, and I was directed to withdraw my mind from the sitting as much as possible, which I interpreted to mean to close my eyes and allow the trickery to go on undetected. I assumed an inattentive look, but provokingly kept the medium's head within the scope of my vision. Several times the slate was withdrawn containing a few

illegible scrawls, evidently written while it rested in the convenient slot.

The slate was then placed on the floor under the table (after having been first held under the cover and written upon, as I inferred), and I was asked to rest my foot on it. In this position, I could feel it moved by some force which, I was convinced, proceeded from the medium's foot. On being removed from the floor, it was found to contain more illegible scrawls. After this, we adjourned to the back parlor for better conditions. Having again seated ourselves as before, we renewed our efforts to get the refractory spirits to manifest. The point to which the medium now directed all her efforts was the reading of the names on the paper held by me, for, until she accomplished this difficult feat, nothing but haphazard information could be conveyed in the messages. To accomplish this purpose, she resorted to various stratagems. First, she suggested that I open the paper and place it within the folded slates. To use a slang phrase, I gave her the rope, and complied. Having again held the slate under the table, she suggested that I write some questions, the paper and pencil lying on the table conveniently near. I politely declined, feeling convinced that when my eyes

were occupied in writing, she would drop her eyes into her lap and read the names on my slip.

The medium now remarked on the intense heat proceeding from the stove, but even politeness to a lady in distress would not cause me to turn around.

The next artifice employed by her, I think, was successful; for, after rubbing her eyes, under cover of which I think she contrived to look downward and read my slip, she withdrew the slate with a scrawling message written thereon, addressed to me by my given name and signed with my deceased wife's name; but its wording was non-committal, and commenced "My boy," that phrase being suitable if the relationship was that of sister, mother or wife. On three occasions, while my head was partially turned, I detected her lips moving when the spirit voices were being produced. She suspected that I had detected her, and expressed some doubt about her ability to give me anything satisfactory. I agreed in this, and after some social conversation, and an invitation to call again, I took my departure.

I shall not tax your patience by going into all the details of my experiences, showing how I sat on two occasions with a trumpet medium

for an hour, without the spirits venturing to touch the trumpet; how, on another occasion, I sat in a closed and darkened room for two hours, with a circle of about twelve, breathing foul air and listening in patience to the childish trivialities coming from the celestial spheres, the medium sitting beside me, while the horn was manipulated by a confederate, the credulous Spiritualists swallowing the nonsense as though it were inspiration; how the trumpet, at another time, refused to listen to the most earnest entreaties to move, and how these same experiences were repeated with the gentleman who abandoned cobbling, and took to the more lucrative and less arduous business of spirit medium.

My experiences with the last-named medium were quite instructive. He had evidently learned from hard experience the danger of sitting for an unbeliever. With Spiritualists who had given proof of the faith that was in them, almost anything in the way of trickery might be ventured upon with impunity; but with the skeptics, it was otherwise. The first thing done by him as a preliminary to a seance, is to ascertain what amount of faith is in you, and if you give indications of unbelief, you are either put off on some convenient excuse, or, if

you get a seance, nothing occurs. This medium is something of a philosopher, and reasons that if nothing occurs, his reputation is not materially damaged, but if he should be caught, the consequences might be disastrous. So he chooses the lesser of the two dangers. Having failed to get anything in my seance with him, I prepared a plan to test his powers in a way fair to all concerned. This he promptly declined. I thereupon placed him on my list of mediumistic humbugs. I speak of him thus in detail, because I am informed that he has a large and enthusiastic following, being ranked as a star of the first magnitude in the local Spiritualistic firmament.

The almost incredible extent to which the intellect of persons, otherwise sane, may be dominated by belief in Spiritualism, is well illustrated in James Payn's once popular romance, "Under One Roof." To persons unacquainted with what I may call the Psychology of Spiritualism, the incidents of this story may appear improbable, but, I assure you, it is no caricature, but a description of characters and incidents that have often found a parallel in the annals of Spiritualism.

