PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL MEETINGS IN

May and June, 1885.

The fourteenth and fifteenth General Meetings of the Society were held at the Rooms of the Society of British Artists, Suffolk-street, Pall Mall, on Friday, May 29th, and Friday, June 24th.

MR. F. W. H. MYERS IN THE CHAIR.

The programme on both occasions included parts of Mr. Hodgson's account of his investigations in India, and of the paper on "Some Higher Aspects of Mesmerism," which appear below. At the June meeting Professor Sidgwick read the conclusions expressed by the Committee in the following Report.

I.

REPORT OF THE COMMITTEE

APPOINTED TO

INVESTIGATE PHENOMENA CONNECTED WITH THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY.*

1. STATEMENT AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE COMMITTEE.

In May, 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. E. Gurney, F. W. H. Myers, F. Podmore, H. Sidgwick, and J. H. Stack. They have since added Mr. R. Hodgson and Mrs. H. Sidgwick to their number.

For the convenience of Members who may not have followed the progress of the Theosophical Society, a few words of preliminary explanation may be added here.

The Theosophical Society was founded in New York, in 1875, by Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, ostensibly for certain philanthropic and literary purposes. Its headquarters were removed to India in 1878, and it made considerable progress among the Hindus and other

* As this Committee had carried out a large portion of its work before the appointment of the Committee of Reference, its Report has, by exception, not been submitted to that body.

educated natives. "The Occult World," by Mr. Sinnett, at that time editor of the *Pioneer*, introduced the Society to English readers, and that work, which dealt mainly with phenomena, was succeeded by "Esoteric Buddhism," in which some tenets of the Occult doctrine, or so-called "Wisdom-religion," were set forth. But with these doctrines the Committee have, of course, no concern.

The Committee had the opportunity of examining Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, who spent some months in England in the summer of 1884, and Mr. Mohini M. Chatterji, a Brahmin graduate of the University of Calcutta, who accompanied them. Mr. Sinnett also gave evidence before the Committee; and they have had before them oral and written testimony from numerous other members of the Theosophical Society in England, India, and other countries, besides the accounts of phenomena published in "The Occult World," "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," *The Theosophist*, and elsewhere.

According to this evidence, there exists in Thibet a brotherhood whose members have acquired a power over nature which enables them to perform wonders beyond the reach of ordinary men. Madame Blavatsky asserts herself to be a *Chela*, or disciple of these Brothers (spoken of also as *Adepts* and as *Mahatmas*), and they are alleged to have interested themselves in a special way in the Theosophical Society, and to have performed many marvels in connection with it. They are said to be able to cause apparitions of themselves in places where their bodies are not, and not only to appear, but to communicate intelligently with those whom they thus visit, and themselves to perceive what is going on where their phantasm appears. This phantasmal appearance has been called by Theosophists the projection of the "astral form." The evidence before the Committee includes several cases of such alleged appearances of two Mahatmas, Koot Hoomi and Morya. It is further alleged that their Chelas, or disciples, are gradually taught this art, and that Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar in particular, a Theosophist residing at the headquarters of the Society, has acquired it, and has practised it on several occasions. It may be observed that these alleged voluntary apparitions, though carrying us considerably beyond any evidence that has been collected from other sources, still have much analogy with some cases that have come under the notice of the Literary Committee.

But we cannot separate the evidence offered by the Theosophists for projections of the "astral form," from the evidence which they also offer for a different class of phenomena, similar to some which are said by Spiritualists to occur through the agency of mediums, and which involve the action of "psychical" energies on ponderable matter; since such phenomena are usually described either as (1) accompanying

apparitions of the Mahatmas or their disciples, or (2) at any rate as carrying with them a manifest reference to their agency.

The alleged phenomena which come under this head consist—so far as we need at present take them into account—in the transportation, even through solid matter, of ponderable objects, including letters, and of what the Theosophists regard as their duplication; together with what is called "precipitation" of handwriting and drawings on previously blank paper. The evocation of sound without physical means is also said to occur.

In December, 1884, the Committee considered that the time had come to issue a preliminary and provisional Report. This Report, on account of its provisional character, and for other reasons, was circulated among Members and Associates of the Society for Psychical Research only, and not published. In drawing up the present Report, therefore, the Committee have not assumed that their readers will be acquainted with the former one. The conclusion then come to was expressed as follows: "On the whole (though with some serious reserves), it seems undeniable that there is a *primâ facie* case, for some part, at least, of the claim made, which, at the point which the investigations of the Society for Psychical Research have now reached, cannot, with consistency, be ignored. And it seems plain that an actual residence for some months in India of some trusted observer—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."

In accordance with this view, a member of the Committee, Mr. R. Hodgson, B.A., Scholar of St. John's College, Cambridge, proceeded to India in November, 1884, and, after carrying on his investigations for three months, returned in April, 1885.

In the *Madras Christian College Magazine* for September and October, 1884, portions of certain letters were published which purported to have been written by Madame Blavatsky to a M. and Madame Coulomb, who had occupied positions of trust at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society for some years, but had been expelled from it in May, 1884, by the General Council of that Society during the absence of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott in Europe. These letters, if genuine, unquestionably implicated Madame Blavatsky in a conspiracy to produce marvellous phenomena fraudulently; but they were declared by her to be, in whole or in part, forgeries. One important object of Mr. Hodgson's visit to India was to ascertain, if possible, by examining the letters, and by verifying facts implied or stated in them, and the explanations of the Coulombs concerning them, whether the letters were genuine or not. The editor of the *Christian College Magazine* had already, as Mr. Hodgson found, taken considerable pains to

ascertain this; but he had not been able to obtain the judgment of a recognised expert in handwriting. Accordingly a selection of the letters, amply sufficient to prove the conspiracy, was entrusted by the editor, (in whose charge Madame Coulomb had placed them,) to Mr. Hodgson, who sent it home before his own return. These, together with some letters undoubtedly written by Madame Blavatsky, were submitted to the well-known expert in handwriting, Mr. Netherclift, and also to Mr. Sims, of the British Museum. These gentlemen came independently to the conclusion that the letters were written by Madame Blavatsky. This opinion is entirely in accordance with the impression produced on the Committee by the general aspect of the letters, as well as by their characteristic style, and much of their contents.

The Committee further desired that Mr. Hodgson should, by cross-examination and otherwise, obtain evidence that might assist them in judging of the value to be attached to the testimony of some of the principal witnesses; that he should examine localities where phenomena had occurred, with a view to ascertaining whether the explanations by trickery, that suggested themselves to the Committee, or any other such explanations, were possible; and in particular, as already said, that he should, as far as possible, verify the statements of the Coulombs with a view to judging whether their explanations of the phenomena were plausible. For it is obvious that no value for the purposes of psychical research can be attached to phenomena where persons like the Coulombs have been concerned, if it can be plausibly shown that they might themselves have produced them: while, at the same time, their unsupported assertion that they did produce them, cannot be taken by itself as evidence.

After hearing what Mr. Hodgson had to say on these points, and after carefully weighing all the evidence before them, the Committee unanimously arrived at the following conclusions:—

(1) That of the letters put forward by Madame Coulomb, all those, at least, which the Committee have had the opportunity of themselves examining, and of submitting to the judgment of experts, are undoubtedly written by Madame Blavatsky; and suffice to prove that she has been engaged in a long-continued combination with other persons to produce by ordinary means a series of apparent marvels for the support of the Theosophic movement.

(2) That, in particular, the Shrine at Adyar, through which letters purporting to come from Mahatmas were received, was elaborately arranged with a view to the secret insertion of letters and other objects through a sliding panel at the back, and regularly used for this purpose by Madame Blavatsky or her agents.

(3) That there is consequently a very strong general presumption

that all the marvellous narratives put forward as evidence of the existence and occult power of the Mahatmas are to be explained as due either (*a*) to deliberate deception carried out by or at the instigation of Madame Blavatsky, or (*b*) to spontaneous illusion, or hallucination, or unconscious misrepresentation or invention on the part of the witnesses.

(4) That after examining Mr. Hodgson's report of the results of his personal inquiries, they are of opinion that the testimony to these marvels is in no case sufficient, taking amount and character together, to resist the force of the general presumption above mentioned.

Accordingly, they think that it would be a waste of time to prolong the investigation.

As to the correctness of Mr. Hodgson's explanation of particular marvels, they do not feel called upon to express any definite conclusion; since on the one hand, they are not in a position to endorse every detail of this explanation, and on the other hand they have satisfied themselves as to the thoroughness of Mr. Hodgson's investigation, and have complete reliance on his impartiality, and they recognise that his means of arriving at a correct conclusion are far beyond any to which they can lay claim.

There is only one special point on which the Committee think themselves bound to state explicitly a modification of their original view. They said in effect in their First Report that if certain phenomena were not genuine it was very difficult to suppose that Colonel Olcott was not implicated in the fraud. But after considering the evidence that Mr. Hodgson has laid before them as to Colonel Olcott's extraordinary credulity, and inaccuracy in observation and inference, they desire to disclaim any intention of imputing wilful deception to that gentleman.

The Committee have no desire that their conclusion should be accepted without examination, and wish to afford the reader every opportunity of forming a judgment for himself. They therefore append Mr. Hodgson's account of his investigation, which will be found to form by far the largest and most important part of the present Report. In it, and the appendices to it, is incorporated enough of the evidence given by members of the Theosophical Society to afford the reader ample opportunity of judging of both its quantity and quality.

There is, however, evidence for certain phenomena which did not occur in India, and are not directly dealt with in Mr. Hodgson's Report. Accounts of these will be found at p. 382, with some remarks on them by Mrs. H. Sidgwick.

The report of Mr. Netherclift on the handwriting of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters will be found at p. 381. Extracts from the letters themselves are given in Mr. Hodgson's Report, pp. 211-216.

The authorship of the letters attributed to Koot Hoomi, which are very numerous, and many of them very long, is fully discussed in Mr. Hodgson's Report. It may be mentioned here that it is maintained by some that the *contents* of these letters are such as to preclude the possibility of their having been written by Madame Blavatsky. This has never been the opinion of the Committee, either as regards the published letters or those that have been privately shown to them in manuscript. Those who wish to form an independent opinion on the subject are referred to "The Occult World" and "Esoteric Buddhism," which contain many of the letters themselves, and much matter derived from others.

In this connection may be conveniently mentioned what the Committee, in their First Report, called the most serious blot which had then been pointed out in the Theosophic evidence. 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 the 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 many 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.

The weakness of this explanation was pointed out (in *Light*) 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.

And more lately (in *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 admitted by Koot Hoomi, and described as forming the introduction to a fresh topic of criticism. The proof of a deliberate plagiarism aggravated by a fictitious defence, is therefore irresistible.

In conclusion, it is necessary to state that this is not the only evidence of fraud in connection with the Theosophical Society and Madame Blavatsky, which the Committee had before them, prior to, or independently of, the publication of the Blavatsky-Coulomb correspondence. Mr. C. C. Massey had brought before them evidence which convinced both him and them that Madame Blavatsky had, in 1879, arranged with a medium, then in London, to cause a "Mahatma" letter to reach him in an apparently "mysterious" way. The particulars will be found at p. 397.

It forms no part of our duty to follow Madame Blavatsky into other fields. But with reference to the somewhat varied lines of activity which Mr. Hodgson's Report suggests for her, we may say that we cannot consider any of these as beyond the range of her powers. The homage which her immediate friends have paid to her abilities has been for the most part of an unconscious kind; and some of them may still be unwilling to credit her with mental resources which they have hitherto been so far from suspecting. For our own part, we regard her neither as the mouthpiece of hidden seers, nor as a mere vulgar adventuress; we think that she has achieved a title to permanent remembrance as one of the most accomplished, ingenious, and interesting impostors in history.

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2. ACCOUNT OF PERSONAL INVESTIGATIONS IN INDIA, AND DISCUSSION OF THE AUTHORSHIP OF THE "KOOT HOOMI" LETTERS.

By Richard Hodgson.

PART I.

In November of last year I proceeded to India for the purpose of investigating on the spot the evidence of the phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society.

It will be known to most of my readers that M. and Madame Coulomb, who had been attached to the Theosophical Society for several years in positions of trust, had charged Madame Blavatsky with fraud, and had adduced in support of their charge various letters and other documents alleged by them to have been written by Madame Blavatsky. Some of these documents were published in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* of September and October, 1884, and, if genuine, unquestion-

ably implicated Madame Blavatsky in trickery. Madame Blavatsky, however, asserted that they were to a great extent forgeries, that at any rate the incriminating portions were. One of the most important points, therefore, in the investigation was the determination of the genuineness of these disputed documents.

It was also highly important to determine the competency of the witnesses to phenomena, and to ascertain, if possible, the trustworthiness in particular of three primary witnesses, viz., Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar, Mr. Babajee D. Nath, and Colonel Olcott, upon whose trustworthiness the validity of the evidence which in our First Report we considered *primâ facie* important, mainly depended.

Before proceeding it may be well for me to state that the general attitude which I have for years maintained with respect to various classes of alleged phenomena which form the subject of investigation by our Society enabled me, as I believe, to approach the task I had before me with complete impartiality; while the conclusions which I held and still hold concerning the important positive results achieved by our Society in connection with the phenomena of Telepathy,—of which, moreover, I have had instances in my own experience, both spontaneous and experimental, and both as agent and percipient,—formed a further safeguard of my readiness to deal with the evidence set before me without any prejudice as to the principles involved. Indeed, whatever prepossessions I may have had were distinctly in favour of Occultism and Madame Blavatsky—a fact which, I think I may venture to say, is well known to several leading Theosophists.

During my three months' investigation I was treated with perfect courtesy, both at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society and by the gentlemen connected with the *Madras Christian College Magazine*. I thus had every opportunity of examining the witnesses for the Theosophical phenomena, and of comparing in detail the disputed documents with the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky. After a very careful examination of the most important of these documents, and after considering the circumstantial evidence offered by Theosophists in proof of their being forgeries, I have come to the assured conclusion that they are genuine.

And it seems desirable here to mention a fact to which attention has already been drawn by the editor of the *Madras Christian College Magazine*, in his reply to an unfounded charge brought against him by Theosophists, who accused the authorities of the magazine of having published the disputed documents without any guarantee of their genuineness. So far was this from being the case that prior to their publication of the documents they obtained the best evidence procurable at Madras as to the genuineness of the handwriting. There was indeed no professional expert in handwriting to be consulted, but the judgments

which were obtained included, among others, the opinions of gentlemen qualified by many years' banking experience.

From these Blavatsky-Coulomb documents it appears that Mahatma letters were prepared and sent by Madame Blavatsky, that Koot Hoomi is a fictitious personage, that supposed "astral forms" of the Mahatmas were confederates of Madame Blavatsky in disguise—generally the Coulombs; that alleged transportation of cigarettes and other objects, "integration" of letters, and allied phenomena—some of them in connection with the so-called Shrine at Adyar—were ingenious trickeries, carried out by Madame Blavatsky, with the assistance chiefly of the Coulombs.

But further investigations were required. Other apparently important phenomena had come before us which were not directly discredited by the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters. Among these phenomena, for example, were some appearances of Mahatmas, many instances of the alleged precipitation of writing independently of Madame Blavatsky and the Coulombs; and there were also the "astral" journeys of Mr. Damodar. Not only did these and other phenomena require special investigation, but it was desirable that some confirmation should be obtained of the genuineness of the disputed letters—that any conclusions concerning them should not depend merely and exclusively upon questions of style and handwriting. To this end it was necessary that I should examine the important witnesses involved in the incidents mentioned in these documents. It may be added that additional light was required on some of the phenomena mentioned in "The Occult World," and that the authorship of the K. H. letters could not be put aside as not in some degree bearing on our research.

I may now express in brief the conclusions to which I was gradually forced, after what I believe to be a thorough survey of the evidence for Theosophical phenomena.

The conclusion which I formed, that as a question of handwriting the disputed letters were written by Madame Blavatsky, is corroborated by the results of my inquiries into the details of the related incidents.

For Mr. Damodar's "astral" journeys I could find no additional evidence which rendered pre-arrangement in any way more difficult than it appeared to be under the circumstances narrated to us at the time of our First Report, when we considered that collusion between Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar was not precluded. On the contrary, my inquiries have revealed that pre-arrangement between Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar was much easier than we then supposed. The accounts given by those witnesses who, we thought, might contribute valuable corroborative evidence in the way of showing that such pre-arrangement was not possible, tended rather to show the reverse. The cases, therefore, rested entirely upon the evidence of Mr

Damodar and Madame Blavatsky. But early in my investigation events occurred which impelled me towards the belief that no reliance could be placed on Mr. Damodar, and after discovering the unmistakable falsehoods which marked his own evidence, I could come to no other conclusion than that he had co-operated with Madame Blavatsky in the production of spurious marvels.

I was also, for reasons that will hereafter appear, compelled to discard altogether the evidence of Mr. Babajee D. Nath, who appeared to us at the time of our First Report to be a primary witness for the ordinary physical existence of the Mahatmas.

The testimony of Colonel Olcott himself I found to be fundamentally at variance with fact in so many important points that it became impossible for me to place the slightest value upon the evidence he had offered. But in saying this I do not mean to suggest any doubt as to Colonel Olcott's honesty of purpose.

In short, my lengthy examinations of the numerous array of witnesses to the phenomena showed that they were, as a body, excessively credulous, excessively deficient in the powers of common observation,—and too many of them prone to supplement that deficiency by culpable exaggeration.

Nevertheless, I refrained as long as possible from pronouncing even to myself any definite conclusion on the subject, but after giving the fullest consideration to the statements made by the Theosophic witnesses, after a careful inspection both of the present headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Madras and of the old headquarters in Bombay, where so many of the alleged phenomena occurred, I finally had no doubt whatever that the phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society were part of a huge fraudulent system worked by Madame Blavatsky with the assistance of the Coulombs and several other confederates, and that not a single genuine phenomenon could be found among them all. And I may add that though, of course, I have not, in coming to this conclusion, trusted to any unverified statements of the Coulombs, still neither by frequent cross-examination nor by independent investigation of their statements wherever circumstances permitted, have I been able to break down any allegations of theirs which were in any way material.

It is needless for me to enter into all the minutiæ of so complicated an investigation. It would in truth be impossible either to reproduce all the palterings and equivocations in the evidence offered to me, or to describe with any approach to adequacy how my personal impressions of many of the witnesses deepened my conviction of the dishonesty woven throughout their testimony. What follows, however, will, I think, be more than enough to convince any impartial inquirer of the justice of the conclusion which I have reached.

I begin by giving some extracts from the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters which will justify the assertions which I have made above concerning the contents of these documents. The asterisk (*) placed against some of the extracts means that the letters from which those extracts are taken were among those examined by Mr. Netherclift.

1.—The Sassoon Telegram.*

The following is an extract from a letter purporting to be written by Madame Blavatsky from Poona to Madame Coulomb at Madras in October, 1883 :—

Now, dear, let us change the programme. Whether *something* succeeds or not I must try. Jacob Sassoon, the happy proprietor of a crore of rupees, with whose family I dined last night, is anxious to become a Theosophist. He is ready to give 10,000 rupees to buy and repair the headquarters ; he said to Colonel (Ezekiel, his cousin, arranged all this) if only he saw a little phenomenon, got the assurance that the *Mahatmas* could hear what was said, or give him some *other sign of their existence (? ! !)* Well, this letter will reach you the 26th, Friday ; will you go up to the Shrine and ask K. H. (or Christofolo) to send me a telegram that would reach me about 4 or 5 in the afternoon, same day, worded thus :—

" Your conversation with Mr. Jacob Sassoon reached Master just now. Were the latter even to satisfy him, still the doubter would hardly find the moral courage to connect himself with the Society.

" Ramalinga Deb."

If this reaches me on the 26th, even in the evening, it will still produce a tremendous impression. Address, care of N. Khandallavalla, Judge, Poona. Je ferai le reste. Cela coûtera quatre ou cinq roupies. *Cela ne fait rien.*

Yours truly,
(Signed) H. P. B.

The envelope which Madame Coulomb shows as belonging to this letter bears the postmarks Poona, October 24th ; Madras, October 26th ; 2nd delivery, Adyar, October 26th ; (as to which Madame Blavatsky has written in the margin of my copy of Madame Coulomb's pamphlet : † "Cannot the cover have contained another letter ? Funny evidence !") Madame Coulomb also shows in connection with this letter an official receipt for a telegram sent in the name of Ramalinga Deb from the St. Thomé office, at Madras, to Madame Blavatsky, at Poona, on October 26th, which contained the same number of words as above.

2, 3, 4.—The Adyar Saucer.

The following are said to have been written by Madame Blavatsky from Ootacamund to M. and Madame Coulomb at Madras, in July or August, 1883 :—

† "Some Account of my Intercourse with Madame Blavatsky," &c.

2.*

Ma bien chère Amie,

Vous n'avez pas besoin d'attendre l'homme "Punch." Pourvu que cela soit fait en présence de personnes qui sont respectables *besides* our own familiar *muffs*. Je vous supplie de le faire à la première occasion.

3.*

Cher Monsieur Coulomb,

C'est je crois cela que vous devez avoir. Tâchez donc si vous croyez que cela va réussir d'avoir plus d'audience que nos *imbéciles domestiques* seulement. Cela mérite la peine—Car la soucoupe d'Adyar pourrait devenir historique comme la tasse de Simla. Soubbaya ici et je n'ai guère le temps *d'écrire à mon aise*, à vous mes honneurs et remerciments.

(Signed) H. P. B.

This letter is said by Madame Coulomb to have contained the following enclosure :—

To the small audience present as witness. Now Madame Coulomb has occasion to assure herself that the devil is neither as black nor as wicked as he is generally represented. The mischief is easily repaired.—K. H.

4.*

Vendredi.

Ma chère Madame Coulomb et Marquis,†

Voici le moment de nous montrer—*ne nous cachons pas*. Le Général part pour affaires à Madras et y sera lundi et y passera deux jours. Il est Président de la Société ici et veut voir le *shrine*. C'est probable qu'il fera une question quelconque et peut être se bornera-t-il à regarder. Mais il est sûr qu'il s'attend à un phénomène car il me l'a dit. Dans le premier cas suppliez K. H. que vous voyez tous les jours ou Cristofolo de soutenir l'honneur de famille. Dites lui donc qu'une fleur suffirait, et que *si le pot de chambre cassait* sous le poids de la curiosité il serait bon de le remplacer *en ce moment*. Damn les autres. Celui-là vaut son pesant d'or. Per l'amor del Dio ou de qui vous voudrez *ne manquez pas cette occasion* car elle ne se répétera plus. Je ne suis pas là, et c'est cela qui est beau. Je me fie à vous et je vous supplie de ne pas me désappointer car tous mes projets et mon avenir avec vous tous—(car je vais avoir une maison ici pour passer les six mois de l'année et elle sera à moi à la Société et vous ne souffrirez plus de la chaleur comme vous le faites, si j'y réussis).

* * * * * *

Voici le moment de faire quelquechose. Tournez lui la tête au Général et il fera tout pour vous surtout si vous êtes avec lui au moment du Christophe. Je vous envoie un *en cas*—e vi saluto. Le Colonel vient ici du 20 au 25. Je reviendrai vers le milieu de Septembre.

À vous de coeur,

LUNA MELANCONICA.

* * * * * *

† Marquis and Marquise are names given by Madame Blavatsky to M. and Madame Coulomb.

The *en cas* referred to is the following :—

I can say nothing *now*—and will let you know at Ooty.
(Addressed) GENERAL MORGAN. (Signed) K. H.

Extracts 5 and 6, from letters written in 1880 by Madame Blavatsky, apparently in Simla, to Madame Coulomb in Bombay, throw some light upon the alleged transportation of cigarettes, &c.

5.

I enclose an envelope with a cigarette paper in it. I will drop another *half* of a cigarette behind the Queen's head where I dropped my hair the same day or Saturday. Is the hair still there? and a cigarette still under the *cover?*

Madame Blavatsky has written on the fly-leaf of the letter from which this passage is taken :

Make a half cigarette of this. *Take care of the edges.*

And on a slip of paper said by Madame Coulomb to have accompanied the cigarette-paper referred to :

Roll a cigarette of this half and tie it with H. P. B.'s hair. Put it on the top of the cupboard made by Wimbridge to the furthest corner near the wall on your right. Do it quick.

6.*

Je crois que le mouchoir est un coup manqué. Laissons cela. Mais toutes les instructions qu'elles restent *statu quo* pour les Maharajas de Lahore ou de Benares. Tous sont fous pour voir quelquechose. Je vous écrirai d'Amritsir ou Lahore, mes cheveux feraient bien sur la vieille tour de Sion mais vous les mettrez dans une envelope, un sachet curieux et le pendrez en le cachant ou bien à Bombay—choisissez bon endroit et—Ecrivez moi à Amritsir *poste restante*, puis vers le 1er du mois à Lahore. Adressez votre lettre à mon nom. Rien de plus pour *S.*—il en a vu assez. Peur de manquer la poste, à revoir. Avez-vous mis la cigarette sur la petite armoire de Wimb—

7.

Oh mon pauvre Christofolo ! Il est donc mort et vous l'avez tué? Oh ma chère amie si vous saviez comme je voudrais le voir revivre ! * * *
Ma bénédiction à mon pauvre Christofolo. Toujours à vous,
H. P. B.

This extract is said by Madame Coulomb to be Madame Blavatsky's lament for the destruction of the dummy head and shoulders employed for the Koot Hoomi appearances, Christofolo being the "occult" name for Koot Hoomi. Madame Coulomb declares that she had burnt the dummy apparatus "in a fit of disgust at the imposture," but that

she afterwards made another. The following letter (8) is suggestive in several ways. The Coulombs are evidently supposed to be familiar with the habits and customs of the Brothers. "Le Roi" is said by Madame Coulomb to have referred to Mr. Padshah, and "les deux lettres" sent by Madame Blavatsky to Madame Coulomb (under the name of E. Cutting) appear to have been Mahatma documents. General instructions for the transmission of such documents are exemplified by (9) and (10).

8.

Mes chers Amis,

Au nom du ciel ne croyez pas que je vous oublie. Je n'ai pas le temps matériel pour respirer—voilà tout ! Nous sommes dans la *plus grande crise*, et *je ne dois pas* PERDRE LA TETE. Je ne puis ni ose rien vous écrire. Mais vous devez comprendre qu'il est *absolument nécessaire* que quelquechose arrive à Bombay tant que je suis ici. Le Roi et Dam. *doivent* voir et reçevoir la visite d'un de nos Frères et—s'il est possible que le premier reçoive une lettre que j'enverrai. Mais les voir il est plus nécessaire encore. Elle devrait lui tomber sur la tête comme la première et je suis en train de supplier "Koothoomi" de la lui envoyer. Il doit battre le fer tant qu'il est chaud. Agissez *indépendamment* de moi, mais dans les habitudes et customs des Frères. S'il pouvait arriver quelquechose à Bombay qui fasse parler tout le monde—ce serait merveilleux. Mais quoi ! Les Frères sont inexorables. Oh cher M. Coulomb, sauvez la situation et faites ce qu'ils vous demandent. J'ai la fièvre toujours un peu. On l'aurait à moins ! Ne voilà-t-il pas que Mr. Hume veut voir Koothoomi *astralement* de loin, s'il veut, pour pouvoir dire au monde qu' *il sait* qu'il existe et *l'écrire* dans tous les journaux car jusqu'à present il ne peut dire qu'une chose c'est qu'il *croit* fermement et positivement mais non qu'*il le sait* parcequ'il l'a *vu de ses yeux* comme Damodar, Padshah, etc. Enfin en voilà d'un problème ! Comprenez donc que je deviens folle, et prenez pitié d'une pauvre veuve. Si quelquechose *d'inoui* arrivait à Bombay il n'y a rien que Mr. Hume ne fasse pour Koothoomi sur sa demande. Mais K. H. ne peut pas venir ici, car les lois occultes ne le lui permettent pas. Enfin, à revoir. Ecrivez moi. À vous de cœur,

H. P. B.

Demain je vous enverrai les deux lettres. Allez les chercher à la poste à votre nom, *E. Cutting=Coulomb.*

P.S.—Je voudrais que K. H. ou quelqu'un d'autre se fasse voir avant le reçu des lettres !

9.

Ma chère Amie,

Je n'ai pas une minute pour répondre. Je vous supplie faites parvenir cette lettre (here inclosed) à Damodar *in a miraculous way.* It is very *very* important. Oh ma chère que je suis donc malheureuse ! De tous côtés des désagréments et des horreurs. Toute à vous,

H. P. B.

10.*

Veuillez O Sorcière à mille ressources demander à *Christofolo* quand vous le verrez de transmettre la lettre ci-incluse par voie aérienne astrale ou n'importe comment. C'est très important. A vous ma chère. Je vous embrasse bien.—Yours faithfully,

LUNA MELANCONICA.

Je vous supplie FAITES LE BIEN.

In the following extracts from letters said to have been written from Ootacamund in 1883, Madame Blavatsky apparently speaks of the Koot Hoomi documents provided by her as "mes enfants."

11.*

Cher Marquis. . . . Montrez ou envoyez lui [Damodar] le papier ou le *slip* (le petit sacristi pas le grand, car ce dernier doit aller se coucher près de son auteur dans le temple mûral) avec l'ordre de vous les fournir. J'ai reçu une lettre qui a forcé notre maître chéri K. H. d'écrire ses ordres aussi à Mr. Damodar et autres. Que la Marquise les lise. *Cela suffira* je vous l'assure. Ah si je pouvais avoir ici mon Christofolo chéri! . . . Cher Marquis—Je vous livre le destin de *mes enfants.* Prenez en soin et faites leur faire des miracles. Peut être il serait mieux de faire tomber celui-ci sur la tête?

H. P. B.

Cachetez l'enfant après *l'avoir lu.* Enregistrez vos lettres s'il s'y trouve quelquechose—autrement non.

(12) (13) and (14) are also said by Madame Coulomb to have been written from Ootacamund, during Madame Blavatsky's visit there in 1883.

12.*

La poste part ma chère. Je n'ai qu'un instant. Votre lettre arrivée trop tard. Oui, laissez Srinavas Rao se prosterner devant le *shrine* et s'il demande ou non, je vous supplie lui faire passer cette réponse par K. H. car il s'y attend; *je sais ce qu'il veut.* Demain vous aurez une grande lettre! Grandes nouvelles. Merci.

H. P. B.

This apparently refers to a consoling Koot Hoomi letter provided by Madame Blavatsky for Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao, Judge in the Court of Small Causes, Madras, and actually received by him.

13.

Ma chère Amie,—On me dit (Damodar) que Dewan Bahadoor Ragoonath Rao le Président de la Société veut mettre quelquechose dans le *temple.* Dans le cas qu'il le fasse voici la réponse de Christofolo. Pour Dieu arrangez cela et nous sommes à cheval. Je vous embrasse e *vi saluto.* Mes amours au Marquis.—Yours sincerely,

LUNA MELANCONICA.

Ecrivez donc.

I have ascertained that Mr. Ragoonath Rao did place an inquiry in the Shrine, but left without having received an answer, although it would seem from the above that Madame Blavatsky had provided "Christofolo's" reply. M. Coulomb declares that he feared the reply might not be suitable, because Mr. Ragoonath Rao had said that only an adept could answer his question, and moreover that he did not wish "to make fun with this gentleman;" that he therefore wrote to Madame Blavatsky, enclosing the Sanskrit document placed by Mr. Ragoonath Rao in the Shrine, stating that he was afraid that the reply she had furnished beforehand might not be applicable, and asking her to send him a telegram if she still wished the Koot Hoomi (Christofolo) reply to be placed in the Shrine. M. Coulomb received, he says, an answer by letter, which is given in extract (14), from which it would appear that Madame Blavatsky considered the reply, in consequence of the delay, to be no longer suitable. The Koot Hoomi document in question, which, the Coulombs assert, remained in their possession, and which they produce, consists chiefly of Sanskrit, but there is also a note in English, and this note exhibits signs of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork, such as are found in most of the Koot Hoomi writings. (See Part II.)

14.*

Tropo tardi! Cher Marquis. Si ce que "Christophe" a en main eut été donné sur l'heure en réponse cela serait beau et c'est pourquoi je l'ai envoyé. Maintenant cela n'a plus de sens commun. Votre lettre m'est arrivée à 6½h. du soir presque 7 heures et je savais que le petit Punch venait à cinq! Quand pouvais je donc envoyer la dépêche? Elle serait arrivée le lendemain ou après son départ. Ah! quelle occasion de perdue! Enfin. Il faut que je vous prie d'une chose. Je puis revenir avec le Colonel et c'est très probable que je reviendrai, mais il se peut que je reste ici jusqu'au mois d'Octobre. Dans ce cas pour le jour ou deux que le Colonel sera à la maison *il faut me renvoyer la clef du Shrine.* Envoyez-la moi par le chemin souterrain. Je la verrai *reposer* et cela suffit; mais je ne veux pas qu'en mon absence on examine la *luna melanconica* du cupboard, et *cela sera examiné* si je ne suis pas là. J'ai le trac. Il faut que je revienne! Mais Dieu que cela m'embête donc que maintenant tout le monde *d'ici* viendra me voir là. Tout le monde voudra voir et—J'EN AI ASSEZ.

By "Punch," the Coulombs say, is meant Mr. Ragoonath Rao. It seems clear from the second portion of the above extract that the Shrine would not bear examination, that there was some secret construction in connection with it of which Colonel Olcott was ignorant, and which he must have no opportunity of discovering. Madame Coulomb states that "luna melanconica" here means the opening at the back of the Shrine. Hence, in case Colonel Olcott should return to Madras before Madame Blavatsky, the key of the Shrine was to be concealed. The passage is a

testimonial to Colonel Olcott's honesty, though perhaps hardly to his perspicacity.

One of the first points to ascertain with regard to these letters is whether Madame Blavatsky did treat M. and Madame Coulomb with the complete confidence which their tone throughout implies. Plenty of evidence could be adduced to show that they were treated with confidence both by Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, and that they held positions of trust (M. Coulomb being Librarian and Madame Coulomb being Assistant Corresponding Secretary of the Society); but it is, I think, sufficiently proved by the fact that when Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund, in 1883, Madame Coulomb had charge of the keys of the Shrine; and that when Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott left Madras to come to Europe in February, 1884, M. and Madame Coulomb were left in complete charge of Madame Blavatsky's rooms. Further evidence may be found in a letter of Colonel Olcott, quoted (with some omissions not specified by Dr. Hartmann) in Dr. Hartmann's pamphlet, "*Report of observations made during a nine months' stay at the Headquarters of the Theosophical Society*," pp. 36, 37; and in another letter from Colonel Olcott, which I have seen, from which it appears that he had wished M. Coulomb to be a member of the Board of Control of the Theosophical Society. Moreover, Madame Blavatsky herself spoke of Madame Coulomb in Indian newspapers, of 1880, as "a lady guest of mine," and as "an old friend of mine whom I had known 10 years ago at Cairo," and by admitting nearly all the non-incriminating portions of the Blavatsky-Coulomb documents to be in substance genuine, clearly proves that she was in the habit of addressing Madame Coulomb in a very familiar tone.

I may now proceed to show, in one or two instances, what evidence there is apart from the style and handwriting of the letters tending to establish their genuineness.

I will begin with number 1, relating to the Sassoon telegram. The matter is rather complicated, and the details of my investigation are given in Appendix I. Here I will briefly state the results. Firstly, it became clear to me from conversations with Messrs. A. D. and M. D. Ezekiel, who spent much time with Madame Blavatsky during her visit at Poona in October, 1883, and from the written statement of Mr. N. D. Khandalvala, in whose house she stayed, that the actual circumstances during her stay there were quite consistent with the letter. Secondly, I have been unable to obtain any trustworthy evidence for the existence of such a person as Ramalinga Deb, who was represented by Madame Blavatsky as a Chela, residing in Madras, of the Mahatma with whom she professed to be in occult communication. Thirdly, a careful comparison of Madame Blavatsky's attempt to disprove the genuineness of

this letter (see Appendix I.) with the statements of Messrs. Ezekiel and Khandalvala appears to me to strengthen the case against her; for it leads us to the conclusion that she must have made a specific pre-arrangement for a conversation, the whole point of which was that its subject should have arisen *extempore*.

I proceed to extracts (2) (3) and (4).

The Coulombs assert that a certain *saucer* was, according to agreement between Madame Blavatsky and Madame Coulomb, to be "accidentally" broken and the pieces placed in the Shrine, arrangements being made for the substitution, through the secret back of the Shrine, of another similar saucer, unbroken, in lieu of the broken pieces. (2) (3) and (4) they say, referred to this; letter (3) enclosed a slip provided for the occasion, and (4) suggests that the phenomenon should occur for the edification of General Morgan.

Now, it is not disputed that the so-called "saucer phenomenon" did occur in the presence of General Morgan. The only question is whether it was pre-arranged, and if so, how it was performed. Here is General Morgan's own account of it, published in the Supplement to the *Theosophist* for December, 1883.

In the month of August, having occasion to come to Madras in the absence of Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky, I visited the head-quarters of the Theosophical Society to see a wonderful painting of the Mahatma Koot Hoomi kept there in a Shrine and daily attended to by the Chelas. On arrival at the house I was told that the lady, Madame Coulomb, who had charge of the keys of the Shrine, was absent, so I awaited her return. She came home in about an hour, and we proceeded up stairs to open the Shrine and inspect the picture. Madame Coulomb advanced quickly to unlock the double doors of the hanging cupboard, and hurriedly threw them open. In so doing she had failed to observe that a china tray inside was on the edge of the Shrine and leaning against one of the doors, and when they were opened, down fell the china tray, smashed to pieces on the hard chunam floor. Whilst Madame Coulomb was wringing her hands and lamenting this unfortunate accident to a valuable article of Madame Blavatsky's, and her husband was on his knees collecting the *débris*, I remarked it would be necessary to obtain some china cement and thus try to restore the fragments. Thereupon M. Coulomb was despatched for the same. The broken pieces were carefully collected and placed, tied in a cloth, within the Shrine, and the doors locked. Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar, the Joint Recording Secretary of the Society, was opposite the Shrine, seated on a chair, about 10 feet away from it, when, after some conversation, an idea occurred to me to which I immediately gave expression. I remarked that if the Brothers considered it of sufficient importance, they would easily restore the broken article; if not, they would leave it to the culprits to do so, the best way they could. Five minutes had scarcely elapsed after this remark when Mr. Damodar, who during this time seemed wrapped in a reverie—exclaimed, "I think there is an answer." The doors were opened, and sure enough, a small note was found on the shelf

of the Shrine—on opening which we read "To the small audience present. Madame Coulomb has occasion to assure herself that the devil is neither so black nor so wicked as he is generally represented; the mischief is easily repaired."

On opening the cloth the china tray was found to be whole and perfect; not a trace of the breakage to be found on it! I at once wrote across the note, stating that I was present when the tray was broken and immediately restored, dated and signed it, so there should be no mistake in the matter. It may be here observed that Madame Coulomb believes that the many things of a wonderful nature that occur at the headquarters, may be the work of the devil—hence the playful remark of the Mahatma who came to her rescue.*

It will be seen that there is nothing in this account inconsistent with Madame Coulomb's assertion. Moreover, it is a very suspicious circumstance that the china tray should have been "leaning against one of the doors." This is not the position *naturally* assumed by a saucer put into a cupboard in the ordinary way through the doors.

The whole "saucer" found in the Shrine was shown to me at Adyar at my request. I examined it carefully, and I also examined carefully the broken pieces of the saucer which Madame Coulomb exhibited as those for which the whole saucer had been substituted. The two "saucers" manifestly formed a pair. The incident happened in August, 1883. Madame Coulomb alleged that she purchased the pair of so-called "saucers" at a shop† in Madras for 2 rupees 8 annas each. On inquiry I found that "two porcelain pin trays" (words which properly describe the so-called "saucers") were purchased at this shop by cash sale on July 3rd, 1883, and that Madame Coulomb had made purchases at the shop on that date. If taken as referring to this purchase there was one slight inaccuracy in Madame Coulomb's account; inasmuch as she said the "trays" cost 2 rupees 8 annnas each, instead of 2 rupees 8 annas the pair.

An incident somewhat similar to the foregoing is related in Appendix III.

It will be seen that in order to explain the "saucer phenomenon" by ordinary human agency, we require to suppose that there was a secret opening at the back of the Shrine. It was important, therefore, to ascertain what ground there was for this supposition, apart from the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters, in which its existence is clearly implied. I now proceed to give the result of my investigations in this direction.

The Shrine (*see Plan, following p.* 380).

On my arrival at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, on December 18th, 1884, I was informed by Mr. Damodar that he could

* A later and longer account, intended by General Morgan to prove that there could have been no deception, will be found in Appendix II.

† M. Faciole and Co., Popham's Broadway.

not allow me to inspect the so-called Occult Room or the Shrine until the return of Colonel Olcott and Madame Blavatsky. Colonel Olcott had left the headquarters some days previously in order to meet Madame Blavatsky at Ceylon on her return from Europe. Two days later Madame Blavatsky had reached Adyar, and I again requested permission to examine the Shrine. Madame Blavatsky professed ignorance on the subject, saying she had been unable to discover what had been done with the Shrine. Mr. Damodar and Dr. Hartmann both denied having any knowledge of it, and it was only after repeated and urgent requests to be told what had happened that I learnt from the halting account given by Mr. Damodar and Dr. Hartmann that the Shrine had been moved from the Occult Room (see Plan) into Mr. Damodar's room at about mid-day of September 20th, that on the following morning, at 9 o'clock, they found the Shrine had been taken away, and they had not seen it since. They threw out suggestions implying that the Coulombs or the missionaries might have stolen it.

Moreover, the Occult Room, when I first received permission to inspect it, had been considerably altered; its walls were covered with fresh plaster, and I was informed by Mr. Damodar that all traces of the alleged "machinations" of the Coulombs in connection with the Shrine had been obliterated. This was not true, for the bricked frame and the aperture into the recess still existed (see p. 228). However, under the circumstances it was impossible for me to test the accuracy of much of the description given by Theosophists of the Occult Room and the Shrine at the time of the "exposure" by the Coulombs. But by analysing and comparing the evidence given by various witnesses, I was able to put together the following history of the Shrine and its surroundings.*

On December 19th, 1882, Adyar became the headquarters of the Theosophical Society. One large upper room of the main bungalow was used by Madame Blavatsky (see Plan). The Occult Room was built later, against the west side of Madame Blavatsky's room. The north window on this side was removed, and a layer of bricks and plaster covered the aperture on the side of the Occult Room—a recess about 15in. deep being left on the east side. The south window was transformed into a doorway leading from Madame Blavatsky's room into the Occult Room. Madame Blavatsky's large room was divided into two by curtains and a screen; that adjoining the Occult Room being used by Madame Blavatsky as her bedroom, and at the end of 1883 as her dining-room also. The accompanying rough sketch made from measurements of my own shows the positions, the Occult Room being about 2ft. lower than Madame Blavatsky's room. The general entrance to the Occult

* For the evidence on which this account is based, see Appendix IV.

Room was through Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room. The Shrine, as I gather from comparing the accounts of different Theosophists, was a wooden cupboard between 3ft. and 4ft. in width and height, and 1ft. or 15in. in depth, with a drawer below the cupboard portion, and with corner brackets. The Shrine was made with three sliding panels at the back.* It was placed against that portion of the wall in the Occult Room where the north window of Madame Blavatsky's room had previously existed (see Plan), covering most of that portion, a most unfortunate position to choose for it if there was no fraudulent intention. It rested below on a plank or shelf, but its chief support consisted of two thick iron wires which were attached to two hooks near the ceiling. A certain space round the Shrine was enclosed by muslin curtains, which were drawn aside from the front when any one wished to approach the Shrine. These curtains were about 7ft. high on the sides, but on the wall behind the Shrine extended nearly to the ceiling. The wall immediately behind the Shrine was covered by white glazed calico, tacked to the wall. Two widths of the calico met in a vertical line passing behind the centre of the Shrine. The remaining part of the walls of the Occult Room was covered with red-and-white striped calico tacked to the wall. The upper part of the Shrine was as close to the wall itself as the muslin and calico behind it would allow. The lower part of the Shrine was near to the wall, at a distance from it differently estimated by different witnesses, but which must have been somewhere between $\frac{1}{4}$in. and $1\frac{1}{2}$in., and was probably very little, if at all, more than $\frac{1}{2}$in. The Shrine and its appurtenances were fixed in February or March, 1883. Shortly afterwards a four-panelled wooden boarding was placed in Madame Blavatsky's room, at the back of the recess. For some time an almirah (cupboard) stood in front of this recess. The exact dates of the placing of the boarding and almirah and of the removal of the almirah I have not been able to ascertain. The almirah, and afterwards the recess, were used by Madame Blavatsky as a closet for hanging clothes. The above is put together from the statements of Theosophic witnesses.

M. Coulomb states that he removed the Shrine just after it was originally placed against the wall, sawed the middle panel in two, and attached a piece of leather behind to serve as a handle, so that the top portion could be easily pulled up. The junction between the two

* This was admitted to me by Madame Blavatsky herself, who alleged that the Shrine was so made in order that it might be more easily taken to pieces and packed in case of removal. But the rest of the Shrine appears to have been of solid construction, and it is difficult to see what great convenience for travelling purposes there could have been in merely taking out portions of the back.

halves of the panel was, he says, hidden from those looking at the inside of the Shrine, by a mirror which just covered it. Behind this sliding panel a hole was made in the wall. A sliding panel was also made in the wardrobe which stood in front of the recess in Madame Blavatsky's bedroom, and one of the panels of the teak-wood boarding was also made to slide about 10 inches, so that easy communication existed between Madame Blavatsky's bedroom and the Shrine. The panels in the wardrobe and in the teak-wood door were shown by M. Coulomb to the Board of Control when he gave up the keys of Madame Blavatsky's rooms in May, 1884. The hole in the wall, he said, had been blocked up in January, before Madame Blavatsky departed for Europe. He states also that the two portions of the middle panel of the Shrine were replaced by a new single panel, and that these changes were made at the request of Madame Blavatsky, who was afraid that some examination might be made of the Shrine during her absence in Europe. M. Coulomb's statement as to the half panel cannot of course be verified, and must be taken for what it is worth. What evidence there is in support of his other statements will be seen from the remainder of my narrative, derived from other sources.

At the end of October or beginning of November, 1883, Madame Blavatsky, in consequence of a doubt expressed by Mr. G.——* concerning the panelled boarding connected with the Shrine, ordered it to be removed, † and the front part of the recess, that towards Madame Blavatsky's bedroom, to be blocked up. The panelled boarding was placed on the outside of the north-east opening into Madame Blavatsky's drawing-room, and formed the back of a shelf, and there it was certainly found to have a sliding panel in it when examined by the Theosophists in May, 1884. ‡ A wooden frame of about 8ft. by 4ft. was made, with cross-pieces, so as to fit the front of the recess. A single layer of half-size bricks was placed in this frame, and the front then covered with plaster, so that it was flush with the adjoining wall. The hollow left in the wall between Madame Blavatsky's room and the Occult Room, was about 1ft. deep. The whole wall was then papered over, the work being completed about the middle of December, 1883, or perhaps several days later. Directly afterwards a sideboard, about 3ft. high and 34in. wide, was placed close against the bricked frame forming part of the papered wall. It covered the lowest north partition of the frame, and it was found on the expulsion of the Coulombs in May, 1884, that the bricks from this partition had been taken out, so that there was communication through the sideboard (in the back

* See Appendix V.

† See Mrs. Morgan's evidence in Appendix IV.

‡ For a case where this panel seems to have been used in the new position see Appendix VI.

of which was a hinged panel) with the hollow space. M. Coulomb states that he removed the bricks as soon as the sideboard was in position in December, 1883. However this may be, the sideboard remained there during the time of the anniversary celebration in 1883; and Shrine-phenomena, which were in abeyance during these alterations, began again immediately after their completion. They ceased altogether, with two exceptions to be afterwards dealt with (see p. 248), about or shortly before the middle of January, 1884. On May 17th or 18th, M. Coulomb gave up the keys, and the various contrivances for trickery were investigated. The sliding panel in the almirah, the sliding panel in the boarding, the hinged panel at the back of the sideboard, the opening behind it where the bricks had been removed, and the hollow space of the recess were all inspected. Mr. St. George Lane-Fox then examined the west side of the party-wall behind the Shrine, but was unable at that time to find any traces of the hole which, according to M. Coulomb, had previously existed between the hollow space and the Shrine. He also examined the sideboard, and found that he could discover no signs *from without* of the aperture which led into the hollow space, showing that this aperture would remain undetected unless examination of the sideboard were made from within. The Theosophists contended that the structures for trickery revealed by the Coulombs, who had had exclusive charge of Madame Blavatsky's rooms during her absence, had been made after she had left; that they had never been and could not be used in the production of phenomena;* that the hollow space and the aperture leading to it were too small to be utilised in any connection with the Shrine, and moreover that M. Coulomb's work was interrupted before he had time to make a hole through the wall between the hollow space and the Shrine itself.

To establish these points, the Theosophical Board of Control sent round a circular inquiry in August, 1884, to various Theosophists who had been at headquarters, requesting them to state what they knew of the condition of the Shrine, adjoining walls, &c., prior to and after the expulsion of the Coulombs. I was allowed by Dr. Hartmann to read the packet of replies to this inquiry. I also questioned in detail all the important witnesses who professed to have made an examination of the Shrine and its surroundings;—the result being that if we except Madame Blavatsky and the Coulombs, Madame Blavatsky's native servant Babula, and Colonel Olcott (whose statement on this point I distrust for reasons given in Appendix IV. where it is quoted), there

* One ground given for this opinion was that the sliding panels worked stiffly, as if new and unused. Disuse for a few months, or a little grit, would, I think, account for this fact. See comments on the evidence of Mr. J. D. B. Gribble, Appendix IV.

is no evidence to show that any person ever removed the Shrine from the wall or saw it removed from the wall after it was first placed there, until the expulsion of the Coulombs; that, therefore, no careful examination could ever have been made of the back of the Shrine or of the wall in immediate juxtaposition. Further, that no such examination was ever made of the east side of the party-wall as would have sufficed to discover the sliding panels and apertures. I must add that the testimony offered appeared to me to be characterised by much mal-observation, sometimes implying a ludicrous lack of ordinary intelligence, and much equivocation sometimes amounting to absolute dishonesty. Several of the original statements of the witnesses are given in Appendix IV., together with modifications of their testimony produced by my questioning, and further comments of my own.

The ultimate fate of the Shrine, according to a statement made by Dr. Hartmann to Mr. and Mrs. Cooper-Oakley, Mr. Hume, and myself, was as follows. After the expulsion of the Coulombs, Mr. Judge, an American Theosophist, then residing at the headquarters of the Society, was desirous of examining the Shrine. Mr. Damodar, who possessed the keys of the Occult Room, avoided this examination several times on one pretext or another; but, eventually, a party of Theosophists proceeded to the inspection of the Shrine. The Shrine was removed from the wall and its doors were opened. Mr. T. Vigiaraghava Charloo, (commonly called Ananda) a Theosophist residing in an official position at the headquarters, struck the back of the Shrine with his hand, exclaiming, "You see, the back is quite solid," when, to the surprise of most of those who were present, the middle panel of the Shrine flew up. It seemed undesirable to some of the witnesses of this phenomenon that the discovery should be made public, and they resolved accordingly to destroy the Shrine. To do this they considered that the Shrine must be surreptitiously removed, but such removal was inconvenient from the Occult Room. The Shrine was therefore first removed openly to Mr. Damodar's room, and, on the following night, was thence removed secretly by three Theosophists, concealed in the compound, afterwards broken up, and the fragments burned piecemeal during the following week. Dr. Hartmann had only retained two portions of the back of the Shrine, which he had enveloped in brown paper and kept carefully concealed in his room,—substantial pieces of cedar wood, black-lacked. It was of such wood, according to a previous statement of M. Coulomb, that the back of the Shrine was made.

Dr. Hartmann has since furnished me with a statement in writing which is of interest as affording evidence respecting the hole between the recess and the Shrine. That this hole had manifestly existed and had been blocked up, I had been assured by another Theosophist who is particularly observant, and who discovered

its traces independently of Dr. Hartmann. The following is an extract from Dr. Hartmann's written account :—

At what time the hole in the wall was made is as much a mystery to me as it is to you ; but from a consideration of all the circumstances as laid down in my pamphlet, I came to the conclusion, and *am still of the opinion*, that they were made by M. Coulomb after H. P. Blavatsky went to Europe, and I am now inclined to believe that M. Coulomb made them to ingratiate himself with Madame Blavatsky to facilitate her supposed tricks. All the traps are too clumsy, and it would tax the utmost credulity to believe that such phenomena as I know of could have been made by their means. In fact I do not know of a single phenomena [*sic*] *that happened in my presence* where they would have been of the slightest use.

