

[Private and Confidential.]

FIRST REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE OF THE SOCIETY
FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH ON PHENOMENA IN CON-
NECTION WITH THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.

It may be remembered that on May 2nd, 1884, the Council of the Society for Psychical Research appointed a Committee for the purpose of taking such evidence as to the alleged phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society as might be offered by members of that body at the time in England, or as could be collected elsewhere.

The Committee consisted of the following members, with power to add to their number :—Messrs. Gurney, Myers, Podmore, and Stack. They have since added Mr. R. Hodgson to their number. The President is, by virtue of his office, a member of this as of other Committees.

The Committee began by taking the evidence offered by Messrs. Olcott, Mohini, and Sinnett, in the presence of a shorthand writer, whose notes of their evidence are here published verbatim (Appendices I., II., III., IV.)

Colonel Olcott was thus examined on May 11th and 27th.

Mr. Mohini " on June 10th.

Mr. Sinnett " on June 13th.

Besides these formal examinations the Committee have enjoyed many other opportunities of acquiring information.

The meetings of the Cambridge Branch of the Society for Psychical Research were attended on

April 25th by Mr. Pādshāh.

May 8th " Mr. Olcott.

June 9th " Mr. Mohini.

Aug. 9th " Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Mohini.

and on each occasion the visitors permitted themselves to be questioned on many topics. On two occasions (July 5th, 26th) Mr. Gurney and Mr. Myers were themselves witnesses of a phenomenon to be hereafter described. (Appendix XX.)

Mr. Myers also spent some days (August 30th to September 4th) at Elberfeld, in Germany, where a large Theosophical group were assembled, and obtained from them much evidence.

Other evidence has also been obtained from sources hereafter specified.

The Committee are therefore of opinion that the time has arrived for a First Report. They think, however, (and the Council confirms this view), that such Report should not be included in the published Proceedings, but sent round as a private and confidential document to Members and Associates only. The reasons for this difference of treatment fall under two main heads.

1. Certain of the witnesses whose evidence is given below would greatly dislike its actual publication. This is especially the case with Mr. Damodar and the lady hereafter styled Mrs. X. (who is personally known to the Committee). The Committee understand and respect this reluctance to place before the world experiences felt as exceptionally intimate and sacred. They tender their sincere thanks for the information given; and it is their wish to use it in a manner likely to be of as much service to science, but with as much regard to individual feelings as possible.

It is not unlikely that this kind of semi-private circulation of evidence may be desirable on other occasions besides the present. The Committee, therefore, at the desire of the Council, wish to state as explicitly as may be possible in so delicate a matter, the kind of limitations which are thus intended to be imposed.

No part (not previously published) of this "private and confidential" Report can be printed or published elsewhere without infringing the legal rights of the Council, to whom the Report is addressed, and to whom it belongs.

And it is also hoped that Members and Associates will deal with the Report as being in reality a confidential document, not to be allowed to pass from Members' own keeping, and to be shown to trustworthy persons only.

The rapid increase in the numbers of the Society for Psychical Research has rendered it impossible to maintain the amount of personal acquaintance between the Council and the Members which was desired at the outset; but the Committee would venture to remind all readers of this First Report that the nature of the matter to be included in their Second Report must largely depend on the discretion with which the present document is treated.

2. But besides consideration for the witnesses who have given evidence, the Committee have another reason for not wishing this Report to be laid before the general public. They find themselves in a state of suspense of judgment on very important matters; they wish to reflect further and to investigate more closely; they feel it not improbable that their judgment may incline more definitely, in one direction or other, within no long space of time. They solicit criticism, as well as information, from persons who have paid attention to the matters in question. But they wish their own expressions of opinion to be considered as provisional and hypothetical, not quoted as positive *dicta* or unanimous conclusions.

Understanding then, that this is a semi-private Report on the phenomenal side of Theosophy, three further questions at once suggest themselves, namely:—

I. What is to be our *primâ facie* attitude as to the trustworthiness of Theosophical testimony?

II. What is the total list of first-hand witnesses involved?

III. What part of the phenomena which they describe is to be considered as within the scope of our inquiry?

I. This first question is one which the Council has already had to consider, in the case of some zealous propagandists of special doctrines on the one side, and in the case of paid mediums on the other side.

As regards this latter class, the Council has altogether declined to accept the evidence of a paid medium as to any abnormal event; not that it is considered that persons accepting money for psychical performances are necessarily untrustworthy, but because, in dealing with these matters, it is admitted that special stringency is necessary, and one obvious precaution lies in the exclusion of all the commoner and baser motives to fraud or exaggeration.

If, then, we saw reason to suppose that the persons mainly engaged in propagating Theosophy were actuated by some motive of this kind, we should probably decline to continue the investigation.

But we may say at once that no evidence even tending to support such a view has been brought under our notice; although had any such existed, we can hardly doubt that it would have been amply set forth among the many hostile comments, printed and verbal, which the Theosophical Society has provoked. Loose suggestions of the kind have, no doubt, been made, but even these appear now to be generally dropped. The balance-sheets published in the *Theosophist*, and the lives of the founders, passed, as they have been, under constant scrutiny since the Society was founded in 1875, sufficiently show that Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott (the only persons who could ever have supposed themselves likely to make money out of the Theosophical Society) have, on the other hand, supported the Theosophical cause at the cost both of much money and of great personal effort and hardship.

Well, then, it may be said, are not the Members of the Theosophical Society on much the same level as to credibility with the Members of the Society for Psychological Research? Ought we not to assume *bona fides* in the case of Theosophical evidence as readily as we should expect it to be assumed in the evidence of our own Committees?

To a certain extent we accept this analogy, but we demur to it on some essential points.

The attitude which it appears to us reasonable for a critic to hold with regard to some novel and extraordinary fact, (as Thought-transference), when attested by a small Committee of the Society for Psychological Research, might be expressed in some such sentence as this: "I do not venture to accuse these gentlemen either of fraud or of imbecility; but human minds are fallible and human motives mixed, and before giving full credence to phenomena antecedently so improbable, I should like to see the Committee's testimony confirmed by some other observers."

And, in fact, the Thought-transference Committee thought it their duty, not merely to insist on the validity of their own evidence, but to corroborate it by the evidence of others, until (to quote Proceedings VI.) the phenomenon was attested "by a group of witnesses too large to be summarily discredited."

It will be seen, then, that we accept in our own case the view, which we now apply to the Theosophists, that without being understood to impugn the character or ability of a witness to abnormal phenomena, the critic is entitled to press for corroboration with an insistence which in any ordinary matter might seem unnecessary or indecorous.

But there are two points on which the Theosophical evidence stands on a quite different footing from that of our Committees. In the first place, it appeals to occult persons and methods; in the second place, it makes claims, which though avowedly based on occult science, do, in fact, ultimately cover much more than a merely scientific field.

Now we do not deny that good reasons may exist for the concealment either of persons or of processes from the knowledge even of honest and friendly inquirers. In all such matters our rule is to make no assumptions. We do not say: "You *ought* to show us your

Teachers and explain your methods." We only say: "If your Teachers think it right to conceal themselves and their methods from us, we on our part feel it our duty to scrutinise all that is revealed with proportionate stringency." The difference between the Theosophical Society and the Society for Psychical Research is here almost diametrical. The Society for Psychical Research exists merely as a machinery for investigation, every step of which is open to the public, and in which any competent person who chooses may join. The Theosophical Society exists mainly to promulgate certain doctrines already formulated, these doctrines being supported by phenomena which are avowedly intended and adapted rather for the influencing of individual minds than for the wholesale instruction of the scientific world. Into such phenomena the *moral factor* seems likely to enter, in one way or other, to a marked extent.

And this brings us to the second point of distinction—namely, the *vast claims* advanced by the Theosophical Society. The teaching embodied in "Esoteric Buddhism," the *Theosophist*, &c., comprises a cosmogony, a philosophy, a religion. With the value of this teaching *per se* we are not at present concerned. But it is obvious that were it widely accepted a great change would be induced in human thought in almost every department. To take one point only, the spiritual and intellectual relationship of East to West would be for the time in great measure reversed. "Ex Oriente lux" would be more than a metaphor and a memory; it would be the expression of actual contemporary fact. Now we know, indeed, that the suspicions which the Anglo-Indian authorities at first entertained as to the *political* objects of the Theosophical Society have been abandoned as groundless. But we can imagine schemes and intentions of a patriotic kind which, though quite innocuous to British rule in India, would effectually spoil Theosophic evidence for the purposes of occidental science. We must remember that in psychical research we must be on our guard against men's highest instincts quite as much as their lowest. The history of religions would have been written in vain if we still fancied that a Judas or a Joe Smith was the only kind of apostle who needed watching. "Fingunt simul creduntque"; "The end justifies the means"—these two sayings are the key to a good deal of ecclesiastical history.

Suspicions of this kind are necessarily somewhat vague. In this case they must attach themselves primarily to persons in the background, for the Theosophists known to us have apparently neither the money, the influence, nor the peculiar kind of ability which would be needed in order to initiate such a scheme as we are about to hint at. But it must be remembered that persons in the background are emphatically asserted to exist. Well, let us conceive a *conciabulum* of Asiatic sages; whether at Lhasa or at Bombay is not at present important. Let us first put into their mouths ideas and purposes entirely natural, entirely honourable, and such as do assuredly exist in the minds of some of the writers in the *Theosophist*.

"The predominance of England in India," such a philosopher might say, is a purely material one. Her vaunted science is mere sciolism when matched with our immemorial wisdom. It would be a noble revenge to teach her the truth in return for her shallow scorn, to subjugate her mind as she has subjugated our armies. All that is needed is to find some striking method by which truths too spiritual for her direct perception may be forced upon her grosser sense. Let us unite in this object, and let those who best know Europeans judge as to the means to be employed."

It is possible that the next speech might bear somewhat the same relation to this as the hints of the judicious election agent bear to the address of the public-spirited candidate for an English borough. "India," it might be said or intimated, "is the land of psychical powers. We are all proud of possessing such powers; let us use them to advance our cause. And if for any reason we find these higher faculties occasionally difficult to employ, let us remember that India contains not only the first philosophers, but the first jugglers in the world. If these Europeans can only rise to spiritual truths through material phenomena, let us give them some of our fine old phenomena for their upstart science to make what it can of. "A wicked generation seeketh after a sign"; we will give them signs which will direct them aright if they choose to follow, and which will, in any case, do them no injury. John Bull likes what he calls solid proofs and cogent arguments. Well! a tea-cup hidden in a forest-bank is less objectionable than a bag of dynamite under his public offices; and a ruler who is accustomed to be converted by bullets from behind a hedge need not grumble if he is surreptitiously pelted with Tibetan roses."

In an English election the next words would probably be uttered by some venerable member of the party, who would merely intimate that if a certain sum of money were needed for patriotic purposes he would be happy to head a subscription.

Now, before we review the difficulties and dangers of this imaginary scheme, let us briefly consider whether it would explain such weak

places as hostile critics have pointed out in the Theosophic armour.

The indictments brought against the Theosophists may be said to proceed from four main sources. These are (1) the Anglo-Indian and general public; (2) Oriental scholars; (3) Spiritualists; (4) Mr. C. C. Massey. Let us take these in order.