Some stories are told about a well-known professional medium of Cincinnati, who died

recently, that show how she profited, in more than one way, by the astounding credulity of the Spiritualists who frequented her dark circles. Her specialty was in the manipulation of the trumpet. It was a common thing for the spirits, who manifested at her dark seances, to ask their friends who were present, to bring them things they wished to use in the spirit world—watches, rings, and other articles possessing a mercantile value. These articles, when brought to the dark seance by the credulous dupes, and handed to the "spirits," mysteriously disappeared—transported, apparently, to the spirit world. One lady, at the request of her "spirit husband," brought a meerschaum pipe, which was transported, as usual, to the spirit world, via the medium's rapid transit air line—in other words, found its way into the medium's collection of miscellaneous tributes to her cunning and rapacity. This lady, unexpectedly visiting the medium one day, discovered a male member of the family ensconced in the kitchen, complacently smoking the self-same pipe. The medium explained that the pipe was not satisfactory to the spirit because it was not smoke-colored, and that the gentleman who was smoking it was coloring it to suit the spirit. This "explanation" re-

moved all doubts, if there were any, from the lady's mind.

Thus far, my experience with mediums had not been very encouraging, and I found that there was more truth than poetry in Artemus Ward's description of that class of frauds when he says:—"Just as soon as a man becomes a regular out-and-out sperrit-rapper, he leeves off working, lets his hare grow all over his face, and commensis spungin his livin' out of other people. He eats all the dickshunaries he can find and goze around chock full of big words, scarein the wimmin folks and little children, and destroying the piece of mind of every famerly he enters. He don't do nobody no good, and is a cuss to society, and a pirate on other people's corn beef barrils. Admittin' all you say about the doctrines to be troo, I must say the regular professional sperrit-rapper —them as makes a bizzness on it—air about the most ornery set of cusses I ever encountered in my life."

Those good old days are gone, when, some thirty years ago, the spirit of "Katie King," materialized through the mediumship of Miss Florence Cook, nightly walked forth from the laboratory of Prof. Wm. Crookes, and, moving among the few select spectators present, en-

tertained them for an hour by narrating her experiences in earth life, some two hundred years ago. Her pulse and heart beats were felt, her temperature taken, and pieces of her dress cut out as mementoes, and the dress immediately made whole again. At times, Prof. Crookes went into the laboratory, and with the aid of a phosphorescent lamp examined the unconscious form of the medium, while the spirit of "Katie King" stood by. Truly, this was "Proof Palpable of Immortality," as it was characterized by Epes Sargent in describing the occurrences. What we are called upon to believe in this case makes a tremendous draft upon our credulity—namely, that the spirit of a girl, dead for over two hundred years, took on flesh and bone and muscle, that the blood flowed in her veins, that her pulse and heart beats could be felt, that she ate candy and carried on an extended conversation, and was photographed. This all took place in the privacy and seclusion of the home of one of the most eminent scientific men of the day—the discoverer of the metal thallium, the inventor of the Radiometer and of the tube used in connection with the X-Ray, who vouches for the genuineness of the phenomena with his great name. Frank Podmore, in his able work, "Studies in Psychical

Research," suggests, as a possible solution, that Miss Cook may have bribed a servant of Mr. Crookes to allow the introduction into the house of a confederate who personated "Katie King." Podmore thinks any explanation, however far-fetched or improbable, is preferable to that of the Spiritualists. It is to be noted, however, that Prof. Crookes (now Sir William Crookes) stated, in the course of an address several years ago before the British Association for the Advancement of Science, that his opinion as to those occurrences, as well as the experiments made by him with D. D. Home, in 1870, had undergone no material change. In fairness to the Spiritualists, it must be admitted that the experiments with Home have never been satisfactorily explained, though the attempt was made by Dr. Wm. A. Hammond, in his work "Spiritualism and Allied Nervous Derangements." Home was before the public almost continuously for twenty-five years, traveling all over the civilized world, exhibiting his peculiar powers, without pay, before crowned heads and eminent scientific, literary and professional men, without ever being detected in anything in the least suggesting trickery. He always courted investigation and invited the severest tests. There have been vague

charges of fraud, but no charge that had the slightest credible evidence to support it. His was certainly a remarkable career, and presents, as one of his biographers says, "a curious, and as yet unsolved problem." And, while such persons as Maskelyne, the English conjurer, contemptuously dismissed the feats of Home as due to jugglery, Frank Podmore, one of the keenest and most searching critics of psychical phenomena, is driven to the far-fetched explanation of "collective hallucination." In plain English, this means that two or more persons are all simultaneously in a state of mind in which they imagine they see an object that does not actually exist. I find this very difficult to conceive; in fact, the annals of Psychology present no case of "collective hallucination" artificially induced.

