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PSYCHICS: FACTS AND THEORIES

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE





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PSYCHICS:

FACTS AND THEORIES.

BY

REV. MINOT J. SAVAGE.

Author of "The Irrepressible Conflict between Two World-Theories," "The Religion of Evolution," "The Morals of Evolution," "Christianity the Science of Manhood," "The Modern Sphinx," "Bluffton," "Social Problems," etc.

"A beam in darkness: let it grow."

TENNYSON.



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TO

WILLIAM JAMES,

Doctor of Philosophy and Professor in Harvard University.

My Dear Professor,—

After having worked with you on the problems that Psychical Research seeks to solve, I am glad and proud to associate your name with mine in this little volume. If all seekers were as unprejudiced as you are, and the jury for the decision of these questions were as fair-minded, we might hope not only for speedy but for satisfactory results.

With affectionate respects,

M. J. SAVAGE.

Dec. 28, 1892.

PREFACE.

THIS little volume is made up of certain papers which have appeared in *The Arena*, and of one which was published in *The Forum* for December, 1889. The latter is re-published here by consent.

Since the appearance of these articles a hundred questions have been asked. I propose to take occasion of this preface to answer some of them a little more fully than is practicable by letter, and also to save myself the labor of writing the same things to so many different persons.

No end of people write and ask if these phenomena may not be explained by this theory or that. It may not be out of the way to say that one who has been studying the matter for eighteen years, has probably considered, with some care, all the theories he could think of. He will be grateful, however, for anything, by way of suggestion, that is not already long familiar.

A word, also, to those who send accounts of experiences. However interesting they may be, or, however conclusive to those immediately con-

cerned, they are generally quite worthless as *evidence* to others. This, for two reasons: First, in most cases, no record is made *at the time*. So it is always open to an objector to say that the memory is unreliable. And, secondly, they are not accompanied by any *corroborative* testimony of others. It cannot be too strongly, or too emphatically said that those who have these experiences should take pains to put their stories into evidential shape, so that they may help in the solution of the great problem.

There is a class of objectors who say, "If my friends in the spirit world can come and communicate at all, why do they not come directly to me? Why must I go to a medium?" For reply, I will ask another question. If a man can communicate with me along a telegraph wire, why can he not as well send the message along a board fence? I do not know. I only know that electricity will work along a wire, but will not along a fence. Why can I not play the piano as well as Blind Tom, since I may claim, without immodesty, to be more than his intellectual equal? I do not know. Perhaps it will be as well to recognize facts, and not deny them because we do not know *why* they are facts.

Then there are seekers who seem to me quite as unreasonable as are some objectors. They will go to a psychic and ask to be put in communica-

tion with a particular friend inside of five minutes. Now, if my friends are alive in a spirit world, and even if they are sometimes able to communicate, is it quite reasonable for me to expect them to be hanging about the door of any particular "medium" I may take a notion to visit? Perhaps they may have something else to do in the spirit world. I hope so, at any rate. If not, I should not like myself to live there.

It ought also to be remembered that failures are quite as satisfactory, sometimes, as successes. If it is only a clever trick, then there need be no failures. If the psychic is honest, occasional failures are to be expected. For all that an honest psychic can do is to sit and passively await results.

One more caution needs to be pointed out. Some person, just interested, starts out and appears to think he is going to settle the matter in a week. Unless prepared for a long, serious and oftentimes disappointing study, people had better let it alone, and leave it to those better fitted for the arduous task. A person needs to be trained and experienced as an observer; he needs to know what is good evidence, and what is not; he needs to know the possibilities and resources of trickery; and then, perhaps, his conclusions may be worth something.

People who propose to visit Boston or NewYork are constantly writing and asking me to give them the address of some "reliable medium." I almost

always decline. For, first, I know very few advertising mediums to whom any first-comer can be sent. And, secondly, though I may have had some satisfactory experience, it does not at all follow that it can be repeated or duplicated, to order, in the case of another. Most of my own experiences have been in the presence of personal friends to whom I should not be at liberty to send a stranger.

I am often asked if I am a Spiritualist. Some who hate spiritualism occasionally charge me with being one; while some Spirtualists express the opinion that I am a sort of Nicodemus, who fears to avow his belief in daylight. I may as well answer that question here. No, in the popular acceptation of that word, I am not a Spiritualist. As the term is commonly used, it covers much which I do not believe, and much which is most distasteful to me. Should I now adopt that name, I should be seriously misrepresenting my position. Even though I should come at last to hold the theory that communication for the spirit world alone could explain my facts, even that would not make me what is generally understood as a Spiritualist.

Spiritualists, for one thing, seem to think that their *ism* is a new religion. This claim seems to me to be hasty and absurd. The *proof* that the "dead" are alive and can communicate with the

living would only put certainty in the place of hope as to the destiny of man. It would not touch or change any one of the great essentials of my religious creed or life. I certainly hope that continued existence may be demonstrated. But "Spiritualism" is a good deal more than that, and many other things besides that. So, as the term is now used, I cannot wear it.

People often ask why, if there is anything in these so-called manifestations, they have waited all these ages and have not appeared before. There are stories of similar happenings as marking every age of history; but, as reported, they have been only occasional, and they have not attracted any serious study. Let us note the stages of evolution as having a possible bearing on this point. First, muscle ruled the world. Then came cunning, the lower form of brain power. Next, the intellect became recognized as king. After that, the moral ideal showed itself mightier than muscle or brain. To-day it is the strongest force on earth. No king dares go to war without claiming, at least, that his cause is a righteous one. Now it is not meant that either of these has ruled the world alone, for they have overlapped each other, as have the advancing forms of life. And as heralding the advent of each new stage of progress, there have been tentative and sporadic manifestations of the next higher, while still the lower was dominant. Is it not then

in line with all that has gone before, that the next step should be a larger and higher manifestation of the spiritual? And, in this case, are not the tentative and sporadic manifestations reported from the past just what might have been expected? "First the blade, then the ear, then the full corn in the ear." "That was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural; and afterward that which is spiritual."

With these suggestions, I offer the reader the following facts and some discussion as to theories. If the facts force us to the reasonable conclusion that

> "There is no death, what seems so is transition,"

why should any one shrink from having proved that which all men hope? I hesitate, as yet, to say that there *can be* no other explanation; but I frankly admit that I can now see no other which seems to me adequate to account for *all* the facts. If any one can find another explanation, I am ready to accept it. For what any reasonable man wishes is only the truth.

M. J. Savage.

Boston, Dec. 26, '92.

PSYCHICS: FACTS AND THEORIES.

CHAPTER I.

I AM to tell some stories; others are to explain them—if they can. Not that I mean to shirk any responsibility. I am ready with my opinions as to what seems to me reasonable in the way of theory, and what unreasonable, only I do not propose to dogmatize; and I am ready to listen to the suggested explanations of anybody else.

The one thing I *know* about these stories is that *they are true*. I say this advisedly and weighing my words. If in the case of any one of them, I only *think* or *believe* it is true, I shall say so; but nearly all of them I know to be true—know it in the same sense in which I

use the word of that which is scientifically demonstrated.

These stories will lead us into the realm of the supernormal. I do not say supernatural, because I do not believe in any supernatural. In my way of looking at the universe, I regard all that is as natural. If, for example, there are invisible beings who can take part in the events of our lives, their being invisible does not make them either unnatural or supernatural. A blind man would have no right to regard other people as supernatural merely because he could not see them. Science makes it purely rational for us to believe in the possibility of the existence and activity of persons we cannot see. Our senses are limited; so it is only a question of fact and evidence. But certain things may transcend the range of our ordinary or normal experience. For clearness of thought, then, let us call these supernormal.

If the claim is made that some supernormal thing has occurred, it is only reasonable that

people should demand adequate proof. The chances are against it, by as much as the normal is more common than the supernormal. If some one tells us that he has just seen on the street a dark-haired man dressed in gray, we do not ask for evidence of such a fact; but if he tells us that, while he was looking at him, he faded out of sight and disappeared, we naturally and rightly doubt the reality of his experience. We know that people can be mistaken; we know that they sometimes lie; we know that, in certain conditions of the brain, men think they see when no objective reality corresponds with their vision. The probabilities, then, are in favor of some one of these explanations.

But that a real, conscious, intelligent being may exist and not be visible to normal eyes; that such a being may be seen at one time by a particular person and not at another; that he may be seen by one person and not by others,—there is nothing in all this that contravenes scientific possibility. It is not as if a

man should tell us that he knew of a country where water did not freeze at 32 ° Fahrenheit. The scientifically impossible is one thing; while the improbable, the uncommon, or the supernormal, is quite another thing. The supernormal may be true. While, then, the probabilities are against it, the proof may be such as to render it credible. Indeed, it is conceivable that the proof may become so strong as to make incredulity absurd and unscientific. The attitude of caution is rational; but the attitude of those who "know" a thing cannot be true, merely because it is unusual, or because it does not fit into the theory of things which they happen to hold—this is irrational.

What looks like proof of certain supernormal happenings has been accumulating so rapidly during the last few years, that public attention has been turned in this direction as never before. Psychic investigation is becoming "respectable." It will be fortunate for it if it does not become a fashionable fad for those who want a new sensation. It is curious, and

would be ludicrous were it not sad, to watch the progress of these things. "You ought to be thankful to me," said John Weiss, one morning, as I met him on Washington Street, "for I have been killed to make room for you." Yes, brave men were professionally and socially killed, to make our religious liberty possible. And now even the "Orthodox" get great credit for being "liberal," and the blood-bought liberty is the hobby of snobs. Always some Winkelreid makes way for liberty at the price of fatal thrusts of spears.

A world-famous man, Church of England clergyman and scientist in one, said to me one day, "I do not talk about my psychic experiences and knowledge with everybody. I used to think all who had anything to do with these things were fools; *and I do not enjoy being called a fool.*" But now the danger is that the society fools will go to dabbling in the matter. Said another man to me, a scholar known on two continents, "Suppose you and I should come to believe, it would only be *a couple more*

cranks!" But it begins to look as though the "cranks" might get to be in the majority, when a famous German philosopher can say that "The man who any longer denies clairvoyance does not show that he is prejudiced; he only shows that he is *ignorant*."

So much by way of preface to my stories. It seems to me that all these points, at least, ought to be kept in mind by one who reads them and seriously tries to think out what they may mean. Now to the stories themselves.

I. Let me begin by telling about some rappings. Do these ever occur except in cases where they are purposely produced? Are they always a trick? A vast amount of ingenuity has been expended by those who have thought they could explain these things as the work of toe joints or other anatomical peculiarities. It will be something to find out that genuine raps do occur, whatever theory may be adopted in explanation of them.

I know a regular physician living not a thousand miles from Boston. His wife, I

should call a psychic, though she does not call herself so. Neither she nor her husband has ever had anything to do with spiritualism, nor are they believers. Where they formerly lived they were continually troubled by strange and unaccountable happenings; but though they moved to their present residence, the happenings—with one important exception—have not ceased. No attempt has been made to reduce these happenings to order, or to find out whether there is any discoverable intelligence connected with them. The doctor vaguely holds the opinion that they indicate some abnormal nervous condition on the part of his wife. So far the whole matter has been treated from that point of view. But what is it that happens? Sometimes, for two hours on a stretch, the doctor and his wife are kept wide awake at night by loud rappings on the headboard of their bed. In accordance with his nervous theory, the doctor will hold his wife with one arm, while the hand of the other arm is pressed against the headboard, in the attempt

thus to put an end to the disturbance. Said the doctor to me one day, "If anybody thinks these rappings are not genuine, I should like to have him go through some of my experiences."

He and his wife will be sitting by the drawing-room table of an evening. They will be conscious of a stream of cold air passing by them,—an accompaniment of psychic facts well known to investigators,—and then the "trouble" will begin. Sometimes it is only raps. At other times they will hear a noise on the floor of the room above, and will think their boy has fallen out of bed; but on going up to see, they find him quietly asleep. Sometimes there will be a loud crash in the corner of the room over the furnace register, as though a basket of crockery had been thrown down and broken. They occupy the house alone, and have no other way of explaining these unpleasant facts than the one alluded to above.

I give this case because of the undoubted occurrence of these things in the house of one

who is not a believer nor even an investigator. There is no expectancy or invitation of them, or any superstitious attitude of mind towards them. They are, in this case, plain, bold, apparent facts, as real as is breakfast or supper, or the existence of a brick in the sidewalk.

The "one important exception" referred to above is this: In the house they formerly occupied, the doctor's wife sometimes saw the figure of a woman. Others were said to have seen it also. It was never visible to the doctor. There is the story of a tragic death which connects this woman with this particular house. Those who believe in haunted houses would thus be able to explain why this figure is never seen in the house at present occupied by the doctor's family.

Here then are raps not to be explained as the conscious, purposed work of any visible person; nor can they be explained as the result of the shrinking of boards, as the work of rats or mice, or in any ordinary way. Starting with facts like these, many persons have sup-

posed themselves to get into communication with invisible intelligences who had taken these ways of attracting attention. Nothing of this sort has been even attempted here. I simply set forth the facts and the reality of the raps.

II. I will now tell a brief story of one of my own experiences in this line.

Until within the past year or two there lived in New York city a lady who, when a girl, had been somewhat known as a "medium." But for twenty or thirty years she led a quiet home-life with her husband, a well-known business-man. But intimates in the house told stories of remarkable occurrences. For example, a friend of this family has told me how, when at breakfast, after having spent the night there, raps would come on the table; and by means of them, how long and pleasant conversations would be held with those who once had walked the earth, but now were in the unseen. This is his belief.

Having occasion to pass through New York, this friend, above referred to, gave me a letter

of introduction, saying he knew I would be welcomed if I called at the house of this lady. I had never seen her, nor she me, but one morning I presented myself with my letter. I was shown into the back parlor. Carpenters were at work on a conservatory opening out of this room where the lady had received me. They made more or less noise, but not enough to interfere with our conversation. Soon I began to hear raps, apparently on the floor, and then in different parts of the room. On this, the lady remarked, simply, "Evidently there is some one here who wishes to communicate with you. Let us go into the front parlor, where it will be quieter." This we did, the raps following us, or rather beginning again as soon as we were seated. At her suggestion I then took pencil and paper (which I happened to have in my bag), and sat at one side of a marble-top table, while she sat at the other side in a rocker and some distance away. Then she said, "As one way of getting at the matter, suppose you do this: You know what

friends you have in the spirit world. Write now a list of names—any names you please, real or fictitious, only among them somewhere include the names of some friends in the spirit world who, you think, might like to communicate with you, if such a thing were possible." I then began. I held a paper so that she could not possibly have seen what I wrote, even though she had not been so far away. I took special pains that no movement or facial expression should betray me. Meantime she sat quietly rocking and talking. As I wrote, perhaps at the eighth or tenth name, I began to write the name of a lady friend who had not been long dead. I had hardly written the first letter before there came three loud, distinct raps. Then my hostess said, "This friend of yours, of course, knows where she died. Write now a list of places, including in it the place of her death, and see if she will recognize it." This I did, beginning with Vienna, and so on with any that occurred to me. Again, I had hardly begun to write the

real name, when once more came the three raps. And so on, concerning other matters. I speak of these only as specimens.