1. The strictures of the "robust sceptic" deal almost entirely with the character and antecedents of Madame Blavatsky. Inquiry in London drawing-rooms during last season, as to what was really known of her, was generally rewarded by the communication of our interlocutor's esoteric knowledge that she was a Canadian by birth and a circus-rider by original profession. It happens, however, that an English weekly review having some years ago described Madame Blavatsky as an adventuress and impostor, her Russian relations obtained a letter from the Ministry of the Interior, certifying her identity. (Appendix XXVIII.) More recently she was charged with having committed some unspecified crime, which debarred her from returning to Russia. This accusation also was refuted by a letter obtained from an official quarter. (Appendix XXIX.) The robust scepticism which ignores official certificates seems scarcely worth distinguishing from deliberate calumny.*

* The allegations of M. Coulomb, as to which we have not yet (October 1st) received full information, will be discussed in an Appendix.

2. The objections of Oriental scholars (Professor Max Müller, &c.) are much more serious, and deserve most careful attention from persons who may be disposed on other grounds to give credit to Theosophic teaching.

But on the preliminary question of the genuineness of the phenomena these philological objections have no direct bearing.

3. On the Spiritualistic objections we need not at present dwell. The claims of Spiritualism itself seem to need sifting in much the same manner as the claims of Theosophy; nor can we accept the specific theory of the unseen world upon which their controversy is based.

4. Mr. Massey, to whose opinion this Committee attaches much weight, has left the Theosophical Society on account of certain doubts and objections. One of these objections, based on what is known as the "Kiddle incident," will be considered later on. The others, which we have carefully discussed with Mr. Massey, are of a more private nature. They appear to us strongly to indicate, without absolutely proving, some defect in straightforwardness, as judged by an English standard, in certain Theosophical dealings. They would be thoroughly consistent with our hypothetical picture of unscrupulous patriotism. It should be added, however, that Mr. Massey himself is disposed to believe in the genuineness of the great bulk of the alleged phenomena.

We have, then, framed a conceivable hypothesis, which may enable us to refuse credit, if necessary, to a good deal of ultra marvellous evidence without committing us to any such view of the founders of the Theosophical Society as can be at once rebutted by the testimony of those who know them. We may, at any rate, suppose that our imaginary sages, when planning, so to speak, how to cast their glamour about mankind, would be anxious to find no vulgar instruments, but rather some nature whose passionate excitability might make any extravagance seem justifiable if the cause were good;—some nature, too, whose dogged loyalty, when once convinced, might make unquestioning obedience to orders seem the one remaining duty in life.

But the difficulty of the supposed confederacy will be sensibly increased by the introduction of each fresh person who is to be not merely a disciple but a coadjutor; who, in plain terms, is not only to be taught the philosophy, but to be let into the trick. It must be remembered that the success of the Theosophical Society in India, though considerable, has by no means been sufficient to prove to the unscrupulously patriotic that their best policy is to support it. There have been ruptures;—the rupture with the Arya-Somāj was a most serious one;—and there have been defections of leading members. Dissensions like these, which are pretty sure to recur, must make it important that as few persons as possible shall have anything damaging to say. Much might, no doubt, be hoped from the mere complaisance and credulity of sympathising spectators. But each attempt to induce a man of character and position to sign an obvious falsehood, or to cooperate in an undeniable fraud, would be a source of fresh and serious danger. Let us take a parallel from English or American Spiritualism. Many worthy persons would consider it no sin to give a somewhat loose account of a séance, in the interest of the great truth of the immortality of the soul. Many, for instance, would be willing to sign a statement that "a small gas-burner gave a good light" when, in point of fact, they could scarcely see their hands before them. They would say to themselves that the light was good, as light at séances goes. But if they were asked to state that the séance was held in *broad daylight*, a statement which they felt to be a lie, and to be meant as a lie, few of them would do it. Similarly, many a sitter would be willing to recognise the medium's pocket-handkerchief protruded from the cabinet, as his own

father. But few would go behind the curtains and help the medium to dress up.

Judging by this analogy, it becomes a matter of capital importance to determine, as nearly as may be, how many persons are actually committed to the alleged marvels, in a manner which mere complaisance or mal-observation fails to explain. The length of this list, and the character of every name on it, must be scrutinised with anxious care.

II. And this brings us to our second question ; What is the full list of first-hand witnesses whose evidence we have to scrutinise ?

In the first place, the evidence may be roughly classed under the following heads :—

- A. The depositions made to the Committee by Messrs. Olcott, Mohini M. Chatterji, and A. P. Sinnett.
- B. "The Occult World," by Mr. A. P. Sinnett.
- C. The *Theosophist*, 1879-1884.
- D. "Hints on Esoteric Philosophy, No. 1, 1882." This work was published under the initials "H.X.," but it has been repeatedly ascribed to Mr. A. O. Hume (formerly Secretary to the Government of India), and not denied by him.
- E. Unpublished statements, printed, written, or made orally to members of the Committee.
- F. The phenomena observed by members of the Committee themselves are at present very small in amount, but are mentioned here for the sake of logical completeness, and in case there should hereafter be more to record.

A.

DEPOSITIONS.

ENGLISH.	HINDU.
W. T. Brown.	Damodar.
General Morgan.	Shankar Singh.
Mrs. Morgan.	Bhavani Shankar.
A. P. Sinnett.	Parshotham Dass.
Professor J. Smith.	Ishri Prasad.
Judge Gadgill.	Brolatee Dass.
Mr. Keightley.	Permaishwari Sahai.
Mr. Oakley.	Chandra Sekhara.
	T. N. Swamy Naidu.
	Ram Churn.
	Dass Mall.
	Ruttan Chand Bary.
	Gopinath.
	Jowala Prasad.
	Mohini M. Chatterji.
	Permehshri Dass.
	Narcottam Dass.
	L. V. V. Naidu.
	Chiranjee Lall.
	Pran Nath.
	Govind Sahai.
	Bishenlall.
	Baboo Norendra Nath Sen.
	Baboo Peary Chand Mitra.
	Ramaswamier.
	Novin Grishna Barmaji.
	Pundit Chandra Sibir.
	Tukaram Tatia.
	Gula Chrishna Deb.
	Mula-Varman Nath-Varman.
	K. N. Shroff.
	Martundrow Vagnand.
	Dorabji H. Bhamcha.

AMERICAN.

Colonel Olcott.
Mr. Houghton.
Mr. Judge.

RUSSIAN.

Mdme. Blavatsky.

FRENCH.

M. A. Coulomb.
Mdme. Coulomb.

B.

"THE OCCULT WORLD."

ENGLISH.	HINDU.
Mr. A. P. Sinnett, pp. 31, 36, 40, 47, 52, 57-59, 76, 79, 81, 95, 97, 122, 126.	Bhavani Rao, 130, 155.
Mrs. Sinnett, 44, 47, 57-59, 76.	Dhabagiri Nath, 154.
A. C. Hume, 57, 121.	
M. A. Hume, 57.	
Fred. R. Hogg, 57.	
Alice Gordon, 57, 61.	
P. J. Maitland, 57, 62.	
Wm. Davison, 57.	
Stuart Beatson, 57.	
Charles Francis Massy, 63.	

And others.

C.

FROM "THE THEOSOPHIST."

ENGLISH.	HINDUS.
General Morgan, No. 51, Supplement, p. 29, &c.	S. Ramaswamier, No. 39, pp. 67-69, 76.
A. B.—F. T. S. (?) No. 55, Supplement, p. 65.	Harisinghi Rupsinghi, No. 57, Supplement, p. 87.
	Rajani Kant Brahmachari, No. 59, p. 270.
	P. Sreenevas Row, No. 59, Supplement, p. 113.
	Mr. Bawaji, No. 59, Supplement, p. 113.
	Gyanendra Nath Chakravarti, No. 56, Supplement, p. 76, &c.
	Pandit Prau Nath, No. 55, Supplement, p. 66.
	Damodar K. Mavalankar, No. 23, p. 230.
	Nos. 51 and 52, p. 61-62.
	Mirza Moorad Alee Beg, No. 23, p. 230.
	S. J. Padshah, No. 23, p. 230.
	Martundrow Babajee Nagnath, No. 23, p. 230.
	Bhavanishanhar Ganesh Mullapoorca, No. 23, p. 230.
	Rama Sourindro Gargya Deva, No. 51, p. 80-81.
	Mohini Mohan Chatterji, No. 51, p. 84.
	Tholuvore Velayudham Mudeliar, No. 34, p. 243.

D.

"HINTS ON ESOTERIC THEOSOPHY, No. 1, 1882."

Occidental.	Oriental.
ENGLISH.	HINDUS—BRAHMINS.
Mr. Hume, 33 (?), 49, 71, 82.	S. Ramaswamier, 73.
Professor Scott, 76.	Damodar, 73, 76, 101, 103, 117.
Mrs. Scott, 76.	M. Moorad Ali Beg, 76.
Hon. J. Smith (Sydney), 98.	Bhavani S. G. Mulla-poorkar, 76, 99, 100, 117.
Mrs. Gordon, 124.	Rawal S. H. S. Rupsingji, 100, 103.
	D. H. Bhamcha, 100, 103, 117.
	K. M. Shroff, 101, 103, 117.
AMERICAN.	K. S. Godbole, 101.
Colonel Olcott, 72, 79, 80, 82, 83.	Daji Raj Thahore Sahib of Wudhwan, 101, 103.
W. A. Judge, 84.	G. N. Land, 103.
Dr. L. M. Marquette, 84.	Martandrao Babaji Nagnath, 103, 104, 105, 106, 117.
W. R. O'Donovan, 85.	Bal Nilaji Pitale, 107, 108.
Thos. Le Clear, 86.	Gwala I. Deb, 117.
RUSSIAN.	
Mdme. Blavatsky, 76, 117.	

and without any special knowledge whatever. But he found in the Hindoo subjects so susceptible that a conspicuous triumph was, so to speak, forced on him unawares. Never did a man who expected less achieve more.

To our minds, the career of Mr. Esdaile is in many ways one of the most instructive pages in the history of science. And to those who have learnt how subtly all these nervous, quasi-psychical, and psychical sensibilities are interblent, one of its most obvious lessons is : In psychical research experiment on Orientals. And this our Society for Psychical Research Committees have felt from the very first. We have always desired—we still desire—to establish a psychical laboratory at Calcutta or Madras.

The great difficulty of such a step, it is needless to say, would consist in our own remoteness from the Hindoo mind,—in the reserve or reluctance which would prevent suitable subjects from offering themselves to our observation. But if we can get at any exact accounts of results achieved by Hindoos among themselves, on lines which even our rudimentary experience has shown to be fruitful, then we ought certainly to be prepared to find that the Oriental results may have surpassed our own as markedly as Esdaile's *foudroyant* mesmerisation of an unknown blind Bengalee through a wall surpasses our laboured efforts to induce hypnotic fixation in some too wide-awake British eye.

Now, as regards this very point of *mesmerism*, there is a good deal of recent Oriental evidence more or less interlinked with Theosophy. There are the accounts of Colonel Olcott's mesmeric healing ; and there are various narratives of *maya* or illusion thrown by Adepts over persons even at a distance from them and not consciously affected. But—working as we are under narrow time limitations—we must defer to some later Report the consideration of the mesmeric side of Theosophy. We will allude to one alleged phenomenon only ;—with the view of showing the need of accurate inquiry into some assertions which may look at first sight too extravagant for discussion. "Madame Blavatsky," it was said to us, "is occasionally invisible." This statement seemed certainly ill-calculated to invite credence. But we find that the assertion actually intended* is this : That an Adept acting from a distance on

* This is Madame Blavatsky's account of the phenomenon, as known to her. persons already in *rapport* with him, can induce a momentary illusion which may take the form of inability to see a certain person present. Now in our own experiments we have seen precisely the same illusion produced on Fred Wells. It is true that the mesmeriser was *present*, and that the illusion was *ordered* in the hypnotic state, though it *persisted* in the apparently normal state. But *mesmeric action* at a distance is, we consider, pretty nearly proved by English and French experiments ; and the production of *illusions* at a distance, without conscious change in the percipient's state, though hardly *proved*, is strongly suggested by the experiments of Mr. H. S. Thompson and Co-millor Wesermann. The assertion, then, as to Madame Blavatsky, with which we set out, may, of course, be true or false. But in any case it only calls on us to believe that a consummate operator, with favourable subjects, has succeeded in carrying an experiment, which we have ourselves repeated, to a pitch which, on theoretical grounds, already appeared to us capable of attainment.

