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Contents.

The Psychology of Hamlet. By Edward W. Cox	229
An Old Witch Story	231
What Truth is there in Astrology?	232
Dr. Slade in Australia	232
Indian Jugglery	233
Physical Manifestations in Public	234
Free Sunday Evening Clairvoyant Seances	234
Lessons in Spiritualism. By Louisa Andrews	235
Correspondence.—A Word from an Outsider, Non-Profes- sional Lectures, 232; Spirit Messages	233
Paraphrases—Chinese Funerals, 231; The late Lord Brougham and Spiritualism, 232; "Present in the Spirit," 233; The Effects of Kindness, 233; Spiritual- ism in Dalton, 233; New Books	234

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LONDON, FRIDAY, MAY 16th, 1879.

THE PSYCHOLOGY OF HAMLET.*

BY EDWARD W. COX, SERJEANT-AT-LAW, PRESIDENT OF THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SOCIETY OF GREAT BRITAIN.

PSYCHOLOGY may best be learned and taught by example. There is no fitter exercise for master and pupil alike than analysis of character, and from its development in action and speech to trace the mental structure that so manifests itself. It is not too much to assert that more knowledge of the forces by which the mechanism of man is moved and directed, and of the methods of their action, will be obtained from one such examination of the conduct and motives of an individual human being than could be gleaned from a hundred lectures by metaphysicians dealing only with abstractions, conjectures, and *a priori* argument.

But better even than the study of the psychology of a man living, or who has lived, is the study of some one of the creations with which genius has so largely supplied the world; better, inasmuch as they are more open to inspection, more familiar, and therefore substantially more *real* to us than any actual personage can ever be. So much of every living man is carefully concealed from view—is, in fact, known only to himself—that he who has most opened his life and thoughts to the inspection of his fellow-creatures has doubtless repressed a great deal more than he has revealed. Of all the writers who have produced studies for the psychologist Shakespeare is beyond measure the greatest, and of all the characters Shakespeare has created there is none so much the subject of controversy as Hamlet. Libraries have been written upon him, and yet the theme is not exhausted. It is debated as eagerly and hotly as ever. But it is not as a literary controversy that I ask your attention to it. It is as a psychological study.

The combatants are about equally divided in number and weight. The question over which they contend is contained in three words: "Was Hamlet mad?" "Yes, decidedly," says one party. "Certainly not," shouts the other party. "But he acts the madman," returns the first. "He only shams madness," retorts the other. Proofs are adduced by both parties that strongly support the contention of each. It seems to me that the long continuance of this dispute, as in all debatable questions of science, indicates that somehow the inquirers are upon the wrong path, and that to discover the truth we should look in some other direction than that which has been taken so long without decisive results.

My purpose in this paper is to suggest another view of the question, based, not upon the old but upon the new mental physiology. We have emancipated ourselves from the metaphysicians for the study of mind generally. We have lately taken to deal with mind as we deal with the subject-matter of all physical science, and, banishing *a priori* argument and speculative abstractions, we have begun to build up a real science of mind and soul upon the sure and safe foundation of *facts*. We look about us to see what is the action of the mechanism of man in its normal and its abnormal conditions; what it *does*; what phenomena it *exhibits*; how mind and soul express themselves in *action*. Then putting all these facts together, we are confident that we can erect as sound and secure a structure for psychology as has been erected for the other sciences by the same process.

The purpose of this paper is to employ this modern method of investigation upon the much-debated character of Hamlet and see what comes of it—if it may not lead us to something more like a solution of the problem, "Madness or no madness?" which has hitherto absorbed almost wholly the thoughts and energies of the combatants.

The method I suggest is that we should first see what is the mental structure of Hamlet, as shown by his acts and words. Then I think it will be found that this mental

structure explains the mystery—without resorting to the strange conclusion that the man who says some of the wisest things that ever were uttered was a lunatic.

For remember what madness is. It is *disease* of the structure of the brain, or of some part of it, causing irregular or incomplete performance of some of its functions. Eccentricity, the result of structure, is not madness, nor allied to madness. If natural mental structure—that which was born with him, that which makes him Hamlet, and not any other person—will explain his actions in the play, the lunatic theory must be abandoned.

Craniology I hold to be an unproved theory. The doctrine of phrenology, that the brain is the organ of mind, and that certain parts of the brain have specific mental functions, I hold to be established, although it is more than doubtful if we have yet ascertained what particular portions of the brain are appropriated to those functions. But I accept, as established, that analysis of the mind which phrenology has worked out and for which psychological science owes to it a debt of gratitude. I employ that map of the mental faculties, not only because it is in my judgment correct, but also because it is generally intelligible.

Hamlet is manifestly of *melancholic* temperament. He lacks the faculty of *hope*. It is the characteristic of such a disposition to nurse griefs—to look on the dark side of things. His first appearance on the stage introduces us at once to this marked feature. We see the son still grieving for his dead father, and who would not be comforted. He wears the deepest mourning while all the Court is robed in wedding garments. To his mother's exhortation that he should cease from seeking his noble father in the dust, and her hint that his sorrow was more in seeming than in substance, he answers:—

"Tis not alone my inky cloak, good mother,
Nor customary suits of solemn black
That can decide me truly; these indeed 'seem,'
For they are actions that a man might play;
But I have that within which passeth show,
These but the trappings and the suits of woe."

The second in prominence of his mental features is *irresolution*—a character by no means uncommon. It is, in fact, a deficiency of the faculty of firmness, and is most conspicuous in persons possessing large capacities for reasoning and reflecting. Such minds habitually hesitate. They have their doubts. They look upon both sides of every question and balance the *pros* and *cons*. They perceive prospective difficulties and objections not apparent to those who act without preliminary thought. This characteristic is not, as commonly supposed, a form of cowardice. The irresolution that paralyzes action is not the product of fear. The judgment sees so much to attract or to warn, as the case may be, that it is unable to come to a decision and pronounce a verdict. Even when resolved to take action, such potent objections present themselves that the mental energies are distracted. The *will* to do is not put forth, as with the inconsiderate—who feel at once an absolute assurance that the course resolved upon is the right one.

This characteristic of the young Prince of Denmark is exhibited throughout the drama. He begins by accepting the Ghost as the true spirit of his father, and at the moment, in the passion of the revelation, he promises to avenge the crime. But he soon begins to reflect, to argue with himself, and then to question the truth of the manifestation. As his thoughts dwell upon it, he discovers all kinds of reasons why he might be mistaken.

"The spirit that I have seen
May be the devil, and the devil hath power
To assume a pleasing shape; yea, and perhaps
Out of my weakness and my melancholy,
As he is very potent with such spirits,
He lures me but to damn me."

* Read at a meeting of the Psychological Society of Great Britain, May 1st, 1879.

Have we not often witnessed the same process among ourselves in relation to other phenomena?

Hamlet is affectionate and fond. He dearly loved his father; he must have been a loving son to his mother until her unnatural marriage revolted him. His friendship for Horatio was firm and enduring. He loved Ophelia with the passion of his youth, until the ghostly revelation froze the life-blood in his veins, and stifled all better feelings in an absorbing thirst for vengeance. Throughout we can see his love struggling fiercely with his over-mastering passion for revenge—his conviction that a duty had been imposed upon him to which he must sacrifice the past and all its “fond records.” How terrible was this mental struggle is shown in that wonderful scene with Ophelia, in which he bids her go to a nunnery. Mark how he wavers between his long cherished love for the girl, whom he avows to have been thrown in his way purposely to try him, and his resolve to sustain his assumed character in the presence of the spies who were watching him. Here again we see the characteristics of the man betraying themselves in his indecision, his cynical philosophy, his reflective habits, his incapacity for action—a character by no means rare in social life. Who has not known men who can *think* profoundly and well, but cannot *do*; who rightly point the way, but want the force of *will* to follow it? That is the character of Hamlet. He is a *moody* man, and, like all moody men, his spirits are sometimes extravagantly high, sometimes wretchedly low. Even his humour is tinged with melancholy, as witness the dialogue with the gravediggers. According to the mood of the moment is the aspect to him of the world and all its belongings. It must be remembered, also, that he was possessed with the superstition that prevailed down to a very recent time. He was a philosopher of the Schools, and when Shakespeare embodied this marvellous creation of his genius, even philosophers did not doubt the existence of ghosts. It was a part of the world's creed, and to question it would have been deemed as rank a heresy as atheism. This must be taken into account in any estimate of the character of Hamlet as exhibited in his speech and conduct. He never for a moment doubted that he had seen a visitor from the other world. The doubt that troubled him was not if his senses had deceived him, or imposture trifled with him, but if the Ghost really was the actual personality it professed to be. It *might* be a devil. Was it his father's spirit, or was it a demon pretending to be his father? He did not for a moment question that it was a spirit he had seen; he did not suspect that his senses had been deluded.

This was the other side of the question which his hesitating mind presented to him. He believed in the potency of evil spirits. He did not doubt that they could take any shape and profess any personality for the purpose of entrapping human souls. It is not difficult to imagine what was the course of reasoning in his hesitating mind, and how with him it paralysed action.

This, then, is the keynote of the entire drama from the moment of his interview with the Ghost. A clear conception must be formed of his natural temperament, as I have ventured to describe it—reflective but irresolute—thoughtful but inactive,—shocked at first by the shameless marriage of his mother, afterwards learning that she was not merely a wanton, but a murderess, a supernatural revelation enforcing him to vengeance, but his lifted arm paralysed by doubt if the communication was from above or from below—thus contemplated, his whole conduct seems to me not only perfectly intelligible but perfectly natural.

With this necessary introduction, let us proceed to the examination of the drama itself, and endeavour to trace in it the revelations of the character we have sketched.

Let us see how this view of the psychological character of Hamlet is sustained by the play.

He is, as already noted, first introduced to us labouring under a fit of melancholy. He is shocked at the marriage of his mother following so hard upon his father's funeral. He has a shadowy suspicion of foul play, as shown by the exclamation, “Oh, my prophetic soul, my uncle!” In this mood he is startled by the intelligence of the appearance of his father's spirit in arms.

He expresses no doubt of the fact, for he feels none. Belief in ghosts was universal. When Shakespeare made such mar-

vellous dramatic use of the supernatural, it would have been deemed insanity to question that spirits walked the earth.

Then comes the interview with the Ghost; the revelation of that murder, “most foul, strange, and unnatural.” With one of Hamlet's melancholy temperament such a tale could not but “harrow up his soul, freeze his young blood.” And it wrought a sudden change in him. His one object in life thenceforth should be to avenge his father's murder. To this end, in the haste of the moment, he devises that scheme of pretended lunacy which explains the whole future action and apparent contradictions of the play. He will “put an antic disposition on” to avert suspicion from his real purpose. Nothing can be more explicit than his intimation that he was going to assume a character with a distinct and obvious design. Nevertheless, in the face of this express avowal, volumes have been written to contend that Hamlet was really mad.