Of the existence of a movable back to the Shrine and a filled-up aperture in the wall, none of us knew anything, and although superficial examinations were made, they divulged nothing ; because to make a thorough examination, it would have been necessary to take the Shrine down, and we were prevented from doing this by the superstitious awe with which Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar regarded the Shrine, and who looked upon every European who dared to touch or handle the "sacred" Shrine as a desecration.

At about the time when Major-General Morgan sent his invitation to Mr. Patterson to come to headquarters, that examination was made, and it was found that the back of the Shrine could be removed, and on moistening the wall behind the Shrine with a wet cloth, it was found that an aperture had existed, which had been plastered up.

Why these discoveries should have thrown any discredit on Madame Blavatsky I cannot see, because they as well as the other traps were the work of M. Coulomb, and there was no indication whatever that H. P. Blavatsky knew anything of their existence, and moreover the testimonials of such as claimed to have examined the Shrine went to show that they were of recent origin.

Nevertheless, I must confess that it seemed to me that if at that inopportune moment this *new discovery*, to which I then alluded in the papers (see *Madras Mail)*, would have been made public, it would have had a bad effect on the public mind. If I had been here as a delegate of the Society for Psychical Research, or as a detective of the missionaries, I would, perhaps, not have hesitated to state the exact nature of the *new discovery* ; but in my position I had to look out for the interests of Madame Blavatsky, and I did not, therefore, consider it prudent to speak of this discovery ; neither was I authorised to do so, neither did I (as I then stated) feel justified in letting the enemies of H. P. Blavatsky invade her private rooms without her consent.

A gentleman who was present, and who shared my opinions, was of the opinion that the *Shrine* had been too much desecrated to be of any more use, and he burned the Shrine in my presence. . . . I never told Colonel Olcott nor Madame Blavatsky, nor any one else at headquarters up to that time, what had become of the Shrine. But when you and Mr. Hume, besides a lot of other absurd theories, also asserted your conviction, that Madame Blavatsky had sent her servant, Baboola, for the purpose of doing

away with the Shrine, and that he had done so by her orders, I thought it about time to show you that even a member of the Society for Psychical Research may err in his judgment.

We learn from Dr. Hartmann that any thorough examination of the Shrine was prevented by the "superstitious awe" with which Mr. Damodar regarded it. Dr. Hartmann's assertion is corroborated by the testimony of Mr. Lane-Fox, who has also very emphatically expressed to me his conviction that no examination of the Shrine by native witnesses can be considered as of the smallest value, in consequence of the exceeding reverence in which it was universally held. But it will be observed that in one part of his account Dr. Hartmann appears to lay some stress on "the testimonials of such as claimed to have examined the Shrine." Dr. Hartmann himself, indeed, was one of those "who claimed to have examined the Shrine" before the exposure; he gave me, on different occasions, accounts of his examinations, and these accounts, besides being inconsistent with one another, are inconsistent with his final statements,—as he at once cheerfully admitted, retracting all his previous utterances on the subject.

It seems clear from all I have said (1) that the position selected for the Shrine was peculiarly convenient for obtaining secret access to it from the back; and that none of the changes from time to time made in Madame Blavatsky's bedroom behind the Shrine, though made with the ostensible object of removing all suspicion of trickery, tended to diminish this convenience; (2) that there undoubtedly were all the necessary apertures for access to the Shrine from the back, at some period before the Coulombs left; (3) that there is no trustworthy evidence whatever to show that this access did not exist during the whole time from the moment the Shrine was put up till Madame Blavatsky left for Europe, in February, 1884, except during the alterations connected with putting up the bricked frame, when Mrs. Morgan saw the whole wall papered over; and there is no evidence of the occurrence of any Shrine phenomena during those alterations.

These results—altogether apart from the Blavatsky-Coulomb correspondence—would prevent the whole mass of testimony to Shrine-marvels from having any scientific value; taken along with this correspondence, they can, I think, leave no doubt in the mind of any impartial reader, as to the mode of production of these marvels.

Mr. Damodar's Evidence.

I now come to the question as to what weight can be attached to the statements of Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar. This is a fundamentally important question, not only because he is one of the few persons

besides Madame Blavatsky who testify to having seen the Mahatmas in Thibet, and in a way which precludes the possibility of his having been deceived, but also because Mr. Damodar himself is said to have the power of travelling in the "astral form," and the reality of these astral journeys of his depends mainly on his own statements. My own conclusion, as I have said, is decidedly unfavourable to the trustworthiness of Mr. Damodar. It is not in my power to reproduce here the whole of my grounds for forming this conclusion, but I think that a mere analysis of his statements regarding the Shrine will go far to justify it.

Babula, the native servant of Madame Blavatsky, had reached Adyar on his return from Europe at 9 p.m., on September 20th, as I found from a written entry in the Visitors' Book. My original conjecture as to the disappearance of the Shrine was that Babula had concealed or destroyed it in compliance with instructions from Madame Blavatsky, as it was on the night of September 20th that the removal of the Shrine had been effected. This appears also to have been the opinion of Mr. Subba Row, pleader in the High Court of Madras, at that time and still a leading Theosophist, who vainly questioned and threatened Babula in the hope of inducing a confession. I am disposed to think that this was also the opinion of Mr. Damodar, and that it was in order to prevent me from drawing the same conclusion, that in reply to my inquiries at an early stage of the investigation, he endeavoured to conceal the fact that Babula had arrived on the evening of September 20th; saying that he had arrived on the morning of September 21st, and had immediately requested that he might inspect the rooms, when, to the surprise of all (not, apparently, excluding the three Theosophists who, according to Dr. Hartmann,* had been concerned in its removal), the Shrine could not be found. Mr. Damodar also asserted that marks were discerned on the partition of the room where the Shrine had been placed, as though the Shrine had been lifted over the side, and that statements to this effect were in the deposition made at the time by those Theosophists who discovered that the Shrine had disappeared. Inquiring of another Theosophist who had been present, I was assured by him that no such marks were observed, and that in fact none had been looked for. The deposition, of which I have a copy, contains not the slightest allusion to any such marks.

* Dr. Hartmann stated that Mr. Damodar was not one of these three. That they should not take him into confidence in the matter is natural, as they probably sincerely believed in the "superstitious awe" with which he regarded the Shrine, and thought that it would lead him to disapprove of their proceedings.

Turning now to the specific statements of Mr. Damodar, quoted in Appendix IV., we find that he makes the following assertions :—

1. That the sideboard aperture leading to the recess, and the recess itself, were so small that he could enter the hole with difficulty, and when once inside, "could only stand abreast, without being able to move either way an inch, or to lift up" his hand.
2. That there was no sliding-panel to the frame of the Shrine.
3. That he was present on several occasions when various witnesses to the phenomena "had scrutinised carefully, in every possible way, the Shrine, and had satisfied themselves that it was intact, and had no *panels* or anything of the kind."
4. That he well remembers Mr. Subba Row and himself "very carefully examining the *Shrine* and the *Wall*," and that they were "both satisfied that they were intact."
5. That the keys of the Shrine and the Occult Room were in his charge while Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund, in 1883 : and again
6. That the keys of Madame Blavatsky's rooms and of the Shrine were in the charge of Madame Coulomb, while Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund in 1883.
7. That the sideboard did not come into existence till January, 1884, when the phenomena were no longer produced in the Shrine.

(1) Now, with respect to the sideboard aperture and the recess, these were, as I afterwards found, still in existence when I arrived at Adyar, though Mr. Damodar stated to me that the recess had been blocked up. This last statement of Mr. Damodar's I can regard only as a deliberate misrepresentation. Had I known that the recess still existed, I should of course myself have endeavoured to enter, and should at once have discovered the untruth of Mr. Damodar's account of his own entrance. I was afterwards informed by another Theosophist that he regarded the aperture and the recess as quite large enough to be used by a person of ordinary size for the production of the Shrine phenomena, and in the meantime I had tested the accuracy, or rather, inaccuracy of Mr. Damodar's account, by constructing for myself an aperture and a recess smaller than those connected with the Shrine. Dr. Hartmann, in his pamphlet, gave the dimensions of the aperture as 27in. high by 14in. wide, and these dimensions are as nearly as possible correct. This I was subsequently able to ascertain for myself, as the frame had been stowed away in the compound,

and was shown to me by another Theosophist. The recess was alleged by Dr. Hartmann to be about 12in. deep, and about 5ft. high; the depth given is about correct, but the height was more nearly 8ft.—as I found by measurement. I have myself entered a space through a hole the dimensions of both of which were at least an inch less than the dimensions given by Dr. Hartmann. The hole I made for the purpose measured less than 13in. by 26in., and the space into which it led, and in which I stood upright, was less than 11in. in depth. In this space I could with ease lift my hand, manipulate objects, and utilise the position generally in the way demanded for the production of the Shrine phenomena. Mr. Damodar draws attention in his account to his own thinness and leanness, and certainly my own organism is considerably larger than Mr. Damodar's, and I believe also than M. Coulomb's or Babula's.

(2) Mr. Damodar's next assertion, that there was no sliding panel to the frame of the Shrine, we have already seen to be untrue. Had this statement stood alone, however, it could not have been regarded as implicating Mr. Damodar in any falsehood, but would merely have appeared to be a hasty inference from his experience, as the assertion was made before the discovery of the sliding panel by Ananda, as described above.

(3) The careful scrutiny of the Shrine "in every possible way," which he asserts was made in his presence, was never made. In no single instance was the Shrine moved in the least degree from the wall by any of these various witnesses to whom he refers. Not only so, but Mr. Damodar afterwards admitted that he never examined the back of the Shrine himself, and was never present when any such examination was made. This appeared in connection with his statement that Mr. Subba Row and himself "very carefully" examined the Shrine and the wall.

(4) I took an opportunity in Mr. Damodar's presence of questioning Mr. Subba Row concerning this alleged examination. Mr. Subba Row denied that he had ever made any examination of the Shrine. Mr. Damodar then made a similar denial, and both again united in affirming that they had never seen the Shrine removed. Yet this imaginary examination by Mr Subba Row and himself, Mr. Damodar declared in a previous written statement that he well remembered.

(5) and (6) The next marked contradiction in Mr. Damodar's statements, is that when Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund in 1883, the keys of the Shrine and the Occult Room were in his charge, and yet were in the charge of Madame Coulomb. This contradiction is not easily resolved, but an explanation of it can be suggested. The first statement was made on August 19th, 1884, when Mr. Damodar probably deemed it to be of capital import-

ance that he should prove that there was no panel in the Shrine before the middle of September, 1883. The second statement was made on September 19th, 1884, and on September 10th the *Madras Christian College Magazine* had appeared, in which various Blavatsky-Coulomb letters were published. An attempt was then made on the side of the Theosophists to show from circumstantial evidence that these letters must be forgeries. Of these letters, two very important ones referred respectively to the Adyar Saucer and to a Shrine letter received by Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao. In General Morgan's previously published account of the former, he had stated that Madame Coulomb had charge of the keys of the Shrine, and the strength of Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao's case for the genuineness of his phenomenon rested upon his statement that he had asked Madame Coulomb to be allowed to see the Shrine, had managed to do so on the following evening, and that Madame Coulomb could not in the interval have written to Madame Blavatsky, and received a Mahatma letter in time for his visit, which had occurred while Madame Blavatsky was at Ootacamund; and it was impossible to give any consistent account of these incidents without its clearly appearing that Madame Coulomb had charge of the keys during Madame Blavatsky's absence, as was no doubt actually the case. It is difficult to suppose that the first of Mr. Damodar's conflicting written statements was not a wilful and deliberate falsehood.

(7) Mr. Damodar states that the sideboard did not come into existence till January, 1884, when the phenomena were no longer produced in the Shrine. Dr. Hartmann in his pamphlet of September, 1884, wrote that on the suggestion of M. Coulomb "a heavy cupboard was constructed according to his [M. Coulomb's] plan, and under his supervision, in the month of December, 1883, and the said cupboard was placed against the said wall on the said side opposite to that on which hung the 'Shrine';" and in reply to my inquiry he stated that this cupboard [the sideboard] in which M. Coulomb showed the movable back, was against the east side of the wall behind the Shrine during the anniversary [December 27th]. Its presence at that time is also certified to by Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Subba Row, Judge P. Sreenevas Rao, and various other witnesses. (See Appendix IV.) Mr. Damodar therefore is in disagreement with very important Theosophical witnesses, and his own statement looks as if it was made because he realised the cardinal necessity of establishing the falsehood that the sideboard was not in its position during the anniversary celebration of December, 1883 (when Shrine-phenomena occurred), if the allegations made by the Coulombs were to be disproved. I had reason to think that he forced the evidence of several minor witnesses on this point. I found that in more than one instance he had instructed the witness

beforehand as to what replies should be given to my questions. I naturally endeavoured to preclude this preliminary arrangement, and on one occasion, having unexpectedly paid a visit to Mr. Rathnavelu, a witness whose written statement had come into my possession, I was greeted by the significant remark, "Damodar didn't tell me you were coming." This gentleman admitted, though with manifest reluctance, that the sideboard was in its position at the time of the anniversary in 1883. The witnesses who state the contrary are all of them, I think, persons whom there are independent reasons for regarding as unreliable.

These contradictions and false assertions as regards the Shrine, constitute by themselves, I think, a sufficient ground for regarding Mr. Damodar as for our purposes an untrustworthy witness.

Mr. Damodar's "Astral" Journeys.

I shall now proceed to show that there is nothing in the circumstances connected with Mr. Damodar's "astral" journeys which renders it difficult to suppose a pre-arrangement between him and Madame Blavatsky to make it appear that he took them; and even that some of the circumstances suggest a suspicion of such an arrangement. Colonel Olcott is of opinion that such a pre-arrangement was not possible, but I do not think that any one who reads his evidence will agree with him, especially if they take his statements in connection with some additional information which I have since acquired. The following is the evidence given by Colonel Olcott before the Committee as to one of these "astral" journeys:—

At Moradabad, N.W.P., India, being on an official tour from Bombay to Cashmere and back, I was very strongly importuned by a gentleman named Shankar Singh, a Government official, and not then a Theosophist, to undertake the cure of two lads, aged 12 and 14 years respectively, who had each on arriving at the age of 10 years become paralysed. It is known, I believe, to many here that I have the power of healing the sick by the voluntary transference of vitality. I refused in this instance, having already within the previous year done too much of it for my health. The gentleman urged me again. I again refused. He spent, perhaps, 10 or 15 minutes in trying to persuade me and endeavouring to shake my resolution; but, as I still refused, he went to Mr. Damodar, who was travelling with me in his official capacity. Shankar Singh represented the case, and appealed to Mr. Damodar's sympathies, and at last persuaded him to go in the double, or phantasm, to the headquarters of our Society at Madras, and try to enlist the goodwill of Madame Blavatsky.

Mr. Stack: What is the distance of Moradabad from Madras?

Colonel Olcott: The distance, approximately, by telegraph line is, I should say, 2,200 miles.

Mr. Myers: Was it known at headquarters that you were at Moradabad on that day?

COLONEL OLCOTT: It was not known that I was at Moradabad, for, owing to the rapid spread of our movement in India, I, while on a tour, was constantly obliged to interrupt the previously settled programme, and go hither and thither to found new branches. All the elements are against any procurement. To understand the present case, you must know that it is the rule in those Eastern schools of mystical research that the pupils are not permitted to seek intercourse with Teachers other than their own. Hence, Mr. Damodar, who is the pupil—the Sanskrit word is *chela*—of the Mahatma Koot Hoomi, could not himself approach my own Teacher, who is another person. (Colonel Olcott here exhibited the portrait of his own Teacher, but preferred to withhold the name from publicity, though he mentioned it to the Committee.) Madame Blavatsky and I are pupils of the same Master, and hence she was at liberty to communicate with him on this subject. Mr. Damodar, preparatory to taking his aërial flight, then sent Mr. Shankar Singh out of the room and closed the door. A few minutes later he returned to his visitor, who was waiting just outside in the verandah. They came in together to the part of the house where I was sitting with a number of Hindu gentlemen and one European, and told me what had happened in consequence of my refusal to heal the boys. Mr. Damodar said that he had been in the double to headquarters (Madras), and had talked with Madame Blavatsky, who had refused to interfere. But while they were conversing together, both heard a voice, which they recognised as that of my Teacher.

MR. STACK: Not of Mahatma Koot Hoomi?

COLONEL OLCOTT: No, that of my own Teacher. Mahatma Koot Hoomi had nothing to do with me in this affair. While they were talking they heard this voice, which gave a message, and Mr. Damodar remarked that, if I would take pencil and paper, he would dictate from memory the message. I did so.

MR. MYERS: You have the paper?

COLONEL OLCOTT: Yes. Shankar Singh then, in the presence of all, sat down and wrote a brief statement of the circumstances, and it was endorsed by 12 persons, including myself.

* * * * * *

The memorandum states that Mr. Damodar added, after repeating the message which he had received from headquarters, that he had asked Madame Blavatsky to confirm the thing to me by sending a telegram repeating the message or its substance, either to himself or to Shankar Singh. The next morning the expected telegram arrived.

* * * * * *

MR. MYERS: You do not know whether Damodar was seen by Madame Blavatsky?

COLONEL OLCOTT: She told me that she had seen him. At the headquarters resides M. Alexis Coulomb, Librarian of the Society. He was at the time of Damodar's alleged visit engaged at some work in the room adjoining the writing bureau, where Madame Blavatsky was. Suddenly he came into the room and asked Madame Blavatsky where Mr. Damodar was as he had heard his voice in conversation with her.

MR. MYERS: From whom did you hear this?

COLONEL OLCOTT: From M. Coulomb himself. He said, "I have just heard his voice distinctly." Madame Blavatsky said, "He has not returned." M. Coulomb seemed surprised; he thought Mr. Damodar had unexpectedly returned, and could hardly be persuaded that he had not been in the room talking to Madame Blavatsky.

The following is the message:—

Received by D. K. M. and delivered to Colonel Olcott at Moradabad at 4.50 p.m., 10th November, 1883.

"Henry can try the parties* once, leaving strongly mesmerised. Cajapati oil to rub in three times daily to relieve sufferers. Karma cannot be interfered with."

The evidence of various witnesses shown to us by Colonel Olcott establishes the delivery of the message by Mr. Damodar, and the receipt of the genuine corresponding telegram from Madame Blavatsky.

In order to show the little probability there was of any conspiracy between *Mr. Shankar Singh* and Mr. Damodar, Colonel Olcott stated:—

Notice had been put into *The Theosophist* some months before that I was going to make such and such official tours throughout India, and that persons who had sick friends to be treated might, within certain hours on the second day of my visit to each station, bring them to me to be healed. Shankar Singh had written to me long before my coming to Moradabad, asking me to undertake the cure of these boys, and offering to bring them to Madras to me. I refused to see anybody there, but told him that he could bring the boys to me when I came to Moradabad, in the course of my tour; and it was in pursuance of that authorisation that he came and importuned me so. He said, "Here is something that you are, in a way, pledged to undertake," and that is what made him so urgent.

Now in dealing with the real sequence of events, this last statement should be considered first. It appears that before Colonel Olcott started on his tour it was known at headquarters that when he reached Moradabad, Mr. Shankar Singh would expect him to fulfil his promise and mesmerise the boys. But what were the peculiar circumstances which would compel Colonel Olcott to resist the importuning of Mr. Shankar Singh? Before starting on the tour, Colonel Olcott had endeavoured to heal certain sick persons at Poona "by the voluntary transference of vitality." I was informed by a Poona Theosophist that some 200 patients were assembled, and that Colonel Olcott had

* The use of the word "parties" seems to me a suspicious circumstance. Why should this general and rather odd word be used if it were not to cover possible but unforeseen contingencies? The word "boys" would have been shorter and more natural.

striven mesmerically with about 50 of them, the result being *nil*, whereupon the Poona Theosophists drew up a protest against Colonel Olcott's disgracing the Theosophical Society by professing to produce cures in the face of such conspicuous failure. Notwithstanding this, however, Colonel Olcott might have been persuaded by Mr. Shankar Singh to the redeeming of his promise; it was, perhaps, for this reason that a special injunction against his undertaking any cure was issued in the form of a Mahatma document, which reached him through Mr. Damodar.

"October 19th.—Through D. K. M. got an order from the Chohans not to heal any more until further orders."—(*Colonel Olcott's diary*, 1883.)

In this way Colonel Olcott's refusal was ensured. It may be observed that this important fact is not disclosed in Colonel Olcott's deposition. The reason there given by him for his refusal was that he had "already within the previous year done too much of it [healing] for his health." That the order referred to in his diary was the cause of his refusal, whatever the alleged cause of the order itself, is confirmed by Mr. Brown's statement (*Some Experiences in India*, pp. 14, 15)

Colonel Olcott . . . had been ordered by his *Guru* to desist from treating patients until further notice, and, when application was made to him by Mr. Shankar Singh, of Moradabad, on behalf of two orphan children, he was under the necessity of refusing the request. Damodar, however, became interested in the matter, and said that he would ask for permission to be granted for this special case.

But the most crucial point of the incident turned upon Madame Blavatsky's ignorance or knowledge that the travellers were at Moradabad, and in reply to the definite question put by Mr. Myers, Colonel Olcott declared that it was not known at headquarters that he was at Moradabad. Now, some time after my arrival at Adyar, I took the opportunity, when Colonel Olcott was examining his diary, of requesting him to furnish me with the dates on which he visited the various towns included in his tour of 1883. He replied that I could get them from the programme of the tour antecedently published in *The Theosophist*, as the programme had been carried out. To my remark that I had understood from his deposition that the previously settled programme was interrupted, he answered that it had been somewhat altered in consequence of his founding new branches not anticipated, and he then proceeded to quote the dates from his diary. I afterwards compared these with the previously published programme, which bears the date of October 17th. Twelve towns were mentioned in the programme, which extended over the dates from October 22nd to November 18th, and the dates corresponded in every case but one with those of Colonel

Olcott's diary, the discrepancy in that case being probably apparent only, and not real. (According to the diary Cawnpore was reached on November 2nd, and the time given in the programme was 12.24 a.m. on November 3rd.)

It appeared from the programme, then, that Moradabad was to be reached on November 9th, and left on November 11th (and it appears from Colonel Olcott's diary that it *was* reached on November 9th, and left on November 11th), so that it was known long previously at head-quarters that Colonel Olcott would be at Moradabad on November 10th, when the incident occurred, if the programme were not interrupted. Colonel Olcott's reason for asserting that it was not known at head-quarters that he was at Moradabad appears to be that, on the course of his tours generally, he was constantly obliged to interrupt the previously-settled programme, and that therefore, apparently, no certain reliance could be placed on the programme for this particular tour. This at least is the most favourable interpretation of the evidence which he gave before our Committee. I may note, however, that the following special proviso was attached to the list antecedently published in *The Theosophist*: "This programme will be as strictly adhered to as possible. Any change, necessitated by unforeseen contingencies, will be signified by telegram." (Thus in case of change of programme, Mr. Damodar would have had an adequate reason for visiting the telegraph office, and might have sent a warning telegram to Madame Blavatsky without exciting any suspicion.) But the programme, as we have seen above, was closely kept, and the circumstances throughout were admirably adapted for a pre-arrangement.

Yet Colonel Olcott, after asserting that it was not known at head-quarters that he was at Moradabad, and giving a general reason for supposing that it could not be known, adds: "All the elements are against any procurement." His promise to the waiting Shankar Singh, the "Chohans'," emphatic prohibition bestowed upon him by Damodar, the programme which pointed with a steady finger to Moradabad on November 10th, the easy opportunity afforded to Mr. Damodar of guarding against a *fiasco* in case of any unforeseen contingency—"all the elements are against any procurement"!

I may notice here that M. Coulomb has stated to me that he told Colonel Olcott a falsehood at the request of Madame Blavatsky; and I may recall the fact, which we felt bound to mention in our First Report (p. 40, note), that when Colonel Olcott quoted to us M. Coulomb's testimony as that of a trustworthy witness, he was aware that M. Coulomb had been charged with making trap-doors and other apparatus for trick manifestations. Further, when Colonel Olcott received the proof-sheets of his deposition, he must have been aware that the Coulombs had been expelled from the Theosophical Society.

Colonel Olcott also referred to M. Coulomb as a witness in the only other instance of Mr. Damodar's alleged astral journeys which came within the scope of my investigations in India.*

This case Colonel Olcott described as follows :—

"The second case is one of a similar character On the night of the 17th of November, 1883—to wit, seven days later—I was in the train on my way from Meerut, N.W.P., to Lahore. Two persons were in the carriage with me—Mr. Damodar, and another Hindu named Narain Swamy Naidu, who were asleep on their beds at either side of the saloon compartment. I myself was reading a book by the light of the lamp. Damodar had been moving upon his bed from time to time, showing that he was not physically asleep, as the other one was. Presently Damodar came to me and asked what time it was. I told him that it was a few minutes to 6 p.m. He said, 'I have just been to headquarters'—meaning in the double—'and an accident has happened to Madame Blavatsky.' I inquired if it was anything serious. He said that he could not tell me : but she had tripped her foot in the carpet, he thought, and fallen heavily upon her right knee. . . . . I thereupon tore a piece of paper out of some book, and on the spot made a memorandum, which was signed by myself and the second Hindu."

The memorandum runs as follows :—

"In train at Nagul Station, S.P. and D. Railway, at 5.55 p.m., 17/11/83. D. K. M. says he has just been (in Sukshma Sarira) to headquarters. H.P.B. has just tripped in carpet and hurt right knee. Had just taken K. H.'s portrait from Shrine. Heard her mention names of General and Mrs. Morgan. Thinks they are there. Saw nobody but H. P. B., but *felt* several others."

"The next station reached by the train was Saharanpur, where a halt of half-an-hour for supper occurred. I went directly to the telegraph office, and sent a despatch to Madame Blavatsky as near as I can remember in the following words : 'What accident happened at headquarters at about 6 o clock ? Answer to Lahore.'"

To this Madame Blavatsky telegraphed in reply :—

"Nearly broke right leg, tumbling from bishop's chair, dragging Coulomb, frightening Morgans. Damodar startled us."

Colonel Olcott added :—

"The presence of General and Mrs. Morgan at headquarters is confirmed by this telegram, and before that we travellers had no knowledge of their having come down from the Nilgiris."

And to this remark Madame Blavatsky made the following note

* Some remarks on the alleged appearances of Mr. Damodar in London will be found at p. 388.

when she looked over Colonel Olcott's deposition before the Committee in proof :—

"They had just arrived from Nilgherry Hills.—H. P. BLAVATSKY."

It seemed, then, that in this case the testimony of General and Mrs. Morgan might afford very important evidence disproving the possibility of pre-arrangement between Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar. For it might have proved (1) that their presence at headquarters could not be known to Mr. Damodar; and (2) that the accident to Madame Blavatsky was a genuine one, and occurred at the hour named. I learnt, however, from General and Mrs. Morgan that they had been at headquarters a week; that they had been specially summoned thither by a Mahatma letter; and even then were not direct witnesses of the accident. Thus every obstacle to a pre-arrangement vanishes. Indeed, the summoning of the Morgans to headquarters, taken in connection with the way their names are dragged into Madame Blavatsky's telegram, and Madame Blavatsky's own note as to their having just arrived, becomes a very suspicious circumstance.

On the whole, then, when I consider the probability from what we otherwise know of Madame Blavatsky, that any marvel in which she plays a part is spurious rather than genuine; the untruthfulness of Mr. Damodar as displayed in his testimony about the Shrine; the absence of any evidence for these marvellous communications except that of Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar; the circumstances favouring pre-arrangement between the two; and the minor points that I have noted which positively suggest such pre-arrangement; the conclusion that these "astral" journeys were fabulous appears to me to be irresistible. And from this conclusion it further follows that no importance can be attached to any other accounts of apparent marvels which can be explained by attributing them to the agency of Mr. Damodar. The full significance of this inference will be seen later on, when I come to discuss the accounts of Mahatma letters received in Madame Blavatsky's absence.

COLONEL OLCOTT'S EVIDENCE.

I have already dwelt more fully on Mr. Damodar's "astral" journeys than was demanded merely to show how easy was pre-arrangement between Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar. I have done so partly in order to show how worthless Colonel Olcott's statements and inferences are seen to be when placed side by side with the record of events as they actually occurred. I will give another instance of the same unreliability.

In replying to a question put by Mr. Myers in connection with

Colonel Olcott's account of the alleged "astral" form of a Mahatma which appeared to him in New York, Colonel Olcott stated :—

"I never saw a living Hindu before I arrived in London on my way to India. I had had no correspondence with anybody until then, and had no knowledge of any living Hindu who could have visited me in America."

Now Colonel Olcott arrived in London on his way to India in 1879. The Theosophical Society was founded in 1875, and long before this Colonel Olcott had travelled with Hindus from New York to Liverpool. He had made their acquaintance and obtained their portraits, which, as he tells one of them in a letter which I have seen, were hanging on his walls in 1877. During the years 1877 and 1878 he wrote many letters to one of them, Mr. M. T., who became a member of the Theosophical Society, and was intimate with Colonel Olcott in Bombay, but died several years ago.

It seems, then, that Colonel Olcott had been in familiar relations with a Hindu, whom he first met on the passage from America to England, long before he reached London on his way to India, and even long before the "astral figure" in question appeared to him in New York. Moreover, it was M. T. who first began the Theosophical Society in Bombay, antecedent to the removal of headquarters from America to India. What, then, is the explanation of Colonel Olcott's statement to the Committee in his deposition? After it had been pointed out to Colonel Olcott that this statement was quite irreconcilable with fact, as could be easily proved from letters of his which I had examined, he admitted that he had met M. T. long previously, and he showed a remarkably clear recollection of the circumstances—at least of the circumstances which were referred to in his letters to M. T. He accounted for his statement to the Committee by urging that his attention at the time was being specially directed to the possibility of personation of the Mahatma's "astral form," and that he momentarily forgot his experiences* with M. T. and other Hindus. I do not, of course, deny this to be the case, though part of Colonel Olcott's statement in his deposition was quite uncalled for, and appears to me to render his lapse of memory somewhat singular. He seems to have volunteered the odd remark that he "had had no correspondence with anybody until then," whereas he had written numerous letters to M. T. and other Hindus, and had started the Theosophical Society of India by means of such correspondence. And it must be remem-

* It may also be urged in Colonel Olcott's favour that his later experiences with M. T. in Bombay would tend to obscure their earlier relations; but against this again we must place the fact that Colonel Olcott appears from his letters to have regarded these earlier relations as very specially memorable.

bered that Colonel Olcott had the opportunity of correcting his statement in proof, when he could not have been affected by that momentary forgetfulness which overcame him in the presence of the pointed question propounded by Mr. Myers.

Other instances of the unreliability of Colonel Olcott's statements, due either to peculiar lapses of memory or to extreme deficiency in the faculty of observation, will be found on pp. 253, 309, and 365.

I cannot, therefore, regard Colonel Olcott's testimony as of any scientific value. In particular, his testimony to the alleged "astral" appearance in New York proves, in my opinion, no more than that he saw some one in his room, who may have been an ordinary Hindu, or some other person, disguised as a Mahatma for the purpose, and acting for Madame Blavatsky. And the same may be said of all his testimony to apparitions of Mahatmas.

Evidence of Mr. Mohini M. Chatterjee.

The testimony of another gentleman, Mr. Mohini M. Chatterjee, who gave evidence as to the apparitions of Mahatmas, is open to a similar charge of lamentable want of accuracy; but in his case it must be said that he always professed that he had never paid any great attention to phenomena. Moreover, his testimony never appeared to us to be of special importance in the way of establishing the genuineness of the supposed marvellous events related by him, because we never thought it impossible that he might have been deceived. We thought, however, that a further acquaintance with the localities where the apparitions occurred, and the examination of other witnesses, might strengthen his evidence; but the reverse has proved to be the case. (See Appendix VII.) After considering the statements of the other witnesses, and examining the places where the alleged events occurred, the probability that the witnesses were imposed upon becomes much more manifest than appears from a reading of Mr. Mohini's evidence alone. Indeed, Mr. Mohini's description of the spots where the alleged "astral" apparitions appeared is more than merely imperfect; it is almost ludicrous.

For instance, in describing the second alleged "astral" apparition, Mr. Mohini stated :—

> "We were sitting on the ground—on the rock, outside the house in Bombay, when a figure appeared a short distance away."

All the other witnesses appear to be agreed that the party were sitting in the verandah, and not upon what some of them described as the *rock;* they gave this name to the irregular summit of the hill upon the side of which the house (Crow's Nest Bungalow) was situated. There are five terrace-fields or gardens on the side of the hill, and the verandah

where the party were sitting was on the same level as the topmost of these. Above and beyond rose the summit of the hill like a high bank, to which there was easy access from the farther side, not visible from the terrace-garden or the verandah; and it was upon this summit that the "figure" appeared. Having pointed this out to Mr. Mohini in a personal interview, I learn that he attributes the inaccuracy of his account to his defective knowledge of the English language, and that by "rock," he meant the ground of the top terrace just outside the bungalow; the use of the word "rock" in this sense is certainly inappropriate; the spot is elsewhere * described as the "garden of the upper terrace." Mr. Mohini also pleads his defective knowledge of the English language in explanation of certain other inconsistencies—to which I drew his attention—between his statements and those of the other witnesses.

Again, in the case of the first alleged "astral" apparition, we had been led by Mr. Mohini's deposition to suppose that not only himself but the other witnesses had recognised the figure. Being asked whether all agreed that it could not be a real man walking in the way described, Mr. Mohini replied :—

"Certainly. It seemed to us to be the apparition of the original of the portrait in Colonel Olcott's room, and which is associated with one of the Mahatmas."

In reply to Mr. Stack's question, whether he could distinguish the features, Mr. Mohini replied : "Oh, yes, and the dress, the turban, and everything," but afterwards, in reply to Mr. Gurney's question whether, if he had seen the face alone, he would have recognised it, he replied that he did not know, that it was the whole thing taken together which produced on him the impression that it was the apparition of the original of the portrait in Colonel Olcott's room.

Now, not one of the other witnesses whom I examined recognised the features; they could not even tell whether the figure had a beard or not, with the exception of Mr. Ghosal, who "saw something like a beard, but not very distinctly."

Nor are the witnesses by any means agreed about other points to which Mr. Mohini refers. For instance, Mr. Mohini said the figure "seemed to melt away." Mr. Ghosal said, "It appeared to me, and a few of those present were of the same opinion, that the figure walked over one of the trees and suddenly disappeared." Mr. Mohini now explains that when he said the figure *seemed to melt away*, he meant merely that the figure disappeared. [In his deposition before the Committee Mr. Mohini said that the figure disappeared, and when Mr.

* "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," p. 99.

Myers asked, "In what way did it disappear?" Mr. Mohini replied, "It seemed to melt away."] Another witness described the figure as walking to and fro below the balcony on the third terrace field, and appeared to think it could not have been an ordinary person, because it would have been difficult for a man to walk freely in that place, which he alleged to be full of thorny trees. But I found when I inspected the old headquarters in Bombay that this description also was inaccurate, and that it was perfectly easy for any one, even though disguised in flowing robes, to walk freely over any of the terraces. And I took care to ascertain that the terraces had not been altered in the interval.

In short, after my examination of the locality, I was left without any doubt that the appearances might have been well produced by M. Coulomb in disguise. I have seen M. Coulomb disguised as a Mahatma, and can understand that the figure may have been very impressive. A dummy head (with shoulders), like that of a Hindu, with beard, &c. and fehta, is worn on the top of the head of the person disguised. A long flowing muslin garment falls down in front, and by holding the folds very slightly apart, the wearer is enabled to see, and to speak also, if necessary. I do not think it in the least degree likely that any of the witnesses in the above cases would have penetrated this disguise had the figure been even much nearer than it was, and the light much better.

I was unable to estimate the precise distance of the figure in the second case, but in the first case the figure must, from an examination of the locality, have been certainly more than 40 yards from the spectators. We can hardly attach any importance to the supposed recognition, and from a portrait only, of a figure at this distance, even in bright moonlight. Moreover, a good view of the figure must have been almost impossible in consequence of the trees and shrubs in the neighbourhood.

The third case mentioned by Mr. Mohini, that of an alleged "astral" apparition at Adyar, possesses, if possible, still less evidential value than the foregoing, especially after Mr. Mohini's later accounts to myself. It appears from Mr. Mohini's deposition that the figure disappeared on one side of the balcony * [terrace], at the edge of the balcony, above a flight of steps.

Mr. Mohini: After a while I said that as I should not see him for a long time, on account of my going to Europe, I begged he would leave some tangible mark of his visit. The figure then raised his hands and seemed to throw something at us. The next moment we found a shower of roses

* This is the flat roof above the ground floor of the bungalow, marked on the Plan as *Terrace*. Only a portion of it is represented within the limits of the Plan.

falling over us in the room—roses of a kind that could not have been procured on the premises. We requested the figure to disappear from that side of the balcony where there was no exit. There was a tree on the other side, and it was in order to prevent all suspicion that it might be something that had got down the tree, or anything of that kind, that we requested him to disappear from the side where there was no exit. The figure went over to that spot and then disappeared.

MR. MYERS: You saw its disappearance?

MR. MOHINI: Oh yes, it passed us slowly until it came to the edge of the balcony, and then it was not to be seen any more.

MR. MYERS: The disappearance being sudden?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. GURNEY: Was the height of the balcony such that any one could have jumped down from it?

MR. MOHINI: The height was 15 or 20 feet, and, moreover, there were people downstairs and all over the house, so that it would have been impossible for a person to have jumped down without being noticed. Just below the balcony there is an open lawn. There were several persons looking at the moment, and my own idea is that it would have been perfectly impossible for a person to have jumped down.

MR. STACK: Why?

MR. MOHINI: There is a small flight of steps just below the balcony, and if a man had jumped from the balcony he must have fallen upon the steps and broken his legs. When the figure passed and re-passed us we heard nothing of any footsteps. Besides myself, Damodar and Madame Blavatsky were in the room at the time.

Mr. Damodar, whom I questioned, declared that the figure disappeared at a spot which he pointed out to me; this spot was not near the edge of the balcony, and was just opposite and close to the door of the Occult Room which opens on the balcony. (See Plan.) I thought, at the time, that the disagreement between this account and Mr. Mohini's might be due to a desire on Mr. Damodar's part to convince me that Madame Coulomb was not acquainted with the circumstances of the case.

Mr. Mohini, in the later account which he gave to me in our first interview after my return from India, described the figure as disappearing at a spot which to a great extent approximates to that pointed out by Mr. Damodar, but is nevertheless not quite in agreement; and I feel bound to say, after careful consideration, that had it been in complete agreement, Mr. Mohini's later account would have involved a clear and absolute stultification of his earlier one; and even as it is, Mr. Mohini's two accounts are fundamentally at variance. Instead of the figure's disappearing, as was stated in his original deposition, *on one side of the balcony* and *above a flight of steps*, the figure is now made to disappear at a spot which should be described rather as the *front of the balcony*, and where there were *no steps below*. I cannot attribute

any evidential value to these conflicting statements: nor does the case seem to me improved by the explanation given to me by Mr. Mohini in our last interview that he had not examined the place to see whether there were any steps below, and that it was only when the question was put by Mr. Stack as to why it was impossible for the figure to have jumped down [Mr. Mohini having made the statement, and Mr. Stack having asked *why?*] that he thought he remembered there were steps under the balcony in that spot (*i.e.*, the spot described in his later account). In Mr. Mohini's earlier account the point of disappearance of the figure was determined by the side of the balcony, the position of the tree on the other side, the edge of the balcony, and the flight of steps. Mr. Mohini's later account contradicts his earlier one in three out of these four determining conditions.

I may now say that the passage quoted above from Mr. Mohini's deposition to the Committee, which was made before anything was known here publicly of the charges brought by the Coulombs, agrees entirely, so far as it goes, both as to the movements of the figure and as to the place of its disappearance, with the account furnished to me *independently* (that is, without any opportunity, as I believe, of knowing what Mr. Mohini had said) by Madame Coulomb, who alleges that she acted as the Mahatma on this occasion. The spot where she described herself as finally escaping from view was at the edge of the balcony on one side of the balcony; a flight of steps was just below, and a tree was near the other side of the balcony. Her account was that, after disguising herself as a Mahatma in the bath-room—now Mr. Damodar's room (see Plan)—she passed through the cupboard with the secret double back into the Occult Room, and thence through the door leading out upon the terrace, where she passed along close to the wall in a stooping attitude until she came opposite the middle window of the sitting-room, when she slowly rose to full height (the dummy head and shoulders being added to her own stature). The spectators in the room, she declared, saluted with profound respect. She was provided, she said, with flowers, which were concealed in the folds of her muslin robe, and which she threw over Mr. Mohini; and after walking up and down on the terrace several times, she finally passed away at the east side of the balcony, departing into the new room, which was then in process of construction, and thence by the north side of the terrace back into the bath-room. She alleged also that she had taken off her shoes in order to move silently, and that it was so dark that she hurt her feet against some nails on the terrace; she said that she had received the flowers that she had thrown over Mr. Mohini from a certain Madame de Wailly, dressmaker, who had since left Madras and is now living in Colombo, in Ceylon. I

called upon Madame de Wailly in Colombo, and found that she recollected having received several bunches of flowers near the beginning of 1884, and having given some to Madame Coulomb. There was one slight difference, however, between the statement of Madame Coulomb and that of Madame de Wailly. The former was under the impression that the flowers given to her by Madame de Wailly had come from Bangalore, a hill station, whereas Madame de Wailly was inclined to think that she had received them from a friend living on the outskirts of Madras, who had presented her with a bouquet of magnificent roses. She believed that it was these roses which she had given to Madame Coulomb.

Madame Coulomb stated that the night was dark, and in reply to my special inquiry, said that there was no moonlight. Mr. Mohini, however, had said in reply to a question put by Mr. Myers, that there was moonlight on the balcony. On reference to the calendar it appears that there was no moonlight. Mr. Mohini now conjectures that he may have mistaken the "fading lamp-light" on the limit of the balcony for moonlight.

I do not myself feel quite certain about the existence of much lamp-light on the balcony; but it may be desirable to add here that, in any case, large portions of the terrace must have remained in darkness, and that although the reader of Mr. Mohini's evidence given to the Committee might almost suppose that the only exit from the terrace was by means of a "tree, or anything of that kind," there are various ways in which an ordinary person disguised might have made his escape. The spectators were in the sitting-room looking from the middle window, and a reference to the Plan will show that certain portions of the terrace on both sides, east and west, were entirely hidden from their observation. The terrace might have been easily left not only by the help of trees, but by proceeding in the direction of the new room, or by mounting the roof,—not to speak of the door of the Occult Room, and the double-backed cupboard; or, considering that it was 11 p.m., and that there was no moonlight, by a ladder from the terrace to the ground. Indeed, I have myself often, as a lad, performed a greater "drop" feat than would be required for leaving the terrace without the help even of a ladder.

I ought to mention that Mr. Mohini had not the opportunity of seeing the proof-sheets of his deposition and correcting any errors that might have been made in our First Report. On June 1st, 1885, he wrote to Mr. Myers remarking on this fact, and stating that he had been looking over the record of his testimony given before the Committee, and he makes a correction in one particular. I need hardly say that I have not used the statement which Mr. Mohini thus corrects in my criticism of Mr. Mohini's evidence. Mr. Mohini, however, omitted to

correct another error, the discovery of which contributes to destroy the interest of another marvel described by him (see Appendix VII.); namely, the case of an alleged phenomenal letter which appeared on the table of Mr. Keightley, a member of the Theosophical Society, in Paris, and which referred to the "*friends*" of Mr. Mohini. The question was asked by Mr. Myers :—

"Could the letter have been written some days before, and the allusion as to taking your friends into the country inserted afterwards?"

Mr. Mohini is represented in the deposition as replying :—

"No, because Mr. Keightley and Mr. Oakley only came to the house by accident that morning."

Mr. Oakley has told me that he went frequently to the Paris apartments and might be expected to call. Mr. Keightley has told me that he was unaware that Mr. Oakley was even in Paris, and that Mr. Oakley had called unexpectedly. But both Mr. Keightley and Mr. Oakley are agreed that Mr. Keightley himself was living in the rooms at the time with Mr. Mohini. After this discrepancy had been pointed out, Mr. Mohini declared that the reply he is represented as giving he did not give, and that the shorthand reporter, who took down the evidence given before the Committee, must have made a mistake. But the reader may himself compare Mr. Mohini's evidence with that of the other witnesses (see Appendix VII.), and he will see how much more marvellous the incidents in question have become under the constructive and destructive action of Mr. Mohini's memory. For example, in the case just referred to, of the letter found on Mr. Keightley's table, it would appear from Mr. Mohini's account that he had gone with Mr. Keightley into Mr. Oakley's room, that Mr. Oakley and Babula were together, and that both Mr. Mohini and Babula were in Mr. Keightley's sight while the latter was absent from his room. Under these circumstances it was not easy to see who could have placed the letter on the table in the interval; but when we find that, according to Mr. Oakley and Mr. Keightley, Mr. Mohini did not enter Mr. Oakley's room at all, that Babula was not with Mr. Oakley, that there was probably a short interval of time during which both Mr. Mohini and Babula were out of the sight of Mr. Keightley, and also of Mr. Oakley, the incident ceases to present any difficulty in the way of an ordinary explanation.

Remaining Evidence for Appearances of Mahatmas.

I need not here say much on the other alleged appearances of Mahatmas, in either their ordinary physical or their "astral" bodies. A confederate in disguise is generally an easy and sufficient explanation of them. I have, I think, shown, in Appendix VIII., that there is no real

difficulty in applying this explanation even to the case of Mr. Ramaswamier, whose account of his experience has made so much impression on Mr. Sinnett. I have dealt similarly with other appearances in Appendices IX. and X. The statements in Mr. Brown's pamphlet, *Some Experiences in India*, concerning which he was unwilling to give me any further details, need not detain us long. The only time he saw "Mahatma Koot Hoomi" in broad daylight, the figure was at a distance. Mr. Brown says: "On the morning of the 20th he came to my tent, and said, 'Now you see me before you in the flesh; look and assure yourself that it is I,' and left a letter of instructions and silk handkerchief, both of which are now in my possession." This incident happened, it appears, at about 2 a.m., and Mr. Brown's particular reason for thinking the figure was "Koot Hoomi" seemed to be only that the letter given to him was in the same handwriting as that of letters "phenomenally" received at headquarters from "Koot Hoomi".

The chief persons who testify from personal experience to the actual existence of the Brotherhood in Thibet are (besides Madame Blavatsky) Mr. Damodar and Mr. Babajee Dharbagiri Nath. Of the value of Mr. Damodar's evidence I have already said enough. With regard to Mr. Babajee D. Nath, it is shown in Appendix I. that he has involved himself in the attempted attack by Madame Blavatsky on the "Sassoon Telegram" letter, and a reference to Appendix IV. will show that he has made statements which I cannot but regard as wilfully false concerning matters connected with the Shrine. Again, he stated to me that he had lived with the Brothers only during certain months out of a specific period of *two* years which immediately followed his leaving, in 1878, the position of private secretary to a deputy-collector in the Kurnool district, although he had previously stated to Mr. Sinnett ("The Occult World," pp. 154, 155, Fourth Edition) that he had been living with Koot Hoomi for *ten* years. Further, it was, he said, only a few months after the lapse of these two years that he joined the Theosophical Society in Bombay, and thenceforward he has been continuously at the headquarters of the Society, except when he paid two visits to the North, one to Thibet, and the other to the borders of Thibet. Now, from this account it is clear that Mr. Babajee must have joined the Theosophical Society in Bombay at least as early as 1881, and remained some time at the headquarters in that year. But he does not seem to have made his first appearance as Babajee Dharbagiri Nath until towards the end of 1882, at about which time he visited Mr. Sinnett. When, later, he joined the headquarters of the Society, he was recognised by Theosophists as Gwala K. Deb, who had been there before. The assertion made by Madame Coulomb in her pamphlet, * and

* "Some Account of my Intercourse with Madame Blavatsky," pp. 48-50.

repeated more explicitly to myself, that Mr. Babajee D. Nath is the same person who was previously known in the headquarters at Bombay as Gwala K. Deb, is confirmed by the testimony of Mr. A. O. Hume, Mr. Tookaram Tatya, Mr. Bal Nilaji Pitale, and Mr. Ezekiel; and it seems to be the only explanation of the above statements made to me by Mr. Babajee himself. Mr. Babajee indeed affirms that he never passed under the name of Gwala K. Deb, but it is by no means likely that all these witnesses should mistake another person for Mr. Babajee, for he is very small, and his voice has a very peculiar *timbre*. Moreover, he seems to have no objection to assuming different characters, since at this very time he represents two persons in the last Official Annual Report issued by the Theosophical Society; that is to say, he appears under two different names. On p. 8 he appears as the delegate of the Vizianagram Branch under the name of *Babajee D. Nath* (otherwise written on pp. 83, 117, 120, as *Mr. Dharbagiri Nath*, in connection with the Anniversary Hall Committee), and on p. 131—Appendix A. of the Theosophical Society's Report—he appears as one of the Assistant Recording Secretaries under the name of *S. Krishnaswami*. Yet Babajee Dharbagiri Nath is the same person as S. Krishnaswami, the latter being Mr. Babajee's real name, according to his own account to myself. I think that all will agree that the mere assertion of a person who has made false and contradictory statements, and has appeared under different *aliases*, is insufficient to prove him "the Chela of Koot Hoomi that he declares himself to be," though it is difficult to avoid the conclusion that "if he is anything else," to use Mr. Sinnett's words, "he, of course, must be a false witness, invented to prop up Madame Blavatsky's vast imposture." Additional evidence of this will be found in Part II. I may add that Mr. Babajee, if I may judge from the account (perhaps not very reliable) which he has given me of his changeful life, appears to be almost isolated and entirely homeless apart from the Theosophical Society, and is, I think, eagerly ready, out of gratitude for sheltering kindness received from Madame Blavatsky, to dispense on her behalf most freely with the truth.

Rama Sourindro Gargya Deva, from whose alleged letter to Madame Blavatsky, asserting his intimacy with the Masters (published in *The Theosophist* for December, 1883), an extract was quoted in our First Report, cannot be regarded as an independent witness; seeing that his own existence is even more problematical than that of the Mahatmas, the only evidence for it being the statement of Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Babajee, and Mr. Damodar, that they know him. And Mr. Mirza Moorad Alee Beg, whose assertions (published in *The Theosophist* for August, 1881) committed him, as we thought, nearly as fully as Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar are committed, to the existence and powers of the Mahatmas, turns out according to the statements

of various Theosophists, to be altogether untrustworthy and to have shown evident marks of insanity. He is said to have practised Black Magic [!] before his connection with the Theosophical Society, which he left long ago, and became a Roman Catholic; he is now a Mussulman. I must conclude, then, that the strongest apparent evidence for the existence of the Mahatmas comes to nothing at all.

Alleged Precipitated Writing, &c.

I now pass to the consideration of alleged phenomenal occurrences other than apparitions, especially those connected with phenomenal letters and the alleged precipitated writing.

I will first draw attention to the statement made by both Mr. Damodar and Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao, that Shrine phenomena occurred even after Madame Blavatsky left Madras, and therefore after the hole in the party wall had been blocked up, according to M. Coulomb's own statements.

In reply to my inquiries it was admitted by Mr. Damodar and Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao, that the only instances of these later Shrine phenomena are the two given in Appendix XI. It will be noticed by the reader, on reference to the Appendix, that in the second case, where a letter apparently requiring a specific reply is placed in the Shrine, a considerable interval elapses, and is probably necessary, before the answer appears. In the first case no letter is placed in the Shrine, no specific communication is required, and a Shrine letter can be, and is, produced without delay. It will be obvious to the reader what part Mr. Damodar may have played in the proceedings; and that for these particular phenomena an opening in the back of the Shrine would have been unnecessary.

It had been alleged, indeed, that when Madame Blavatsky was at Madras, instantaneous replies to mental queries had been found in the Shrine, that envelopes containing questions were returned absolutely intact to the senders, and that when they were opened replies were found within in the handwriting of a Mahatma. After numerous inquiries I found that in all the cases I could hear of, the mental query was such as might easily have been anticipated by Madame Blavatsky; indeed, the query generally was whether the questioner would meet with any success in his endeavour to become a pupil of the Mahatma, and the answer was frequently of the indefinite and oracular sort. In some cases the envelope inserted in the Shrine was one which had been previously sent to headquarters for that purpose, so that the envelope might have been opened and the answer written therein before it was placed in the Shrine at all. Where sufficient care was taken in the preparation of the inquiry, either no specific answer was

given or the answer was delayed. Mr. Ezekiel, Theosophist of Poona, has described to me the details of a case where he received a Mahatma communication intended to be a reply to a specific question which he had asked. These details entirely corroborate my conclusion concerning Madame Blavatsky, but Mr. Ezekiel is unwilling that they should be published; he has given me permission, however, to state that the following passage which occurs in Madame Coulomb's pamphlet (p. 73) is quite justified.