Now, I cannot say that in this particular case the raps were not caused by the toe joints of the lady. The thing that puzzles me, in this theory, is as to how the toe joints happened to know the name of my friend, where she died, etc., which facts the lady herself did not know, and never had known.

Certain theories, as explanations of certain facts, are already regarded as demonstrated by those familiar with the results of psychic investigation. Among these are hypnotism, clairvoyance, telepathy, and the agency of the subconscious self as active about matters with which the conscious self is not familiar. Can the simplest, genuine rap be explained as coming under either of these? No one has the slightest idea how, and as yet there is nothing in this direction that, even by courtesy, can be called a theory; but it *may* be possible that these raps are produced by psychic power. If

so, as in Case I., the psychic herself does not know even *that* she does it, much less *how*. Are they the work of the sub-conscious self? No sub-conscious self has ever claimed to do it. And if so, from what source does this sub-conscious self, as in Case II., obtain a knowledge of facts the psychic never knew? To explain these cases in accordance with any yet accepted theories, mind-reading must also be introduced. This New York lady must have been able, not only to produce the raps, consciously or unconsciously, but also to read my mind and tell me things she never knew before. But these things, if they do no more, reveal such an extension of mental power as to lead us into a world vastly unlike that which is recognized by ordinary scientific theories; and it may be well for us to be on our guard lest we invent theories more decidedly supernormal than the facts we seek to explain.

IV. My next story goes far beyond any of these, and,—well, I will ask the reader to decide as to whether there is any help in hypnotism

or clairvoyance or mind-reading, or any of the selves of the psychic, conscious, or sub-conscious.

Early on Friday morning, Jan. 18, 1884, the steamer "City of Columbus," *en route* from Boston to Savannah, was wrecked on the rocks off Gay Head, the southwestern point of Martha's Vineyard. Among the passengers was an elderly widow, the sister-in-law of one of my friends, and the mother of another.

This lady, Mrs. K., and her sister, Mrs. B., had both been interested in psychic investigation, and had held sittings with a psychic whom I will call Mrs. E. Mrs. B. was in poor health, and was visited regularly for treatment on every Monday by the psychic, Mrs. E. On occasion of these professional visits, Mrs. B. and her sister, Mrs. K., would frequently have a sitting. This Mrs. E., the psychic, had been known to all the parties concerned for many years, and was held in the highest respect. She lived in a town fifteen or twenty miles from Boston. This, then, was the situation of

affairs when the wreck of the steamer took place.

The papers of Friday evening, January 18, of course contained accounts of the disaster. On Saturday, January 19, Dr. K., my friend, the son of Mrs. K., hastened down to the beach in search of the body of his mother. No trace whatever was discovered. He became satisfied that she was among the lost, but was not able to find the body. Saturday night he returned to the city. Sunday passed by. On Monday morning, the 21st, Mrs. E. came from her country home to give the customary treatment to her patient, Mrs. B. Dr. K. called on his aunt while Mrs. E. was there, and they decided to have a sitting, to see if there would come to them anything that even purported to be news from the missing mother and sister. Immediately Mrs. K. claimed to be present; and along with many other matters, she told them three separate and distinct things which, if true, it was utterly impossible for either of them to have known.

1. She told them that, after the steamer had sailed, she had been able to exchange her inside stateroom for an outside one. All that any of them knew, was that she had been obliged to take an inside room, and that she did not want it.

2. She told them that she played whist with some friends in the steamer saloon during the evening; and she further told them the names of the ones who had made up the table.

3. Then came the startling and utterly unexpected statement,—"I do not want you to think of me as having been drowned. I was not drowned. When the alarm came, I was in my berth. Being frightened, I jumped up, and rushed out of the stateroom. In the passage-way, I was suddenly struck a blow on my head, and instantly it was over. So do not think of me as having gone through the process of drowning." Then she went on to speak of the friends she had found, and who were with her. This latter, of course, could not be verified. But the other things could

be. It was learned, through survivors, that the matter of the stateroom and the whist, even to the partners, was precisely as had been stated. But how to verify the other statement, particularly as the body had not been discovered?

All this was on Monday, the 21st. On Tuesday, the 22d, the doctor and a friend went again to the beach. After a prolonged search among the bodies that had been recovered, they were able to identify that of the mother. And they found the right side of the head *all crushed in by a blow.*

The impression made on the doctor, at the sitting on Monday, was that he had been talking with his mother. The psychic, Mrs. E., is not a clairvoyant, and there were many things connected with the sitting that made the strong impression of the mother's present personality. In order to have obtained all these facts, related under numbers 1, 2, and 3, the psychic would have had to be, not only clairvoyant, but to have gotten into mental relations with several

different people *at the same time.* The reading of several different minds at once, and also clairvoyant seeing, not only of the bruised body, but of facts that took place on the Friday previous (this being Monday),—all these multiplex and diverse operations, going on simultaneously, make up a problem that the most ardent advocate of telepathy, as a solvent of psychic facts, would hardly regard as reasonably coming within its scope.

Let us look at it clearly. Telepathy deals only with occurrences taking place at the time. I do not know of a case where clairvoyance is even claimed to see what were once facts, but which no longer exist. Then there must have been simultaneous communication with several minds. This, I think, is not even claimed as possible by anybody. Then let it be remembered that Mrs. E. is not conscious of possessing either telepathic or clairvoyant power. Such is the problem.

I express no opinion of my own. I only say that the doctor, my friend, is an educated,

level-headed, noble man. He felt sure that he detected undoubted tokens of his mother's presence. If such a thing is ever possible, surely this is the explanation most simple and natural

V. The only other case I shall be able to find room for in this chapter is a genuine ghost story, all the better for my purpose because it is simple and clear cut in every particular. It is perfectly authentic, and true beyond any sort of question.

The lady who furnishes me the facts is a parishioner, and a distant connection. In the year 1859, Mrs. S. and Mrs. C. were living in two different towns in the State of Maine. Both were Methodists, and the husband of Mrs. C. was a clergyman of that denomination. My brother, at one time, was well acquainted with him, and the family was related to my brother's wife. At this time, in 1859, Mrs. C. was ill with dropsy, and her sister, Mrs. S., was visiting her. They both well knew that Mrs. C. could not live for long, and that this was to

be their last meeting in the body. One day they were speaking of the then new and strange belief of spiritualism, when Mrs. C. said, "Mary, if it is true, and it is a possible thing, I will come to you after my death."

The day following, Mrs. S. returned to her home, in another part of the state. Some weeks passed by; it was now October 4. Mr. S. was away from home, and Mrs. S. was alone with her two daughters. No one was on the premises except a farm-hand, who slept in another part of the house. As is the common custom in these country towns in Maine, the daughters had gone to bed early, and were asleep. They were both awakened out of their sleep by their mother, who came and told them that their Aunt Melinda was dead, for she had just seen her standing in the doorway, in her nightdress. They noted the time, and it was 9.50 P.M.

In those days there were no telegraphs. The mails, even, were very irregular, and the post-office was four miles away. They had

heard nothing to make them think that their aunt was any nearer death than she had been for a long time. Three days after, i. e., on October 7, news came that Mrs. C. had passed away on the evening of October 4, after being dressed for bed. At 9.30 they had left her, for a few moments, sitting comfortably in her chair. At 10 they returned and found her dead, and they said she looked as though she had been dead for some minutes. Of course, when they sent this news, they knew nothing of the fact that, by some subtle express, they had been anticipated by at least three days.

I am well aware of the policy of the Psychical Society, and that the attempt is made to explain such appearances by supposing that the dying friend is able telepathically to impress, not ideas only, but images on the minds of distant friends, so producing the effect of an objective vision. Indeed, I am in sympathy with this attitude on the part of the society. Let telepathy and all other well-established theories be strained to the utmost. We will go further for explana-

tions only when we have to. But there are some who think that these theories are already being overweighted. No matter. Let them be. For if they break down at last, and compel us to go further, some other theory will come as a necessity; and the proof at last will seem all the more forcible because the conclusion was not jumped at, but came when all other explanations had proven futile.

Here, then, I stop for the present. Not a third of my authentic cases have been even alluded to. Many of the most striking still remain; for I wished to begin as near the commonplace as possible, and so advance from the less to the more complex and difficult. If it shall seem best, some more of my stories may be told later on.

NOTE.—I have not thought best to give names, but I am in possession of names, dates, facts of every kind, sufficient to make these what would be called legal evidence in a court of justice.

CHAPTER II.

Of the truth of what I shall here relate, I am as certain as I am of any fact in my own personal history. I select typical specimens out of a large number. Many, and some of them of the most remarkable kind, cannot yet be told, because they are so very personal in their nature; and yet, to those who know these they are naturally the most striking of all.

The first case, which I shall now detail, is so profusely authenticated that it would be accepted as absolutely conclusive evidence, even in a matter of life and death, in any court in Christendom. I shall tell the story in my own words, but I have in my possession eight separate accounts of eight living witnesses. To these accounts are attached the autograph signatures of their authors, and these are witnessed to by others who know them. With two of the

principal ones I am personally acquainted, and can vouch for both their intelligence and truthfulness. I shall not give the real names, for all these people are still living, and investigators more zealous than wise might subject them to personal annoyance.

The events now to be narrated occurred in the year 1864, and in a town not forty miles from Boston. The persons chiefly concerned are these: A Mrs. C., who had been three times married; a son, a young man, child of the first marriage (I shall speak of him by his first name, Charles); two sons by the second marriage, William and Joshua, aged respectively sixteen and thirteen; and Mrs. D., the one who played the principal part, and who tells the principal story. All these, together with the other witnesses, are still living, with the exception of the two boys William and Joshua, around whose fate the story revolves.

On March 25, 1864, Mrs. C. went into Boston for the day. Her son William had been at work in a wholesale drug house in Boston, but

for some time preceding this date had been engaged with a similar firm in Portland, Me., during the refitting of the Boston store, which had been burned. On this day, while his mother was absent, he came back from Portland, and was to return to his former position on the following Monday. This day, March 25, was a Friday. He reached home about two o'clock P.M. Not finding his mother, he, with his brother Joshua, started for the station, expecting to meet her as she came out on the five o'clock train. But the mother was delayed, and did not reach home till two hours later. She was met by a friend of the boys, who told her that William had got home from Portland. But when she reached the house the boys were not there. The last trace that was ever found of them alive was the fact that they had started for the station to meet their mother on the arrival of the five o'clock train.

At first the mother consoled herself by thinking that they must have met some friends, and had been detained by them. But when bed-

time came and they did not return, she became very anxious, and passed a sleepless night. At this time her husband, the stepfather to the boys, was in the army, and she had to rely on her own resources.

The next morning she and the elder son, Charles, began to make inquiries. They not only searched the town, but drove to neighboring towns, searching every place to which it seemed at all likely that they might have gone. Recruiting camps were visited, as it was thought possible that curiosity might have led them on some such expedition. But about five P.M. (this being Saturday) they returned, and reported to the neighbors that no trace had been found. The neighbors then offered their services, and started out in various directions, as their own ideas might guide them. But all efforts proved in vain. Then they came to the mother, and asked if she had anything else to suggest. She replied that, if her husband were at home, she should have the pond searched, for she felt sure they must be some-

where where they could not get home, or they would not have stayed away so long.

But everybody thought it most unlikely that they were in the pond, and this for two reasons. In the first place, they were timid about being on the water; and in the second place, being in March, it was too cold for them to think of any such thing as swimming or rowing. On Sunday evening, however, to satisfy the mother, and in order that nothing might be left untried, they began to search the pond, and kept on until the darkness compelled them to postpone their labors. On Monday morning early, the engine and church bells were rung, and the citizens were called together to organize a systematic search of the pond. Grappling irons were used, and cannon were fired over all the places where it seemed possible that the bodies might be. Still no trace was discovered.

Such was the situation of affairs when, at about ten o'clock in the forenoon, Mrs. D., one of the neighbors, called on Mrs. C., the mother

of the boys, to show her sympathy and ask if there was anything she could do. By this time every known resource had been exhausted. So, as a last resort, the mother asked Mrs. D. if she would not go to Boston and consult a medium. It is important here to note that she was not a spiritualist, but was a believer in Evangelical Christianity, and had never had anything to do with spiritualism. She turned to this as a last desperate resource, because in despair of help from any other quarter.

It must also be noted that Mrs. D. had no faith in it, and had never consulted a medium in all her life. So, although she had offered her services as being willing to do anything she could, she tried to beg off from this, as being both a disagreeable and hopeless errand. But as Mrs. C. urged it so strongly, and said she wished her, and no one else, to go, she at last and most reluctantly consented.

She reached Boston at twelve o'clock noon. Meantime, and with more efficient grappling irons, the search of the pond was continued,

but with no results. On arriving in town, and not knowing which way to turn, since she was not acquainted with a single medium, she went (as some one had advised her to do) to the office of the *Banner of Light*, the spiritualist paper. They directed her to a place near Court Street. The medium here was engaged, and could not see her. But the man who answered the door sent her to another one in Dix Place. This one also was engaged, and could not see her. But here they told her to go to a Mrs. Y. on Washington Street near Common Street. By this time it was about three o'clock. A sitter was just leaving, and Mrs. Y. said she was too tired to give any more sittings that day. But when she found that her visitor was from out of town, and that the next day would be too late, she said that if she would wait long enough for her to take a little rest, she would see what she could do. Nothing was said that could give her the slightest clue. Indeed, nothing could be said, for no one had a clue, and it was a clue they all were in search of. It is

important here to note another thing. Up to this time Mrs. Y., the medium, had never been in the town where the boys resided.