For many years, one of the most successful mediums was the famous slate-writer, Dr. Henry Slade, who escaped detection and exposure until, in an evil hour, he went to London, where, in a sitting with Prof. Ray Lankaster, the slate was suddenly seized immediately after the sound of writing had commenced. The slate, on examination, was found to contain a complete message covering the entire side, and evidently prepared before the sitting began. The crim-

inal prosecution that followed cut short Slade's career in England. He subsequently went to Leipsig, where, in a series of sittings with Prof. Zöllner and other German scientists in 1878, very remarkable phenomena are said to have occurred, which resulted in the conversion to Spiritualism of some of the professors. An account of these sittings is to be found in Zöllner's "Transcendental Physics."

Subsequently to this, the Seybert Commission had several sittings with him in this country, and detected him in the most flagrant imposture. His usual method was to have a pile of slates, some of them containing prepared messages, conveniently near the table at which he was sitting, and, after diverting the sitter's attention by one of his many devices, he would quickly substitute one of the prepared slates for the one previously ascertained to be clean by the sitter. At other times, he would be called to the door by his servant—quite unexpectedly, you know—carelessly taking with him the slate previously examined by the sitter and found to be clean, and quietly handing it to the servant, would receive from the latter another, containing a message probably written from data obtained from papers in the overcoat pocket of the sitter, which he had removed

and placed on the hat-rack on entering. The chairs that moved so mysteriously were manipulated by Slade's supple toes, which were conveniently encased in slippers, to be removed as occasion required. These toes, when flashed from under the table, might easily be converted into a spirit hand by the Spiritualistic imagination.

While on a visit to Germany, Prof. George S. Fullerton, a member of the Seybert Commission, wishing to test the value of the Zöllner experiments by some knowledge of the personality of the German professors, had interviews with several of them. He found that nearly every one was incapacitated in some way, either by physical defect or mental bias, from prosecuting such an inquiry with thoroughness and impartiality. Two of them were partially blind, one was seventy-five years old, and Zöllner himself came to the investigation with his mind prepossessed by his theory regarding four-dimensional space. It was found that some of the most important experiments had been arranged some days before they were tried, thus affording Slade every opportunity for preparation. Thus, this imposing mass of evidence in favor of the reality of the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, was discredited.

The Seybert Commission had been unable to find a single medium whose performances were not due to trickery. They advertised freely in the Spiritualistic papers, offering liberal pay, but were unable to secure the services of any genuine medium. They found Mansfield, the great spirit-postmaster, a transparent fraud, all of the sealed letters submitted to him having been surreptitiously opened and answered in the usual style of the quack medium. Indeed, his trickery was so palpable that they marveled at his success in posing as one of the leading lights of Spiritualism for so many years.

Every day we are told of the wonderful physical phenomena produced by this or that medium, and are asked to explain them. Very few people appreciate the difficulty of close and continuous observation, as that faculty is not called into play in the every-day affairs of life. No one but an expert is competent to observe and correctly report these alleged occurrences. When asked to account for these phenomena, I have invariably answered that I can not say how it was done, for, not having been present, I do not know what actually occurred. If I had seen what occurred, probably no further explanation would be required. To observe

correctly what occurs at the seance of a medium who is expert at jugglery, one must be trained to close and continuous observation, and be without Spiritualistic bias. The Spiritualistic bias may render the best intellect liable to delusion, as in the case of Alfred R. Wallace, the eminent naturalist. The Spiritualistic bias has affected the judgment of this gentleman to such an extent that he does not shrink from adopting the most preposterous conclusions, providing they chime in with his prepossessions.

This is shown by the explanation Mr. Wallace advanced to account for a double or döppelganger, as the Germans call it, supposed to have been seen by Mr. Wm. Stead.

Mr. Stead is editor of the English "*Review of Reviews*," is a very amiable and philanthropic gentleman, of considerable literary ability, and was also editor of the now defunct magazine, "*Borderland*," devoted to psychic research. Mr. Stead gave an account in "*Borderland*" of how he had followed, in London, a certain lady correspondent of his magazine until she reached his office, which she entered just about one minute in advance of him. On entering, inquiry disclosed the fact that she had not been there.

Mr. Stead is positive as to her identity. He thinks it was her double he saw. I should think that the most plausible explanation would be that of "mistaken identity." But Mr. Wallace, in a communication to "*Borderland*," suggests another. He thinks that the lady may have been transported bodily, in an instant, from the part of London where she was, to the place where Mr. Stead thought he saw her. This opinion he supports by citing the case of Mrs. Guppy, who was carried bodily from her home and deposited on a table, in the midst of a dark seance in London, having passed through the roof, leaving it intact. At the time the spirits seized her, she was engaged in making out her daily household accounts, and, when deposited on the table at the dark seance, she still held in her hand the pen wet with ink. *Punch* grew merry over the occurrence:—

> "There is a lady, Mrs. Guppy—
> Mark, shallow scientific puppy!—
> The heaviest she in London, marry,
> Her, spirits three long miles did carry.
>
> "Upon a table down they set her
> Within closed doors. What! you know better,
> And wer'e all dupes and self-deceivers?
> Yah! Sadducees and unbelievers."