I. But while we postpone the consideration of this and other *mesmeric* evidence, as in itself complex, and as separable from the main body of the subject, we must certainly not neglect any evidence of *Thought-transference* which the Theosophists offer us. Such evidence there is ; but the difficulty which we find in *isolating* it is an instructive commentary on the nature of Thought-transference itself. In our own experiments we have (it would seem) reduced the phenomenon to its simplest form ; we have dealt with the projection by A of a mere thought or image into P's mind, with no insight on A's part as to the success or failure of his projection.

Now, the Theosophic cases of Thought-transference generally include one or more of the following phenomena :—

1. Projection of something more than a mere image ; of a *guiding impulse*, or (as in the above-mentioned case of temporary invisibility) of an *irresistible illusion* :—thus resembling the stronger influence of a mesmeric operator rather than anything of which we have as yet had evidence when the percipient is in a normal state.

2. Insight on the agent's part into the percipient's mind ; amounting to a power not only of *transmitting*, but of *exchanging* thought. The process in such a case is represented as only partially reciprocal ; the Adept reading all the subject's thoughts at will, but imparting, in return, only such ideas as he chooses.

3. This conception of the *potential visibility* of all thought (to which we shall hereafter have to return) is still further brought out in the cases where the Adept is a percipient merely, and not an agent. Thus it is alleged that he can either (a) discern the general character of a

subject's thought from the aspect of his cerebral emanations; or (b) trace out, by some process of clairvoyant vision, a whole train of ideas in the subject's mind, so as even to acquire a knowledge of the subject's mother-tongue, otherwise unknown; or (c) somatize in the akâs (the astral light of mediæval mystics,—the substratum of all manifested things) permanent pictures, left either by objective scenes, in which the subject has participated, or by thoughts which have at some previous time existed in his mind.

4. Finally, the phenomenon is often complicated by the alleged presence of the Adept in his "astral body."

For a typical case of (1) see Mr. Schmiechen's evidence. For (1) and (2) see Mr. Hume, "Hints," p. 46. For (2) and (4) see M. Solovioff's evidence, which also includes the mere transmission of mental pictures from a distance. For (3) see Dr. Hübner-Schleiden's evidence, and other cases of precipitated letters referring to the talk or thoughts of the moment.

II. The question of the "astral body," it will be seen, cannot long be deferred in any inquiry of this kind. The doctrine of an involute or composite constitution of man is, in fact, in a certain sense the *articulus stantis aut cadentis Theosophie*. In occult teaching it is presupposed in the explanations given of apparitions, of clairvoyance, of premonition, of intuition; it is the basis of the occult doctrine of a future life, the key to the unseen world. If this be a groundless fancy, it will be hardly worth while to pursue further a philosophy founded on an imaginary postulate. If, on the other hand, real evidence can be adduced for a *separability of principles* in living men,—for a voluntary projection of the double, or manifestation of aspects of the same identity in discrete places at the same moment,—then, though the superstructure of occult doctrine will still remain unproved, there will be a sufficient presumption of the existence of real psychical knowledge in the East to make it our duty to track out such knowledge through every accessible avenue with pertinacious care. It is, in fact, mainly the hope of reaching a direct issue on this vital point which has directed our attention to Theosophy at this early stage in our Society's existence. For many reasons we should have preferred to deter this perplexing inquiry till we were more fully equipped with experimental results of our own. But, considering the position at which our published speculations have arrived, and the special opportunity afforded by the presence of leading Theosophists in England, we felt that we had no choice. We have, as we maintain, proved the existence of apparitions of the living. We have, as we maintain, proved the existence of Thought-transference, or telepathy. We have, as we maintain, shown strong reason for supposing that *some*, at least, of these apparitions (we have always limited our statement thus) are explicable as instances of telepathic impact. And we have announced our intention of pushing this interpretation as far as it can legitimately be made to go. Well, we are now encountered, not by a mere blank negation, nor, on the other hand, by a mere dogmatic announcement, but by a theory of apparitions, not indeed contradicting our own, but enormously altering and extending it, and appealing to definite evidence and definite experiment as distinctly as we ourselves do. This evidence and these experiments we are surely bound to investigate. We cannot contentedly pursue our own speculations until we have sifted all the alleged facts which seem pertinent to our inquiry.

For an account of the "septenary constitution of man" we must refer our readers to Mr. Sinnett's "Esoteric Buddhism." We can here attempt nothing further than to explain what this astral form is asserted to be; why it should be sometimes visible to everyone present, and sometimes to one or two persons but not to the rest. The astral body may be said to exist in the akâs in the same way as the physical body exists in the ponderable world. Like other things existing in the akâs, (of which we shall hereafter speak more fully), it may be considered as a potential rather than as an actual form. Or at any rate the aspect under which it is manifested to human beings varies within wide limits, which, in the case of the Adept, depend on the will of the self-manifester. We shall find it described sometimes as free from any appreciable amount of ponderable matter, and visible, probably, only to the clairvoyant eye; sometimes as clothed in a robe of ponderable matter, and perceptible to all persons alike; sometimes as gradually shaped from akâsîc cloud into human semblance by visible accretion and disposition of particles attracted to itself.

Having premised thus much, we must consider what evidence lies before us as to the actual possession of this power of "projection of the double" by Adepts and their disciples.

Now in order to establish the habitual voluntary apparition, in India and elsewhere, of certain living persons, various distinct points will have to be proved.

A.—The evidence must first establish the ordinary physical existence of the persons thus appearing, and prove their identity with the alleged

apparitions by the recognition of persons who have seen them in the flesh, or who have seen portraits certified to by persons who have seen the originals in the flesh.

If the existence of ordinary *physical* bodies appertaining to the "astral" or phantasmal bodies be improved, the theory of voluntary projection of the double of course falls to the ground. The phantoms may still have been observed; but they must be treated like other phantoms;—they must fall into our category of *repeated* or *collective hallucinations*, *veridical* or merely *illusory*, as the case may be.

B.—On the other hand, if the existence of the physical body be demonstrated, the evidence must then prove that the alleged phantasmal forms were not the real men themselves, nor other men personating them, nor illusions produced by optical apparatus, nor hallucinations generated by expectant attention, or by some mesmeric process. 1

C.—And, thirdly the evidence must show that these phantasma appearances of living men were conscious and intentional; subserving some definite purpose, or corroborated by some independent proof.

If this is not proved, the repeated apparitions of some one man would only show what we may perhaps call a *psychorrhagic diathesis*,—a natural predisposition on his part to phantasmal appearance, of which we have some evidence in certain of our British informants, without our finding them any more able than we are to explain the singular phenomenon of which they are the subject.

A.—We purpose in this Report to deal with the alleged projections of three persons only, viz. :—

MR. DAMODAR
MAHATMA KOOT HOOMI.
MAHATMA M——.

We place Mr. Damodar first, because his ordinary physical existence is not disputed. Some information as to his antecedents, &c., is given by Colonel Olcott, Mr. Hume, and others. From the description given, (which does not appear to have been disputed on any side), it would appear that Mr. Damodar's character commands very high respect.

We have some available evidence as to four occasions on which Mr. Damodar is alleged to have appeared in the astral body; a power which he is said to have quite recently acquired in the course of his training for Adeptship, and whose exercise may therefore be considered as still experimental. These occasions are as follows, giving first the place where his actual body was situated, and then the place of projection.

1. Moradabad and Adyar, November 10th, 1883.

This occasion is described at length by Colonel Olcott in his deposition (Appendix I.), and also by Mr. W. T. Brown, "Experiences," p. 14. (Appendix .)

2. Saharanpur and Adyar, November 17th, 1883.

(Appendix I.) Witnesses, Colonel Olcott, Mr. Mohini, Madame B., Colonel Morgan, and Mrs. Morgan.

3. Adyar and London, May 23rd, 1884.

Witness, Mr. Ewen, with subsequent confirmation from Mr. Damodar.

4. Adyar and London, August 15th, 1884.

Witnesses, Madame B., in a lower degree Mrs. Z., Mr. Keightley, Mr. Pādshāh, Mr. Gebhard: confirmed by Mr. Damodar.

The records of these appearances are a good sample of much evidence with which we shall have to deal. The incidents take place in an apparently unpremeditated way, in the midst of ordinary existence. Many persons are more or less concerned in them, and, although they tend to centre round certain central personages, no special effort seems to be made to secure the presence of some bystanders or the absence of others. Evidentially this *miscellaneous* character of the experiences has both drawbacks and advantages. The *drawback* is the want of clear test conditions, the difficulty of eliminating all chance of collusion on any one occasion. The *advantage* lies in the *number* of persons more or less implicated, in the immensely increased risks of detection were anything underhand attempted under the eyes of so many witnesses of honourable repute.

We shall endeavour to arrange the witnesses to each group of phenomena in four classes, viz. :—

First Degree.—Persons so deeply involved in the incident that a doubt of its substantial truth involves a doubt of their probity. In drawing up this list we must once more disclaim any offensive intention. We have explained already how important it is to ascertain distinctly *how many* persons must be implicated in the plot (if plot there be) to force upon the world Theosophical phenomena. The more this list is lengthened the stronger will the argument in favour of the genuineness of the phenomena become.

Second Degree.—Persons whose share in the incident is conceivably reducible to a mere hallucination, but a hallucination *independently corroborative* of the phenomenon narrated.

This is a most interesting and important class, whose existence seems hitherto to have been but little discussed. Yet there is no set of witnesses for whom persons familiar with such researches will more carefully watch. For on the hypothesis that a main fountain of occult influence does in fact exist—in the group of Mahatmas and advanced Chelas,—and that the main stream of this influence is directed in a definite channel—towards other Chelas, and their immediate *entourage*—we cannot help supposing that some runlets of this stream would be diverted to outlying channels; that some cognate psychical incidents would supervene in the lives of persons altogether outside the central group, either by design, as preliminary invitations, or even by accident, owing to some local circumstance, or some misdirection of the psychical act. We shall presently give an illustration of our meaning here.

Third Degree.—In this class we shall place the alleged witnesses whose first-hand testimony we have not yet got. We hope that a member of the Committee may be able, before long, to take the evidence of as many of this class as possible; besides enjoying personal interviews with many of the witnesses whose written evidence we already possess.

Fourth Degree.—The fourth degree will consist of persons who, if a fraud were practised, may have been its dupes, and not its contrivers,—whose testimony may be the outcome of mere mal-observation, and without intentional falsity.

It is clear that there will be many grades in this class. Some persons (like the two members of the Committee) have simply heard the “astral bell,” without being able to account for it. If that sound be fraudulently made, these witnesses must be considered as wanting in acumen, but not necessarily in fairness of mind or correctness of statement. Everyone admits that the *localisation* of sounds is difficult, and the *description* of sounds necessarily vague. But many of the witnesses in this class depose to phenomena of a much more unmistakable kind. If they positively assert that they saw a majestic human form walking with stately steps, and if that form should turn out to have been composed of bladders and a wig, these witnesses are probably lacking in something besides acumen. They must be taken as showing a degree of prepossession which leaves them divided by a very narrow line from our witnesses of the first degree, whose veracity is absolutely staked on the genuineness of the phenomena.