When the medium came again into the room, she walked directly to the fireplace and stood with her back to Mrs. D. Then, before either of them had spoken a word, by way of preliminary, she said, "They went east before they went west." The railroad station is east from the house in which they lived, and the pond is west. Then she added, "They saw the fire, and so went to the water." It was afterwards found that some men were burning brush near the lake. So knowing it would be some time before the next train, it is supposed that, boylike, they were attracted by the fire, and went to see what was going on. The medium then went on to speak of a boathouse with a hole in its side. This was not mind-reading, because Mrs. D. knew nothing of there being any boathouse or boat. She continued and described a boat,—"a narrow boat, painted black." Then she cried out, "Oh,

dear, it was never intended that more than one person should get into it at a time!" She told how the boys went through the hole in the side of the boathouse, found the boat, got into it, and pulled out onto the water. She said they had gone but a very little way before the younger brother fell overboard; then the older one, in trying to save him, also fell into the water. Then she added, "The place where they are is muddy, and they could not come to the surface. Why," said she, "it is not the main lake where they are, but the shallow part which connects with the main lake, and they are so near the shore that if it were not this time of the year [March], you could almost walk in and pick them up." She spoke of the citizens' interest in seeking for them, but said, "They will not find them; they go too far from the shore. They [the bodies] are on the left of the boathouse, a few feet from the land."

Mrs. D. then said, "If they are in the water, they will be found before I can reach home."

The medium replied, "No, they will not be

found before you get there; you will have to go and tell them where I say they are, and then they will be found within five minutes after you reach the lake." Then she made Mrs. D. promise to go with them to the lake, and added, "They are very near together. After finding one, you will quickly find the other."

In spite of all that Mrs. Y. had said, Mrs. D. was still as incredulous as before. But she had undertaken to see it through, and so started for home. She arrived at five o'clock. By this time it was known on what sort of errand she had gone to Boston, and a crowd of the curious and interested was at the station. As she stepped on to the platform, a gentleman asked, "What did the medium tell you?" She replied with the question, "Haven't you found them yet?" When they said they had not, she delivered her message. Immediately they took a carriage and started for the lake. As they came in sight of the place, Mrs. D. recognized the boathouse, with the hole in the side, as the

medium had described it. The "narrow boat painted black" had also been found drifting in another part of the lake. So by this time, Mrs. D. began to wonder if the rest might not be true. But no one in the crowd seemed to have any confidence in the medium's statements. They felt that they had thoroughly searched the pond, and that the matter was settled. But they went on, and prepared to follow Mrs. D.'s directions.

She stood on the shore while two boats put off in which were men with their grappling irons. In one boat was the elder brother, or half-brother, of the missing boys. He was holding one of the grappling irons; and after only three or four strokes of the oars, he exclaimed, "I have hold of something!" The boat was stopped, and he at once brought to the surface the body of the older boy, William. In a few minutes more, and close to the same place, the body of the other boy, Joshua, was found. The place was shallow and muddy, as the medium had said; and, held by the mud,

the bodies had not risen to the surface, as otherwise they might have done. The bodies were now placed together in a carriage, and before six o'clock they were in their mother's house.

At the close of the Boston interview, Mrs. D. asked the medium from what source she got her claimed information, and she said, "The boys' father told me." The boys' father was the second husband of Mrs. C., and had been "dead" for several years, while the mother was then living with her third husband.

Here, then, is the story. I have in my possession the account as given by Mrs. D., who is still living and is a personal acquaintance. I have the account of her daughter, who well remembers it all. I have also the account of Mrs. C., the mother; of Mr. C., the father-in-law; of the elder brother, Charles; of the sister of Mrs. D.; of the lady who was at that time postmistress of the town; of a man who came into Boston after grappling irons with which to search the lake; and also of two or

three other persons whose names, if given, would be recognized as connected with one of the distinguished men in American history.

One other item is of sufficient interest to make it worth mentioning. The father-in-law of the boys tells that one day, after his return from the army, the medium, Mrs. Y., visited the town for the first time in her life, and came to his house. She wished to visit the place where the bodies of the boys were found. When within a short distance of the lake, she asked him to fall back. She then became entranced; and picking up a stone, she stood with her eyes closed and back to the water. Then she threw the stone over her head, and landed it in the precise place from which the bodies were taken.

Mr. C., as well as his wife, was an Evangelical in his creed, and had never had anything to do with mediums.

Of the truth of these occurrences, as thus related, there can be no rational doubt. As an explanation, telepathy is excluded, for nobody

living was aware of the facts. Clairvoyance seems to be excluded, for Mrs. D. did not tell the medium where she was from nor what she wanted to find out, and clairvoyance requires that the mind should be directed or sent on some definite errand to some particular place. What, then, is left? Will the reader decide?

The incidents I am next to relate occurred two years ago this winter. The place is a large city in a neighboring state. The three persons concerned are a doctor, his wife, and one of his patients. The story, as I tell it, was given me by the wife. She was an old school friend of some of my personal friends, who hold her in the highest esteem. Her husband I have never seen; but a connection of mine was once a patient of his, and speaks of him always with enthusiastic admiration, both as a man and a physician. He is a doctor of the old school, inclined to be a sceptic, and had never had anything whatever to do with mediums. He is not visionary, and this was his first experience out of the normal.

On a winter night, then, two years ago, he was sound asleep. Being very weary, and in order that he might sleep as late as possible, the green holland shade of his own window was down to the bottom, and there was no way by which any light could penetrate his room. His wife was asleep in a room adjoining, with a door open between. She was waked out of a sound sleep by hearing him call her name. She opened her eyes, and saw his room flooded with a soft, yet intense yellowish light. She called, and said, "What is that light?" He replied, "I don't know; come in and see!" She then went into his room, and saw that it was full of this light. They lighted the gas, but the other light was so much stronger that the gas flame seemed lost in it. They looked at their watches, and it was about five full minutes before it had faded away. During this time he explained to her what had occurred. He said he was wakened by a strong light shining directly into his face. At the same time, on opening his eyes, he saw the figure of

a woman standing at the foot of his bed. His first thought was that his wife had come in and lighted the gas, as he knew she intended rising to take an early train in order to visit his mother, who was ill. Being very tired and needing sleep, he was about to reproach her for needlessly waking him, when he saw that the figure, from which now all the light seemed to proceed, was not his wife. By this time he was broad awake, and sat upright in bed staring at the figure. He noticed that it was a woman in a white garment; and looking sharply, he recognized it, as he thought, as one of his patients who was very ill. Then he realized that this could not be so, and that if any one was in the room, it must be an intruder who had no right to be there. With the vague thought of a possible burglar thus disguised, he sprang out of bed and grasped his revolver, which he was accustomed to have near at hand. This brought him face to face with the figure not three feet away. He now saw every detail of dress, complexion, and feature, and for the first time

recognized the fact that it was not a being of flesh and blood. Then it was that, in quite an excited manner, he called his wife, hoping that she would get there to see it also. But the moment he called her name, the figure disappeared, leaving, however, the intense yellow light behind, and which they both observed for five minutes by the watch before it faded out.

The next day it was found that one of his patients, closely resembling the figure he had seen, had died a few minutes before he saw his vision,—had died *calling for him.*

It will be seen that this story, like the first one in this article, is perfectly authentic in every particular. There is no question as to the facts. It only remains to find a theory that will explain the facts. Was it a telepathically produced vision, caused by the strong desire of the dying woman to see her physician? Or was it the woman herself coming to him a few moments after leaving the body? I leave my readers to reply for themselves.

I will now relate a death vision that has

about it some unusual features. These visions, of course, are very common. I have known many that were striking; but generally there is no way of proving that they are not entirely subjective. The dying frequently appear to see and converse with their friends who have preceded them, but how can any one tell that they are not like the imaginings of those in delirium? I have in my collection two or three that have about them certain characteristics that are hard to explain on that theory. One of the best is the following.

In a neighboring city were two little girls, Jennie and Edith, one about eight years of age, and the other but a little older. They were schoolmates and intimate friends. In June, 1889, both were taken ill of diphtheria. At noon on Wednesday, June 5, Jennie died. Then the parents of Edith, and her physician as well, all took particular pains to keep from her the fact that her little playmate was gone. They feared the effect of the knowledge on her own condition. To prove that they succeeded

and that she did not know, it may be mentioned that on Saturday, June 8, at noon, just before she became unconscious of all that was passing about her, she selected two of her photographs to be sent to Jennie, and also told her attendants to bid her good-bye.

Right here is the important point to be noticed in this narration. Dying persons usually see, or think they see, those and only those that they know have passed away. Edith did not know that Jennie had gone, and so, in the ordinary or imaginative vision, she would not have been expected to fancy her present.

She died at half-past six o'clock on the evening of Saturday, June 8. She had roused and bidden her friends good-bye, and was talking of dying, and seemed to have no fear. She appeared to see one and another of the friends she knew were dead. So far it was like the common cases. But now suddenly, and with every appearance of great surprise, she turned to her father, and exclaimed, "Why, papa, I am

going to take Jennie with me!" Then she added, "Why papa! Why, papa!! You did not tell me that Jennie was here!" And immediately she reached out her arms as if in welcome, and said, "O Jennie, I'm so glad you are here."

Now, I am familiar with the mechanism of the eye and the scientific theories of vision. I know also very well whatever the world knows about visions. But I submit that here is something not easily accounted for on the theory of hallucination. It was firmly fixed in her mind that Jennie was still alive, for within a few hours she had arranged to have a photograph sent her. This also comes out in the fact of her great astonishment when her friend appears among those she was not at all surprised to see, because she knew they had died. It goes, then, beyond the ordinary death vision, and presents a feature that demands, as an adequate explanation, something more than the easy one of saying she only imagined it.

I have read, of course, a good many stories

telling of the apparent seeing of "spirit" forms on the part of animals. One such, and a perfectly authentic one, I have in my collection. The friend who gave it me I will call Miss Z. I have known her for seventeen years, and feel as sure of the truth of her narrative as though I had been in her place. Without any further preface, I will tell her brief story.

In the spring of 1885, on a certain evening, she was alone in the house. All the family, even to the servants, had gone out. It was about eight o'clock, but several gas jets were burning, so that the room was light throughout. It was in the parlor, a long room runing the whole length of the house. Near the back of the parlor stood the piano. Miss Z. was sitting at the piano, practicing at a difficult musical exercise, playing it over and over, and naturally with her mind intent on this alone. She had as her only companion a little skye terrier, a great pet, and which, never having been whipped, was apparently afraid of nothing

in all the world. He was comfortably placed in an easy-chair behind the piano-stool.

Such, then, was the situation when Miss Z. was startled by hearing a sudden growl from the terrier, as if giving an alarm of danger. She looked up suddenly to see what the matter was, when, at the farther end of the room, the front of the parlor, there appeared to be a sort of mist stretching itself from the door half-way across the room. As she watched it, this mist, which was gray, seemed to shape itself into three forms. The heads and shoulders were quite clearly outlined and distinct, though they appeared to have loose wrappings about them. From the height and general slope of the shoulders of one, she thought she recognized the figure of a favorite aunt who had died a few years before. The middle figure of the three was much shorter, and made her think of her grandmother, who had been dead for a good many years. The third she did not recognize at all. The faces she did not see distinctly enough so as to feel in any way sure about them.

The dog, always before very brave, now seemed overcome with terror. He growled fiercely several times, and then jumped trembling from his chair, and hid himself under a large sofa, utterly refusing to be coaxed out. His mistress had never known him to show fear before on any occasion whatever.

Miss Z. now watched the figures, while they grew more and more indistinct, and at last seemed to fade through the closed door into the front hall. When they had disappeared, she gave her attention to the frightened terrier. He would not leave his hiding-place, and she was obliged to move the sofa and carefully lift the trembling little creature in her arms.

Now, the only remarkable thing about this is, of course, the attitude and action of the dog. The "spirits" did not seem to have come for anything. They said nothing, and did nothing of any importance. But—and this is where the problem comes in—what did the dog see? If his mistress had seen the figures first and had shown any fear, it might

reasonably be said that her fear was contagious, and that the dog was frightened because she was. But the dog was the first discoverer; the discoverer—of what? If there had been nothing there to see, the dog would have seen nothing. Are dogs subject to hallucinations? Even if they are, and though it were a subjective vision on the dog's part, how does it happen that Miss Z. also sees it? Would she mistake a dog's subjective vision for the figure of her aunt?

Turn it about as you will, it is a curious experience, and one worth the reader's finding an explanation for, if he can.

The limits of this chapter will make room for only one more story. The lady who had this experience is the one who gives us the account of it, though I tell it in my own words. She was a schoolmate of my brother, and her character and veracity are beyond question. In June, 1886, she was a patient in the family of a physician in a well-known city in a neighboring state. She was suffering much from mental

depression, feeling assured in her own mind that she had an ovarian tumor. On this particular day, she was lying alone in her room, unusually oppressed by foreboding fears. Lying thus, absorbed in thoughts of her own condition, she suddenly became conscious as of an open map of the United States being spread before her. Her attention was particularly directed to Virginia, and then westward to, as she then thought, Ohio. At the same time she heard the name "McDowell." At once she thought of General McDowell, as the only one she knew of by that name. But a calm, gentle voice seemed to reply to her unspoken thought, "No, I am not General McDowell, but a physician. I was the first advocate and practitioner of ovarian surgery. By the urgent request of your friends, I have examined your case very carefully. Rest assured, madam, your malady is not of that character. In time you will regain your health, but never be very strong."

With a feeling of awe, gratitude, and wonder,

which, she says, she could not attempt to express, she rose from the couch on which she was lying, and went at once to the doctor's office in another part of the house. At once she related what had occurred, and asked, "Am I right?" The physician, a lady, went to her library and took down her Medical Encyclopædia. From this she read, "Ephraim McDowell, born in Virginia, settled in Kentucky. He performed the first operation in ovarian surgery that is recorded in this country."

She was correct, therefore, in every particular, except the substituting Ohio for Kentucky, and this is quite natural, as it is the next adjoining state.

Several points now it is important carefully to note.

In the first place, this lady has had many psychic experiences, others of which I hope to obtain.

In the second place, until these began, she was a complete sceptic as to continued exist-

ence. She tells me that she was a most unwilling convert, and only gave in when compelled to by her own undoubted experiences.

Again, she has never been surrounded by any atmosphere of belief in these things; for even now most of her friends and relatives are violently opposed to everything of the sort, and she has had to suffer much because she could not help but believe.