I do not think any comment is necessary.

The Spiritualist, in his narration of what took place at a seance, invariably omits, in entire good faith, however, what he regards as unimportant details. He omits to state that the medium, after having commenced operations, was called to the door by a visitor. This was a means of effecting a substitution of slates often employed by Slade—a slate with a prepared message being handed to him by his alleged visitor. The Spiritualist fails to inform you that, while holding the slate under the table, it was thrown to the floor, apparently by accident—that being used as a cover to effect a substitution of slates.

Dr. Richard Hodgson, Secretary of the American branch of the Society for Psychical Research, illustrates this liability to mistaken impressions, by the following occurrence. While in Calcutta, he saw an Indian juggler sitting on the ground, cross-legged, in front of a hotel, with some trick coin lying on the ground in front of him. The coin would jump up unaccountably at the command of the juggler. An Englishman, happening along, stopped to watch the performance, and asked the juggler if he could make his (the Englishman's) coin jump up in the same way. The juggler replied that he could. The coin was thereupon placed on

the ground with the others, and jumped up in like manner. Hodgson afterwards heard the Englishman relate the occurrence to a crowd of friends, stating that he had placed the coin on the ground with his own hands. This was not correct. Hodgson says that the Englishman had taken the coin out of his pocket, and reached his hand down to place it on the ground with the others, when the juggler's hand deftly and carelessly intercepted it, taking the coin from the Englishman's hand, and placing it on the ground. Thus, you see, the most important point—the very point where the trick came in—was incorrectly observed and reported. This is what Dr. Hodgson calls mal-observation. As a matter of fact, the juggler, after receiving into his hand the Englishman's coin, adroitly substituted a trick coin, which he placed on the ground.

Dr. Hodgson, in commenting on this incident, says he has no doubt that the manner in which the juggler reached out his hand and took the coin, entered the domain of the Englishman's consciousness, but the impression made was only very slight, and was afterwards entirely displaced by the act of recalling in imagination the manner in which he had himself taken the coin from his pocket, and stooped to

place it on the ground. It is in this way that the most intelligent person—especially if his mind is biased by a belief in Spiritualism—is deceived.

One of the most noted slate-writing mediums in England, some fifteen years ago, was Eglinton. He had attained such proficiency in this particular line of mediumship, that professional jugglers like Kellar and scientific men like Alfred Russell Wallace, were deceived, and attributed his feats to the possession of occult power. He received numerous endorsements from men whose opinion was held in high esteem, among whom might be mentioned C. C. Massey, the well-known English barrister. Every week the Spiritualistic journals teemed with accounts of his marvels. He was even credited with executing the difficult feat of producing writing between locked and sealed slates. Mr. S. J. Davey, an intelligent Englishman, who was disposed to believe that occult agency was concerned in the production of the phenomena, had several sittings with Eglinton, and was at first much puzzled by what he saw. Finally, close watching was rewarded by a discovery of the *modus operandi*. It was found that Eglinton executed the writing under the table after having diverted the attention of the sitter by

some artifice. When he was kept under close and continuous observation the results were negative—that is, nothing occurred; but just as soon as the sitter relaxed his vigilance, conditions became more favorable, so to speak, and the spirits lost their timidity and ventured upon the boldest and most surprising tricks. If the skeptical sitter pretended to be looking elsewhere, but stealthily watched Eglinton, the latter could be seen looking intently downward at the slate, evidently held on his knees while he was executing the writing. The slightest return of vigilance on the part of the sitter would cause him to suspend the writing, and quickly assume an erect posture.

Questions, the answers of which he was ignorant, would be answered in a non-committal way. A comparison by experts of the handwriting of the alleged messages with his own known handwriting, revealed a startling resemblance, which could only be explained on the theory that they were both written by the same person. In the handwriting of the messages there was a transparent attempt at disguise, which only made the case against Eglinton stronger.