The evidence for the two first cases of Mr. Damodar’s astral journeys is given in the Appendices.

The evidence for the two latter cases (Adyar, London), which are closely connected together, must be given here in full; inasmuch as it was obtained directly by and for the Society for Psychological Research, and is in itself of much interest.

The Journal of the Society for Psychological Research for June, in an account of a meeting held at the Garden Mansions, May 28th, contains the following passage (pp. 75-6):—

“At the conclusion of the Literary Committee’s Report some further discussion was raised on Colonel Olcott’s evidence, and Mr. E. D. Ewen, of Chattergarh, Central Provinces, India, stated that he had himself a few days ago (on Friday, May 23rd, at about 10 p.m.) received a visit from Mr. Damodar in the astral body. He (Mr. Ewen) had gone to an upstairs room, at 77, Elgin Crescent, W., to replenish his tobacco-pouch. He was in the act of doing so from a store of tobacco in a drawer, when he suddenly perceived Damodar standing beside him. He recognised Damodar distinctly, having previously known him personally in India. His first impression was that Damodar had come to see Colonel Olcott, who was in the house at the time. He (Mr. Ewen) rushed out on to the landing, and called to Colonel Olcott. As he stood on the landing, just outside the door of the room in which he had seen Damodar, Damodar appeared to pass through him, to emerge from the room without sensible contact, although the door was not wide enough to admit of a normal exit, while Mr. Ewen stood in front of it, without a collision, which Mr. Ewen must have felt. After thus apparently passing through him, the form of Damodar descended the stairs for some little way and then seemed to disappear through a closed window.*

* Mr. Ewen has since sent us an account of this incident, which will be found in Appendix A.

“It was here suggested by the members of the Committee for Inquiry into Contemporary Apparitions of the Living in India, that a telegram should be sent to India to obtain, if possible, corroboration for this narrative. It was not, of course, considered possible to prove that no communication other than such telegram could have been sent to Mr. Damodar before an answer could be received from India; but it was felt that it would at any rate be interesting to observe what light might be thrown by Mr. Damodar’s reply on the question whether Mr. Ewen’s vision was of a purely subjective character. Colonel Olcott assented to this suggestion, and offered that the telegram should be sent in his name, so as to ensure a reply from Mr. Damodar. Accordingly, at the close of the meeting (7 p.m.), the following telegram was despatched from the Westminster (Parliament Street) Telegraph Office (Mr. F. W. H. Myers being present, on behalf of the Committee, with other witnesses): ‘Olcott to Damodar, Adyar, Madras. Have you visited London?’

To this telegram we received no reply. We heard, however, from Madame Blavatsky that she had had a letter from Mr. Damodar, in which he expressed his decided unwillingness to reveal his own intimate proceedings for the information of the Society for Psychical Research. Madame Blavatsky added that he had enclosed a letter which was to be shown to us or not, as she thought fit. This, of course, suggested that the letter was to be shown only if it fitted the circumstances; yet, on that supposition, it was hardly diplomatic in Madame Blavatsky to mention it at all. In any case, both letters, we were told, had been lost. Mr. Ewen's vision thus very decidedly lacked confirmation.

Common fairness, however, forbade us positively to conclude either that an unseen letter of Mr. Damodar's contained compromising matter, or that his reluctance to divulge his own affairs to satisfy our curiosity was a merely simulated feeling.

Let us take the opportunity to look at the matter from Mr. Damodar's standpoint. Let us suggest, rather, the thoughts which might most naturally and justifiably pass through the mind of some Hindoo friend of Mr. Damodar, on hearing of the persistent intrusions of the Society for Psychical Research.

"I hope," he might say, "that Damodar will not consent to pander to these men's curiosity. We have enough of Englishmen and their methods elsewhere, without admitting them into the recesses of our spiritual being. I prefer the mere ignorant scorn which is their usual attitude towards our higher life to this meddling pretension to judge by their own standards an experience of which they cannot form even the preliminary idea. Stay; I believe they have a legend that St. Ambrose was miraculously permitted, though many miles distant, to administer the Eucharist to the dying Pope. What would have been the reply of the College of Cardinals if a deputation of Moorish doctors had applied to them for an accurate sketch of the wafer used on that occasion, on the ground that they had heard something of the affair from friends of St. Ambrose, and suspected that a definite test or two would show the saint fibbing?"

We do not ignore the force which a retort of this kind would possess. We are conscious that the spiritual, the subjective side of such a phenomenon as this must be the dominant one in a religious soul. If such a power of self-liberation indeed exists in man, its first exercises must be so intimate, so epoch-making an experience that no extent of reserve in dealing with it can justly surprise us.

While matters were in this state Madame Blavatsky attended a meeting of the Cambridge branch of the Society for Psychical Research, on August 9th. There she declared that she saw Damodar astrally present; and she herself suggested that she should try to impress on him to send her three mango-leaves as a test of his presence. It was, however, suggested by Mr. Myers that the number should be five instead of three, and it was agreed (on Madame Blavatsky's suggestion) that the leaves should be sent to Mr. Sinnett. This test would of course have been evidentially valueless, as it was suggested by Madame Blavatsky herself, and made on an occasion whose date had been fixed some time previously. Madame Blavatsky professed herself uncertain as to whether Damodar had understood her request.

Up to the present writing (October 2nd) these leaves have not appeared. From one point of view this may be thought satisfactory, inasmuch as it indicates that no plot had been formed to the effect that Damodar was to despatch the leaves on a pre-arranged date. For in that case Mr. Sinnett would probably have received *three* leaves about the end of August.

Taken along with the Ewen case, this failure rather looked as though Mr. Ewen and Madame Blavatsky had really imagined that they had seen Mr. Damodar, but that either this was a mere hallucination, or Mr. Damodar (like Mr. Beard in our own experiments) had been himself unconscious of his disembodied journey.

The next incident to be recorded was the receipt by Mr. Myers of the following letter from Messrs. Pádsháh, Keightley, and Gebhard. Mr. Gebhard is a leading manufacturer in the town of Elberfeld, Prussia, and enjoys much local distinction both as an administrator and a philanthropist. Mr. Keightley is a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, known to several members of the Committee. He has spent many weeks in close companionship with the Theosophic group now in England, and has shown a cordial willingness to assist us in our inquiries. Mr. Pádsháh is a young Parsee gentleman, who was recommended to one of us by Professor Wordsworth, of Elphinstone College, Bombay, where he was elected to a Fellowship. He has, however, resigned this emolument, mainly, as we understand, because the conditions of residence connected with it would interfere with his services to the Theosophic cause, which he has warmly embraced. He must, therefore, be considered as an enthusiastic but a disinterested disciple.

77, Elgin Crescent, Notting Hill, W.

Saturday, August 16th.

Dear Mr. Myers.—Madame has just told me that she saw Damodar last night, quite distinctly, standing in a corner facing the chair in which she was seated in the drawing-room. There were present in the room, Mr. and Mrs. Oakley, Mr. Gebhard, and others, who do not seem to have known or felt his presence. Madame tells me that he had come to ask what it was she had told him about some trunk the night before. It appears she had told him the previous night to take care in the Custom House of a certain trunk taken by Babula, who has proceeded to India to-day. Damodar, unable, however, to make himself more distinct, as Madame desired, seems to have not understood her. So he appeared again this morning more than once, asking, "Why do you not answer about the trunk?" Madame tells me she related the appearance the night before to Mrs. Arundale, Mrs. Holloway, and Miss Arundale. The circumstance would have been thought of no more, but on my consulting Madame this afternoon about some articles about to appear in the *Theosophist* she naturally spoke of Damodar; and among other things, very enthusiastically of his latest development. It occurred to me that this was a splendid chance for the S.P.R.; you had repeatedly desired me to commit to paper what I have seen or might see, and there are many friends in England and India who are ready to trust my word. I suggested I should write to you, and wait for D.'s letter, where he might refer to his astral presence. But that would be no test. I suggested an immediate despatch of a telegram, and also a letter to you signed by Mr. Keightley and Mr. Gebhard, who had come some time before, and myself. Mr. Keightley made some difficulties as to the value of the test, alleging that our word may not suffice for the S.P.R. I prefer to think otherwise. And, accordingly, the telegram is decided upon. It is in these terms:—

To Damodar,
Theosophist Office, Madras.

Telegraph instantly what you told me last night.

BLAVATSKY.

You will see that I have suggested the telegram should be from Madame Blavatsky, to undo any difficulty Damodar might make to reply to others—for instance, to S.P.R.

Madame is going to-day to Elberfeld, and I shall open the answer as soon as D. telegraphs it, and send you a copy.

I hope Damodar will make no difficulties now, and the test will be, we trust, if not complete, at least of considerable scientific value.—I remain, dear Mr. Myers, yours sincerely,

B. J. PADSHAH.

I came in this afternoon, between 3 and 4, while Madame was talking of Damodar's visit and the matter of the trunk, to Pādshāh, Mr. Gebhard, and Mrs. Arundale.

The above statement is correct, so far as it relates to myself, and Madame has had, I believe, no opportunity of telegraphing Damodar without my knowledge, as I have been in the house most of the day.

BERTRAM KEIGHTLEY.

I herewith certify that Mr. Pādshāh's version is correct, and that I was in the room with Madame Blavatsky when she told the occurrence about the different apparitions of Damodar . . . upon which Mr. Pādshāh proposed as a test to telegraph at once to Damodar. I wrote the telegram at once myself.

GEBHARD (Consul of Persia, Elberfeld, Germany).

This letter was speedily followed by the annexed telegram:—

B. J. Pādshāh to F. Myers, Cambridge.—August 17th.

Damodar telegraphs Blavatsky "Master wants you there to-night; don't fail; look into your pocket."

Mr. Damodar's original telegram, dated Madras, August 17th, 9.10 a.m., is now in possession of the Committee, and is in precisely the same words. This telegram was forwarded to Mr. Myers, who was on the Continent at the time, and unable to communicate at once with the Committee. The effect on Mr. Myers' mind was very unfavourable to Mr. Damodar's reputed powers. It appeared that on the first occasion on which he had accepted a test, he had distinctly failed to satisfy it. An alleged transcorporeal interview of Damodar's had been selected without previous notice, and for the very reason that a distinct and concrete topic had formed the subject of discussion. It was about the *trunk* that the senders of the telegram wished to hear. Mr. Damodar had replied without delay. Telegram despatched from Notting Hill, August 16th, say 5 p.m. English time (say 10 p.m. Indian time); received probably at Madras too late for delivery that night. Answer despatched from Adyar 9.10 a.m., August 17th, Indian time; received in London 6.58 a.m., English time. But the reply, so far from containing any allusion to the trunk, referred only to a statement that Mahatma M. wished to see Madame Blavatsky, and that she would find a letter from him to that effect in her pocket. It seemed as though a vague, quasi-private message had been purposely pitched upon by Mr. Damodar as incapable of disproof. Madame Blavatsky could of course say that he had given her such a message, and that she had found such a letter, but that both had been too private for open mention at the time.

On August 30th Mr. Myers proceeded to Elberfeld and inquired of Mr. Keightley (who was staying at Mr. Gebhard's along with Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Mohini, Colonel Olcott, &c.), whether he had received Mr. Damodar's telegram and what he thought of it. He replied that the party had left London on August 16th, and arrived at Elberfeld on the 17th. On arriving they were met by a telegram

from Mr. Pādshāh, reporting Mr. Damodar's reply. The whole party, said Mr. Keightley, were surprised and distressed at what seemed to them also the conspicuous failure of the intended test. Madame Blavatsky said that she had in fact received such a message, and had found such a letter in her pocket; but, of course, recognised the inadequacy of such statement. It then struck her that she might have made some mention of the incident in her private diary. This was contained in a despatch-box which had been in Mr. Keightley's charge from the time when it was packed and locked, just after the telegram had been sent to Damodar, and just before the party left London by an evening train, August 16th, for Elberfeld, *via* Queenborough and Flushing.