The voices of his frightened friends remind him that he has a part to play, and his purpose is fully shown when they meet. But very soon his constitutional irresolution returns. He doubts, hesitates. I am not sure that he does not—what we see so many do among ourselves—after awhile begin to question his senses, and doubt to-morrow what he has seen to-day. If he does not distrust the vision altogether, he certainly begins to ask himself if it was an honest ghost. It was the popular belief that the devil could assume all shapes, even those of angels, for the entrapping of souls, and this reflection made him pause again.

Certainly this irresolution, this wavering between duty (for such was vengeance to him) and doubt, could not but disturb somewhat a mind not naturally well balanced. He is harassed by contending emotions and intellectual conflicts. In a fit of his melancholy mood he contemplates even suicide as an escape from that mental disquietude which is the most frequent cause of self-slaughter. But he steadily maintains the assumed character of the madman to those about him—to all observers, except his dear friend Horatio, who is the depository of his secrets. With him he is at all times sane enough. Can a real madman change thus at will?

But Ophelia—what of her? “His behaviour to her is inexplicable, and inexcusable,” say the critics, “save on the assumption of positive madness. She had not offended him. She would not betray him. We challenge an explanation of this consistent with the sanity of a gentleman described by Ophelia herself:—

“The expectancy and rose of the fair state,
The glass of fashion and the mould of form,
The observed of all observers.”

He has loved Ophelia dearly—loves her still; but he knows her to be innocently the tool of her father. His sagacity has divined that she is to be made an instrument to try him. Polonius implicitly believes in the reality of his madness, but the King, with the natural suspiciousness of the guilty, has manifestly in his mind an almost instinctive sense that Hamlet is playing a part, and his conscience tells him wherefore. Consequently he is most anxious, by personal observation, to test him when not himself perceived, and he accepts with eagerness the proposal of Polonius that they should hide, and take him unawares, for which purpose Ophelia is to be set to entrap him into a revelation of his true condition.

His fellow-students are then set to the like watch for the like reason—to learn if his madness was real or assumed. He speedily detects their scheme also.

The appearance of the Players suggests to him the device of setting a trap for the King. He will have a play that shall tell over again, in the presence of the suspected murderers, the story told him by the Ghost.

Polonius and the King continue their espials. Ophelia is still the bait employed. On his approach in one of his most melancholy and most meditative moods—when his reasoning powers were most active, and his faculty of hope in its most extreme depression—again they hide and listen. At first he is not aware that spies are near him, and his beautiful soliloquy marks surely not the madman, but the philosopher. It is not until he has arisen to greet Ophelia that he sees or hears the spies, and then and therefore he instantly resumes, and abruptly, the “antic disposition” he had put on for a purpose. Then follows the extraordinary scene which has been so persistently advanced as conclusive proof that Hamlet

was really insane, and this, in spite of his sudden assumption of apparent insanity and the obvious motive for it.

We are indebted to Mr. Henry Irving for having rightly interpreted this much misrepresented scene. Other actors have made of it an incoherent raving. He has given to it its true meaning and expression—a mingling of deep love for the girl with the conscious need for sustaining before the hidden witnesses the character he had assumed. The conflict was hard to bear, the work hard to do, and he tries to stifle the emotions of his love by the affectation of a passion he does not feel. He is conscious of inflicting a terrible agony upon her by those “wild and whirling words”; but the consciousness of the ears that were open behind the arras to catch every syllable that fell from his lips compelled him to a harshness he was far from feeling. At times his affection almost betrays him. But it is exhibited in tone not in language. Mr. Irving’s expression of this conflict of emotions, his impulse almost to embrace her, and then his restraining endeavour to sustain, even by exaggerating, the part he was playing, is to my mind the true embodiment of Shakespeare’s design, as it is a triumph of dramatic art—one of those bursts of true genius for which we would gladly forgive the actor’s faults, were they ten times more numerous.

Then his advice to the players. Is that madness or anything that anybody but a mad-doctor could torture into madness? He is now no longer irresolute. His mind is made up. The path is plain before him. He had certainly imparted to his bosom friend, Horatio, all his doubts and suspicions; he now confides to him his plot of the play and invites his assistance. It is given cordially, with what result we all know.

Assured now that it was an honest Ghost—persuaded that his college friends Rosencrantz and the gentle Guildenstern were commissioned to watch him, he maintains his assumed character with them. The reappearance of the Ghost in the midst of his passionate interview with his mother marks the irresolution that had so long held him inactive. And again at the close of this marvellous scene he tells his mother not to let the King by his endearments

“Make you to ravel all this matter out,
That I essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.”

The irresolution had again shown itself in the closet when the King kneeling in prayer, and the opportunity for vengeance offering, he failed to avail himself of it—his wavering reasons for inaction plainly proving that he could not make up his mind. Hearing a noise behind the arras he kills Polonius believing the spy to be the King. It was infirmity of purpose still, not insanity.

The question has been often asked why, now that he was assured of his uncle’s guilt, he did not at once proceed to fulfil the promise he had made to avenge his father’s murder? Opportunities could not have been wanting. Why did he quit Denmark, leaving his work undone? Even after his return, so craftily brought about, his purpose remains blunted. He meets the King in the churchyard, but does nothing. Even the catastrophe is not of his seeking. He was the intended victim of the passage at arms, and the blow that slew the King avenged more his own murder than that of his father. Thus to the last his character is maintained with most admirable consistency. A character meditative not active—highly intellectual and reflective, but wavering, vacillating, doubting. Certainly he is not mad, nor is there the slightest approach to madness. Every act simulating madness is carefully calculated. Madness never yet talked so wisely as he talks when it is not his cue to assume the antic disposition.

I hope, therefore, to have established something like a case against the insanity theory so steadily maintained by so many critics, and notably by an eminent M.D., who should be an authority upon such a question, seeing that he was, if he is not now, the principal of a public asylum. I trust, so far as a psychological investigation of the play can do so, to have satisfied those who may have doubted that Hamlet really was and did what he has himself described in these passages:—

“Herc, as before, never, so help you mercy,
How strange or odd see’r I bear myself,
As I, perchance, hereafter shall think meet
To put an antic disposition on.”

Again:—

“Ham.—But my uncle-father and aunt-mother are deceived.

“Guild.—In what, my dear lord?

“Ham.—I am but mad north-north-west; when the wind is southerly I know a hawk from a heronshaw.”

And yet again:—

“Queen.—This is the very coinage of your brain;
This bodiless creation ecstasy,
Is very cunning in

“Ham.—Ecstasy!
My pulse as yours doth temperately keep time
And makes a healthful music. It is not madness
That I have uttered. Bring me to the test
And I the matter will reword, which madness
Would gambol from.”

And lastly:—

“That I
Essentially am not in madness,
But mad in craft.”

AN OLD WITCH STORY.

ONE of the best old witch tales of the Ettrick Forest district is related of the celebrated Michael Scott, master of Oakwad. It used to be told as follows:—There was one of Michael’s tenants who had a wife that was the most notable witch of the age. So extraordinary were her powers, that the country people began to put them in competition with those of the master, and say that in some *cantrips* she surpassed him. Michael could ill brook such insinuations, for there is always jealousy between great characters, and went over one day with his dogs, on pretence of hunting, to see Lucky—. He found her alone in the field weeding lint; and desired her to show him some of her powerful art. She was very angry, and denied that she had any supernatural skill. He, however, continued to press her. She sharply told him to let her alone, else she would make him repent the day he troubled her. How she perceived the virtues of Michael’s wand is not known, but in a moment she snatched it from his hand and gave him three lashes with it. The knight was instantly changed to a hare, when the malicious and inveterate hag cried out, laughing, “Away, Michael, run or die,” and baited his own dogs upon him. He was extremely hard hunted, and was obliged to swim the river, and take shelter in the sewer of his own castle from the fury of his pursuers, where he got leisure to change himself to a man.

Michael, extremely chagrined at having been thus outwitted, studied a deadly revenge; and going over afterwards to hunt, he sent his man to Fauldsheope to borrow some bread from Lucky to give to his dogs, for he had neglected to feed them before he came from home. If she gave him the bread, he was to thank her and come away; but if she refused, he gave him a line written in red characters which he was to lodge above the lintel as he came out. The servant found her baking bread, as his master had assured him he would, and delivered his message. She refused to give him any bread. The man said no more, but lodged the line as directed; and returned to his master. The powerful spell had the desired effect: Lucky— instantly left her work and danced round and round the fire like one mad, singing the while with great glee,

“Master Michael Scott’s man
Cam seeking bread an’ got nane.”

The dinner-hour arrived, but the reapers looked in vain for their dame who was wont to bring their provisions to them to the field. The Goodman sent home a servant-girl to assist her, but neither did she return. At length he ordered them to go and take their dinner at home, for he supposed that his spouse had taken some of her *tirravees*. All of them went inadvertently indoors, and as soon as they passed beneath the mighty charm, were seized with the same mania, and followed the example of their mistress. The Goodman, who had tarried behind, came home last; and, hearing the noise before he came near the house, he did not venture in, but peeped in at the window. There he beheld all his people dancing round and round the fire and singing with the most frantic wildness. His wife was at that time quite exhausted, and the rest were half trailing her round. She could only now and then pronounce a syllable of the song, which she did with a kind of scream, yet seemed as intent on the sport as ever.

The Goodman rode with all speed to the master to inquire what he had done to his people. Michael Scott bade him take down the note from the lintel and burn it, which he did, and all the people returned to their senses. Poor Lucky— died overnight, and Michael remained unmatched in all the arts of enchantment and necromancy.

Mr. ROBERT COOPER writes to us from Boston, U.S.A., a letter, “taking a side” in American spiritualistic contentions. As all the merits of the case are not before the readers of these pages, the tribunal is not adapted to express an opinion upon an *ex parte* statement.

CHINESE FUNERALS.—When a Chinese funeral takes place one of the mourners or a friend of the deceased sits with the driver, and as the hearse passes along he scatters slips of perforated paper along the street. It appears that these paper charms are thrown out all the way from the house to the cemetery, the object being to keep the evil spirits from getting the body. It is supposed that they follow the dead body in crowds, determined on mischief, but that, being very curious, they stop whenever they see these paper slips, examine them carefully, and try to get at their significance. Meanwhile the procession hurries on, other slips being thrown out, thus keeping the little spirits occupied in their studies till the friends get the body buried, and beyond their reach.—*Religio-Philosophical Journal*.

WHAT TRUTH IS THERE IN ASTROLOGY?

IN a discussion once carried on by astrologers in these pages, there was, we think, little to convince anybody that the subject in which they were interested had any real foundation, and they wandered away into details before verifying the main point. Predictions whether particular children will die in infancy, or live, have little weight when verified, since the chances are even that any guess will be right. But the first two cases given below are startling in their accuracy:—

ASTROLOGICAL PREDICTIONS VERIFIED.