Once more, I have been in recent correspondence with the physician in whose house she was at the time. This physician completely confirms all the facts, and testifies in the most emphatic way to the noble character and unquestioned veracity of her patient. And yet, though she offers no other theory, she is strongly opposed to any explanation that calls for the agency of any supernormal intelligence. This, however, grows out of the fact that she has always been bitterly prejudiced against everything of the kind.

And lastly, both the physician and her patient are perfectly assured that the name of

Dr. McDowell and his work as a surgeon were entirely unknown to the teller of this experience at the time when the voice was heard.

I have many other equally puzzling cases left, but these are enough for the present installment. Who will find a theory that does not lead us into the invisible?

CHAPTER III.

After the preceding chapters I need waste no time in words of preface or introduction. Concerning these I shall now relate, I only wish to say, as I have already said concerning all the rest, that I think I know they are genuine. These things took place. They took place in the conditions and in the precise way which I shall describe. I shall refrain from dogmatizing as to theories of explanation. Such dogmatism never convinces. People will accept a new and unfamiliar truth only when driven to it by overwhelming force of evidence. I seek only to help in the accumulation of evidence; the truth—whatever it be—will at last make itself manifest to the minds of all reasonable men.

For the sake of variety, and to hint at the breadth of the field now open for investigation, I will begin with a case unlike any of those so far presented.

There is a certain class of sensitives or psychics who claim to possess what is called psychometric power. Suppose it is a lady. She will take in her hand a letter, and, without reading a word of it or even looking at it, she receives from it certain impressions, which she states. Sometimes she goes into such detail as to the contents of the letter and the character and personality of the writer as is utterly impossible on any theory of guess-work. Neither, in my judgment, is it to be classed with clairvoyance; for she does not read the letter nor even seem to see the writer. These phenomena of psychometry seem to constitute a class by themselves. At times it is not a letter that the lady holds in her hands, but any article or substance whatever. But in any case, the article so held appears to give impressions of so precise a nature that the psychic reads the story

of its past, calls up distant persons and scenes —distant both in space and in time. In presence of such facts, one finds himself wondering if even inanimate nature—if any part of nature *is* inanimate—does not carry with it a record or memory of all that ever concerned it. But I will suppress any tendency to dream, and turn to my fact.

On a certain morning I visited a psychometrist. Several experiments were made. I will relate only one, as a good specimen of what has occurred in my presence more than once. The lady was not entranced or, so far as I could see, in any other than her normal condition. I handed her a letter which I had recently received. She took it, and held it in her right hand, pressing it close, so as to come into as vital contact with it as possible. I had taken it out of its envelope, so that she might touch it more effectively, but it was not unfolded even so much as to give her an opportunity to see even the name. It was written by a man whom she had never seen, and of whom she had

never heard. After holding it a moment, she said, "This man is either a minister or a lawyer; I cannot tell which. He is a man of a good deal more than usual intellectual power; and yet, he has never met with any such success in life as one would have expected, considering his natural ability. Something has happened to thwart him and interfere with his success. At the present time he is suffering with severe illness and mental depression. He has pain here (putting her hand to the back of her head, at the base of the brain)."

She said much more, describing the man as well as I could have done it myself. But I will quote no more, for I wish to let a few salient points stand in clear outline. These points I will number, for the sake of clearness:—

1. She tells me he is a man, though she has not even glanced at the letter.

2. She says he is either a minister or a lawyer; she cannot tell which. No wonder, for he was both; that is, he had preached for some years, then had left the pulpit, studied

law, and at this time was not actively engaged in either profession.

3. She speaks of his great natural ability. This was true in a most marked degree.

4. But he had not succeeded as one would have expected. This again was strikingly true. Certain things had happened—which I do not feel at liberty to publish—which had broken off his career in the middle and made his short life seem abortive.

5. She says he is ill as he writes. At this very time he was at the house of a friend, suffering from a malarial attack, his business broken up, and his mind depressed by the thought of his life failure.

Now this lady did not know I had any such friend; and of all these different facts about him, of course she knew absolutely nothing. She did not read a word of the letter. But (note this carefully) even though she had read it all, it would have told her only the one fact that, as he wrote, he was not well. It contained not the slightest allusion to any of the others.

This case cannot be explained by clairvoyance, for the lady did not possess the power. Was it guess-work? One case might be so explained. But one does not guess after this fashion very often. So, as I put this case alongside the many others which I know, the guess theory becomes too improbable for one moment's serious consideration.

I will now tell the story of my first sitting with Mrs. P., a psychic famous in the annals of psychical research, both in Boston and in London. In one way the incidents are very slight, but for that very reason they were to me all the more striking; for it seems to me that *such* incidents are beyond the wildest theory of guess-work. She might have guessed a great many things about me; but that she should have guessed these particular things, seems to me most wildly improbable.

This sitting occurred in the winter of 1885. My father had died during the preceding summer, aged ninety years and six months. Most of his life had been spent in Maine. He had

never lived in Boston, and there is no conceivable way by which Mrs. P. could ever have learned about him any other than the most general facts. But as she had no earthly reason for supposing that I was ever going to call on her, I do not know why she should have taken the trouble to learn anything about him. Even if she had taken such trouble, there was no one in the city who could have told her these especial facts. They were not known outside of one or two members of my own family, and at this time no member of my family had ever seen Mrs. P.

Such, then, was the condition of affairs when, one morning, I called at her house. She soon became entranced. That these trances, in her case, are genuine, there is no shadow of a question; and when she returns to her normal condition, she has no knowledge of anything that has been said or done. Her "control" said—what is common enough—that many "spirits" were present. Among them he singled out for description an old man. This de-

scription was general only, but correct so far as it went; for immediately he proceeded to tell me it was my father. Then he added, "He calls you Judson." Soon after this, as though his attention had just been turned to it, he exclaimed that he had a peculiar bare spot "right here." (The hand of the psychic was lifted and laid on the right side of the top of her head, about where the parting of the hair would usually be.)

This is by no means all that was said or done, but I single out thus these two tiny facts, so that we may look at them a little by themselves. As to this matter of the bare spot on his head: Though living to so advanced an age, my father was never bald; but years before I was born, as the result of a burn, this particular place lost its hair. It was about one inch in width and two or three inches long, running back from the forehead towards the crown. He was accustomed to part his hair on the left side, and comb it over this bare place. Generally, therefore, it was entirely unnoticed.

As I had every reason to suppose that Mrs. P. had never seen him, this struck me as at least worthy of remark.

But the other little matter appears to me still more worthy of notice. When I was born, away up in the middle of Maine, I had a half-sister, my father's daughter, who was then living in Massachusetts. She sent home a request that I be named Judson. She was to do for me certain things, provided her request was granted. So I got my middle name; but she died suddenly before ever returning home, and I have never learned the reason for her wish. The only important thing about this bit of autobiography is to note the fact that (as I always supposed, out of tenderness for the memory of a favorite daughter) my father, all through my boyhood, always called me Judson, though all the rest of the family uniformly spoke to me, and of me, by my first name; and (this is worthy of note) my father himself, in all his later years, fell into the habit of using my first name, like the rest of the family. I doubt,

therefore, if he had called me "Judson" for as many as fifteen or twenty years before his death. Why, then, does the "control" of Mrs. P., after describing correctly this "old man," exclaim, "Why, it is your father; he calls you *Judson?*"

Neither one of these things was consciously in my own mind at the time, and I can imagine no way by which either the conscious or unconscious self of Mrs. P. could ever have found them out.

A very little thing. Yes, and so it was a very little thing to know that a piece of amber, when rubbed with silk, would attract light bodies; but this little thing had in it the promise and potency of world-revolutionizing discoveries.

One other thing occurred at this same sitting. Towards its close, Mrs. P.'s "control" said: "Here is somebody who says his name is John. He was your brother. No, not your own brother; he was your half-brother." Then, pressing her hand on the base of her

brain, Mrs. P. moaned and rocked herself back and forth as if in great agony. Then the "control" continued: "He says it was *so* hard to die, away off there all alone! How he *did* want to see mother!" Then he went on to explain that he died from the effects of a fall, striking the back of his head. The whole description was most strikingly realistic.

Now for the facts corresponding to this dramatic narration. I had a half-brother John, my mother's son. (The family was a threefold one, my father and my mother both having been married before they married each other.) He was many years older than I, and in his earlier life had gone to sea. A year or two before this sitting, he had been at work in Michigan, building a steam saw-mill. Some hoisting tackle having got out of gear, he had climbed up to disentangle it. Losing his hold, he had fallen and struck the back of his head on a stick of timber, from the results of which he died. No friend was near him at the time, but afterward we learned that he had

died talking of "Mother"; and love for his mother had been a most marked characteristic all through his life.

John was not consciously in my mind at the time of this sitting, and I cannot even dream of any way by which Mrs. P. could ever even have heard that any such person had ever lived.

I will now relate a very slight incident, but one which I should like to have somebody explain. The psychic, in this case, was not a professional. She is a personal friend of many years' standing. Most of her friends do not know that she ever has any such experiences. While interested in these matters, she is modest and undogmatic, and as much an inquirer as I am myself. Her present husband (she has been twice married) is a student in these directions, and so encourages her in such investigations.

One day at a little quiet sitting, she unexpectedly became entranced. It was only occasionally that this occurred, the "influences" commonly working in some other way. While

thus entranced, she personated half a dozen different people, ranging from a little girl to an old man. Her facial expression, voice, gesture and whole being took on and expressed the particular character in each instance. All this was utterly unlike her ordinary demeanor; for in her normal condition, she is unusually shy and diffident. She would have needed the art of the actress to have purposely assumed and played these various parts.

But only one incident of this sitting will I now dwell on. Her first husband claimed to be in control and to be speaking to me through her. He talked over many things of which I knew nothing, and left messages, the purport of which were "all Greek" to me, but which were full of significance to her as I related them when the trance was over. Among other things, he said, "Tell my wife that the friend she is expecting to visit her will come on Saturday." Then he added, laughingly, "She won't believe that."

I knew nothing of any particular friend who

was coming to visit her on Saturday or any other day; so all this meant nothing to me. But when I gave her the message, she smiled and said, "That is surely a mistake, for I have just received a letter from this friend (a lady in New York), saying that I am to expect her next week Tuesday."

This sitting was on Wednesday morning. In my next day's mail came a letter from my friend, in which she told me that, on reaching home, she found another letter from New York telling her the plans had been changed, and the visitor would arrive on Saturday.

I leave the explanation of this to the wise.

I wish now to tell some parts of an experience which a young lady friend of mine had with Mrs. P., the psychic already referred to. This young lady is remarkable for her level head, clear thought, and self-control. She and Mrs. P. had never met. A sitting was arranged, Miss S. (the young lady) writing and making the appointment under an assumed name, and giving the address of a friend instead of her

own home: so anxious was she that there should be no clue to her personality. She carried a book, and in it three envelopes containing three locks of hair. One of these locks was from the head of her mother, but concerning the other two she knew nothing. They had been given her by a friend to be used as a test. When Mrs. P. had become entranced, Miss S. gave her one of the envelopes containing a lock of hair. Immediately her "control" began talking about it. She told whose head it was from, gave the name, and not only this, but the names of other people connected with this one, and described their characteristics and the relations in which they stood to each other.

Meantime Miss S. was in entire ignorance as to the correctness of the statements being made. She however made a careful record of them all, and afterwards found that all which had been said was true in every particular.

Now this case is not like the psychometric one mentioned above; for here the psychic is entranced, and it is the "control" that speaks.

In the other case, it is the conscious psychic herself.

What happened in regard to this one lock of hair happened concerning them all. In each case names were given, facts referred to, persons described, and all with complete accuracy. I state the case in this brief and general way; but I have in my possession all the particular facts written out at the time.

I am now to relate the story of three most remarkable psychic experiences occurring in the life of the same person, then a girl not more than twelve years of age. The lady in whose girlhood they happened has written them out for me, and they are corroborated by witnesses who had full knowledge of the facts, so that they would constitute evidence in a court of justice.

Following the method I have uniformly pursued so far, I will tell the stories in my own words. I do this for the sake of simplicity; but the autograph documents are in my possession.

When the first instance occurred, Miss D. was about eleven years old. She was an extremely nervous, sensitive child, afraid of the dark, always hearing strange sounds, and never willing to go upstairs to bed alone.

Her father was an educated man, a Harvard graduate, and at this time was teaching a class that met in one of the rooms on the second floor of the house in which they then lived. On this particular evening, just after supper, her father sent her up to this classroom to remove the blower from the Franklin coal stove. This she did, and then started for the sitting-room below again. As she reached the top of the stairs, she saw what appeared to be a very tall man coming up, and he had nearly reached the top. She stepped aside to let him pass; and as she did so, she lifted her head and looked him full in the face. He looked down in her face for a moment, spoke to her, and said, "I watch over you," and then vanished as if into the side of the wall.

He was unusually tall, over six feet, and Miss

D. says she remembers his face now more distinctly than that of any other face she ever saw. She knew at once that she had seen him by virtue of some strange inner sight.

So far the word "hallucination" would easily explain it all, but let us go on.

She went on downstairs, and spent the evening quietly with the family. She said nothing that night to any one of what she had seen, only all fear of the dark had gone; and when bed-time came, and they asked her if some one should go with her, she answered "No." From that time forth all the old timidity had ceased. Instead of being frightened, as at a ghost, she felt cared for and guarded by a loving friend.

The next morning she went to her mother and told her what she had seen, adding, "I think the man I saw was my father's father." This grandfather had died when her father was a boy of only eleven. There was no likeness of him in the family, and her father remembered him only as being a very tall man. When her

father heard her description, he said that it was, so far as he knew, a faithful likeness. The grandmother was still living, but, being a very strict Baptist, knew nothing whatever of these psychical matters; but she declared that she could not herself have given a better description of her husband than the one her granddaughter gave, from having seen this figure on the stairs. And she always believed that, for some special reason, this visit from the unseen had been permitted.