In this diary was found the entry here translated.

*Translation of entry in Madame Blavatsky's private journal, written partly in Russian and partly in English, and dated August 15th, 1884.**

* The words underlined are written in English in the original.

I saw suddenly Damodar this August 15th. While looking on I called, trying to find out some one near me to call attention to him. I was sitting under the looking-glass, and tried to make myself heard by Mrs. Arundale, who was sitting near Mrs. Oakley. Upon seeing him, I said to him: "*Damodar, can't you make yourself visible to all?*" Instead of answering, he says to me something very strange, that he had seen me the night before, and could not understand what I wanted from him. He said: "*You came to me about two, I could not understand what you were asking me for. Is it for a trunk sent here?*" Then a few minutes later he again appeared and said: "*Master wants you here to-night. Don't fail. Look into your pocket.*"†

† This entry was followed by another sentence which is worth noting. "I keep asking Damodar why he does not send the three mango-leaves care of Sinnett." This entry seems inexplicable except on the hypothesis that Madame Blavatsky had simply *for,otten* that the number of mango-leaves to be sent had been altered from three to five. For, assuming a trick, Damodar would either have been instructed *previously* to August 9th to despatch *three* leaves on August 9th, or he would have been instructed *subsequently* to the meeting of August 9th to despatch *five* leaves as soon as possible. Neither of these things had he done, and the time was past for any test in connection with the leaves; yet we find Madame Blavatsky in her private diary harking back to her own original idea, forgetting the alteration (of three to five leaves) imposed on the test, and unconscious, moreover, of the uselessness of having *any* leaves sent so long after the mooted of the original proposal. This little point will give some idea of Madame Blavatsky's habits of mind.

This entry greatly changed the aspect of affairs. It was now plain that Mr. Damodar had not invented a reply on the mere chance of its proving appropriate. His reply corresponded, at any rate, to an entry of the interview actually made in London by Madame Blavatsky. His reply was therefore either a true statement, or a fraudulent statement despatched in consequence of a private telegram sent to him by Madame Blavatsky during the short time that Mr. Keightley was "off guard," after the despatch of the Gebhard-Pādshāh-Keightley telegram of inquiry. But in this case why was he not instructed to reply as to the *trunk*, which was the special object contemplated in the inquiry? On the other hand, if the genuineness of Damodar's visit be assumed, there is an obvious explanation of the form which his recollection took. He had not been himself specially interested about the *trunk*. But he *was* interested in all that concerned his Master's dealings with Madame Blavatsky. To him the desire of Mahatma M. to summon Madame Blavatsky in *her* astral form to an interview at Adyar was a real and impressive incident. Moreover, the conveyance of the letter from Mahatma M. to Madame Blavatsky was specially interesting to him if (as Madame Blavatsky alleges) this was the first time that his own powers had enabled him to effect a transfer of the kind. And the wording of the telegram (due to Mr. Gebhard) certainly was likely to suggest that was asked for was the *command* which Damodar transmitted, and not the *inquiry* which he made. He *asked* Madame Blavatsky about the trunk; he *told* her to pay an incorporeal visit to Adyar and to find the written summons in her pocket. The result of the vaguely-worded inquiry was thus what might fairly have been anticipated on the theory of the genuineness of Damodar's visit. He had recollected first what had struck *him* as the gist of the spiritual interview,—not the uninteresting concrete topic which had been noted simply for its *concreteness* by persons seeking a test. More evidence, however, remains. On Wednesday, September 10th, a letter from Damodar was received at Elberfeld by Madame Blavatsky in the presence of Mr. Keightley, who noted its registered envelope; that letter is dated Adyar, Madras, August 16th. It had gone first to London and been forwarded to Elberfeld. In spite of Mr. Damodar's request for privacy, Madame Blavatsky, at the earnest request of the Committee, has presented us with the letter for this form of private circulation. We give it here:—

Adyar, Madras, 16th August, 1884.

Respected Upasika,—I could not make out what you wanted here when you came here on the morning of the 15th, at about two or three of Madras time. So in the night I attempted to come and ask you. It was between 10 and 11 in the night here—so it must be between five and six in the evening of London time. Who was that gentleman talking with you under a big looking-glass, and who was that short old lady? I think there were several

others in the room at the time, but I could not make out how many, or who they were. If I had known that at that time you would be amidst so many people, I would not have attempted to come. I might have seen you later when you were alone. And why was it that you asked me to make myself visible to all? You know I am too much of a beginner yet in this line. It was only because you asked me to do so I attempted. Whether I succeeded or failed, I do not know. And in all this affair, the main object I came for was not quite accomplished. I wanted to know exactly what you had come here for? I heard something about a trunk, but whether you wanted me to take care of something you had sent, or whether you wanted me to send you something, I do not quite remember. However, I have sent you a parcel, and I believe it is that which you mean. Did you find in your pocket that Tibetan order from the MASTER to come here, to notify you about which he sent me to you again? I hope, yourself, nor the friends who were there, will not speak about this to any one, and not make a public talk of it in the Society for Psychical Research, and such other places. I am sure Mr. Ewen and others would have done it, if I had not asked you privately to prevent the publication of the fact of Mr. Ewen having seen me when I came to see you and Col. O., and committed a blunder. I hope I have not committed a mistake in sending you the parcel. Ever yours respectfully and sincerely,

DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.

It is to be noted that all the circumstances mentioned in this letter are correct. Two points refer to assertions made by Madame Blavatsky at the time, and thus confirmed, viz. :—

1. Astral visit of Mdme. B. to D.
2. Ineffectual attempt of Mdme. B. on that occasion to explain something about a trunk.

The next five points are confirmed by Messrs. Keightley, Padshah, and Mrs. Z.

3. Hour of D.'s visit to 77, Elgin Crescent.
4. Presence of short old lady (Mrs. Z.)
5. Presence of gentleman under looking-glass talking (Mr. Keightley).
6. Presence of several other persons.
7. Request of Mdme. B. that D. would make himself visible to all.

The letter also contains :—

8. Mention of letter from Mahatma M. (already mentioned in telegram).
9. Mention of Mr. Ewen's vision of D. when D. meant to see Col. O., with explanation of D.'s silence on the point when inquiry was made.

On the hypothesis of fraud, therefore, the case would stand as follows: Madame Blavatsky, during the moments when Mr. Keightley was off guard, telegraphed to Damodar as follows :—

"Wire, 'Master wants you here to-night; don't fail; look in your pocket.' Then write, saying I visited you at night, could not explain about trunk: you visited me 5 p.m.; several present; short old lady, gentleman under looking-glass, I asked you make yourself visible."

The cost of this telegram would be about £12.

Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott have repeatedly offered to assist us in India to examine all telegrams sent by or to any members of their group during the existence of the Theosophical Society, and we hope that our envoy may be able to do this.

It is worth remarking that the true message as to the trunk was not conveyed after all. Madame Blavatsky's servant, Babula, was conveying to Madras a box (*Americanicè* trunk) containing frames for the portraits of the Mahatmas and Madame Blavatsky was anxious that Damodar should see these frames uninjured through the Custom-house at Madras. She would seem, then, to have communicated astrally as a cheaper plan than telegraphing, though in this case it has proved so far less precisely effectual.

Now let us once more revert to the Ewen vision and telegram in the light of this letter of Damodar's. Mr. Ewen, it will be remembered, at a meeting of the Society for Psychical Research declared that he had seen Mr. Damodar's astral form, seeking, apparently, for Colonel Olcott. Mr. Ewen eagerly agreed to telegraph to Mr. Damodar for corroboration. Mr. Damodar refused to make any reply. Now here there was plainly no *previous concert* between Mr. Ewen and Damodar. But it is, of course, possible that Mr. Ewen (a Scotch gentleman of honorable repute, whose organisation is highly nervous) may have simply had a *hallucination* which Mr. Damodar afterwards—in a letter, at any rate—avowedly private, falsely adopted as a fact. But the singular coincidence would remain that Mr. Ewen (who is not, on his own showing, subject to any hallucinations which are not afterwards clearly proved to have been *veridical*, to have corresponded to some objective event) should for once have had a merely illusive hallucination, and should then have seen Mr. Damodar, with whom he was only slightly acquainted,—the very person and under the very circumstances which would afterwards admit of being worked up into false evidence, quite independent of Mr. Ewen's will. This is what we meant above when we spoke of witnesses whose *corroborative hallucination* places their evidence to one of these phantasmal occurrences at almost as high a level as that of the witnesses whose veracity is absolutely involved in the account of the occurrence itself.

Dividing, then, the witnesses to the Damodar apparitions into these four classes, according to the evidence in Appendices —, we shall have some such arrangement as the following:—

- First Degree.*—M^{me}. Blavatsky
Col. Olcott
Mr. Damodar
Mr. Mohini.
- Second Degree.*—Mr. Ewen.
- Third Degree.*—Col. Morgan
Mrs. Morgan.
- Fourth Degree.*—Mr. Brown
Mr. Keightley
Mrs. Z. and Miss Z. (ladies well known to the Committee)
Mr. Pādshāh
Mr. Gebhard

We come next to the alleged apparitions of Mahatma Koot Hoomi. And here a new point meets us. The physical existence of Mahatma Koot Hoomi is itself a contested matter. According to Theosophical statements, Koot Hoomi is a Brahmin, whose full name has not been given; Koot Hoomi, alleged to be an ancient Brahmin family name,*

* "The phonetic name Koothoomi, or Kuthumi, however variously spelt, is one too well known in Indian literature and language to need help from any Oriental scholar, whether eminent or not. Koothoomi is the name of one of the Rishis, the author of one of the twenty remaining Codes of Law, now in the Asiatic Society's Library, in Calcutta; again he is named as one of the thirty-six Rishis in the *Pudma Purana*; and we would strongly advise Mr. Conway to consult these authorities, and Monier Williams' *Indian Wisdom*, for one, wherein Koothoomi is mentioned."—*The Theosophist*, June 1884, p. 221.

"The name Koothoomi is mentioned as belonging to a Rishi, in *Vishnu Puran*. The precise reference I shall be able to give you later on. The book is translated into English by H. H. Wilson. There is, I believe, also a French translation by Burnouf. About the name, see also Monier Williams' *Indian Wisdom*, p. 305. There is a school of Sama Veda students founded by Koothoomi, and called after him Kauthoomi. The text of the Sama Veda according to this school is published by the Asiatic Society, in Calcutta. All Brahmans who, belong to this school (and everything being hereditary, many Brahmans of the present day are supposed to belong to it by right of descent, even though ignorant of Sanskrit) may call themselves Kauthoomis—something like M. A. (Oxon.)."—From a letter by Mr. Mohini M. Chatterji to Mr. F. W. H. Myers.

forming a part only of the designation to which he is entitled. He was it is said, partly educated in Europe, and attended Professor Fechner's lectures. He became an Adept, and took up his residence in Thibet, where he is relic-bearer to the Teshu-Lama, an office in Thibet resembling that—say of Cardinal-Vicar, in the Roman Catholic Church.

Now it is admitted that our knowledge of this personage is derived from his action on the world outside Thibet. No one is concerned to maintain the mere *existence* of Koot Hoomi apart from his *powers*. The question, then, is whether there is in fact an Adept resident in Thibet who has any real connection with the apparitions which have been described, or the letters and pictures which undoubtedly exist in America, Russia, Germany, England, and India. It is thought by many persons that there is no such Adept; that the apparitions are due to trick or delusion; that the letters are written by Madame Blavatsky, aided by some person or persons unknown; and that the pictures represent an imaginary personage.