Mercurius's Predicting Almanack for 1878 (Curtice and Co., Catherine-street, Strand) was published in the autumn of 1877. Under "Predictions for January," we find, "Victor Emmanuel's nativity is afflicted; let him beware." The king died on the 9th of that month. Under "Predictions for December," is the following:—"Saturn's transits are evil for the Princess Alice of Hesse. Illness, or a death in the family." The Princess died on the 14th, a few weeks after one of her children. *Zadkiel's Almanack* for 1879 (Cousins and Co., 3, York-street, Covent-garden) was published in the autumn of 1878. Among the "Predictions for January" is this one:—"About the 11th of this month accidents will occur in mines." The great Dinas Colliery explosion happened on the 13th. Under the heading "Partial Eclipse of the Moon at the Cape of Good Hope," at page 46 of the Almanack, we read, "The ecliptic conjunction takes place at 1.5 p.m. of January 22nd, Cape mean time. . . . Saturn in the eleventh (house) will bring some difficulties on the Government, and these may be chiefly in connection with hostile acts perpetrated by discontented tribes, as Mars squares Saturn from the seventh house." On the day named, the 22nd, occurred the disaster to our troops at Isandlana. These predictions are taken from copies which were in my possession in or before November of 1877 and 1878 respectively.

C. C. M.

DR. SLADE IN AUSTRALIA.

THE *Sydney Evening News* of March 3rd, 1879, contains the following:—

"In my article in the *Argus* I have not stated one-half of what I have seen, but, among other things, I may mention this: Dr. Slade was at my private house. On entering the dining-room with me for the first time, a chair in the far end of the room wheeled round and drew up to the table: it was quite eight feet away from any of us. During the evening a lady and gentleman came in, and I got a common school slate and a chip of pencil, and Dr. Slade immediately laid it on top of the table, it never having been once out of sight or under the table, and a message was written on it from a sister of a lady then present. Again, a gentleman went to him with a book slate tied and sealed up; he refused to open it, but in spite of his precaution writing took place inside; and not only that, but it was in green, proving incontestably that it was written with the chip of green pencil locked up inside. Now the question arises, what did it? Surely some invisible force. What, then, is this invisible force? It must have intelligence to write answers, bearing on questions asked, and having intelligence, surely it must emanate from the soul or spirit of some person. Can it be the medium's spirit? Can the medium see into the past events of my life, and not only answer questions and speak of people known to me, but also use 'household words' and phrases common to a certain person of my acquaintance, and some months dead? Can the medium by his will-power not only do all this, but tie a peculiar knot in a handkerchief, that was identical with that tied by one other person who died, when he (the medium) was about eight or nine years old and totally unacquainted with him. I say, no! he cannot do it, and I do not see what else can, unless it be the spirits of the people it purports to represent. I have just come back from Melbourne, and on Saturday night last, on the Barrabool, all alone (Dr. Slade in Melbourne), I got raps on my bunk, and questions were answered that I could not verify until I reached Sydney, and on arrival I found they were all perfectly correct. In closing this letter, I would like to call attention to the fact of *Edwin Drood* having been finished by a mechanic in America, who acted as Amanuensis to the spirit of Charles Dickens. I have read some of the extracts to a great admirer of Dickens and a severe critic, and it was at once allowed, as nought else but the work of Dickens himself. Let your readers get it and judge for themselves; it will astonish all anti-Spiritualists.

E. CYRIL HAVILAND.

"Burwood, February 25."

THE LATE LORD BROUGHAM AND SPIRITUALISM.—In connection with the name of Robert Dale Owen we are reminded of the illustrious Englishmen who have upheld Spiritualism in company with his beloved and world-renowned father, Robert Owen, who, by the request of Lord Brougham, attended the *séances* of Mrs. Dr. Hayden twenty-six years ago, and who, although a positive disbeliever of 'immortality'—although he had, in 1826, proclaimed religion to be one of the trinity of evils that had degraded mankind—adopted the truth at once when he witnessed the demonstration, and at the celebration of his eighty-third birthday, some weeks later, stood up before the large array, chiefly of sceptics, materialists, and atheists, who loved and idolized him as a father, and there, with Mrs. Hayden by his side, proclaimed his solemn conviction of 'immortality' amid the most intense though subdued emotion of those men—his life-long associates in reform—who mourned to see in him the pillar of their unbelief overthrown. With the same courage with which he had proclaimed his unbelief he proclaimed his belief for the remainder of his life. There was an example of the love of truth, but not a solitary example among the great men of England, or among good men of any country, for the love of humanity lifts men into the atmosphere of truth.—*Professor Buchanan.*

Correspondence.

[Great freedom is given to correspondents, who sometimes express opinions diametrically opposed to those of this journal and its readers. Unsolicited communications cannot be returned; copies should be kept by the writers. Preference is given to letters which are not anonymous.]

A WORD FROM AN OUTSIDER.

SIR.—The Rev. W. Miall's very interesting and able paper in *The Spiritualist* of April the 25th affords opportunity for a few remarks from those unfortunates, the "Outsiders." He speaks of the "alleged accessibility" of the alleged phenomena, which we are told occur not only in distant lands but here in England, in London, in the next street, in the houses of our friends. Without much cost of either trouble or money, we may for ourselves see what is to be seen, hear what is to be heard, and examine whatever evidence is wont to be adduced, and subject that evidence to whatever sifting or testing process our sagacity may suggest."

Now, this is by no means so much the case as may be supposed, or as may at first sight appear. The facts are not easily accessible to investigators—are not open to general scrutiny. Owing to the peculiar conditions, and the strict rules necessary to be maintained, nearly all private circles are closed as soon as formed: even friends with every wish to help finding it almost impossible to do so, whilst the paid sources available to us are becoming few and far between.

Mr. Miall refers to the temporariness of the zeal of apparently sincere and earnest converts—to persons once prominent among its supporters, who now never refer to it, and who seem to have lost interest in it—"which recreancy requires explanation." Now, for this loss of interest, real or apparent, we can give one reason which has come under our own notice. We know cases in which great and sincere interest in the subject has given place to entire silence and avoidance of it, and to complete withdrawal in bitterness of spirit at finding every avenue barred. We know others in which the endeavour to secure the truth, ending only in disappointment, has led to the conclusion that a theory or belief, affording so little opportunity for thorough investigation, which is confined to a mere handful, shutting out the large majority, must after all be a delusion. Again, there are those to whom Spiritualism has become not only a belief but a religion, influencing all their thoughts and actions—a religion in which, come what may, they are determined to live and die. They go after the phenomena (whenever the kindness of friends or a favourable opportunity may permit), not from idle curiosity, not from love of novelty or excitement, but with an intense yearning for the comfort which haply they may and sometimes do derive from it. Nevertheless, they have to remain outsiders; to stifle many a heartache when they hear of the constant, almost daily consolation which others more fortunate receive from it. Mr. Miall truly says, "it is of considerable importance that Spiritualists should know how outsiders are affected by incidents about which it may be the initiated were themselves once exercised, but whose influence upon them they, since their period of full conviction, have perhaps forgotten."

If Spiritualism is really the key to a future life—if it lifts the black cloud of uncertainty which has so long obscured our horizon, if it removes, once for all, that horrible nightmare, the ever-recurring dread of death, if it opens out not only a world to come, but a life full of intellect, activity, and progression—is it not the grandest, the greatest boon that ever dawned upon humanity? Ought it not to be preached almost to the very stones? Should not every effort be made for the further spreading of it? But the literature alone will not do this, neither will a stray lecture here and there in our towns suffice to accomplish that object. It is not a subject to be taken up only at intervals or in fragments.

There is a class now standing on the border land unwilling to give up the subject, yet unable to gain a firm footing. For this class Mr. Fletcher's course of earnest and eloquent lectures has done and is still doing much, and we hope the time is not far distant when yet more help will be given to those who are earnestly inquiring. We hear of evil and undeveloped spirits who claim sympathy and aid, and we are willing to give them a great deal of the former and as much of the latter as may lie in our power; but we are selfish enough to wish that the case of outsiders in this world might be taken into consideration before the undeveloped ones of the next. We do not expect private circles to be opened to us, for we know that cannot be done, but we heartily concur in wishing that "some three or four or half-dozen representative Spiritualists whose names command public respect should be invited to adopt every possible means of advertising the world, of inviting inquiry and investigation." And for such a work we also think "all necessary pecuniary means would be forthcoming." We agree with Mr. Miall's suggestion that the object upon which effort should be concentrated should be rather conviction of the occurrence of the phenomena than the admission of any theory respecting their cause. Facts first, explanations afterwards. To thrust forward the latter before the former are admitted is to retard their admission. What men need most of all to be assured of is "that these things do really occur." In concluding, we would observe that these remarks do not emanate only from an individual, but embody the sentiments and wishes of many

AN OUTSIDER.

NON-PROFESSIONAL LECTURES.

SIR.—There appears to be a growing and sincere desire on the part of many unbelievers in the alleged phenomena of modern Spiritualism to ascertain what are the facts in relation to them.

I find everywhere a wish expressed to hear from a non-professional and unpaid investigator a statement of the alleged facts, and a yet further desire for an opportunity of questioning such an investigator to any extent.

Permit me through your pages to make the following announcement, viz.: That I am prepared, at considerable sacrifice of time and convenience, to visit any of the following centres of intelligence, viz.: London, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Manchester, Liverpool, and Birmingham, to deliver a lecture in defence of the reality and genuineness of the alleged phenomena of modern Spiritualism, before any audience, in any room, on the following conditions: That the chair be occupied by any respectable and well-known inhabitant;

that the committee of management consist for the most part of unbelievers in the phenomena of modern Spiritualism; that the proceeds of the lectures be given to any benevolent institution; and that I be paid first-class railway fare to and from the place of lecture, and have provided for me respectable hotel accommodation for one evening.

I would lecture about one hour, and submit to be questioned for any length of time the audience may desire. In the lecture I would defend the genuineness of modern spiritual phenomena; would affirm that no known natural laws can be shown to account for them, and that the most rational and defensible hypothesis is that of their being of extra or supra-mundane origin.

I would further suggest, that if this offer be accepted, that every scientific professor, medical practitioner, and lawyer in the locality should by complimentary ticket be invited to attend, in order that the best arguments and the most crucial questions on the negative side of this vexed question may be heard, and, if possible, answered.

I shall feel obliged if any of your readers who know intelligent sceptics in any of the localities above named, would kindly forward to them a marked copy of this letter, in order to induce them to make arrangements for the lecture, and have an opportunity of hearing and questioning one who, after twenty-five years' careful investigation, believes that the evidence for the reality of the phenomena is incontrovertible.

T. P. BARKAS, F.G.S.

Art Gallery, Newcastle-on-Tyne, May 11th, 1879.

SPIRIT MESSAGES.