"There is another phenomenon which I must mention, because it took place in the presence of Mr. Ezekiel, whom I shall have to mention again later. At the time of the Anniversary, among the many delegates that came on this occasion was the above gentleman. He was in company with others in Madame's apartment when a letter fell from the ceiling. Mr. Ezekiel formed the natural supposition that it must have been pulled down by some contrivance, so he went and unburdened his heart to several Fellows of the Society, giving this as a great secret. However, although a secret, it came to Madame's ears and she immediately asked my husband to take out the screw-rings through which the string had passed, and stop the holes with a little paint to remove all traces; this done, she called some one to show how ridiculous the accusation had been."

This letter fell in Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room, and was probably arranged in the same way as the "phenomenal" letter prepared for me by the Coulombs, which was described in the April number of the *Journal*, in the words of a letter written by me from India, as follows:—

Madras, January 9th, 1885.

This morning I called upon the Coulombs, who are living at the house of Mrs. Dyer in St. Thomé. I conversed a short time with M. Coulomb before Madame Coulomb appeared. In the course of the conversation that followed I remarked, concerning certain cases of premonition, that I had no satisfactory theory at present to account for them. At this moment something white appeared, touching my hair, and fell on the floor. It was a letter. I picked it up. It was addressed to myself. M. and Madame Coulomb were sitting near me and in front of me. I had observed no motion on their part which could account for the appearance of the letter. Examining the ceiling as I stood I could detect no flaw; it appeared intact. On opening the letter, I found it referred to the conversation which had just taken place. I transcribe the words:—

"Because the existing cause of to-day foretells the effect of to-morrow —a bud assures us beforehand the full-blown rose of to-morrow; on seeing fine field of corn in which are buried eggs of locusts, we are to foresee that that corn will never enter the granary; by the appearance of consumptive father and scrofulous mother a sickly child can be foretold. Now all these causes, which bring to us these effects, have in their turn their effects them-

selves, and so, *ad infinitum;* and as nothing is lost in Nature, but remains impressed in the *akasa*, so the acute perception of the seer beginning at the source arrives at the result with exactitude.

"THE NEW ADEPT, COLUMBUS."

M. Coulomb then described the origin of the letter.

A large beam supported the ceiling, and resting on this, at right angles to it, was a series of small beams with spaces between them. These spaces were filled with blocks of wood, with mortar to keep them in place. Part of this mortar had been scraped out on the top of the large beam and between two smaller ones, so that a letter could be inserted and lie flat on the top of the large beam. Round the letter was twice passed a piece of thread of the same colour as the ceiling. One end of the thread remained loose on the letter, the other end was in the hand of a person outside the room. The thread ran from the letter, close to the ceiling, passed outside and hung down. I was sitting under the main beam. The subject of conversation was led up to, and at the given signal (a call to the dog) the confederate in the verandah beyond pulled the thread and the letter fell. The confederate drew the thread entirely away and left the spot. The crevice for the letter might, in a few moments, have been stopped up and covered with dust, so that no aperture whatever appeared in the neighbourhood of the ceiling.

The ceiling of Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room was constructed in the same way as the one here described, and would, therefore, be suited for the occurrence of similar phenomena. Besides the letter received by Mr. Ezekiel, the letter mentioned in Appendix V. also fell in this room. I examined the beam, and observed a crevice well suited for the production of the phenomenon; this crevice was still in existence when I left Madras.

In connection with phenomenal incidents various envelopes have been shown to me by Theosophists which were supposed to have been completely fastened, but from all of these the contents might have been in my opinion even more easily abstracted than from the sealed envelope described in detail in Appendix V., which presented clear traces of having been surreptitiously opened by the withdrawal of the right flap, which had just escaped being securely held, if held at all, by the wax. In the case of one large sealed envelope shown to me by a prominent native Theosophist, the wax held the upper and lower flaps only, and hardly came within a quarter of an inch of the side flaps; the crumpling suggested that the right flap here also had been withdrawn.

After Madame Blavatsky's departure for Europe the Mahatma communications—with the two exceptions already mentioned—were found, not in the Shrine, but in various other places about the house, chiefly the office-room. The accounts of many cases of this kind were published in our First Report. I made careful inquiries concerning

all of them, and found that in every instance the letter might have been easily placed by Mr. Damodar.

In one case mentioned by Mr. Babajee, where he found a letter upon his desk in the office-room, he wrote :—

"On approaching my desk, I saw *distinctly* an envelope and paper *forming* themselves." In his account to me, however, he says only that "the letter appeared to increase in size as he approached his desk"!

There are, I think, only two instances among those given in our First Report, where the *modus operandi*, if Mr. Damodar were the agent, will not be obvious, and I shall briefly describe these.

Our evidence for them is an account written by Mr. Babajee and forwarded through Dr. Hartmann to Mr. Myers for the Committee, and after what I have said as to the value of Mr. Babajee's evidence, it may seem unnecessary to investigate them further. Still, as they seem to me—the second especially—to form an interesting sample of the kind of evidence which is apparently thought at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society to be valuable, I will give them. The first is as follows :—

"On or about the 1st August, 1884, I was examining whether the wrappers addressed to subscribers (to *The Theosophist*) were correct, sitting in the room next to our office-room ; on a large camp table were spread the addressed wrappers. With some noise fell a heavy packet (with a covering letter to me) on the wrappers. The letter contained some wholesome and timely advice to me, and directed me to hand over the packet to Mr. St. George Lane-Fox. I accordingly gave it, and found that in the packet was a Chinese envelope and letter addressed both to Dr. F. Hartmann and to Mr. Lane-Fox. When the packet fell on my table, there was nobody then in the room or in the office-room. I was alone. The letter and contents were in the well-known handwritings of Mahatma Koot Hoomi and of B.D.S."

I found from Mr. Babajee that Mr. Damodar was reclining on a couch outside the office-room, and adjoining its door. Mr. Babajee was sitting with his back turned partly towards the direction of the spot occupied by Mr. Damodar, in such a position that no movement of Mr. Damodar's need have been observed by him. The two rooms are divided by a partition about seven feet high, the lower part o which is zinc, the upper part being formed of wire trellis-work. The rooms are twice as high as the partition. An object might easily be thrown from the office-room entrance so as to fall on the table.

The other case is the following :—

"M. R. Ry. G. Sreenivas Row Garu, Sule Registrar of Cumbum, Kurnool District, India, wrote a letter, dated 15th January, 1884, to the address of Damodar, who gave it to me for reply. Early in the morning, at 7 a.m., I arranged all the papers to be answered on my desk, with which

nobody ever interferes. I put this letter of Sreenivas Row in a prominent place on the table, and then after locking the office-room and taking the key with myself, I went out to take a bath; at about 8 a.m. I returned and opened the office door; on approaching my table, what do I find? Endorsement on Sreenivas Row's letter in blue pencil, in the handwriting of Mahatma K.H., ordering me to answer the letter. There is not the least possibility of doubt in this case."

After reading this, what was my surprise to find that the room which I have just described, next to the office-room, and divided from it only by the partition reaching half-way to the ceiling, was never locked, and that there is no lock to the door, while a child might climb from the table over the partition into the office-room! Truly "there is not the least possibility of doubt in this case" that the phenomenon might have been produced by normal means.

Various other letter-phenomena which were mentioned in our First Report, had occurred at the headquarters in Bombay. Several letters had fallen in the guest-chamber, which adjoined Madame Blavatsky's bedroom, in Crow's Nest Bungalow. Among these were the phenomena recounted by Professor Smith, Mr. Shroff, and Mr. Bal Nilaji Pitale (see "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy"), and that described by Mr. Sinnett in "The Occult World," fourth edition, p. 120. The ceiling of this room is boarded, not plastered; and the remark which we made in our First Report, that all accounts of letters falling in such places must be regarded with suspicion, I found to be quite justified. In Mr. Shroff's account it is stated that the wooden ceiling of the room was perfectly intact. Mr. Shroff informed me that the account was drawn up in the first instance by himself, and that afterwards some passages were added and alterations made at the suggestion of others present. He did not appear to have made any "examination"; he said that he had "looked up at the ceiling," that he had been positive beforehand about the genuineness of the phenomena, and that he did not care to scrutinise with the eye of a critic.

M. Coulomb asserted, before I went to Bombay, that in a garret above this room a trap was fixed with a string running from it into another room. The letter was placed in the trap just above one of the interstices between the boards of the ceiling, and on a given signal, the string was pulled and the letter fell. On one occasion, when Judge Gadgill was present, the trap would not work, and M. Coulomb had himself ascended the garret and pushed the letter down. He described the garret particularly, the entrance to which is through a trap-door in the ceiling of Madame Blavatsky's bedroom. The trap, he asserted, was taken away when Judge Gadgill desired to inspect the garret. The case where Judge Gadgill was present is mentioned by

Colonel Olcott in his deposition, but as there given, is likely to be very misleading. He said :—

"Judge Gadgill, and one or two others, knowing that they had to deal with some very difficult sceptics at Baroda, who would demand if they had taken the precaution to examine the premises and see if the letter could have been delivered by any mechanical device, thereupon made a search of the place, and even got a ladder and went upon the tiled roof. He will tell you that the examination made then, and a subsequent and more careful one, which was made in my own presence and with my assistance—for I held the ladder—left no ground for suspicion of bad faith."

Now the tiled roof spoken of was above the garret, and there is not the slightest trace of any suspicious circumstance discoverable from there. Moreover, part of the hill very closely adjoins the bungalow, so that it is but a short step from the bank to the tiled roof, and to speak of getting a ladder and going upon the tiled roof is quite as absurd as to speak of getting a ladder and going upon the sofa.

According to M. Coulomb, when Mr. Gadgill requested to examine the garret Madame Blavatsky ordered the only available ladder to be hidden, so that Mr. Gadgill was unable to examine the garret at the time; and before he made his "subsequent and more careful" examination, having obtained a ladder for the purpose, M. Coulomb had removed the trap, filled the interstices with bits of bamboo and stick and dust, and endeavoured to make the garret look as though it had been entirely undisturbed for a long time.

After my return from Bombay, Colonel Olcott gave me another account of the incident,* in which he said that he was not at Bombay when the letter fell; that he was told that Judge Gadgill went on the tiled roof; that it was a week or so later when Judge Gadgill examined the garret; that he (Colonel Olcott) held the ladder to steady it, as it was placed on a table to enable the trap-door to be reached, and that he told Judge Gadgill to first look at the joinings of the boards and see if they were not choked with cobwebs, dust, &c., thus showing that they

* Another statement made by Colonel Olcott in his deposition concerning the above incident is worthy of remark. He said: "One of those present suddenly called attention to a collection of vapour that had that instant appeared in the air up towards the corner of the room; and all present, looking, saw this take the form of a letter." The letter which fell was addressed, "To Tookaram and Others," according to the account given to me by Mr. Tookaram Tatya himself ("merchant and commission-agent, and the active member working at the Homœopathic Charitable Dispensary established at Bombay under the auspices of the Theosophical Society, and practising mesmerism in its curative branch both at home and at the dispensary"). Concerning the fal of the letter, Mr. Tookaram states: "The grandson of Iyalu Naidu said he saw a flash of light near the ceiling, which contracted into a letter, and fell fluttering on the floor. I saw the letter just as it struck the floor."

How a little dust can blind one's eyes !

could not have been used for pushing letters through. I neglected to ask Colonel Olcott whether this suggestion originated from himself or from Madame Blavatsky.

I examined carefully, when I was at Bombay, the room and the garret, the entrance to which is through a trap-door in the ceiling of what was Madame Blavatsky's bedroom. The appearance of the garret corresponded so accurately with M. Coulomb's detailed description as to convince me that he was familiar with it. Some of the interstices in the ceiling were open; others had evidently been carefully filled with bits of stick and dust, and I dropped several pieces of bamboo which I found in the garret, and which were more than a quarter of an inch thick, through one of the interstices. A copy of our *Proceedings* might easily have been pushed through, and interstices were plainly visible in the ceiling from below. I was unfortunately unable to see Judge Gadgill himself, but after my examination of the room I felt that he could probably have added little important evidence.

There were also instances of objects falling in a room roofed by a ceiling-cloth, which was occupied by Colonel Olcott in another house; one of these (from "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy") was given in our First Report. I did not see this room, but Colonel Olcott, in reply to my inquiries, informed me that no examination of the ceiling-cloth was made, so that Madame Coulomb's statement that the card which came fluttering down was pushed from above through a slit made in the ceiling-cloth is very probably correct.

But cases had occurred, not only of the appearance, but of the disappearance of letters. Chief among these was the disappearance of the packet in the *Vega* case. This incident is described in "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy." It was alleged that a letter was conveyed by a Mahatma from Mr. Eglinton on the steamship *Vega*, between Colombo and Aden, to Madame Blavatsky at Bombay, and again from Bombay to Mrs. Gordon at Howrah. It is clear from the account of this occurrence, as we pointed out in our First Report, that there was no proof whatever of identity between the letter received at Bombay and that shown on the *Vega*. The fall of the letter in Bombay is somewhat strangely described in the following certificate. (See "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy.")

"At 8 p.m. (Bombay time), on Friday, the 24th March, 1882, we were spending our time with Madame Blavatsky in the room as the wind was blowing powerfully outside. Madame told us that she felt that something would occur. The whole party, consisting of 7 persons, then adjourned on the terrace, and within a few minutes after our being there we saw a letter drop as if from under the roof above. Some of us saw the letter coming slanting from one direction and drop quite opposite to where it came from. The letter, on being opened, was found to contain a closed envelope

adto the dress of Mrs. Gordon, Howrah; on the reverse side were three crosses ††† in pencil. The envelope was of bluish colour and thin. The open letter written in red pencil contained certain instructions to Madame Blavatsky, and accordingly she put the envelope, together with three visiting cards, and strung them all with a blue thread of silk and put the packet as directed on a bookcase, and within 5 minutes after it was put there it evaporated, to our no small surprise.

"K. M. SHROFF,
"*Vice-President Bombay T. S.*
"GWALA K. DEB, F.T.S.
"DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR, F.T.S.
"MARTANDREW B. NAGNATH, F.T.S.
"DORAB H. BHARUCHA, F.T.S.
"BHAVANI SHANKAR, F.T.S."

"The packet was taken away from the bookcase at 21 minutes past 8 p.m. (9, Madras time). A letter from Mr. Eglinton to myself was also received by me. In it he confesses to a firm belief in the 'Brothers.' Speaks of Koot Hoomi having visited him two nights ago (the 22nd) on the *Vega*, &c.

"H. P. BLAVATSKY."

Mr. Martandrao B. Nagnath and Mr. Bhavani Shankar, whom I questioned at Madras, could give but little additional information. Mr. Martandrao said that he first saw the letter in the air at about 10 feet from the floor. Mr. Bhavani (concerning whom see p. 261 and Appendix IX.) said that he first saw the letter as it struck the floor of the verandah, that it contained an enclosure to Madame Blavatsky beginning "Old woman get up," and ordering her to get some cards of her own, and sew them up with the letter with green thread, and put the packet on the top of a large cupboard; that the packet was placed there as directed, and in about one minute afterwards it had disappeared. Mr. Shroff, whom I saw in Bombay, was unable at first to recollect the incident at all, and when he did recollect it, was unable to give me any details.

Mr. Dorab H. Bharucha, medical student, whom I also saw in Bombay, said, in reply to my inquiries, that he saw the letter in the air, that when he first saw the letter it was close to the branches of a neighbouring tree, and that it came in such a way that it might have been thrown from the tree. It should be noticed that no opportunity was given to any of the witnesses to place any test marks on the packet.*

* It is the more important to notice this, because in describing the incident in "The Occult World," 4th ed., p. 132, Mr. Sinnett says the cards were "written on by them at the time," an expression which certainly suggests that some one besides Madame Blavatsky had written on them. That this was not the case may be inferred from the above accounts. Moreover, Mrs. Gordon describes the writing on the cards received at Howrah, but makes no allusion to any except that of Madame Blavatsky and Mahatmas Koot Hoomi and M., so that if others *did* write on them at Bombay there was a want of correspondence between the cards seen at Bombay, and those seen at Howrah.

It was to Madame Blavatsky herself that the instructions were given in "the open letter written in red pencil." Mr. Bharucha has given me further details which throw some light upon the evaporation of the packet. The whole party entered Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room after the letter was taken up; and when Madame Blavatsky had fulfilled her (own) instructions, and placed the packet on the bookcase, the whole party left the room. Several minutes elapsed before they returned to the room, and when they returned the packet had disappeared. Mr. Bharucha described the position of the bookcase where the letter was placed, giving me a pencil sketch of the room. He did not know that any opening existed on that side of the room where the bookcase was situated, and was unaware that the bookcase stood immediately in front of a double venetianed door, which communicates with a sort of alley, part of which formed Babula's room. That this was so I had ascertained by my own examination of the room at Crow's Nest Bungalow. Probably the top portion of the venetianed door may have been by some means concealed from view. M. Coulomb asserts that it was hidden by a piece of carpeting, and this would account for Mr. Bharucha's not noticing it. The venetian spaces of this door are very wide and allow the hand and most of the forearm to be thrust through. I presume, therefore, that the evaporation which astonished the witnesses—I should perhaps say the non-witnesses—was due not so much to the volatile nature of the packet itself, as to the protrusile capacity of Babula's hand. As to the fall of what purported to be the same letter at Howrah, in the presence of Colonel Olcott and Colonel and Mrs. Gordon, in the room which had been occupied by Mr. Eglinton, it may of course have been accomplished by a confederate, in one of the ways already described.

Other instances of "phenomenal" letters will be found mentioned in Appendices XII., XIII. and XIV. It remains only to add here that in those cases where the immediately previous subject of conversation was referred to in the Mahatma communication, there is no difficulty in supposing that the special topic was led up to by Madame Blavatsky.

"The Occult World" Phenomena.

The phenomena described by Mr. Sinnett in "The Occult World" now demand consideration. And first I shall deal with several cases selected by Mr. Sinnett in his deposition to the Committee, as these were presumably thought by him to be of special importance. The first case described by Mr. Sinnett to the Committee was that of a letter which he had written to Koot Hoomi.

"Having completed the note, I put it into an envelope, and took it to Madame Blavatsky, who was sitting in the drawing-room with my wife. I

said to her, 'Will you get that taken, if you can, and get me an answer?' She put the letter into her pocket, and rose to go to her room. All the windows were open, as is usual in India. As she passed out I walked to he drawing-room door. She was out of my sight but for an instant of time when she cried out, 'Oh, he has taken it from me now.' I will undertake to say that she was not out of my sight for 10 seconds. Having uttered that exclamation, she returned to the drawing-room, and we then proceeded together to my office at the back of my house. I went on with what I was doing, and she simply lay on the sofa in my full view. She remained there, perhaps, for between 5 or 10 minutes, when, suddenly lifting her head from the pillow, she pointed to it and said, 'There is your letter.' I should mention, as a little fact which may bear upon occult physics, that the moment before I distinctly heard a peculiar rushing sound through the air. It was, I think, the only occasion on which I had heard such a sound, and she asked me afterwards if I had heard it. The letter lay on the pillow, the name which I had written on the envelope being scratched out, and my own name written immediately above it. The envelope was unopened, and in precisely the same state, with the difference I have mentioned, as when I gave it to Madame Blavatsky. I cut the envelope open, and found inside an answer to the question which I had asked the Mahatma."

From this account it appears that Madame Blavatsky was not out of Mr. Sinnett's sight for *ten seconds*, but in the account given in "The Occult World" (pp. 96-97) Mr. Sinnett undertakes to say only that she had not been away to her own room *thirty seconds*, admitting that she was also out of his sight *for a minute or two* in Mrs. Sinnett's room. After this I cannot feel certain that Madame Blavatsky may not have been absent in her own room considerably more than 30 seconds, nor do I feel certain that Madame Blavatsky may not have retired to some other room during the interval of "a few minutes" which Mr. Sinnett assigns to her conversation with Mrs. Sinnett in the adjoining room. Even apart from this uncertainty, I cannot attach any importance to the case after finding that on my second trial I could open a firmly closed ordinary adhesive envelope under such conditions as are described by Mr. Sinnett, read the enclosed note and reply to it, the question and the reply being as long as those of Mr. Sinnett's, and re-close the envelope, leaving it apparently in the same condition as before, in one minute; and it appears to me quite possible that Madame Blavatsky, with her probably superior skill and practice, might have easily performed the task in 30 seconds. I do not suppose that Mr. Sinnett would wish to maintain that the "peculiar rushing sound through the air" could not have been produced by ordinary means at the disposal of Madame Blavatsky.

The next case mentioned by Mr. Sinnett was the fall of a letter in the guest-room at Crow's Nest Bungalow, and is thus described in his deposition.

"I had been expecting a letter from Koot Hoomi, but on my arrival at Bombay I did not find one awaiting me at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society there. I had written, asking him several questions. I had got in late at night, and on the following morning I was walking about the verandah talking to Madame Blavatsky. We went into a room which I had occupied as a bedroom during the night—a big room, with a large table in the middle of it. I sat down while we were talking, and she occupied another chair at a considerable distance from me. I said, 'Why on earth have I not had a letter in answer to mine?' She replied, 'Perhaps he will send it to you. Try to exercise your will-power; try to appeal to him. Ask him to send it to you.' I retorted, 'No, I will wait his time; he will send sooner or later, no doubt.' At that moment a packet fell before me on the table. It was a large envelope containing at least 30 pages of manuscript—heavy draft paper. The packet only came into view a few feet—two perhaps—above the table, though I do not attach much importance to the precise distance, as in a case of that sort the eye cannot be certain to a foot. The room was brilliantly light, this being in the morning.

MR. GURNEY: Did Madame Blavatsky know that you had written a letter and were expecting an answer, before this conversation with her?

MR. SINNETT: Certainly; but the point to which I attach importance in this case is that the thing happened in broad daylight in a room which I had myself occupied the previous night, and which I had been in and out of during the whole of the morning. Everything occurred fully before my eyes. It is impossible that Madame Blavatsky could have thrown the letter with her hand. All the circumstances are incompatible with that. I was not writing at the time, but talking to her, so that the idea that she could have thrown the letter is simply preposterous. (See "The Occult World," p. 120.)

It might be suggested that the remarks made by Madame Blavatsky were calculated to render this phenomenon more striking than it actually was if Mr. Sinnett could have been prevailed upon to "exercise his will power," and it is to be inferred from Mr. Sinnett's accounts that he made no examination whatever of the ceiling either from the room below or from the garret above. According to M. Coulomb the packet had been arranged in the trap in the garret before the arrival of Mr. Sinnett on the previous evening, but as Mr. Sinnett was late in arriving, the phenomenon was deferred until the following morning. The room where the letter fell has already been described (p. 254), and the incident needs no further comment.

The third case was that of a sealed envelope, a case which Mr. Sinnett seems to have regarded as "quite complete," in his deposition to the Committee. (See "The Occult World," pp. 95-96.) This envelope, which contained a letter for the Brothers, and which Mr. Sinnett, after gumming and sealing, had given to Madame Blavatsky, was in Madame Blavatsky's possession for several hours, and when it was returned to Mr. Sinnett, he found it "absolutely intact, its very complete fastenings having remained just as" he had arranged them. Cutting

the envelope open, Mr. Sinnett found inside, not only the letter it had previously contained, but also another, from Koot Hoomi. Mr. Sinnett showed me the envelope. The fastenings were not by any means what I should call complete ; so far was this from being the case, that owing to the length of the flap, which was only sealed at its lower extremity, the letter might have been abstracted, and re-inserted with other letters, without even steaming the envelope, or loosening the adhesion of the gum by any other process ; and if the gum had been loosened, say by careful steaming, the abstraction and re-insertion would have been superlatively easy.

The last case given by Mr. Sinnett in his deposition to the Committee, and emphasised by him as a "phenomenal test," is the alleged instantaneous transportation of a piece of plaster *plaque* from Bombay to Allahabad. ("The Occult World," pp. 126-131.) The important facts are briefly these. Colonel Olcott, accompanied by Mr. Bhavani Rao (now Inspector of the N.W. Theosophical branches), was on his way from Bombay to Calcutta, and was staying with Mr. Sinnett at Allahabad on the route. One evening, on his return home, Mr. Sinnett found, in one of several telegram envelopes awaiting him, a note from Mahatma M., telling him to search in his writing-room for "a fragment of a plaster bas-relief that M. had just transported instantaneously from Bombay." Mr. Sinnett found the fragment in the drawer of his writing-table. A document signed at Bombay shows that somewhere about the same time as Mr. Sinnett got this note a loud noise, as of something falling and breaking, was heard by several persons as they sat in the verandah adjoining Madame Blavatsky's writing-room. A search was immediately made in this room, which proved to be empty, but a certain plaster mould was found lying in pieces on the floor. On fitting the pieces together, it was found that one fragment was missing. Shortly afterwards Madame Blavatsky went into her other room and shut the door. After a minute's interval, she called Mr. Tookaram Tatya and showed him a paper containing the handwriting of "Mahatma M.," which informed them that the missing piece had been taken to Allahabad. The remaining pieces were sent a few days later to Mr. Sinnett, and he found that his piece "fitted in perfectly." Of course, the weak point of the case is that there is no proof whatever that the piece of plaster received by Mr. Sinnett was in Bombay when the peculiar breakage occurred, for it appears from the statement of the witnesses at Bombay (shown to us by Mr. Sinnett, but not printed complete in "The Occult World") that the only evidence for the previously unbroken condition of the plaster mould is that "Madame Blavatsky on inquiry ascertained [!] from the servants that all the furniture had been cleaned and dusted two days before, and the portrait was intact then."

What arrangements would be necessary for the phenomenon if it was a trick? Madame Blavatsky, we may suppose, begins by breaking off a corner of the plaster mould, and in so doing breaks the mould into several pieces. After some difficulties, M. Coulomb fits the pieces together—all but one—and keeps them in place by a strip of cardboard frame fastened in such a manner that it can be jerked away by a string pulled from outside the room where the mould was suspended. The cardboard strip containing the mould is arranged on the nail. As M. Coulomb is going with Madame Coulomb to Poona, he instructs Babula how to pull the string.* The fragment of plaster withheld is given (or sent) to some confederate to be placed in Mr. Sinnett's drawer, together with a note in the handwriting of "Mahatma M.," which is to be placed, if possible, in some "closed" envelope at Mr. Sinnett's house; an hour is agreed upon, say 7 p.m., March 11th, Bombay time, and at the appointed hour, Babula pulls the string, the plaster falls with a crash, and witnesses are there to hear the noise and fit the fragments together. Madame Blavatsky enters her inner room alone and provides a Mahatma note. Meanwhile, the confederate has succeeded in inserting the note in a telegram envelope (possibly by careful manipulation of the eyelets which are used to fasten telegram envelopes in India; possibly by substituting eyelets slightly larger, so as to cover any flaws made in the paper of the envelope).

To the same confederate may have been confided the two Koot Hoomi notes received by Mr. Sinnett while Mr. Bhavani Rao was at Allahabad. There is most assuredly nothing in those portions of the first of these which Mr. Sinnett quotes ("Occult World," p. 130) which might not have been written beforehand, and the second might well, so far as appears from Mr. Sinnett's account of its contents, have been prepared in anticipation of Mr. Sinnett's suggestions. It simply said, Mr. Sinnett tells us, "that what I proposed was impossible, and that he [Koot Hoomi] would write more fully through Bombay."† This

* M. Coulomb declares that the arrangements were as here described.

† From a contemporary account of the occurrence sent by Mr. Sinnett to Mr. Hume, on March 14th, and from the copy of a contemporary letter written by Colonel Olcott to Madame Blavatsky on March 12th, it would appear that on March 11th Mr. Sinnett put a note addressed to *Mahatma M.* into his drawer, from which on March 12th it had disappeared. But there is no mention of any note to *Koot Hoomi* except the one given to Mr. Bhavani Rao on the 13th, and it is implied in a copy of a letter from Mr. Bhavani Rao to Mr. Damodar on March 14th, that this was the first letter which he had received for "transmission" to a "Brother." Is it possible that there is a mistake in "The Occult World," and that by the first note to Koot Hoomi is really meant the note to M. put into the drawer? The documents which I have mentioned point clearly to this conclusion. What *seems* to have happened during Mr. Bhavani Rao's visit is that Mr. Sinnett wrote a note to *Mahatma M.* on March 11th, and not

is curiously like the *en cas* which was provided by Madame Blavatsky for General Morgan in connection with the Adyar Saucer phenomenon, and which, as General Morgan did not ask any questions, remained in possession of the Coulombs (see p. 213). If it be objected to my explanation of these Allahabad phenomena that the only possible confederate was Mr. Bhavani Rao himself, I must reply that I cannot regard this objection as an important one. I have already shown grounds for believing that Madame Blavatsky has obtained sufficient influence over two educated young natives to induce them to join her in tricks, and from what I know of Mr. Bhavani Rao, or, as he is more generally called, Bhavani Shankar, whose acquaintance I made while I was in India, I can find no improbability in the supposition of his being a third. I have given in Appendix IX., and in Part II., p. 297, what I regard as instances of deliberate misrepresentation on his part.

I pass now to the remaining phenomena mentioned by Mr. Sinnett in "The Occult World." We may first take the "raps" and the "astral bells," which Mr. Sinnett seems to regard as constituting important test phenomena. I may here quote a passage from "The Occult World," p. 35 :—

> "With such a mighty problem at stake as the trustworthiness of the fundamental theories of modern physical science, it is impossible

only did he get no reply whatever at the time to this note, but it led to no communication of any sort at the time from *Mahatma M.*; he received, however, a *K. H. communication* on March 12th, and on March 13th addressed a letter to Koot Hoomi in which he suggested that certain other things should be done, and which he gave to Mr. Bhavani Rao to be "transmitted." On March 14th, he received from Mr. Bhavani Rao a K.H. communication which merely said, "impossible; no power; will write through Bombay." The latest form of this incident as published by Mr. Sinnett occurs in the Appendix to the fourth edition of "The Occult World," p.155, where, referring to Mr. Bhavani Rao, he writes : "During the visit I speak of, he was enabled to pass a letter of mine to the Master, to receive back his reply, to get off a second note of mine, and to receive back a little note of a few words in reply again." I find it impossible to reconcile this account with the documents which I have mentioned, and it appears also to differ slightly from the account which Mr. Sinnett gives on p. 130, from which I infer that the note which he says he wrote to Koot Hoomi and gave to Mr. Bhavani Rao on March 11th, was not *answered* by the Koot Hoomi note presented by Mr. Bhavani Rao on March 12th. If I am right in this inference I may venture to make another, and that is that Mr. Sinnett was himself dissatisfied at not receiving, in Koot Hoomi's communication of March 12th, a reply to his letter of March 11th, and that when he wrote the words that he did, *after all*, exchange letters with Koot Hoomi, it was with the feeling that his dissatisfaction had been partly if not altogether removed by the final Koot Hoomi note. Does Mr. Sinnett think that this final note referred so specially to his own suggestions that it could not have been prepared before his own letter was written? In this case it would be interesting to know the exact words of *both* documents, and to examine the handwriting of the Koot Hoomi reply.

to proceed by any other but scientific modes of investigation. In any experiments I have tried I have always been careful to exclude, not merely the probability, but the possibility of trickery; and where it has been impossible to secure the proper conditions, I have not allowed the results of the experiments to enter into the sum total of my conclusions."

That Mr. Sinnett looks upon the cases we have just considered in detail as instances of the passage of matter through matter or of its pre-precipitation or reintegration, forces me to the opinion that his modes of investigation have not been what I should call "scientific," and that the same lack of due caution probably characterised his observation of test-conditions in those instances which I have not been able to investigate personally, as in those instances where I have had the opportunity of examining the conditions applied. Thus, for example, I have not taken part in forming a pile of hands such as Mr. Sinnett describes on p. 33, but I cannot attribute any importance to his confident statement concerning this and similar incidents, now that I have examined some of the possibilities in other cases about which he speaks with equal, if not greater, confidence. The raps occurring when Madame Blavatsky places her hands upon the patient's head, I have, however, experienced, —though, as Madame Blavatsky sat behind me and placed her hands upon the back of my head, I was unable to watch her fingers. She had not informed me what she intended doing, and I conjectured that she was attempting to "mesmerise" me; the so-called "shocks" which I felt impressed me simply as movements of impatience on the part of Madame Blavatsky. My attention being then drawn to them as "phenomena," they were repeated, but I found them not at all like the "shocks" experienced when taking off sparks from the conductor of an electrical machine, as Mr. Sinnett describes them. The sharp thrilling or tingling feeling was quite absent. Unfortunately, I am unable to gently crack any of the joints of my fingers, I can but clumsily and undisguisedly crack one of the joints of my thumbs, yet I find that the *quality* of the feeling produced when I thus crack my thumb-joint against my head exactly resembles that which I perceived under the supple hands of Madame Blavatsky. The explanation which accounts satisfactorily for my own experience I do not pretend to offer as an assured explanation of the experiments made by Mr. Sinnett, though I do not by any means feel certain that it may not be sufficient. It is true that Mr. Sinnett regards the hypothesis as "idiotic" ("Occult World," p. 33); but then he regarded the suggestion that the letter he described as "materialised, or reintegrated in the air," was an outcome of any concealed apparatus, as "grotesquely absurd" (p. 120), notwithstanding the facts that the phenomenon occurred at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, that the ceiling of the room abounded with interstices, and that the garret above might have been crammed up to

the tiled roof with all sorts of conjuring devices for aught he knew to the contrary. Mr. Sinnett treats with scorn the supposition that Madame Blavatsky could have produced either the "raps" or the "astral bells" by means of any machine concealed about her person; but I cannot help thinking that the latter sounds at least might have been produced in this way. Madame Coulomb asserts that they were actually so produced, by the use of a small musical-box, constructed on the same principle as the machine employed in connection with the trick known under the name "Is your watch a repeater?" and she produced garments which she asserted had belonged to Madame Blavatsky, and showed me stains resembling iron-mould on the right side, slightly above the waist, which she affirmed had been caused by contact with the metal of the machine. She declares also that the machine was sometimes carried by Babula, on the roof or in the various rooms of the house or outside, and when used by Madame Blavatsky herself was worked by a slight pressure of the arm against the side, which would have been imperceptible to the persons present. I think the "astral bells" may be thus accounted for, and I must remind the reader of an important consideration which Mr. Sinnett seems to have overlooked—namely, the great uncertainty in all localisation of sounds of which the cause and mode of production are unknown, especially pure tones such as he describes the "astral bell" sound to be, and the great ease of inducing by trifling indications the adoption of an altogether erroneous opinion concerning the position where the sonorous disturbance originates. Further, we may suppose, without any extravagance of hypothesis, that Madame Blavatsky may possess more than one of these machines alluded to, so that the sounds may be heard in different places at the same time. Yet the possibility that if Madame Blavatsky had one such machine she might have had two does not seem to have occurred to Mr. Sinnett, if I may judge from his argument on p. 41.

"Managed a little better, the occurrence now to be dealt with would have been a beautiful test" ("Occult World," p. 43); for a certain class of readers it is told "not as a proof but as an incident," and it is worth a brief consideration from this point of view. Mrs. Sinnett "went one afternoon with Madame Blavatsky to the top of a neighbouring hill. They were only accompanied by one other friend." While there Madame Blavatsky asked Mrs. Sinnett "what was her heart's desire." As Mr. Sinnett's correspondence with "Koot Hoomi" appears to have begun about this time,* it is probable that much interest was excited by the idea of receiving communications from the "Adepts," and it cannot, therefore, be regarded as at all unlikely that Mrs. Sinnett

* Whether he had received his first Koot Hoomi note is not manifest; he had certainly not received his second.

should ask as she did "for a note from one of the Brothers." Moreover, it does not appear that Madame Blavatsky guaranteed the fulfilment of Mrs. Sinnett's "heart's desire" until she knew what the desire was, any more than she guaranteed the fulfilment of Mrs. Sinnett's wish that the note should "come fluttering down into her lap," and this last wish was not granted. "Some conversation ensued as to whether this would be the best way to get it, and ultimately it was decided that she should find it in a certain tree." Mr. Sinnett does not lay any stress upon the identity of the paper folded up by Madame Blavatsky with the paper of the pink note received by Mrs. Sinnett, nor will any person experienced in strawberry hunts, or familiar with leafy trees, be in the least degree surprised that Mrs. Sinnett did not at once perceive the "little pink note" upon the "twig immediately before her face." The note was "stuck on to the stalk of a leaf that had been quite freshly torn off, for the stalk was still green and moist—not withered as it would have been if the leaf had been torn off for any length of time." "Length of time" is vague.

The incident ought to be instructive. Colonel Olcott was the friend who accompanied Mrs. Sinnett and Madame Blavatsky to the top of the hill, where, according to his diary, they had seen on the previous day, "through a field-glass, a man in white making signals" to them. The "man in white" may account for the expedition to the hill; he may also account for the pink note in the tree. We are unlikely to discover how many of Madame Blavatsky's pre-arrangements were never carried out, owing to the complete failure of her anticipations; but the case before us clearly illustrates a partial failure. If Mrs. Sinnett had made some other answer than the one she actually made to the question, put "in a joking way" by Madame Blavatsky, we should probably have never heard of the conversation or the expedition at all. Mr. Sinnett has not told us definitely whether it was Madame Blavatsky or Colonel Olcott (whose name is not mentioned by Mr. Sinnett at all in connection with the incident) who objected to Mrs. Sinnett's request that the letter should "come fluttering down into her lap," nor has he told us what the exact objection was.* It is implied, however, that Madame Blavatsky pointed out the tree supposed to be chosen by the "Brother." Why did she first point out the wrong tree? Perhaps she anticipated that Mrs. Sinnett might, for her own satisfaction, suggest

*I have seen a newspaper account in which it was said that Madame Blavatsky expressed the "Adept's" opinion that if the note were to drop into Mrs. Sinnett's lap, it might be urged afterwards that Madame Blavatsky had managed the phenomenon by sleight of hand, and that therefore he (the Adept) proposed putting the note into a certain tree. This objection was not made in cases where the witnesses happened to be sitting under creviced beams or intersticed ceilings.

the other tree; or perhaps there may have been a mistake between herself and the "man in white." The note said, "I have been asked to leave a note here for you, what can I do for you?" The words are not remarkably relevant; according to the account given by Mr. Sinnett, the "Brother" had chosen the spot himself.

We "come now to the incidents of a very remarkable day," ("Occult World," pp. 44-59), that of the Simla picnic, October 3rd, 1880—the day of the cup and saucer, diploma, bottle of water, and Mrs. Hume's brooch. The account given by Colonel Olcott, dated October 4th, 1880, and sent round at the time as a circular to the Fellows of the Theosophical Society, throws a remarkable light upon Mr. Sinnett's narrative. Thus, whereas from Mr. Sinnett's description of the events, it would seem that Madame Blavatsky had no share in the choice of the spot chosen for luncheon, almost the reverse of this appears from the opening sentences of Colonel Olcott's account:—

"Great day yesterday for Madame's phenomena. In the morning she, with Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett, Major ——, Mr. S. M., Mrs. R., and myself went on a picnic. Although she had never been at Simla before, she directed us where to go, describing a certain small mill which the Sinnetts, Major —— and even the *jampanis (palki-wallahs)* affirmed, did not exist. She also mentioned a small Tibetan temple as being near it. We *reached the spot she* had described and *found the mill* at about 10 a.m.; and sat in the shade and had the servants spread a collation."

I received from Colonel Olcott, not only a copy of the circular from which the above extract is taken, but a transcript from his diary-account, and also further oral explanations. From these last it would appear that Madame Blavatsky and X. were in front of the others, and that Madame Blavatsky described the road which they should take; that it was Madame Blavatsky and X. who together chose provisionally the spot for the picnic encampment; and that Mr. Sinnett and X. then walked on further to see if a better spot could be chosen, and decided to remain at the place where the halt had already been made.

As this place appears in Mr. Sinnett's account as a place they "were not likely to go to" (p. 49) we cannot attach much weight to his opinion that the cup and saucer were of a kind they "were not likely to take."

Probably Madame Blavatsky's native servant Babula, an active young fellow, who, I am assured on good authority, had formerly been in the service of a French conjurer, could throw even more light upon the day's proceedings than Colonel Olcott's account. The previous abstraction of the cup and saucer, their burial in the early morning, the description of the spot to Madame Blavatsky, the choice of the particular service taken, are deeds which lie easily within the accomplishment of Babula's powers. Concerning a later period of the day, when

the party had shifted their quarters to another part of the wood, Mr. Sinnett writes, on p. 51: "X. and one of the other gentlemen had wandered off." From Colonel Olcott's accounts it appears that they had gone back to the previous encampment in order to ascertain if there were any traces of a tunnel by which the cup and saucer might have been previously buried in an ordinary way, and that when they returned they expressed their conviction that the cup and saucer might have been so buried, but that the ground about the spot had been so disturbed by the digging and throwing of earth, that evidence of such a tunnel could not be found. Before the party returned from the picnic it was known that three of them, viz., Mrs. R., Mr. S. M., and Major —— (mentioned by Mr. Sinnett as X.), were dissatisfied with the "phenomenon"; the three who came away believing, were Mr. and Mrs. Sinnett and Colonel Olcott,—all of whom seem to have previously fully attained the conviction of Madame Blavatsky's good faith. Shortly afterwards Major Henderson wrote a letter to the *Times of India*, in which he stated: "On the day in question, I declared the saucer to be an incomplete and unsatisfactory manifestation, as not fulfilling proper test conditions. My reasonable doubt was construed as a personal insult, and I soon discovered that a sceptical frame of mind in the inquirer is not favourable to the manifestation of the marvels of Theosophy . . . . I am not a Theosophist nor a believer in the phenomena, which I entirely discredit, nor have I any intention of furthering the objects of the Society in any way."

The concealment of the diploma and the management of the bottle of water would have been still easier tasks for Babula than the burying of the cup and saucer in the rooted bank. Against Mr. Sinnett's account of the finding of the diploma by X., I have to set Colonel Olcott's statement that the particular shrub where the diploma was found was pointed out to X. by Madame Blavatsky, this statement being made in connection with the passage in Colonel Olcott's diary: "She points to a bit of ground, and tells him to search there. He finds his diploma . . . under a low cedar-tree." In continuation Colonel Olcott writes: "Later, we are out of water, and she fills a bottle with pure water by putting the bottle up her sleeve." In connection with this incident Mr. Sinnett has much to suggest about the abnormal stupidity of a certain coolie who had been sent with empty bottles to a brewery with a pencil note asking for water, and who, finding no European at the brewery to receive the note, had brought back the "empty" bottles. It was—apparently—one of these "empty" bottles thus brought back that Madame Blavatsky took for her experiment. Who was this abnormally stupid coolie? Surely not Madame Blavatsky's personal servant Babula? It is difficult to suppose that Mr. Sinnett would speak of Babula as a coolie, and he could hardly

make a greater mistake than to attribute abnormal stupidity to Babula rather than abnormal cleverness. And yet Babula was in some way concerned. Colonel Olcott wrote, after saying that wanting some tea they found they were out of water :—

"Servants were sent in various directions but could get none. While Babula was off on a second search Madame quietly went to the lunch-baskets, took an empty water-bottle, put it in the loose sleeve of her gown, and came straight to where we were sitting on the grass. *The bottle was full of clearest and softest water*, of which we all partook."

Granted that Babula was present, the fact that all the bottles became empty, and that afterwards one of them became full, may be easily accounted for without the necessity of supposing that there was anything more substantial than a smile in Madame Blavatsky's sleeve. It is curious how much Babula has been kept in the background of Mr. Sinnett's account ; carelessly, no doubt, and not carefully ; but then, if carelessly, Mr. Sinnett must be charged with a grievous lack of ordinary perspicacity.

Finally, came the "celebrated brooch incident." ("Occult World," pp. 54-59.) Of this it will suffice to say that the *brooch* formed one of several articles of jewellery which Mrs. Hume had given to a person who had again parted with them to another who had "allowed them to pass out of their possession." It is an admitted fact that many of these articles, parted with at the same time as the brooch, did actually pass through Colonel Olcott's hands very soon afterwards. Colonel Olcott does not remember seeing the brooch ; but that Madame Blavatsky may at that time have had an opportunity, which she seized, of obtaining possession of it, is obviously highly probable, though there is no absolute proof of this. It is at any rate certain that she entrusted a brooch, which needed some slight repair, to Mr. Hormusji S. Seervai, of Bombay, who shortly afterwards returned it to Madame Blavatsky. When the "brooch incident" occurred later, and the account of it was published containing a description of the brooch, Mr. Hormusji found that the description exactly fitted the brooch which had been entrusted to him for repair by Madame Blavatsky. For these facts I rely chiefly on statements made to me personally by Mr. Hume and Mr. Hormusji, though, indeed, the first links of the chain had been previously published in various forms, and were never challenged, and I may add that Mr. Hormusji's testimony is confirmed by that of two other witnesses who remember his immediate recognition of the description given in the account of the "brooch incident" as that of the brooch Madame Blavatsky had given him to be repaired. The above outline is, I think, specific enough to lead the reader to a right conclusion. The fact that Mrs. Hume chose the lost brooch as the object to

be brought to her by the "Brother," Mr. Hume is inclined to explain as a case of thought-transference to Mrs. Hume from Madame Blavatsky, who was probably willing intensely that Mrs. Hume should think of the brooch. I do not dispute this opinion, though I cannot regard the case as a proven instance of telepathy; Madame Blavatsky may have had enough knowledge of the history of the brooch and enough practical acquaintance with the laws of association, to make it easy for her to suggest that family relic to the thoughts of Mrs. Hume, without exciting the suspicion of the persons present, who, by Mr. Sinnett's account, seem to have been as far as possible from attempting to realise what a special chain of reminiscence may have been quickened into vivid life by Madame Blavatsky's words.

It must not be forgotten, in dealing with these cases, that we do not know how many "phenomenal tests" may have been arranged by Madame Blavatsky which did not succeed. She may have failed in leading to the needful topic of conversation; she may have been asked for objects she had not obtained, or could not obtain, and so refused on one pretext or another to comply with some request made; she may have offered an answer to a letter neither she nor any confederate was able to read, and failed in her Mahatma-reply to make any reference whatever to the specific question asked in the undecipherable document; she may have been requested to produce phenomena in a way different from that already prepared; she may not have provided for contingencies such as the absence of the persons required for the experiment, and so on. There are samples of these several kinds of failures, which would, I presume, be regarded by Mr. Sinnett merely as interesting "incidents." A notable incident of this kind may be given as it is closely related to the next group of "proofs" to which we pass in Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World." It appears that Madame Blavatsky, for the benefit of Captain Maitland, had professed to send a cigarette tied up with her hair to a place under the horn of the unicorn on the coat of arms under the statue of the Prince of Wales, opposite Watson's Hotel in Bombay. Captain Maitland telegraphed (from Simla) to Mr. Grant in Bombay, asking him to look immediately for the cigarette. Mr. Grant found no cigarette in the place described. Madame Coulomb asserts that she was the person who was to have put the cigarette there, but that she "never went near the place." ("Some Account," &c., by Madame Coulomb, pp. 16-18.) Hence the failure, not mentioned by Mr. Sinnett. The Blavatsky-Coulomb documents sufficiently discredit the cigarette phenomena, and it can be seen at once that those quoted by Mr. Sinnett might have been arranged with perfect ease by Madame Blavatsky. In the first case, that of Mrs. Gordon, the "place indicated" as the place where the cigarette would be found is not stated. In the two other instances given, the cigarettes were found in places where they would probably remain un-

discovered for some time, unless particular search for them were made, and Madame Blavatsky—or, by her instructions, Babula—might have deposited them there previously. Mr. Sinnett says that "for persons who have not actually seen Madame Blavatsky do one of her cigarette feats it may be useless to point out that she does not do them as a conjurer would," and certainly it is difficult for such persons to understand the profound conviction which Mr. Sinnett displays ("Occult World," p. 63) concerning the identity of the corner of the paper torn off with the corner given to the percipient, in the face of such sleight-of-hand performances as he himself describes :—

"You take two pieces of paper, and tear off a corner of both together, so that the jags of both are the same. You make a cigarette with one piece, and put it in the place where you mean to have it ultimately found. You then hold the other piece underneath the one you tear in presence of the spectator, slip in one of the already torn corners into his hand instead of that he sees you tear, make your cigarette with the other part of the original piece, dispose of that anyhow you please, and allow the prepared cigarette to be found. Other variations of the system may be readily imagined."

Mr. Sinnett's *naïve* remark that the certainty of the spectator would be enhanced by the pencil-marks drawn upon the cigarette paper before his eyes, compels me to suppose that his experience in conjuring must be very limited. For it appears that the pencil-marks were chosen and drawn by Madame Blavatsky herself ; she *declined to let Captain Maitland* "mark or tear the papers"; otherwise there might have been no apparent similarity between the paper marked and that which had already been deftly rolled by Madame Blavatsky's fingers, and was lying snugly on a shelf inside the piano, or in the covered cup on the bracket.

Mr. Sinnett's confidence that the cigarette feats are not conjuring performances will appear still more singular to persons who have practised palming, as I have myself done, and who read the following sentences from the accounts given on p. 62 :—

"The cigarettes being finished, Madame Blavatsky stood up, and took them between her hands, which she rubbed together. After about 20 or 30 seconds, the grating noise of the paper, at first distinctly audible, ceased."

"With the remainder of the paper she prepared a cigarette in the ordinary manner, and in a few moments caused this cigarette to disappear from her hands."

In short, if Madame Blavatsky does not do her cigarette feats as a conjurer would, the descriptions quoted by Mr. Sinnett, pp. 60-63, must be fundamentally erroneous.

The next case for our consideration is the Pillow Incident. ("Occult

World," pp. 75-79.) Mr. Sinnett's "subjective impressions" of the previous night appear to be in close relation with the incident, if not to form part of it; but as they are not exactly described, I am unable, of course, to deal with them. If they were neither hallucination nor extreme illusion suffered by Mr. Sinnett, they may have been due to Madame Blavatsky's boldness and cleverness, in which case the cushion may have been manipulated *before* Mr. Sinnett spoke of his impressions that morning. And here again appears the invaluable Babula, who was probably the "Brother" who inserted the brooch and the note provided by Madame Blavatsky, in the jampan cushion. Was it a remarkable fact that this particular cushion was chosen? There may, indeed, have been a second object, and a note in some adjoining tree in case a tree had been chosen, and there may have been a third buried in the ground; though I think it unlikely that Madame Blavatsky would have taken any trouble to provide for these contingencies, even if there were other objects which might have "hinged on" to Mr. Sinnett's subjective impressions. Simply because such places as the ground and the tree had been chosen before, they were not likely to be chosen again; it was not so exceedingly improbable that the firmly-made "usual jampan cushion" which Mrs. Sinnett might certainly be expected to take with her should be selected. Madame Blavatsky's intimate acquaintance with Mr. Sinnett may have enabled her to anticipate with considerable confidence that he would choose the cushion. Besides, if it should unfortunately not be chosen, some conversation might ensue as to whether the place fixed upon was the best, and ultimately it might be decided that they should look for it in one of the cushions. If any mistake were made about the cushion, Madame Blavatsky might again get into communication with Koot Hoomi, and ascertain that it was in Mrs. Sinnett's cushion that the object was being placed, as in the case of the "incident" discussed above, p. 264.

But Mr. Sinnett gave a note to Madame Blavatsky, apparently just before starting out, for Koot Hoomi. This note is said to have disappeared when they were about half way to their destination, yet no reference to this was made in the Koot Hoomi note found in the cushion. Let us suppose, allowing the picnic-spot to be only half an hour's distance, that this involved only a quarter of an hour's interval between the disappearance of the note and the choice of the cushion, followed by the preparation of the "currents." What happened during this quarter of an hour? We read in other places of *instantaneous* transportations of solid objects, instantaneous precipitations of answers to questions, &c. I suppose this quarter of an hour would be accounted for by the blundering of a *Chela*, the *Chela* being Madame Blavatsky. It will hardly be pleaded that "the currents for the production of the

pillow *dak*" had been set ready some time before the pillow had been chosen, unless it is intended to take refuge in the surrejoinder that Koot Hoomi knew that Mr. Sinnett would be certain to choose the pillow, and could, therefore, pre-arrange the "currents," but that Koot Hoomi did not know, when he thus pre-arranged the currents, what Mr. Sinnett had written, or even that Mr. Sinnett had written a letter at all. All this ignorance on the part of Koot Hoomi, notwithstanding the fact that Mr. Sinnett's letter was in answer to a Koot Hoomi note, and that Koot Hoomi was supposed to be busy with phenomena for Mr. Sinnett's behoof! Mr. Sinnett's faith, however, does not seem to have been affected by this little hiatus of time, though it seems to have been stimulated by the underlining of a "k" in the Koot Hoomi cushion note, as on the previous evening "Madame Blavatsky had been saying that Koot Hoomi's spelling of 'Skepticism' with a 'k' was not an Americanism in his case, but due to a philological whim of his." (This "philological whim" is not always remembered; I have myself seen "sceptic" spelt with a "c" in a Koot Hoomi document.) That the note found in the cushion bore reference throughout to the conversation (we will suppose, not led up to) of the previous evening, but contained not the slightest allusion to Mr. Sinnett's note of the following morning, leads me to the inference that the said Koot Hoomi note was inserted in the cushion in the interval—and, as I have stated, by Babula.