Davey, having discovered the methods employed by Eglinton to produce his slate-writing,

conceived the idea of duplicating the same. He commenced practicing, and in time, became so proficient that he was able to give a series of public sittings, including among his spectators both Spiritualists and unbelievers. The results of these sittings showed that the average person is devoid of the power of close and continuous observation, and that almost every person is liable to lapses of memory that render his description of a seance almost worthless as evidence. The persons witnessing Mr. Davey's performances were all unable to explain them, many referring them to the agency of disembodied spirits.

The spectators were requested to write accounts of what they had witnessed, but no two of them agreed in what had occurred. Even after it was known that Mr. Davey produced his slate-writing by jugglery, Alfred Russell Wallace persisted in ascribing it to spiritual agency, thus showing that even the scientific mind is liable to be warped by prepossession.

Since the days of Home, no medium has attracted so much attention and received such hearty endorsement from scientific men as Eusapia Paladino, an Italian peasant woman. In her presence, chairs and various other objects

were moved and musical instruments played upon by invisible agencies, under conditions, it was asserted, that precluded trickery or deception. As early as 1884, her powers had been tested by some of the scientific men of Italy, who pronounced the phenomena inexplicable by reference to any known physical laws. In 1892, a commission of Italian scientists held a series of seances with her, and were equally puzzled by the phenomena witnessed by them. Her hands and feet were securely held, and every precaution against trickery appears to have been taken. Later, still, another series of experiments were conducted in Italy, in which Professor Oliver Lodge and Frederic Myers participated as representatives of the Society for Psychical Research. Again the scientific men were non-plussed. Eusapia was now induced to go to Cambridge, England, for the benefit of the Society for Psychical Research, where her psychic powers were subjected to more searching tests. Prof. Lodge, Frederic Myers, Prof. Henry Sidgwick and Prof. Richet, of France, took part in the experiments. Dr. Richard Hodgson, who had exposed the fraudulent character of the Theosophical marvels in India, and who had long suspected Eusapia of trickery, also joined

in the investigation. It was through his ingenuity that Eusapia was detected.

The usual procedure at a seance was for Eusapia to sit in a chair with a person seated on each side of her, each one of whom held one of her hands. When the manifestations were about to commence, she would move her hands—still clasped in those of the persons charged with holding her—in a violent manner, swinging them in such a way as to bring them both together, so that she was enabled to cover the hands of the persons sitting on each side of her with one of her own, making it do duty for both, and leaving one of her own free to manipulate chairs and musical instruments. The semi-darkness in which the seances took place facilitated this deception. This settled her pretensions to the possession of psychic power so far as the Society for Psychical Research was concerned.

In fairness to the Spiritualists, it must be stated that Professor Richet and Frederic W. H. Myers, since the Cambridge seances, have subjected Eusapia to further tests at sittings held in Paris, and have declared themselves satisfied of the supernormal character of the phenomena occurring in her presence.

No discussion of the evidences of Spiritual-

ism would be complete without some reference, however brief, to the remarkable psychic experiences of Wm. Stainton Moses. These experiences, owing to the high character and social position of Mr. Moses, are among the most impressive and unique in the history of Spiritualism.

A careful and dispassionate study of this man's life and character, and of the extraordinary phenomena alleged to have occurred in his presence, convinces me that he can not be fairly classed with honest enthusiasts like Mohammed, self-deluded visionaries like Swedenborg, or with successful charlatans of the Madame Blavatsky type.

Mr. Moses was born in England in 1839, and received a collegiate education in preparation for the ministry, in which, after his graduation, he served until about 1870. Mr. F. W. H. Myers, who knew him intimately for nearly twenty years, bears testimony, in a biographical sketch contributed to the "*Proceedings*" of the Society for Psychical Research, to his high intelligence and irreproachable character.

His first psychic experiences occurred in 1872, and continued, with varying force, for a period of over eight years. The phenomena

occurred usually, though not invariably, in darkness or semi-darkness, and were witnessed only by a privileged circle of intimate friends, some of whom took notes of the incidents. To these notes, as well as to those made by Mr. Moses, we are indebted for our knowledge of these remarkable occurrences. Books and other articles were said to have been transported, by an invisible agency, from distant rooms, musical instruments played upon while floating through the air, writing produced independently of mortal fingers, and Mr. Moses himself frequently carried from the floor to the ceiling without the intervention of any visible agency. It would require a volume to detail all the phenomena. These occurrences are said to have taken place almost daily, in the privacy of his domestic circle, for a period of eight years. Those who best knew Mr. Moses unhesitatingly dismissed all idea of fraud on his part. There appeared, in fact, to be an entire absence of mercenary, or other motives, by which people are ordinarily influenced to commit deceptions. He had every reason, apparently, to conceal these incredible things from the public, for fear of the ridicule and scorn that would follow their publication.