SIR,—Some months back I wrote to the Secretary of the British National Association of Spiritualists, suggesting the desirability of establishing a "Message Department" in *The Spiritualist* similar to the one that appears weekly in *The Banner of Light*, and I offered an annual subscription towards the accomplishment of this object, provided a few others would come forward and help also. My letter was referred to the Committee, and the Secretary wrote me that you would be requested to notice the matter in your paper, but I have heard nothing further about it.

I feel convinced that the course I advocate would be the means of spreading a knowledge of "Spiritualism" where other channels fail, and I shall be glad if you will advocate the question in your columns. It should not be a matter of much difficulty to arrange with some good medium to devote one day in the week to such a purpose, and the cost might well be defrayed by those that have the good of the cause at heart.

J. G. MEUGENS.

The Manor House, Penge, Surrey, 13th May, 1879.

[The Association never informed us of the above offer of some months back, and we knew nothing about it till this letter arrived last Tuesday.—Ed.]

"PRESENT IN THE SPIRIT."—An elderly lady, the mother of gentlemen well known in politics and business in this city, herself in a low state of health, who now has her residence in the south-western portion of the city, awoke from a sleep last Monday afternoon and at once broke out in a fit of violent weeping, which attracted the attention of all in the house. When quieted, she said that her husband, long since dead, had appeared to her in a dream and told her that her daughter was dying. This incident was related to persons in another part of the city, during the same day, and before the person who told of it had any knowledge of what is recited hereafter. That the mother, who knew that her daughter had been for some time sick should become impressed with the idea that she was dying was not singular, as that might easily have resulted from apprehensions which had, no doubt, been entertained. The remarkable fact is this: On the same day, as near as can be ascertained, at the exact time when the mother was manifesting distress of mind, the daughter roused herself in her bed of sickness, in a house on Arbor Hill, and said to her attendant, "Why, how my mother is crying!" and a moment later, "Don't you hear her cry?" the nurse heard nothing, and was obliged to say so, although the sick woman repeatedly asserted that her mother was crying, and endeavoured to convince the nurse that she heard her. The younger lady died on Wednesday and was buried on Saturday.—*Albany Argus*.

THE EFFECTS OF KINDNESS.—The following, from the *Cape Ann Advertiser* (Mass.), shows what may be the general experience, when it shall be no longer the habit of man to shoot and kill the more harmless members of the lower creation:—"A pleasing sight may be witnessed at Magnolia—a lady standing in the doorway of her dwelling with some dozen little forest birds flitting about her and feeding from the palm of her extended hand. From one to four birds at a time will feed from her hands seemingly with a sense of perfect safety, while others will snap up a crumb, dart off to a tree or roof, devour it, and come back for another. When the supply of food runs short they will alight and peck at the bottom of her dress. An observer of this interesting scene must keep at a proper distance and remain silent, or the birds will be frightened away. While feeding them the lady keeps up a constant chatting, which they seem to understand, and respond by chirping. They know her voice and will come at her bidding, however much she may disguise herself. If she neglects them in the morning they will flutter their wings against the window-pane to attract her attention, and she never fails to answer their summons. Their confidence was of gradual growth, commencing some six years ago, when shelves were attached to the outside window-sills, and crumbs of bread, meat, cheese, &c., were placed there for their refection, the lady standing inside and talking kindly to them while they fed themselves, now and then indulging in a reprimand when they were selfish and quarrelsome. From the window they were led in time to the doorway for their daily rations. Her little flock make their appearance in the winter when the ground is first covered with snow, their hours for meals being at sunrise and late in the afternoon. As soon as their wants are supplied they are off to the woods again. The visitors evidently belong to the same stock, some of them returning from year to year and recognizing the lady's voice, for at their first appearance annually a part of them will come to her hand at her first call, while no other person can approach within two rods of them."

INDIAN JUGGLERY.

DR. SLADE has, on the whole, been treated well in Australia, though of course here and there he has met with abuse from the ignorant. Some of the latter class have put their valueless ideas in a pamphlet sent us from Sydney, and one of the writers gives the following testimony as to juggling performances he witnessed in India:—

"I have seen a village juggler do a much more wonderful trick than that. It was at Sonapore fair, in 1872 or '73. It is called the floating trick—suspending a body in the air without any visible support. Dr. Sylvester did the trick here, but experts well know that an iron or steel rod projects from the back of the stage, being hidden by the seemingly floating body. The conjuror passes his sword apparently all round in every direction, meeting no resistance on any side. It does seem inexplicable. In the case I saw in India it was done in a *shamiana*—that is, under a covered canopy. A young girl was seemingly suspended in mid-air. The green turf was beneath, the canvas walls of the *shamiana* above and on every side. 'Tis true, the English spectators all sat on one side. Yet there were natives all round, and they seemed as astonished as we were. I could not account for it, but the *jadugar*, or juggler, expressly told us, in answer to repeated queries, that it was a trick learned from his father,—a pure deception of the senses. Let Spiritualists say it was the spirits if they choose. I believe the juggler himself, although I cannot explain how the thing was done.

"The same juggler on the same occasion did a trick which I have often seen done, and have heard explained, but which always seemed to me very wonderful. It is the well-known basket trick. I never saw it better done than by a handsome young juggler from Benares, who used to amuse me by his 'hanky-panky' one time I was confined to my couch by an attack of rheumatism. The scene of operations was my own verandah. A well-built, plastered brick floor. Natives squatting on their hams all around, watching with eager, interested looks every movement of the light, supple, handsome young 'Jadugar.' His body was bare from the waist upwards, and his long, coal-black hair was tied behind in a knot. He had none of the ordinary impedimenta or accessories. He produced a narrow, oblong cane-work basket, which I was allowed to examine. It appeared simple enough. No false bottom, side, or lid was perceptible. Next he introduced his son, a handsome little fellow about ten years old. The boy was enveloped in a net, which I myself examined, tied firmly round the ends, and sealed the knots with my own seal. The boy was slung like a rabbit in a net, and I swung him myself off the ground. Thus enclosed, the boy was put in the basket. A cloth was borrowed from an adjacent native and spread over the basket, and the lid then put over the whole. The juggler then went through some other antics, but I did not take my eye from the basket. After a very short time the man removed the lid, took a leap into the air, and came down with all his weight right in the centre of the basket. Had the boy been there, the shock was enough to rupture his diaphragm—we only heard a groan. Again the lid was put on the basket. The juggler took a sharp, long, slender rapier-like sword, and ran it through and through the basket. Blood issued freely. The natives looked horror-stricken and gasped out their cries of pity. I must confess I was puzzled. I was still more dumbfounded when the juggler began to call out loudly in Hindoostanee for his boy. A childish voice, seemingly from a great distance, answered him. The call and the answer was repeated, this time a little nearer, until at length the boy, smiling and uninjured, came tripping through the crowd from the outside of the verandah. The basket was opened, and there at the bottom lay the empty net, seals intact, and not a tittle of evidence to show how the trick was done.

"Now, surely you will admit that this was more wonderful than any of the so-called spirit manifestations that the most gifted medium has ever received. Every sense was deceived, and yet the explanation to those who know the trick is very simple. The spirits have nothing to do with it. I might go on to describe the mango tricks, and others equally wonderful and equally capable of explanation, but space forbids.

"Some people make a great point of having taken different coloured pencils to Slade's sances. One gentleman took a green pencil, which was put upon one corner of the slate, and the writing was green—*ergo*, the spirits must have written with it, because Dr. Slade could not have known what colour the pencil was, and he denied having written the message. A most convincing test indeed. The same gentleman is not, however, satisfied. He wishes to have a *séance*, during which one of the company (let us hope a candid sceptic) will lie beneath the table. That seems fair. I have seen a common village juggler in India mix five or six different coloured powders together, put them into a tumblerful of water and drink them off. I have examined his mouth to see that the powders were not concealed there. Then, with his hands tied behind his back, I have asked him to produce a yellow powder. He grates his teeth and out comes a pile of DRY yellow powder on the top of his little drum. Ask for blue: the blue is produced. Ask for white: the white succeeds the blue; and so on, whatever colour you name, that colour instantly appears."

MRS. MAKDOUGALL GREGORY has so far recovered from her illness, that she is able to drive out occasionally.

DR. LOCANDER has returned from Naples to Paris.

DR. SLADE will shortly return from Australia to New York via San Francisco.

SPIRITUALISM IN DALSTON.—Last Monday night, the Dalston Association of Inquirers into Spiritualism held a *conversazione* at their rooms, 53, Sigdon-road, Hackney-downs, London. Music and singing were the chief attractions, and those who contributed to the entertainment of the assembly were Mrs. Elgie Corner, Madame Ourry, Miss Tippins, Mr. T. Blyton, Mr. Davey, Mr. and Miss Coldrey, Mr. J. Bruce Gillon, and Mr. Norrington. Mr. Thomas Shorter made a few brief remarks, and the evening closed with dancing.

PHYSICAL MANIFESTATIONS IN PUBLIC.

(To the Editor of the "Religio-Philosophical Journal," Chicago, April 12th.)

If Mrs. Rosalie C. Simpson, the slate-writing and flower medium of your city, gained a signal victory over the editor of the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat*, a full account of which was published in your paper, she also achieved yesterday, March 30th, 1879, if possible, a greater one. She came to our place by special invitation, to attend our anniversary, and at the quiet, pleasant home of Mr. and Mrs. Chas. Merritt, she held some private *séances* under test conditions, which, I am told, were highly satisfactory to all who attended them. At one of these private *séances*, Mr. George A. Geer, of Minnesota, received in a glass of water, one red and two white carnation pinks, as fresh and real as I ever saw. Being much pleased at receiving them, he brought them in the glass of water to the meeting, and made a full statement of the manner in which he had obtained them, to an audience of four hundred persons, many of whom were sceptics. The flowers were passed round, and the audience curiously examined them, after which a gentleman, John Deshon, an old and wealthy settler, arose, and in a defiant manner challenged Mrs. Simpson, who was present on the platform, to duplicate the manifestation then and there, in broad light, before that audience, under the same conditions as previously given to Mr. Geer—demanding that she should produce one red and two white carnation pinks in a glass of water for him, and he would give her fifty dollars. Afterwards he raised it to a hundred dollars, but fell back again to fifty.

The house was thrown into the greatest confusion; for a few minutes it was impossible to maintain order, but in the midst of the uproar Mrs. Simpson rose to her feet, and in a quiet, business-like manner, accepted the defiant challenge just as it had been given. She deliberately repeated the words of the challenger, and made a clear statement of what she would do. There was no dodging or equivocation on the part of either. Complete victory or utter defeat was the only alternative. Though Mrs. Simpson was not excited in the least, that I could observe, yet the spirit of undaunted courage flashed from her eyes.