The Jhelum telegram case might be explained in a variety of ways, but Mr. Sinnett has not given us the detail necessary to enable us to form any conclusion. The incident was briefly as follows. ("Occult World," pp. 80-83). Mr. Sinnett, before leaving Simla for Allahabad, wrote a letter to Koot Hoomi which he sent to Madame Blavatsky, who was at Amritsur. This letter was written on October 24th, 1880. The envelope of this letter was returned to Mr. Sinnett by Madame Blavatsky, and bore, as I understand, the afternoon postmark of October 27th. On October 27th, Mr. Sinnett, then at Allahabad, received a telegram from Jhelum sent on October 27th. This telegram contained a specific reply to his letter. Afterwards Mr. Sinnett was requested, through Madame Blavatsky, to see the original* of the Jhelum

* I may here mention a curious document which was unintentionally lent to me for several days by Mr. Damodar. I had with some difficulty obtained several specimens of Mahatma writing, and in an envelope enclosing some of these I afterwards found a slip of paper, which had not—as I concluded when later I discovered that it was not enumerated among those lent to me—been observed in the envelope when Mr. Damodar gave me permission to take the specimens away. This document was a single small fragment of thin paper, undated and unsigned. On one side of it were written the following words in red ink, and the writing resembles that attributed to Mahatma M.:

—

telegram. This he succeeded in doing, and found the writing to be that of Koot Hoomi.

Let us suppose that Madame Blavatsky did not forge the "evidential" postmark; that post-office peons were none of them bribed to mark* or deliver a letter otherwise than in due course; that the letter enclosed by Mr. Sinnett in the envelope was actually despatched in that envelope; that previous to its despatch the contents were known to no one but Mr. Sinnett, and that no one acquired any knowledge of the contents before the letter reached Madame Blavatsky's hands. Under these circumstances it would still have been possible for Madame Blavatsky to have read the letter, and to have telegraphed the right reply to a confederate in Jhelum, who might then have penned or pencilled the telegram to Mr. Sinnett in sufficiently close imitation of the Koot Hoomi handwriting ordinarily produced by Madame Blavatsky, to have deceived Mr. Sinnett. I have made all the above suppositions for the purpose of drawing the reader's notice to the fact that, presuming that the Jhelum telegram document, afterwards inspected by Mr. Sinnett, was actually the document handed in as the message to be despatched to him, we should require some further evidence of the identity of its handwriting with that of Mr. Sinnett's Koot Hoomi documents generally, than that furnished by the examination of Mr. Sinnett himself, who appears not to have observed the numerous traces of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork in the earliest Koot Hoomi letters he received.

I think it probable, however, that the document in question was, as a matter of fact, written by Madame Blavatsky herself, and that Mr. Sinnett's letter reached her, either in the envelope in which he enclosed it, *or in another*, before the 27th. It surprised me considerably to find that Amritsur was only 21 hours† from Simla, and Jhelum only 8 hours from Amritsur. Madame Blavatsky is said to have received Mr. Sinnett's envelope not earlier than the afternoon of October 27th, so that, if the Amritsur postmark was *bonâ fide*, it probably left Simla on October 26th. Mr. Sinnett's letter was written on October 24th. This large hiatus of time is not alluded to in Mr. Sinnett's account, which is remarkable for the scantiness of its detail concerning the most impor-

"Send this by copying telegram and original telegram to A.P.S. Charge to my account and send bill. Let Deb study more carefully his part." Whether this document had anything to do with the above incident I can of course only conjecture. The relation between Gwala K. Deb and Mr. Babajee has been already considered (p. 247).

* While at Madras I was informed of a recent case where the defendant had secured an elaborate misuse of the post-office stamps for the purpose of falsely proving an *alibi*.

† Simla to Umballa, 94 miles—horse conveyance—12 hours. Umballa to Amritsur, 155 miles—train—9 hours. Amritsur to Jhelum, 135 miles—train—8 hours.

tant conditioning elements. He does not explicitly mention either when he wrote his letter (the date appears on p. 83 in the Koot Hoomi quotation) or when or by whom the letter was posted. He does not mention the Simla post-mark, nor does he make any suggestion, for the benefit of the English reader, as to the distances between Simla, Amritsur, and Jhelum. Yet Mr. Sinnett seems to have regarded this fragmentary evidence as likely to appeal to other minds besides his own ("Occult World," p. 80); no doubt it may do so if they take for granted that the details neglected contribute to the marvellousness of the phenomenon.

With reference to the portraits drawn in Mr. Sinnett's house ("Occult World," pp. 137-139), it is not necessary to say any more, considering the exiguity of Mr. Sinnett's account, than that Madame Blavatsky is exceedingly skilful in the use of both pencil and brush. I have seen specimens of her handiwork, not only in certain playing-cards, which Colonel Olcott showed me—each card being a clever, humorous sketch, —but in drawings, precisely similar to that mentioned by Mr. Sinnett, where the face on the white paper was defined by contrast with "cloudy blue shading."*

On the whole, then, I think I am justified in saying that the phenomena relied upon by Mr. Sinnett in "The Occult World" can be accounted for much more satisfactorily than can the performances of any ordinary professional conjurer by the uninitiated observer, however acute; that the additional details which I have been enabled to furnish in connection with some of the incidents Mr. Sinnett has recorded, clearly show that he has not been in the habit of exercising due caution for the exclusion of trickery; and that he has not proceeded in accordance with those "scientific modes of investigation" which he explicitly declares ("Occult World," p. 35) he regarded as necessary for the task he attempted.

Evidence of Mr. A. O. Hume
(Late Government Secretary of India).

As Mr. Hume took a prominent part in the early development of the Theosophical Society in India, and even published two pamphlets on the subject, "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," Nos. 1 and 2, it seems to me desirable to draw special attention to the considerable change which has taken place in his opinion concerning the phenomena

* Blue pencil is a favoured instrument at the Theosophical headquarters. I possessed a specially convenient form of a patent blue pencil, and having handed this to Mr. Babajee for the purpose of enabling him to write a name and address which he wished to give me, he remarked, as he regarded it with spontaneous admiration, "Oh! this would do well for ——," the Koot Hoomi scriptures, thought I, but my spoken comment was different; Mr. Babajee's head was bowed, his tongue was dumb, and the sentence was never completed.

connected with Madame Blávatsky. I enjoyed, while in India, the opportunity of having various long interviews with Mr. Hume, and have already referred to his conclusion (reached after a most careful inquiry) in connection with the incident of the recovery of Mrs. Hume's brooch, that Madame Blavatsky may very well have obtained the brooch previously by ordinary methods. Long before the publication of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters in the *Christian College Magazine*, Mr. Hume had discovered that some of Madame Blavatsky's phenomena were fraudulent, and that some of the professed Mahatma writing was the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky herself. Once or twice he had seen notes on some philosophic question which had been made by Mr. Subba Row (Vakil of the High Court, Madras), a leading native Theosophist. The substance of these notes appeared afterwards worked up into a Mahatma document (received by either himself or Mr. Sinnett), and worsened in the working. I inquired of Mr. Subba Row, the ablest native Theosophist I have met, whether he was aware of the episodes which Mr. Hume had described. He replied laconically, "It may be so." When the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters were first published Mr. Hume expressed his opinion publicly that Madame Blavatsky was too clever to have thus committed herself; latterly, however, and partly in consequence of the evidence I was able to lay before him, he came to the conviction that the letters in question were actually written by Madame Blavatsky. Further, he had never placed the slightest credence in the Shrine-phenomena, which he had always supposed to be fraudulent. I may state also that his conclusions, reached independently of my own and from different circumstances, concerning the untrustworthiness of Messrs. Damodar, Babajee, and Babula, entirely corroborated those to which I had been forced. Yet Mr. Hume was originally just as fully committed to the genuineness of certain phenomena as Mr. Sinnett himself, as will be manifest from a perusal of his "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," from which some of the narratives quoted in our First Report were taken. His present attitude is an admirable testimony not only to his readiness to accept the truth at the cost of negating so extensively his own past opinions, but also to the systematic pains he has taken in sifting the antecedents of the apparently marvellous phenomena which occurred in close connection with himself. For example, he received a Koot Hoomi communication in a letter coming from a person who had no connection with Theosophy. This may have been the incident referred to by Mr. Sinnett ("Occult World," p. 21), as follows :—

"When this Society [the Simla branch of the Theosophical Society] was formed, many letters passed between Koot Hoomi and ourselves, which were *not* in every case transmitted through Madame Blavatsky. In one case, for

example, Mr. Hume, who became President for the first year of the new Society . . . got a note from Koot Hoomi inside a letter received through the post from a person wholly unconnected with our occult pursuits, who was writing to him in connection with some municipal business."

Mr. Hume has informed me that he himself received the letter, which was large and peculiar in appearance, from the postman's hands. A long time afterwards, when reinvestigating a number of supposed phenomena (not published) which had occurred at his house, he learnt incidentally from one of his servants that just such a letter had been taken by Babula from the postman early one morning, and carried off to Madame, and had been returned to the postman, when the postman came by again, Babula, who said that it was not for Madame but for Mr. Hume. The servant had wondered at the time why Babula had not taken the letter to Mr. Hume himself, and he said that he thought he remembered that Babula had taken and returned letters in the same way on other occasions. We suggested a somewhat similar procedure on the part of Babula in our First Report as an explanation of instances analogous to that of Mr. Hume's. In various cases, which it is unnecessary to reproduce in this Report, it will be seen that Madame Blavatsky may have been enabled in a similar way to tamper with the letters before they actually reached the addressees. It may be instructive here to quote Mr. Hume's testimony to the fact that peculiar envelopes and paper, like those generally used by Madame Blavatsky for the Mahatma communications, are procurable in the neighbourhood of Darjeeling, that they were not used for the earliest Mahatma documents, which appeared before Madame Blavatsky had visited Darjeeling, but were first brought into requisition for that purpose at a time which coincided with her visit to that place. Mr. Hume's position at present is that "despite all the frauds perpetrated, there have been genuine phenomena, and that, though of a low order, Madame [Blavatsky] really had and has Occultists of considerable though limited powers behind her; that K. H. is a real entity, but by no means the powerful and godlike being he has been painted, and that he has had some share, directly or indirectly—though what Mr. Hume does not pretend to say—in the production of the K. H. letters." The reader already knows that I cannot myself discover sufficient evidence for the occurrence of any "occult phenomenon" whatever in connection with the Theosophical Society.

I have thus far postponed the consideration of the handwriting purporting to have been "precipitated." The specimens of such writing which came under my notice in India were of three kinds, and were alleged to have emanated from Mahatma Koot Hoomi, Mahatma M., and the *Chela*, "Bhola Deva Sarma," respectively. I made a minute

and prolonged examination of these and other manuscripts with a view to determining by whose hand the supposed "precipitated" communications were written. The conclusions I reached were such as fully to confirm the results of my investigations in other directions, and they are generally and briefly as follow :—

That the one specimen of the Chela B. D. S. writing which I had the opportunity of carefully examining was the handiwork of Mr. Babajee D. Nath : that the several specimens of Mahatma M. (M. C.) writing which I had the opportunity of carefully examining were the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky : and that of the several specimens of Mahatma Koot Hoomi (K. H.) writing which I had the opportunity of carefully examining, one was the handiwork of Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar, the others were the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky.

Since my return to England I have been strengthened in this last conclusion by an examination of a large quantity of K. H. MSS. forwarded to me by Mr. Hume,* a series of K. H. documents entrusted to us by Mr. Sinnett, and a K. H. document sent to us by Mr. Padshah for comparison with other K. H. writings. The K. H. communication belonging to Mr. Padshah is, in my opinion, the handiwork of Mr. Damodar, and the K. H. documents sent by Mr. Hume and Mr. Sinnett the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky. It is probable, therefore, that various K. H. communications received in India during Madame Blavatsky's absence in 1884 were written by Mr. Damodar. Many of these were produced under circumstances which absolutely precluded the possibility that Madame Blavatsky could have written them, but under which it would have been easy for Mr. Damodar to have written them. My justification for the conclusions I have expressed above concerning the authorship of the handwriting will be found in Part II. of this Report, to which I now proceed.

PART II.

The chief questions in which we are aided by caligraphic evidence concern the authorship of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters and the authorship of the Mahatma documents. I do not propose to go into any detail in describing the similarities between Madame Blavatsky's undoubted handwriting and the handwriting of the Blavatsky-Coulomb

* I have now in my hands numerous documents which are concerned with the experiences of Mr. Hume and others in connection with Madame Blavatsky and the Theosophical Society. These documents, including the K. H. MSS. above referred to, did not reach me till August, and my examination of them, particularly of the K. H. MSS., has involved a considerable delay in the production of this Report.

letters.* These letters, before publication in the *Christian College Magazine*, were, as I have said, submitted by the editor to several gentlemen with experience in handwriting, who were unequivocally of opinion that they were written by Madame Blavatsky. The same opinion was also expressed by Mr. J. D. B. Gribble, of Madras, in "A Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence, published in the *Christian College Magazine*." But the most important judgment on this point is that of the expert in handwriting, Mr. F. G. Netherclift, who has no doubt whatever that the disputed letters which were submitted to him were written by Madame Blavatsky. His Report will be found on p. 381. Mr. Sims, of the British Museum, is also of the same opinion.

Under these circumstances I need say little more than that I examined the whole of these documents, and throughout I found those characteristics of Madame Blavatsky's handwriting which were present in the document I used as my chief standard, *viz.*, a letter from Madame Blavatsky to Dr. Hartmann, written from Elberfeld in October, 1884.

I had other undoubted writings † of Madame Blavatsky in my possession, which rendered me some assistance, but, as will appear presently, I was unable to regard these as altogether trustworthy. Further, I found no peculiarity whatever in the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters which is not present in Madame Blavatsky's undoubted handwriting. There were, indeed, a few forms which are not found very often in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting, and which are found often in the Koot Hoomi writings; but this statement applies just as much to Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged handwriting as it does to the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters, and it appears to me to suggest an additional proof of the fact that the letters in question were one and all written by Madame Blavatsky.

In Part I. of this Report I have shown that the circumstantial evidence which I obtained in relation to these disputed letters, adds to the strength of the conclusion reached on grounds of handwriting, that Madame Blavatsky wrote them. I shall show later that there is evidence which confirms yet further the justice of this conclusion. In

* Several of these letters were lent to me for my own examination by the editor of the *Christian College Magazine*. The remaining letters I examined at the house of a gentleman in whose custody they were at the time. Some of them which I selected myself were entrusted to me to be sent to England for the judgment of the best experts obtainable, with the special request that they should be returned as soon as possible, and I found upon my arrival in England that they had already been returned.

† I refer to the *B. Marginal Notes* and the *B. Replies*. (See pp. 282 and 290.)

order to appreciate the considerations which follow, we must first understand the circumstances under which several of the documents demanding our attention appeared. I must therefore briefly describe the course of events at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society after the departure of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott for Europe in February, 1884.

Before this time, according to Dr. Hartmann, if Madame Coulomb "found a willing ear she would never hesitate a moment to insinuate that the whole Society was a humbug, the phenomena produced by fraud, and that 'she could tell many things, if she only wanted to do so.'" After the departure of Madame Blavatsky she apparently began to speak more freely to that effect, and it appeared, moreover, to the officers of the Society, especially Mr. St. George Lane-Fox and Dr. Hartmann, that the Coulombs were wasting its funds. Letters on the subject were written from the headquarters to Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott. In particular, Mr. Damodar wrote to Madame Blavatsky, probably by the mail leaving India on March 12th, which would arrive in Paris about April 1st, informing her that Madame Coulomb was spreading reports that the phenomena were fraudulent. In the meantime Mr. Lane-Fox and Dr. Hartmann resolved "to impeach them [the Coulombs] in a formal manner," and began to draw up the charges. At this stage Mr. Damodar produced a Koot Hoomi letter which he declared that he had received from the "astral form of a *Chela*," and which runs as follows :—

"So long as one has not developed a perfect sense of justice, he should prefer to err rather on the side of mercy than commit the slightest act of injustice. Madame Coulomb is a medium and as such irresponsible for many things she may say or do. At the same time she is kind and charitable. One must know how to act towards her to make her a very good friend. She has her own weaknesses, but their bad effects can be minimised by exercising on her mind a moral influence by a friendly and kindly feeling. Her mediumistic nature is a help in this direction, if proper advantage be taken of the same.

"It is my wish therefore that she shall continue in charge of the household business, the Board of Control of course exercising a proper supervisory control, and seeing, in consultation with her, that no unnecessary expenditure is incurred. A good deal of reform is necessary and can be made rather with the help than the antagonism of Madame Coulomb. Damodar would have told you this but his mind was purposely obscured, without his knowledge, to test your intentions. Show this to Madame Coulomb, so that she may co-operate with you. K. H."

The above letter is docketed as having been received on March 22nd. [I shall refer to this letter afterwards, when I shall give reasons for thinking that it was written by Mr. Damodar, as "K. H. (Y)."] The

effect of it was that "an armistice was concluded with the Coulombs by treating them with greater consideration."

On April 1st, according to Dr. Hartmann's account, Madame Coulomb, Mr. Lane-Fox, and Mr. Damodar went "for a change" to Ootacamund. By this time the letters complaining of the Coulombs had reached Madame Blavatsky, who wrote to the Coulombs a letter which with its threats and its pleadings* speaks for itself to the intelligent reader. Madame Blavatsky no doubt wrote also to Mr. Damodar. Her letters would reach Madras about April 24th, and Ootacamund on April 26th, on which date Mr. Damodar produced a Mahatma M. letter, declaring that it had fallen in his room; it was addressed to Dr. Hartmann, who has published the following portions of it:—

"For some time already the woman has opened communication—a regular diplomatic *pourparlers*—with the enemies of the cause, certain padris. She hopes for more than 2,000 rupees from them if she helps them ruining or at least injuring the Society by injuring the reputation of the founders. Hence hints as to 'trap-doors' and tricks. Moreover *when needed* trap-doors *will be found*, as they have been forthcoming for some time. They are sole masters of the top storey. They alone have full entrance to and control of the premises. 'Monsier' is clever and cunning at every handicraft—good mechanic and carpenter, and good at walls likewise. *Take note of this—ye Theosophists.* They hate you with all the hatred of failure against success; Society, Henry, H. P. B., theosophists, and aye—the very name of theosophy. The * * * are ready to lay out a good sum for the ruin of the Society they hate. * * * Moreover the J * * * of India are in direct understanding with those of London and Paris. * * * Keep all said above in strictest confidence if you would be strongest. Let her not suspect you know it, but if you would have my advice—be prudent, yet act without delay. * * * M.C."

Mr. Damodar was instructed on the outside of the letter to let Dr. Hartmann have it without delay; and Dr. Hartmann was instructed in the document itself to show it to Mr. Lane-Fox. The writer of the letter was evidently unaware that Mr. Lane-Fox was with Mr. Damodar at Ootacamund, and that Dr. Hartmann was at Madras. Mr. Damodar, however, remedied the ignorance of "Mahatma M.", and showed the letter to Mr. Lane-Fox before forwarding it to Dr. Hartmann.

As a consequence of these and other documents and the resulting altercations, immediate action was taken by Mr. Lane-Fox and Dr. Hartmann, which led to the expulsion of Madame Coulomb on May 14th, on the ground that she had spoken evil of the Society. According to Dr. Hartmann, "M. Coulomb was requested to resign, but as he

* See Madame Coulomb's pamphlet "Some Account," &c., pp. 94-104.

could not make up his mind whether he would do so or not, he was expelled likewise."

The reader will remember that the contrivances for trickery were investigated when M. Coulomb gave up the keys of Madame Blavatsky's rooms on May 17th or 18th. Madame Coulomb showed me a telegram sent to her by Madame Blavatsky on May 19th: "What can be done? Telegraph"; and asserted that this telegram was in reply to a letter written by her to Madame Blavatsky at the end of April (which would reach Paris about May 19th), threatening, in case of a rupture, to produce incriminating letters written by the latter. M. Coulomb declares that he showed this telegram to Mr. Damodar, who refused to take any notice of it, and therefore no reply was sent by the Coulombs to Madame Blavatsky.

Some time later Colonel Olcott received, he says, in a "cover post marked Madras," a letter forged in the handwriting of Dr. Hartmann. Writing to Dr. Hartmann on July 10th, Colonel Olcott stated that he had received this document "some little time ago," and had laid it away in his despatch-box, but that in going through his papers that morning (July 10th), "I noticed that the Master had been putting his hand upon the document and while reading his endorsement I heard him tell me to send it to you by to-day's post."

The endorsement—by "Mahatma M."—is in these words: "A clumsy forgery, but good enough to show how much an enterprising enemy can do in this direction. They may call this at Adyar—a pioneer."

The document itself is as follows:—

Private. Adyar, *April 28th*, 1884.

My Dear Madame Coulomb,—I was very glad to receive your kind warning: but I need a new and further explanation before I will beleive in Madame Blavatsky's *innocence*. From the first week of my arrieval I knew she was a *trickster* for I had received intimation to that effect, and had been told so by Mr. Lane-Fox before he went to Ooty (and who added moreover, that he had come from England with this purpose, as he had received secret instructions from the London fellows) and even sayd that he felt sure she was a spy).

She is worse than you think and she lied to me about lots of things; but you may rest assured that she shall not bambuzle *me*.

I hope to tell you more when I see you, upon your return from Ootocamund and show you that Col. Olcott is no better than he should be.

Excuse short letter. I am writing in the dark.

Yours faithfully,
Dr. F. Hartmann.

This forged Hartmann document, and also the endorsement thereon, are, in my opinion, the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky. I think

there can be little doubt that she forged this Hartmann document for the purpose of attributing the forgery to the Coulombs, in order that she might thus prepare the way for her assertion that the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters were also forgeries. The evidence for this will appear later. I must now describe the manner in which various documents used by me in my examination of handwriting in India came into my possession.

Soon after my arrival at Adyar, I asked for a specimen of Madame Blavatsky's undoubted handwriting,—for the purpose of comparison with the disputed documents. Mr. Damodar avoided giving me any before Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott reached headquarters, and after I had had some conversation with them on the subject, Colonel Olcott said that Madame Blavatsky would write me a letter at once, if I wished, which I could use as a test document. I replied that it would be desirable for me to have some manuscript that was written before the appearance of the *Christian College Magazine* in September, whereupon Colonel Olcott said abruptly that he could take no action as to giving me any handwriting of Madame Blavatsky's until their own Committee had met and that Madame Blavatsky was in the hands of the Theosophical Society.

My request, made at the same time, for Mahatma documents for the purpose of submitting them to a caligraphic expert was also refused.

I was afterwards, however, enabled to obtain some documents in the following manner. Mr. Damodar had recounted to me some of his professed experiences, and had shown me several Mahatma documents in connection with them. Most of these, he alleged, were too private to be submitted for my reading throughout, but there were several to which this objection did not apply, and among these were some 16½ pages of the K. H. writing in black ink, which had formed portions of the reply by K. H. to questions which had been raised concerning certain statements in "Esoteric Buddhism." I pointed out to Mr. Damodar that there could be no possible objection to my having these for examination, and he agreed, and allowed me to take them away for a few days for my own inspection only. The 16½pp. referred to I shall speak of as the K. H. 16½pp.

I received also from Dr. Hartmann, for my own inspection only, the letter from Madame Blavatsky, written to him from Elberfeld in October, 1884, the forged Hartmann document, and the K.H. (Y) letter already mentioned.

Further, I had been anxious to know what answer Madame Blavatsky had to make to the pamphlet written by Madame Coulomb, entitled "Some Account," &c., and Madame Blavatsky had taken the trouble to write out her replies to the first portion of this pamphlet, although I had not asked her for a written

statement, and although she made oral statements as well, the important points of which I took down at the time in writing. This written statement by Madame Blavatsky covers about 7½pp. foolscap. I shall speak of it as the *B. Replies.* In addition, Madame Blavatsky wrote various statements in my copy of Madame Coulomb's pamphlet. These I shall speak of as the *B. Marginal Notes.* Other documents came under my notice, which it will suffice to specify further on when I have occasion to refer to them.

I now proceed to consider the authorship of the Mahatma letters, and propose in the first place, and chiefly, to deal with the K. H. series of documents, these being by far the most abundant and the most important of the Mahatma writings. It is upon the K. H. series almost exclusively that Mr. Sinnett has relied for his volume on "Esoteric Buddhism" as well as for certain portions of "The Occult World"; it is to the K. H. series that most of the Mahatma letters written to other persons also belong; and it is portions of the K. H. series alone which we have been able to obtain for the purposes of careful examination.

With the incriminating Blavatsky-Coulomb letters which were submitted to Mr. Netherclift, were also submitted some specimens of the K. H. writing, viz., several small slips which were forwarded from India with the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters proper, a K. H. document in blue ink submitted by Mr. Massey, and a K. H. document in blue pencil submitted by Mr. Myers. Mr. Netherclift, in the first instance, came to the conclusion that these K. H. documents were not written by Madame Blavatsky. I had already expressed my own conclusion, reached after an investigation of K. H. writings in India, that those I had examined were, with the exception of the K. H. (Y), written by Madame Blavatsky, and on my arrival in England I was surprised to find that Mr. Netherclift was of a different opinion concerning the K. H. writings submitted to him. The small slips I had already seen in India; and after examining the K. H. writings submitted by Messrs. Massey and Myers, I concluded that these also were written by Madame Blavatsky. My judgment, however, was originally formed upon my examination of the K. H. 16½pp., in which the marks of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork were more patent than in the documents which Mr. Netherclift had had an opportunity of examining. In the meantime we had obtained from Mr. Sinnett eight specimens of the K. H. writing, which represented, some of them at least, consecutive periods of time, beginning with the earliest letter received by Mr. Sinnett. In this, which was received about October, 1880, the traces of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork were numerous and conspicuous, and from this onwards the gradual development of the K. H. conventional characteristics,

and the gradual elimination of many of Madame Blavatsky's peculiarities, were clearly manifest. The K. H. writings which had been submitted to Mr. Netherclift, were written after Madame Blavatsky had had years of practice. I therefore re-submitted to him the K. H. writings belonging to Messrs. Massey and Myers, which we still had in our possession, together with the series forwarded by Mr. Sinnett. The result was that Mr. Netherclift came to the conclusion that the whole of these documents were without doubt written by Madame Blavatsky. Mr. Sims, of the British Museum, who had originally expressed the same conclusion as Mr. Netherclift, similarly changed his opinion after inspection of the documents furnished by Mr. Sinnett.

I may now give some of the results of my own comparison of these documents with the undisputed handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.* At first sight Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting, for the most part small and somewhat irregular, looks very different from the large, bold, round, regular writing of the K. H. documents. It is only when we examine closely the formations of individual letters that the traces of the same handiwork in both become obvious. The little importance that can be attached to the mere general appearance of a written document is well enough known to persons who are at all familiar with the comparisons of handwritings.

I shall now endeavour to show—

I. That there are clear signs of development in the K. H. writing, various strong resemblances to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting having been gradually eliminated.

II. That special forms of letters proper to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, and not proper to the K. H. writing, occasionally appear in the latter.

III. That there are certain very marked peculiarities of Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing which occur throughout the K. H. writing.

I shall specify, under each of these heads, the most important instances that I have observed, but shall not attempt to place before the reader any exhaustive statement of them, as this would be tedious.

I. Facsimiles of the series of K. H. letters lent by Mr. Sinnett would perhaps have been interesting and suggestive to the reader, and would have clearly shown the development of the K. H. hand; but

* In addition to the manuscripts which I have already mentioned as providing me with a knowledge of Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting, I have in my possession various undisputed writings of hers produced between 1877 and 1885, among which are three letters written to a Hindu in 1878, three writings to Mr. Hume about the years 1881-1882, and other more recent letters to Messrs. Massey and Myers.

Mr. Sinnett strongly emphasized his desire that no use whatever should be made of the specimens he submitted except for comparison of handwriting, and the facsimile production of portions of the documents was, of course, impossible without the publication, to some extent, of their substance. I have therefore chosen several small letters, *f*, *g*, *k* and *y*, for the purpose of illustrating the development I have mentioned. The groups of individual letters in Plate I. are copied from tracings of my own made from the original documents, and hence many of them exhibit a tremulous appearance which is not characteristic of the original MSS., and which might have been avoided if the work had been done entirely by the lithographic artist. The letters in the first row of each of the groups of the *f*, *g*, *k*, *y* are taken from undisputed writings of Madame Blavatsky, those to Mr. Hume already mentioned. These letters I shall call (B). The remaining five rows of each group are taken from the first five documents of the K. H. series lent by Mr. Sinnett. These I shall speak of as K. H. No. 1, K. H. No. 2, &c. The numbers do not mean that these were the first five letters received by Mr. Sinnett from "K. H." Mr. Sinnett describes them as follows :—

"No. 1 * * * is the first sheet of the first letter I ever had from him certainly through another hand.

"Nos. 2 and 3 selections from later letters of the old series written before the publication of 'The Occult World.'*

"No. 4 was received by me in London about the time 'Esoteric Buddhism' was published.†

"No. 5 * * is from a letter certainly in K. H.'s own handwriting."

The *f*, it will be observed, in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting (B), is commonly looped only below, and is usually preceded by an up-stroke. It is easy to see the close correspondence between the *f's* in (B) and those in K. H. No 1. Compare, moreover, the second *ff* in (B) with the *ff* in K. H. No. 2; the formation is peculiar and the resemblance striking. The type of the *f* soon changes. In K. H. No. 1, the forms are almost all looped below, but in K. H. No. 2 they are generally looped above, and as we go on through Nos. 3, 4, and 5, Madame Blavatsky's ordinary *f* gradually disappears; though here and there in later K. H. documents a stray *f* looped only below may be discovered, sometimes the upper loop is found to have been added by an afterstroke, and the tendency to make *f's* with a loop below is manifest.

The *g's* in K. H. No. 1. are very various, but yet suggest an effort to introduce a new type. Various as they are, however, I believe that

* "The Occult World" (first edition) was published June 2nd, 1881.
† "Esoteric Buddhism" (first edition) was published June 8th, 1883.

by a careful search I might match almost every form in K. H. No. 1 by a corresponding form from Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged handwriting. Even from the specimens given in (B) it will be perceived that her *g's* vary greatly, and that there are one or two curious forms that find fairly close parallels in K. H. Nos. 1 and 2.

The characteristic K. H. *k*, which is formed quite differently from Madame Blavatsky's, first appears, I think, in K. H. No. 2, but is somewhat narrower in formation than the type it ultimately reaches. Some of the *k's* in the group represent capitals, the capital *k* being formed on the same type as the small *k*. Madame Blavatsky's ordinary *k* is frequently preceded by an upstroke and consists of a main downstroke from the bottom of which the next stroke starts upwards, trending to the right, without the pen's having been taken off the paper. The final stroke is frequently added separately and often not connected with the rest of the letter; but in many cases the whole of the letter appears to be made in one continuous movement. All these habits, together with other little peculiarities of curvature, are clearly visible in the *k's* of K. H. No. 1, and in later K. H. documents the gap between the two last strokes of the *k* continues to be common. The last of the *k's* selected from K. H. No. 3 is particularly noteworthy as exhibiting a *lapsus calami* which has been partially covered with the cloak of the K. H. *k* curvature.

The *y's* in the early K. H. documents, most of which have a nearly straight downstroke, with a little curl to the right, are just as suggestive of Madame Blavatsky as are the *f's*, and they begin to develop nearly as rapidly as the *g's* and in the same direction, the downstroke of both eventually ending in a pronounced curling curve to the left, with the concave side habitually upwards. The letter *j* has developed similarly, and so also apparently has the letter *z*, all of these letters finally exhibiting a similar curve to the left.

In the group of letters (B″), all of which are taken from Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, I have given various forms of her *t*. All these forms are common in the earliest K. H. documents; the first three forms are common in the developed K. H. writing, the peculiarity in the third form being the very small curl to the right at the end of the downstroke. The fourth form occurs occasionally even in some of the latest K. H. writings which I have seen, but in these I have observed no specimen at all of the fifth and sixth forms. The fifth and sixth forms, with the curious loop at the bottom before the stroke runs on to the next letter, abound however in a large portion of the K. H. MSS. in my possession, written about 1880-1882. The sixth form is apparently an offshoot of the fourth form, the fifth being intermediate. The downstroke of the first form of *t* is almost universally non-looped, as represented in the Plate, in

Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writings of 1878; similarly in the earliest K. H. writing; and though in the developed K. H. writing this *t* is commonly looped, the non-looped form is very frequent. The long dashes through or over the *t's*, which are a marked feature of the K. H. writing; may be merely the expansion of a habit of Madame Blavatsky's, in whose ordinary writings these dashes are just as pronounced as they are in the earliest K. H. documents.

Preceding upstrokes, which are prevalent in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting, are far more numerous in the earliest than in the latest K. H. documents.

The German type of *d* may be mentioned as a letter which has been gradually eliminated from the K. H. writing, but I shall have more to say about this further on.

I have now in my hands the Koot Hoomi letter, the greater part of which is quoted by Mr. Sinnett in "The Occult World," pp. 85-95. It bears the date of November 1st (1880), and is signed in full, "Koot Hoomi Lal Sing," by which name it may be designated. The second group of capital letters in the Plate is taken from this document; the first group, which I will call (B′), is taken from undisputed writings of Madame Blavatsky—from the same documents whence the small letters (B) are taken. These capital letters, A, D, F, P, T, require but little comment. The D, F, and T, of the *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing* are especially suggestive of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork, and they soon disappear from the K. H. documents. The hook above, at the end of the roof-stroke of the first Koot Hoomi T, presents a similar appearance to that shown by a form of T which occurs in a letter of Madame Blavatsky's in 1878. The common forms of F and T in the K. H. writings are quite different from Madame Blavatsky's usual forms; the specimens in square brackets represent the type commonly found in the *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing*. The characteristic features which occur in the P's of (B′) and those of *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing* may be noted. The long preliminary upstroke, the crook to the left at the end of the downstroke, seen also in the F's and the T's, the downward curl which begins the umbrella curvature above, the turn to the left which ends it, and the little final scrape downwards. Some of these, as also some of the characteristics of the D, remain throughout the K. H. writing, but others almost completely disappear.

II. We are now to consider letters which are proper to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, and not to the K. H. writing, but which yet occasionally appear in the latter—apparently by mistake. An attempt is often made to remedy the mistake by afterstrokes, transforming the letter into the K. H. type. Such additions, reformations, cloakings and erasures occur in the case both of small and of capital letters; they appear to me to be especially significant, and to place it almost beyond

a doubt that the person who wrote the K. H. MSS. where they occur was in the habit of producing a different handwriting, and that that person was Madame Blavatsky. I find numerous instances throughout the K. H. documents which I have examined, but especially in the earlier ones, and will mention a few of the letters in which these mistakes have been made.

The letter *e* in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing is uniformly made upon the common type which we are all taught in copybooks, but when it begins a word in the K. H. writing, it is formed on the same type as Madame Blavatsky's capital E in her ordinary writing. Yet in the early K. H. documents there are many instances where the initial small *e* was at first well formed in the ordinary way, and then transformed into the other type by the addition of a second curve at the top; there are instances also where the transformation was never made, and the initial *e* of the ordinary type still remains.

Instances occur in the K. H. writings of the form of *k* which is most characteristic of Madame Blavatsky; sometimes the form has been cloaked by an afterstroke, as in the case already mentioned, and sometimes not.

The letter *x* in the K. H. writings is formed even from the first in an entirely different way from that used by Madame Blavatsky in her ordinary writing; a different form would seem to have been deliberately and successfully adopted. Nevertheless, there are one or two cases where Madame Blavatsky's ordinary *x* was first made, and the K. H. *x* superposed; and I have also discovered, in the Koot Hoomi writings now in my hands, two instances—pure and free, undimmed by any cloakings, and untouched by any after-strokes—of Madame Blavatsky's own *x*. One of these stray *x's* abides near the sheltering presence of a capital Q beginning the word "Quixottes" (*sic.*), which is suggestive of Madame Blavatsky's peculiar form, and which is very different from the Q which I have found oftenest in the K. H. writing. Another Q which I have found in the K. H. writing bears a much closer resemblance to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary Q.

There are several conspicuous instances of alterations in the K. H. capital B, Madame Blavatsky's usual form having been first made either partially or entirely. I have observed two very notable and indubitable specimens of this; an altered capital B, which the reader will find in Plate II., K. H. (I), I regard as a doubtful case.

Madame Blavatsky uses two forms of capital P, the one illustrated in the Plate, and another, perhaps the commoner of the two, which shows a very different type. I have seen a specimen of the latter in the K. H. 16½pp., and there are several very closely resembling it in the K. H. MSS. in my possession.

Many other instances might be given under this head, and something like the counterpart of what I have been pointing out is also true—viz., that forms of letters proper to the K. H. writing, and not to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, occasionally appear in the latter.

This is perhaps the most convenient place to mention the stroke over the *m*. This stroke, which is a peculiar and apparently meaningless feature of the K. H. writing, occurs several times over letters which resemble an English *m* in some Russian writing which I have seen by Madame Blavatsky. There are two Russian letters which resemble the English *m*, and these, I am informed by Mr. W. R. S. Ralston, "being much alike when written carelessly, they are sometimes, but rarely, written" with a stroke above and below respectively. This may suggest the origin of the stroke over the *m* in the Koot Hoomi writings.

III. I shall now proceed to show that there are fundamental peculiarities in some of Madame Blavatsky's formations of certain small letters which are *found throughout all the K. H. writings which I have examined, except those which there are strong positive grounds for attributing to the authorship of Mr. Damodar.*

The evidence which we are now to consider is, in my view, the most important of all in proof of the fact that the K. H. writings in general are the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky. This evidence depends on Madame Blavatsky's formation of the group of letters *a*, *d*, *g*, *o*, and *q*. The peculiarities exhibited in these letters are very striking; they are sufficiently shown in the specimens of *a*, *d*, *o*, and *q*, which I have given in group B″ (all the letters in which are taken from the undoubted writings of Madame Blavatsky), and are apparent also in the different groups of *g's* which I have given as manifesting the evolution of the characteristic K. H. *g*. A properly made "o" formation is uncommon both in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting and in the K. H. writings. If the letter requiring such a formation is initial, or not connected with the preceding letter, the tendency in both handwritings is to produce a formation akin to those shown in the first four *a's*, the first three English *d's*, and the first four *q's*. If the letter is connected with the preceding letter, the tendency is either to begin the "o" formation high up with a loop, as happens most commonly in the case of the *d*, leaving a gap above,—or to begin it low down, in which case the curve is rarely closed by a complete backward stroke,—and a peculiar gap therefore remains on the left-hand side. This last method of formation, which I shall call the *left-gap stroke*, may be clearly seen in some of the *q's* and *o's*, and is yet more noticeable in the *g's* and *a's*, of which last especially *it is the common, conspicuous, and most highly characteristic feature, both in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing and in those K. H. writings*

*which I attribute to her.** It is so peculiar, that were it found but rarely in both sets of writings, or commonly in one and rarely in the other, it would still be a tolerably definite indication of identity of handiwork; but when we find, as we do, that it occurs constantly in both sets of writings, that any other form (except the *initial* forms spoken of) is comparatively rare, and that numerous varieties of the type in the one set of writings can be exactly paralleled in the other, there can, I think, be little doubt that one and the same person wielded the pen throughout. Only a few specimens of these peculiar letters are given in the plate. Sometimes the stroke ends by rolling into the right-hand part of the curve, so that in the case of the *a* the remaining part of the letter, which is commonly made with a new stroke of the pen, appears to be almost or quite continuous with the first stroke. Frequently the second part of the letter is quite unconnected with the first part, and frequently it begins in the heart of the space partially enclosed by the first stroke. Sometimes, again, the first stroke travels farther back to the left than its origin, still leaving a gap, and sometimes, but seldom, it even joins its origin, so as to form a complete enclosure. It must be difficult for any person to trace this *left-gap stroke* throughout a series of Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged writings, and throughout a set of what I believe to be her K. H. writings, comparing in detail all the swirling tricks and fantastic freaks of curvature which it adopts, and at the same time resist the impression that the same person executed them all.

There are two types of *d* given in the plate, which I may speak of as the German *d* (enclosed in square brackets) and the English *d*. It is the English type which is almost universally assumed by the *d* in all but the earliest writings; while the German type is now almost exclusively used by Madame Blavatsky in her ordinary writing. In the early Koot Hoomi writings, however, there are many instances of the German *d*, and in Madame Blavatsky's writings of 1878 and 1879 the English *d* frequently occurs. The first part of the English *d* is formed like the initial *a's*, or with a loop, and there is frequently a wide gap between the loop and the final down stroke of the letter, which is often clipped short, as shown in some of the instances in the Group (B″). This looped *d* with the wide gap and the clipped down stroke I shall call the *clipped loose d*; it is the characteristic form of the developed K. H. writing, and among the English *d's* of Madame Blavatsky's undoubted handwriting it is also of common occurrence. But some persons who possess writings of Madame

* Mr. Gribble, in his pamphlet, "A Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence," &c., has drawn special attention to this left gap-stroke in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, and to the significance of its occurrence in some K. H. writing.

Blavatsky may, perhaps, be unable to find any specimens at all of the English *d* in her writing; and this brings me to the additional evidence which I said at the beginning of this part of my report would be forthcoming in proof of the fact that Madame Blavatsky wrote the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters.

In three letters written by Madame Blavatsky in 1878, the English *d* occurs about 80 times and the German *d* about 340 times. In a letter to Mr. Massey of July, 1879, the English *d* occurs about 130 times and the German *d* about 525 times. In her three writings to Mr. Hume, already mentioned, of about 1881-82, the English *d* occurs 4 times and the German *d* about 674 times. In three letters (and two envelopes) to Mr. Massey in 1884 the English *d* occurs 6 times and the German *d* about 1106 times. In four letters (and two envelopes) to Mr. Myers in 1884 the English *d* occurs 5 times and the German *d* about 400 times. In the Elberfeld letter to Dr. Hartmann, 1884, *d* occurs 39 times, and is always of the German type.

In the *B. Replies* the English *d* occurs about 140 times and the German *d* about 220 times, and in *B. Marginal Notes* the English *d* occurs 6 times and the German *d* about 89 times. These writings were produced in the time covered by the last few days of 1884 and the first few days of 1885, the *Marginal Notes* being for the most part slightly later than the *Replies*.

Now, it can hardly fail to be regarded as singular that the English *d* being thus frequent (about 210 to 865) in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writings in 1878 and 1879, and being thus rare (15 to about 2,200, and 7 out of these 15 occur on envelopes) in Madame Blavatsky's writings from 1881 to 1884, should suddenly be found in such abundance as appears in the *B. Replies*, and I have been able myself to account for this singular fact in only one way. Before Madame Blavatsky's arrival at Adyar at the end of 1884, Mr. J. D. B. Gribble, of Madras, had published "A Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence Published in the *Christian College Magazine*," and in that report he drew special attention, in connection with the Blavatsky-Coulomb letter dated 1st April, 1884, to the uniformity of the small *d* of the German type. Now Madame Blavatsky knew that I was desirous of obtaining a specimen of her undoubted writing for the purpose of testing the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters; and she knew that I would not use a letter *professedly* written to meet my requirement since I had already declined the offer made by Colonel Olcott, I assume at her instigation, that she should write such a letter (see p. 281). Is it not possible that she hoped, nevertheless, that I might use as my standard a document written by her ostensibly with quite another object? Had I used the *B. Replies*, with its numerous English *d's*, as a standard of reference for the Blavatsky-

Coulomb letters, I should have been compelled to conclude that the rarity of the English *d* in the disputed documents was certainly an argument in favour of their having been forged. But a comparison of the *B. Replies* in this respect with other writings of Madame Blavatsky shows that unquestionably this frequency of the English *d* is foreign to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing produced about the same time as the *B. Replies*, or during the four previous years. I cannot help thinking therefore that the use of these English *d's* was deliberate, and that they were inserted for the special purpose of misleading me in one of the most important parts of my investigation. In one or two other minor points Madame Blavatsky has also, I think, in the *B. Replies*, altered her usual handwriting. If I am right in this conclusion it would follow that Madame Blavatsky has resorted to a device which an innocent person would scarcely be likely to adopt; and when I take all the circumstances into consideration, remembering especially that Madame Blavatsky was entirely unaware, as I believe, that I intended to send some of the disputed documents to England for examination—the manuscript in question affords, in my opinion, strong confirmatory evidence of her authorship of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters.

To return to the K. H. writings, it is strongly suggested by the foregoing facts concerning Madame Blavatsky's *d's* that, since the appearance of K. H. writing with the English *d* as the regular form, she has aimed at eliminating the English type from her ordinary handwriting, and using there the German type; but what we have especially to note here is that the very marked peculiarities which characterise the formation of the English *d* in her acknowledged handwriting, also characterise its formation in the K. H. manuscript which I attribute to her.

There are other minor peculiarities common to both sets of writings. One of these, which occurs in the formation of the letter *l*, deserves special mention, and several specimens are given in the Plate (B″). When final, it is frequently clipped very short; not only is the last upstroke frequently wanting, but the main downstroke is often carried no further than its junction with the first upstroke of the letter, so that the letter remains as a mere loop. Moreover, in the case of *ll*, the second *l* is not only frequently clipped short, but it takes a different angle from that of the previous *l* (compare also the *ff*), not rising so high, and presenting the appearance of tumbling over to the right. These forms of *l* are common both in Madame Blavatsky's undoubted writing, and in the K. H. MSS. which I believe to have been written by her.

The peculiar formations in the group of letters *a*, *d*, *g*, *o* and *q*, were entirely absent from the K. H. (Y), but they were present in the other K. H. documents which I had the opportunity of carefully examining in India. In some of these latter documents

there were further traces of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork—*e.g.*, in the K. H. 16½pp. there were various alterations, and the word or letters altered were usually crossed out, but in three places careful *erasures* had been made, and these erasures were just where the K. H. *k* had been afterwards formed. In two of these cases I was unable to determine what the previous formation had been, but in the third I could still trace the outline of Madame Blavatsky's characteristic *k*. In another place in the same MS., the word "Buddhist" had been inserted afterwards in faint lead-pencil; this was written in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting; upon it had been written, in ink, the same word in the K. H. writing, but the pencil marks had not been erased. In the K. H. document alleged by Madame Fadéeff to have been received by her at Odessa from "un messager à figure asiatique, *qui disparut sous mes yeux mêmes*," Madame Blavatsky's characteristic *a* formations were present, and there were also many instances of the after stroke transforming a well-formed copy-book *e* into the Greek type. These were the most noticeable of those features of the document* which struck me in the two or three minutes' inspection of it which I had the opportunity of making.

I have, I think, said enough to justify my conclusion that Madame Blavatsky was the writer of nearly all the K. H. documents which I have seen. And since those which I attribute to her include, among others, the whole of the K. H. manuscript forwarded to me by Mr. Hume, as well as every specimen of the series lent to us by Mr. Sinnett, I think I may assume that by far the greater portion of the K. H. MSS. is the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky.

Different specimens of Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing and

* I think it not improbable that this document was written by Madame Blavatsky in 1879 or 1880 when the idea of corresponding with one of the "Brothers" appears to have been first mooted. In weighing the statement of Madame Fadéeff that she received the document about the year 1870, we should remember that she is a Russian lady, and the aunt of Madame Blavatsky, and that Madame Blavatsky may have been influenced by political motives in the founding of the Theosophical Society (*vid.* p. 314). It may be mentioned here that Madame Blavatsky, when she heard that Mr. Hormusji had given evidence that he had received a brooch from her for repair, which resembled the one afterwards produced at Simla for Mrs. Hume, first alleged (to Mr. Hume) that the brooch Mr. Hormusji had seen was *square*, and a few days later (to myself) that it was *round*, and had, indeed, some resemblance to Mrs. Hume's, that she (Madame Blavatsky) had purchased it for her niece, and that I could obtain confirmation from Madame Fadéeff. Considering Madame Blavatsky's contradictory statements about the brooch, this ready reference to Madame Fadéeff, in connection with it, suggests that she was a convenient person to appeal to when no other corroboration of Madame Blavatsky's assertions could be obtained.

the K. H. writing may be seen in the Plates which accompany this Report, and Mrs. Sidgwick's corroboration of my observations will be found in Appendix XV.

I shall now proceed to give the barest possible outline of the results of my examination of sundry other documents, and begin with the K. H. (Y). It was this letter to which Dr. Hartmann referred when he wrote to us last year that it was "handed to me by Damodar, who received it in my presence from the hands of the *astral form* of a Chela." In his pamphlet, p. 33, he wrote also: "we . . . were engaged in drawing up the charges [against the Coulombs] in my room, when the astral body of a Chela appeared, and handed the following letter to Damodar." Madame Blavatsky, in a letter to Mr. C. C. Massey, on May 4th, 1884, wrote, apparently concerning this letter: "When the Council assembled and the Board of Trustees were ready to lay the black charges against her and have her expelled—there falls on the table a letter of Mahatma K. H. to the Board, and *defending her*, speaking with his Christ-like forgiveness and kindness, and saying that she was *a victim and not a culprit*, and that it would one day be proved." I asked Dr. Hartmann about this incident, and he told me that Mr. Damodar had *left the room* (Dr. Hartmann's), where he had been talking with Dr. Hartmann, but had returned almost immediately with the letter in question, saying that he had just received it from the "astral form of a Chela"! Madame Coulomb alleges that she peeped through a small hole which she had previously bored through the wooden partition which formed one side of Mr. Damodar's room, and that she saw him preparing this Mahatma letter; and I certainly found a small hole such as Madame Coulomb described to me, which looked as if it had been made on purpose to serve as a spy-hole.

On comparing the K. H. (Y), in India, with other K. H. MSS. in my hands at the time, I noted that there was a close similarity as regards particular characteristics of the K. H. writing, as in the curls to the left of the downstrokes of *g*, *j* and *y*, the stroke over the *m*, the formation of the initial small *e*, the *x*, *p*, &c. In short, those peculiar forms which I suppose Madame Blavatsky to have deliberately and successfully employed in the developed K. H. writing, and which she would naturally teach as characteristics of the handwriting to any person whom she wished to train in the art of writing it, were strongly marked in the K. H. (Y). There were, however, certain differences between this document and the other K. H. writings with which I compared it.

1. *It contained not a single instance of the "left-gap stroke," or of the clipped loose d.*

2. There was not a single upstroke preceding the words, 31 in number, beginning with *m*, *n*, or *i*.

3. The abbreviated *&* was very different from any specimen in the other K. H. writings.

4. The curl to the left at the end of the downstroke in *g*, *j*, and *y*, was made stiffly, starting abruptly from the end of the downstroke.

5. It showed a habit of strongly looping the main downstrokes of certain letters—a habit which appeared especially in the capital M and the small *d*. This habit is, in the case of these letters, foreign to the ordinary K. H. writings, but is eminently suggestive of Mr. Damodar's handiwork.

6. The capital D was different from either of the two forms usual in the K. H. writings. The final loop of the D touched without passing to the left of the main downstroke. This D was a facsimile of some which I found in Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing.

7. There were six instances of a peculiar small *a*, of which I could not find a single instance in the K. H. 16½pp., but which is very common in Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing.

8. The style was much less flowing than is usual in the K. H. handwritings, but I do not attribute much importance to this fact.

There were other minor differences, and my examination of the document led me to the conclusion that it was certainly not written by Madame Blavatsky, and that it was probably written by Mr. Damodar. This conclusion has been strengthened by my examination of a document, which I shall call K. H. (Z), submitted to us for examination by Mr. B. J. Padshah, who received it last year direct from Adyar, in reply to a letter which he had sent, and who thinks that Madame Blavatsky could not have known anything about the letter, she being at the time in Europe. The letter is about the same length as K. H. (Y), nearly two pages of note-paper.

1. It contains not a single instance of the peculiarities which I have described in the group of letters *a*, *d*, *g*, and *o*. (The letter *q* does not occur.)

2. There is only one case of a preceding upstroke in the 16 words beginning with *i*, and only one very doubtful case of a preceding upstroke in the 18 words beginning with *m* or *n*.

3. It contains an abbreviated *&* of the same formation as that noted in the K. H. (Y).

4. The turns to the left at the end of the downstroke in *g*, *j*, and *y* have an angular corner, and the curvature of the stroke to the left is always concave downwards, never concave upwards.

5. Several of the *d's* have the main downstroke very strongly looped.

6. A capital L on the envelope is different from any L which I have found in what I may now call the Blavatsky K. H. writings.

7. Mr. Damodar's peculiar *a* formation, which I will describe

presently, is obvious in two *a's*, and there are clear traces of it in other *a's*, which are now somewhat blurred. A similar formation occurs in six *g's*, and the tendency to this formation in other instances is manifest.