Nor was there any doubt of his sanity among his acquaintances.

Frank Podmore, the "doubting Thomas" of the Society for Psychical Research, finds himself hard pressed for a solution of the problem. In his "Studies in Psychical Research," however, he suggests, as the hypothesis involving the fewest difficulties, the possibility of Mr. Moses himself unconsciously doing these things while entranced. Those who are acquainted with Mr. Podmore's invincible skepticism will not wonder at this explanation, far-fetched as it is. All the circumstances of the case are utterly irreconcilable with it. Mr. Podmore also thinks it possible that Mr. Moses and his witnesses may have been the victims of what is known in psychological parlance as "collective hallucination." This theory is conclusively disproved by the material traces, that often remained after a seance, of the action of some exterior force. Chairs, tables and other objects were found to have been displaced. To my mind the matter presents itself as a simple question of evidence. The limits of my lecture, however, will not permit a recapitulation of that evidence, much less a detailed analysis of it. The evidence is readily accessible to any one desiring to examine it, and can be found mainly in the pub-

lished "*Proceedings*" above referred to. From a careful examination of that evidence—considering also the evidence to similar phenomena in the case of D. D. Home—I am disposed to think that these things may have occurred substantially as reported by the witnesses. Their meaning must be determined by future investigations under more rigorous conditions, by those competent to conduct such researches, and in whose ability and judgment the public repose confidence.

In conclusion, I will sum up the results of my study of this interesting subject—interesting as a study of the human mind, if in no other sense—by expressing the opinion that there is a small residuum of phenomena, after deducting the vast mass of fraud and delusion with which it is almost buried, that seems to justify further investigation, and which points to the possible, if not probable, existence of forces with which we are as yet but slightly acquainted. I do not think any one who has candidly and fairly examined the evidence presented by the lives of D. D. Home and Wm. Stainton Moses will deny this.

All truth is relative, and often lies between the extremes of unreasoning belief and uncompromising denial. He who believes because

his grandfather believed, is no more unreasonable than he who accepts a theory merely because it is new. The fanatic who is ready to burn his fellowman because of difference of religious or political opinion, is no more to be condemned than he who refuses to see any truth in any system of religion. They are both actuated by the same spirit of narrow intolerance that has covered the pages of history with the blood of martyrs in all the ages of the past. The true philosopher looks upon all religions as a product of the times, an outgrowth of the intellectual conditions amid which they flourished, no more to be quarreled with than the law of gravitation for dashing us to pieces.

In my remarks on Spiritualism, I have not sought to establish any proposition; I have only attempted to find the truth and to indicate, incidentally, the pitfalls that beset the path of the investigator. If I have said anything that wounds your intellectual pride, it has not been my intention to inflict pain, but to speak the truth as I comprehend it. Spiritualism can gain no headway among intellectual and moral people until it has been purified of its immoralities and superstitions. So long as Spiritualists countenance and support the fraudulent

mediums, they must expect to be frowned upon by all honest people.

I repeat, after a very careful study of the life of D. D. Home, and the phenomena said to have occurred through him, I am disposed to concur in the opinion of such competent observers as Prof. William Crookes and Dr. Richard Hodgson, that the theory of fraud is inadequate to explain many of those phenomena, and that we are driven to the conclusion that they indicate the possible existence of some force in nature heretofore unrecognized by science. The exact nature of that force, and the manner of its operation, must be determined by future investigations.

I believe the explanations of the phenomena of life and mind given by materialism are inadequate and unsatisfactory. I believe the human mind contains powers and forces hitherto undreamed of by our materialistic philosophers, dim intimations of which are just beginning to be received. I believe that we are on the verge of discoveries in Psychology that will throw much light on the problems of mind that have heretofore baffled solution.

These discoveries will come, not through Spiritualism, which in the past has been so barren of practical results and so fruitful of

fraud, but along the line of Psychical Research, which has undertaken to investigate, by scientific methods, a field hitherto handed over to dreamers and superstition mongers.

If what Psychical Research has accomplished in the brief period of its existence is an augury of its future work, then much greater achievements may be confidently anticipated in the years to come.

Deacidified using the Bookkeeper process.
Neutralizing agent: Magnesium Oxide
Treatment Date: Nov. 2004

PreservationTechnologies
A WORLD LEADER IN PAPER PRESERVATION
111 Thomson Park Drive
Cranberry Township, PA 16066
(724) 779-2111

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS
0 013 523 208 7