Mr. Deshon now came forward, and was seated beside Mrs. Simpson upon the platform, and they proceeded to business, the former taking a glass of water with a slate beneath it, pressing it hard against the under part of the table, while the latter bared her arm to the elbow, and seating herself fifteen or twenty inches from the table, also put her hand on the slate, and in less than three minutes the materialistic sceptic removed the slate and glass from beneath the table, and held it up before the audience, when, wonderful to tell, the glass contained one red and two white carnation pinks, thus duplicating in every particular the test demanded. The greatest excitement followed, and Mrs. Simpson, who stood before the audience, was enthusiastically applauded.

Mr. Deshon bore his defeat with manly courage, saying that all the religion he had was to do as he agreed, and especially to pay honest debts; accordingly he took out his pocket-book, slowly counted out fifty dollars in greenbacks, and with great tenderness and seeming reluctance, he handed the money over to Mrs. Simpson. It was received with thanks.

In conclusion, let me add that Mrs. Simpson not only gave private *séances*, but three public *séances* before crowded houses, in broad light, all of which, so far as I have learned, gave entire satisfaction. Her visit to our city has caused a great interest in Spiritualism.

A. J. FISHBACK.

Battle Creek, Mich., March 31, 1879.

THE nearest Metropolitan Railway Station to Steinway Hall, in which Mr. J. W. Fletcher delivers his interesting lectures, is Baker-street.

NEW BOOKS.—Captain John James's new book, *Mesmerism, with Hints for Beginners*, will be published at *The Spiritualist Office*, next Tuesday. Captain James was an intimate friend of the late Dr. Elliotson, and has had thirty years' experience in Mesmerism. His book meets a public demand, there being, at present, no small work on Mesmerism by a well-educated writer, in general circulation, and we expect the little volume to hold its ground for a generation or two, as a standard elementary text-book. Captain James, being a soldier, indulges in no waste of words; he is concise and clear throughout the work. The first volume of Mr. Harrison's work, *Spirits before our Eyes*, will come out at the close of next week, and is already in encouragingly extensive demand.

FREE SUNDAY EVENING CLAIRVOYANT SEANCES.

EVERY Sunday evening, at seven o'clock, services in connection with Spiritualism are held at the Steinway Hall, Lower Seymour Street, Portman Square, London, by Mr. J. W. Fletcher, and the proceedings close with a public trance and clairvoyant *séance*. The meetings are well conducted, the accommodation for the public is good, and these gatherings are proving exceedingly beneficial to Spiritualism, for they are attracting earnest attention on the part of some of those who have previously given little thought to the subject. The following is a report of what took place at the close of the service last Sunday night:—

Mr. Fletcher, in the clairvoyant state, said: As I was sitting during the singing, I saw a spirit come very near to me, and it still stands before me. She brings with her the spirit of a child—of a little girl—who she is holding by the hand, and they both appear to wish to signify their presence to a gentleman present. The child has been some time in the spirit world, for I know by the brightness of the light that she comes from some very spiritual sphere, remote from earth-life. She holds up some beautiful white flowers, which signify her name in some way. Now I see her name written before me—"Daisy." It is her spirit name as well. I see these words written—"We are all with you to-night, but I tried most to come, because I have been sitting beside you all the evening, and I knew you would be glad to hear a word from me. I wanted to fill you with a stronger thought and influence, that I might come closer to you by-and-by. We are nearer to you than any earthly friends can be, for we can read your heart. Let all your doubts pass away, they only keep us further from you. We are both here." I see "Robert" written as well, as belonging to the gentleman they came with. There is some lady here as well, to whom they came to speak. They may indicate the persons to whom they come, perhaps.

A gentleman here rose and said that a lady present had asked him to state that she recognised the spirits.

Mr. Fletcher continued: A spirit of a gentleman is near me, who has been in spirit-life for a year; he is rather tall, has blue eyes—not black or dark. He has a brown beard, and looks down to my left, saying—"I have been with you all the time you were away, and while you were in association with one very dear to us both; and I am glad to see, too, how well he is doing. I feel he is the one link between the future and the past, and though miles and miles separate him from you, I am often with you both. I will try to help him to be a useful man by aiding him to unfold his mind. I am often with you in your home—oftener still with him. Often your thoughts stray back to the past, and when you think strongly of me it is because my spirit-presence is about you." He is speaking to somebody on my left. If anybody recognises him, the saying so will help the spirit and be a relief to me. He is waiting for recognition.

There was no response.

Mr. Fletcher, after a long pause, added: If anybody recognises the spirit, will he kindly say so? I cannot get free from his influence—that is why I ask.

Still no response.

Mr. Fletcher, after waiting some time, said: I see the spirit of a lady who has not been long in the spirit world. She seems very anxious to speak to some friend of hers here, in the earth-life, and she is beckoning as if calling to some one from this hall. I am taken far away from here to a large place where the people are assembled together; music fills the place, and while the people wait I see her walk out before me. Now I see her suffering and ill, and there are two who she is very anxious to speak to—one who was not near her when she died, and the other was kind to her when here. I see a wreath of flowers and the letter "T," and that is meant as the initial of her name. She says: "It is not for any test that I have come, but because of my great desire to tell those who were kind to me here that though my voice is still in death, I am happy in a land fairer than this. I am with my friends—let them know that. When they stand in the place dear to me, and look into the eyes of the people I love, I am there too, and I rejoice that I still live in the hearts of my people."

An officer in the army here rose, and said that he fully recognised the description. After the close of the proceedings, the information was given to us that the description applied to Titians, and that a day or two previously he had placed a wreath of flowers on her grave. Will he next week authenticate this, by publishing full details with his name and address appended?

Mr. Fletcher continued: Somebody calls "Helen!" There are two you wish to speak to, but Helen is the nearest.

The medium was next entranced, and gave a short address on "Freedom," from the spirit of the late George Thompson, anti-slavery reformer, and formerly M.P. for the Tower Hamlets.

Mr. Fletcher, again in the clairvoyant state, said: There is the spirit of a gentleman here, almost in the earth life. He says: "I wish to send a message to my brother. Tell him it is his own fault if he does not hear from me more; he has strength of mediumship enough, and I am with him often, very often. When he allows his fingers to wander, I sometimes try to lead them into the old familiar words, to remind him of my presence. I have come to-night to renew a link of connection between my spirit and his."

No recognition of this communication was announced, and the meeting separated.

Those who recognise descriptions, should at the same time give their names and addresses.

MR. W. H. PREECE recently called the attention of the Society of Arts to the merits of the Harmonic Electric Telegraph invented by Mr. Cromwell Varley.

At the West-end of London, Spiritualism is making much more progress in private than in public. The chief portion of its advance is not publicly seen.

PRACTICAL LESSONS IN SPIRITUALISM.*

BY LOUISA ANDREWS.

It is with much diffidence and self-distrust that I have complied with the request made me to come before you to-night, feeling, as I do, how little I have to offer worthy the attention of those who, like yourselves, have devoted themselves for years to the investigation and study of all that appertains to Spiritualism. Many among you have had opportunities for experimental research, and happy communion with spirit friends, in the home circle, which have been denied to me. I have had to depend upon public mediums, and it is, perhaps, because I feel very deeply my personal indebtedness to them that I am always ready to speak a word in their defence. I am well aware that those who are so happy as to have in their own families, or among familiar friends, the material for forming private circles under the best conditions, enjoy advantages not otherwise attainable.

But, on the other hand, since in everything the law of compensation works its beneficent results, something, I think, is gained in going, as a stranger, from one powerful medium to another, and receiving from them proofs of spirit presence and tests of identity, the more striking and impressive as coming from those unfamiliar with one's past history, modes of life and thought, habits, feelings, and wishes.

Much is corroborated in this way, and many little links get joined together till they make at last a strong chain of evidence. Varying forms of mediumship and different influences throw unexpected gleams of light upon obscure points, and our views in regard to all that relates to medial agency, and the intercommunion of the worlds of spirit and matter, becomes expanded and made clearer. At any rate, I must praise the bridge which has carried me so satisfactorily over the dark chasm of doubt and dread; and I cannot forget how many thousands have had, like myself, to depend on the much maligned agents of spirit power, and through them have obtained not only knowledge, but comfort invaluable and unutterable. This being so, we cannot afford to depreciate these sorely tried workers, or make their way harder by treating them as if guilty, until they prove themselves, not once or twice, but hundreds of times, to ever new claimants for crucial tests, innocent of fraud. A medium can never subject himself to tests conclusive enough, nor come unscathed from the fiery furnace of sceptical investigation often enough to give him any acknowledged claim to public confidence. This is, in a measure, the result of causes beyond our control. A medium habitually honest may, under certain conditions, be led into wrong-doing. We are none of us proof against the temptations that most easily beset us, and sensitives are, more than others, susceptible to influences, good and bad; but for myself, if I believed that one possessing genuine power had in some particular instance been led astray, I should either be silent on the subject, warning him privately, and striving to influence him towards the right, or else I should tell the whole plain truth, leaving others to judge of the facts as known to myself. Vague hints, such as we often hear in disparagement of noted mediums, may do great damage, but hardly can do good, either to them or to the public. All must judge for themselves, but I think more patient forbearance, more kindly consideration in our treatment of sensitives, and more deliberation in forming conclusions, for or against the genuineness of phenomena, would be productive of very beneficial results. Especially should we be cautious in deciding upon the exact amount of responsibility resting upon those through whom form manifestations are obtained. From what I have seen and heard, I question whether any man living is able, in all cases, to draw correctly the boundary line between what should be considered genuine in materializations and what is in reality not that which (as we understand matters) it purports to be. I question whether either the medium or the spirit always knows how much of the bodily form is used in the incarnations. In some cases (as in that of Mrs. Compton, whose dress was nailed to the floor and who was otherwise secured) the medium has disappeared from her seat while some of the powerful male forms showed themselves, being found again in her place with all the fastenings intact when the *séance* was over. In other cases mediums have been found, as you know, to have lost in weight (though this in itself is

hardly conclusive, since a table can be made, in an instant, light or heavy by spirit action), and sometimes we are told of loss of size—while in still other well-attested cases, the face of the living woman has become transfigured, and has taken, before the eyes of those looking directly at her, a totally different appearance, sometimes becoming that of a man with beard and whiskers. I have heard of a wonderful case of this flesh transformation occurring with a well-known American medium, the particulars of which I cannot now enter into. These things being so, how can we always and surely know where fraud on either side the line begins? The spirit acting upon matter, may go on drawing from the body of the sensitive till he has drawn it all, and yet be quite innocent of any deceptive intent—perhaps even unconscious that he has not left enough behind to save the poor mortal, from whose flesh and blood, as from a fountain, he obtains his supplies, from cruel suspicion, and even, it may be, from the violent assault of enraged sceptics.

I have seen the most astonishing extremes of scepticism and of credulity among Spiritualists and so-called investigators, and I do not know which most completely blinds the eyes to the light of truth, though it shine like the sun at noon-day.