8. The style is less flowing than is usual in the K. H. handwritings.

9. The main downstroke of the initial *t* [type of the first *t* in the B″ group] of a word is invariably strongly looped; and that of the final *t* [type of the second *t* in the B″ group] is almost invariably looped.

10. The main downstroke of the *b* and the *h* is invariably looped.

Both K. H. (Y) and K. H. (Z) are written in blue pencil, whereas the K. H. documents which I have hitherto discussed are chiefly written in ink. Lest it should be maintained that the differences noted are due to this, I shall now compare this K. H. (Z) with another K. H. letter, also in blue pencil (8pp.), and written approximately at the same time. It was received by Mr. Myers from the hands of Madame Blavatsky when she was in Cambridge last year, and I find—

1. That the Blavatskian peculiarities which I have described in the group of letters *a*, *d*, *g* and *o*, abound throughout.

2. That of the first 16 words (excluding four doubtful cases) beginning with *i*, 10 have a preceding upstroke, and that of the first 18 words beginning with *m* or *n*, 9 have a preceding upstroke.

3. The form of *&* is different from the form in K. H. (Z).

4. The corners of the turns to the left at the end of the downstrokes in *g*, *j* and *y* are almost invariably rounded and the curvature of the stroke to the left is almost invariably concave upwards.

5. There is no instance of a *d* with its main downstroke strongly looped.

6. A capital L which occurs is different from that in K. H. (Z).

7. There is one solitary instance (in the 8pp.) of an *a* formation which resembles those common in Mr. Damodar's writing, but the specimen is somewhat doubtful. There is no tendency to this formation in other instances.

8. The style of handwriting is much freer and swifter than that of the K. H. (Z).

9. The downstroke of the initial *t* is rarely so strongly looped as in K. H. (Z), and is frequently not looped at all; and that of the final *t* is commonly not looped.

10. The main downstroke of the *b* and the *h* is frequently not looped.

There are other points of difference between the two documents, which, however, it is unnecessary to enumerate.

On the importance of (1) I need not dwell any further. The contrast noted in (2) is also true to a certain extent in *j*, *u* and *w*. To none of these letters when beginning a word is there any preceding up-

stroke in K. H. (Z). Preceding upstrokes to the letters mentioned are common in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, but except in the cases of *m* and *n*,* comparatively rare in Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing. Thus in a letter of his, written last year, there are 17 initial *i*'s, and only two have the upstroke; there are 31 initial *w*'s, and not one has the upstroke, though there may be a slight doubt in two cases.

The strong looping of the main downstroke of the *d* is characteristic of Mr. Damodar's writing, as may be seen from the instances in Plate I., Group (D). The specimens in this Group are taken from a letter written by Mr. Damodar in August, 1884. The last instance is especially peculiar, where the upstroke touches the initial point of the letter and the main downstroke cuts the initial stroke, which thus divides the extraordinary loop of the *d* into two parts. There is a conspicuous example of exactly this form in the K. H. (Z). It is also particularly to be observed that not only is there no instance of the clipped loose *d*, but there is never the slightest tendency to such a formation. There is not a single instance where the preceding letter runs into the initial stroke of the *d* so as to form a loop with it, and the structure of the letter throughout exactly conforms to the structure of the English *d* found in Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing. Mr. Damodar indeed frequently leaves a gap in his ordinary writing between the beginning of the *d* and the main downstroke; this seems to be partly due to rapid writing, but there is apparently one instance of it in the K. H. (Z), and two other instances may be considered doubtful, though I think myself, after careful examination with a lens, that the appearance of a gap in these two cases is due simply to the attrition of the first part of the pencilled stroke. The other most important trace of Mr. Damodar's handiwork in the K. H. (Z) is the presence of what I shall call the *beaked a* formation, of which several instances are given in the Plate (Group D). The initial point of the letter is considerably farther to the right than the top of the straight downstroke of the letter, which, moreover, does not reach so high as the upper curvature. It is this *beaked a* formation to which I refer above in (7); it is very common in Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing.

My own view is that Mr. Damodar unquestionably wrote the K. H. (Z) as well as the K. H. (Y). Mr. Netherclift has had no opportunity of seeing the K. H. (Y), which was only lent to me for a short time in India, but the K. H. (Z) was submitted to him with the other K. H.

* The initial curve beginning the *m* or *n* strictly forms part of the letter in ordinary writing, but in the K. H. writing these letters are made on the pattern of the letters *i* and *u*, so that the absence of a first upstroke is less curious than it would otherwise be.

documents upon which he was asked to give a second opinion, with the additional light afforded by those lent to us by Mr. Sinnett. Mr. Netherclift, in his second report, stated as his opinion that it was "quite impossible that Damodar could have accommodated his usual style to suit that of K. H.," and although he admitted that he was unable to find in it an instance of what I have called the *left-gap stroke*, and that it was less like Madame Blavatsky's than other of the K. H. documents, he appeared to think that this may have been due to the increased wariness of Madame Blavatsky, and placed it with the others as being unmistakably her handiwork. I then submitted to him my analysis of the document, and he kindly undertook to make a further examination, expressing his confidence that he would prove to me that the conclusion which I had reached was erroneous. The result, however, of a prolonged comparison which he then made was that he frankly confessed that my view was the correct one, saying that in the whole course of his many years' experience as an expert, he had "never met a more puzzling case," but that he was at last "thoroughly convinced that" the K.H.(Z) "was written by Damodar in *close imitation* of the style adopted by Madame Blavatsky in the K. H. papers."

Specimens of the K. H. (Z) and the other K. H. letter with which I have compared it are given in Plate II., and it may be noticed that the K. H. characteristics in the former are almost all rigidly of one variety, as we might expect to find in the work of a copyist adhering to his lesson.

I may here make brief reference to a long account of the professed experiences of a native witness, which was sent to the headquarters of the Theosophical Society while I was in India. Mr. Bhavani Shankar alleged that he was copying this account for me, and that he had already copied a portion of it. At the time I thought it rather odd that I never saw him actually engaged in the copying, and when after the lapse of some days I found that the document was not ready, I doubted whether I should receive it at all. Eventually, however, I did receive it, and with the explicit declaration of Mr. Bhavani Shankar that it was his copy. The pointedness of his assurance that he had made the copy caused me to wonder slightly why he was so anxious to let me have what I should know was a specimen of his handwriting; and the probable explanation did not occur to me till some time afterwards, when I was struck by observing, in the document in question, some peculiarities which I had noticed in the ordinary writing of Mr. Damodar. I then made a careful examination of the document, and found that it had every appearance of having been written by Mr. Damodar, beginning with an elaborate though clumsy attempt at disguise, and ending with what can hardly be called any disguise at all. This incident has confirmed me in my opinion of the untrustworthiness

of both Mr. Damodar and Mr. Bhavani Shankar. But as to why Mr. Bhavani Shankar should have made this attempt to deceive me concerning the characteristics of his handwriting, I have only a conjectural view.

My examination of another document which I saw in India confirmed me in my opinion of the untrustworthiness of Mr. Babajee D. Nath. This document was written in green ink, and purported to be the work of a Chela B. D. S. (Bhola Deva Sarma). The disguise seemed to me to be very puerile, most of the letters being of the copy-book type; one or two of Mr. Babajee's habits being traceable throughout, while the name *Nath*, which occurred in it, was almost a facsimile of a "Nath" which I found in Mr. Babajee's ordinary signature.

The forged Hartmann document (see p. 280), which I believe to have been forged by Madame Blavatsky, for the purpose of attributing it to the Coulombs, was alleged by some Theosophists to have been the work of the Coulombs, on the ground that the sentence, "Excuse short letter. I am writing in the dark," suggested a peculiarity of Madame Coulomb's, that "writing in the dark" meant "writing in a hurry," and in proof of this an old letter of Madame Coulomb's, in which she used a similar expression, was produced *from the possession of Madame Blavatsky*. I saw this letter, and the expression there appeared to me to be meant literally. The forged document may possibly have been intended to bear traces of its forgery on the face of it, though of this I cannot be sure. The imitation of Dr. Hartmann's characteristics is for the most part exceedingly close, and on this point I must differ entirely from Mr. Gribble,* who was evidently unfamiliar with Dr. Hartmann's writing; moreover, bad spelling is noticeable in the document, and bad spelling of a similar character is noticeable also in Dr. Hartmann's writings; but Dr. Hartmann himself asserts that the letter is a forgery, and the fact that it contains *fourteen* remakings of letters is enough to confirm his statement. Although there were 14 remakings of letters, there was only one *erasure*; this was in the *k* of the word *dark*. Dr. Hartmann's *k* is peculiar; so is Madame Blavatsky's; but the erasure had been so thoroughly made that I was unable to trace the

* "A Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence," &c., p. 7. Mr. Gribble says:—"The only instance in which any resemblance to Dr. Hartmann's writing is to be found is in the formation of the capital H," and he mentions the capital letters A and T, and no others, as exhibiting peculiarities which reminded him of "similar letters to be found in Madame B.'s acknowledged writings." The A and T are, in my opinion, not more suggestive of Madame Blavatsky than the A and T of Dr. Hartmann's undoubted ordinary writings. I should say that Mr. Gribble had the opportunity of examining the document only very hastily during a short visit of an hour at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society, when he examined other documents also; and this no doubt accounts for the mistakes which he made in his examination of it.

shape of the letter first formed. I compared the document with writing of M. and Madame Coulomb, and could not find in it any traces of their handiwork; but comparing it with Madame Blavatsky's writings, I found several, and these instances formed the only divergencies which I observed from Dr. Hartmann's formations. I attach importance to the following:—

1. The figure "8" in the dating of the letter was not Dr. Hartmann's, but Madame Blavatsky's.

2. A capital S was not Dr. Hartmann's, but Madame Blavatsky's.

3. A small *z* was very different from Dr. Hartmann's, and was almost a facsimile of the careful *z* in the K. H. writings, which also shows exactly the same type as the careful *z* (very rare) in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writing, except that the former terminates in the leftward curl, while the latter terminates in the usual copy-book upward stroke, trending to the right, cutting the lower part of the downstroke, and thus forming a closed loop with it.

4. Dr. Hartmann's small *x* is nearly of the common copy-book type, the first half of the letter being formed like a reversed *c*; but it seems that he habitually keeps his pen upon the paper until he has completed the letter, so that from the end of the first part of the letter a diagonal stroke runs up to the beginning of the second part, between the left side of which and the right side of the first part there remains a gap, bridged by the cross stroke; at a first glance, the bridging stroke may escape notice, and the *x* appear to be of the copy-book form. Now *x* occurs three times in the forged Hartmann document. The first of these is formed without the bridge, and the two strokes of the letters touch each other. The second of them is formed like Dr. Hartmann's variety. The third of them, however, which occurs in the last sentence of the letter, *was first formed as Madame Blavatsky's peculiar x, Dr. Hartmann's type being formed over it without any erasure's having been made.* On close inspection this was clear even to the naked eye, and examination with a lens rendered it absolutely unmistakable.

Let us now consider the *Mahatma M. endorsement* on the forged Hartmann document.

1. In five of the seven *r*'s the upper loop has unmistakably been added by an after stroke, and apparently in the other two also. Very heavily crowned *r*'s are characteristic of the M. writing; but Madame Blavatsky in her ordinary writing is frequently obliged to twirl the top of the *r* with an afterstroke. (Mr. Gribble also regarded the *r*'s of this document as suggestive of Madame Blavatsky.)

2. The letter *g* in the words *good* and *forgery* exhibits the peculiar left-gap stroke. The gap in the *g* of *good* has been partly filled by another stroke, and this also occasionally but rarely happens both in Madame

Blavatsky's ordinary writing and in the K. H. writing. (See the final *a* and *o* in the Plate, Group B″.)

3. The letter following the *t* in the word "enterprising" was manifestly first made as Madame Blavatsky's *left-gap stroke a*. The word has apparently been first spelt "entaprising," and the second part of the *a* altered into an *r* by the addition of a very grotesque loop, awkwardly placed in consequence of the little room left for it.

I suppose that Madame Blavatsky, having forged the document in Dr. Hartmann's writing, and enclosed it in a "cover postmarked Madras," in which Colonel Olcott might receive it, afterwards obtained it again surreptitiously (on finding, as I conjecture, that Colonel Olcott was not bringing forward the document and stating that he believed it to be a forgery, as she had intended him to do), wrote the endorsement in her disguised M. handwriting and replaced it in Colonel Olcott's despatch-box. If she had little time at her disposal in which to write the endorsement, this would account for the exceptionally glaring indications of her handiwork which it contains.

Everyone will admit, I think, that the forged Hartmann document must have originated either with the Coulombs or with Madame Blavatsky. If the Coulombs were the authors, it is difficult to see the point of the last sentence about "writing in the dark," and if the phrase really illustrates a peculiarity of Madame Coulomb's, an old letter of hers in the possession of Madame Blavatsky being adduced as proof, the Coulombs would seem to have committed the very curious mistake of inserting a statement for what looks like the specific purpose of indicating themselves as the authors. That they should not only have done this, but have also perpetrated the marvellously subtle fraud of making several slips in the forged document which should be characteristic of Madame Blavatsky's handiwork, is a supposition which, I think, appears in itself somewhat absurd, besides being incompatible with the hypothesis which has been put forward that they forged the letter in order to make mischief between the founders of the Society and Dr. Hartmann and Mr. Lane-Fox; and it is difficult to see what other motive they could possibly have had. In short, the hypothesis that the Coulombs forged the document is fraught with so many great difficulties that I do not imagine any impartial reader will entertain it for a moment, or have any doubt whatever that Madame Blavatsky wrote both the forged document and the Mahatma M. endorsement. Her action in this respect is in harmony with her action throughout, and her object* is not far to

* I have already referred to Madame Coulomb's allegation that at the end of April she wrote to Madame Blavatsky threatening to produce incriminating letters written by the latter.

seek. The remarks in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* for October, 1884, p. 302, are entirely justified :—

"What the whole Press and the Indian public has been quick enough to see was not likely to be concealed from Madame Blavatsky, viz., that the only chance of her rehabilitation lies in Madame Coulomb's letters being proved *forgeries*. How would a person of Madame Blavatsky's genius be likely to parry such a thrust? Not by a mere assertion, but by a proof that forgery is in the air—that attacks upon Theosophy are being made through the forger's pen."

She therefore forged a letter which would indubitably be shown to be a forgery, and which, at the same time, should contain evidence apparently pointing to the Coulombs as the authors. This evidence (the aforesaid phrase about "writing in the dark") appears to me to point on the contrary to Madame Blavatsky herself as the author.

I have not had specimens of the M. writing which would have enabled me to make such a full examination as I have made of the K. H. writing, but I have no doubt that all of the few short specimens which I have had the opportunity of carefully examining may have been, and that some of them unquestionably were, written by Madame Blavatsky. It occurred to me that the first M. writing may have been written by Madame Blavatsky with her left hand, and that she afterwards imitated with her right hand the characteristics thus displayed; and on trying the experiment, making some of Madame Blavatsky's characteristic strokes, I found that several of her peculiarities took the roughened form which I have observed in some of the M. writing. But whether all the M. writing was the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky, or whether some of the earliest specimens were written by Babula under the guidance of Madame Blavatsky—as Madame Coulomb asserts—or whether some other person had some share in their production, my limited acquaintance with the MSS. has not provided me with any means of determining. I observed in some specimens which Mr. Ramaswamier allowed me to see, an instance of Madame Blavatsky's characteristic *k*, with another *k* formed over it, an instance of her terminal *r*, and an instance of her peculiar *x*. In perusing the Mahatma M. document which Mr. Damodar alleged had fallen into his room at Ootacamund, on April 26th, 1884 (see p. 279), I observed the following peculiarities :—

1. There were a capital H and a capital P which were varieties of certain H and P types found both in the K. H. and in Madame Blavatsky's ordinary writings.

2. Many of the *k*'s exhibited a double stroke which, though not a facsimile of Madame Blavatsky's, was very strongly suggestive of her handiwork.

3. The *a* exhibits new peculiarities in the M. writing, but some of the *a*'s here showed the left-gap formation notwithstanding.

4. Several *g*'s exhibited Madame Blavatsky's ordinary left-gap stroke, and in one case the gap had been partially filled up, so that it presented an eminently peculiar appearance, like that shown in the final *a* and *o* of the Group B″. (See Plate I.)

5. In two words the initial *e* had been first made in the common type, and had afterwards been altered into the Greek form.

6. In at least four cases the top of the *r* had been added by an after stroke.

A complete examination of this document might have revealed more resemblances to Madame Blavatsky's ordinary handwriting, but I think those above enumerated are, considering the circumstances of its appearance, enough to justify me in concluding that Madame Blavatsky was the writer.* The substance of the document is certainly much more suggestive of the cunning combined with the inevitable ignorance of Madame Blavatsky in Paris, than of any divine wisdom or knowledge of the supposed "Mahatma M." in India. The K.H. (Y) of March 22nd, and the Ootacamund M. letter of April 26th are not easily explained, except on the view that Mr. Dâmodar wrote the former and Madame Blavatsky the latter; for the documents absolutely contradict each other. But they admit of a satisfactory explanation when we find that on March 22nd Mr. Damodar was doing his best to avoid a rupture with the Coulombs, and that Madame Blavatsky, a week or so later, ignorant of the change of position at headquarters, and ignorant that Messrs. Lane-Fox and Damodar were at Ootacamund, while Dr. Hartmann remained at Adyar, was preparing a Mahatma document to serve as a guard against the disclosure of the trick apparatus, just as she afterwards forged the Hartmann document to ward off the blow which fell in the publication of her own incriminating letters in the *Madras Christian College Magazine*.

Even greater ignorance, or a curious standard of morality, is displayed in another Mahatma document, written to Mr. Hume. It contains a reference to a "young man" to whose rapid spiritual development "K. H." enthusiastically draws Mr. Hume's attention. After referring to the growth of this young man's "inner soul-power and moral sense," &c., K. H. continues:—

"I have often watched that silent yet steady progress, and on that day when he was called to take note of the contents of your letter to Mr. Sinnett,

* The following passage occurs in the document: "She hopes for more than 2,000 Rupees from them, if she helps them ruining or at least injuring the Society," &c. Madame Blavatsky writes, in one of her undoubted letters: "I ask you to do this to help me tracing by the emanations the persons," &c.

concerning our humble selves, and the *conditions* you imposed upon us—I have myself learned a lesson. A soul is being breathed into him, a new Spirit let in, and, with every day he is advancing towards a state of higher development. One fine morning the 'Soul' *will find him*; but, unlike your English mystics across the great Sea, it will be under the guidance of the true *living adept*, not under the spasmodic inspirations of his own *untutored* 'Buddhi,' known to you as the 6th principle in man." *

Mr. Hume appends a note that, at the very time the above passage was written, the young man in question "was systematically cheating and swindling me by false contracts, besides directly embezzling my money."

How far the K. H. letters received by Mr. Sinnett, upon which "Esoteric Buddhism" is confessedly founded, emanated from the brain of Madame Blavatsky, how far she was assisted in their production by confederates, how much of their substance was plagiarised from other writers, are questions which lie somewhat outside my present province. In the light of the incident mentioned by Mr. Hume, where matter furnished by an able native had been used in the preparation of Mahatma documents—we may regard it as not improbable that Madame Blavatsky has obtained some direct or indirect assistance from native learning and native familiarity with Hindu Philosophy; and the "Kiddle incident," where the charge of plagiarism has eventually been admitted, and the fraud attributed to a Chela—is enough to show that "K. H." has not been above pilfering the very language of a lecturer on Spiritualism. But apart altogether from such incidents as these, we must remember that Madame Blavatsky appeared in the last decade as the author of "Isis Unveiled." It is not denied that a similarity of style exists between a number of the K. H. documents and portions of "Isis Unveiled"; the inference made by those who accept the statements of Madame Blavatsky is that she wrote neither; I think it much more probable that she wrote both.

Madame Blavatsky at times writes very strange English, or rather a language which can hardly be called English. This, I believe, she frequently does intentionally, and sometimes with good effect. Thus, towards the close of a long passage in her ordinary handwriting, and in her good English style, she says that it was dictated to her by a "greasy Tibetan," and in what follows immediately afterwards, which of course we are to notice is her own, she lapses into a markedly poorer form

* It is noteworthy that in the same K. H. document the following passage occurs: "Nor can I allow you to be under the misapprehension that any adept is unable to read the hidden thoughts of others without first mesmerising them."

of utterance. I have no doubt that she was fully aware* of the importance of convincing adherents like Mr. Sinnett that she was unable to produce the K. H. writings, and that one of her devices to this end was the speaking and writing of purposely deteriorated English. Her best English style appears to me to be essentially like that of the K. H. writings, especially in the cumbrous and wordy form of sentence which so often appears, in the abundance of parenthetical phrases and in the occasional use of almost *outré* metaphors.

There are, indeed, certain oddities in Madame Blavatsky's English which are not feigned—in spelling, in the division of words at the end of a line, and in grammatical structure; but I find that these occur in the K. H. writings also; where the frequency of dashes, underlinings, and expressions like "please," "permit me," &c., is further suggestive of Madame Blavatsky's work. I admit that some of the quotations which have been published by Mr. Sinnett, from the K. H. MSS., attain a standard of style and reflective thought which I should not expect Madame Blavatsky to maintain continuously through a long series of documents, and I am accordingly not surprised to learn from Mr. Hume, who received a large quantity of the K. H. MSS., and who began the writing of "Esoteric Buddhism," that much of the K. H. writing is considerably below the level of those fragments which have been published, and that the task of eliminating the vast mass of rubbish was exceedingly difficult. I conceive myself that it would be impossible for the writer of the K. H. MSS. now in my possession to substantiate any claim to a familiarity with the principles of either Science or Philosophy, and I see no reason why they should not have been written by Madame Blavatsky herself, without any assistance whatever. To speak about "a bacteria," as K. H. does in one of these documents, is to show a knowledge neither of Biology nor of Philology; and to say, as K. H. does in another of these documents, "that man has a better prospect for him after death than that of turning into carbolic *(sic)* acid, water and ammonia" † shows a lamentable ignorance of the constitution of the *Rupa*, the ordinary human organism, the first of the "seven principles."

It would, however, be a tedious and a useless task to analyse these K. H. documents at length, and I shall now simply give a few instances of those points which admit of a brief illustration. I take the following

* This appears, *e.g.*, in the following sentence of hers in a letter to Mr. Hume, of 1882: "You have either to show me as a champion liar, but *cunning*, *logical* and with a most *phenomenal memory* (instead of my poor failing brains), or admit the theory of the Brothers."

† This reminded me of a passage in the *Contemporary Review* for September, 1876, p. 545: "The man resolves into carbonic acid, water and ammonia, and has no more personal future existence than a consumed candle."

from the *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing*: "Whatever helps restore" [= whatever helps *to* restore]. Also, "You and your colleagues may help furnish the materials." Similarly Madame Blavatsky writes, "to help him publish." The *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing*, as I have already mentioned, is quoted almost in its entirety by Mr. Sinnett, on pp. 85-95 of "The Occult World." But the reader will find that the word *to* is inserted before its verb in Mr. Sinnett's version. I was certainly surprised on finding this, as Mr. Sinnett had written ("The Occult World," p. 69):—

"I shall, of course, throughout my quotations from Koot Hoomi's letters leave out passages which, specially addressed to myself, have no immediate bearing on the public argument. The reader must be careful to remember, however, as I now most unequivocally affirm, that I shall in no case *alter* one syllable of the passages actually quoted. It is important to make this declaration very emphatically, because the more my readers may be acquainted with India, the less they will be willing to believe, except on the most positive testimony, that the letters from Koot Hoomi, as I now publish them, have been written by a native of India."

Yet on comparing the original document, *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing*, with "The Occult World," I find that there are more than *sixty* differences between the two (excluding mistakes of spelling—*her's* and *remarqued*—and excluding also omission of underlinings, changes of punctuation, &c.). Many of these differences consist of words omitted or inserted, others of words changed, and although some of these differences may be resolved into misprints or mis-*copies*, by no means all of them can be explained in this way. For example, in the original document I read: "the difference between the modes of physical (called exact often out of mere politeness) and metaphysical sciences"; but in "The Occult World" (p. 88), *politeness* appears as *compliment*. Again: "Education enthrones skepticism, but imprisons spiritualism"; *spiritualism* in "The Occult World" (p. 94) appears as *spirituality*. *Remarqued* and *politeness* appear to me to be more suggestive of Madame Blavatsky than of the K. H. described to us, whose peculiarities ought to be German rather than French;* and it is curious that Madame Blavatsky, in a letter of last year to Mr. Myers, should have drawn a contrast "between spiritualism and materialism," where *spiritualism* is clearly intended to bear the same meaning as in the passage quoted from the K. H. document. I do not suppose that Mr. Sinnett himself knew anything of these and other alterations, but

* Other mistakes suggesting that the writer was accustomed to French may be found in different K. H. documents; for instance, *montain* for *mountain*, *profond* for *profound*, *vanted* for *vaunted*, *defense* for *defence*, "*you have to beat your iron while it is yet hot.*"

he is certainly chargeable with no ordinary negligence for not having ascertained, after the emphatic and unequivocal declaration which I have quoted, that no copyist or printer's devil or reader had assumed the function of improving Koot Hoomi's English—unless, indeed, we are to suppose that Koot Hoomi *him*(?)self corrected the proof for the press, in which case we ought to have been told that he did so, and how and when it was done. Such exceeding carelessness on the part of Mr. Sinnett has destroyed the confidence which I formerly had that his quotations from Koot Hoomi documents might be regarded as accurately faithful reproductions of the originals.

The following short groups of peculiarities of spelling and mistakes of idiom may be compared :—

Koot Hoomi.	Madame Blavatsky.
Spelling.	
your's, her's	your's
fulfill, dispell	expell
thiefs	thiefs
leasure	deceaved, beseached
quarreling, marshaling	quarreling, quarreled
alloted	cooly (for 'coolly')
in totto	lazzy, lazziness
circumstancial	conscientsciously, hypocricy
defense	defense
&c.	&c.
Division of words at the end of a line.	
incessan—tly, direc—tly	recen—tly, hones—tly, perfec—tly
una—cquainted	cha—nged
fun—ctions	correc—tness
discer—ning, rea—ding, rea—dily	retur—ning, trea—ting, grea—test
po—werless	po—wers
atmos—phere	
des—pite	
corres—pondence	
En—glishman, En—glish	Beacon—sfields
misunders—tood	
&c.	&c.

KOOT HOOMI.	MADAME BLAVATSKY.
Structure.	
'I give you an advice'	'to give as impartial an evidence'—'offering advices'
'who, ever since he is here, has been influencing him'	'for 14 or 15 years that I am "preaching the Brothers"'
'we mortals never have and will agree on any subject entirely'	'they have never and never will rush into print'
'one who understands tolerably well English'	'Olcott says you speak very well English'
'you felt impatient and believed having reasons to complain'	'had he but consented becoming a rascal'
'to take care of themselves and of their hereafter the best they know how'—'the best she knew how'	'and left to do the best I knew how'
'that the world will not believe in our philosophy unless it is convinced of it proceeding from reliable'	'there is not a tittle of doubt for it being so'
'there are those, who, rather than to yield to the evidence of fact'	'the chelas would rather be anyday insulted themselves than to hear insulted'
'in a direct course or along hundred of side-furrows'	'the accursed lecture with hundred others'
their active mentality preventing them to receive clear outside impressions'	'the mediums reproached me with preventing by my presence the "spirits" to come'
'provided you consented to wait and did not abuse of the situation'	'I have never written anything against you that I could fear of being shown to you'
'Immutable laws cannot arise since they are eternal and uncreated, propelled in the Eternity and that God himself—if such a thing existed—could never have the power of stopping them'	'since Eastern and Western ideas of morality differ like red and blue and that you . . . may appear to them as, and more immoral perhaps than they do to you'
'So more the pity for him'	'So more the pity for those'
&c.	&c.

It may seem strange that K. H. should be induced by a "philological whim," to spell "skepticism" with a *k* (*vide* p. 271), and yet make such mistakes in spelling and such remarkable divisions of words as I have instanced above. And throughout the K. H. documents in my hands, expressions abound which can hardly be termed *felicitates*,

though they are certainly *curiosæ*, and which appear to me to be eminently Blavatskian.

What the ethics of a real Mahatma would be we perhaps have no means of judging, but those of Madame Blavatsky's Mahatma certainly are, in some points, those which we should expect would commend themselves to a person engaged in producing fraudulent phenomena. There is evidence in one of the K. H. documents that K. H. actually endeavoured to incite the recipient to what I think every honourable Englishman would regard as a falsehood. The moral is tolerably obvious, and the reader will perhaps rather expect the advanced Chelas of "Mahatmas" to be, by virtue of that very position, untrustworthy individuals. That there are persons whose actions are marked by the highest integrity, and who have devoutly and sincerely believed themselves to be acting under the tutelage of a "Mahatma," I do not for a moment question; though there can be little doubt that there are also instances where Madame Blavatsky has endeavoured to persuade natives to pretend falsely that they were Chelas, and in some cases, as I think I have shown, has succeeded, but in other cases has failed. Mr. Hume has stated to me his conviction, founded on their own confessions, that certain natives had been instigated by Madame Blavatsky to fraudulent assertion of their Chelaship, and to the conveyance of "Mahatma" messages in the guise of Chelas; this would appear also from some of the documents forwarded to me by Mr. Hume; and, quite independently of this evidence, I was assured by an educated native with whom I had a personal interview, that Madame Blavatsky had used her powers—not only of persuasion, but of threatening—to induce him to further her objects, as explained to him, and to play the *rôle* of a dawning Adept. It is, in short, quite certain that there are natives who have charged Madame Blavatsky with inciting them to the fraudulent personation of Chelas of "Mahatmas," and she seems to have worked upon patriotic feeling for the purpose of securing their assistance.

I have now dealt with the main points of the evidence for the alleged marvellous phenomena in connection with the Theosophical Society which were directly associated with my investigations in India, and I regard the details which I have given as sufficient to warrant the conclusion which I expressed at the beginning of my Report, that these alleged marvellous phenomena have been fraudulent throughout. The force of the evidence leading to this conclusion will hardly be appreciated except by those who have followed the accounts given in the Appendices, and it certainly cannot be conveyed in a mere summary. Yet I think it well that the reader should be reminded of the most important considerations which have arisen in the course

of the inquiry, and I shall therefore suggest these once more—in as few words as possible. But, before doing so, there are one or two collateral questions which demand some brief reference.

At the time of our First Report, it appeared to us a serious difficulty in the way of adopting the hypothesis of fraud that we should have to suppose Mr. Damodar to have exchanged, within a comparatively short time, the character of a confiding dupe for that of a thorough-going conspirator. This difficulty was impressed upon us all the more strongly by the account of Mr. Damodar which we received from Colonel Olcott, who stated:—

"His father was a wealthy gentleman occupying a high position in the Government secretariat at Bombay; and the son, besides the paternal expectations, had, in his own right, about 50,000 or 60,000 rupees. The father at first gave his consent to the son's breaking caste—a most serious step in India—so as to take up our work. But subsequently, on his death-bed, his orthodox family influenced his mind, and he demanded that his son should revert to his caste, making the usual degrading penance required in such cases. Mr. Damodar, however, refused, saying that he was fully committed to the work, which he considered most important for his country and the world; and he ultimately relinquished his entire property, so that he might be absolutely free."

The impressiveness of this, however, was considerably reduced by further investigation, which revealed that Colonel Olcott's statement conveyed utterly erroneous ideas concerning the actual facts of the case. From evidence I obtained in Bombay from several witnesses, and from a series of documents which I was allowed to peruse by an uncle of Mr. Damodar, and which consisted partly of letters written by Mr. Damodar, it appeared that his father had been a member of the Theosophical Society, but that he had resigned all connection with it in consequence of the conclusion he had reached that the founders of the Society were untrustworthy. It was also in consequence of this conclusion that he so earnestly entreated his son (not to "revert to his caste," but) to give up his connection with Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott, or at least to live no longer in the same house with them. It was, moreover, in consequence of the opinion which prevailed among some of Mr. Damodar's acquaintances in Bombay to the effect that Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott had sought to gain power over Mr. Damodar for the purpose of obtaining his money—that Mr. Damodar had expressed his desire to relinquish his property. And, according to the provisions of his father's will, he may yet receive the property on certain conditions, of which the primary one is the severance of his connection with the Theosophical Society. I must add that the correspondence to which I refer, which lasted over some months, afforded ample evidence that

Mr. Damodar's father had been painfully impressed by his want of truthfulness and honourable dealing.

At the time when Mr. Damodar desired to give up all claims to the property, he was, I think, not a confederate. When he first began to suspect fraud, I have no means of ascertaining; but as regards the transition from being a dupe to becoming himself a conspirator, there is this to be said.—There can be little doubt that patriotic feeling—which, I believe, has much more to do with the underworking of the Theosophical Society than the followers of Madame Blavatsky in England commonly imagine—was one of the strongest influences which attracted him to the Society, and which afterwards kept him an active worker in the movement. His bitter antipathy to the "conquering race" was sufficiently obvious in those letters of his which I had the opportunity of perusing. To this we must add the fact that he had espoused the Theosophical cause and the claims of Madame Blavatsky with a burning intensity of antagonism to those who alleged that these claims rested on a foundation of dishonesty. It was not easy to confess to the world that the flaming ardour which resisted the tender and wise advice of his father, and perhaps was fed by the importunate cautions and scoffings of his friends, was but the folly of an aspiring youth, who was not quite clever enough for Madame Blavatsky. And, after all, he might have the honour of posing as a Chela, with rapidly-developing powers, and receiving reverence and glory, not only from his native associates, but from Englishmen themselves. In the face of such considerations as these, the psychological revolution in which Mr. Damodar was transformed from a dupe, capable of deceiving his father, to an impostor in the supposed interests of his country, is perhaps not very difficult to understand. There is no necessity for me to give all the results of my inquiries concerning the personal characters and antecedents of those persons whom I regard as confederates of Madame Blavatsky. As Mr. Damodar is the only one of her followers who has deprived himself of any substantial property by his action in connection with the Theosophical Society, or who, in my opinion, can be said to have sacrificed his worldly prospects, I have thought it desirable to draw special attention to the circumstances under which the sacrifice was made.

After reviewing the instances I have given of the unreliability of Colonel Olcott's testimony, some readers may be inclined to think that Colonel Olcott must himself have taken an active and deliberate part in the fraud, and have been a partner with Madame Blavatsky in the conspiracy. Such, I must emphatically state, is not my own opinion, though I should be unwilling to affirm that Colonel Olcott may not, by carrying out supposed injunctions of his "Master," have improperly contributed, either by word or action, to the marvellousness of certain

phenomena. It is clear, for example, from documents in my possession, that the influence of "K. H." has been exerted unsuccessfully in the case of another gentleman, for the purpose of strengthening the evidence for an alleged "occult" phenomenon, and I can well understand that Colonel Olcott may have been induced by the solemn asseverations of his "Master" that certain events occurred, to remember incidents which never happened at all; and how much may have been exacted from his blind obedience it is impossible to determine. Further, his capacity for estimating evidence, which could never have been very great, was probably seriously injured before the outset of his Theosophical career by his faith in Madame Blavatsky, who herself regarded him as the chief of those "domestic imbeciles" and "familiar muffs" to whom she refers in her letters to Madame Coulomb; and writing about him from America to a Hindu in Bombay, she characterised him as a "psychologised baby," saying that the Yankees thought themselves very smart, and that Colonel Olcott thought he was particularly smart, even for a Yankee, but that he would have to get up much earlier in the morning to be as smart as she was. His candour was shown by his readiness in providing me with extracts from his own diary, and the freedom with which he allowed me to inspect important documents in his possession; and he rendered me every assistance in his power in the way of my acquiring the evidence of the native witnesses. Not only so, but observing, as I thought, that Mr. Damodar was unduly endeavouring to take part in my examination of a witness shortly after I arrived in India, he desired me not to hesitate in taking the witnesses apart for my private examination, and he made special arrangements for my convenience. Not unmindful of the opportunities afforded me for investigation by most of the Theosophists themselves, it is with all the more regret that I now find myself expressing conclusions which must give pain to so many of them. But Colonel Olcott himself would be among the first to admit that the interests of truth must not be stopped or stayed by any merely personal feelings, and although in a letter to Madame Coulomb, he implied that his mind could not "be unsettled by any trivial things"—such as, among others, the making of trap-doors and other apparatus for trick-manifestations by Madame Blavatsky—he wrote also :—

> "I do *not* think it right or fair that you should continue to be a member of a Society which you thought flourishing by the aid of trickery and false representation. If I thought my Society *that* I would leave it, and wash my hands of it for ever."

This, however, is a course which probably Colonel Olcott's mind will never be "unsettled" enough to take, and he still apparently continues to believe in the genuineness of the alleged occult phenomena.

CONCLUSION.

I may now draw attention to the main points involved in the foregoing inquiry.

In the first place, a large number of letters produced by M. and Madame Coulomb, formerly Librarian and Assistant Corresponding Secretary respectively of the Theosophical Society, were, in the opinion of the best experts in handwriting, written by Madame Blavatsky. These letters, which extend over the years 1880-1883 inclusive, and some of which were published in the *Madras Christian College Magazine* for September, 1884, prove that Madame Blavatsky has been engaged in the production of a varied and long-continued series of fraudulent phenomena, in which she has been assisted by the Coulombs. The circumstantial evidence which I was able to obtain concerning the incidents referred to in these letters, corroborates the judgment of the experts in handwriting.

In the second place, apart altogether from either these letters or the statements of the Coulombs, who themselves allege that they were confederates of Madame Blavatsky, it appears from my own inquiries concerning the existence and the powers of the supposed *Adepts* or *Mahatmas*, and the marvellous phenomena alleged to have occurred in connection with the Theosophical Society,

1. That the primary witnesses to the existence of a Brotherhood with occult powers,—viz., Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar, Mr. Bhavani Shankar, and Mr. Babajee D. Nath,— have in other matters deliberately made statements which they must have known to be false, and that therefore their assertions cannot establish the existence of the Brotherhood in question.
2. That the comparison of handwritings further tends to show that Koot Hoomi Lal Sing and Mahatma Morya are fictitious personages, and that most of the documents purporting to have emanated from these "personages," and especially from "K. H." (Koot Hoomi Lal Sing), are in the disguised handwriting of Madame Blavatsky herself, who originated the style of the K. H. handwriting; and that some of the K. H. writing is the handiwork of Mr. Damodar in imitation of the writing developed by Madame Blavatsky.
3. That in no single phenomenon which came within the scope of my investigation in India, was the evidence such as would entitle it to be regarded as genuine, the witnesses for the most part being exceedingly inaccurate in observation or memory, and having neglected to exercise due care for the exclusion of fraud; while in the case of some of the witnesses there has been much conscious exaggeration and culpable misstatement.

4. That not only was the evidence insufficient to establish the genuineness of the alleged marvels, but that evidence furnished partly by my own inspection, and partly by a large number of witnesses, most of them Theosophists, concerning the structure, position, and environment of the Shrine, concerning "Mahatma" communications received independently of the Shrine, and concerning various other incidents, including many of the phenomena mentioned in "The Occult World," besides the numerous additional suspicious circumstances which I have noted in the course of dealing in detail with the cases considered, renders the conclusion unavoidable that the phenomena in question were actually due to fraudulent arrangement.

The question which will now inevitably arise is—what has induced Madame Blavatsky to live so many laborious days in such a fantastic work of imposture? And although I conceive that my instructions did not require me to make this particular question a province of my investigation, and to explore the hidden motives of Madame Blavatsky, I should consider this Report to be incomplete unless I suggest what I myself believe to be an adequate explanation of her ten years' toil on behalf of the Theosophical Society. It may be supposed by some who are unfamiliar with her deficiencies and capacities that the Theosophical Society is but the aloe-blossom of a woman's monomania, and that the strange, wild, passionate, unconventional Madame Blavatsky has been "finding her epos" in the establishment of some incipient world-religion. But a closer knowledge of her character would show such a supposition to be quite untenable; not to speak of the positive qualities which she habitually manifested, there are certain varieties of personal sacrifice and religious aspiration, the absence of which from Madame Blavatsky's conduct would alone suffice to remove her ineffably far from the St. Theresa type.

As Madame Blavatsky *in propria personâ*, she can urge her followers to fraudulent impersonations; under the cloak of Koot Hoomi she can incite "her" Chelas to dishonourable statements; and as an accomplished forger of other people's handwriting, she can strive to save herself by blackening the reputation of her enemies. She is, indeed, a rare psychological study, almost as rare as a "Mahatma"; she was terrible exceedingly when she expressed her overpowering thought that perhaps her "twenty years'" work might be spoiled through Madame Coulomb; and she developed a unique resentment for the "spiritualistic mediums," whose trickeries, she said, she "could so easily expose," but who continued to draw their disciples, while her own more guarded and elaborate scheme was in danger of being turned inside out. Yet I must confess that the problem of her motives,

when I found myself being forced to the conclusion that her claims and her phenomena were fraudulent, caused me no little perplexity.

It appeared to me that, even should the assertions of Theosophists that their Society has been partly dependent upon the gifts of Madame Blavatsky prove to be the reverse of truth, the sordid motive of pecuniary gain would be a solution of the problem still less satisfactory than the hypothesis of religious mania. More might be said in support of the supposition that a morbid yearning for notoriety was the dominant emotion which has stimulated and sustained her energetic efforts in the singular channel which they have so long pursued. But even this hypothesis I was unable to adopt, and reconcile with my understanding of her character.

At last a casual conversation opened my eyes. I had taken no interest in Central Asian perplexities, was entirely unaware of the alleged capacities of Russian intrigue, and had put aside as unworthy of consideration the idea—which for some time had currency in India—that the objects of the Theosophical Society were political, and that Madame Blavatsky was a "Russian spy." But a conversation with Madame Blavatsky, which arose out of her sudden and curious excitement at the news of the recent Russian movement upon the Afghan frontier, compelled me to ask myself seriously whether it was not possible that the task which she had set herself to perform in India was to foster and foment as widely as possible among the natives a disaffection towards British rule.* Madame Blavatsky's momentary emotional betrayal of her sympathies in the onset of her excitement was not rendered less significant by the too strongly-impressed "afterstroke" of a quite uncalled-for vituperation of the Russians, who, she said, "would be the death-blow of the Society if they got into India." That she was ever seven years in Thibet there is much reason for disbelieving. In a letter she wrote to a Hindu from America, she professed no more than that she had acquired some occult knowledge from some wandering Siberian *Shamans*, which, being interpreted, probably means, if her statement has any foundation of truth at all, that she learnt their conjuring performances. According to her own account, in one of the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters, it appears that before her acquaintance with Madame Coulomb at Cairo, in 1872, she had been filling a page which she wishes

* There is a special rule in the Society providing for secret membership. Madame Blavatsky's influence is felt, moreover, far beyond the limits of the Society. When she returned to India, at the end of last year, an address of sympathy was presented to her by a large body of native students of Madras, of whom, apparently, only two or three were Theosophists.

to be "torn out of the book"* of her life. This part of her history does not at present concern us, except that it proves the story of her Thibetan experiences to be fabulous. But the letter also refers to her sojourn at Cairo and her later adventures, and it appears that she and a certain Madame Sebire had established a Society in Cairo, which was evidently "spiritualistic," and which failed; that shortly after parting with Madame Coulomb in Cairo, she went to Odessa, taking Madame Sebire, who dragged her into an enterprise of "making some extraordinary inks," which proved a losing speculation; that from Odessa she proceeded to India, where "she remained over eight months, and then returning by Odessa to Europe, went to Paris, and thence proceeded to America," where the Theosophical Society was established. The same letter contains the following explanation to Madame Coulomb, clearly in order that the latter might understand that the new Society was on a different basis from that which Madame Blavatsky had countenanced, in 1872, in Egypt.

"We believe in nothing *supernatural*, and discard every *miracle*—those of the Jewish Bible especially. But we are believers in and students of phenomena, though we do not attribute every manifestation to 'spirits' of disembodied people solely, for we have found out that the *spirit of the living man* was far more powerful than the spirit of a dead person. We have quite a number of members *theosophists* in Ceylon among the Buddhist priests and others.

"How far this agrees with your present ideas I do not know. But I hope you will answer me frankly, dear Mrs. Coulomb, and say what you think of it. And thus we may be able to elucidate more than one mystery before we meet each other again."

It seems, then, that Madame Blavatsky, a Russian lady, the daughter of Colonel Hahn (of the Russian Horse Artillery), and *quondam* widow of General Blavatsky (Governor during the Crimean War, and for many years, of Erivan in Armenia), assisted in starting a spiritualistic Society in Egypt, which failed; that she afterwards spent eight months in India, and then proceeded to America for what

*That this life-page was partly known to Madame Coulomb, and that Madame Blavatsky feared her in consequence, is borne out by the fact that, in a dispute which arose, in 1880, while Madame Blavatsky was at Ceylon, between Madame Coulomb and another member of the Society at its headquarters, then in Bombay, Madame Coulomb boasted of her power. Her boast was apparently justified upon Madame Blavatsky's return. Madame Coulomb was supported by Madame Blavatsky, and therefore also by Colonel Olcott, and the dispute resulted in the withdrawal from the Society of some of the most influential members at Bombay, who regarded the action taken in the matter by the founders as wanting in straightforwardness. I have had personal interviews with some of these ex-members, who consider that the recent exposures of the Coulombs have thrown much light on the formerly mysterious behaviour of Madame Blavatsky and Madame Coulomb in connection with the Bombay episode.

would appear to have been the express purpose of becoming an American citizen, "for the sake of greater protection that the citizenship of this free country affords." The fact, moreover, that she was an American citizen was urged on her behalf when, upon her arrival in India, she was for some time subjected to the surveillance of the Indian Government as being possibly a Russian agent. She apparently made the mistake in the first instance, of adopting "an attitude of obtrusive sympathy with the natives of the soil as compared with the Europeans," as Mr. Sinnett tells us ("The Occult World," p. 25); but she soon remedied this error by obtaining the public adhesion to her following of such men as Mr. A. O. Hume (see p. 273) and Mr. Sinnett. And without attempting to show in detail how strongly the patriotic feeling of the natives has been enlisted in connection with the Theosophical Society, or how well the procedure of Madame Blavatsky may be shown to comport with the view that her ultimate object has been the furtherance of Russian interests, I may quote several passages which, I think, suggest meanings which Madame Blavatsky would hardly dare to blazon on the banner of the Theosophical Society. Thus Colonel Olcott wrote, and apparently italicised the sentence, in a letter from New York to a Hindu, in 1878:—

"*While we have no political designs, you will need no hint to understand that our sympathies are with all those who are deprived of the right of governing their own lands for themselves. I need say no more.*"

Madame Blavatsky wrote to the same person:—

"Is our friend a Sikh? If so, the fact that he should be, as you say, 'very much pleased to learn the object of our Society' is not at all strange. For his ancestors have for centuries been—until their efforts were paralysed by British domination, that curse of every land it fastens itself upon—battling for the divine truths against external theologies. My question may appear a foolish one—yet I have more than one reason for asking it. You call him a Sirdar—therefore he must be a descendant of one of the Sirdars of the twelve mizals, which were abolished by the English to suit their convenience—since he is of Amritsir in the Punjâb? Are you personally acquainted with any descendant of Runjeet Singh, who died in 1839, or do you know of any who are? You will understand, without any explanation from me, how important it is for us, to establish relations with some Sikhs, whose ancestors before them have been for centuries teaching the great 'Brotherhood of Humanity'—precisely the doctrine we teach. * * *

"As for the future 'Fellows' of our Indian Branch, have your eyes upon the chance of fishing out of the great ocean of Hindu hatred for Christian missionaries some of those big fish you call Rajahs, and whales known as Maharajahs. Could you not hook out for your Bombay Branch either Gwalior (Scindia) or the Holkar of Indore—those most faithful and loyal friends of the British (?). The young Gwikovar is unfortunately scarcely weaned as yet, and therefore not elligible for fellowship."

The note of interrogation after the word "British" is Madame Blavatsky's. The above passages are from documents which came into my hands quite independently of the Coulombs. Indeed, I am not aware that the Coulombs even know of their existence. The following passage is from a fragmentary script which forms one of the Blavatsky-Coulomb documents; on one side of the paper are written a few broken lines in Russian, the full significance of which is dubious without their context, and on the other side are written these words:—

military men, more than any other, must remember that the approaching act of the Eastern drama is to be the last and the decisive one. That it will require all our efforts, every sacrifice on our part, and requires far more careful preparations in every direction than did the last war. They must remember, that to sit idle now, when every one has to be busily preparing, is the highest of crimes, a treason to * their country and their Czar."

"He who hath ears let him.

(A facsimile of the manuscript of this passage is given in Plate I.) While I was in India Madame Blavatsky obtained a partial knowledge of the substance of this document (which I had no permission at the time either to show to her or to publish), and she said that it was probably a portion of a translation which she had made from a Russian work, and was not her original composition. Be this as it may, I cannot profess myself, after my personal experiences of Madame Blavatsky, to feel much doubt that her real object has been the furtherance of Russian interests. But although I have felt bound to refer to my own view on this point, I suggest it here only as a supposition which appears best to cover the known incidents of her career during the past 13 or 14 years. That she is a remarkably able woman will scarcely be questioned by any save those of her followers whose very infatuation of belief in her "occult relations" is perhaps the most conspicuous proof of that ability which they deny; and it would be no venturesome prognostication to say that, in spite of recent exposures, she will still retain a goodly gathering of disciples on whom she may continue to inculcate the ethics of a profound obedience to the behests of imaginary Mahatmas. The resources of Madame Blavatsky are great; and by the means of forged letters, fraudulent statements of *Chelas*, and other false evidence, together with the hypothesis of Black Magicians, she may yet do much in the future for the benefit of human credulity. But acting in accordance with the principles upon which our Society has proceeded, I must express my unqualified opinion that no genuine psychical phenomena whatever will be found among the pseudo-mysteries of the Russian lady *alias* Koot Hoomi Lal Sing *alias* Mahatma Morya *alias* Madame Blavatsky.

* The letters "Ru" crossed out in this place may be observed in the facsimile in Plate I.

APPENDIX I.

THE SASSOON TELEGRAM (vide p. 217), &c.

Some of the details which follow, and which serve to explain the extract quoted on p. 211, I have learnt from the oral statements of Messrs. A. D. and M. D. Ezekiel, and the written statements of Mr. Khandalvala shown to me by Dr. Hartmann.

Madame Blavatsky, on her way from Bombay to Madras, in October, 1883, stayed at Poona several days at the house of Mr. N. D. Khandalvala, a member of the Theosophical Society. On October 23rd she dined at the house of Mr. Jacob Sassoon, who was desirous of seeing some "phenomenon." Madame Blavatsky despatched the letter from which the extract is taken, to Madame Coulomb on the morning of the 24th. While driving with Mr. A. D. Ezekiel on the afternoon of the 24th, she expressed her desire to call upon Mr. Sassoon. Probably she intended, when she wrote to Madame Coulomb, to arrange for a conversation with Mr. Sassoon on the afternoon of the 26th, when the subject of the telegram would be mentioned—only, of course, after much entreaty by Mr. Sassoon for some phenomenon; but, finding that Mr. Sassoon purposed leaving Poona on the 25th, she was compelled, if she was to impress him at all, to take the needful action earlier than she had anticipated. On this afternoon, then, of the 24th, after refusing to show Mr. Sassoon any phenomena, she professed, by some "occult" mental process, to get the opinion of Ramalinga's Master; but, having imperfectly heard his answer, she wished mentally, as she said, that Ramalinga should communicate to her the words in writing, that she might satisfy herself that she had heard aright. She wrote down at the time the words she expected to receive, and said that Ramalinga would send a telegram to her at once, or that she might not receive it till after a day or two. The telegram did not arrive till the 26th. Madame Blavatsky's explanation of the delay is that Ramalinga sent on the words late to Mr. Babajee D. Nath, who copied them and gave them to Madame Coulomb to be sent by telegram. This explanation was given to me by Madame Blavatsky, and appears also in the letter professedly written by her on October 26th to Colonel Olcott. Madame Blavatsky was too shrewd openly to lay stress upon the telegram, but I have no doubt, after conversations with Messrs. A. D. and M. D. Ezekiel, who were present at Mr. Sassoon's on the 24th, and at Madame Blavatsky's receipt of the telegram on the 26th, that she wished the occurrence to be regarded as "phenomenal," notwithstanding Mr. A. D. Ezekiel's statement to the contrary in his letter to the *Times of India*.

It may be pointed out in passing that Mr. Babajee D. Nath lends his sanction to Madame Blavatsky's explanation, and thus, the

Blavatsky-Coulomb letters being genuine, implicates himself in the fraud.