Now the best (though not the only) means of replying to these doubts must lie in the testimony of those who have actually seen Koot Hoomi in flesh and blood.

Let us first inquire, then: Who has seen Koot Hoomi in the flesh? and with what apparitions, letters, or pictures have they been able to connect the living man whom they saw?

The following persons (beside a Hindu servant of Madame Blavatsky's) claim to have seen Koot Hoomi in the flesh:—

EUROPEANS.	HINDUS.
Madame Blavatsky	Mr. Damodar
Col. Olcott	Mr. Mohini
Mr. W. T. Brown	Rama Sourindro Gargya Deva
	Dhabagiri Nath

Of Rama Sourindro Gargya Deva we know nothing beyond what is implied in the letter from which we quote in Appendix V. For the experiences of Dhabagiri Nath, and his connection with occult phenomena generally, see Appendix VI. In the remaining four cases the identification is apparently complete, both as to apparitions, handwriting, and portrait. The testimony of any one of these witnesses, if fully accepted, would, therefore, be conclusive on the main point. Let us take the witnesses in order.

Mme. Blavatsky. It is not necessary to set forth Madame Blavatsky's evidence as to Koot Hoomi in detail. It is admitted on all sides that if any weight whatever is to be given to Madame Blavatsky's evidence the identity and powers of Koot Hoomi are proved. We have received much verbal evidence from Madame Blavatsky on this matter, besides her printed statements in the *Theosophist* and "The Occult World," &c.

Col. Olcott. See Appendices I, II. Colonel Olcott's testimony, it will

be seen, specifically includes the precipitation of a letter by Koot Hoomi in the flesh in the Koot Hoomi handwriting.

Mr. Brown. See Appendix VII. ("Experiences," pp. 15-17.) Mr. Brown's identification also includes the handwriting.

Mr. Damodar. See Appendix VIII. (*Theosophist*, Jan., 1884, pp. 61, 62). Mr. Damodar's testimony, if accepted, is as complete as Madame Blavatsky's. He does not specially mention the handwriting, but the genuineness of the Koot Hoomi letters is, of course, implied in his narrative.

Mr. Mohini refused in his oral evidence to make any statement on this point for explicitly personal reasons;—viz., the duty incumbent on Chelas to avoid needless promulgation of favours accorded to them by the Mahatmas. But the charges brought by the Coulobms have induced him to speak out. (Appendix XXX.) This is a good illustration of the way in which personal feeling, of a highly honourable kind, may interfere with the collection of evidence of this intimate kind.

Besides these persons who claim to have seen Koot Hoomi in the flesh there is another class of witnesses whose evidence must be taken into a count in discussing his actual existence. These are the persons who have seen the *apparitions* of Koot Hoomi, and can connect the apparitions with the portraits, or the letters, or both. They are as follows:—

Madame Blavatsky.

Colonel Olcott.

Mr. W. T. Brown.

Mr. Damodar.

Mrs. X. (See Appendix).

Mr. Sinnett ("Occult World," p. 155).

Mr. Mohini (with others, Appendix III.)

Mr. Martandrao Babaji Nagnath, ("Hints," p. 105, Appendix IX.)

And seven others (letter in *Spiritualist*, 1882, Appendix X.)

Now these cases, if not true cases of projection of the double, must be explained in one of three ways: as *corroborative hallucination* (as was suggested in Mr. Ewen's case above); as *deceptive personation*, or simply as false statements.

The theory of *corroborative hallucination*—of an accidental shaping of a morbid hallucination in the likeness of a known person or picture—would cover, we think, Mr. Sinnett's nocturnal visions. They were seen when he was in a confessedly abnormal state, and his mind, no doubt, full of the thought of Koot Hoomi. But it can scarcely be stretched to cover the case of Mrs. X. This lady, known to the whole Committee, appears to us all to be an exceptionally conscientious, accurate, and trustworthy informant. Her reasons for withholding her name, and the bulk of her evidence, from even the limited public to which this paper is addressed, are fully intelligible to us. But we may say, in brief, that she reports herself to have distinctly and repeatedly seen Koot Hoomi in astral body, in a country distant from India, before she had even seen his picture, and without discovering who he was; that she acted on communications made to her in these interviews; and that these communications were afterwards confirmed by letters in the Koot Hoomi handwriting, addressed not only to Madame Blavatsky and others, but to Mrs. X. herself, under such conditions that no other person, as she maintains, could possibly have had a hand in them.

Mrs. X.'s experience, then, testified, for a considerable time, to the existence of a stream of influence apart from the main channel in which, as already said, the operation of the Adepts appears to be expended. It gives strong reasons for supposing that *some entity* has actually been seen by various and distant observers under the same persistent aspect. Taken by itself this fact, if it be one, need not logically imply the existence of a living man corresponding to the repeated vision. But on the other hand, our own previous collection of apparitional evidence points much more strongly to the appearance of "phantasms of the living" than of any extra-mundane entities.

The theory of corroborative hallucination can hardly stand when there are several simultaneous witnesses. *Collective hallucination* has, so far, been plausibly alleged to exist only when some powerful mesmerist is present; or (in the extremest supposition) is operating at a distance. It might conceivably be said that in these cases an Adept, unseen, was producing a mesmeric illusion. But then, if we have not got our Adept, we have not got our powerful mesmeriser either.

The theory of personation will be discussed when we deal with the Coulobm charges. (Appendix XXXVI.)

We come next to the alleged apparitions of Mahatma M. Here again our first task must be to marshal the evidence for his existence in the flesh at a l.

To this there are four witnesses :

Mdme. Blavatsky.
Col. Olcott.

Mr. Damodar.
Mr. Ramaswamier.

Madame Blavatsky's evidence need not be specifically referred to. She alleges herself to have seen M. very frequently in the flesh and in the astral body, as well as, of course, receiving very many letters from him.

Colonel Olcott's evidence will be found in Appendices I., XI.

Mr. Damodar's is included in his statement. Appendix VII.

For Mr. Ramaswamier's see Appendix XII. See also Appendix XIII.

The identification with the astral apparition, and with the portrait, is complete in these cases. The handwriting is not specifically dwelt on.

Next, as to the persons who have seen apparitions of M., and have connected them with portraits or handwriting. (See Appendices XIV., XV., XVI.)

Mdme. Blavatsky.

M. Moorad Ali Bey, "Hints," 76.

Col. Olcott, "Hints," 72, 79, 83, and
Deposition.

B. S. G. Mallapoorkar.

Martandrao B.N. (recognition not stated; height mentioned 6ft. Personation seems to have been possible here).

Mr. Ross Scott, "Hints," 76.

Mrs. Scott. Appendix XXXI.

Mr. Solovioff. Appendix XXXII.

Mr. Damodar, "Hints," 72.

Novin Grishna Bannerji, App. III.

S. Ramaswamier.

Pundit Chandra Sikir, App. III.

Colonel Olcott states that he saw M. first in America, afterwards recognised his portrait, and then his flesh and blood self, as the person whose astral form he had seen.

Mr. Scott's evidence is important, and it comprises identification of handwriting. Appendices XV., XXXI.

Mrs. Scott saw the same figure. It is not stated whether she had previously seen a picture of Mahatma M. (the only Rajput Adept with whom we are concerned) who is the personage here referred to. Hallucination or personation are here rendered improbable by the number of witnesses and the local circumstances described.

The evidence of the Scotts as to identity is much strengthened by Appendix XXXI. The portrait which they there identify with the apparition previously seen, represents an exceedingly distinct and individual countenance.

The evidence of Mr. Solovioff, singularly confirmed by that of Mdme. A., is among the most important which lies before us. Mr. Wsevolod Solovioff, Page of Honour to the Czar and son of the tutor of the late Czar, is a Russian author of high repute. In his case, as in that of Mrs. X.; there was no previous inclination to mysticism, nor acquaintance with Eastern modes of thought. Phenomena personal to himself have directed him to the Theosophic group, into which he had not definitely entered until the occurrence narrated in Appendix XXXII., The *corroborative hallucination* is here so complete, so prolonged, so intimately confirmatory, that it is certainly difficult to refer it to a mere synchronism of morbid fancies. Mr. Solovioff has narrated to one of us certain other psychical experiences, which indicate a combination of great natural sensitiveness with marked coolness and self-control. We have had the advantage of tracing his connection with Theosophy from its very beginning, and we shall watch with great interest for any further evidence from him.

The lady whom we have designated as Mme. A. has given to one of us an account entirely confirmatory of M. Solovioff's, and adding other matter. But for reasons which we fully appreciate. She does not wish to give written evidence at present.

We may then arrange the witnesses as to Mahatma M.'s apparitions in our degrees as follows:—

Witnesses to M.'s existence, in the flesh, and identity with the apparitions.

First Degree.—Mdme. Blavatsky.

Col. Olcott.

Mr. Damodar.

Mr. Ramaswamier.

Witnesses as to the apparitions: connection with pictures or letters.

First Degree.—Mdme. Blavatsky.

Mr. Damodar.

Col. Olcott.

Mr. Ramaswamier.

Mr. Ross Scott.

Mr. M. Moorad Ali Bey.

Mrs. Ross Scott.

Mr. B. S. G. Mallapoorkar.

Second Degree.—Mr. Solovioff.

Third Degree.—Novin Grishna Bannerji.

Pundit Chandra Sikir.

Fourth Degree.—Mr. Martandrao B.N. (personation of phantasmal figure possible under the circumstances).

Here, at present, the evidence as to projection of doubles closes. There are some scattered accounts of the appearance of other Mahatmas, but we do not find any direct evidence of the identification of these occasional phantoms with persons seen in the flesh. We, therefore, merely note their occurrence, in case further evidence should accrue.

And here we seem to have gone through the phenomena which are paralleled by anything in our own experience. Had we been merely

comparing the Theosophical phenomena with our own, we should have stopped at this point.

But the evidence which is sent to us must not be truncated in order to suit our logical convenience. We are obliged to embark on a topic which in our own Proceedings we have thus far studiously postponed, viz., the action of psychical energies on ponderable matter.

We cannot separate the apparitions of the Mahatmas from the physical phenomena which are described as so often (1) accompanying apparitions; (2) occurring when an apparition is visible to some persons present, though not to all; (3) occurring without apparition, but through the alleged agency of the Mahatmas; or (4) occurring through the alleged agency, partial or entire, of persons other than the Mahatmas.

The connection of these phenomena with the projection of the double is said to be very close. Both operations alike depend on a power of treating a *medium*, or *state of matter*—the akâs—as familiarly as we ordinary men can treat the matter which we know. Our own conception of this theory is very imperfect, but we will express it as well as we can.

In this respect, then, it may be said, as in others, the Adept is not in reality assuming any magical novelty of power. He is merely standing at a more advanced point than we in the evolutionary series in which all sentient beings are included. He has powers of analysis and synthesis as much ahead of ours as ours are ahead of the savage's, or as the savage's are ahead of the brute's. To the brute beast matter in its grossest and most complex forms—sand, mud, &c.,—is ultimate and unmodifiable. Of *spirit* the beast knows nothing; he is monistic from the materialistic side. The savage can convert water into steam and sticks into smoke, but he cannot re-condense the steam into water, still less re-integrate the smoke into wood. He has an idea of spirit, but this idea is still so near to matter that *air in motion* serves as its very type. We civilised men can see deeper into the structure of things; we can not only vapourise water and re-condense it, but also dissociate its elements and re-combine them. To us the air is mere ponderable matter, and although, when we conceive the luminiferous ether or "radiant matter," we feel ourselves on the brink of immateriality, still we are learning to stretch our conceptions to embrace matter in several states which are only conjecturally known to us. But the gulf between the objective and the subjective side of our experience remains unbridged. Such conceptions as "thought," "will," "life," "soul," we still class in the world of *mind* or *spirit*, as contradistinguished from the world of matter. Our dualism, however, is not so *unquestioning* as the savage's. We are capable of a speculative monism—of conjecturing that *thought* and *iron* may both be modifications of some underlying *mind-stuff*.