A short time after, this same little Miss D. was seated in her father's study one evening reading a book. After a while she looked up from her book, and said, "Father, there is some one here in this room, and she wishes to speak." Her father was writing at his desk in another part of the room, facing away from her. But as she spoke, he turned, and said, "If any one wishes to speak with me, she must give me her name, as I am busy." Then the little girl said, "Her name is Mary," and, waiting a moment, she added, "Mary Pickering." At once her

father seemed greatly interested, and said, "If this is you, Mary, tell me something by which I may know that it is you." Miss D. then said (the information seemed to come to her in some inexplicable way, for she heard no words with the outer ear): "She has been in the other life many years. She was from twenty-two to twenty-four when she died. She died quite unexpectedly, after a very short illness, of a fever. She lived in B——. You met her and became acquainted with her while teaching in that town, and boarding in her father's family, before you left college. You knew her before you went to the divinity school. She has been often, often to you, and *you have known it.*"

The father had been educated for the Baptist ministry, and at this time had no faith in the possibility of spirits returning, so far as any of the family knew. But he asked his daughter if she could describe this Mary, saying, "She had marked peculiarities in dress and in the manner of arranging her hair." The daughter replied: "Yes, she has hair almost black, dark

eyes, so dark you would call them black; but as you look closer, you see they are hazel. She wears this hair in *three curls* on each side of the face, and these curls reach down in such a manner that they make a frame for the face, while the rest of the hair is combed back and fastened by a comb in a twist at the back of the head. The last time you saw her she had on a cloth dress; it looks like a black wool, and is cut with a plain, full skirt, and a plain back to the body; but the front crosses one side over the other in three folds, and the sleeve has a look like a leg of mutton."

Then the father sat for a few moments in silence. But soon, taking his bunch of keys from his pocket, he unlocked a drawer in his writing-desk which his little girl had never seen opened before. From this he took a daguerreotype, and, passing it to her, he said, "This is a likeness of Mary Pickering; does she look like this?" Thereupon the little girl said, "Just like it; only what I see is spirit."

The name of this young lady the little girl

had never before heard. She did not know that such a person had ever lived; and no one in the family, except her father, knew that such a portrait was in existence; and only he knew of this episode in his past life. Yet everything that Miss D. had seen and said corresponded perfectly with the facts.

This Miss D., now of course grown up, is a personal acquaintance, and her father testifies to the strict truthfulness of all that is here written down. And here, let it be remembered, is no experience with a professional. This lady lives in the quiet of a wealthy home; has never "sat" for psychical investigation, either for money or for any other reason. Only all her life long she has been subject to these strange experiences. Also it is worth noting that she is healthy and sane, and practical to an unusual degree.

But now for one more experience out of her girlhood life. Again she was sitting with her father in his study. She was a great book-lover, and so his study was a favorite place

with the daughter. This time it was a man she saw. So she said to her father, "There is a man here by the name of Rockwood." Her father said: "Yes, I knew a young fellow by that name once; but he has been dead for years now. Tell me where I knew him and how!" So she went on, and said, "You knew him in H., when you were attending the classical school then kept by G. R." Then she proceeded to describe the house in which he had lived and died. She told him it stood at the forks of the road, was a mile from the town; that the funeral was from the house, and not the church, as was the custom in the town at that time. She told the manner in which he had died.

Her father then said: "I do not know anything more than the fact that he died some years ago. If you can see all this," he added, "you certainly ought to be able to tell me where he is buried; and this I do not know any more than I know whether his funeral was in a church or in his own house."

In a few moments she went on, "I can go over the entire ground." Then, mentally, she went into the house, saw the body as it lay in the coffin, saw the face, and told how he looked and what he had on. Then she saw them take the coffin from the front right-hand room, and put it into the hearse, and go slowly to the cemetery, which was a mile away. She also described how the bell in the Orthodox Church tolled all the time while the procession was on the way to the grave. She seemed to enter the cemetery by the middle gate. She described the lot as being on the left side of the main driveway, just before coming to the new addition to the cemetery at the farther side.

She had never been in this town in her life, and knew nothing about it. Her father knew nothing of the circumstances of the death or the funeral, or of there being any new addition to the cemetery. He however became so interested in the matter, that he asked her if she thought she could go unguided from the railway station to the cemetery, and then back to

the house. She felt so sure that she could, that it was decided that a trial should be made. So one day they together visited the town. Her father kept behind, and let her go on alone. As stated above, she had never before been in the town, and he had not visited it for many years; but she proceeded directly to the cemetery. When they reached the left-hand corner of the cemetery, she said, "I can go in here instead of going round to the main entrance, where the procession entered, and go straight to the grave." This she did, recognizing the place as the one she had seen mentally, and finding it as familiar as though she had known it all her life.

Now occurred a curious incident. At the grave they saw a strange gentleman neither of them had ever seen before. He was talking with the town undertaker. Seeing them come to this particular lot, he spoke to them. It turned out that he had married a sister of this Mr. Rockwood, by whose grave they were standing. After falling into conversation, Mr.

D., the little girl's father, told him what had brought them there. He straightway became so interested in the matter, that he begged them to go to the old home with him, and see if his wife confirmed the story as Miss D. had told it. He said he noticed them enter the cemetery; and though familiar with all the place, he could not surely have gone more directly to the grave. They accepted the invitation, and, her father having renewed his old acquaintance with what was left of the family, they spent the night there. The sister of Mr. Rockwood remembered all the particulars of her brother's death, and confirmed all that Miss D. had said. He had died in the chamber she had described; the funeral was in the house and not in the church; the bell did toll while the procession was in motion. In short, she had been correct in every detail.

This case seems to me a most remarkable one, and one not easily to be classified under any one head. She sees this Mr. Rockwood, and he tells her what she does not know. Her

father knows a part of it, but by no means all. So, telepathy might help us in explanation of some of it; it does not cover all. Another part of it looks like clairvoyance; and yet clairvoyance, as ordinarily understood, sees only what is going on at the time. But here the past is resurrected; not only persons, but places and events. Let who can undertake to explain. All I will say is that it comes to me so supported by evidence, and first-hand evidence at that, that I cannot but accept it as true.

One more case shall close this already long story of psychic experience. It occurred on a certain evening in June in the year 1890. The place is a well-known town in one of the New England States. The psychic is a clergyman who gives me the account, and it is confirmed by the autograph indorsement of the other principal man concerned. It seems to me to demand the presence and the activity of some invisible intelligence.

There were present Mr. and Mrs. B., two or three friends, and the clergyman. Conversa-

tion turned on this general subject, when Mr. B. remarked that he wished he could have a satisfactory test. The clergyman, Mr. L., thereupon felt a sudden and very powerful nervous shock. This always precedes, in his case, an experience of this kind. He describes it by saying that this strange sensation commences at the cerebellum, and passes down the spinal column, and thence branching to his feet. The feeling is very like that produced by the action of an electric current applied to the base of the brain, and passed downward, especially if the surface of the skin is lightly touched by the sponge.

Immediately he saw (it was a subjective vision) the face and form of a gentleman who was a stranger to him. He bore a resemblance to Mr. B., who sat near. In this same subjective way, he saw the name of "Edward B." (I give only the initial of the last name, though the full name is in my possession). Then he seemed to have uttered these words: "Tell my brother that a piece of property which I

once owned, and which by death fell to my heirs, and is now owned by my brother, is in danger of being lost to him. He must look after it at once, or it will pass out of his hands." The "spirit" was very urgent, and the psychic was very strangely thrilled and affected by his presence. Those in the room remarked on the changed character of the psychic's countenance, it being shining and apparently illuminated.

Mr. B. at once replied, however: "It is not possible that this can be true. I have all my tax bills on the various properties which I own in Nebraska. It is a mistake."

This Mr. B. is a cautious and careful business man; so what occurred is all the more remarkable. He was not a spiritualist, but was a candid inquirer.

In spite of the denial of Mr. B., the "spirit" was very urgent that the matter be looked up at once.

A few days later, Mr. L., the clerical psychic (he is still in the active work of the ministry,

and not making a profession of this strange power), sailed for a vacation trip to Europe. He was absent several months.

On his return he met Mr. B. one day, and he said: "Oh, about that matter in Nebraska. I looked over my papers soon after you went away, and found that one of my tax bills on a certain piece of property was missing. I felt sure that I had received it, but I found that I had been mistaken. I at once wrote to my agent (in Nebraska), and requested him to send the tax bill to me. Several days elapsed beyond those required for an answer, but none came. I wrote again, and peremptorily, telling my agent that he could attend to the matter immediately, or I would transfer my business to another man. This letter brought a prompt reply. The agent wrote that, through his own oversight, the lessee had been allowed to pay the tax on the property, and had taken as security what is called a tax lien. *The payment of these taxes, and the taking of such liens for a certain length of time will, in the end,*

entitle the lessee to a warrantee deed of the property."

This is Nebraska law; and many a dodge of this kind is resorted to as a means of swindling the real owner out of his property.

This seems to be a strikingly clear-cut case. At the time of this message, purporting to come from Mr. B.'s brother, no living man this side of Nebraska had any knowledge of the facts as stated. These facts proved to be correct in every particular. And here is one instance that a "spiritualist" might use in rebuttal of the common charge that the "messages," never tell anything that is of any value to anybody. In this case, certainly, a valuable price of property was saved by the message whatever may have been its source.

The story is authenticated in such a way as would make it good evidence in the hands of any judge, or before any jury in Christendom

CHAPTER IV.

No matter what my opinion is, for the present. The reader is not expected to care. I do not mean to reveal it. I may, however, do so quite inadvertently. Perhaps I shall find it no easy thing to keep it from peeping out somewhere between the lines. For of course I have one. I am not the "intelligent juror" who has not heard of the case. And, having studied it for several years, I cannot claim to be entirely free from bias. Should I claim to be, the reader might justly question my competence to form an opinion on any subject. But I can say—and this is all the reader need care about—that I have no opinion which I am not ready to revise or to reject altogether for a sufficient reason. Neither am I like the old Scotchman who said: "I am open to convic-

tion, but where is the man that can convince me?" I am not able to understand how any man should care to hold or defend any opinion that is not true. Since the truth is the only reality, he who seeks or cherishes anything else is only storing up disappointment for himself.

So much it seems needful for me to say. Not that I am egotistical enough to imagine that my unsupported opinion is so important as to concern any one; but because my point of view, and the spirit in which I enter on my task, may greatly concern all those who become interested in this discussion. It is important that the reader should know that I am not an interested advocate, and that I will join him in being grateful to any one who shall prove to be wise enough satisfactorily to settle the problem that is to be raised. This problem concerns both the reality and the nature of certain alleged facts that are usually associated with, or that pass under the name of, Spiritualism.

The Spiritualists make two claims that need

to be noted, only in order that their real position may be understood, and that the situation may be stated as fairly as possible.

In the first place, they say that though there has been an extraordinary and wide-spread development of these phenomena in the modern world, they are no new thing, and so are not out of keeping with what has occurred in the past history of mankind. Intelligent and credible witnesses, they claim, have reported similar happenings in every age. And, in spite of misreports and exaggerations, they further claim that these stories are so in line with their own experiences as to make the belief entirely reasonable that there are grains of truth in the bushels of chaff. For example, concerning the story of the resurrection of Jesus, few of them would believe that the body which was crucified ever lived again. They would say that a spiritual reappearance is a more rational explanation than, on the one hand, that the disciples lied, or, on the other, that the story sprang up out of nothing at all. And then

they point to such well-attested reports as those of the extraordinary happenings in the house of the Wesleys in England, and in that of Dr. Phelps in Connecticut.

In the second place, they resent the charge that they believe in the supernatural or the miraculous. They say that if these things occur at all, they are a part of the natural order; and that they are none the less so because the persons who are the agents and actors in them are invisible to ordinary human sight. So much in order fairly to set forth the situation. And now I must ask the reader's patience for even a little longer, while I make a few more preliminary points.

As to my reasons for looking into this subject. A minister is expected to be able to help his parishioners in their practical difficulties; and as hundreds of people have applied to me for advice in these matters, I have felt that I ought to have an opinion for them and not merely a prejudice. Then, while I have always hoped for a future life, and while I have

felt the force of all the arguments so often presented, I have been compelled to confess that these arguments fell short of demonstration; and I have been willing to exchange a hope for a demonstration, provided such a thing were possible. In the third place, I have felt that Spiritualism is either a grand truth or a most lamentable delusion; and for the sake of the vast interests involved, and of the thousands who looked to it for light, it has seemed to me that the problem ought to be competently investigated. I agreed with Professor Sidgwick, of Cambridge, England, in saying that it was a scandal to the scientific world that so grave and so important a matter should go so long without any adequate explanation.

Then, though many had claimed to investigate, and had declared the whole matter only fraud and humbug, I had to remember some things. First, that hypnotism had been examined by a scientific commission and gravely pronounced only charlatanry and delusion; while to-day it is universally accepted, and is

used by the regular faculty in the treatment of disease. Secondly, that clairvoyance was once only scouted; while now most competent investigators are compelled to admit that such a thing does really exist. Thirdly, that mind-reading or telepathy was at first declared to be impossible; but that to-day it seems to be the only way of explaining certain things that do actually occur.

And then, long study had driven me to the conclusion that, in a universe the size of this, a modest scientific man will hesitate about declaring as to what is or what is not impossible. The world is perhaps a little too free with its theories as to what can happen and what cannot happen. Not long ago a workman in a New York factory came to the overseer with a strange story as to the behavior of the steam in a certain part of the works. The overseer, who had made steam his life-long study, declared that the thing was impossible; steam could not act in that way. But investigation proved that the "impossible" was taking

place; and the result was a new invention, more knowledge of steam, and an increase in the modesty of the overseer. It is only the traditional court pettifogger who any longer "denies the fact." If it be a fact, then room must be made for it somewhere, however long the explanation of it may have to wait.

I have always tried, then, first to see if I could find any facts. I have a horror of being fooled. I have studied sleight of hand, and tried to find out the limits and possibilities of trickery. I have, in all directions, wanted the truth and only the truth. I hold that the "scientific method" is the only method of knowledge, and that it can be applied successfully to anything that is real, and with which we really come in contact. I may *hope* a thousand things; I may *believe* that many things are probable; but I have never claimed *to know* anything that could not be demonstrated as true.

In my investigations I have ruthlessly set aside everything that has seemed to occur

where the conditions were such that I could not feel sure of my facts. And when I have had the surest grip on a fact, in reasoning upon it, I have rigidly tried to explain it in accordance with known laws and forces. It is only when all my knowledge of accepted theories and forces failed to help me to a solution, that I have set the fact aside until some wiser man could tell me what it meant. A study like this, extending over a period of at least a dozen years, has left me where I am to-day. I am in possession of quite a large body of apparent facts that I do not know what to do with. The generally-recognized scientific order of the world has no place for them; I therefore bring them into the open air of the public to see if any one is wise enough to tell what they mean. Have they any bearing on the nature and destiny of man? Do they require for explanation the agency of invisible intelligences? Or, can they be referred to the working of embodied minds?