The statement made by Madame Blavatsky when the September number of the *Christian College Magazine* appeared in Europe is as follows :—

The third letter, supposed to be written from Poona, is an entire fabrication. I remember the letter I wrote to her from Poona. It asked her to send me immediately the telegram contained in a note from Ramalinga if he brought or sent her one. I wrote to Colonel Olcott about the experiment. He thinks he can find my letter at Madras. I hope to either get back Ramalinga's note to me or obtain a statement of the whole matter from him. How could I make a mistake in writing, however hurriedly, about the name of one of my best friends? The forgers make me address him—"care of H. Khandalawalla"—when there is no such man. The real name is N. D. Khandalawalla.

Now, in the first place, the H originally printed in the *Christian College Magazine* was a misprint or a miscopy for the N in the original document.

As for the letter supposed to have been written to Colonel Olcott, it proves nothing, even were it written at the time it professes to have been written, viz., October 26th, 1883. Colonel Olcott alleges that he found this letter among his papers at Madras on his return thither at the end of last year, though he was unable to tell me how, when, or where he had originally received it. I was afterwards informed by Mr. Damodar that Madame Blavatsky had sent it through him to Colonel Olcott, whom he was accompanying on his tour in 1883. My opinion is that this letter, which was shown to me, is *ex post facto*, and was not written earlier than towards the end of last year. There are two statements in the letter which appear to me to point to its having been written at the later date. One of these is Madame Blavatsky's expression of her deep distrust of the Coulombs; the other is the following:—Madame Blavatsky, after writing that Ramalinga objected to give the words to Madame Coulomb, and gave them to Babajee, who gave them to Madame Coulomb to be sent as a telegram, continues: "I received the telegram to-day, but as it said, 'Master has *just* heard your conversation'—when it was not 'just now' but yesterday that the conversation took place—it was a *glorious failure!*" Now the letter is dated October 26th, therefore "yesterday" would be October 25th. But the conversation took place on October 24th. If the letter was written a year after the events, the mistake is intelligible enough. It was probably concocted after the appearance of the *Christian College Magazine* in Europe, and then—if we are to regard Colonel Olcott as a dupe in the matter—sent to Mr. Damodar for insertion among Colonel Olcott's papers.

I have also seen the letter alleged to have been written by Ramalinga at the time, and it appeared to me to be written, in part at least, in the disguised hand of Madame Blavatsky. It is curious, too, that in this letter Ramalinga is represented as expressing a great dread of Madame Coulomb; and I may say here that my inquiries have not enabled me to discover that Mr. Ramalinga Deb's existence has ever been other than imaginary.

But a more serious flaw in the attempted explanation by Madame Blavatsky yet remains. Messrs. Khandalvala and Ezekiel maintain that Madame Blavatsky could not have written to Madame Coulomb on the 24th *after* the conversation took place at Mr. Sassoon's in time for her letter to reach Madame Coulomb on the 26th. She declares in her statement that she asked Madame Coulomb to send her "immediately the telegram contained in a note from Ramalinga if he brought or sent her one," and from her supposed letter to Colonel Olcott it appears that this expected telegram related to the Sassoon conversation. Hence this alleged request must have been made *before* the aforesaid conversation occurred; and it is apparently not denied by Madame Blavatsky that she did write to Madame Coulomb on the *morning* of the 24th. On Madame Blavatsky's own showing, therefore—if Messrs. Ezekiel and Khandalvala are right concerning the time of the conversation and the subsequent events which prevented her afterwards writing a letter—a specific pre-arrangement must have been made by her for a conversation, the whole point of which was that its subject should have arisen *extempore*.

I may here notice some of Madame Blavatsky's allegations concerning other extracts which I have quoted. These allegations, among others, were published in a pamphlet issued in 1884, by the Council of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society. Against extract (6), p. 213, she said: "There is no 'Maharajah of Lahore,' hence I could not have spoken of such a person, nor have been attempting mock phenomena for his deception." I do not suppose that any one who is familiar with Madame Blavatsky would maintain that she could not have written *les Maharajah de Lahore ou de Benares* simply because there was no Maharajah of Lahore but only of Benares.

Concerning extract (7), p. 213, Madame Blavatsky said: "All depends upon knowing who is 'Christopholo'—a little ridiculous figure in rags, about three inches high; she wrote to say it had accidentally been destroyed. She joked over it, and I too." In reference to another extract (14)—where "Christofolo" occurred, she said: "'Christopholo' was a name by which she [Madame Coulomb] called an absurd little figure, or image of hers. She gave nicknames to everything." And in *B. Replies* she wrote *à propos* of extract (7) (which occurs at the end of a letter about her intended movements for the next few months, and other practical matters), "I deny having written any such thing on that same letter. I remember her telling me in a

letter her magic Christopholo had melted in the sun, and I may have answered her something to that effect. But that after the serious letter that precedes I should write such *bosh* is impossible, not *in my style* at all."

Concerning extract (13), p. 215, she wrote : "I could never, in writing to her who saw the man every day, use all his names and titles. I should simply have said, 'Dewan Bahadur,' without adding 'Rajanath Rao, the President of the Society,' as if introducing to her one she did not know. The whole name is evidently put in now to make it clear who is meant." Now I think it is probably true that Madame Blavatsky would not usually write the full name and titles of Mr. Ragoonath Rao, and I account for her having written them in the present case by supposing that she had just written them in the K. H. hand on the envelope of the Mahatma document she had prepared, and that they were consequently running in her mind.

APPENDIX II.

THE ADYAR SAUCER (see p. 218).

The subjoined account is that of Major-General Morgan himself,* who thinks it sufficiently proves that Madame Blavatsky could not have written letter No. 4 (p. 212)! It should be compared with his earlier account, quoted on p. 218.

In the month of August, 1883, I was obliged to go to Madras on business entirely unconnected with Adyar affairs. Madame Blavatsky was then staying in my house, and urged me to stay at the Adyar during my visit to Madras. This I declined, as the place was too far from my business. She then advised me to see the picture of the Mahatma in the Shrine, as it was a very peculiar work. I replied that I should make a point of going to see the picture, but the day was not mentioned. Two or three days after my arrival at Madras I went to visit the headquarters, and found that the woman Coulomb was out, and was requested by Damodar to await her return. She came in about one hour, having been out shopping in Madras. On my mentioning the purpose for which I had come, she took me upstairs, and, instead of going through Madame Blavatsky's room, we went round outside to the Occult Room, as she stated that the rooms of Madame were locked and the doors blocked up with furniture. On entering the room she hurriedly approached the Shrine or cupboard, and quickly opened the double doors; as she did so, a china saucer, which appeared to have been placed leaning against the door, fell down on the chunam floor, and was broken to pieces. On this she exhibited great consternation, exclaiming that it was a much cherished article of Madame's, and she did not know what she should do. She and her husband, who had come with us, picked up the pieces. She then tied them up in a cloth and replaced them in the Shrine, *in* the silver bowl, not behind it, the doors were shut, and Damodar took up his position on a chair right in front of the Shrine and only a few feet distant from it; he sat

* See Reply by H. R. Morgan, Major-General, Madras Army (retired), to a Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence, by J. D. B. Gribble, M.C.S. (retired).

intently regarding the Shrine and in a listening attitude. I was not then aware, as I am now, of the fact that the astral electric current causes a sound exactly like that of the ordinary telegraph to be distinctly heard in the Shrine; unaware of this, I resumed conversation with the Coulombs regarding the accident, when I remarked that it would be well if he got some mastic or glue and tried to put the pieces together. On my saying this he started to get some, which he said he had in his bungalow, situated about 100 yards from the house, and I, turning to his wife, remarked, "If the matter is of sufficient importance the Mahatmas could cause its repair, if not you must do the best you can." Hardly had I uttered this,* when Damodar said, "There is a message," and he immediately opened the door of the Shrine and took down the silver bowl (in which the letters are generally found), and sure enough there was a note, which on opening contained the following lines :—

"To the small audience present as witnesses. Now Madame Coulomb has occasion to assure herself that the devil is neither as black nor as wicked as he is generally represented. The mischief is easily repaired.—K.H." We then opened the cloth containing the broken saucer, found it intact and whole! *Three*† minutes had not elapsed since I had suggested the glue should be procured! and shortly after Coulomb returned with the glue in his hand. If he could have gone all round the upper rooms, got behind the Shrine, removed the broken saucer, tied up the parcel, having placed a whole one in its stead, and written the note regarding the repair of the saucer (my remark about which he had not heard), then I say his feat rivalled that of the Masters! When I spoke to the woman about the wonderful manner in which the saucer had been restored, she replied, "It must be the work of the devil." Here is her note on the subject, written to Madame Blavatsky, then in Ootacamund. The *printer's* devil has left out a whole line in the letter, which makes nonsense of it, both in Dr. Hartmann's pamphlet and in the copies I have seen (taken from this) elsewhere. Below I give a correct copy.

ADYAR, 13*th August*, 1883.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I verily believe I shall go silly if I stay with you. Now let me tell you what has happened. On my arrival home I found General Morgan sitting in that beautiful office of ours, talking with Damodar and M. Coulomb. After exchanging a few words, I asked whether he would wish to see the "Shrine," and on his answering in the affirmative we went upstairs, passing on the outside, on account of the furniture of your sitting-room being heaped up to block the doors and prevent thieves breaking in.

* In the earlier account General Morgan says: "Five minutes had scarcely elapsed after this remark." This *five minutes* exhibits here a decided tendency to approximate to nothing.—R.H.

† According to the earlier account this interval was considerably longer, being *five* minutes, *together with* an uncertain interval spent partly in conversation, partly in reading the note, &c. But more surprising still than the inconsistencies between General Morgan's two accounts, is the opinion which he apparently holds, that if the phenomenon was fraudulent M. Coulomb himself must have written the Koot Hoomi note,—and must have written it, moreover, in the very interval which has thus dwindled!—R.H.

The General found the portraits admirable, but I wish I had never gone up, because, on my opening the "Shrine," I, Madame Coulomb, who never cares either to see or to have anything to do in these matters, as you well know, must needs go and open the Shrine, and see before her eyes, and through her fingers pass, the pretty saucer you so much cared for.

It fell down and broke in 20 pieces. Damodar looked at me as much as to say, "Well, you are a fine guardian." I, trying to conceal my sorrow on account of General Morgan's presence, took up the *débris* of the cup, and put them in a piece of cloth which I tied up, and placed it behind the silver bowl. On second consideration I thought I had better take it down, *lest some one should throw it down again and reduce it into powder this time.* So I asked Damodar to reach it for me, and to our unutterable surprise the cup was as perfect as though it had never been broken, and more, there was the enclosed note :—

[Then follows the note already quoted from the Master], to which the General added the few lines and signed as an eye-witness.

Now make what you like of this. I say you have dealings with *old Nick.*

Yours ever affectionately,

E. COULOMB.*

There is a discrepancy between my account and that contained in the above letter, as to why the doors of the Shrine were opened the second time; this was done by Damodar of himself and not by the Coulombs' desire. I may here observe that on this occasion everything done by the Coulombs was done mechanically, as if impelled to do certain things, and as directed by me. For instance it was on *my* suggestion Coulomb went for the glue. I remarked that the Masters could repair the saucer if they chose, and it was Damodar who said "there was a message," and opened the Shrine accordingly.

The man Coulomb's assertion, that the saucer was put in at the back of the Shrine: I have shown, that to do this, in the short time allowed him, was simply impossible; numbers have testified to the fact that the back of the Shrine has never been tampered with. In the letter under discussion, I am said to expect a phenomenon "because I told" Madame Blavatsky so. I never did so—I really went to see the picture of the Mahatma. Madame Blavatsky knew perfectly well that I was intimately acquainted with Spiritualism, and knew all about phenomena and had no childish curiosity on that head, therefore she was very unlikely to have thought I wanted one.

APPENDIX III.

COLONEL OLCOTT'S FLOWER VASES.

A window which had originally been in the north wall of the Occult Room was transformed into a cupboard with a secret double back (see Plan, No. 8),

* It is easy to read between the lines of Madame Coulomb's letter, even without her statement that Madame Blavatsky told her to be prudent in what she wrote.—R.H.

allowing objects to be placed within from the adjoining outside passage. This double back was one of the "trap doors" discovered at the time of the expulsion of the Coulombs. Colonel Olcott informed me that one day in 1883, when he was in the Occult Room with Madame Blavatsky, a vase appeared in this cupboard—empty just before—as a gift to Colonel Olcott from one of the Mahatmas. Colonel Olcott apparently wished to duplicate this vase if possible, and made mesmeric passes before the closed door of the cupboard. On re-opening the cupboard a second vase was there, the facsimile of the first.

Madame Coulomb declared that she bought these vases at a shop in Madras, and that they were placed in the cupboard through the double back from outside the Occult Room. The shop where the vases had actually been obtained was, she said, Hassam's, though they were purchased through M. Faciole and Co., Popham's Broadway, Madras. I saw M. Faciole, who remembered accompanying Madame Coulomb to Hassam and Co.; and he Chinese manager at Hassam's, whom I also saw, showed me a pair of vases somewhat similar, as he alleged, to the two pairs purchased by Madame Coulomb. I afterwards requested Colonel Olcott to show me the vases, when he found to his surprise that they were not in his bungalow, and he was unable to tell me when they had disappeared. He sent a few words of inquiry concerning them to Madame Blavatsky, to the main bungalow, about 40 yards distant, and in the meantime gave me a description, which, as far as it went, in shape, height, and style of ornamentation, exactly tallied with the description of the vases Madame Coulomb had purchased at Hassam's.

Madame Blavatsky herself then joined us, and after stormily denying that she had taken the vases, alleged that, after Colonel Olcott had received them from the Mahatma, Madame Coulomb had tried to obtain vases like them, but had failed; that Madame Coulomb had purchased *one pair* of vases *afterwards*, and that these differed in shape, &c., from those received by Colonel Olcott. Madame Blavatsky then proceeded to sketch roughly the vases Colonel Olcott had received, and the sketch differed greatly from the description Colonel Olcott had just given. Moreover, the pair of vases which Madame Blavatsky said had been brought to her by Madame Coulomb had also disappeared as mysteriously as Colonel Olcott's. The only mention of the vases I could find in the books at Hassam's occurred in connection with their payment by M. Faciole and Co., shortly after the date on which Colonel Olcott received them.

Under the date of May 25th (1883) occurs the following entry in the day-book of M. Faciole and Co. :—

	(Rupees.)
"1 Pair Flower Vase	7
1 Pair ,, ,, ...	6."

These items appear in the account to Madame Coulomb, but have been struck out. Madame Coulomb's explanation of this is that she wished them not to appear in the bill rendered to headquarters, and she therefore paid cash for them.

Another entry, under date May 25th, occurs in the receipt-book of M. Faciole and Co. :—

"Received from Assam and Co.—

		(Rupees.)	
1 Pair	Chapan Flower Vase	7	} Sent to Mrs. E. Coulomb."
1 Pair	,, ,, ,,	6	

Madame Coulomb therefore purchased the vases on May 25th; Colonel Olcott received them on May 26th.

Extract from Colonel Olcott's Diary.

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

APPENDIX IV.

STATEMENTS OF WITNESSES CONCERNING THE SHRINE AND ENVIRONMENT.

This Appendix contains the most important evidence which I received concerning the Shrine and its environment. The accounts of "examinations" of the Shrine fairly represent much of the "evidential" material which I gathered from Theosophists in India concerning "occult phenomena" generally. It would be superfluous to print the whole of this material, but such accounts as those of Messrs. Rathnavelu, Rajamiengar, and Unwala, given in this Appendix, may be regarded as typical.

Some of the following statements consist of extracts from replies by Theosophists to a circular inquiry (*vide* p. 223) issued in August, 1884, by Dr. Hartmann, as Chairman of the Board of Control of the Theosophical Society. Others were made in reply to my questions and taken down by me at the time in writing; and in giving these here I have omitted various details, which chiefly regard certain estimated measurements of size, distance, &c., as unnecessarily burdensome to the reader.

Comments of my own are in some cases added in further elucidation of the statements of the witnesses; but there are many instances of inconsistency displayed in the Theosophic evidence which may well be left to the reader's own discernment.

Mrs. Morgan.

In reply to my questions :—When Mrs. Morgan arrived at Adyar early in November, 1883, the wooden door in the room adjoining the Occult Room, which had blocked that portion of the wall immediately opposite the Shrine, had been removed, and a bricked frame was being substituted. This was completely plastered over, so that the whole wall of Madame Blavatsky's bedroom was bare and visible, and there was no aperture of any kind. This smooth wall was then papered in the presence of Mrs. Morgan, the papering being completed about the 15th of December.

Mrs. Morgan did not see the door which had previously occupied part of the space of the wall. This door had been removed in consequence of a

doubt expressed by Mr. G. Mr. G. had placed a sealed letter in the Shrine. The letter disappeared. It was afterwards returned to him with the seal apparently unbroken, and it contained the handwriting of a Mahatma in reply to his letter. Mr. G. was not completely satisfied that the letter might not have been taken out from the back of the Shrine and the letter opened without destroying the seal. Madame Blavatsky hearing of this, wished all doubts to be removed, and hence ordered the wall to be blocked up and covered with chunam.

After this work was completed it was suggested by M. Coulomb that a shelf and sideboard should be made for the room adjoining the Occult Room as a resting place for the dishes which might be passed through the upper part of a closed door issuing from this adjoining room to the terrace. This proposal was made to save the servants' passing through the drawing-room with the dishes, as this adjoining room was at that time used by Madame Blavatsky as her dining-room. This suggestion was welcomed by Madame Blavatsky, who ordered M. Coulomb to make the sideboard "*at once—at once.*" This sideboard was made and placed against the wall opposite to the Shrine. Whether it contained drawers or was opened by a door Mrs. Morgan is unable to recollect. This sideboard remained in that place during the time of the anniversary. It was about three feet high. A plain, single shelf was also made and placed so that dishes could be easily put upon it by the servants through the upper part of the door issuing upon the terrace.

* * * * * * * * *

The Shrine was not removed at any time in the presence of Mrs. Morgan.

Mrs. Morgan thinks that a cupboard or wardrobe which was being made by M. Coulomb for the new rooms might have been adapted for purposes of trickery, and that M. Coulomb's first intention was to prepare trick-panels and cupboards in the new rooms, with the object of throwing discredit on the phenomena, but that he afterwards thought it better to make these trick-panels, &c., appear in the old rooms, where phenomena had already taken place.

She noticed how careful M. Coulomb was in bevelling and trimming the planks, and thought at the time he was a remarkably skilful workman.

She left Adyar on December 31st.

MR. SUBBA ROW (Vakil of the High Court of Madras), in presence of Mr. Damodar.

In reply to my questions:—The Shrine was placed in the Occult Room, in March, 1883.

* * * * * * * * *

Neither Mr. Subba Row nor Mr. Damodar had ever seen the Shrine removed.

* * * * * * * * *

Mr. G. had received a reply to a letter which he had placed in the Shrine, and had afterwards expressed his suspicion that his letter might have been taken out from the shrine at the back and through a panelled door which was on the east side of the wall, and immediately behind the Shrine. Madame hearing of this, caused this panelled door to be removed, and a wooden

bricked frame inserted which was filled with a layer of bricks, and then covered with chunam, so that a bare wall without aperture was formed. This wall was then papered over, and the work was completed about a fortnight before the anniversary, December 27th, of 1883.

A sideboard was made and placed against that part of the wall where the bricked frame had been inserted.

* * * * * * * * *

This sideboard was placed against the wall before the anniversary, and remained there during the anniversary. It was the same sideboard in which M. Coulomb afterwards exhibited the movable back. Mr. Subba Row had never seen the inside of the sideboard before M. Coulomb opened it at the time of the "Exposure."

The panelled door was composed of four pieces of teak wood together with cross-pieces, and resembled the door now fixed in the side of Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room, but he cannot say certainly whether it is the same door or not.

[Mr. Damodar wished to demur to Mr. Subba Row's statement that the sideboard was against the wall before the anniversary. He did not venture to assert so himself, but said that Mr. C. Soubbiah Chetty (whose evidence Mr. Damodar had been very anxious for me to obtain) declared it was not there during the anniversary. Mr. Subba Row nevertheless was perfectly confident on the subject, nor did Mr. Damodar venture any further to dispute Mr. Subba Row's statements. But see Mr. Damodar's evidence, *infra*.]

Mr. St. George Lane-Fox.

In reply to my questions:—Mr. Lane-Fox examined the Shrine carefully at the time of the "Exposure." The Shrine was close to the wall, and muslin and other stuff between the Shrine and the wall.

Mr. Lane-Fox desired my special attention to the fact that an excessive superstition was attached to the Shrine by the natives. The feeling with which they regarded it would absolutely interfere with any careful investigation of either the Shrine or its surroundings. On the occasion of the "Exposure," Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao and others urged strong remonstrances against his proposal to remove the Shrine and examine the wall, and "disturb the sacred things." He insisted, however, upon doing so. He endeavoured to look behind the Shrine, but could see nothing. M. Coulomb had said there had been formerly a hole in the wall just behind the Shrine, and that the "saucer" phenomenon was thus accounted for. Mr. Lane-Fox, therefore, had the Shrine lifted up and he pulled the muslin away, and then some other fabric or "stuff" which was close to the wall. This other stuff [which the tailor who prepared the hangings of the Occult Room asserts to have been white glazed calico tacked to the wall] was joined, not sewn, so that the joining ran down the wall opposite the middle of the Shrine. He examined the wall, which was whitewashed, very carefully, and could find not the smallest trace of the previous existence of a hole.

The hole in the east side of the wall, behind the sideboard, had apparently been made after the sideboard was placed there, and could not be seen at all from outside when the sideboard was closed.

Mr. P. Sreenevas Rao (Judge of the Court of Small Causes, Madras).

August 31st, 1884.

From his reply to the circular inquiry :—The Shrine is a rosewood cabinet, in which are placed the portraits of the two Revered Mahatmas under whose auspices the Theosophical Society is founded, besides certain other articles which are considered sacred. This cabinet is lodged about three feet from the floor at one end of a room—called the Occult Room—on the upper storey of the main building of the headquarters of the Society, and was at first made to rest against a board which completely covered the whole length and breadth of a door which opened into the adjoining hall ; but subsequently, this door having been closed with brick and chunam, the cabinet was allowed to rest against the wall thus formed. But there never was a hole or other communication of any kind between the cabinet and the door or wall behind it, or in any other part of the room. . . . There were phenomena, *i.e.*, in other words, letters put in the Shrine disappeared, and replies were found in their place, even after Madame Blavatsky left Madras,—that is, even after the aforesaid holes had been closed, as alleged by Coulomb ; thus proving beyond a doubt that the holes were not necessary for the production of phenomena. . . .

And lastly, I have to notice the happy circumstance that, subsequent to the above noticed Coulombs' affair, matters are going on in *statu quo* in our Society. After a short suspense in the interval the Shrine was opened to communication as freely as before, and while the founders of the Society are still absent from Madras the Masters are taking away our communications from the Shrine, and vouchsafing their replies through the Shrine and often outside the Shrine, and even outside the Occult Room itself, thus establishing the broad fact that for the exhibition of the phenomena no Shrine or cabinet is necessary, much less any mechanical contrivance, trap-doors of Coulomb's invention . . .

In reply to my questions :—Mr. P. S. Rao thinks that the Shrine was first resting against the planked door, but is not certain, as he never himself put his hands behind the Shrine to feel it. The Shrine was never removed in his presence.

He never heard a ticking sound from the Shrine. The Shrine was close to the wall.

The sideboard in which the panels were shown by M. Coulomb was standing in its position during the anniversary of 1883.

Mr. P. S. Rao does not know of any instance of Shrine phenomena after the expulsion of the Coulombs.

[Concerning Shrine phenomena after Madame Blavatsky left Madras see Report, p. 248, and Appendix XI.]

Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charloo (Ananda) (Official at Headquarters).

In reply to my questions ;—The wooden door which had once been on the east side of the wall behind the Shrine is the same door which is now in the side of Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room.

An almirah (cupboard) was standing for some time before this door in the east side of the wall, and the almirah was sometimes removed to allow sceptics to see that there was no hole to the Shrine.

Mr. G. came and saw the hollow place where some clothes of Madame were hanging, and he thought his letter which he had put into the Shrine might have been taken out there. Madame, hearing of this, had a wooden frame made to fit the gap, with cross-pieces of wood. Bricks in a single layer were then inserted, and the outside covered with chunam. The interior was left hollow at M. Coulomb's suggestion to Madame Blavatsky. Coulomb said that if the space was filled up, the pressure would tell too much upon the roof.

The carpenters say that Coulomb told them only to GLUE the back of the sideboard which was made.

[At first Ananda said that this sideboard thus made was placed against the east side of the Occult Room wall before the anniversary, but afterwards asserted that it was not placed there till after the anniversary, and that during the anniversary there was no sideboard in the room adjoining the Occult Room. In a later conversation I told Ananda that other witnesses asserted that the sideboard was present during the anniversary, and he then said that he did not know whether it was present or not, that he was absent during the anniversary.]

The Shrine itself was never moved in Ananda's presence, and it was close to the wall. There was hardly half an inch of space between the back of the Shrine and the wall.

MR. BABAJEE D. NATH.

August 30th, 1884.

In reply to the circular inquiry:—Having been called upon to state what I know in regard to the Occult Room in the upstairs and its condition on, before, or after the 18th May, 1884, I beg to say that I had before that date examined the Occult Room, the Shrine, and its surroundings several times. I had an interest in so examining, as I wanted to be able to give my unqualified testimony conscientiously to a very prominent sceptical gentleman at Madras, who knows me well and who urged me to state all my experiences about phenomena. Madame Blavatsky herself asked me on several occasions to examine, as she knew my relation to the gentleman. I was also present on the day when Mr. Coulomb gave the charge of the upstairs to our party and when he exposed himself audaciously. I remember very well that, during the last (VIII.) anniversary, I one day tapped well on the papered wall behind the Shrine in various places, and found, from the noise produced, that it was a whole wall. I have tapped on the wall after Coulomb's contrivances, and found that there is a marked difference between the portion of the wall where he has cut open and between other portions of it. The former when tapped produces now the noise of a hollow, incomplete wall; while the latter portion stands the test of tapping. I know more of the phenomena, of Madame Blavatsky, and of the Coulombs than any outsider; I am in so intimate relations at the headquarters that I have been treated with matters of a confidential nature unreservedly. Even Madame Coulomb herself had been along treating me as a real friend, and telling much and often of what she said she would not tell others. I have, therefore, no hesitation at all in stating for a fact that any contrivances whatever, like trap-doors, &c., that are now found had nothing at all to do with Madame Blavatsky, who had not the remotest idea of them. The Coulombs are the

sole authors of the plot. It is worth mentioning here that Mr. Coulomb worked up the walls, set up the doors, and did everything without allowing a single carpenter, mason, or coolie, to go upstairs; and he was furious if any of us went up to see. To prove that Madame Blavatsky was not a party to the scheme, I shall cite one fact. She allowed—nay, requested—Mr. G. Subbiah Chetty Garu, F.T.S., to examine the work done. He went one day to see it. Coulomb was furious, and did not allow him, but drove him out, and told Madame Blavatsky that none of us should go there at all, since he said he was working without clothes alone. This was a mere pretext, as on that occasion he was not so,* and as we have all seen him often with only a pair of dirty trousers. Instances can be multiplied. I must conclude by saying that the "phenomena" of the Mahatmas do not stand in need of Coulombian contrivances, as I have witnessed at different times and different places when and where there were no such trap-doors, and I have seen and know those exalted sages who are the authors of the "phenomena." I can therefore assure all my friends that the Coulombs had got up a "Christian plot" during Madame Blavatsky's absence.

In reply to my questions:—He had seen the boarding on the east side of the Occult Room wall behind the Shrine; said it was not at all like the four-panelled door now in the north side of the sitting-room. [At this moment a Venetianed window caught Babajee's eye. He said the boarding was "like that"—pointing to the window!] He saw the wall bare and intact some time before the anniversary, and saw it completely papered.

The sideboard was not placed there till February at the earliest; it was the same sideboard as was afterwards exhibited by Mr. Coulomb.

The four-panelled door now in the north side of the sitting-room was not set up there till after the anniversary, [in other words] the teak-wood door now in the side of the sitting-room was not there when the phenomenon of "Ramaswamy's arm" occurred.

* * * * * *

Mr. Babajee never saw the Shrine removed, but examined the back of the Shrine before it was set up. There were no panels. There was about 4in. space between the Shrine and the wall, and the wall of the Occult Room throughout was bare and whitewashed.

* * * * * *

[Concerning Mr. Babajee's statement, it may be remarked that the wall upon which he tapped was, by the agreement of all the other witnesses, except Babula, just as hollow during the anniversary as it was after M. Coulomb's "exposure;" that the four-panelled door now in the north side of the sitting-room was clearly there during the anniversary and at the time of the occurrence of the "Ramaswamy's arm" phenomenon, and is identical with the boarding originally on the east side of the Occult Room wall behind

* Supposing Mr. Babajee's account to be correct, the fact which he cites to prove that Madame Blavatsky was not a party to the scheme, shows rather the contrary; it seems not unlikely that M. Coulomb, when the incident which Mr. Babajee relates occurred, was actually engaged in the preparation or alteration of trick apparatus. Madame Blavatsky might well have trusted M. Coulomb to supply a "pretext" for not allowing any one to inspect his work.

the Shrine; that the back of the Shrine was panelled and much closer to the wall than alleged, the wall being, moreover, covered with fabric; and that the sideboard was placed in position before the anniversary. I regard Mr. Babajee's statements about the four-panelled door and the sideboard at least as involving deliberate falsification on his part, so much so that I must regard him as an altogether untrustworthy witness.

It will be seen from Mrs. Morgan's evidence that she left Adyar on December 31st, so that the sideboard must have been placed in its position against the wall behind the Shrine some time in December. Her explicit testimony that it was placed in its position before the anniversary, and remained there during the anniversary, is confirmed by the statements of Dr. Hartmann, Messrs. Subba Row, P. Sreenevas Row, and P. Rathnavelu. Messrs. Ramaswamier and Cooppooswamy Iyer also gave me their testimony to the same effect. As to the four-panelled boarding in the side of Madame Blavatsky's sitting-room, Ananda and even Babula stated that it was that which had previously been at the back of the recess behind the Shrine, and Mr. Subba Row stated that it *resembled* that boarding. The reason mentioned by Mrs. Morgan, Mr. Subba Row, and Ananda for the removal of the boarding from its original position in the recess behind the Shrine, agrees with that alleged by Madame Coulomb ("Some Account," &c., p. 71), *viz.*, that Madame Blavatsky had "heard that some one had hinted at the existence of sliding panels in this massive sham door, which was at the back of the bricked-up window against which the Shrine leant." Against this statement, in my copy of Madame Coulomb's pamphlet, Madame Blavatsky has written the word "NEVER"! In reply to my very definite questioning as to the full significance of this word, Madame Blavatsky asserted that no one had hinted at panels, and that there never had been a boarding. I was so specific in repeating my inquiry that I believe it to have been absolutely impossible that Madame Blavatsky could have misunderstood me, yet her answer was to the same effect as before. Nevertheless, after I had pointed out to her that by denying the existence of the boarding she was irretrievably damaging her own evidence, inasmuch as the statements of Theosophic witnesses clearly established that such a boarding had been against the wall behind the Shrine, she pretended that she had misunderstood my questions, and proceeded to give me a clear and accurate enough outline of the open history of the boarding under discussion.]

BABULA (Madame Blavatsky's native servant).

[Babula, who was near the door part of the time when I was questioning Babajee, gave a similar description of the Shrine and the space between the Shrine and the wall, placing his fingers in the same manner as Babajee, to show me the width of the space between the Shrine and the wall.]

* * * * * *

* * * * * *

In reply to my questions:—There had originally been a window at that part of the wall where the Shrine was placed. This window had been taken away, and the gap bricked up on the Occult Room side, and covered with chunam. The Shrine was placed against this bare wall. On the east side of this part of the wall a plank boarding was erected. This boarding was afterwards taken away and placed in the north side of the sitting-room, and is the same as that to be now seen there.

The plank boarding, when on the east side of the wall of the Occult Room, formed the back of a recess, in which Madame Blavatsky used to hang her clothes.

When the boarding was taken away a frame was made of wood so as to fit the outer edges of this recess; a layer of bricks was placed in this frame, and the whole then covered with chunam. [The hollow of the recess Babula was not sure about; he appeared to be trying to get some cue from Babajee, who was present; said first it had been filled up, but finally said he did not know, but thinks it was filled up.] The sideboard was put against the wall for the first time about the beginning of February. He saw the wall papered over some time before the anniversary.

[See comments on Mr. Babajee's evidence.]

MR. P. RATHNAVELU (Editor of *The Philosophic Inquirer*), Madras.

[He visited Adyar on 14th September, 1884, to inspect the rooms, &c. Dr. Hartmann, Mr. Judge, and Mr. Damodar led him to the Shrine.]

From a letter to the Editor of *The Theosophist*, 21st September, 1884.

I examined it [the Shrine] carefully and with a critical eye of course sometimes touching the several parts thereof with my own hand, to guard myself against any possible illusion of the sight. There was no opening or hole on this side of the cupboard (Shrine) for any one to reach his hand from behind it. It was rather loosely but firmly fixed to the wall, so that one could pass a stick through the space between the back board of the Shrine and the wall to which it is attached. On being satisfied with this portion of the Shrine, I was led into the adjoining room to see the other side of the wall to which the Shrine is attached, and which is alleged to be connected with it by a trap-door or back door. Alas! I was shown an ingenious piece of furniture-like apparatus, standing close to, or I might say even fixed to the mouth of the Shrine, to which was fastened a sliding door which, when opened, led into a small aperture in that wall nearly two by three feet. Inside of this again there was a hollow space, sufficiently large for a lean lad to stand on his legs, if he could but creep into it through the aperture, and hold his breath for a few seconds. I attempted in vain to creep through the opening in the wall myself, and simply stretched out my head with some difficulty into the small hollow to see its internal condition and structure. It had no communication with the back board of the Shrine. At least there was nothing in it to show that there could have been any such thing. From which and other circumstances I thought within myself that the diabolical machinery, for the invention of which the Society is greatly indebted to the genius of Mr. Coulomb, the "Engineer-in-Chief of the Devil," was not finished, as was intended. I was shown also other similar inventions—such as sliding panels, sliding doors, &c., by the selfsame gentleman; all of which bore the stamp of the freshness of unfinished work.

* * * * * *

When I had seen the Shrine and its surroundings on a previous occasion, as stated already, on the 1st April, 1883, there was a large almirah standing against the wall, just on the very spot where Mr. Coulomb has been pleased to put up his machinery trap-door; and it was, if I remember aright, in the

bedroom of Madame Blavatsky. On the occurrence of the phenomenon recorded in *The Philosophic Inquirer* of the 8th April, 1883, which was neither pre-arranged nor premeditated, as will be seen from my report in that journal, I took great care to see that there was no trap-door or opening behind the Shrine on either side of the wall to which it is fixed. The almirah was, at our request to Madame Blavatsky, removed with some difficulty from its place, to allow of the wall on that side being tapped and sufficiently examined by me. I did so, and was then convinced thoroughly that there was no attempt at deception on any one's part.

[Said he had not heard from Mr. Damodar that I was coming.]

In reply to my questions :—Mr. Rathnavelu inspected the Shrine in April, 1883. He did not move the Shrine from the wall. There was muslin between the Shrine and the wall, and there was just space enough to pass a stick up and down between the Shrine and the muslin, the Shrine being about an inch from the wall. He passed the stick up and down in this manner, and it moved freely. When the almirah or cupboard in the room adjoining the Occult Room was removed, there was visible a plastered wall, which sounded hollow. The plaster covered some planking.

[At first I understood that Mr. Rathnavelu clearly admitted that the planking, or blocking door, was visible behind the almirah, but he then stated, on my repeating the inquiry very definitely, that this blocking door was covered with chunam. On my asking how he knew there was a door underneath, he said he had been told so at the time.]

Mr. Rathnavelu also stated that he was present at the anniversary, 27th December, in 1883, and admitted that the sideboard was then present against the wall of the room adjoining the Occult Room.

[The marks of the nails used to keep the plank door in its place are still visible in the recess on the east side of the wall, and it appears clearly that the door was never covered with chunam. Mr. Rathnavelu is quite alone in this peculiar statement.]

Mr. T. C. Rajamiengar (native doctor).

[Extract from an account quoted in the Supplement to *The Theosophist* for November, 1884.]

I have known the Shrine at Adyar since February, 1883. But it was in September, 1883, that I had actually an opportunity of closely examining the structure of the Shrine, so as to see whether the trickery, now pretended to be exposed, had ever any existence. I may say that I entered the room containing the Shrine with the mind of an out-and-out sceptic, indeed, all this time, I may say I was an unbeliever, though I had constantly met the founders of the Theosophical Society, and read much of their writing. What struck me about the doings of the Theosophists was, "What necessity is there for these modern Theosophists to perform their phenomena in a particular locality, and that in a shrine, while our ancient sages did all we have known in open places?" I was soon quieted by an invitation on the part of Madame Blavatsky to inspect the Shrine, and satisfy myself about it.

I shall now give a brief description of the Shrine and its situation in order that the outside public may see whether it is possible that the en-

lightened members of the Society could have been subjected to the trickery that the Coulombs now boast of exposing.

Madame Blavatsky had her sleeping apartment in the hall upstairs in the Adyar premises. There is a door-way leading from this hall to a room where the Shrine is suspended, the Shrine itself (a cupboard as they call it) being on the wall about four feet above the ground. I opened the doors of this Shrine, and found in it some photos and a silver cup and a few other things. I clearly examined every portion of this Shrine from within, tapping with my hands every part of it, and nowhere could I find room for suspicion. Not satisfied with this, I examined the outside of the Shrine, the front and the sides, and the top; and they stood the test. For fear of disarranging the things, I did not move the Shrine about, but what was more satisfactory, I examined the back portion of the wall on which rested the Shrine (which was inside the hall containing Madame Blavatsky's sleeping apartment) and found that there could not be the slightest room for suspicion in any direction, so far as the matter of the structure of the Shrine is concerned.

After this Madame Blavatsky had the kindness to ask if any of us (we were then about five there) had any letter to send to Mahatmas. One of us immediately produced a letter; I took up the cup from the Shrine, having carefully examined it, and the gentleman dropped the letter into it. I placed the cup with the letter in the Shrine, and closed it, as desired by the above lady. Two or three minutes after, Madame Blavatsky, who was standing about two yards off from the Shrine, said she felt an answer came, and on opening the Shrine we found a letter addressed to the sender, containing four pages with not less than 20 lines on each, which would occupy any mortal writer, simply to copy it in, not less than half-an-hour. It must be remembered that there must have been time for one to read the letter, and then to prepare an answer which may take up another 15 minutes. But all this took place in the course of two or three minutes.

I shall now give an account of the so-called trap-door. I found this trap-door in an incomplete state for the first time in June, 1884, a few months after the departure of the founders. It is so small a door that a thin, spare boy of 10 or 12 years could hardly enter through it. It is intended to be understood the phenomenal letters were ushered into the Shrine through this passage, but any one seeing the passage for himself would be convinced of the impossibility of the thing being done.

I must, therefore, take this occasion to represent what I know of these matters to allow Truth to triumph; and I feel it specially necessary now that every one of us should speak out his experience of the Theosophists and their doings, that they may furnish, however lightly it may be, answers to the attacks of the Coulombs upon the conduct of persons too far away to justify themselves.

In reply to my questions:—He had not removed the Shrine from the wall, nor had he examined the back of the Shrine from without or the face of the wall juxtaposed. The wall he examined was in the other room, and was bare and intact where it corresponded to the Shrine.

The letter produced was one which had been previously forwarded to Mr. Damodar to be sent to the Mahatma, and Mr. Damodar placed it in the Shrine.

[The statements of Mr. Rajamiengar are curiously wide of the truth. He describes the wall behind the Shrine in Madame Blavatsky's bedroom as "bare and intact" in September, 1883, whereas at that time the four-panelled boarding was certainly there. Mr. P. Parthasarathy Chetty, who accompanied Mr. Rajamiengar, recollected that "in the room adjoining the Occult Room, there was, immediately behind the Shrine, a door which appeared solid and immovable, and which sounded hollow."

Since the "letter" had been previously forwarded to Mr. Damodar, the answer might have been easily prepared beforehand.]

Colonel Olcott.

It was not until after my investigations had been continued some time, and I had expressed at the Theosophical headquarters my appreciation of the great dearth of evidence for any examination of the west side of the wall behind the Shrine, that on one of my visits to Adyar I was informed that Colonel Olcott had that morning found a letter in his drawer, written in red ink, and said to be from Mahatma M. Colonel Olcott declared that he had entirely forgotten the circumstances to which this note referred until finding it in his drawer. It ran as follows :—

"Henry, now that your fever is cured I want you perform something that will cure it for ever. It would not do for you to have it at Ceylon. Call Babula and a cooly or two and lifting off the cupboard Shrine clean off the wall (you can do so without taking it off its wires or nail), write my sign on that spot of the wall which corresponds with the centre and four corners of the cupboard. The signs must be very small, and thus. [The letter contained a rough sketch of the positions of the marks.] When you return from Ceylon the answers will be there. Copy them. You must not let Upasika see what you have done, nor tell her. Especially keep this secret from the Coulombs."

Colonel Olcott then told me that the finding of this letter had recalled to his mind the fact that he obeyed these instructions. He calculated the date to be December 17th, 1883. He declares that he looked again on a date calculated by him to be February 13th, 1884, and found the wall in the same condition as on December 17th. There was no mention of these events in his diary. Colonel Olcott said there was muslin behind the Shrine, and Babula,—who was summoned by Madame Blavatsky, *not* at my request,—said that he remembered the incident, and that he moved the Shrine, &c., very carefully, because he was afraid Madame Blavatsky would be angry. Colonel Olcott, in reply to my inquiry made at the time when this note was first shown me, said that he thought he must have observed any panel or hollow if there had been such behind the muslin, which he said was moved at the different positions so as to allow him to write the initials. Colonel Olcott's confidence, however, soon increased considerably, and in a later conversation he asserted that he saw the whole bare wall at once after removing the "stuff" between it and the Shrine! The reader however may remember that to see the whole bare wall at once it would have been needful to remove not only the muslin but the other fabric, which, according to the evidence of Mr. Lane-Fox, closely covered the wall immediately behind the Shrine.

Examination of Colonel Olcott's testimony in other cases (see Report, pp. 231-239, analysis of his evidence given before the Committee), even without the discrepancy noted above, is enough to show the impossibility of placing any reliance upon his isolated "remembered" indirect observation of the wall behind the Shrine.

Most probably this Mahatma note is an *ex post facto* document foisted upon Colonel Olcott by Madame Blavatsky. Had it really been written at the close of 1883, it should have been mentioned in Colonel Olcott's detailed diary, and it should have been found by Colonel Olcott immediately on his arrival at Adyar from Europe at the end of 1884, when he professes to have made a careful search through his papers for documents of value as against the Coulombs' charges; nothing, however, was heard of it till the moment when evidence for inspection of the Shrine wall was known to be lacking.

Mr. Damodar K. Mavalankar.

August 18*th*, 1884.

From his first reply to circular inquiry:—As regards the hole [through the sideboard into the recess] . . . in the presence of Dr. Hartmann and Mr. Lane-Fox, I attempted to enter it. All who know me or have seen me are aware how thin and lean I am; and although I was almost half naked at the time, I could enter the "hole" with difficulty. And when once inside I could only stand abreast without being able to move, either way, an inch, or to lift up my hand. I was there hardly 10 seconds when I felt choked, and I am firmly persuaded to believe that if I had stopped there two minutes longer I should have fainted on account of suffocation. And this when the cupboard attached to the hole was removed, and there was passage for air through it. How much more suffocating must it be when there is no such free passage for air? Moreover, the piece of wall on which the "Shrine" was hung is intact. Mr. Coulomb himself told us, on the evening of the 18th, that there was no communication then between that "wall" and the "Shrine." The frame of the "Shrine" was also intact, and there was no sliding panel to it. All this he himself admitted, adding, however, that he had closed them up before Madame Blavatsky's departure from Madras. If so, there are several witnesses to show that the phenomena were witnessed even *in the "Shrine" after Madame Blavatsky's departure*, and when, according to Mr. Coulomb's own admission, the communication between the "Shrine" and the aperture was no longer existing.

August 19*th*, 1884.

From his second reply to circular inquiry:—I had not *myself* examined the wall, nor the *Shrine* for some time; but I was present on several occasions when the various witnesses to the "occult phenomena" had examined them. One or two of these were themselves engineers, and had closely and minutely examined the places. They had scrutinised carefully, in every possible way, the *Shrine*, and had satisfied themselves that it was intact, and had no *panels* or anything of the kind. I say all this because the several examinations in my presence were completely satisfactory, and I had no reason to complain in any way. When some outsiders had made unfavourable observations, I mean those who had never been in the *Occult Room*, Madame Blavatsky had asked me to examine the *Shrine*; and one day, in December or January

last, I well remember Mr. Subba Row and myself very carefully examining the *Shrine* and the *wall*; and we were both satisfied that they were intact. But I must state something before that time. To the other side of the wall, behind the Shrine, was put a wardrobe, which was sometimes removed in the presence of several witnesses, and we had all every reason to be sure that the wall was intact. In July or August last year Madame Blavatsky went to Ootacamund; and shortly afterwards Colonel Olcott, who was then visiting the South Indian Branches, joined her there. During their absence, the key of the *Shrine* and of the *Occult Room* were in my charge, and every week, without fail, I used to take all the things out of the *Shrine*, and clean it myself with a towel, many times in the presence of Madame Coulomb, and sometimes when others were there I used to rub the frame hard with the towel, and if there were any workable panel at that time, it could not but have moved under the pressure. But I noticed nothing of the kind. The whole frame was quite intact, and I can say from positive knowledge that it was so till the middle of September last. Madame Blavatsky then returned to Madras, and I handed the keys over to her. During that period of nearly three months, I had put in several letters in the Shrine, the key being in my possession, and invariably I received replies. It was then, during that period, that General Morgan saw the phenomenon of the broken saucer mentioned by him in *The Theosophist*. . . .

Then he showed us three sliding panels to three pieces of furniture in Madame Blavatsky's room. These were evidently new. They could not be moved without a great deal of effort and a great noise. One of these, moreover, was to a shelf, to be worked from outside, *i.e.*, the passage from the stairs to Madame Blavatsky's rooms. At all times the door of the stairs was open, and any one going up could easily see anyone working it. And, moreover, hardly any phenomena were produced therein. Another of these panels also was to a shelf, to be worked from outside, so that anyone standing on the stairs could see what the person was doing. Moreover, the difficulty and the great noise with which they could be moved distinctly showed their very recent origin and the impracticability of their having been used before.

From Mr. Damodar's Statement concerning the Blavatsky-Coulomb Letters. (Printed in a pamphlet compiled by Dr. Hartmann.)

September 19th, 1884.

But I must say a few words in regard to the Shrine itself. As Mrs. Coulomb always promised to look after the books and furniture of Madame Blavatsky during her absence, the latter always entrusted her with the keys of her room, so that the former might be able to see that none of the books and furniture were damaged. Accordingly, when Madame Blavatsky went to Ootacamund, the keys of her rooms and of the Shrine were as usual handed over to Mrs. Coulomb, with full permission, *to all of us, to use her rooms and things whenever we liked.* It was only in January, 1884, when Madame Blavatsky began to dine in the room next to the Occult Room, that the cupboard was put to the wall, so that dishes, plates, &c., might be put in it. But this piece of furniture came into existence after the phenomena were no longer produced in the Shrine.—[*Vide* pp. 228-231.]

Mr. G. N. Unwala.

Bhaunnagar, *August* 3*rd*, 1884.

Perhaps I may also be allowed to bear testimony as an expert, as the lawyers say, to the genuineness of an occult phenomenon that I was fortunate enough to witness at the Adyar headquarters, where I was a guest for three weeks in May, 1883.

I humbly venture to call myself an "Expert," and I have my grounds for doing so, which I am constrained to enumerate in this place in the interests of truth and of justice to our esteemed and venerable teacher, Madame Blavatsky, against the ill-advised, fatuous, and malicious attacks of our enemies, whose wilful ignorance of our transcendental sciences is as great as their infamous and wicked desire to distort and misrepresent facts for their own self-interest.

I had a scientific education in my younger days, and have never ceased to take a keen interest in all that appertains to the progress of modern scientific researches. For the last 12 years or more I have been a teacher *inter alia* of Natural Science, and have also delivered public lectures on scientific subjects, supplemented and illustrated by experiments of various kinds. When I was in England in 1870, one of my favourite places of resort was the Polytechnic Institution, where, as is well-known, scientific lectures are delivered. One of these lectures, I may mention here, was on "Raising Ghosts," by Professor Pepper; and I may say that I am fully conversant with the appliances and apparatus he used to illustrate his lectures. As a humble devotee of Natural Science, I have studied and lectured upon electric and magnetic phenomena, and although it would be presumptuous—nay, absurd—to say that I "know all about it," yet I may say that I have some experience, theoretical and practical, in manipulating electrical and magnetic apparatus, including the telephone and the microphone. It was but a few days ago that I was established in this city under the patronage of the Maharaja. Besides these pursuits, I may be allowed to state that I have had considerable experience in "Parlour Magic," "Prestidigitation," &c., &c., which, I have always been of opinion, are not only productive of innocent amusement but also of instruction and Natural Science.

As this letter may be published, I hasten to assure you that it is with very great reluctance I make these personal statements to prove the claim I, in all humility, put forth to be looked upon as an "Expert" in the technical phraseology of the Law Courts. I must not be misunderstood—I do not pretend to know much; I am no professor!

In May, 1883, when, as I said above, I was a guest at the headquarters, I had many opportunities of being in the "Occult Room," and of examining it and the Shrine; and once, I remember, at the earnest desire of Madame Blavatsky, before and after the occurrence of a phenomenon, I can safely say, without any equivocation or reservation, that in the "Occult Room," or anywhere within the precincts of the headquarters, I never could find anything, either apparatus or appliances, electric wires, galvanic batteries, telephones, microphones, trap-doors, springs, double walls, resonant tubes, screens, mirrors, magic-lanterns, photogenic solutions, &c., &c., in any way suggestive of "fraud or tricks," as our enemies in their blatant, mischievous self-complacency are fond of designating "Occult" phenomena.

Two more phenomena I have had the good fortune to witness—the ringing of silvered-toned bells and the receipt of a letter from one of our revered Guru Devs, "formed" in a hollow tin model of Cleopatra's Needle. But these took place before Madame Blavatsky at places a thousand miles from the headquarters.

This, then, I know for a certainty, that these phenomena—occult because the *rationale* is not known, not because "unscientific," as our short-sighted enemies would, in their culpable perverseness, have it—are produced by the manipulation of certain forces of nature subtler by far than the subtle "physical forces" of modern science, still imperfectly known and inadequately studied or investigated, as she herself frequently has to confess.

Mr. J. D. B. Gribble.

[From "A Report of an Examination into the Blavatsky Correspondence, published in the *Christian College Magazine*."]

"I was also shown two of the sliding doors and panels, said to have been made by M. Coulomb after Madame Blavatsky's departure. One of these is on the outside of the so-called Occult Room, and the other is on the outside of the sitting-room upstairs. Both of these have been made without the slightest attempt at concealment. The former is at the top of a back staircase and consists of two doors which open into a kind of book-shelf. This gives the idea of having been constructed so as to place food on the shelves inside without opening the door. The other contrivance is a sliding panel which lifts up and opens and shuts with some difficulty. It is evidently of recent construction. Certainly in its present state it would be difficult to carry out any phenomena by its means. In this case also there is no attempt at concealment. Neither of these two appliances communicate with the Shrine, which is situated on the cross-wall dividing the Occult Room from an adjoining bedroom. I was not allowed to see the Shrine."

[Mr. Gribble is not a Theosophist. The preceding passage refers to his visit to the headquarters of the Society, on October 3rd, 1884, and the Shrine had by that time, according to Dr. Hartmann, been destroyed. It would appear from Mr. Gribble's account that the sideboard and the entrance to the hollow space were not shown to him. His account of the "two doors which open into a kind of book-shelf" suggests, moreover, that the double-backed cupboard (see Plan, No. 8) had been altered in some way since the dismissal of the Coulombs, before it was shown to Mr. Gribble. Dr. Hartmann ("Report of Observations," &c., p. 43), after speaking of "three secret openings and sliding panels," describes one of them as "opening into the back of another cupboard or bookcase, whose front was covered by a mirror and which was made accessible from the hall." This is the opening to which Mr. Gribble must be supposed to refer, though he was apparently not informed of the existence of the mirror, and had no opportunity of examining the position from within the Occult Room.

The sliding-panel to which Mr. Gribble refers is that in the four-panelled boarding (Plan, No. 3). This I have myself thoroughly examined, and certainly it could, when I saw it, be opened and shut only with considerable difficulty.