I have known would-be investigators sit with Slade in full daylight—getting writing on a slate placed before them on the table—being touched by visible and palpable hands, and seeing objects moved about at a distance from the medium; and these wise men of Gotham, after leaving the *séance* room, only shook their heads, with an air of critical dissatisfaction, remarking that they had heard a suspicious gurgling in the medium's throat which they could not understand! On the other hand, I once attended one of Gordon's *séances* in New York, which in the way of deception and credulity was not only ludicrous, but disgusting and amazing. Ludicrous, because the veil covering the fraud was so absurdly thin and transparent—disgusting, because it *was* fraud, premeditated and audacious—and amazing because men and women who appeared sane, and as intelligent as the average, looked upon this ridiculous exhibition and actually believed it to be a splendid and convincing spiritual manifestation! If I should have myself time, after telling you something of my own experiences (which I regard as object lessons more impressive than any words), I should like to make a few remarks in regard to what seems to me the vital importance of physical mediumship, and the mistake those make who undervalue the solid phenomenal fact-foundations of the spiritual temple. Mental perceptions and impressions, the wonderful psychic powers manifested in clairvoyance, should, it would seem, be enough to convince men of their immortality; and yet my sympathies are with the doubting Thomases.

How many such there have been and are! And for them, as for myself, I welcome the "proofs palpable," as helping us to realize and appreciate those mental evidences, which ought perhaps to suffice, but do not, except with the few. Schopenhauer, Martineau, Broussais, and many others, knew the facts of somnambulism, and yet continued incredulous as to the future life. It was not, I believe, till Elliotson witnessed some of the physical phenomena that he woke from his nightmare of unbelief and blessed the coming light. Schopenhauer was himself clairvoyant, as he tells us, and yet he lived and died an atheist and a Sadducee.

There seems to be a vague sort of idea that to despise the senses and what they bring us, is spiritual and elevated. Are words from the lips of a clairvoyant necessarily more spiritual, farther removed from the physical plane, than those from the lips of a disembodied spirit? Does not the simple fact of their being uttered by such lips suggest more than the intellect can well grasp? In either case we receive these words through the sense of hearing, or if we read of them as having been spoken, through that of sight? We cannot receive much in any other way, while imprisoned in the earthly body. Those who are not themselves mediums and clairvoyants, must depend on such eyes and ears as they have. He who lives on the plane of the senses is a very poor sort of animal, but he who fails to recognize in them the channels through which has come all that he distinctly knows, not only of the world about him, but of his own intellectual and spiritual nature, is surely not a true philosopher.

Now, however, I will, before wearying you by dwelling

* A paper read before the National Association of Spiritualists.

upon thoughts and opinions of little value, perhaps, except to myself, relate how first I became convinced of the truths of Spiritualism, and what that conviction has done for one bereaved and doubting heart. My record of *séances* was always made at the time. I never trusted to memory: and most conscientiously have I always, to the best of my ability, stated the exact truth, without embellishment or exaggeration. The revelation I am about to make to you would seem too personal were I addressing a public audience, but with only Spiritualists before me, I feel that, as such, they will receive with kindly sympathy such details as are necessary in an explanation of my awakening to the reality and meaning of those marvellous facts which now seem almost too familiar to excite our wonder.

Seven years and six months ago, I sat quietly employed with some needlework in one of a suite of rooms which we occupied in a hotel in the pretty rural town of Northampton, Massachusetts. The day was bright, and outwardly, like any other in our beautiful Autumn, when more, perhaps, than at any other season the air seems full of peace and gladness. And yet that day was destined to stand for ever alone and awful in my memory, and to work, by one sudden and terrible blow, a change in my inner life greater than I could then have conceived of as possible. My younger son, a lad of twelve, was with me, and, asking leave to go to the library, across the street, for a book, he left me. After closing the door, he opened it again, and spoke, smiling brightly, a few words, which I will presently repeat to you. This merry smile was the last I ever saw on that dear, familiar face; the words, so lightly spoken, the last I ever heard from those lips. In less than fifteen minutes from that time the form that had been so full of life lay senseless, and was moved only by the last struggle of the departing spirit.

To those here who are mothers, I need not speak of an agony beyond all understanding, except through the sympathy of hearts that have loved and mourned. My little son had always clung to me with passionate affection, and what his loss was, coming as it did, with such a terrible shock, no words can tell. I was crushed, bitter, rebellious. I felt that he had been murdered by cruel carelessness, and that there was nothing I could rely upon, or believe in, since such things were permitted, and no Divine power stretched out a hand to save. I sank into utter despondency, and could not wish to live. I knew I still had duties to perform, but a black pall covered everything and I could see nothing clearly—could only feel that the light had gone out of my life for ever. In this state of mind I was persuaded to go on to New York, and seek, if haply I might find, in Spiritualism some hope or consolation. I took a letter of introduction to the venerable Dr. John Gray, known by name to all who are familiar with the works of Robert Dale Owen, or with the history of American Spiritualism. The kind old gentleman received me with tender sympathy; and took me in his carriage to the house of Charles Foster, the medium. After a *séance* in which many startling evidences of spirit presence and control were given, I sat talking with Dr. Gray in relation to what had taken place, and turning again towards the medium, asked, with that heart-craving so hard to satisfy, "Could you get from the spirit you say is present the last words I ever heard him speak?—that, indeed, would be to me a convincing test." Mr. Foster feared this would not be possible, and I continued my conversation with the Doctor, when, glancing at the medium, I saw he looked pale, and appeared as if listening to something. After a moment's silence he spoke, just in my little boy's cheery, eager way, saying, "Mother, if Robbie Day comes, please ask him to wait, I won't be gone five minutes."

These were the words my son spoke when he looked in at me from the open door, and which no one in New York had ever heard.

Naturally I was overcome with surprise and emotion, and Mr. Foster tried to soothe me,—but Dr. Gray, laying his hand upon my shoulder, said, "Let her weep. She will never again shed such bitter tears as in the past." How often have I recalled those true prophetic words! This was the first lifting of the veil, and the light which streamed through upon me then has never been lost (though sometimes obscured by transient clouds of doubt), but has grown brighter and more beautiful from that day to this. During this same

séance I asked Mr. Foster, "Can my son tell you the cause of his death?" The reply, coming instantly, "He tells me he was killed." I then asked: "Can he give you the name of his elder brother?" Immediately the hand of the medium wrote with wonderful rapidity, the words, "Dear mother, as a test to you that I am here, I say, give Lancelot my tools." "But," said Foster (who you know is not a reading man), "L.A.U.N.C.E.L.O.T., is that really his brother's name? and do you spell it with a *u*?" I only mention this to show that it was the hand, but not the mind, of the medium that wrote. The allusion to the tools *might* have been a guess, but evidently ignorant as he was of the name (not at all common in America) he could not have hit upon it by chance, and it was not easy to convince him that it was correctly written. I then requested to know if my son would give me the name of the child he loved so much when here. "He says," was the reply, "that he will write it on my hand," and making a slight exclamation, as one might from the sudden prick of a pin, the medium held out his hand, closed, before me. At first I saw nothing, but in a moment the name "Bertie" appeared plainly written on the back of it in running hand, as if traced in blood under the skin. It was the name I had asked for. Mr. Foster was an utter stranger to me and mine, and Dr. Gray had avoided even a formal introduction.

It was a few days after this that I first sat with Slade, having had other *séances* with Foster, and one, to which I went with my dear friend Robert Dale Owen, with Mrs. Underhill, the eldest of the Fox sisters, who had long ceased to be a public medium. All Slade's sittings were at that time held either by day or gas light.

When I first knew him, between seven and eight years ago, I do not believe any consideration or any bribe would have induced him to sit in the dark. He dreaded to be in a totally dark room, even when not giving a *séance*, lest something should touch him. I have feared sometimes, when the manifestations were in any way unusual, that he would go into convulsions from fright and excitement, he being subject to nervous spasms very distressing to witness. Owassoo, his principal Indian control, used to get out of all patience with him, because he would (as he said) "up jump and squeal" just at the wrong time.

At my first sitting, in the forenoon of a sunny day in January, 1872, I obtained slate writing—while holding the slate myself—and got very sweet and natural communications. Hands patted me in the full sunlight, touched my face, and played with my watch-chain, taking the watch from its pocket and replacing it. At one of these early sittings, I asked if my son could kiss my hand, as he so often used to do, and at once felt warm lips pressed on the back of the hand which rested on my lap.

Once or twice, at my request, the imprint of teeth, which gave me a little playful nip, was left quite red upon the flesh, and, also, moisture from the tongue and lips, which I had felt touching it.

Hands of different sizes and forms—from Owassoo's large, strong and copper-coloured, to those of a little child, my baby boy Ernest (as I was told), that played with my necktie—were held before me, sometimes uncovered, and sometimes under the very thin cambric of my handkerchief, so that I could examine them carefully. Several times a hand was forced up my sleeve, showing plainly as it moved, grasping my arm, although between my wrist and the table, near which I sat, nothing was visible. A cord tied about my waist was untied by fingers whose motions were visible underneath the cloth of the jacket I wore. Tight double and treble knots which I made in it were undone in the twinkling of an eye. There is nothing very new to you in this, but the fact of its occurring in broad daylight may make it worthy of notice. Once, having desired that I might take some mark home with me, as evidence that the hands were real, though I had said nothing to any one of this wish, my arm, above the elbow, was pinched black and blue, so that the bruises lasted for weeks. I thought how very much I wished it was Dr. Carpenter's arm!—that he had sat there, in my place, holding the hands of the medium, and that materialized "prepossessions," or "cerebral hallucinations," in the form of very muscular fingers, had made their mark on this gentleman's scientific flesh. Of course he would not have believed (except in some new theory of his own); but I should like, all the same, to try upon scepticism

incarnate the effect of such pinches as made me cry aloud for mercy.

At the first materializing *séance* which I ever attended, on the evening of January 11th, 1872, Slade, after he entered the room where our sittings were held, hung up a small black curtain, simply a yard-square piece of cambric, with an aperture cut in it a foot in diameter. This curtain he stretched on a string, so that it hung down on the side of the table opposite me, then seated himself by me and we joined hands. I saw that evening several faces and heads—the most fully materialized and lifelike being that of my sister-in-law, Edith Andrews, who passed away in my house when about twenty years of age. The brown curling hair fell upon the neck, the head was crowned with a chaplet of white roses, and the drapery about the bust, arms, and shoulders was as if made of a silvery-white gossamer inwoven with glittering threads of gold. I feel well assured that this drapery was never made in a material loom. The hands of this young girl were, in earth-life, remarkable for their beauty, and those delicately moulded hands were shown—held up, at my request, against the dark curtain—in more than mortal loveliness of tint and outline.

I not only saw the sweet mobile face several times, but the head was turned in various directions, once with the back to me, and the medium took some of the soft dark ringlets in his hand.

On two occasions the lips moved and distinctly articulated several words, although, from the wavering motion of the head it seemed to be floating in the air—and I do not think the form was materialized below the waist. Once this spirit sent a spoken message to one of her brothers; and again she spoke, leaning towards the medium, and saying—"Put a paper on her lap and I will write." This was done—a sheet of note-paper being laid upon a slate held upon my knee.