Now the difference in the case of the Adept is that he is *confidently* monistic. Not that he can fully see or perceive the underlying identity of spirit and matter. He too has a purely subjective side to his experience. The atma, the seventh principle, the pervading unity of things, remains incognisable to him save as an indwelling essence, which is the soul of his soul. But he has nevertheless made just that forward step which was necessary to make his monism a confident and not a merely speculative tenet. For he has obtained an experimental insight into the "mind-stuff," whose existence we can only conjecture; he has half bridged over the gulf between objective and subjective, by actually learning to see his own thought, his own will, as vibrations of the akâs, as well as feeling them as changes of his own consciousness. The gulf, we say, is thus *half* bridged over; it would need not an Adept, but a world-soul to bridge it over *entirely*, to recognise no difference between inner consciousness and external existences. Yet to see thought and will as vibrations in the akâs involves a deeper insight than would be involved in merely watching their correlated vibrations in the physical *brain*. For the akâs is the foundation of thought and brain alike; it is (in another sense than the poet's) "such stuff as dreams are made of;" it is the very fabric of the veil of illusion on which our world and we are projected as images from the unmanifested unity of things.

Thus much of explanation is necessary if we are to understand either the nature of the akâsîc phenomena which the Adept can produce, or the means which he adopts to produce them. In the first place, to a person who can discern the akâsîc substratum of ponderable things, our "chemical elements" are of course as conspicuously composite as organised matter is to ourselves. All substances known to us are modifications of the akâs; and the forces which hold them together, and govern their behaviour,—cohesion, gravitation, chemical affinity, electricity, magnetism,—are incidental cases of the deeper laws which regulate the structure and govern the behaviour of the akâs. An experimenter, therefore, who could deal with the akâs could overcome and renew the molecular cohesion of wood

or iron as easily as we can vapourise water and re-condense it ; he could precipitate any substance known to us from his great reservoir of relatively undifferentiated akâs as easily as we can accrete to our electrodes the desired elements of a chemical compound.

And this (to continue our statement of the Theosophical case) is just what the Adept can do. And he does it by the aid of no ponderable instruments, but by a trained and appropriate direction of the energy of his own thought and will. For, be it remembered, his own thought is *in pari materiâ* with the effects which he wishes to produce. Super-consciously, no doubt, his thought involves an inconceivable process in the unmanifested unity. Sub-consciously it involves a molecular vibration in the thinker's physical brain. But *consciously*,—as the Adept realises it and can direct it,—it is an impulse propagated through the akâs, which can be made either to impress the akâs without otherwise modifying it, or to modify it by condensation or segregation, into, or out of, any concrete substance desired. Thus, for instance, if an Adept in Thibet wishes to transmit a letter to a friend at Madras he can proceed in various ways. If his friend is himself gifted with occult power it will suffice for the Adept to imprint the intended words on the akâs by an effort of will. The disciple will then discern them in the akâs, and if necessary can himself precipitate them on to an ordinary sheet of paper. Or else the Adept can write his letter on ordinary paper in Thibet, and then disintegrate the paper,—keeping its particles, however, sufficiently close for ultimate reunion,—convey the disintegrated or *virtual* missive through intervening obstacles, and re-integrate it at Madras. Or he can simply precipitate both paper and handwriting from the akâs at Madras, without any previous preparation or transmission.

One more point remains to be noticed. These powers of the Adept, as has been so often said, are not miraculous. They are inherent in all of us, in the same sense as the power to make electrical experiments is inherent in the savage. And just as the savage, who cannot even dimly conceive of electricity, is nevertheless unconsciously producing electric phenomena at every step he takes ; is modifying the electric conditions around him in a manner which would be perceptible to *savants* armed with the necessary instruments ; even so we are modifying the akâs around and in us by every thought which manifests itself in our brains. We do not consciously *stamp* our thoughts on the akâs, but they *make their mark* on the akâs none the less. We thus leave an involuntary but a permanent imprint, by means of which the Adept can track our moral and mental course in the akâs, partly as a dog can track our physical course by the smell, and partly as we can track the dog's course if he has run before a row of instantaneously-recording photographic cameras.

When the *substance* of phenomenally-delivered letters comes to be considered it will be very necessary to bear this part of the theory in mind.

Having thus stated (though probably by no means accurately) as much as we can make out of the theory on which the Theosophists explain these alleged akâsic phenomena, we may proceed, for convenience sake, to divide the cases now before us into the following classes :—

1. The evocation of light or warmth.
2. The evocation of sound.
3. The transportation of ponderable objects.
4. Their duplication.
5. Their precipitation, or integration.
6. Their disintegration.

Now before we deal with these classes in order, let us consider what bearing phenomena of this kind can have on the *identity* of the agents causing them. Of course if they appear in the *presence* of a recognised person, or of a recognised apparition, their connection with him may be evident. But how far are they in themselves capable (if occurring in the presence of persons who disclaim their production) of conveying any proof of some unseen communicating identity ?

Such proof might be of two kinds ; it might indicate an *esoteric school* or an *individual identity*. Thus if the "bell sound" (which certain non-Adepts can avowedly evoke) is nevertheless *only* produced by persons claiming to have been *taught* by Adepts, this will indicate a certain solidarity, the existence of a traditional school, with a conventional mode of communication. But if the bell sound is found to be reproduced in ordinary Spiritualistic séances, then, (assuming for the sake of argument that in both cases something more than jugglery is involved), the bell sound can no longer be adduced as definitely connoting a Thibetan school.

Material evidence for the *individual identity* of a communicating intelligence is in common life generally obtained from *identity of handwriting*. But it seems doubtful how much, on the akâsic theory, such identity would prove. If A can precipitate handwriting in his own

style from the akâs, may he not also be able to get at B's handwriting,—which, *ex hypothesi*, must exist somewhere in the akâs,—and precipitate it, as in fact we hear in Colonel Olcott's deposition that Madame Blavatsky actually has done? An endless vista of perplexities thus opens before us. Fortunately, what we have primarily to determine is whether there is any truth in the akâsic theory at all. We must at any rate begin by refusing to allow our personages any powers beyond those of the ordinary forger. If we should decide that they can precipitate handwriting at all, it will then be time enough to discuss what the internal evidence of handwriting, style, or continuity of matter may indicate as to their authorship. In the language of theologians, our epistles must be shown to be *genuine* before they are shown to be *authentic*.

There is yet another manner in which the personality of some given Adept, or of an Adept generally, might be indicated without vision. This would consist in some *bodily sensation*, which might be measurable by instruments, as rise of temperature, increased rapidity of circulation, &c.; or might be merely subjective, and described as "glow," "thrill," "*bien-être*." We mention this for the sake of logical completeness; but it is obvious that the influence of mere imagination would in such cases be very hard to exclude.

Having premised thus much, let us take the classes of akâsic phenomena in order.

1. *Evocation of Light or Heat*.—Colonel Olcott and Mr. Mohini both speak of luminosity as accompanying an Adept, especially when in the astral body. (Appendices II., III.)

2. *Evocation of Sound.*

Raps. Olcott, Appendix I.

Mr. Sinnett, "Occult World," p. 31, &c.

Mrs. Sinnett, " " p. 31, &c.

Major-General Morgan, the *Theosophist*, June, 1884, Supplement, p. 29.

Sreenavasa Row, Appendix —

Music from a tree. Martandrao B. Nagnath, "Hints," p. 103.

(Appendix XVII.)

Astral Bell.

W. T. Brown, p. 7,

Mr. Sinnett, "Occult World," p. 41,

Mrs. Sinnett, " " p. 41,

Major-General Morgan,

Hairsinghi Rupsinghi,

Dr. Hartmann,

J. N. Unwala,

F. W. Thurstan,

E. Gurney,

F. W. H. Myers,

} Appendix XVIII.

} Appendix XIX.

} Appendix XX.

The possibility of mistake as to the localisation of sound prevents the bell sound from being in itself a conclusive phenomenon. But it is sometimes reported in conjunction with other phenomena more difficult to simulate.

This bell sound, so far as we know, is not a phenomenon alleged to occur at Spiritualistic séances; though we have had one narrative sent to us in which it is alleged to have been heard by two persons, without the presence of a medium, in response to a strong desire for some token from a departed friend.

The above witnesses to the astral bell may, however, be all placed in the fourth degree, as possibly deceived.

Mr. Hume, who asserts, "Hints," p. 27, Appendix XXI., that he has heard the bell "on at least two occasions in rooms more or less distant from Madame Blavatsky," must be assumed to have had *corroborative hallucinations* (if the bell be not genuinely akâsic), and placed in the second degree. Mr. S. Row also heard raps at his own house, near the picture of Mahatma K. H.

We shall thus have under the heading *Evocation of Sound* the following witnesses:—

First Degree.—Mdme. Blavatsky, Mr. Sinnett.

Col. Olcott, Mrs. Sinnett.

Second Degree.—Mr. Hume.

Mr. Sreenavasa Row.

3. *Transportation of Objects.*—It is not always clear whether the appearance of a letter, &c., is to be classed as a case of transportation or of precipitation; as it is not stated whether the letter existed beforehand or was formed at the moment.

For a case where a recognised letter and cards are said to have been transported see "Hints," 112, 113. (Appendix XXII.) We speak only of the transport of the letter from Bombay to Calcutta, omitting the evidence of transit from the ss. "Vega" to Bombay, which (1) depends in great measure on the assertion of Mr. Eglinton, whose evidence our rule forbids us to count; and (2) is vitiated on Mr. Eglinton's own showing by a blunder as to test conditions of the most serious kind.

Taking then only the evidence as to the fall of a letter in Calcutta which had previously fallen in Bombay, we have

Witnesses to the fall in Bombay and subsequent "evaporation;" ("Hints," 117), Friday, March 24th, 1882, 8 p.m., Bombay time.

Mr. K. M. Shroff.	Mr. Martandao.
Mr. Gwala K. Deb.	Mr. Dovat H. Bhamcha.
Mr. Damodar.	Mr. Bhavani Shankar.

Witnesses to the fall in Calcutta, Friday, March 24th, 1882, 9 p.m. Madras time:—

Col. Olcott.
Col. Gordon.
Mrs. Gordon.

Two Adepts (in astral form) seen by Colonel Olcott, but not by the others. "Hints," 112, 113, 124.

This is an important case, in spite of the weakness of the "Vegà" portion of the story. For if the fall at Bombay were fraudulent, Colonel Olcott must have effected it. Moreover, Mrs. Gordon's account must be inaccurate almost beyond the limits of unintentional exaggeration. Colonel Gordon must be taken as corroborating Mrs. Gordon's account, which she published on two separate occasions. Other cases of transportation of objects are found in "The Occult World," pp.36-63, and in Mr. Sinnett's deposition (Mr. Sinnett's own letters; china *plaque*.)

See also "Hints," p. 84 (Appendix XXIII.), for the removal of a picture from New York and its occult production at Bombay. (Colonel Olcott.)

Witnesses—*First Degree*.—Mr. Sinnett.
Mrs. Sinnett.
Tookaram Tatyā.
Gwala K. Deb.
Malavarman Nathavarman.
Damodar K. Mavalankar.