After the boarding had been placed in its present exposed position, it had

been utilised only once, so far as I could ascertain, in the production of a phenomenon. This instance is given in Appendix VI., and it must have occurred very shortly after the boarding was placed in the side of the sitting-room. When we consider that the panel had apparently not been used for about five months previous to the dismissal of the Coulombs, and that for several months afterwards the rooms were in the possession of Mr. Damodar, we should be surprised if Mr. Gribble had found the panel in good working order. Indeed, a little accidental grit would account for the stiffness which we both observed, and there was a considerable amount of dirt resembling the dust of mortar in the hole in the terrace made for the panel to sink into. The panel which slid was the lower east panel, and the wooden block which, according to M. Coulomb, had kept it in its normal position, had apparently been removed. The position of the panel when I saw it was, therefore, perfectly obvious, in consequence of the hole manifest beneath it; but no trace of its sliding capacity was noticeable in the panel itself when it was closed; it was, to all appearance, just as firmly fixed as the other panels. Further, the sliding panel did not seem to me to be of more recent construction than the rest of the boarding, but whether the whole boarding was only six months old or a year, or much longer, I could not have told from my own inspection. The question, however, is decisively enough answered by Theosophists themselves. (See comments on Mr. Babajee's evidence.)

I may here refer to some remarks made by Mr. Damodar (see his evidence quoted in this Appendix) concerning these two pieces of "sliding" apparatus mentioned by Mr. Gribble. According to Mr. Damodar, whose statement on this point is correct, they could be seen from the stairs; and he tells us further that "at all times, the door of the stairs was open." He gives this information in order to show that the apparatus in question could not have been used for the production of phenomena (though he scarcely strengthens his argument by adding that "hardly any phenomena were produced therein"); but it would seem to show more strongly the impossibility of M. Coulomb's having prepared the apparatus at the time he is declared by Theosophists* to have prepared it, *viz.*, in the absence of Madame Blavatsky at Wadwhan, in February, 1884, after she had left Adyar, but before she had left India. The curiously suspicious incident told by Mr. Babajee (see p. 330) occurred while Madame Blavatsky was at headquarters.

Now it would appear that after Madame Blavatsky's departure from headquarters in 1884, the Occult Room and the Shrine were in charge of Mr. Damodar (see Appendix XI.); moreover it is apparently not denied by the Theosophists that workmen were about on the terrace during the interval assigned to M. Coulomb for his secret work, and according to Mr. Damodar the door of the stairs was at all times open. If M. Coulomb under these circumstances could, without the knowledge of any persons at headquarters, have constructed the double-backed cupboard, the panel in the boarding, the sideboard panel, and the aperture into the recess, he would have performed a feat which I should find much more difficult of explanation than all Madame Blavatsky's phenomena together. And the discovery that

*Mr Brown, member of the Board of Control, states that this was "unanimously decided" by the "gentlemen present" at the "disclosure."

a hole in the wall immediately behind the Shrine had previously existed, but had been blocked up, and that the wall face in the Occult Room behind the Shrine had been carefully whitewashed so as to conceal the traces of the hole, would apparently compel the Theosophists to assume that this hole was, under the same circumstances, not only made but actually closed again, and *hidden* so effectually by M. Coulomb in the Occult Room, which was always open to Mr. Damodar, that it was very nearly never discovered at all. And of these alleged marvellous works we should have to suppose that Mr. Damodar, highly-developed Chela of Mahatma Koot Hoomi, remained entirely ignorant ! ! I think, therefore, that not only is there no evidence to establish the non-existence of the apertures and panels in question at the time when phenomena may have been produced by their means, but that an insurmountable difficulty lies in the way of supposing that they could have been manufactured at the time to which their origin is attributed by the Theosophists, and that there can be little doubt that they were made while Madame Blavatsky herself was at headquarters, and under her general instructions.]

APPENDIX V.

MR. G.'S LETTER.

[Mr. G. gave me an oral account of the following circumstances, and afterwards kindly revised my written statement.]

Mr. G. had had several conversations with Madame Blavatsky concerning Theosophy before the occurrence of the following incident. He had not, however, expressed any intention of writing a letter to Koot Hoomi.

On October 14th, 1883, he wrote a letter addressed to Mahatma Koot Hoomi Lal Singh, and after gumming and sealing the envelope, in which he placed the letter, visited the Adyar Headquarters, accompanied by Mrs. G. The letter contained some inquiry as to the advisability of Mr. G.'s joining the Theosophical Society. Having obtained permission to place the letter in the Shrine, Mr. G., with Mrs. G., Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Subba Row, and Mr. Mohini, entered the Occult Room. The Shrine was opened, and Mr. G. was invited to inspect it, which he did from within. No opening of any kind was visible in the back of the Shrine. Mr. G.'s impression is that the Shrine was placed immediately in front of a planked wall or partition which separated the Occult Room in this part from the adjoining room. The Shrine appeared to be resting closely against the west side of this wall or partition, but the Shrine was not moved at all from its position.

After the letter was placed in the Shrine by Mr. G. himself the door of the Shrine was locked, and the key given to Mr. G. Shortly afterwards Madame Blavatsky left the room for a few seconds, and upon returning she asked Mr. G. to go round and examine the eastern side of the wall or partition behind the Shrine. Mr. G. went into the adjoining room (used as a bedroom by Madame Blavatsky) and found that some clothes of Madame Blavatsky were hanging upon the east side of this partition. The partition consisted of teak planking, and appeared to Mr. G., in the cursory examination to which he submitted it, to be of solid construction, and he observed no sliding panels.

It was about 6.30 o'clock in the evening, and the light was good.

Mr. G. does not regard his examination as complete. The presence of Madame Blavatsky's clothes suspended on the partition, inconveniently prevented him from scrutinising it as carefully as he would have liked to have done; and he felt this inconvenience even although Madame Blavatsky herself moved some of the clothes apart and asked him to satisfy himself. They then returned to the Occult Room, and Madame Blavatsky sat down with her back to the Shrine, and drummed with her finger nails upon a small table in front of her. A curious, rapid ticking was also heard apparently from the Shrine, which resembled the ticking heard inside a watchmaker's shop. Madame Blavatsky suddenly asked if he had heard anything. Mrs. G. thought she heard a noise like the shutting of a door, but did not say so at the time, though she afterwards told Mr. G. of this fact. Madame Blavatsky remarked, "I suspect the letter has gone." Mr. G. then opened the Shrine and found his letter had disappeared.

Mr. G. waited some time at the headquarters for an answer to his letter, but at last left without having received one. About two hours later, after dinner, Mr. Mohini came over to Mr. G.'s house (which is about a mile from Madame Blavatsky's), bringing Mr. G.'s letter, upon the envelope of which was written in blue pencil, "Mohini—forward immediately to G. Sahib.—K. H."

Mr. G. examined the envelope, which was sealed with his own signet ring which he always wears on his left hand, and the envelope appeared to him at that time to be intact. He found no trace of the envelope's having been opened. Mr. Mohini said the letter fell in the midst of them at Madame Blavatsky's as they were talking, and that he had immediately set off with it to Mr. G. Mr. G. opened the envelope by cutting the top edge. Upon the fly-leaf of his letter was written an answer to his question in blue pencil, signed K. H.

Mr. G. had previously hoped that he might receive an immediate answer to his letter, and after reviewing the circumstances of the incident, he concluded that there was a possibility that his letter might have been opened in some way or other, after having been taken surreptitiously from the Shrine through the teak-panelled door which he had so cursorily examined.

He therefore wrote another letter addressed to Koot Hoomi, and in it requested that the answer to it might fall in the open air outside his (Mr. G.'s) own house. This letter he asked Mr. Mohini to take, but Mr. Mohini declined to do so; and Madame Blavatsky afterwards wrote to Mr. G., offering reasons why his request could not be complied with.

Since these occurrences, Mr. G. has had no communication with Madame Blavatsky.

Mr. G. kindly permitting me to examine the envelope, I found certain noteworthy peculiarities in the seal-impression. A portion of the wax had adhered to the seal, so that the paper was visible at one point near the centre of the seal-impression. This had been noted by Mr. G. at the time of his making the impression, and the seal at first glance appeared to be entirely intact. The right flap of the envelope, however, appeared crumpled, and a lens revealed a slight crack on the right side of the seal, and also a very

minute fracture on the same side, at the very edge of the wax, beyond the limits of the seal-impression. It seemed as though a very small fragment of wax had been broken away, and close inspection showed that *the right flap of the envelope was not held at all by the wax.* Cutting down the side-edges of the envelope I found the right flap hardly adhering at all to the rest of the paper, and the part which had been covered with gum presented the appearance of having been steamed, or otherwise moistened, though this is somewhat difficult to determine with any certainty. There was also a mark of gum extending considerably beyond the limit of the flap. The appearance suggested that the right flap had been withdrawn, that a small drop of gum had been placed near the edge of the withdrawn flap, and that part of this drop had oozed out beyond the line of the flap when the envelope was pressed after replacing the flap. The colour of this gum was somewhat different from the gum on the opposite flap, being yellower and dirtier than what appeared to be the original gum of the envelope. There was also, as I afterwards found, a mark of what appeared to be gum, in a corresponding position on the enclosed note itself.

Mr. G. has on various occasions handled the envelope, and it may be urged that the seal-impression held all the flap-joinings together when the letter was written more than a year previously. This, of course, cannot be disproved, but it is important to observe that Mr. G.'s attention had not been before given to the possibility that one of the under flaps might be withdrawn as I have suggested, and he was unaware that the seal-impression secured only three of the flaps. This is proved by the fact that he showed me the sealed letter which he had offered to Mr. Mohini, and which he still had in his possession. The right-hand flap of this envelope also was free from the seal-impression in precisely the same way as the flap of the other envelope.

From the appearances described I infer that Madame Blavatsky probably opened the letter in the way implied above.

[P.S.—I had given to Mr. Sinnett in conversation an account of the above incident, and shortly afterwards, at the General Meeting of May 29th, Mr. Mohini informed me that he had heard a description of the case from Mr. Sinnett. Mr. Mohini then proceeded to suggest that Mr. G. had omitted to mention an important circumstance to me, *viz.*, that Mr. G. had attempted, when the letter in question was returned to him, to open it by applying a heated knife-blade to the seal. Mr. Mohini, I inferred, had not heard every detail of the case as above given, and he apparently thought that the disturbance of the seal and the crumpling of the envelope might be accounted for by the attempt which he alleged Mr. G. had made. They could not, however, be thus accounted for, and I felt certain, from my examination of the seal, that no person could have made any attempt to remove it by means of a heated knife-blade. Moreover, I thought it much more probable that Mr. Mohini should have remembered an event which had not occurred, than that Mr. G. should have omitted to inform me of the circumstance alleged. Nevertheless, Mr. Mohini's statement was so explicit that I considered myself bound to mention it at the meeting of June 26th, when I had occasion to refer to the incident. In the meantime I had taken the first opportunity of writing to Mr. G. on the subject, and the following is

his reply of June 25th, which, so far as I am concerned in it, is in exact accordance with my own recollections :—

"Mohini's memory must either have failed him or else he must have wilfully misrepresented the matter to you. I did NOT attempt to open the seal of the letter, which I put into the cabinet, with a heated knife, but I *did* take another *similar envelope* and the same sealing-wax and seal that I had used for sealing that letter, and having sealed the envelope I tried to see if a heated knife-blade would lift the seal and found it would not do so. My wife was present and saw me do this, and now confirms my statement.

"It is not likely that I would do anything to the seal of the original cover of the original letter, and if I had done so I should have told you of the fact and you yourself would have discovered where the wax had been melted by the hot knife-blade.

"The original seal, being made of wax, dropped blazing on the envelope, burnt the paper a little, that is, it singed it brown, as you may remember I told you ; moreover, a small piece stuck to my signet-ring and came away with it, thus rendering it *impossible* to attempt any trifling with the seal by means of heat without my detecting it immediately, while any such attempt on my part would probably have defaced the impression of the signet-ring, which you know was intact and perfect."]

APPENDIX VI.

THE "RAMASWAMY'S ARM" PHENOMENON.

The teak door in its new position (*vide* p. 222), seems to have been utilised in connection with the following phenomenon.

Supplement to *The Theosophist*, February, 1884.

In these days of scepticism and unbelief, the following testimony to a phenomenon, not capable of being explained on any theory of trick or fraud, will be not without use in exciting at least a spirit of calm inquiry in reasonable minds.

On the 24th of November, Mr. S. Ramaswamier and myself both went to the Adyar headquarters at about 9 p.m. We found Madame Blavatsky seated in the verandah in front of the main building conversing with General and Mrs. Morgan and Miss Flynn, then on a visit to the headquarters, and a number of Chelas and officers of the Theosophical Society. After about an hour's conversation there, Madame Blavatsky wished good-night to our European brethren and went upstairs to her own room, asking us to follow her thither. Accordingly we went up. There were seven in all in the room, which was lighted. Madame Blavatsky seated herself facing west on a chair near a window in the north-eastern corner of the room. S. Ramaswamier and myself sat on the floor, one behind the other, right in front of and facing Madame Blavatsky, close by an open shelf in the wall on our left. Babu Mohini Mohun Chatterji, M.A., B.L., (solicitor, Calcutta) Messrs. Babajee, Ananda, and Balai Chand Mallik, also seated on the floor near us, opposite the wall-shelf and facing it. What had originally been a window was closed with a thick wooden plank, which on careful examination I found was immovably fixed to the window frame and thus converted into a

wall-shelf with two cross boards. The plank behind was hung and the boards were covered and ornamented with black oil cloth and fringe. About half-an-hour after conversation began, while S. Ramaswamier was talking about certain important matters concerning himself and the others were listening, a slight rustle of the oil cloth, hanging in the back of the middle compartment of the wall-shelf, was observed by the four gentlemen seated opposite the same. From it, immediately after, was extruded a large hand more brown in complexion than white, dressed in a close fitting white sleeve, holding an envelope between the thumb and the forefinger. The hand came just opposite my face and over the back of S. Ramaswamier's head, a distance of about two yards from the wall, and at a jerk dropped the letter, which fell close by my side. All, except S. Ramaswamier, saw the phantom hand drop the letter. It was visible for a few seconds, and then vanished into air right before our eyes. I picked up the envelope, which was made of Chinese paper evidently, and inscribed with some characters which I was told were Tibetan. I had seen the like before with S. Ramaswamier. Finding the envelope was addressed in English to "Ramaswamy Iyer," I handed it over to him. He opened the envelope and drew out a letter. Of the contents thereof I am not permitted to say more than that *they had immediate reference to what S. Ramaswamier was speaking to us rather warmly about, and that it was intended by his Guru as a check on his vehemence in the matter.* As regards the handwriting of the letter, it was shown to me, and I readily recognised it as the same that I had seen in other letters shown me long before by S. Ramaswamier as having been received from his Guru (also Madame Blavatsky's master). I need hardly add that immediately after I witnessed the above phenomenon, I examined the shelf wall, plank, boards, and all inside and outside with the help of a light, and was thoroughly satisfied that there was nothing in any of them to suggest the possibility of the existence of any wire, spring, or any other mechanical contrivance by means of which the phenomenon could have been produced.

V. Coopooswamy Iyer, M.A., F.T.S.,
Pleader, Madura.

27th November, 1883.

In reply to my questions:—I first questioned Mr. Coopooswamy Iyer alone downstairs. He was very doubtful about the distance of the hand from the wall, and seemed surprised that in his account the distance was given as *two yards*. He said it might be a yard or a yard and a-half. He had not observed anything beyond the hand and part of the arm, had not looked beyond this,—could not say whether it ended in a stick, or in nothing at all. The hand and arm appeared from behind the hangings of the shelf, dropped the letter, and were immediately gone. His examination of the shelf and planks behind appears to have been very incomplete. I took him upstairs and asked him to describe the positions, and to hold his finger at the point which the "hand" reached. Madame Blavatsky was in the room, and requested me to get the tape and measure the distance. The measuring tape was in another room. I observed closely the position of Mr. C. Iyer's finger before I left for the tape. I was away about half-a-minute, leaving Madame Blavatsky talking with Mr. C. Iyer about the position. When I returned the finger was at least a foot further away from the wall. The distance then measured was 4ft. 9in.

I received two accounts within a few minutes from Mr. Ramaswamier as to the respective positions of the sitters, and in his second account both he and Mr. C. Iyer were represented as sitting in places quite two feet nearer the shelf than as described in his first account. Moreover, the words in the letter received by Mr. Ramaswamier were not more specific than might easily have been written before the conversation referred to took place. They were a general injunction beginning "Patience! Patience!"

Mr. Babajee did not see the hand, he was not looking in that direction at the moment. He heard a slight noise and saw the letter on the floor.

Ananda (Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charloo) saw the curtain before the shelf stirring as though a wind was passing. He then saw a hand and arm come out from behind the curtain. It came out about a foot or a foot and a-half, about up to the elbow. The letter fell, and his attention was drawn to the letter. Then hand and arm were gone.

After the sliding panel was shown in the teak door, the defence made was that the arm had come from the *right* side of the shelf, whereas the sliding panel was on the *left* side. I found it perfectly easy, however, to thrust my arm through the gap made when the panel slid, and to turn it in the shelf recess (which was concealed by the curtains) so that it should appear beyond the curtains in front of the right panel instead of the left, and as far forward as described by Ananda. I discussed the discrepancies in the different accounts with Messrs. Ramaswamier and Coopooswamy Iyer; and Mr. Lane-Fox, who afterwards heard of the different accounts, expressed his conviction of the worthlessness of the phenomenon as a test, and assured me that in a later conversation with Madame Blavatsky she admitted that the "phenomenon" probably originated with and was carried out by the Coulombs for the purpose of enabling them afterwards to discredit other "phenomena" more easily. Yet Madame Blavatsky had shortly before been endeavouring to persuade me that the arm must have been "astral," and urging how infinitely impossible it was for the "phenomenon" to have been other than a genuine manifestation of the "occult power," which the initiates of the "esoteric science" are alleged to possess.

According to M. Coulomb it was Babula's hand that appeared, by Madame Blavatsky's instructions. This explanation fits in well enough with Ananda's account.

APPENDIX VII.

ACCOUNTS OF PHENOMENA DESCRIBED BY MR. MOHINI IN HIS DEPOSITION BEFORE THE COMMITTEE (See Report, pp. 239-245).

FIRST AND SECOND ALLEGED ASTRAL APPARITIONS.

Account by Mr. Mohini.

Mr. Mohini: It was in the month of December, 1882, that I saw the apparition of one of the Mahatmas for the first time. I do not remember the precise date, but it can be easily ascertained. It was a few days after the anniversary of the Theosophical Society was celebrated in that year.

One evening, eight or ten of us were sitting on the balcony at the head-quarters of the Society. I was leaning over the railings, when at a distance I caught a glimpse of some shining substance, which after a short time took the form of a human being. This human form several times passed and re-passed the place where we were. I should think the apparition was visible for four or five minutes.

MR. STACK: How far did it appear to be from you?

MR. MOHINI: About 20 or 30 yards.

MR. MYERS: In what way can you be sure that it was not an ordinary person?

MR. MOHINI: From the position in which it appeared. It appeared at a place where there was a declivity in the hill, the house being at the top of the hill. There was also a bend at the spot, so that if an ordinary human being had been walking there it would have been impossible for him to have been seen. I saw the whole figure, however, so that it must have been floating in mid-air.

MR. MYERS: Other persons besides yourself saw it?

MR. MOHINI: Oh, yes. One was Nobin Krishna Bannerji, who is deputy collector at Berhampore, Moorshedabad, Bengal. Another was Ramaswamier, who is district registrar at Madura, Madras. A third was Pundit Chandra Sekhara, who lives at Bareilly, N.W.P.

MR. MYERS: All those witnesses saw the same figure that you did?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. MYERS: Who observed it first?

MR. MOHINI: It was first observed by Ramaswamier and myself.

MR. MYERS: And all agreed that it could not be a real man walking in that way?

MR. MOHINI: Certainly. It seemed to us to be the apparition of the original of the portrait in Colonel Olcott's room, and which is associated with one of the Mahatmas.

MR. MYERS: In fact, Colonel Olcott's Master?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. MYERS: What amount of light was there at the time?

MR. MOHINI: This occurred about half-past nine or ten o'clock on a bright moonlight night.

MR. MYERS: The figure walked up and down?

MR. MOHINI: Yes, and then disappeared.

MR. MYERS: In what way did it disappear?

MR. MOHINI: It seemed to melt away.

MR. STACK: Could you distinguish the features at the distance at which you were?

MR. MOHINI: Oh, yes, and the dress, the turban, and everything.

MR. MYERS: What height did the figure appear to be?

MR. MOHINI: I should think it was six feet or so—a very tall man.

MR. MYERS: Because we heard from Colonel Olcott that his Mahatma was something like 6ft. 5in. in height.

MR. MOHINI: I could not tell exactly, but it was very tall. I had seen the portrait several times. It was the first picture of a Mahatma I had ever seen, so that it made a great impression upon me.

MR. MYERS; When was the second time that you saw an astral appearance?

MR. MOHINI: Two or three days after that. We were sitting on the ground—on the rock, outside the house in Bombay, when a figure appeared a short distance away. It was not the same figure as on the first occasion.

MR. MYERS: In what way are you sure it was not a living man?

MR. MOHINI: You could easily find that out from the colour. This was the same shining colour as before.

MR. MYERS: Did the apparition seem to walk or to float?

MR. MOHINI: It seemed to float. There was no sound accompanying it.

MR. MYERS: You say that it was a shining substance. Was it phosphorescent?

MR. MOHINI: It seemed like phosphorus in the dark. The hair was dark, and could be distinguished from the face.

MR. GURNEY: Going back to the first apparition, it seems somewhat startling to be told that you could recognise the face at such a distance off, and in moonlight. Do you feel sure that if you had seen the face alone you would have recognised it?

MR. MOHINI: I cannot answer that. I saw the whole thing, and the whole thing, taken together, produced upon me the impression that it was the apparition of the original of the portrait in Colonel Olcott's room. Had I seen the face alone, peering out of the dark, I do not know whether I should have recognised it or not.

MR. STACK: Do all the Mahatmas dress alike?

MR. MOHINI: No. Colonel Olcott was present on the first occasion, and, as I have already stated, the apparition that appeared was that of his Master.

MR. MYERS: On the two occasions did all who were present see the apparitions?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. MYERS: Can you give us the names of the persons who were present on the second occasion?

MR. MOHINI: They were the same persons that were present on the first occasion.

MR. MYERS: Did the apparition say anything on the second occasion?

MR. MOHINI: No.

[The following accounts were taken down by me in writing at the time the statements were made to me by the several witnesses. I received also additional description of the spots where the alleged astral figures were said to have appeared. I was thus able to test to a certain extent the accuracy of the accounts, when I visited the old headquarters in Bombay.]

Account by MR. RAMASWAMIER (District Registrar, Madura).

1.

At the end of the following year (1882), at the headquarters at Bombay, several of us were together on the upper balcony. I am unable to recollect any of the others. I suddenly saw, at the distance of about 15 paces, a gleaming substance which assumed the figure of a man. It was not walking on the ground, but appeared to be gliding through mid-air among the top-

most branches of the trees. It glided forwards and backwards four or five times. I could not recognise the person, could not see whether it had a beard or not, cannot say whether it was tall or not. The night was moonlight. Time between eight and nine p.m.

2.

About the same time, at the end of 1882, I was sitting with Madame Blavatsky, Madame Coulomb, Norendra, Janaki, Nobin K. Bannerji, and others in a verandah adjoining Madame Blavatsky's writing-room.

On one side was a hill gradually rising to a top. The hill was covered with thorns. I saw something like a flash of light, and gradually it assumed the figure of a person about 20 feet distant. Time between 7 and 8 p.m. I cannot say whether it was moonlight or not. I did not recognise the figure; cannot say whether it had a beard or not; cannot say whether it had a turban or not. Madame went near the foot of the hill and exchanged some signs with the figure. Madame then went to her room by the path on our side, and the figure went in the direction of Madame's room by the other side.

Afterwards Madame came to us in great excitement and said that one of the delegates had polluted the house, and it was for this reason the figure could not come near us. Shortly after the figure again appeared on the hill, and suddenly vanished, leaving a brightness which gradually faded away.

Account by Mr. Nobin Krishna Bannerji (Deputy Magistrate and Deputy Collector, and Manager-General of Wards' Estates in Moorshedabad, Bengal).

1.

On the occasion of the seventh anniversary, in 1882, one evening before the anniversary celebration, at about 7 p.m., I was sitting in the balcony of the headquarters in Bombay, in company with Norendra Nath Sen, Mohini, Madame, Ramaswamier, and several others. We were talking when Madame said, "Don't move from your seat until I say," or something to that effect. This made us expect that something was about to happen. Some were standing near the railing of the balcony, others were seated a little back. After a few moments those standing near the rails saw something, and made some remarks which induced the rest of the party, excepting myself and Norendra, to get up and go towards the rails, and look at the object. We didn't stir, as nothing further was said by Madame, but kept turning our heads in expectation of seeing something. But we didn't perceive anything. Some four or five minutes after, we inferred from the remarks made, that the others had seen some luminous astral figure walking to and fro below the balcony on the side of the hill. It was not pitch dark. Objects could be seen at a distance, but not distinguished clearly.

2.

The same party with the addition of Mr. Ghosal were sitting together on the north extremity of the bungalow facing the sea, at about 7.30 p.m., when some remark of Madame's made us expect to see something immediately. Shortly after we saw a form standing on a rock close to the adjoining bungalow, about 10 yards distant. The light was about the same

as on the previous occasion. There was no tree near and the figure could be seen clearly. The figure was dressed in a white flowing garment, with a light coloured turban, and a dark beard. The figure was that of a man of apparently ordinary size, but I could not recognise who it was. From my description Colonel Olcott recognised one of the Mahatmas. He mentioned the name, which we afterwards found to be correct, as Madame and Damodar corroborated it. The figure seemed faintly luminous, but I am unable now to recollect any further details concerning its description. The figure gradually vanished, and for a minute or two afterwards the place where it had been seemed to be gleaming with a milky brightness. The rock itself has some date and other trees upon it, but the spot where the figure appeared was bare. The figure was standing still when we saw it.

Account by Mr. Chandra Sekhara (Teacher in High School, Bareilly, N.W.P.).

1.

In 1882 I went to Bombay in November, reaching there on the morning of 26th inst. The anniversary was postponed from November 27th to December 7th. On the evening of the 27th, about 8 p.m., we, *i.e.*, about 10 or 11 of us, including the delegates, were seated in the balcony with Madame B. and Colonel Olcott. Mohini M. Chatterji, Bishen Lall, and Janaki Nath Ghosal were present. We were chatting together, and Madame Blavatsky, with some other brethren, quickly rose up, and looked towards the garden below the balcony. I rose up and looked out, but not in the proper direction. J. N. Ghosal pointed me to the proper quarter, and I saw a luminous figure walking to and fro below the balcony, on the third terrace field. [This was explained to mean that there were two fields and a portion of a third between the speaker and the figure.] Each field is about 10 yards wide. The third field is full of thorny trees, so that it is difficult for a man to walk freely. The trees varied in size, and the foliage occupied a good deal of space. The figure was upright. I saw him walk three times over a distance of about 40 yards, and then disappear. There was no moonlight. The figure appeared nearly 6ft. high, well-built, but I could not distinguish the features. I could not tell whether he had a beard. My sight is ordinary.

2.

The following day we were seated in the verandah near the Occult Room, when Madame said that she felt something extraordinary. The time was between 7 and 8 p.m. Suddenly we saw the luminous body of one who was explained to me to be another Mahatma, on the high rock adjoining the Occult Room. The distance of the figure was about 16 yards. Madame Coulomb was with us. I could not distinguish the features clearly, not sufficient for recognition. I cannot say whether the figure had a beard. As soon as we saw the figure, Madame Coulomb exclaimed, in a nervous manner, "There! There!" And in a minute Colcnel Olcott said, "Madame [Blavatsky], go to the foot of the rock, and talk to the Mahatma." Madame went to the rock, and in a short time after she came back shivering, and said

the Mahatma would be willing to come forward to talk to the audience, but there was some man in our company whose sin was so great that it would be difficult for the Mahatma to approach, and therefore he had to go away. The figure disappeared suddenly before Madame returned.

Account by Mr. J. N. Ghosal (Allahabad).

One evening, at the Bombay headquarters, on the 27th or 28th of November, 1882, about 9 or 10 p.m., Madame Blavatsky, Mohini, Chandra Sekhara, Damodar, Nobin Krishna Bannerji, Norendra Nath Sen, and a few others besides myself, were sitting in the balcony. Some of them had been called there by me, as I was then expecting that some phenomenon would take place. My attention was drawn by a sound among some trees down below, about 10 yards from the balcony. The sound was like the stirring of leaves. Immediately after I saw the tall figure of a man apparently more than 6ft. in height, clad in white, near the trees. It was a clear moonlight night. The figure was well-built. I could not distinguish the features very well, saw something like a beard, but not very distinctly. A white turban was on the head. The figure began to walk backwards and forwards for two or three minutes. Madame Coulomb joined the group, and the figure disappeared, making the same kind of sound, like stirring of leaves, which I heard before the appearance of the figure. But it appeared to me, and a few of those present were of the same opinion, that the figure walked over one of the trees and suddenly disappeared. Not being able to distinguish the features, I inquired of Madame, and was told it was the astral appearance of her Master.

Next morning I went to the spot where the figure appeared, and found the spot so low that any one walking on the ground could not have been entirely seen from the balcony.

[This is the only "astral figure" Mr. Ghosal has seen.]

Account by Mr. Norendra Nath Sen (Editor of the *Indian Mirror*, Calcutta).

I saw the astral figure on the rock at the Bombay headquarters. It was 7 or 8 p.m., and the figure was about 20 yards distant. I recognised no more than that it appeared to be the figure of a man, who came down from the rock and went with Madame Blavatsky into her room.

THIRD ALLEGED ASTRAL APPARITION.

Mr. Mohini: The third instance which I will describe was the last that occurred just before my leaving India. We were sitting in the drawing-room on the first floor of the house at Adyar. It was about 11 o'clock at night. The window looks over a terrace or balcony. In one corner of the room there appeared a thin vapoury substance of a shining white colour. Gradually it took shape, and a few dark spots became visible, and after a short time it was the fully-formed body of a man, apparently as solid as an ordinary human body. This figure passed and repassed us several times, approaching to within a distance of a yard or two from where we were standing near the window. It approached so near that I think if I had put out my hand I might have touched it.

MR. STACK: Did you see the face clearly?

MR. MOHINI: Oh, yes; very clearly.

MR. MYERS: And it was Mr. Sinnett's correspondent?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. STACK: How did you identify him as Koot Hoomi?

MR. MOHINI: Because I had seen his portrait several times before.

MR. STACK: Had you ever seen him in the flesh?

MR. MOHINI: I cannot answer that. I explained to you the reason why I could not. Colonel Olcott can, but I cannot.

MR. MYERS: Are we to understand, then, that, when favours are accorded by a Mahatma for the sake of the Chela's own spiritual advancement, there is a rule which forbids the Chela to describe them, with the view of preventing spiritual pride?

MR. MOHINI: I have not been told the reason, but that is, I believe, the reason.

MR. MYERS: Will you continue your account?

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MR. MOHINI: Oh yes, it passed us slowly until it came to the edge of the balcony, and then it was not to be seen any more.

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MR. MOHINI: Yes.

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MR. MOHINI: The height was 15 or 20 feet, and, moreover, there were people downstairs and all over the house, so that it would have been impossible for a person to have jumped down without being noticed. Just below the balcony there is an open lawn. There were several persons looking at the moment, and my own idea is that it would have been perfectly impossible for a person to have jumped down.

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MR. MOHINI: In the room, with the window open.

MR. MYERS: What light was there on the balcony?

MR. MOHINI: The moonlight, and the figure came to within so short a distance that the light, which was streaming out of the window, fell upon it. This was at the Madras headquarters, about either the end of January or the beginning of February last; in fact, just before I left Madras.

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[See the comments on this case pp. 241-244.]

LETTER RECEIVED AT PARIS.

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MR. STACK: Was the drawing-room between the two bedrooms?

MR. MOHINI: The hall also intervened, I think. To go from one bedroom to another the easiest way was through the drawing-room. Arriving

* I have no doubt that what Mr. Mohini terms the "luminosity" was merely the moonlight reflected from the white robes of the figure. On the "former occasions" there was moonlight, but in this third case there was no moonlight—Mr. Mohini's statement that there was being erroneous. (See p. 244.)

in the bedroom we found Mr. Oakley talking with Madame Blavatsky's Indian servant. Mr. Keightley inquired if Mr. Oakley had called. Mr. Oakley replied in the negative, and Mr. Keightley then returned to his own room, followed by myself. There was a table in the middle of the room occupied by Mr. Keightley. He had passed the edge of the table nearest the door, and was about one foot and a-half distant—I had not yet entered the room—when, on the edge of the table nearest the door, I saw a letter. The envelope was of the kind always used by one of the Mahatmas. Many such envelopes are in my possession, as well as in the possession of Mr. Sinnett and others. The moment I caught sight of it I stopped short and called out to Mr. Keightley to turn back and look. He turned back and at once saw the letter on the table. I asked him if he had seen it there before. He answered in the negative, and said that had it been there he must have noticed it, as he had taken his watch and chain out and put them on the table. He said that he was sure the letter was not there when he passed the spot, as the envelope was too striking not to have caught his sight.

MR. STACK: What are these envelopes? Are they peculiar to the use of Mahatmas? Or are they ordinary Thibetan envelopes?*

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MR. STACK: They are made of paper, and have Chinese characters on them, I think?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. STACK: The reason I ask is that Colonel Olcott, in his conversation, spoke of them, I think, as if they were Thibetan envelopes. I thought they might be in general use in Thibet.

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MR. MYERS: Our object would be to ascertain whether anybody could have placed the letter in the room during Mr. Keightley's absence. Do I understand that while Mr. Keightley was absent from his room yourself, Mr. Oakley, and the Indian servant were in his sight all the time?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. MYERS: Was the outer door of the house closed at the time?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

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MR. MOHINI: I do. The letter was directed to myself, and it was opened in their presence.

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MR. MOHINI: Absolutely impossible. Mr. Keightley was only absent a few seconds.

MR. MYERS: Could nobody have reached the window without a ladder?

MR. MOHINI: Certainly not.

MR. MYERS: Do you remember whether the window was open or not?

MR. MOHINI: Most likely it was not open.

MR. MYERS: Was the yard which you referred to the court-yard of the hotel?

MR. MOHINI: The back court-yard.

MR. MYERS: Had you observed any men moving about in the yard during your stay?

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In reply to my inquiry:—Madame Blavatsky, Mr. Keightley, and Mr. Mohini had been staying together for about 3 days in the rooms in question. The day before the occurrence described, Madame B. had gone to Enghien. Mr. Oakley went frequently to the Paris apartments, and might be expected to call every day. On this particular morning he called at about 11.30 a.m., and after some conversation as to what they should do, they decided to go to Enghien. Mr. Oakley went into a sort of spare room [to shave]. Mr. Keightley went to his own room, and in 2 or 3 minutes came in to Mr. Oakley, and asked if Mr. Oakley had called him. He had heard his name called—Bert. [Bertram.] Mr. Keightley then left Mr. Oakley, and after a short interval returned, and asked him to come and look at something he had received. Mr. Oakley went back with him, and saw

MR. STACK: Did you see the face clearly?

MR. MOHINI: Oh, yes; very clearly.

MR. MYERS: And it was Mr. Sinnett's correspondent?

MR. MOHINI: Yes.

MR. STACK: How did you identify him as Koot Hoomi?

MR. MOHINI: Because I had seen his portrait several times before.

MR. STACK: Had you ever seen him in the flesh?

MR. MOHINI: I cannot answer that. I explained to you the reason why I could not. Colonel Olcott can, but I cannot.

MR. MYERS: Are we to understand, then, that, when favours are accorded by a Mahatma for the sake of the Chela's own spiritual advancement, there is a rule which forbids the Chela to describe them, with the view of preventing spiritual pride?

MR. MOHINI: I have not been told the reason, but that is, I believe, the reason.

MR. MYERS: Will you continue your account?

MR. MOHINI: After a while I said that as I should not see him for a long time, on account of my going to Europe, I begged he would leave some tangible mark of his visit. The figure then raised his hands and seemed to throw something at us. The next moment we found a shower of roses falling over us in the room—roses of a kind that could not have been procured on the premises. We requested the figure to disappear from that side of the balcony where there was no exit. There was a tree on the other side, and it was in order to prevent all suspicion that it might be something that had got down the tree, or anything of that kind, that we requested him to disappear from the side where there was no exit. The figure went over to that spot and then disappeared.

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upon a large round table, about 3 paces from the door of Mr. Keightley's room, a letter. The letter was on the edge of the table, nearest the door. It was addressed to Mohini, and asked him to come with his *friends* to Enghien.

Mr. Oakley is positive that no one was in his own room but himself when Mr. Keightley entered. He believes that Babula was in a small washroom between the two bedrooms, and is certain that Babula was on the same flat. Mr. Oakley volunteered the remark that as a question of strict evidence, the case was vitiated by the presence of Babula in the neighbourhood.

The two bedrooms and washroom opened on the same side into a passage, and Mr. Mohini was in a sitting-room on the other side of the passage. The natural way of passing from one bedroom to the other was along the passage past the washroom.

In a later conversation I learnt from Mr. Oakley that as Mr. Keightley returned to his room, Mr. Mohini passed into Mr. Keightley's room just in front of Mr. Keightley, and first saw the letter. Mr. Keightley explained to Mr. Oakley that the letter was not on the table when he *left* the room, as he had been placing some articles on the table, &c., and must have observed it had it been there. Mr. Oakley remarked that he thought it possible for Babula to have slipped into the room immediately after Mr. Keightley's leaving it, and to have deposited the letter on the table, and departed without having been seen in the act.

Account by Mr. B. Keightley, B.A. (Camb.).

In reply to my inquiries (June 24th, 1885) :—Mr. Keightley says that he was living in the rooms at the time, but that Mr. Oakley arrived unexpectedly, Mr. Keightley being unaware that Mr. Oakley was even in Paris. Mr. Oakley had not been to the rooms previously. Mr. Keightley heard his name called and left his own room to inquire if Mr. Oakley had called him. He proceeded to the room where Mr. Oakley was engaged. There were two ways of entering this room after passing a short distance along the passage upon which Mr. Keightley's room opened.

One way was through the corner of a small dressing-room between Mr. Keightley's room and the room where Mr. Oakley then was ; another way was through the drawing-room where Mr. Mohini was seated. Mr. Keightley is unable to recollect certainly which way was taken by him, and he cannot be certain whether he actually went into Mr. Oakley's room, but thinks he went just inside. After asking Mr. Oakley whether he had called his (Mr. Keightley's) name [Bert], and receiving Mr. Oakley's reply in the negative, he returned immediately to his own room, and Mr. Mohini followed him on his return. Mr. Keightley on returning had entered his room and had not quite passed the table when Mr. Mohini, who was barely inside the door, called out. He was about 3 paces from the table. Mr. Keightley turned round and saw the letter lying on the table, between himself and the door, and at such a distance from him that he could reach the letter by leaning over. Mr. Mohini had not touched the letter, which was lying squarely on the table as though neatly placed there. The letter was beyond the reach of Mr. Mohini. Mr. Keightley had been looking for some object just before leaving his room, and had cleared that end of the table

where the letter appeared, placing moreover his ring and eyeglasses upon the table; so that he is quite certain that the letter was not on the table when he left his room. He feels sure also that the letter must have attracted his attention had it been on the table when he entered his room on returning. Mr. Keightley went back to Mr. Oakley to ask him to come and see the letter, which until then he thinks had remained untouched. Mr. Keightley thinks that Babula was in the dressing-room at the time. This dressing-room opened into the corner room where Mr. Oakley was, but not into Mr. Keightley's room.

After I had read Mr. Oakley's account to him, Mr. Keightley thought he could negative the possibility referred to by Mr. Oakley, that Babula could have placed the letter on the table. Mr. Keightley thinks the time of his absence was so short that Babula could not have escaped being seen by him, somewhere in the room or in the passage, while he was returning.

Account written by MR. KEIGHTLEY, in June, 1884.

On the following day, [May 14th,] Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Judge being both at Enghien, where they had gone the previous day, I was sitting about 10.30 a.m., in the salon chatting with Mr. Oakley and Mr. Mohini. We had decided not to go to Enghien, and the subject had been dropped, when I felt a sudden impulse to go there, This suggestion of a change of plan was accepted after a little hesitation, Mr. Mohini having the same feeling. I therefore went to our room to get ready, and was engaged in arranging my toilette when I thought I heard Mr. Oakley calling me. Going out into the passage, just outside the door, I called to know what he wanted. Finding that he had not called me, I re-entered the room, Mr. Mohini following me from the salon at a yard or two's distance. I had reached the middle of the room when I heard him calling me from the doorway, and turning round I saw him standing on the threshold. I must here state that needing a certain article which I thought was on the table, I had thoroughly searched everything on it, and had cleared a space at the end next the door to put my ring and glasses on.

On turning round then, I at once noticed a Chinese envelope lying as if carefully placed there, on the cleared end of the table next the door. This envelope I at once recognised as being like those used by Mahatma K. H., and also recognised his writing in the address. Having called my friend Mr. Oakley, Mr. Mohini opened the envelope, which contained a long letter from his Master K.H. (of 3 pages), and concluded with an order to him to take Mr. Oakley and myself with him to Enghien for a few hours, thus showing an acquaintance with the question previously under discussion, and also the fact, known only to three or four persons in London, and about the same number in Paris, that my friend Mr. Oakley was then in Paris and actually in the house. Mr. Oakley was staying with some friends about 20 minutes walk distant, while he was in Paris.

THE STRANGE VOICE.

[The following passage from Mr. Mohini's deposition may also be worthy of note.]

MR. MOHINI: There is one other circumstance that I think I ought to state. It seemed to me a crucial test. I was seated one night with Madame Blavatsky

in her room. I had addressed a certain question to one of the Mahatmas, and Madame Blavatsky told me I would have a reply, and should hear the Mahatma's own voice.

MR. GURNEY: Had you asked him before?

MR. MOHINI: Yes, by letter. I had asked him the question; to which Madame Blavatsky said I should have a reply in his own voice. Madame Blavatsky said, "You shall hear his voice." I thought how should I know that it was not Madame Blavatsky ventriloquising. I began to hear some peculiar kind of voice speaking to me from one corner of the room. It was like the voice of somebody coming from a great distance through a long tube. It was as distinct as if a person were speaking in the room, but it had the peculiar characteristic I have indicated. As soon as I heard the voice I wanted to satisfy myself that Madame Blavatsky was not ventriloquising. A word was uttered and Madame Blavatsky would repeat it. It so happened that before she had finished speaking I heard another word uttered by the voice, so that at one and the same time there were two voices speaking to me. Madame Blavatsky, by whose side I was seated, repeated the words for no particular reason, so far as I am aware, and I came to the conclusion that the Mahatma had known what my thoughts were.

[Concerning this incident, I need only remind the reader of the hollow in the wall, which was near the corner of Madame Blavatsky's room. The confederate may have been Babula, previously instructed in the reply, and with a mango leaf in his mouth to disguise his voice.]

APPENDIX VIII.

EXPERIENCES OF MR. RAMASWAMIER.

As considerable importance has been attached to the experiences of Mr. Ramaswamier, it will be best to give the reader full opportunity of judging for himself what they come to. His first sight of a "Mahatma" is described as follows ("Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," No. 1, pp. 72-73):—

[CERTIFICATE.]

"Bombay, December 28th, 9 p.m., 1881.

"The undersigned, returning a few moments since from a carriage ride with Madame Blavatsky, saw, as the carriage approached the house, a man upon the balcony over the *porte cochère*, leaning against the balustrade, and with the moonlight shining full upon him. He was dressed in white, and wore a white *Fehta* on his head. His beard was black, and his long black hair hung to his breast. Olcott and Damodar at once recognised him as the 'Illustrious.'* He raised his hand and dropped a letter to us. Olcott jumped from the carriage and recovered it. It was written in Tibetan characters, and signed with his familiar cipher. It was a message to Ramaswamier, in reply to a letter (in a closed envelope) which he had written to the Brother a short time before we went out for the ride. M. Coulomb, who was reading

*A name by which Colonel Olcott's *Chohan* is known amongst us.—H.X.

inside the house, and a short distance from the balcony, neither saw nor heard any one pass through the apartment, and no one else was in the bungalow, except Madame Coulomb, who was asleep in her bedroom.

"Upon descending from the carriage, our whole party immediately went upstairs, but the Brother had disappeared.

"H. S. OLCOTT.
"DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR."

"The undersigned further certifies to Mr. —— that from the time when he gave the note to Madame Blavatsky until the Brother dropped the answer from the balcony, she was not out of his sight.

"S. RAMASWAMIER, F.T.S., B.A.
"District Registrar of Assurances, Tinnevelly.

"P.S.—Babula was below in the *porte-cochère*, waiting to open the carriage door, at the time when the Brother dropped the letter from above. The coachman also saw him distinctly.

"S. RAMASWAMIER.
"DAMODAR K. MAVALANKAR.
"H. S. OLCOTT."

The following is Mr. Ramaswamier's account of what subsequently occurred to him in the North, published in *The Theosophist* for December, 1882, pp. 67-69. It is abridged from "HOW A 'CHELA' FOUND HIS 'GURU.'" (Being extracts from a private letter to Damodar K. Mavalankar, Joint Recording Secretary of the Theosophical Society.)

"When we met last at Bombay I told you what had happened to me at Tinnevelly. My health having been disturbed by official work and worry, I applied for leave on medical certificate and it was duly granted. One day in September last, while I was reading in my room, I was ordered by the audible voice of my blessed Guru, M——— Maharsi, to leave all and proceed immediately to Bombay, whence I had to go in search of Madame Blavatsky wherever I could find her and follow her wherever she went. Without losing a moment, I closed up all my affairs and left the station." Mr. Ramaswamier then describes how after journeying about, he at last found Madame Blavatsky at Chandernagore, and followed her to Darjeeling. "The first days of her arrival Madame Blavatsky was living at the house of a Bengalee gentleman, a Theosophist, was refusing to see any one; and preparing, as I thought, to go again somewhere on the borders of Tibet. To all our importunities we could get only this answer from her: that we had no business *to stick to and follow her*, that she did not want us, and that she had no right to disturb the Mahatmas with all sorts of questions that concerned only the questioners, for they knew their own business best. In despair *I determined*, *come what might*, to cross the frontier, which is about a dozen miles from here, and find the Mahatmas, or—DIE." He describes how he started on October 5th, crossed the river "which forms the boundary between the British and Sikkhim territories," walked on till dark, spent the night in a wayside hut, and on the following morning continued his journey.

"It was, I think, between 8 and 9 a.m. and I was following the road to the town of Sikkhim whence, I was assured by the people I met on the

road, I could cross over to Tibet easily in my pilgrim's garb, when I suddenly saw a solitary horseman galloping towards me from the opposite direction. From his tall stature and the expert way he managed the animal, I thought he was some military officer of the Sikkhim Rajah. Now, I thought, am I caught! He will ask me for my pass and what business I have on the independent territory of Sikkhim, and, perhaps, have me arrested and—sent back, if not worse. But, as he approached me, he reined the steed. I looked at and recognised him instantly. . . I was in the awful presence of him, of the same Mahatma, my own revered *Guru* whom I had seen before in his astral body, on the balcony of the Theosophical headquarters! It was he, the 'Himalayan BROTHER' of the ever memorable night of December last, who had so kindly dropped a letter in answer to one I had given in a sealed envelope to Madame Blavatsky—whom I had never for one moment during the interval lost sight of—but an hour or so before! The very same instant saw me prostrated on the ground at his feet. I arose at his command and, leisurely looking into his face, I forgot myself entirely in the contemplation of the image I knew so well, having seen his portrait (the one in Colonel Olcott's possession) a number of times. I knew not what to say: joy and reverence tied my tongue. The majesty of his countenance, which seemed to me to be the *impersonation* of power and thought, held me rapt in awe. I was at last face to face with 'the Mahatma of the Himavat' and he was no myth, no 'creation of the imagination of a *medium*,' as some sceptics suggested. It was no night dream; it is between nine and ten o'clock of the forenoon. There is the sun shining and silently witnessing the scene from above. I see HIM before me in flesh and blood; and he speaks to me in accents of kindness and gentleness. What more do I want? My excess of happiness made me dumb. Nor was it until a few moments later that I was drawn to utter a few words, encouraged by his gentle tone and speech. His complexion is not as fair as that of Mahatma Koot Hoomi; but never have I seen a countenance so handsome, a stature so tall and so majestic. As in his portrait, he wears a short black beard, and long black hair hanging down to his breast; only his dress was different. Instead of a white, loose robe he wore a yellow mantle lined with fur, and on his head, instead of a *pagri*, a yellow Tibetan felt cap, as I have seen some Bhootanese wear in this country. When the first moments of rapture and surprise were over, and I calmly comprehended the situation, I had a long talk with him. He told me to go no further, for I would come to grief. He said I should wait patiently if I wanted to become an accepted *Chela*: that many were those who offered themselves as candidates, but that only a very few were found worthy; none were rejected—but all of them tried, and most found to fail signally, especially——and——. Some, instead of being accepted and pledged this year, were now thrown off for a year. . . . . The Mahatma, I found, speaks very little English—or at least it so seemed to me—and *spoke to me in my mother tongue—Tamil.* He told me that if the *Chohan* permitted Madame Blavatsky to go to Pari-jong next year, then I could come with her. . . . The Bengalee Theosophists who followed the 'Upasika' (Madame Blavatsky) would see that she was right in trying to dissuade them from following her now. I asked the blessed Mahatma whether I could tell what I saw and heard to others. He replied in the affirmative, and that, moreover, I would do well to write to you and describe all. . . .

"I must impress upon your mind the whole situation and ask you to keep well in view that what I *saw* was not the mere 'appearance' only, the astral body of the Mahatma, as we saw him at Bombay, but the *living man, in his own physical body.* He was pleased to say when I offered my farewell *namaskarams* (prostration) that he approached the British Territory to see the Upasika. . . . Before he left me, two more men came on horseback, his attendants, I suppose, probably *Chelas*, for they were dressed like *lama-gylongs*, and both, like himself, with long hair streaming down their backs. They followed the Mahatma, as he left, at a gentle trot. For over an hour I stood gazing at the place that he had just quitted, and then I slowly retraced my steps. Now it was that I found for the first time that my long boots had pinched me in my leg in several places, that I had eaten nothing since the day before, and that I was too weak to walk further. My whole body was aching in every limb. At a little distance I saw petty traders with country ponies, taking burden. I hired one of these animals. In the afternoon I came to the Rungit River and crossed it. A bath in its cool waters renovated me. I purchased some fruits in the only bazaar there and ate them heartily. I took another horse immediately and reached Darjeeling late in the evening. I could neither eat, nor sit, nor stand. Every part of my body was aching. My absence had seemingly alarmed Madame Blavatsky. She scolded me for my rash and mad attempt to try to go to Tibet after this fashion. When I entered the house I found with Madame Blavatsky, Babu Parbati Churn Roy, Deputy Collector of Settlements and Superintendent of Dearah Survey, and his Assistant, Babu Kanty Bhushan Sen, both members of our Society. At their prayer and Madame Blavatsky's command, I recounted all that had happened to me, reserving, of course, my private conversation with the Mahatma. . . . They were all, to say the least, astounded ! . . After all, she will not go this year to Tibet ; for which I am sure she does not care, since she saw our Masters, thus effecting her only object. But we, unfortunate people ! We lose our only chance of going and offering our worship to the 'Himalayan Brothers' who—I *know*—will not soon cross over to British territory, if ever again.

"I write to you this letter, my dearest Brother, in order to show how right we were in protesting against 'H.X.'s' letter in *The Theosophist.* The ways of the Mahatmas may appear, to our limited vision, strange and unjust, even cruel—as in the case of our Brothers here, the Bengalee Babus, some of whom are now laid up with cold and fever and perhaps murmuring against the Brothers, forgetting that they never asked or personally permitted them to come, but that they had themselves acted very rashly. . . .

"And now that I have seen the Mahatma in the flesh, and heard his living voice, let no one dare to say to me that the Brothers *do not* exist. Come now whatever will, death has no fear for me, nor the vengeance of enemies ; for what I know, I KNOW !

"You will please show this to Colonel Olcott, who first opened my eyes to the *Gnana Marga*, and who will be happy to hear of the success (more than I deserve) that has attended me. I shall give him details in person.

"S. RAMASWAMIER, F.T.S.

"Darjeeling, October 7th, 1882."

In reference to the above incident on p. 76 of the same number of *The Theosophist*, Mr. Ramaswamier says that he recognised the Mahatma "on account of his great resemblance to a portrait in Colonel Olcott's possession, which I have repeatedly seen."