In a moment or two, a fair, slight hand came from beneath the table, holding a long pencil which Slade had just told me he saw the spirit taking up from a desk at the far end of the room, and wrote under my eyes, the delicate white fingers tracing the words as I watched them.

The hand disappeared as it reached the frame of the slate, by passing beneath the table, and the instant afterwards we saw it, still holding the pencil, at the aperture of the curtain—then, as the medium said he saw the form going towards the desk, the pencil was thrown from that direction (opposite the medium) and fell upon the table close to my hand.

On another evening this same lovely hand came up close to me with a star of intensely brilliant light glittering upon its palm; as it receded nothing could be seen in the distance but this dazzling light, which was quite steady and indescribably pure and clear.

In after *séances* I saw, just across a small table (once peeping, with a smile, over the edge of it), the glad blue eyes and happy face of my dear boy, with the lock of hair, that always would fall over his forehead when he played, hanging down nearly to the eyebrows.

His face, however, I never saw so fully incarnated as that of his aunt Edith. Although the form of the head and face, and even the rosy tint upon the cheeks, were quite visible, the light, instead of falling upon it from without, seemed partly to emanate from it, which rendered the outlines less distinct and more ethereal. Many times I have seen the pattern of the wallpaper and other objects through these faces and forms, for, with Slade, there seemed less corporeal substance in them than I have seen with some other mediums. They were, to me, rather more than less beautiful on this account, for one so fully realised, in looking at them, that they were not mortal flesh and blood. With Mrs. Mary Andrews, at Moravia, the faces were so exactly like those of living men and women that it was difficult to believe them to be spirits clothed only for a few minutes in a visible body. But that they were genuine I was entirely convinced. We have no medium in America more thoroughly genuine and in every way honest than she is, although quite uneducated, and seeming to feel little interest in Spiritualism. The complete incarnation of the faces and forms in her case was the more remarkable because she was quite wide awake and in her normal condition—never entranced during a *séance*, nor at any other time. She used to laugh and talk with us from the cabinet, describing those forms which could not succeed in

coming forward into the light. Remarkable tests of identity were frequently given at her *séances*. In recalling my many *séances* with Henry Slade, I really do not know what to describe which will be most likely to interest you—so much must be omitted, and it is difficult to make selections from others. I stayed for weeks together, at different times, with this wonderful medium, making as free use of the *séance* room as if it had been in my own house. As to psychography: I have obtained it in screwed-up slates, on paper, on my pocket-handkerchief, and on the very high ceiling of the *séance* room; but after having seen the detached hand actually holding the pencil and forming the words, I could hardly, for myself, desire more in this way.

Dr. Slade, who understands only English, has obtained direct writing in French, Spanish, German, Dutch, Latin, Greek, Russian, and Chinese. One singular thing I noticed which may possibly be new to you.

I observed once on a slate, which had been written upon, while on the top of the table, some words erased, as if with damp fingers. I afterwards requested the spirit to rub out portions of a written sentence, and several times this was done. The marks of wet fingers were distinctly visible, the moisture left by them remaining for some minutes. Several times I have noticed a word erased in this way, and another written in place of it. Also, sometimes, when I have attempted to take up a slate just filled with writing, I have found it difficult to lift. It did not give the impression of being heavy; the attraction seeming rather magnetic than that of gravitation—like the resistant, adhesive force which is felt in pulling the armature from a powerful magnet. In this connection (though by no means imagining that the one fact elucidates the other) I might mention that scissors, knife, or needles become magnetic when carried for a short time on Dr. Slade's person.

I believe the singular phenomenon of the explosion of slates, held for writing, was witnessed by several in England. Twice I have seen it—once when I held a corner of one in my own hand. Most of it was reduced to a coarse powder. One day, not long before Slade left America, a gentleman showed me a large hinged slate he had just bought, hoping to get it written upon to send away to some friends. A few minutes afterwards he came down from the *séance* room with the frame of it and some fragments in his hand, the rest having been powdered by the explosion. He went out directly, bought another, tied it up firmly, and sat down upon it—when, fortunately, it did not explode, but was filled with writing in that position. At an evening *séance*, with the gas partially turned down, and in a room where I had been for some time, flowers, fresh and dewy, roses, violets, and carnations fell from above upon the table, filling the air with their powerful fragrance, which could not have been disguised had they been present when the sitting began. At my request, a warm, slight hand, quite wet from contact with the moist flowers, arranged them, one by one, in my hair, patting my face with the soft, damp fingers. I have had garments brought me through closed and locked doors, and once a letter which I had left, tied up in a bundle in a locked trunk in my bedroom, up two flights of stairs. As I had money in this trunk, I had hidden the key away where I thought it would be safe. After the sitting, Slade, taking the letter up in his hand, asked "Would you like me to tell you what is in it?" It was one among a number which I had received from a gentleman in England on the subject of Spiritualism, and as it contained nothing confidential, I told him he might if he could. Holding the envelope enclosing the letter up to his forehead, he gave me, sentence by sentence, all the contents, scarcely missing a word.

In a light room books have come sailing through the air to me, and once a large, heavy dictionary fell on the medium's hand (having been brought from a desk some distance from us), making quite a sore bruise. At an evening sitting, when Slade had turned the gas up high, because he said he *wouldn't* have violent manifestations, the walnut table at which we sat rose up into the air, turned upside down and floated over our heads, afterwards righting itself and descending again, slowly and quietly, to its former place.

One of Owassoo's favourite tricks, when his medium first consented to sit in the dark for spirit voices and other manifestations best obtained in that way, was firing off what he

called his "pistolin" (a spiritually improvised firearm), much to Slade's annoyance—for the explosion and flash coming so unexpectedly, and sometimes so close to us, were really startling to nerves less sensitive than his. A manifestation which the spirits called "The burning bush," and which I witnessed while staying with the medium in 1873, was very remarkable. The gas was partially turned down, and we had been watching various articles as they were moved about by invisible hands, when, suddenly, there streamed up from the floor, towards the corner of the room nearly opposite me, what appeared like an outburst of actual fire, illuminating the walls near which it seemed to burn. The quivering, leaping flame was accompanied by a slight crackling sound, and thick vaporous clouds rose from it, rolling up in volumes to the ceiling. It lasted some minutes, and the medium was much agitated, but I quieted him at last, and the *séance* went on. We examined the spot where the fire had seemed to be, but there was no trace of anything upon the carpeted floor.

I was afterwards shown flaming hands, of different sexes, from which a stifling vapour poured so thickly as nearly to conceal from me my left arm when the fiery hand came between it and my face.

The spirit fingers which seemed on fire felt cool as they touched my cheek and lips. I was told that this manifestation was similar, in its nature, to that of the burning bush. On an evening *séance* in the spring of 1874, my sister being with me—both of us staying in the house with Dr. Slade—we heard a loud rumbling, as of mimic thunder, such as might be made upon a drum or tambourine.

It came from the table, which thrilled and trembled under our hands, and after lasting several minutes, was accompanied by vivid flashes, as of lightning, in the air. Presently the lightning seemed to strike the opposite wall with a brilliant flash and loud explosion. Three times these thunder-claps and lightning-flashes were repeated, greatly to the medium's horror and consternation, when a sudden shower came on, the watery drops dashing into our faces and trickling down from my hair, wetting very thoroughly the top of the table. There had been no water in the room when the sitting began. Liquid perfume also has been poured over us and the table in quantities. I once took on to New York with me, when I went there for sittings with Slade, a small musical box which had belonged to my son Harold; one of those little childish toys which are made to play by turning a crank. This little box was broken, the crank, or handle had been lost, many of the pins were gone, and no sound could be produced from it without taking it to pieces and moving the barrel with the fingers, when, of course, it was mere sound not music. In several *séances* this box played, while floating in the air, and also while I held it in my hand, feeling every vibration distinctly. There was, at intervals, a sound as of winding-up, sometimes taking place while the box rested on my hand or my head, so that the jar naturally produced by such an operation was plainly felt. I have held it tightly clasped, from the time that I heard and felt the music proceeding from it, until the sitting was over, so that there could be no doubt as to its identity. Of course I do not believe that this broken box, the mechanism of which did not admit of its being wound up, was actually and mechanically made, by winding, to play airs which it was not constructed to play. I have had an instrument of this kind (if I may so speak of a spiritual creation) much larger and heavier than this, though invisible, placed upon my lap and upon the table before me, the music from which was as loud and clear as that obtainable from any large-sized music-box manufactured of wood and metal.

This spirit-made box, when set down upon the table, gave out a louder, fuller sound, just as a material instrument would if placed on anything which acted as a sounding-board, and seemed, like a material machine, to require winding. And yet, no such instrument—that is, none made by mortal hands—was in the room or the house. While its weight and its vibrations were plainly felt, as it rested on my knees, I passed my hand over the place where it seemed to be without perceiving anything. When placed upon the table the vibrations through the substance of the wood were distinctly perceptible to the touch.

The little box of which I have spoken, before it began to play, trembled like a live thing, hither and thither, about the table, creeping along from side to side, till at last it

ventured too near the edge and fell off, but was speedily restored to me by a spirit hand. Also, I have seen a small silver bell move about in the same way, coming towards me or receding, at request, and also dancing in a very lively, fantastical manner, tipping comically from side to side, till, at last, getting very much excited, it hopped up and jumped like an acrobat, through the aperture of the curtain hung for materialization. Afterwards, we saw a small white hand holding and ringing it. Permit me here to pause in my record of experiences, and call your attention to the singular fact, that what we call spirit, when acting upon matter, seems to manifest properties or attributes, which, to our ignorance, appear contradictory. For instance, the fingers rubbing out words written on the under side of the slate must have passed through matter to reach the writing, and yet, had not the material on which the words were written offered resistance to the spirit touch, those words could not have been rubbed out by it. Again, when I felt the weight of the invisible music-box on my lap, and yet could perceive nothing there, when passing my hand over the spot where it seemed to be. How could this thing, whatever it was, have substance enough to be subject to the law of gravitation, or, in other words, possess weight, and yet not be perceptible to the touch? Why should some of the nerves and muscles of my body feel it as weight and others not perceive it as tangible?

Once, when Dr. Slade spoke of seeing the spirit form of my little son seating himself on a chair close by my side, I saw a woollen table cover, loosely thrown together in a heap, upon that chair, pressed down as by the weight of one sitting on it. At my request, the invisible spirit several times arose and re-seated himself. Whenever he got up the table-cover moved as if relieved of a pressure, and when the medium spoke of seeing him sit down, the cloth was again pressed together, as by a superincumbent weight. I have also seen a shadow cast by a spirit form invisible to me. Of course, you have all seen more or less of such things. I fully realize that I can tell you nothing more wonderful than your own experiences have made familiar to you: but sometimes, I think, we fail to appreciate how much these things indicate, and how limited and incorrect they prove our generally received ideas on the subject of matter to be; showing that we shall have to revise and correct our impressions, or at least to hold them in abeyance, before we can begin really to understand what we call spiritual phenomena.