That certain things to me inexplicable have

occurred, I believe. The negative opinion of some one with whom no such things have occurred will not satisfy me. Some of those who know the least about such matters will doubtless inform me that I have been deluded, and that my supposed facts are not facts at all. But so long as they do not know the care I have taken, nor the circumstances, and are ignorant of how many times I have repeated the same experiment, this proposed explanation will hardly satisfy me. Neither will it be quite enough to tell me how a similar thing may be done under other conditions. I know all this already, but this knowledge has no bearing on my particular series of facts.

After so much preliminary—none of which, under the circumstances, seems to me uncalled for—I am ready to submit some specimens of those things that constitute my problem. They can be only specimens, for a detailed account of even half of those I have laid by would stretch to the limits of a book.

Though all that has ever been claimed as

true, under the general heads of hypnotism, clairvoyance, clairaudience, and telepathy, should be proved to be true beyond all question, it is of course apparent that all of them together would still fall far short of proving the spiritualistic claim. For this claim is nothing less than that those we call dead are still alive, and that, at certain times and under certain conditions, they both can and do communicate with persons still in the ordinary body.

And yet, as the very first point in my problem, I wish to submit a case that I suppose falls under the head of telepathy. Out of many I choose this, for the following reasons: It is unquestionably true. Names, dates, and all details are accessible. The distance across which the line of communication stretched was enormous. The fact was not expected, and could not have been anticipated. No ordinary method of communication, not even the telegraph, was possible. It is not different in kind from a thousand others; but, like a taller

mountain among its fellows, it stands out with peculiar distinctness as a remarkable specimen of its kind.

A merchant ship, bound for New York, was on her homeward voyage. She was in the Indian Ocean. The captain was engaged to be married to a lady living in New England. One day, early in the afternoon, he came, pale and excited, to one of his mates and exclaimed: "Tom, Kate has just died! I have seen her die!" The mate looked at him in amazement, not knowing what to make of such talk. But the captain went on and described the whole scene—the room, her appearance, how she died, and all the circumstances. So real was it to him, and such was the effect on him of his grief that, for two or three weeks, he was carefully watched lest he should do violence to himself. It was more than 150 days before the ship reached her harbor. During all this time no news was received from home. But when at last the ship arrived at New York, it was found that Kate did die at the time and under the

circumstances seen and described by the captain off the coast of India.

This is only one case out of hundreds. What does it mean? Coincidence? Just happened so? This might be said of one case; but a hundred of such coincidences become inexplicable. Did some invisible intelligence convey the news? Did he really see her? Or did she, in that hour, reach out with such a longing that she touched him half-way round the world?

Now, though this may fall far short of the spiritualistic claim, does it not suggest something strange and generally unrecognized as to the nature and power of mind? If mind can, under any conditions, or however rarely, assert such a semi-independence of the body and of the ordinary methods of communication, may it not be able to go alone? I do not say or think that such a supposition is proved by a case like this; but is it not at least suggested? When the Second Adventist told Emerson that the world was coming to an end, he calmly replied: "Well, I think I can get along

without it." Do not cases like the above at least start the surmise as to whether these souls of ours are not such as to be able to "get along without it"?

I pass now to such phenomena as are usually classed under the head of Spiritualism. I shall avoid the use of the word so far as possible, for the reason that it assumes an explanation; and it is an explanation of which I am still in search. I shall present specimens of three different classes of manifestations.

1. And first, I note some of such as are usually spoken of as "physical," though I have never seen any that were purely physical, for the intelligence of somebody has always been mixed with them. These physical experiments are justly regarded with more suspicion than are those of the higher order, because the opportunities for trickery are great, and they seem to be more nearly on a level with the work of the prestidigitator. But the conditions, the time, the place, and one's capacity as an observer, must be taken into account. Surely it is pos-

sible, at least in some cases, for one to know what really happens. I will instance a few cases, and the reader must judge.

I went to the house of a woman in New York. She was not a professional. We had never seen each other before. We took seats in the parlor for a talk, I not looking for any manifestation. Raps began. I do not say whether they were really where they seemed to be or not; I know right well that the judgment is subject to illusion through the senses. But I was told a "spirit friend" was present; and soon the name, time and place of death, etc., were given me. It was the name of a friend I had once known intimately. But twenty years had passed since the old intimacy; she had lived in another State; I am certain that she and the psychic had never known or even heard of each other. She had died within a few months.

I have had several experiences that have demonstrated to me that physical objects are sometimes moved in a way that cannot be ac-

counted for by any muscular power, or by any mere physical force with the workings of which I am acquainted. I was sitting one evening at the house of a friend, a lady whom I had known for eight or ten years. Neither she nor her husband was a Spiritualist; but that which, for want of a better name, we call psychic force, was sometimes manifested in her presence. Both she and her husband were simply inquirers, as I was. At the end of the evening I rose to go. Many inexplicable things had already occurred. Then I thought I would try a simple experiment. She and I stood at opposite sides of the table at which we had been sitting. Both of us having placed the tips of our fingers lightly on the top of the table, I spoke, as if addressing some unseen force connected with the table, and said: "Now I must go; will you not accompany me to the door?" The door was ten or fifteen feet distant and was closed. The table started. It had no casters, and in order to make it move as it did we should have had to go behind and to push it. As a matter

of fact, we led it, while it accompanied us all the way and struck against the door with considerable force. I then lifted it and carried it back into the middle of the room. My friend then stood at the end of it opposite to me, while I stood at some distance away, between it and the door. I addressed it again, as though talking to an intelligent being, and said: "Will you not lift for me the other end of the table?" My friend stood with only the tips of her fingers touching the upper side of the table near the end. Immediately the end of the table next to her was lifted into the air, and the table went through a motion as if bowing to me, bending over as far as her arms could reach. In this case, I might have been suspicious of some possible trick, but for two considerations. First, I knew and trusted my friend; secondly, I could plainly see the hands, and knew that the thumbs were not under the edge of the table. Besides, I had learned before, under other conditions, that this power of moving physical objects did exist.

I add one more experiment of my own. I sat one day in a heavy stuffed arm-chair. The psychic sat beside me, and laying his hand on the back of the chair, gradually raised it. Immediately I felt and saw myself, chair and all, lifted into the air at least one foot from the floor. There was no uneven motion implying any sense of effort on the part of the lifting force; and I was gently lowered again to the carpet. This was in broad light, in a hotel parlor, and in presence of a keen-eyed lawyer friend. I could plainly watch the whole thing. No man living could have lifted me in such a position, and besides, I saw that the psychic made not the slightest apparent effort. Nor was there any machinery or preparation of any kind. My companion, the lawyer, on going away, speaking in reference to the whole sitting, said: "I've seen enough evidence to hang every man in the State—enough to prove *anything excepting this!*"

Professor Crookes, of London, relates having seen and heard an accordion played on while it

was inclosed in a wire net-work and not touched by any visible hand. I have seen an approach to the same thing. In daylight, I have seen a man hold an accordion in the air not more than three feet away from me. He held it by one hand, grasping the side opposite to that on which the keys were fixed. In this position, it, or something, played long tunes, the side containing the keys being pushed in and drawn out without any contact that I could see. I then said: "Will it not play for me?" The reply was: "I don't know; you can try it." I then took the accordion in my hands. There was no music; but what did occur was quite as inexplicable to me, and quite as convincing as a display of some kind of power. I know not how to express it, except by saying that the accordion was seized as if by some one trying to take it away from me. To test this power, I grasped the instrument with both hands. The struggle was as real as though my antagonist were another man. I succeeded in keeping it, but only by the most strenuous effort.

On another occasion I was sitting with a "medium." I was too far away for him to reach me, even had he tried; which he did not do, for he sat perfectly quiet. My knees were not under the table, but were where I could see them plainly. Suddenly my right knee was grasped as by a hand. It was a firm grip. I could feel the print and pressure of all the fingers. I said not a word of the strange sensation, but quietly put my right hand down and clasped my knee, in order to see if I could feel anything on my hand. At once I felt what seemed like the most delicate finger tips playing over my own fingers and gradually rising in their touches toward my wrist. When this was reached, I felt a series of clear, distinct, and definite pats, as though made by a hand of fleshy vigor. I made no motion to indicate what was going on, and said not a word until the sensation had passed. All this while I was carefully watching my hand, for it was plain daylight and all was in full view; but I saw nothing.

If anybody will explain these things I shall be very grateful, whether the explanation take me to another world or leave me in this one.

I should like merely to suggest that, so far as we know, the only force that under any circumstances ever opposes or overcomes the force of gravity, is will force, or some power under the direction of intelligent will. If, therefore, a single pin's weight of matter is ever moved contrary to the natural pull of gravity, and the motion is not explainable by any of the known forces of nature, we must in its presence regard ourselves as standing on the border line of some undiscovered power. If the significance of such a fact is once appreciated, people will hardly sneer at such things as unworthy, undignified, or of no account even if true.

And when people ask me why this, and why that, and why not something else, if anything at all is going to happen, I have a ready reply. The three great questions that the world is always asking are, "What," "How," and "Why." Thus, science begins with What;

this is observation of facts, the first step in rational inquiry. Some of the world's Hows we can answer; this is the region of methods and laws. But Why is a question that very few people are ever able to answer in regard to anything. It is wiser, then, to begin with the What, and we should be thankful if we can get as far as the How. Until I know more about these, I will let the Why rest.

2. In the second place, I will cite some examples of psychic power more exclusively mental. Here I am bewildered with the mass of material. I confine myself, at present, to a certain class of cases—those in which I have been told things which I knew, but which I know the psychic did not know. Such instances have been so numerous in my experience that, like the telephone and telegraph, they have become almost commonplace. Of course they may be mind-reading—if some one will only tell me what mind-reading is. Since this may be telepathy, I must be brief with them, as I have more important cases still to relate.

The first time I was ever in the presence of a particular psychic, she went into a trance. She had never seen, and so far as I know had never had any way of hearing of, my father, who had died some years previously. When I was a boy he always called me by a special name that was never used by any other member of the family. In later years he hardly ever used it. But the entranced psychic said: "An old gentleman is here"; and she described certain very marked peculiarities. Then she added: "He says he is your father, and he calls you ——," using this old childhood name of mine.

On another occasion a friend went to the same psychic, taking an unmarked lock of my hair in an envelope. This envelope was put into her hand after she had become entranced. She not only at once told my name, but also details of many occurrences that had taken place in my study—things that were said and done, the peculiar way in which the lock was cut off, and the like. Nothing whatever had been said about me, and there was nothing that, in the mind of

the psychic, could have associated the visitor with me.

One case more only will I mention under this head. A most intimate friend of my youth had recently died. She had lived in another State, and the psychic did not know that such a person had ever existed. We were sitting alone when this old friend announced her presence. It was in this way: A letter of two pages was automatically written, addressed to me. I thought to myself as I read it—I did not speak—"Were it possible, I should feel sure she had written this." I then said, as though speaking to her: "Will you not give me your name?" It was given, both maiden and married name. I then began a conversation lasting over an hour, which seemed as real as any I ever have with my friends. She told me of her children, of her sisters. We talked over the events of boyhood and girlhood. I asked her if she remembered a book we used to read together, and she gave me the author's name. I asked again if she remembered the particular poem

we were both specially fond of, and she named it at once. In the letter that was written, and in much of the conversation, there were apparent hints of identity, little touches and peculiarities that would mean much to an acquaintance, but nothing to a stranger. I could not but be much impressed.

Now, in this case, I know that the psychic never knew of this person's existence, and of course not of our acquaintance. But I got nothing that I did not know, and so I am not sure that this went beyond the limits of telepathy. But, if telepathy, it was entirely unconscious on the psychic's part. And in this case there was no trance. I could fill a good-sized book with cases of this sort. I will, however, only set up an interrogation point and pass on.

3. In the third place, I wish to offer two or three typical cases in which the mystery, to my mind, grows deeper still. In these instances the information imparted was not known, and could not have been known, either to the

psychic or to myself, the only other person present. It was afterward found to be true. These are peculiarly interesting to me, because I do not see how the theory of telepathy can be so stretched as to include them.

As in some of the cases already described, I was sitting with my psychic friend, who is not a professional and whose powers are known only to a few intimate friends. I will also say of her that she does not always possess the power, and has over it no voluntary control. She simply sits and waits, and sometimes something occurs and sometimes nothing.

On one of these occasions a dead friend claimed to be present. She had one living sister, married and settled two hundred miles from Boston. After the ordinary conversation, it occurred to me to attempt a little test. I had reason to suppose that, at the particular time, the married sister was in another town than that in which she resided; so the bias of my mind was in that way. I note this because a mind-reader could not have given the answer

I received. I asked this supposed "spirit" friend if she knew where her sister was at that hour. The answer came that she did not; and that she had no way of knowing, any more than I had, unless she should go or send and find out. Then I said: "Can you go or send for me?" I was told that she would try, and was directed to wait. For fifteen minutes everything was quiet. Then came a signal. I asked what it meant, and got the reply that it was my friend, who had returned. I said: "Have you found out for me?" The answer was: "Yes; she is at home in her own house. She is getting ready to go out."

The reply was entirely contrary to my expectation, and the psychic knew nothing about either of the parties concerned. I wrote a letter at once to this sister of my dead friend, and asked where she was and what she was doing on this day and at this hour, telling her I would explain later why I wanted to know. In due course the answer came, saying: "I was at home on that particular forenoon, and

at about the hour you mention I made a call on one of my neighbors."

At another sitting with the same psychic friend, again there purported to be present the "spirit" of a lady I had known for years. Her father's family and mine had been intimate when we were young. If still conscious, she knew I was greatly interested in all that pertained to their welfare. She told me of a sister married and living in another State. She said: "Mary is in a great deal of trouble. She is passing through the greatest sorrow of her life. I wish I could make her know that I care. I wish you would write to her." As we talked the matter over, she explained it to me, telling me at first vaguely, as though shrinking from speaking plainly, and then more clearly, making me understand that the husband was the cause of her sorrow. I had not seen her husband more than once, and had never dreamed that they were not happy. And the psychic had never heard of any such people. In this case, also, I wrote to the lady. I told

her I would explain afterward, but for the present asked her only to let me know if she was in any special trouble; and provided she was, and the nature of it was such that she could properly do so, to tell me what it was. I received a reply, "private and confidential," confirming everything that had been told me in the privacy of my own study. And she closed by asking me to burn the letter, adding that she would not for the world have her husband know that she had written it.