Third Degree.—K. N. Shroff.
Marsundrow Vagnand.
Dorabji H. Bhamcha.

4-6. It is plain that the *duplication* of objects cannot strictly be classed entirely apart from their *precipitation*. Indeed, it must be remembered that the rough classification we have made of these changes in ponderable matter is for purposes of merely temporary convenience. These later groups of phenomena may be regarded as falling under the heads of precipitation or disintegration.

4. The *precipitation* of objects forms the largest class of the alleged akâsic phenomena; the usual type being the fall of a letter, or its discovery in some closed receptacle; and the caligraphy of these letters being mainly of two types, the Koot Hoomi and the M. handwriting.

But here we come upon the most serious blot which has as yet been pointed out in the Theosophic evidence.

The "Kiddle incident" has been so fully discussed already (see *Light* . . .) that we shall not think it needful to give its full details. Briefly, the case stands as follows:—

A certain letter, in the Koot Hoomi handwriting and addressed avowedly by Koot Hoomi from Thibet, to Mr. Sinnett, in 1880, was proved by Mr. H. Kiddle, of New York, to contain a long passage apparently plagiarised from a speech of Mr. Kiddle's, made at Lake Pleasant, August 15th, 1880, and reported in the *Banner of Light* some two months or more previous to date of Koot Hoomi's letter. Koot Hoomi replied (some months later) that the passages were no doubt *quotations* from Mr. Kiddle's speech, which he had become cognisant of in some occult manner, and which he had stored up in his mind, but that the appearance of plagiarism was due to the imperfect precipitation of the letter by the Chela, or disciple, charged with the task. Koot Hoomi then gave what he asserted to be the true version of the letter as dictated and recovered by his own scrutiny apparently from the blurred precipitation. In this fuller version the quoted passages were given as quotations, and mixed with controversial matter. Koot Hoomi explained the peculiar form which the error of precipitation had assumed by saying that the quoted passages had been more distinctly impressed on his own mind, by an effort of memory, than his own interposed remarks; and, that inasmuch as the whole composition had been feebly and inadequately projected, owing to his own physical fatigue at the time, the high lights only, so to speak, had come out; there had been others, and illegible passages, which the Chela had omitted. The Chela, he said, wished to submit the letter to Koot Hoomi for revision, but Koot Hoomi declined for want of time.

It would have been very desirable that the alleged original precipitation, or a photograph of it, should have been sent to Mr. Kiddle and subjected to scientific scrutiny. It is alleged to have been seen by Mr. Subba Row and General Morgan, and since destroyed. This document could not of course have *proved* the truth of Koot Hoomi's explanation, but it would at any rate have afforded scope for certain tests which its alleged destruction renders impossible.

Further difficulties involved in Koot Hoomi's explanation were pointed out by Mr. Massey, who showed (among other points) that the quoted sentences seemed to have been ingeniously twisted into a

polemical sense, precisely opposite to that in which they were written. It might, of course, be rejoined that this was the work of the Chela, endeavouring to set forth what he thought his Master meant; but the odd coincidence remains that words should have been originally quoted most of which were capable of being pieced together into a coherent meaning other than that intended by their original author.

And quite lately (*Light*, September 20th, 1884) Mr. Kiddle has shown that the passage thus restored by no means comprises the whole of the unacknowledged quotations; and, moreover, that these newly-indicated quotations are antecedent to those already described by Koot Hoomi, as forming the introduction to a fresh topic of criticism. We wait to hear Koot Hoomi's reply to this last charge. It will be somewhat difficult to extend much further the explanation of accidentally dropped connecting passages, which, nevertheless, leave behind them a coherent sense. In fact, an obvious criticism on the whole incident would be that a line of explanation *à priori* most improbable had been adopted, and that, furthermore, this improbable explanation had itself been strained to bursting.

The incident taken altogether suggests many difficulties beyond those of a purely phenomenal kind. But from the purely phenomenal point of view, which alone this Committee can occupy, the primary questions are:—

(1) Can a Mahatma make himself acquainted with current events or speeches?

(2) Can he precipitate paper or written characters from the akâs, instead of writing letters in the usual way?

If either of these phenomena is judged impossible, *cadit questio*. In that case the claims of the Adepts are a sham, and the Kiddle incident is just what might have been expected. If, on the other hand, akâsic intelligence and precipitation be accepted as *veræ cause*, the case becomes much more perplexing. It will still be exceedingly difficult to believe the explanation which Koot Hoomi offers, but, on the other hand, it will be hardly possible to *disprove* it.

Some light is perhaps thrown on this perplexing incident by the account given in Appendix XXIV.

Further discussion of the Kiddle incident may, however, be postponed until, on the one hand, Koot Hoomi's reply to the second charge shall have been received, and on the other hand, this Committee shall have been able to devote a more extended consideration to the question of akâsic precipitation generally.

The evidence for such precipitation is briefly outlined in Appendix XXV., (where lists of witnesses are given) and certainly if it is to be rejected *in toto*, we shall be obliged largely to extend our categories, both of deceivers and deceived. The reader will observe that the evidence for many instances of precipitation is strengthened by conjunction with other phenomena. Thus we find precipitations:—

1. Coincident with the bodily presence of an Adept.
2. Coincident with an apparition visible to all present.
3. Coincident with an apparition visible to some person or persons present, but not to all.
4. Coincident with a sound or other corroborative phenomenon.
5. Written words or enclosures found in letters arriving by post, or in telegrams.
6. Letters, &c., seen falling, or found in secret places.

Other important points to be noticed are these:—

The handwriting of the letters.

Their style.

The references made in them either to former letters (indicating that the letters form a series), or to conversation passing at the moment (indicating that the letters are freshly composed).

Into this class of letters falls the only one which a member of our Committee has received. On August 11th, 1884, Mr. Myers was talking with Madame Blavatsky and others on the Kiddle incident, when Madame Blavatsky said that she felt Koot Hoomi's presence. She left the room, and in two or three seconds returned with a letter, which she said had fallen on a slab outside the door. This formed no test, of course. The letter was in the Koot Hoomi handwriting, and alluded to what had just passed in conversation. The subject, however, might have been purposely led up to. But the odd thing was that the letter included a verbal quotation (duly acknowledged) from a volume of essays of Mr. Myers'. It will not be maintained on any side that this publication has made its way into Thibet; whereas a copy of the work had recently lain in a room where Madame Blavatsky had sat. It would seem strange that Madame Blavatsky (if she wrote the letter) should attempt, so to say, to purge the writer of the Koot Hoomi letters from the charge of having read the *Banner of Light*, and in the same instant should gratuitously indicate that this mysterious correspondent had, at any rate, read a book quite equally unlikely to be obtainable at Lhasa. Of course, on

the occult theory the Adept or his disciples can read what they please, by visit in astral body or by scrutiny of the akâs, and Mr. Mohini explained the incident in some such way.

We have made special inquiry from Dr. Hartmann as to the continued receipt of letters in the K. H. handwriting at Madras after the departure of Madame B. for Europe. Appendices — XXXIII., XXXIV., XXXV. deal with this point.

Disintegration of Objects.—Under this head we place the alleged production of pictures by partial destruction of the substance of the paper, so as to produce the effect of dark shades by leaving only the carbon of the paper in certain places. This, at least, is the explanation given of the method used in the Fakir's portrait, whose mode of production seems to have baffled experts. See "Hints," pp. 83, 84, 85, 86. (Appendix XXVI.)

The witnesses to the occult production and character of the Fakir's portrait are as follows:—

First Degree.—Mr. W. Q. Judge

Dr. L. M. Marquette.

Third Degree.—Mr. W. R. O'Donovan

Mr. T. le Clear.

It may be here added that other extraordinary phenomena are alleged to occur, both with and without the assistance of the Mahatmas. Mr. C. Ramiah, of Madras, describes in the *Theosophist* (September, 1884, Supplement) how, after dreaming (in 1864, 1880, and 1883) of a Mahatma, he recognised the exact features of the Mahatma of his dreams in the picture of Koot Hoomi.

Evidence is also offered for psychometry and precipitation effected by Madame Blavatsky's own powers. (Appendix XXVII.)

But here, for the present, the Committee must close their review of the existing evidence for Theosophical phenomena.

That evidence is of a kind which it is peculiarly difficult either to disentangle or to evaluate. The claims advanced are so enormous, and the lines of testimony converge and inosculate in a manner so perplexing, that it is almost equally hard to say what statements are to be accepted, and what inferences as to other statements are to be drawn from the acceptance of any. On the whole, however, (though with some serious reserves), it seems undeniable that there is a *prima facie* case, for some part at least of the claim made, which cannot be safely ignored. And it seems also plain that an actual residence for some months in India of some trusted envoy,—his actual intercourse with the persons concerned, Hindu and European, so far as may be permitted to him,—is an almost necessary pre-requisite of any more definite judgment.

It may be said that the Council of the Society for Psychical Research possess already such a source of information in the person of Mr. St. George Lane-Fox, formerly a valued member of their body, who has now joined the Theosophical Society, transferred his residence to Madras, and assumed an active part in Theosophical affairs. The Committee do not regard Mr. Lane-Fox's membership of the Theosophical Society as a disqualification in the research; for such membership is expressly admitted by the Theosophical Society to be compatible with an attitude of the freest inquiry; and this attitude many members of the Theosophical Society avowedly assume. And the Committee hope to obtain from Mr. Lane-Fox much information, to which his practical training in physical science will give especial value. But Mr. Lane-Fox, when he went out to Adyar, admittedly did not take this step on grounds of scientific conviction alone. He was deeply impressed by the *philosophy* set before him,—by the *teaching* of the Adepts or their exponents as well as by their alleged *powers*. He had, doubtless, satisfied himself as to the general validity of the evidence offered; but had the philosophy, the cosmogony, the theodicy of the Adepts been altogether *repugnant* to his mind, he would hardly, we imagine, have felt it incumbent on him to embrace them on the strength of the phenomenal evidence alone.

Now the capacity to recognise intuitively exalted truth,—the faith to act on such recognition,—may, no doubt, be among the highest gifts of mankind. But, as we have already remarked, in psychical research we must be on our guard against men's highest instincts as much as against their lowest; and when we find so many competing religions appealing with confidence to the innate and self-evident truth and beauty of their respective tenets, we are warned to keep to our humbler task of simply testing, as well as we can, by ordinary scientific methods, whatever evidence as to unknown powers or an unseen world is put before us,—of approaching all with the same absence of prepossession, whether we have to deal with the visions of Swedenborg, or the miracles at Lourdes, or the communications received at Spiritualistic séances.

Having necessarily to touch on so many delicate subjects, so many profound convictions, so many ardent hopes, we can only avoid giving offence by rigidly confining ourselves to those parts of each inquiry which can be tested by the same definite rules in every instance. It

can never be our part (so to say) to discuss the policy of any Bill introduced, but only to determine whether the Standing Orders have been duly complied with.

We desire, therefore, to receive the reports of some competent inquirer, who, while free from any prepossession *against* the wisdom or the psychical capacities of the East, is, nevertheless, prepared to conduct his Indian investigations with a sole regard to definite evidential proof. Mr. Hodgson, B.A., Scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge, is willing to undertake this task at once; and we can only hope that the cordial readiness to afford information which has been so courteously shown to us by the founders of the Theosophical Society, and Mr. Mohini, Mr. Sinnett, &c., may be extended to Mr. Hodgson also, in the paramount interest of truth.

Mr. Hodgson's journey will entail no expense upon the Society for Psychical Research. It is hoped that his letters from India, or some part of them, may be submitted to Members and Associates in a Second Report of this Committee.