I do not wonder that Zöllner should have fled in scientific despair to the fourth dimension to seek for the key to these mysteries, though it does seem strange that he had what he believes to be this key hidden away beforehand among his theoretical treasures. I suppose those familiar with the higher mathematics may understand what this fourth dimension signifies, when brought down into the "concrete practical"; but I cannot avail myself of light from such a source, because I do not in the least comprehend the theory, nor what powers fourth dimensional beings would be likely to possess in the way of knot-tying and other queer entanglements of matter; and in this ignorance I am not, I imagine, without very respectable companionship. So far, indeed, theories of fourth dimensional beings, of elementals and elementaries, of psychic force, which (being scientific) disdains the name of spirit, and all others of which I know anything, leave us, for any real comprehension of the subject, very much where we were before. I do not say that all these theories may not be more or less true. "Psychic force" is but a name, indefinite and non-committal. I have no prejudice in favour of these dimensions, nor do I object to elementals and elementaries, only that I find myself forgetting which is which, and a blunder might give offence, which I should not like to do, as I have heard that they are (one or both) very dangerous to "poor American Spiritualists." The learned lady who gave us this timely warning certainly knew all about it, for she assured me herself that she had been on the most intimate terms with one of these soulless gentlemen for more than sixteen years! It seems to me that what, as truth-seekers, we should avoid, is, on the one hand, a too free indulgence in theory, and, on the other, such extreme caution as hinders some from giving a name to anything, lest it should, by-and-by, prove to be

something else. Some psychologists, as I noticed in listening to an address lately delivered by the learned President of the Psychological Society, do not venture to call a spade a spade, lest future scientific investigation should prove it to be a shovel. We may, of course, if we so desire, doubt all things. Mr. Huxley tells us that "all we know about matter is that it is the hypothetical substance of physical phenomena, the assumption of the existence of which is as pure a piece of metaphysical speculation as that of the substance of mind." "The materialist, the idealist, and even the theologian," he says, "may be right, but each has to make an assumption which is entirely beyond proof." Your great poet asks, "Do we not live in dreams?" and your great scientist answers very decidedly in the affirmative. So, between dream and dream—the dream of the Spiritualist and the dream of the Materialist—we are free to choose. Mr. Huxley bids us "make a desert of the unknowable, and the divine Astræa of philosophic peace will commence her blessed reign." If Mr. Huxley likes to live in a desert with his divine Astræa, and enjoy what he calls "philosophic peace"—a peace that certainly passeth understanding (seeming to unscientific minds very like that vacuum which in old times nature was said to abhor)—no one should object: but tastes differ, and since "dreams are true while they last," I prefer to plunge boldly into that mysterious ocean on whose shores we abide, and bring up from its hidden depths my pearl of faith.

If we Spiritualists are to be scorned for our credulity, Mr. Huxley is, on the other hand, hardly consistent as a sceptic; for would he not, if he were, sit down upon a mathematical point of knowledge in his desert (the one fact of which he is sure that we can know nothing), and stay there safely, since on all sides the quicksands of doubt and "theoretical assumption" are ready to engulf alike idealists, theologians, and materialists? One great dream swallowing up the smaller ones, and leaving behind neither matter nor spirit, soul nor body! The god Doubt seems to be the only true God to minds like his, and in Him all things perish and lose their being.

Seriously, is it not quite essential to progress, intellectual and moral, that we should believe, simply and earnestly, in a few things, and accept as explanations of the phenomena which are always (in and out of Spiritualism) presenting themselves for solution, what most commends itself to our reason and judgment as accounting for them satisfactorily? Always being ready to change, or modify, our opinions as more light comes, and never allowing ourselves to become so fixed in our ideas and conclusions as to be enslaved by that "foolish consistency" which Emerson calls "the hobgoblin of little minds."

I will now describe a *séance* which was very striking to those who witnessed it, though I know how impossible it is to give you any adequate idea of its thrilling effect. On the evening of April 19th, 1874, I persuaded Dr. Slade to let me hang up a quilt, as a curtain, and see what we could get. No one was present but the medium, my sister, and myself. We began by sitting all three together at the table, the quilt which we had arranged being behind Slade; but he became so nervously excited that Owassoo took possession of him and laid him, in deep trance, on a sofa behind the curtain.

We soon heard much rustling, as of drapery, and also voices, as of persons talking together in whispers, with an occasional moan from the medium, and his regular breathing. In a few minutes a person came from behind the curtain and stood at my back. I heard the rustle as he moved, and his whispered words, but could see him only as a whitish cloud. He whispered—"It is Harold. I am come to you, mother! I am near you always. Give my love to brother Launce. Do not worry about him. We are watching over him, and he is safe." Some other words were spoken which I failed to hear distinctly. Again whispering was heard, as of several voices speaking fast, though so low that we could not distinguish the words. At intervals the medium sighed and moved uneasily, as one in troubled sleep. A moment's silence, and then a tall form, clothed in flowing white raiment, with a hood drawn so far forward as to shade the face, while his robes seemed, by the rustling sound, to trail as he moved, came up behind me. As I turned my head I could see the whole tall form. He spoke his name, "*Daniel*," and made a slight shaking sound as of a subdued cough. It was a young

man in whom we were (are) much interested, who had fought throughout our war and had come home only to die, soon after, of hemorrhage from the lungs and rapid consumption. He said several things which I did not hear plainly, several times repeating the name, "*Launcelot*," and something about "*excitement*," but saying again, as Harold had done, "*He is safe—we are watching over him*." This spirit placed his hand on my neck and shoulder; then, as my sister and I sat close side by side, he took us both in his arms, pressing us together in a strong and loving embrace. He then placed a hand on each side of my face, and leaned forward, so that his heavy drapery fell over my head and shoulders. Again and again his firm hands were caressingly laid upon my neck and arms—then he walked, step by step, past our backs and to the left of where we sat, and passed slowly all round the table till he came to my right side, where a chair stood, and on this chair he sat down, remaining seated, motionless and silent, for some minutes. Then he arose slowly, and stepping with one foot upon the chair, placed the other on the table, and standing erect upon it, directly before us, with his head close to the gasalier, where the light was burning low, he again remained still for some time. I asked him to look towards me, which he did, the face appearing dusky, and either because of imperfect materialization, or because of the shadow cast by the overhanging hood, I could not distinguish the features. He stood upon the extended leaf of the table, as no mortal form, not even that of a little child, could have done without tipping it over—and perhaps it was to satisfy us that it was not a mortal form that he placed himself there. After standing for awhile, he glanced downwards, as if to see that the chair was properly placed then stepped upon it, and from thence to the floor. Just as he descended, we heard a sound like an electric snap, and with a loud, nerve-thrilling rustle, the tall, solid-seeming form collapsed and became in an instant invisible. This sitting took place on Sunday evening, and we know of no especial reason why the spirits should speak of "excitement," in connection with my son Launcelot, and should reiterate the assurance that they were watching over him, and that he was "safe."

The next morning the papers told us of a terrible accident which had happened in the city of Newark, New Jersey, the evening before, about an hour before the sitting took place. A horse-car on one of the street railways, in descending a hill, was, from the giving way of a brake, precipitated downwards with fearful velocity, and before reaching the foot of the declivity, meeting with some obstruction, was turned completely over, coming down upon its roof, which was crushed in. The passengers were most of them injured, some cut with broken glass, and others having fragments of splintered wood driven through their flesh—only two or three escaped unhurt, and one of these was my son.

I have spoken several times of Owassoo, Slade's Indian control, and wish to say that, although I began by feeling sceptical as to his individual entity, I became well convinced of it long ago.

He was very fond of getting hold of a watch, and Slade used sometimes to be greatly puzzled to know what could be the matter with his.

One day Owassoo, told me, in confidence, that while his medium was asleep, he was showing the inside of his watch to another Indian, and just touched a little thing, when it went "whizz!" and stopped. He was very sorry, he said, and wouldn't do so any more, but begged me not to tell the medium, as he would be very angry.

Of course I gave my word, and kept it. A few days afterwards, he (Owassoo) was complaining to a lady, an acquaintance of mine (Mrs. Lane, of New York) that he hadn't any watch to do as he pleased with, and she told him that if he chose he might come to her house and do as he liked with her cuckoo clock, which he greatly admired. He expressed himself much delighted, saying he should certainly go. Soon after Mrs. Lane returned home, her clock began to strike, and struck a hundred, and from that time it could not be made to go properly. One evening, while in the house with Slade, I was suffering from severe headache, and he, influenced by Owassoo, made passes for my relief. He was going that night with some friends to the theatre, and as he was talking with me by my bedside before leaving, there came loud raps on the headboard.

I asked if Owassoo, too, were going to leave me; he said, "Yes," but that he would come back and see me.

Between ten and eleven o'clock my bed was violently shaken. I said nothing about it to any one, but Owassoo, when he next controlled Slade, said, "Squaw, you feel me shake your bunk last night?" One night while visiting my son, then a Yale student in New Haven, my sister living in New York with Slade, I had a bad attack of nervous headache, and suffering great pain, said aloud—"O Owassoo! O dear spirits! do help me!" In the night, I was awakened by a hand repeatedly touching the back of my neck, and rising on my elbow, leaned over the edge of the bed to see if anything were visible. The next evening I received a letter from my sister telling me that Owassoo had said to her—"Squaw Andrews headache bad last night. She say, 'O Owassoo! O dear spirits! help me!' and me there, me and Harold boy, helping her all the time! and in the night me touch her, and she put her head up and look—look—but she wouldn't see anything at all."

Owassoo was a Mexican Indian, and speaks still a mixed dialect of Indian and Spanish. When speaking independently, his voice and manner are just the same as when using the organism of the medium. A Spanish lady who had several sittings with Slade in New York, could understand most that he (Owassoo) said, so many of the words being Spanish. At one time Dr. Slade began to walk in his sleep, and Owassoo told Mr. Simmons he must be broken of the habit at once, and that he (Mr. Simmons) must give him a whipping whenever he attempted to get up in his sleep. This Mr. Simmons said he should hardly like to do, when the Indian declared that he himself would administer the salutary castigation. Some nights afterwards, Mr. Simmons was awakened by Slade's getting out of bed, and speaking to him, found that he was asleep. In an instant a slipper came flying through the air and began vigorously spanking the offender—after which there was no more sleep-walking. In view of all this and much more of the same kind, I have felt myself constrained to accept Owassoo's personality. If, however, more scientific minds find "psychic force," or "unconscious cerebration," or "an epidemic delusion," more satisfactory as a theory and more plausible as an explanation of that which inflicted personal chastisement for remedial purposes, and even, when dental aid was required, drew a tooth for the medium, I have nothing to say.

(To be continued.)

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