But one more case dare I take the space for, though the budget is only opened. This one did not happen to me; but it is so hedged about and checked off that its evidential value in a scientific way is absolutely perfect. The names of some of the parties concerned would be recognized in two hemispheres. A lady and gentleman visited a psychic. The gentleman was the lady's brother-in-law. The lady had an aunt who was ill in a city two or three hundred miles away. When the psychic had become entranced, the lady asked her if she had

any impression as to the condition of her aunt. The reply was, "No." But, before the sitting was over, the psychic exclaimed: "Why, your aunt is here! She has already passed away." "This cannot be true," said the lady; "there must be a mistake. If she had died, they would have telegraphed us immediately." "But," the psychic insisted, "she is here. And she explains that she died about two o'clock this morning. She also says a telegram has been sent, and you will find it at the house on your return."

Here seemed a clear case for a test. So, while the lady started for home, her brother-in-law called at the house of a friend and told the story. While there, the husband came in. Having been away for some hours he had not heard of any telegram. But the friend seated himself at his desk and wrote out a careful account, which all three signed on the spot. When they reached home—two or three miles away—there was the telegram confirming the

fact and the time of the aunt's death, precisely as the psychic had told them.

Here are most wonderful facts. How shall they be accounted for? I have not trusted memory for these things, but have made careful record at the time. I know many other records of a similar kind kept by others. They are kept private. Why? Sometimes it is for fear of being thought superstitious; at other times it is because of a wish to avoid wounding the feelings of friends who, for religious or other reasons, are opposed to these things. Then, again, the communications are of so personal a nature that they are spoken of only to intimate friends.

Psychic and other societies that advertise for reports of strange phenomena must learn that at least a respectful treatment is to be accorded or people will not lay bare their secret souls. And then, in the very nature of the case, these experiences concern matters of the most personal nature. Many of the most striking cases people will not make public. In some of those above related, I have had so to veil facts that

they do not appear as remarkable as they really are. The whole cannot be told.

Of course I have detailed only successful experiments. At many a sitting I have gotten simply nothing. Many times things have been told me that were not true: many times I could not find out whether they were true or not. Large numbers of so-called "mediums" are impostors, smart knaves, finding it easier to trick for a living than to work for it. Not only is there much of fraud, but there is also a large amount of self-delusion, on the part both of psychics and sitters. There is no end of misinterpretation of things that actually occur. They are made to mean all sorts of things that they need not mean at all. But all this ought not to lead the careful student to disregard one genuine fact, however small it may appear. Each case is to be taken by itself. Scientific men know the value of even slight things. If it be a fact, place must be made for it, and an explanation found if possible.

When I began this article I intended to offer some carefully-verified cases of vision on the part of both the dying and the living, as well as some instances of the appearances of those newly dead to friends at a distance. Of the first I have seen some most remarkable, where the dying person, along with those known to be dead, suddenly recognized some one supposed to be still living, expressing the greatest astonishment at seeing this one with the others. Of the second, I have cases occurring in the experience of personal friends, which I have so carefully verified that I do not know how to get rid of them or to disregard them. But I must pass them by for the present.

I have given only selected specimens out of a large collection. I do not know what they mean; but I believe that the statements I have made are true. Some reader will doubtless sneer. Some will say "crank." Some will think the writer easily "gulled." But, if not this year, at some time, a wiser person will explain them. Then, if we do not know any

more about any next world, perhaps we may have an extension of our knowledge about this one. It is a great universe, and a strange one. We are strange beings, and as yet know but little as to our own selves. Only the shallowest think they know it all.

CHAPTER V.

I HAVE now given my readers a large number of facts. But facts are worth little unless one knows what to do with them. Aristotle was in possession of certain facts, and from them he argued that the earth was a sphere; but for hundreds of years after his time the wise men of the world came to quite other conclusions. This was either because they were not wise enough to comprehend their significance, or, as was more commonly the case, because they were dominated by some bias that led them to adopt a contrary theory. It is this latter thing that stands more in the way of truth than does ignorance itself. In religion, in politics, in political economy, in all directions there are facts enough; but the majority of people are prepossessed by theories which

hinder their seeing the real meaning of the facts.

I shall then have rendered a very incomplete service to those who have taken note of my facts if I stop with these. It remains for me therefore to indicate the present status of psychical inquiry, and to point out what seems to me the significance of my facts. I do not claim to be so wise here that my conclusions will be free of all error, but without immodesty I can claim one thing: I am not dominated by any theory, and am under no bias to come to any particular conclusion. Indeed, I have reached a point in my thinking where I find it hard to comprehend how any sane man should even wish to discover anything but the truth. I know there are such people, because they have told me that they were content with their present beliefs, and even though they were wrong, they did not want to find it out. But I do not wish to be even pleasantly fooled. I wish to know the truth and adjust myself to it.

I cannot, indeed, agree with those who say

that, if there be no other life, this present life is not worth having. For—

—When I look upon the laughing face
Of children, or on woman's gentle grace;
Or when I grasp a true friend by the hand,
And feel a bond I partly understand;
When mountains thrill me, or when by the sea
The plaintive waves rehearse their mystery;
Or when I watch the moon with strange delight
Treading her pathway 'mid the stars at night;
Or when the one I love, with kisses prest,
I clasp with bliss unspoken to my breast;—
So strange, so deep, so wondrous, life appears,
I have no words, but only happy tears.
I cannot think it all shall end in naught;
That the abyss shall be the grave of thought;
That e'er oblivion's shoreless sea shall roll
O'er love and wonder and the lifeless soul.
But e'en though this the end, I cannot say
I'm sorry I have seen the light of day.
So wondrous seems this life I live to me,
Whate'er the end, *to-day I have and see;*
To-day I think and hope: and so for this,—
If this be all,—for just so much of bliss,
Bliss blended through with pain, I bless the Power
That holds me up to gaze *one wondrous hour!*

If, then, this is all, I want to know it and make the most of it. If it is only the begin-

ning, I want to know that, and lay out my life on a scale proportioned to the magnificence of its possibilities. And I can conceive of no knowledge that for one moment matches this in importance.

Before treating the present standing of psychical inquiry, it is needful to note certain preceding conditions of human thought out of which present conditions have been evolved. In the pre-critical and unscientific ages, the belief in continued existence and some sort of intercourse between spirits and mortals was practically universal. In the general ignorance of natural laws, people were not troubled by questions of possible or impossible. All forces and happenings were interpreted in terms of will or caprice; and the supernatural presented no difficulty because there was, in their minds, no natural order. There being no standards of probability, what to-day is meant by proof was not only not demanded, it was not even understood. The journey of Odysseus to Hades was as believable as was the voyage of the latest Phœni-

cian navigator. The appearance of spirits, messages from the invisible world, and celestial or demoniac interferences with human affairs were a part of all religions and of daily life. The Bibles of all peoples and all ancient literatures are abundant witnesses to these facts. If any one wishes to come in personal contact with this condition of the human mind, he need not go further than to the devout Catholic servants of his own household.

As children now are afraid of the dark, the lonely, the mysterious, so it was natural that in the childhood of the world men should be afraid of the invisible. They were in terror at the thought of the possible return of even their most intimate friends. The gods themselves were not regarded as over kind, and their wrath must be placated or their favor purchased by gifts. Perhaps, therefore, it is not strange that these feelings linger still. Most people to-day, like Madame de Staël, are afraid of ghosts even though they do not believe in them ; and there are few who are brave enough to spend a night

alone in the room with the body of the one they have loved best in all the world. This state of mind makes it exceedingly difficult for people to treat these psychical investigations in a rational way. Among those who believe that "the dead" are still alive, there is a general impression that the fact of death has produced some marvellous and magical change so that they are real human folks no longer. The imagination is full of either angels or devils, so that they are troubled with all sorts of theories as to what is fitting or becoming, instead of being ready to note facts first and then see what they mean afterwards.

But as one of the results of modern science, there has been, in the minds of the learned, a violent reaction against the superstitions or over-beliefs of the past. This is entirely healthy, provided science itself does not become a superstition. But a scientific theory may become as serious a barrier against the acceptance of a new truth as vulgar prejudice itself. Witness the scientific authority of Newton as it blinds

the eyes of the learned to the truth of Young's theory of light, or note the attitude of Agassiz in the matter of evolution. Professor Huxley has written, with all his power of sarcasm, against modern spiritualism. And yet Professor Wallace, at least his peer in scientific eminence, told me that he had repeatedly tried to get Huxley to join him in investigating these matters, and he would not. To the mind of the ultra-scientist all these stories of the childhood world are so childish that they are to be rejected in the lump, without being accorded even the dignity of an investigation. I agree with this scientific reaction to the extent of holding that they are all to be put aside and labelled "Not proved"; that is, the basis on which they rest, whether in Bibles or out of Bibles, is inadequate, and does not in any case amount to demonstration. But it is going away beyond any truly scientific warrant to say that none of them may be true. And if, in the modern world, any similar stories should be scientifically established as true, then it would

be fully in accord with the scientific method to reconsider all or any one of these traditional stories, and estimate the degree of probability in its favor.

Curiously various and contradictory have been the positions of different classes of thinkers and of those who do not think in the modern world. One class has held that all these things were childish and superstitious, and that only ignorant or flighty people could take any stock in them. Members of this class smile wisely, not to say superciliously, when any of these matters are mentioned. It is this attitude of the "Unco" wise (for there is an "unco" wise as well as an "unco guid") which led a philosopher, known in two hemispheres, to say to me: "Well, Savage, suppose we become convinced that these things are true, it will only be *a couple more cranks*." Then there are the ordinary Protestant Christians, who accept such stories as are told in the Bible, and reject all others, whether ancient or modern. Of course this is a matter of religious "faith,"

not reason. Again, there are the Catholics, who believe not only the stories told in the Bible, but all such as are indorsed by the Church, either in mediæval or modern times. Once more, there are the Swedenborgians, who accept the stories of their founder. They also believe in the possibility of spirit intercourse to-day, but hold it unwise if not dangerous. Then there are men like the late Professor Austin Phelps of Andover, who "know" that spirits do interfere with human affairs, but believe that they are always evil spirits. Perhaps it is consistent with that theology which he represented, to believe that God will permit devils to overrun the earth, but forbid the good spirits to make their presence known. Such, then, are some of the points of view from which these matters have been regarded up to the time when they began to be approached in a rational and scientific manner.

It is doubtless due to the experiments of Mesmer in France, and the Rochester rappings that the era of scientific psychical research has

at last been reached. I do not at all mean to say that the former were the cause, in the ordinary sense of the word, of the latter. I only mean that mesmerism and spiritualism, with their allied phenomena, resulted at last in such a widespread and popular interest in the problems involved as to lead certain people to feel that the question was worthy of serious attention and ought not longer to be postponed. The attitude of Professor Henry Sidgwick of Cambridge, England, the great writer on ethics indicates what I mean. In his first address as president of the English Society for Psychical Research, he declared it to be "a scandal" that a matter of so great importance, and involving the life interests of so many people, was not scientifically investigated and settled; and the first time that so significant a thing ever occurred, Professor Oliver Lodge of Liverpool, in his address as president of the Physical and Mathematical Section of the British Association for the Advancement of Science, only last year, took similar ground, and chal-

lenged the attention and interest of the leading scientific men of Great Britain.

Men had come to feel, in view of the fact that so many thousands uncritically accepted the claims of spiritualism on the one hand, and so many were hungry for a belief that their reasons forbade, on the other, that the truth, if possible, ought to be known. They saw that either thousands of people were deluded, and that it was worth while to help them out of their delusion, or that something was true which might comfort and help other thousands who stood helpless and hopeless in the presence of "the great mystery." It was out of such convictions that the movement for psychical research was born.

Every little while, still, some presumably wise scientific man sneers at the whole thing, and treats the search as though it were on a level with the "Hunting of the Snark." A certain class of newspapers also treat it as though it were fair game for the jester's column, classing the "spook" and the sea serpent as equally

legitimate prey for the limp-minded humorist of the "silly season." It will not therefore be time thrown away if we spend a little in considering as to whether psychical research is really a rational scientific inquiry.

There are two great universe theories, some variety of one or other of which we all hold. One is the materialistic theory, which teaches that in some way life is the outcome of matter, the product of organization. It is generally supposed to be the necessary consequence of this theory that the conscious life of the individual ceases with the death of the visible body. I have not been quite able to see why, however, for there may be an invisible body; and if matter is able to produce a conscious, thinking person, who is wise enough to say that this same matter may not be able to continue the life in some invisible form? For it seems to me that Thomas Paine did not at all exceed the bounds of reason when he said, "It appears more probable to me that I shall continue to exist hereafter, than that I should have

existence, as I now have, before that existence began."

But whatever may be the truth of this, the old, crude theories of materialism are antiquated, and "dead matter" is philosophically and scientifically unknown. The only materialists to-day are a few belated survivals, fossils of a bygone period of human thought. Even Clifford, before he died, was talking of "mind-stuff" as connected with matter. Haeckel, the nearest to a materialist of any great living thinker, must have his "atom-souls" in order to account for facts. Schopenhauer must have his "world-will," and Hartmann his "Unconscious" with a capital U. Huxley, though the inventor of the term "Agnostic," declares that sooner than accept the old materialism he could adopt the ultra-idealism of Bishop Berkeley. And Herbert Spencer, easily prince of them all, says that the one thing we know, more certainly than we know any isolated or individual fact, is the existence of the one Eternal Energy back of all phenomena, and of which

all phenomena are only partial manifestations.

Materialism, then, is dead, and spiritualism (of course I am using the term philosophically now) is taking its place. This theory puts life back of form, and makes it the cause, and not the product, of organization. This does not teach that man has a soul. That sort of talk belongs to the old theology:—

> "A charge to keep I have,
> A God to glorify;
> A never-dying soul to save
> And fit it for the sky."

If man is thought of as "having" a soul which he may "lose," it is but a step to thinking of him as a being independent of his soul, and as getting along without it. This theory rather teaches that man *is* a soul, and *has* a body; and on that theory, it is purely a rational question as to whether he may not be able to get along without the present and visible body.

And here we need to note to what an extent we are the fools of our eyes and ears. It is common to imagine that we can see all that is,

if only it is near enough to us, and that we can hear all "sounds" that are not too far away. As matter of fact, it is only the very smallest part of the real world of things about us that we are able either to see or hear. Vibrations that reach a certain number in a second produce an effect on the eye which, when transmitted to the brain is, in some way, quite incomprehensible to us, transformed into vision. When these vibrations pass a certain other number in rapidity, then they lose the power to produce the sense of seeing. It is then only within very narrow limits that we see; while on both sides of these limits there is a practical infinity that to us is invisible, though no whit less real than that which we speak of as seeing. And all the while it isn't the eye, nor the brain, nor any visible thing that sees even the commonest object; it is the I, the self, the soul only that ever sees. A precisely similar thing is true of hearing.

It is not science, but only shallow sciolism that assumes that our present senses are a meas-

ure of the universe. Men like Professor Crookes and Nicola Tesla are already on the eve of physical discoveries that promise to reveal to us forms and conditions of matter quite unlike those with which we are already familiar. For anything at present known to the contrary, the soul or the self may emerge from the experience we call death with a body as real and much more completely alive than the present visible body, and which shall yet be invisible, inaudible, and intangible to our ordinary senses.

Indeed "spirit photography," whether true or not, is not at all absurd or scientifically impossible in the nature of things. The sensitized plate can "see" better than the ordinary human eye, for it can photograph an "invisible" star. It may then photograph an invisible "spiritual body," provided any such body really exists.

As to the possible existence of a "spiritual" world in the neighborhood of the earth, I need only quote Young, who lived not long after Newton, and who is the famous scientist who discovered and demonstrated the present uni-

versally accepted theory of light. Jevons, in his "Principles of Science" (Third edition, Macmillan & Company, 1879), page 516, says, "We cannot deny even the strange suggestion of Young, that there may be independent worlds, some possibly existing in different parts of space, but others perhaps pervading each other, unseen and unknown in the same space." It is not scientific wisdom, then, but only scientific ignorance or prejudice that supposes that the student engaged in the work of psychical research need apologize to science. There is nothing which his work pre-supposes that in any way whatever contradicts any established principle or verified conclusion of science.

In the light of these facts, and considering the character and the learning of those engaged in the work, it is time that the silly attitude toward it were given up. The time is passing away when such a remark as the following should be possible. The Reverend J. G. Wood was a clergyman of the Church of England, and a world-famous naturalist. As the result of years

of careful investigation, he became a firm believer in the "spirit" world, and in communication between that world and this. Some years ago he was in Boston, giving a course of lectures before the Lowell Institute. In conversation with him at that time, he spoke freely of his experiences, and told me stories as wonderful as any I have ever heard. He said: "I do not talk about these things with everybody. I used to think anybody who had anything to do with them was a fool, and"—he added with a look that told of frequent contact with the "unco" wise—"*I do not enjoy being called a fool.*" It is time, I say, that this sort of thing were gone by. The wise man whose whole stock in trade on this subject is an ignorance only less than his prejudice, will soon learn that it is not entirely scientific to "know all about" a matter about which he really knows nothing at all.

This, then, is a subject as fairly open to scientific investigation as is the germ theory of disease, or the present condition of the planet

Mars. It is purely a question of fact and evidence.

I had begun a careful study of these questions when as yet there was no English Society for Psychical Research. Before touching on the work that has been done, and the theories propounded since that organization, I wish to say a few things concerning my own personal attitude. I do this, not because I imagine that my own motives and actions are of any public importance in themselves; but in one way they may be of a good deal of importance to those who may be interested in the work I have done, and the conclusions I have reached in the matter of psychical study. If, in the case of the so-called exact sciences,—like the work of observation in astronomy,—the "personal equation" has to be taken account of, much more is it necessary in studies like these, where experience, power of exact observation, motive, and purpose may either practically assure or vitiate results. Since then I have ventured to lay before the public so large a number of

cases, my readers have a right to know so much of my personal attitude and methods as will help them to estimate the value of these cases.

My evangelical training had prepared me to look upon all these things with suspicion. I believed the whole business to be either fraud or delusion or "nerves." I do not think I traced it to the devil, as so many others did, but I felt sure that it had "better be let alone." I felt towards it as all the "respectable" people of Jerusalem and Corinth and Rome felt towards Christianity—that at best it was "a pestilent superstition." On the basis of "invincible ignorance," I once delivered a scathing lecture against it, and perhaps wondered a little that certain obstinate people still continued to believe in it after I was done.

But about seventeen years ago, a year or so after coming to Boston, the father of one of my parishioners died. Soon after she came to me, saying she had been with a friend to consult a "medium." As she thought, certain very striking things had been told her, and she

wished my counsel and advice. Then it came to me with a shock that I had no business to offer advice on a subject concerning which my entire stock of preparation consisted of a bundle of prejudices. Then I began to reflect that this one parishioner was not alone in wanting advice on this subject; and I said to myself, whether this be truth or delusion, it is equally important that I know about it so as to be the competent adviser of those who come to me for direction. I should have felt ashamed to have had no opinion on the Old Testament theophanies or the New Testament stories of spirit appearances or demoniacal possessions. Why should I pride myself on my ignorance of matters of far more practical importance to my people? As a part of my equipment for the ministry, then, I said to myself, I must study these things until I have at least an intelligent opinion. Such, then, were the circumstances and motives that led to my prolonged investigation.

Since then I have improved every available

opportunity to study these things. I have had no prurient curiosity as to any other possible world, neither have I made it my chief object to see if I could get into communication with personal friends. I have studied these phenomena, first, as bearing on the nature and powers of the mind, as here embodied, and then with a view to finding out if any proof could be obtained that personal, conscious existence survives the experience we call death. For only a superficial knowledge of the drift of popular opinion is needed to show that if the belief in a future life is to continue as a life-motive among men, it must be based on something more recent and authentic than a shifting ecclesiastical tradition two thousand years old. The Catholic church is wise enough to see this. And the attitude of the Protestant church is a curiously inconsistent one, particularly when one remembers that the "facts" on which it relies are of precisely a similar kind to the modern ones it contemptuously rejects.

In my studies I have sought faithfully to

follow the scientific method, which I regard as the only method of knowledge. By careful observation and rigid experiment I have tried, first, to be sure that I have discovered a fact. Of this fact I have made a record at the time. I have paid no attention to results apparently obtained in the dark, or in circumstances where I could not be certain as to what was taking place. I have not said that all these were fraud, but I have never given them weight as evidence. I have made a study of sleight of hand, and am quite aware of all the possibilities of trickery. But to imitate an occurrence, under other conditions, is not to duplicate a fact. The larger number of those occurrences which have actually influenced my belief have taken place in the presence of long-tried personal friends, and not with professional "mediums" at all.

When at last I have been sure of a fact, I have stretched and strained all known methods and theories in the attempt to explain it without resorting to any supposed "spiritual" agency.

I say "spiritual" and not supernatural, for I do not believe in any supernatural. In my conception of the universe whatever is, is natural. If "spirits" exist, their invisibility does not make them supernatural any more than the atom of science is to be regarded as supernatural for a similar reason. And when at last I discovered facts which I am utterly unable to explain without supposing the presence and agency of invisible intelligences, even then I have not positively taken that step. For the present, at least, I only wait. The facts will keep; and if the wisdom of the world is able to discover any other explanation, I am quite ready to accept it. Stronger than my desire to conquer death is my desire not to be fooled, or to be the means, ever so honestly, of leading astray any who might put their trust in my conclusions; but I have discovered facts which I cannot explain, and they *seem* to point directly to the conclusion that the self does not die, and that it is, in certain conditions, able to communicate with those still in the flesh. It

may be proper to add here that the leading man in the English Society for Psychical Research, Mr. F. W. H. Myers, has published the fact that, as the result of his investigations, he has become convinced of "continued personal existence and of at least occasional communication." The secretary of the American Branch of the English Society, Mr. Richard Hodgson, LL.D., has given to the world a similar conviction.

It is time now for me to indicate certain results which I regard as well established. There will be no room here for detail. For illustration, and for cases other than those I have already given, the reader is referred to reports and books published by the English Society. What, then, are some of the results?

1. Mesmerism, under its new name of hypnotism, is now recognized by all competent investigators. Not only this, but it is being resorted to in the treatment of disease by the best physicians of France, Germany, England, and America. It is found that it can be used

in surgical operations as an anæsthetic, in place of ether. In the hypnotic state many strange phenomena sometimes appear, such as the dual personality, clairvoyance and clairaudience, that lead the student into other departments of psychical research.

2. Clairvoyance and clairaudience are well established. This means that, in certain conditions, people can see without their eyes and hear without their ears. Facts like these do not take one "out of the body," but they do suggest, with somewhat startling force, the query as to whether the mind is necessarily so dependent on our ordinary senses as is commonly supposed.

3. Next comes telepathy, or mind reading. It is found that communication of thoughts, feelings, and even events in detail, is possible between minds separated by distances ranging from a few feet to thousands of miles. It is suggested that the explanation may be found in the theory of ethereal vibrations set up by the activity of the brain particles whose motion

accompanies all thought and feeling; but in any case the facts are none the less wonderful.

4. Next come what are ordinarily classed together as "mediumistic phenomena." The most important of these are psychometry, "vision" of "spirit" forms, claimed communications, by means of rappings, table movements, automatic writing, independent writing, trance speaking, etc. With them also ought to be noted what are generally called physical phenomena, though in most cases, since they are intelligibly directed, the use of the word "physical," without this qualification, might be misleading. These physical phenomena include such facts as the movement of material objects by other than the ordinary muscular force, the making objects heavier or lighter when tested by the scales, the playing on musical instruments by some invisible power, etc. I pass by the question of "materialization," because I have never seen any under such conditions as rendered fraud impossible. I do not feel called on to say that all I have ever seen

was fraudulent; I only say that it might have been. Consequently, I cannot treat it as evidence of anything beyond the possible ingenuity of the professionals.

Now all of these referred to (with the exception of independent writing and materialization) I know to be genuine. I do not at all mean by this that I know that the "spiritualistic" interpretation of them is the true one. I mean only that they are genuine phenomena; that they have occurred; that they are not tricks or the result of fraud. I am not saying (for I must be very explicit here) that imitations of them may not be given by fraudulent "mediums" or by the prestidigitator; but that they are genuine phenomena, in many cases, I have proved over and over again. I ought to say a special word here in regard to slate writing. I put this one side, because I know it can be done in many ways as a trick. More than once have I detected a trick as being palmed off on me for genuine; but it is only fair to say that I have had experiences of this sort when I

could not discover any trick, and in conditions where it seemed impossible. I leave it out of present account only because I do not feel justified in saying I know, as I do feel justified in saying in regard to most of the others.

But a thousand experiences of these kinds may occur, and yet find a possible explanation without crossing the borders of the possible "spirit" world. Psychometry, visions, voices, table movements, automatic writing, trance speaking—all these may be accounted for by some unusual activity of the mind as embodied. They may throw great and new light on the powers and possibilities of the mind here, and yet not lead us to the land of "spirits."

But—and here is the crucial point to be noted—by any one of these means a communication may be made that *cannot* be accounted for as the result of the mental activity of any one of the persons visibly present. Was the statement made such as was known, or *might ever* have been known, by any of the (visible) persons present? In that case, the

cautious and conscientious investigator will feel compelled to hunt for an explanation on this side of the border. For since mind-reading is a known cause, he will resort to that as long as he can, and only go further when absolutely compelled to do so. But if none of the people (visibly) present ever knew or ever could have known the communicated fact, then what?

It seems to me that the Rubicon, whether ever crossed or not, is here. This, therefore, calls for clear discussion by itself; but one other point, not yet sufficiently noted, needs to be disposed of first. When enumerating some of the phenomena called "mediumistic," I referred to the movement of material objects in a way not be explained by muscular force, and to musical instruments played on by some invisible power. Is there any way to account for these without supposing the presence and agency of some invisible intelligence? I frankly confess I do not know of any; and here let me refer to the opinion of Dr. Elliott Coues. For years he was connected with the

Smithsonian Institution in Washington; and a professor there is a personal friend of mine. He is, if not a materialist, an out and out agnostic. I asked him one day as to the scientific standing of Professor Coues, leaving out of account what he regarded as his "vagaries" in connection with psychical matters. He replied that he was "one of the ablest and most brilliant scientific men in Europe or America." Professor Coues then has said—I quote from memory—"All material objects are under the power of gravity. If, then, any particle of matter, though no larger than a pin's head, be moved in such a way as not to be explained by purely physical forces, this fact marks the boundary line between the material and the spiritual, between force and will."

But now for a brief consideration of the most important psychical cases with which I am acquainted. More than once I have been told by a psychic (and in the most important cases of all the psychic was not a professional) certain things that neither the psychic nor myself

knew, had known, or (in the nature of the case) could by any possibility ever have known. These communications claimed to come from an old-time and intimate friend who had "died" within three months. The facts were matters which mutually concerned us, and which she would have been likely to have spoken of if it were possible. There was an air of naturalness and verisimilitude about the whole experience, though some parts of it were so "personal" as to render it impossible to publish the whole case, and so make it as forcible to others as it was to me.

Now, will somebody tell me what I am to do with facts like these? In one or two cases the facts communicated to me concerned happenings, mental conditions, and spiritual suffering in another state, two hundred miles away. I wish to note briefly the ordinary attempts at explanation and see if they appear to be adequate.

1. Guess-work; coincidence; it happened so. This might be true of one case, however extra-

ordinary; but when you are dealing with several cases, the theory of guess-work or coincidence becomes more wonderful than the original fact.

2. Clairvoyance. But my friend, the non-professional psychic, has no clairvoyant power; and, besides, clairvoyant power does not ordinarily reach so far, nor does it deal with mental and moral states and sufferings.

3. Telepathy. But this is based on sympathy between the two persons concerned, and deals with something in which they are mutually interested. But my friend, the psychic, not only was no friend of the parties concerned; she did not even know that any such persons were in existence.

4. As a last resort, it has been suggested that we are surrounded by, or immersed in, a sort of universal mind which is a reservoir containing all knowledge; and that, in some mysterious way, the psychic unconsciously taps this reservoir, and so astonishes herself and others with facts, the origin of which is untraceable

and unknown. But this seems to me explanation with a vengeance! The good old lady, after reading "Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress" with "Scott's Explanatory Notes," said she understood *everything except the notes*. So in this case, it seems to me we might conceivably *explain everything except the explanation*. No, I must wait still longer. Unless my friend was there telling me these things, I confess I do not know how to account for them.

Here, then, for the present, I pause. Do these facts only widen and enlarge our thoughts concerning the range of our present life? Or do they lift a corner of the curtain, and let us catch a whisper, or a glimpse of a face, and so assure us that "death" is only an experience of life, and not its end? I hope the latter. And I believe the present investigation will not cease until all intelligent people shall have the means in their hands for a scientific and satisfactory decision.

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