Now in Mr. Ramaswamier's first experience, that of the figure on the balcony, "the whole force of the evidence," as we remarked in our First Report, "depends on what value can be attached to a recognition by moonlight of a person on a balcony above you. Apart from this recognition, personation through the agency of the Coulombs would appear to be peculiarly easy in this case." Mr. Ramaswamier's account of it, in reply to my questions, is as follows :—

"I had been a member of the Society about two months, when I went to the headquarters at Bombay. After being there 2 or 3 days, Madame came in to me one morning and said I was thinking of something special, and that she had Master's orders to tell me to put it in writing and give it to her. I wrote a letter during the day. Madame asked me to accompany her for a drive—somewhere between 6 and 7 p.m. As we went downstairs to get into the carriage, I gave her the letter. She put it into her pocket, and we immediately got into the carriage. We got out at the telegraph-office, in order that a telegram might be sent to congratulate some friends who were being married. Either the Colonel or Damodar went alone to the telegraph-office, but not out of my sight.

"Madame then said she felt the presence of the Masters at headquarters, and wanted to go back directly. We usually walked up the road towards the house, but on this occasion Madame would not allow us to leave the carriage. As the carriage neared the portico, I saw the figure of a man leaning on the railing of the balcony with a letter between finger and thumb. We all remained motionless for a short time, the figure on the balcony also. The letter was then thrown down by the figure. It fell near the carriage, on the ground. Colonel Olcott got out and took it up, and we all then ran up to the balcony. But no one was there. The night was bright moonlight. The figure was tall, about 6ft., well-built, and the face very handsome. The eyes were very calm and motionless, giving an aspect of serenity. The hair was dark and long, the beard was short. He had a fehta on his head, and did not speak. I had never seen the figure before. Afterwards I recognised the resemblance between this figure and the portrait in possession of the Colonel, which I had not previously seen.

"The letter was addressed to me, and contained words to the effect that every man must have his own deserts, and that if I deserved well of the Mahatmas they would assist me; also that my desire to become a pupil had not been long in existence, and that I should wait to see whether it was a mere passing thought or not. (In my letter I had expressed a desire, among other things, to become a pupil.) This was the whole substance of the letter, in my own words. Time—between 7 and 8 p.m."

During my examination of Madame Blavatsky, concerning some of the letters in Madame Coulomb's pamphlet, Colonel Olcott gave an account of the letter which Mr. Ramaswamier had given to Madame Blavatsky.

According to his account, Mr. Ramaswamier gave the letter to Madame Blavatsky in her own rooms, shortly before dinner. The letter was placed by her on the table, and in a few minutes, on looking for it, it could not be found. Madame Blavatsky confirmed this account; Mr. Damodar also assented to it. Madame Blavatsky was alone with Mr. Ramaswamier at the time, but Colonel Olcott and Mr. Damodar professed to have heard the details shortly after.

I asked Madame Coulomb if she knew anything of this letter. She said that Madame Blavatsky retired to the bath-room, where she (Madame Coulomb) was; that Madame Blavatsky was in a great hurry, saying "Quick! Quick!" and wrote the reply in a few seconds, which she gave to Madame Coulomb, to be dropped by M. Coulomb disguised as a Mahatma. There was ample time for M. Coulomb to have doffed his disguise, and to be found reading "a short distance from the balcony," and I may remark that an expression used by Mr. Ramaswamier seems to me especially applicable to the eyes of a dummy head, like that exhibited to me by M. Coulomb. "The eyes were very calm and motionless, giving an aspect of serenity." The "Mahatma" communication is described as "written in Thibetan characters," and Mr. Hume has informed me that he ascertained that Madame Blavatsky had some knowledge of Thibetan, though how far her knowledge extends he was unable to say, not being himself a Thibetan scholar.

I have had many conversations with Mr. Ramaswamier, and I questioned him closely concerning the "Mahatma" he saw on the borders of Thibet. A loose robe covered most of the Mahatma's body. The feet and legs were not bare. The feet were enveloped in a sort of leather used in that district. The Mahatma talked to him for about half-an-hour, spoke to him of Chelas who had failed, of the duties of a Chela,—told him he should work for the Theosophical Society, and gave him certain communications by which persons in high standing in the Society could be assured he had seen the Master himself. Among these persons was Colonel Olcott, and I understood that the knowledge communicated implied something equivalent to a password.

Mr. Ramaswamier could not describe the Chelas, who passed quickly on horseback.

I see no improbability in supposing that the Mahatma was personated by one of Madame Blavatsky's confederates, and it is not impossible that Mr. Babajee and Mr. Casava Pillai may have been concerned in the scheme, as Madame Coulomb implies in her pamphlet. They are both familiar with districts where Tamil is commonly spoken. Mr. Babajee had not been accused of actually playing the Mahatma on that occasion, but he was nevertheless particularly anxious to prove to me how absurd it was that he, the little Mr. Babajee, could be mistaken for a majestic Mahatma. Mr. Casava Pillai, who had been on a contemporaneous visit to the North, I have not had an opportunity of cross-examining; but I obtained incidentally some curious information from Mr. Muruganunthum Pillai, who was present when Madame Blavatsky was conversing with his brother-in-law, Mr. Casava, after the latter's return from the North and when he was on a visit to Madras. Madame Blavatsky had "chaffed" Mr. Casava Pillai on the loss of his beard. Upon inquiry I learnt that Mr. Casava Pillai habitually

wore no beard; he seems, therefore, to have temporarily acquired a beard in the course of his journey north! Mr. Damodar, who was present when I was questioning Mr. Muruganunthum Pillai, was evidently disconcerted when this piece of suggestive conversation was innocently reproduced by the witness. It appeared to us in our First Report that "hallucination" would be an easier hypothesis to apply to Mr. Ramaswamier's experience than "personation"; but my acquaintance with Mr. Ramaswamier, taken with the evidence for the reverence displayed by the natives towards the "Mahatmas," which would interfere with any careful scrutiny, has convinced me that he might easily have been deceived by a confederate of Madame Blavatsky's in disguise.

APPENDIX IX.

EVIDENCE OF MR. MARTANDRAO B. NAGNATH, &c.

From "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," No. 1, p. 103.

"On another night a Brother came in his own physical body, walking through the lower garden (attached to Colonel Olcott's bungalow) and stood quiet. Madame Blavatsky then went down the wooden staircase leading into the garden. He shook hands with her and gave her a packet. After a short time the Brother *disappeared on the spot*, and Madame coming up the stairs opened the packet and found in it a letter from Allahabad. We saw the envelope was quite blank, *i.e.*, unaddressed, but it bore a triangular stamp of Allahabad Post Office of December the 3rd, 1881, and also a circular postal stamp of the Bombay Post Office of *the same date, viz.*, 3rd December. The two cities are 860 miles apart.

"I have seen letters, or rather envelopes containing letters, coming or falling from the air in different places, without anybody's contact, in presence of both Theosophists and strangers. Their contents related to subjects that had been the topics of our conversation at the moment.

"Now I aver in good faith I saw the Brothers of the first section and phenomena, in such places and times, and under such circumstances, that there could be no possibility of anybody playing a trick.

"MARTANDRAO BABAJI NAGNATH.

"Bombay, 14th February, 1882."

In our First Report we said, with regard to this statement, that we thought it must "be regarded as of small value, because postmarks can be imitated, and it seems improbable that an unaddressed letter would have been stamped at the post-office and not subsequently missed. It is, of course, curious that a Brother should seem to 'disappear on the spot,' but Mr. Martandrao does not seem to have been very near. It seems curious in another way, that the 'brother' should think it worth while to have the letter stamped at the post-office, when he was going to deliver it himself." Its value has certainly not been increased by Mr. Martandrao's later account in reply to my inquiries. He said:—

"One day we were sitting in the small verandah at Bombay. There were present Madame, Bhavani Shankar, Mullwarman Nathwarman, and myself.

We were talking on various subjects with Madame. Madame's attention on a sudden was abstracted. She stood up and began to stare far towards the sea. After looking for a while, she sat down and went on talking. This happened twice or thrice. There was no moonlight ; a clear starlight night. Talking was going on. On a sudden, at about 10 or 11 at night, a white clad figure was coming through the garden from the brow of the hill [down which, Colonel Olcott interposed, there was no path leading to the common road at the foot].

"The figure wore a fehta, seemed rather tall, and had a beard. I could see the man clearly, and could distinguish his features, but did not know him. He came fast walking towards us. When he came within 6 or 7 yards of us, Madame went down the wooden staircase, and met the figure and appeared to shake hands with him. I saw a packet delivered by the figure to Madame. After some minutes' talk with the figure Madame remounted the staircase with the packet in her hand, and told us to go into the bungalow and shut the door. We went inside, closed the door, and sat on a couch close to the right of the door. We heard Madame talking outside, but we did not know the language. It was not French or English. After some minutes Madame came in and showed us the packet. The packet was intact, and had three postal marks, Calcutta, Allahabad, and Bombay. [Interrupted by Colonel Olcott, who persuaded him there were only two postmarks.] One stamp was triangular,—Allahabad. These postmarks were of the same date. The letter was without any address. It was opened in our presence. Madame read the letter. I believe it was from Mr. Sinnett. It came from Allahabad."

Colonel Olcott, who was present at this interview with Mr. Martandrao, said there was no path leading from the brow of the hill to the common road at the foot. I found, however, that there were two such paths, which appeared to be very old, and which I definitely ascertained were in existence when Crow's Nest Bungalow formed the headquarters of the Society. Moreover, I found upon trial that the hill could be ascended where no path had been made.

In Mr. Martandrao's oral account there appears to be some confusion between the incident quoted above from "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," and a different incident, of which the account previously given by Mr. Martandrao in the same pamphlet, p. 104, is as follows :—

"In the month of April, 1881, on one dark night, while talking in company with other Theosophists with Madame Blavatsky about 10 p.m. in the open verandah of the upper bungalow, a man, 6 feet in height, clad in a white robe, with a white *roomal* or *phetta* on the head, made his appearance on a sudden, walking towards us through the garden adjacent to the bungalow from a point—a precipice—where there is no path for any one to tread. Madame then rose up and told us to go inside the bungalow. So we went in, but we heard Madame and he talking for a minute with each other in an Eastern language unknown to us. Immediately after, we again went out into the verandah, as we were called, but the Brother had disappeared."

The same absurd statement that there was no path occurs in this account also. Mr. Martandrao (Clerk in Examiner's Office of Public Accounts,

Bombay,) is, I believe, a very honest witness, though not gifted with a great amount of shrewdness, and not able to describe his experiences with any fluency in English. It was quite impossible for him to have written the account of his experiences, as it stands above his name in "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy." Colonel Olcott in my presence has corrected—as to absurd or faulty expressions—the written accounts of witnesses; and he may have erroneously "corrected" Mr. Martandrao's account in the above particular concerning the path, just as he made the addendum when Mr. Martandrao was giving the oral account to myself. The reader will see that either account is perfectly valueless for proving that the figure was other than an ordinary man,—unless the brow of the hill, accessible without difficulty on the farther side beyond the observation of the witnesses, were first transformed into the summit of a pathless precipice. I may here say that the grounds which form the environment of Crow's Nest Bungalow, with their many paths and easy hiding-places, formed an admirable stage for the display of "astral figures," which appear to have been seen much more frequently at Crow's Nest Bungalow than elsewhere. The next account is interesting in the way of suggesting exactly how the "astral figures" were pre-arranged in that particular case for the purpose of enabling the witnesses to testify to the existence of the "Brothers."

MR. MARTANDRAO'S Account published in "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," p. 105.

"Similarly, in a strong moonlight on another night, I, in company with three Brother Theosophists, was conversing with Madame Blavatsky. Madame Coulomb was also present. About 8 or 10 yards distant from the open verandah in which we were sitting, we saw a Brother known to us as Koot Hoomi Lal Sing. He was wearing a white loose gown or robe, with long wavy hair and a beard; and was gradually forming, as it were, in front of a shrub or a number of shrubs some 20 or 30 yards away from us, until he stood to a full height. Madame Coulomb was asked in our presence by Madame Blavatsky: 'Is this good Brother a devil?' as she used to think and say so when seeing the Brothers, and was afraid. She then answered: 'No; this one is a man.' He then showed his full figure for about 2 or 3 minutes, then gradually disappeared, melting away into the shrub. On the same night again, at about 11 p.m., we, about 7 or 8 in number, were hearing a letter read to us, addressed to the London *Spiritualist* about our having seen Brothers, which one of our number had drafted, and which we were ready to sign. At this instant Mr. and Madame Coulomb called out and said: 'Here is again our Brother.' This Brother (Koot Hoomi Lal Sing again) was sometimes standing and walking in the garden here and there, at other times floating in the air. He soon passed into and was heard in Madame Blavatsky's room talking with her. On this account, after we had signed the letter to the London *Spiritualist*, we added a postscript that we had just seen him again while signing the letter. Koot Hoomi was in his *Mayavi rupa* on that evening."

Mr. Martandrao's account in reply to my inquiries:—"At about 7 or 8 p.m., in Bombay headquarters—it was either in 1881 or 1882—we were sitting in the verandah upstairs, Bhavani Shankar, Padshah (elder brother of Padshah in England), Madame, Mulwarman Nathwarman, and Damodar,

We were talking together when Madame suddenly became abstracted. She got up and went to the railing, and stood looking towards the sea. We thought something would happen. Madame told us to go on talking; then she sat down. Again we were talking. Again she stood up; and at once we also stood up, and saw a figure in the garden among the shrubs, about 30 yards off, on the brow of the hill. It was moonlight, and the moonlight shone upon the figure. I saw first half a figure, and then a full figure approaching a few steps, then standing. Then the figure seemed gradually to melt away. While this figure was standing, Madame sent for Madame Coulomb from downstairs, as she was always saying the place was haunted by devils. Madame Coulomb came, and was told to look at the figure, and Madame Blavatsky asked in a challenging tone, 'Is that the devil, or a man?' She said quietly, 'This is a man, not a devil.' The figure was very tall, 5½ or 6 feet. The figure had on a loose white gown, and wore a beard. I do not now recollect whether the figure had a turban, or not. I did not recognise the person as one whom I had known before. The figure remained 7 or 8 minutes.

"We went on again talking, and at 9 or 9.30 we went into another verandah, and Damodar and Padshah drafted a reply to be sent to the newspaper *Light*. After about 10 or 12 lines of the draft were written, 3 or 4 persons signed. The rest were to sign, and as we were called to sign we were told to read the draft. While reading, our attention was drawn by M. Coulomb, who had come up, to a figure standing in the garden. At that time the moon had gone. We went from the table to the Venetian windows facing towards the sea, and I saw a figure in the garden, while M. Coulomb and others were standing near me. The figure in the garden was tall, about 6 feet, standing erect and majestically, with a gown on, wearing a beard, but was not so robust as the previous figure, and with a fehta on his head. Towards that figure I folded my hands in reverence, thinking it to be a Mahatma. The figure stood for 4 or 5 minutes, at about 12 yards distance, and I then began to talk with those near me, and suddenly heard Madame's servant, Babula, shouting from the bungalow. Madame went in haste to the porch, and thence to her own room. I then heard Madame talking with somebody. When I heard Babula shout, I looked up again for the figure, and it was no longer there. Padshah and Damodar suggested that as we saw the figure while we were about to sign the protest we should add a postscript to that effect. We accordingly did so."

With these accounts may be compared the following:—

Account by Mr. Bhavani Rao (Shankar) printed in a compilation by Dr. Hartmann in 1885.

"In a bright moonlight, on the night of the 13th July, 1881, we were engaged in a talk with Madame Blavatsky as usual in the same verandah. M. Coulomb and Madame Coulomb were present on the spot, as also all the persons of the house, and Madame Blavatsky's servant. While we were conversing with Madame Blavatsky, the Mahatma, known as Mr. Sinnett's correspondent and the Author of the letters published in 'The Occult World,' made his appearance in his *Mayavi rupa* or 'Double,'

for a few minutes. He was clad in the white dress of a 'Punjabee' and wore a white turban. All of those who were present at that time saw his handsome features clearly and distinctly, as it was a bright moonlight night. On the same night, a letter was drafted to the London *Spiritualist* about our having seen the Mahatmas. As we were reading the letter in question, the same Mahatma showed himself again. The second time when he made his appearance, he was very near us, say at the distance of a yard or two. At that time, M. and Madame Coulomb said, 'Here is our Brother,' meaning the Mahatma. He then came into Madame Blavatsky's room and was heard talking with her and then disappeared. M. Coulomb and Madame Coulomb signed the letter drafted to the London *Spiritualist* testifying to the fact of their having seen the 'Mahatma.' Since Madame Coulomb now says that the Mahatmas are but 'crafty arrangements of muslin and bladders,' and her husband represented the Mahatmas, how are we to reconcile this statement with the fact that in the London *Spiritualist* of the 19th August, 1881, appeared a letter signed by five witnesses, including myself, testifying to the fact of their having seen a Mahatma, while they were writing that letter; and that this document is signed by both the Coulombs? There is, therefore, no doubt that they were with the company who signed the paper. Who was it then that appeared on that occasion as a Mahatma? Surely neither M. and Madame Coulomb with their 'muslin and bladders,' nor Madame Blavatsky's servant, who was also present, but the 'double' of a person living on the other side of the Himalayas. The figure in coming up to Madame Blavatsky's room was seen by us 'to float through the air,' and we also distinctly heard it talking to her, while all of us, *including her servant and the Coulombs*, were at the time, together, in each other's presence."

Now with regard to the statement of Mr. Bhavani, who apparently earns his living as an official of the Theosophical Society, being Inspector of the N. W. Theosophical branches, I may remark that the figure in question, although neither M. nor Madame Coulomb, nor Madame Blavatsky's servant, may still have been a confederate in disguise. It does, indeed, appear somewhat odd that "all the persons of the house, and Madame Blavatsky's servant" should be "present on the spot" with those Theosophists who were "engaged in a talk with Madame Blavatsky," and it is rather unfortunate that this fact or fancy was not exhibited more clearly either in the document forwarded to *The Spiritualist* or in the account given soon afterwards (February, 1882) by Mr. Martandrao. A reference to *The Spiritualist* of August 19th, 1881, will show that the Coulombs signed *only the postscript*, which runs as follows: "As we were reading the foregoing over, a Brother was with us. M. and Madame Coulomb, the latter Assistant Corresponding Secretary of the Central Theosophical Society, have seen him and will testify to the same." Then comes the statement: "The above postscript is correct," which is signed by the Coulombs. Obviously, this postscript proves only that the Coulombs were with the other witnesses when the alleged apparition was seen the *second* time. But this has never been denied by the Coulombs. M. Coulomb asserts that he appeared first disguised as a Mahatma, that then a letter was drafted to be sent to *The Spiritualist*, and that afterwards Babula appeared disguised

as a Mahatma, for the purpose of enabling both the Coulombs to be present with the other witnesses, and to add their testimony. These assertions are entirely in harmony, not only with the document printed in *The Spiritualist*, but also with the detailed accounts of the two alleged "astral" appearances given by Mr. Martandrao, in whose earlier account it is plainly enough implied that M. Coulomb was *not* present with the other witnesses when the first figure was seen, and that Babula might have been absent from the company the whole evening. His later account confirms his earlier one in these particulars, and appears to me to be further corroborative of M. Coulomb's assertions. I think it, therefore, highly probable that the appearances were produced in the way described by M. Coulomb, and I cannot myself resist the impression that the important and palpable discrepancies between the accounts given by Mr. Bhavani and Mr. Martandrao are due to deliberate falsification on the part of Mr. Bhavani.

APPENDIX X.

ALLEGED ASTRAL APPARITION WITNESSED BY MR. AND MRS. ROSS SCOTT. REMARKABLE PORTRAITS.

"Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," No. 1, pp. 75, 76.

"The undersigned severally certify that, in each other's presence, they recently saw at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society" (at Bombay) "a Brother of the First Section, known to them under a name which they are not at liberty to communicate to the public. The circumstances were of a nature to exclude all idea of trickery or collusion, and were as follows:—

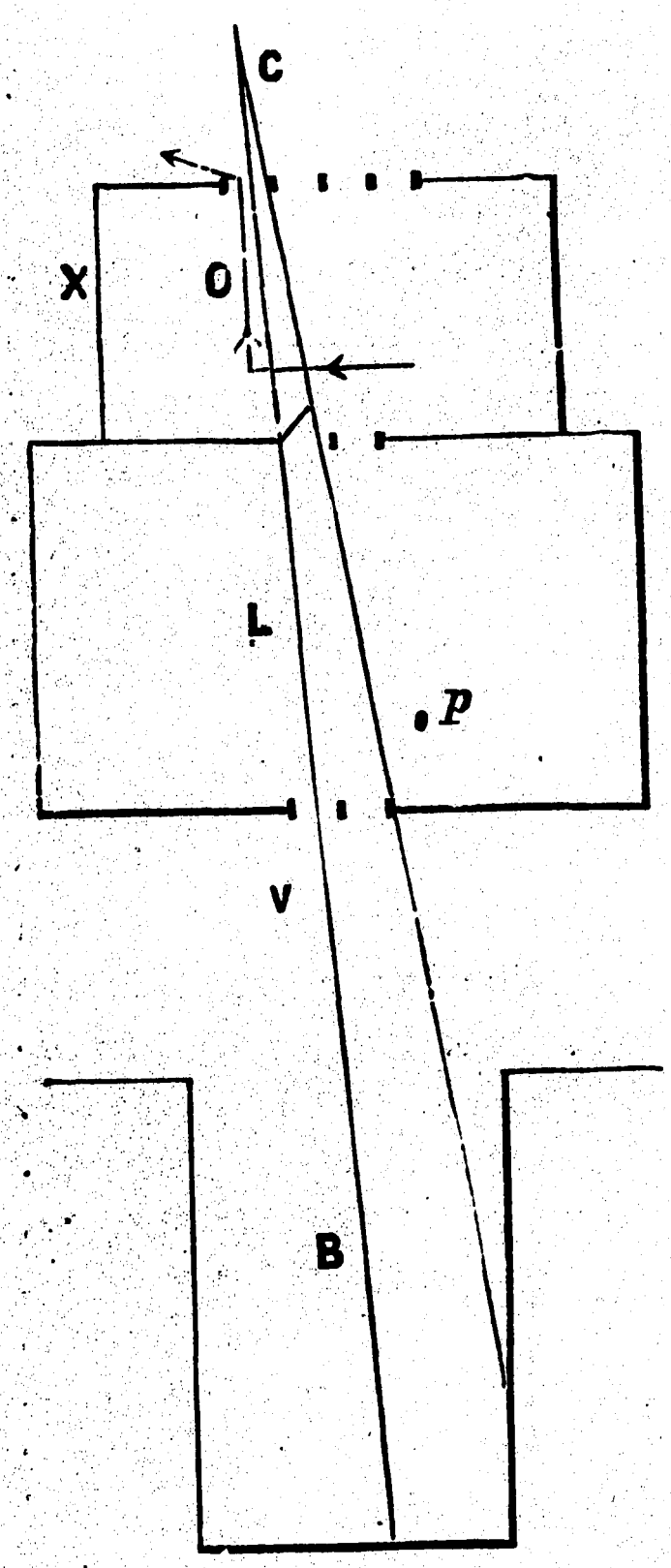
"We were sitting together in the moonlight about 9 o'clock upon the balcony which projects from the front of the bungalow. Mr. Scott was sitting facing the house, so as to look through the intervening verandah and the library, and into the room at the further side. This latter apartment was brilliantly lighted.

"The library was in partial darkness, thus rendering objects in the farther room more distinct. Mr. Scott suddenly saw the figure of a man step into the space, opposite the door of the library; he was clad in the white dress of a Rajput, and wore a white turban. Mr. Scott at once recognised him from his resemblance to a portrait in Colonel Olcott's possession. Our attention was then drawn to him, and we all saw him most distinctly. He walked towards a table, and afterwards turning his face towards us, walked back out of our sight. We hurried forward to get a closer view, in the hope that he might also speak; but when we reached the room he was gone. We cannot say by what means he departed, but that he did not pass out by the door which leads into the compound we can positively affirm; for that door was full in our view, and he did not go out by it. At the side of the room towards which he walked there was no exit, the only door and the two windows in that direction having been boarded and closed up. Upon the table, at the spot where he had been standing, lay a letter addressed to one of our number. The handwriting was identical with that of sundry notes and letters previously received from him in divers ways—such as

dropping down from the ceiling, &c.; the signature was the same as that of the other letters received, and as that upon the portrait above described. His long hair was black, and hung down upon his breast; his features and complexion were those of a Rajput.

"Ross Scott, B.C.S.
"Minnie J. B. Scott.
"H. S. Olcott.
"H. P. Blavatsky.
"M. Moorad Ali Beg.
"Damodar K. Mavalankar.
"Bhavani Shankar Ganesh Mullapoorkar."

In our First Report we said: "Personation does not seem impossible in this case, considering the distance, and that there may have been modes of ingress to the room known only to the Coulombs. Still less does it seem impossible that it can have been the real man in the flesh." That it was a case of personation I have now no doubt.



The accompanying rough sketch will explain the position.

M. Coulomb asserts that he played the Mahatma on this occasion. He explained to me that the door leading from the verandah (V) into the library (L) was an ordinary double one, and so, likewise, was the door leading from the library into Colonel Olcott's office (O), where the figure appeared; but the door leading from the office into the compound (C) was a quadruple one. The line of sight from the position occupied by the party on the balcony (B) did not permit the *whole* of the quadruple-door exit to be seen, and by the time the party had reached such a position as to see the whole space of exit, M. Coulomb had left the room by the further side part of the quadruple-door.

One side of the door leading from the library into the office, M. Coulomb declares he had pushed partly to, in order to make certain that his departure should not be observed.

I performed this manœuvre myself in Bombay, and it succeeded admirably. With the door pushed partly to, as represented in the diagram, it was not possible for the party, who were originally on the balcony, to have seen the point of M. Coulomb's alleged exit before reaching the spot marked *P*. I requested a gentleman to walk in the direction indicated by the arrowed line, and found that the illusion was naturally produced that he had continued to walk

towards X, and could not have passed into the compound. Walking thus into the compound myself, I found it especially convenient to keep my face turned towards the spectators, as this enabled me to tell exactly when I was beyond their line of sight, and so make my exit unseen. And this just answers to the peculiar description of the disappearance of the figure given in the above account. "He walked towards a table, and afterwards turning his face towards us, walked back out of our sight." M. Coulomb's assertions, then, were so entirely corroborated by my inspection of the place, as to make it highly probable that he personated the Mahatma in the manner he alleges.

Mr. Sinnett, in giving some additional information to Mr. Hume concerning the above incident shortly after its occurrence, writes truly that "the force of the incident turns on the arrangement of the rooms," and proceeds to give a sketch of the rooms. This sketch affords another illustration of the remark which I have made in dealing with "The Occult World" phenomena—that Mr. Sinnett has not exercised by any means sufficient care in his investigation. The most important point in the arrangement of the rooms is entirely overlooked by him, the exit into the compound being represented as no wider than the doorway from the library into the office. In Mr. Sinnett's sketch, the three doorways appear to be all of the same size!

I may here draw attention to a certificate, a copy of which was sent by Colonel Olcott to Mr. Myers in October of last year:

[Copy.]

"Colonel Olcott having to-day shown us a portrait in oils, we at once recognised it as a very good likeness of a form which, in January, 1882, we saw at the headquarters of the Theosophical Society in Bombay, and said to be that of one of the Mahatmas known as the teacher of Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott.

"(Sgd.) Ross Scott
"(Bengal Civil Service).
"(Sgd.) Maria J. B. Scott.

"Bonn, Germany, 27th September, 1884."

This refers to a portrait painted by Mr. Schmiechen from a photograph alleged to represent Mahatma M. The features of Mahatma M. originated, I believe, with an artist in America. It appears that this gentleman was requested to draw a typical Hindu head. He did so, and Madame Blavatsky declared that it was the portrait of Mahatma M. It was *after this occurrence* that the figure whose features resembled those of the "fancy portrait," appeared to Colonel Olcott in New York. Photographs were taken from this "fancy portrait," and it was either from one of these photographs, or from the original portrait that Mr. Schmiechen's painting was made. I have compared the photograph side by side with Mr. Schmiechen's painting, and must certainly say that there is a close resemblance between the two. Considering then that the dummy head with its equipment of turban, &c., was made up to resemble the early portrait, it is not surprising that a painting made from the same original should seem

to Mr. and Mrs. Ross Scott a good likeness of the disguised figure which they saw in Bombay between two and three years previously—and at a distance from them which I concluded when I was at Crow's Nest Bungalow, was probably about 20 paces.

Mr. Schmiechen has also painted a portrait of K. H., which appears to me to resemble his painting of Mahatma M. more nearly than it resembles the portrait of K. H. which was formerly kept in the Shrine. The Shrine-portrait and Mr. Schmiechen's cannot both be striking likenesses of K.H. ; they would probably be taken by any ordinary observer to represent different persons. In the Shrine-portrait, which is alleged, I think, to have been the work of some *Chela* (and if so, was probably the work of Madame Blavatsky), the nose is much more aquiline, and the eyes more almond-shaped than in Mr. Schmiechen's painting. The expression of the eyes, moreover, is very different from that in Mr. Schmiechen's rendering, and the complexion is very much paler. Also the hair is decidedly curly in the Shrine portrait, but is not curly in Mr. Schmiechen's. I drew Colonel Olcott's attention to the lack of resemblance displayed in some of these respects, and he admitted that there was a difference, which he described as being such as one would expect between the attempt of a schoolboy and that of a finished artist. As for the hair, he said that "Hair gets much straighter when it is wet" !

In connection with these portraits, I may refer to another, alleged to have been produced by Madame Blavatsky in less than a minute, in America. It appeared to us, at the time of our First Report, that there was no proof that the portrait, said to represent a Hindu Fakir, might not have been made previously ; but the case seemed to be of some interest in consequence of the artistic merits of the picture attested to by Mr. O'Donovan and Mr. Le Clear (*vide* "Hints on Esoteric Theosophy," No. 1, pp. 85, 86). Mr. O'Donovan, in the statement which he made concerning the portrait, said that "the black tints seem to be an integral part of the paper upon which it is done." Mr. Le Clear said : "I first thought it chalk, then pencil, then Indian ink ; but a minute inspection leaves me quite unable to decide. Certainly it is neither of the above" ; and also : "The tint seems not to be laid on the surface of the common writing-paper upon which the portrait is made, but to be combined, as it were, with the fibres themselves." I think it is implied by the statement of Mr. O'Donovan that the *lighter* tints appeared to have been laid on, and not to form an integral part of the paper, and this appeared also to myself. Madame Coulomb alleged that Madame Blavatsky had told her that she had laid on the upper tints herself upon one of two photographs of a Hindu Fakir which she possessed, and Madame Coulomb further alleged that the other photograph was still in one of Madame Blavatsky's albums, and that I would, without doubt, be able to see the portrait in the album, and recognise the likeness to the one supposed to have been produced by occult methods. I found a portrait which I thought might be the counterpart ; it was different from an ordinary photograph, the surface not presenting a polished appearance, and it seemed to me to resemble rather a mezzotint engraving. I had no opportunity of comparing it side by side with the "phenomenal" portrait, which I had not seen for some time previously ; and all I can say is that I noted a considerable

resemblance about the eyes and forehead which led me to think it quite possible that the "phenomenal" portrait may have been the result of Madame Blavatsky's artistic skill exercised upon a portrait like the one I found in her album.

APPENDIX XI.—(*Vide p.* 248.)

1

On the 4th March, 1884—(Madame Blavatsky and Colonel Olcott were at this time on the ocean, having left Bombay on February 20th for Marseilles)—I, owing to certain domestic afflictions, felt exceedingly miserable; could not take a morsel of food; and remained in the most wretched condition of mind all that day. But in the evening, between 5 and 6 p.m., I proceeded to Adyar, in the hope of finding some consolation there; and was seated in the office-room of the headquarters, talking to Mr. Bawaji, without, however, mentioning to any body the circumstance of my being in an unhappy condition. In the meantime, Mr. Damodar stepped in; and I at once expressed to him my desire to see the "Shrine." He very kindly conducted me to the Occult Room upstairs forthwith; and unlocked the "Shrine." He and I were standing hardly five seconds looking at the Mahatma K. H.'s portrait in the "Shrine," when he (Mr. Damodar) told me that he had orders to close the "Shrine;" and did so immediately. This course was extremely disappointing to me, who, as the reader will have perceived from the above, was sorely in need of some consolation or other at that time. But ere I could realise the pangs of this disappointment, Mr. Damodar re-opened in an instant the "Shrine" by orders. My eye immediately fell upon a letter in a Thibetan envelope in the cup in the "Shrine," which was quite empty before! I ran and took the letter, and finding that it was addressed to me by Mahatma K. H., I opened and read it. It contained very kind words conveying consolation to my aching heart; advising me to take courage; explaining how the laws of *Karma* were inevitable; and finally referring me to Mr. Damodar for further explanation of certain passages in the letter.

How my presence before his portrait attracted the instantaneous notice of the Mahatma, being thousands of miles off; how the Mahatma divined that I was miserable and was in need of comfort at his hands; how he projected his long and consoling letter from such great distance into the closed cabinet, within the twinkling of an eye; and, above all, how solicitous he, the great Mahatma, is for the well-being of mankind, and more especially of persons devoted to him,—are points which I leave to the sensible reader to consider and profit by. Enough to say that this unmistakable sign of extraordinary kindness on the part of the great Master armed me with sufficient energy to shake off the miserable and gloomy thoughts, and filled my heart with unmixed comfort and excessive joy, coupled with feelings of the sincerest gratitude to the benevolent Mahatma for this blessing.

P. Sreenevas Row.

2

I was at headquarters very often during my sojourn with my friend H. H., the Thakore Sahib of Wadhwan at Madras, whither we had gone last

March for the celebration of his marriage with the daughter of the Hon. Gujpati Row. One day I asked Mr. D. K. Mavalankar to let me put a letter from me to my revered Master K. H. in the Shrine. It was in a closed envelope, and was regarding private personal matters, which I need not lay before the public. Mr. Damodar allowed me to put the letter in the Shrine. The day after I visited again the Shrine in company with my wife. On opening the Shrine I did find my letter unopened, but addressed to me in blue pencil, while my original superscription, : "My Revered Master," had a pencil line running through it. This was in the presence of Mr. Mavalankar, Dr. Hartmann and others. The envelope was intact. I opened it, and on the unused portion of my note was an answer from my Master K. H. in his, to me, familiar handwriting. I should very much like to know how others will explain this, when as a fact both founders were thousands of miles away.

HARISINGHJI RUPSINGHJI, F.T.S.

Varel, 9th September, 1884.

APPENDIX XII.

Account by MR. P. IYALOO NAIDU.

(A reply to Mr. Myers' inquiry contained in his letter of 13th ultimo.)

On the 11th February last, I received a letter from Mr Damodar K. Mavalankar, dated 8th idem, Adyar. In it there was a message in pencil by Mahatma Koot Hoomi, regarding a very important point.

On the same day, viz., 11th February, I received another envelope by the same post, "From Bhola Deva Sarma," in which there was a Thibetan envelope containing a message in Teloogoo characters on a point very important to me, with the initials of our revered Guru Deva M.C.

In the last month (August) I was anxious about my journey to this country from Hyderabad, and often thought of the Mahatma M. C. About the 26th idem I examined my clothes, &c., at Hyderabad, and found the initials of the Mahatma M. C. on a cap which I use during my meditation.

P. IYALOO NAIDU, F.T.S.,
Pensd. Dep. Collector, Arnee.

19th September, 1884.

In reply to my inquiries:—Mr. Naidu had sent a letter to Mahatma M., through Damodar. About 10 days after, on February 11th, he received a letter from Damodar, who said he had "missed" the letter (*i.e.*, that he had placed it for the Mahatma to take, and that it had gone), that Mahatma M. had taken it and would attend to it. On the same day Mr. Naidu received a letter from Mount Road (nearly four miles from the Theosophical head-quarters), "From Bhola Deva Sarma," supposed Chela of Mahatma M.

The *cap* referred to had been given to him by Colonel Olcott about 20 months previously. The cap had been worn several times during this interval by Mr. Naidu, who had been staying at Hyderabad the whole time. The initials appear as though marked with a blue pencil, and Mr. Naidu himself suggested that he should ask Colonel Olcott if the initials were there when he received the cap. He thought it possible the initials might have

been there without his observing them. His sight is not good, and he had never specially examined the cap, which may be described as a smoking-cap made of white soft fabric. The colour of the initials is not deep, and appears to have suffered the wearing away due to friction.

When we issued our First Report, Mr. Naidu's written statement seemed to have some interest on account of the use of Teloogoo characters in the Mahatma document, but assuming that Madame Blavatsky has native confederates, it is obvious that no importance can be attributed to their use. Mr. Babajee, however, in reply to my questions, said that he did not think anyone at headquarters knew Teloogoo, "except it be Damodar," but when I pushed my inquiry further, he said with some hesitation that he thought that Mr. Damodar also was ignorant of Teloogoo. The Teloogoo may have been written by Mr. Babajee himself. Some writing in English, alleged to have been precipitated by "Bhola Deva Sarma," showed clear traces of Mr. Babajee's handiwork. (See Part II. of Report.) Another instance had occurred where a Bombay Theosophist had received a phenomenal communication in the Mahrathi language; but Mahrathi is Mr. Damodar's vernacular. Sanskrit knowledge could also be secured, but a question in Hebrew and Arabic proved rather too hard a knot for the Mahatma Brotherhood. Mr. Damodar, when conversing with Madame Blavatsky, in my presence, let slip the remark—in reference to what he would do on his projected visit to the North—that he would "first learn Thibetan and Urdu." Madame Blavatsky's quick glance of warning, Mr. Damodar's disconcertion, and the speedy change of subject did not lessen the suggestiveness of the utterance.

APPENDIX XIII.

The following accounts will serve to illustrate the quality of many of the letter-phenomena. They were given in reply to my inquiries.

FALL OF A CALENDAR.

Account by Mr. T. Vijiaraghava Charloo (Ananda).

In May, 1882, Madame Blavatsky and others came to Nellore. There were more than half-a-dozen of us upstairs. No one could remember the date. Madame Blavatsky said the Masters could give her a calendar if they liked. We were sitting in a circle or semi-circle in front of Madame. She shook violently, and a letter struck the wall behind. It was a calendar.

Account by Mr. Doraswamy Naidu.

When we were at Nellore, about midday, in May, 1882, we, Soubbaya Chetty, myself, Ananda, Madame, and some others, were sitting in a room together in an upper storey. Madame wanted to know the date. Soubbaya Chetty gave one date, and another gave a different one. Madame said, "Haven't you got any calendar?" The reply was No. Some one asked Madame to supply a calendar. Within two or three seconds something fell with a noise on the floor. One of the brothers took the object up. It was a small paper calendar of an English publisher, apparently quite new. Madame was sitting at about the centre of one side of the room, and the calendar fell in the far corner of the room.

MR. GOSHI'S LETTER.

Account by Mr. Babajee.

During the 8th anniversary, M. Goshi was a delegate. He came to me, and offered his services. He wrote a long letter of 5 or 6 big pages. I gave it to Damodar to give to Madame, who returned it to Damodar with the words, "Answer him as you please." Damodar left the letter on the table. Goshi watched it, and answers came to his questions in the letter. Goshi was watching the letter all the time.

Account by Mr. Lukshman N. Goshi (Pensioned Sub-Judge of Sind).

I wrote a long letter of several foolscap pages, and gave it, through Mr. Brown, to Madame, who gave it to Damodar to get the Master's account. Damodar said he left it on the table, and found the writing of Mahatma Koot Hoomi in it. He returned it to me.

Mr. Norendra Nath Sen, editor of the *Indian Mirror*, did not appear to me to have been much impressed by "phenomena." One experience of his was as follows:—

At the anniversary of 1883, Messrs. Damodar, Mohini, Mullick, Brown, and himself were sitting together when Mr. Damodar asked him if he felt anything. The reply was *No*. Mr. Damodar then said that the Master told Norendra to look in his pocket. He found nothing in his pocket, but found a letter on the seat—from the Mahatma.

Mr. Nobin Krishna Bannerjee received a "phenomenal" letter while I was at Adyar, but not in my presence. He gave me an account of the incident almost immediately afterwards.

He had handed some folded manuscript of his own to Mr. Damodar, to be read through before insertion in *The Theosophist*. Mr. Damodar took the manuscript, turned over the sheets quickly, said he would read it directly, refolded the manuscript, and placed it on the table. Taking up the manuscript shortly after, it was found that a "Tibetan" envelope was lying in the folds, addressed to Harisinghi Rupsinghi in the blue pencil writing said to be that of Mahatma Koot Hoomi.

A TEST PHENOMENON!

"December 25th.—Grand phenomenon at Shrine: six or seven notes to different persons simultaneously appear in the silver bowl—one in Mahrathi to Tookaram, in which his secret name was written." (Colonel Olcott's diary for 1883.) To the copy I possess of this extract, Colonel Olcott has appended the following note: "A Hindu receives from his Guru, at the 'thread ceremony,' when a boy of about seven, a mystical name, and this he always keeps a secret. This test was therefore perfect." This note of Colonel Olcott's has been crossed through by a pencil by Mr. Damodar, who read through the extracts from Colonel Olcott's diary before they were given to me, and who has substituted the statement: "It was a part of his name, but never used by him in correspondence or anywhere else, and therefore unknown to even his friends."

Mr. Tookaram Tatya informed me that the name was his "surname" or "family name," and he told me at once what it was: *Padwal*. He said that

nobody knew it at Madras, but his only ground for thinking so appeared to be that he does not commonly use it. The name is no *secret*, and he said that friends of his in Bombay may know it. Mahrathi, as already mentioned, is Mr. Damodar's vernacular, and Mr. Damodar had lived in Bombay previous to the removal of the headquarters of the Society to Madras. But the mere fact that the knowledge of the family name of a prominent Hindu member of the Society has thus come to be characterised by Colonel Olcott as a "perfect test," is enough in itself to betoken upon what a flimsy fabric of evidence his great convictions may rest.

APPENDIX XIV.

PROFESSOR SMITH'S LETTER SEWN WITH SILK.

Colonel Olcott stated in his deposition that a letter which had been addressed by Professor Smith, of Sydney University, to Mahatma M——, "and sent enclosed in a letter to Madame Blavatsky, and which was sewed through and through many times with silk of different colours, had been removed and another paper substituted inside without the threads having been broken." Madame Coulomb declared to me that it was she herself who, with very great care, and after a long examination of the silk threads, unpicked the stitches on one side of the letter and sewed them back by means of a hair. The "Mahatma" enclosure had been inserted, she said, by Madame Blavatsky, who had previously read it over to Madame Coulomb, and the latter quoted some words which she said had formed part of Mahatma M——'s reply. Madame Coulomb also said that in sewing the stitches back she had pulled the silk somewhat "tighter" than it had previously been, in order that she might have enough silk to tie the final knot, and as a consequence, after tying the knot, there were some small ends of silk to spare, which she cut off, and which she showed to me.

Having written to Professor Smith on the subject, I received from him a letter in which he kindly sent the sewn up note for inspection, and made the following statements concerning it:—

"It contains the enclosure with which it was returned. I slit up the side of the paper to get the enclosure out, after examining the whole carefully with a magnifying glass. I could believe that Madame Coulomb unpicked the silk and restored it again only if I saw her do it. Observe how closely the ends were cut off so as to leave nothing to hold by. . . . . Madame Coulomb's partial knowledge of the writing on the enclosure goes for little, as I described it all in a letter to Madame Blavatsky."

I examined the sewn-up note, and observed that the threads on one side had been clearly pulled tighter than those of the other side, and also that the silk of the more tightly pulled stitches had been handled more than the silk of the other side, as was manifest by its peculiar frayed appearance. Apart from these signs, my examination of the note left me without any doubt that the opening and reclosing of it, as described by Madame Coulomb, were far from being impossible. I was desirous, however, of clearly establishing whether the note could be so opened and closed or not, but as the operation demanded

a certain sort of delicate care in which I might prove deficient, I requested Mrs. Sidgwick to undertake the task.

Account by Mrs. Sidgwick.

Mr. Hodgson brought me a letter which Professor Smith of Sydney had sent to Madame Blavatsky to be delivered to Mahatma M——. This letter had been carefully folded up, and the edges doubled over and sewn down with red and yellow floss silk. It was returned by Madame Blavatsky apparently intact, but on cutting open one side, without interfering with the silk, Professor Smith found inside a note purporting to come from the Mahatma. This note could not, I think, have got there by natural means unless the sewing had been unpicked at one end. Madame Coulomb asserted, so Mr. Hodgson told me, that she had unpicked the silk at one end, and sewn it up again by means of a hair. Professor Smith did not think this possible, and Mr. Hodgson wished me to repeat the operation, which Madame Coulomb asserted that she had performed, with a view to ascertaining its possibility.

I thought I could detect slight signs of Madame Coulomb's operations at one end of the folded paper, and as she said that in sewing it up again she had pulled the silk tighter than before in order to leave a margin for fastening, I selected what I thought was the other end, in order to secure a margin for myself too. Before undoing the sewing I made careful diagrams of the way in which the stitches went, and of the relative positions in each stitch of the two colours. The fastening knot was not quite easy to undo, but otherwise the unpicking afforded no difficulties. The difficulties in sewing it up arose from the impossibility of using a needle in the ordinary way owing to the shortness of the silk. Taking Madame Coulomb's hint, however, I found no great difficulty, though the process was tedious, in pulling the silk through its old holes by means of a loop of hair. By pulling the stitches tight I secured length enough for fastening at the end, and the superfluous fragments I then cut off. Before replacing the sewing I wrote initials inside to prove that I had undone it.

Eleanor Mildred Sidgwick.

I returned the letter afterwards to Professor Smith, with statements by Mrs. Sidgwick and myself, and have received a reply from Mrs. Smith on behalf of her husband (who was too ill to be able to write himself), from which it appears that Professor and Mrs. Smith were quite satisfied, in consequence of the operation performed by Mrs. Sidgwick, that the supposed evidence of "occult" agency was worthless.

APPENDIX XV. (*Vide* p. 293.)

CONCERNING HANDWRITING, &c.

Examination by Mrs. Sidgwick.

Mr. Hodgson was anxious that his statements and conclusions, as regards the handwriting of the Koot Hoomi documents and some other points, should, as far as possible, be verified in detail by some other person, and I have accordingly examined all the MSS. in question, which he has had in

his hands in England, with great care, with the result that I find myself in complete agreement with him. His observations on documents which he saw only in India I cannot, of course, verify.

First, as regards the plates. The specimens of isolated letters are, I think, so far as I have compared them with the originals (or in the case of those taken from Mr. Sinnett's series with tracings which I had previously compared with the originals), as nearly facsimiles as can be expected, with the exception of a certain tremulousness which they ought not to have, but which does not affect them for our present purpose. I have thus compared the larger number of the specimens, and where I have not compared the copy with the particular letter from which it was traced, I can testify to its strong resemblance to many other specimens that might have been selected. The plates representing short passages from different documents give a good general idea of the writing, but in some instances fail in giving the individual character of particular letters. Still they are quite sufficiently accurate to help the reader to understand the discussion. Those copied from writing in blue pencil are, as might be expected, less close facsimiles than the others.

I have carefully verified every statement Mr. Hodgson makes about the acknowledged handwriting of Madame Blavatsky, and about the K.H. MSS. in England which he attributes to her. I entirely agree with all he says, and am myself strongly convinced that the same person wrote both. The development of the K.H. writing is very marked, and the gradual elimination of Blavatskian forms is, to say the least of it, suggestive. The argument is greatly strengthened by the occasional spasmodic appearance of Blavatskian forms—seemingly by accident—throughout the K.H. MSS. attributed to her—and that this is an accident, and an accident which the writer desired to avoid, is proved, I think, by the erasures and alterations. The last *k* selected from K.H. No. 3 on Plate III., which occurs in the original in the word *Greek*, is a fair instance of these alterations.

But convincing as the two considerations already mentioned are, I think the prevalence of certain peculiarities throughout both sets of documents is more convincing still, and in particular the very peculiar *a* and *g* constantly occurring in both. It so happened that when Mr. Gribble's pamphlet, mentioned by Mr. Hodgson, first reached me, while Mr. Hodgson was still in India, I had in my hands some letters of Madame Blavatsky's and a long K.H. document, and naturally turned to Madame Blavatsky's handwriting to see if it possessed the characteristics mentioned by Mr. Gribble. There, without doubt, I found among others this peculiar *a*, but it was with a shock of surprise that I found this same *a*, which I had never seen in any other handwriting, occurring even more conspicuously in the K.H. document than in Madame Blavatsky's acknowledged writing. I have seen a somewhat similar formation of *a* in the handwriting of a Russian gentleman.

I think evidence that the K. H. handwriting is a disguised one may be found in other variations of form besides those which show development. The variations I speak of remain more or less constant through a particular document, but do not appear in other documents, and thus appear to me to suggest that the writer was not using all the forms of letters instinctively, and had not a perfectly clear and persistent idea of what all the forms should

be. No doubt some variations might be found in every handwriting from document to document, due to a difference of speed in the writing, to the kind of pen employed, &c. But those in the K. H. writing seem to me more marked than this, and are the more noticeable as the writing is regular and very seldom gives one the impression of being carelessly done.

I have counted the English and German *d's* in various writings of Madame Blavatsky. It is a matter of considerable difficulty to count correctly the number of times a letter occurs in a long MS. if it is at all frequent; I am, therefore, not surprised to find that my numbers are slightly different from Mr. Hodgson's. As, however, we in *no case differ by so much as* 5 *per cent.* it is evident that the difference is of no importance whatever to the argument, and I therefore considered that it would be waste of time to repeat the counting. The extreme rarity of the English *d* in all the acknowledged handwriting of Madame Blavatsky in our hands which has been written since the K. H. correspondence began, except in the *B. Replies*, combined with its comparative abundance in the earlier letters and in the *B. Replies*, is very striking, and it is difficult to attribute it to accident.

I have verified completely every statement about the letter called K. H. (Z) and about Mr. Damodar's ordinary writing, and have little doubt that the K. H. (Z) was written by him.

I have also examined the long document professedly in the handwriting of Mr. Bhavani Shankar. It appears to me to bear very evident indications of being written in a disguised hand, and to have enough of the marked characteristics of Mr. Damodar's handwriting to point to him as the writer. I have compared the letter which Mr. Hodgson has called the "Koot Hoomi Lal Sing" with the quotations from it in Mr. Sinnett's "Occult World," and find as Mr. Hodgson does, more than 60 differences, without counting mis-spellings, changes in punctuation, &c.

It only remains to speak of the mis-spellings, faults of idiom, &c., quoted by Mr. Hodgson from the K.H. documents, and from Madame Blavatsky's own letters. I have compared all these with the originals and believe them to be correctly transcribed. More of the same kind might be adduced.

ELEANOR MILDRED SIDGWICK.

EXPLANATION OF PLATES, &c.

PLAN OF OCCULT ROOM AND SURROUNDINGS.—*Vide* **pp. 220-222.**

PLATE I.—Concerning the groups of individual letters in this Plate, which are very close facsimiles of my own tracings from the original documents, *vide* pp. 284-291, 296.

The specimens B (I.), B (II.), &c., which are on the whole very good representations of the originals though not accurate in every detail, are taken from Madame Blavatsky's undoubted writings, with the exception of B (X.), which represents the Blavatsky-Coulomb document referred to on p. 317. The remaining Blavatsky-Coulomb documents being in India, I have been unable to produce facsimiles of them in this Report.

B (I.) is from a letter written to a Hindu in August, 1878.

B (II.) is from a letter written to Mr. C. C. Massey in July, 1879.

B (III.), B (IV.), and B (V.) are from letters lent by Mr. Hume, received February—June, 1882.

B (VI.) is from an envelope addressed to Mr. C. C. Massey in 1884.

B (VII.) is from an envelope addressed to Mr. Myers about the beginning of October, 1884.

B (VIII.) is from a letter to Mr. Myers about October, 1884.

B (IX.) is from *B Replies* (*vide* p. 290), written about the end of 1884 or the beginning of 1885.

B (X.), the Blavatsky-Coulomb document, was probably written at some time between 1879 and 1883.

PLATE II.—The specimens K.H. (I.), K.H. (II.), &c., are from K.H. documents which I consider to be the handiwork of Madame Blavatsky, and they are for the most part good representations of the originals. The K.H. (VII.), however, is taken from writing in blue pencil, which is much blurred, so that the reproduction is not so good as in the other cases, the originals of which are in ink.

K.H. (I.) represents a page from the *Koot Hoomi Lal Sing* letter to Mr. Hume, of November 1st, 1880. I have placed a small dash under many of the letters for the purpose of directing attention to peculiarities mentioned in the preceding discussion.

K.H. (II.)—K.H. (VI.) are from K.H. documents received about 1881—1882, K.H. (II.) being taken from the commencement of one of

these documents, and K.H. (III.) from the end of the same document.

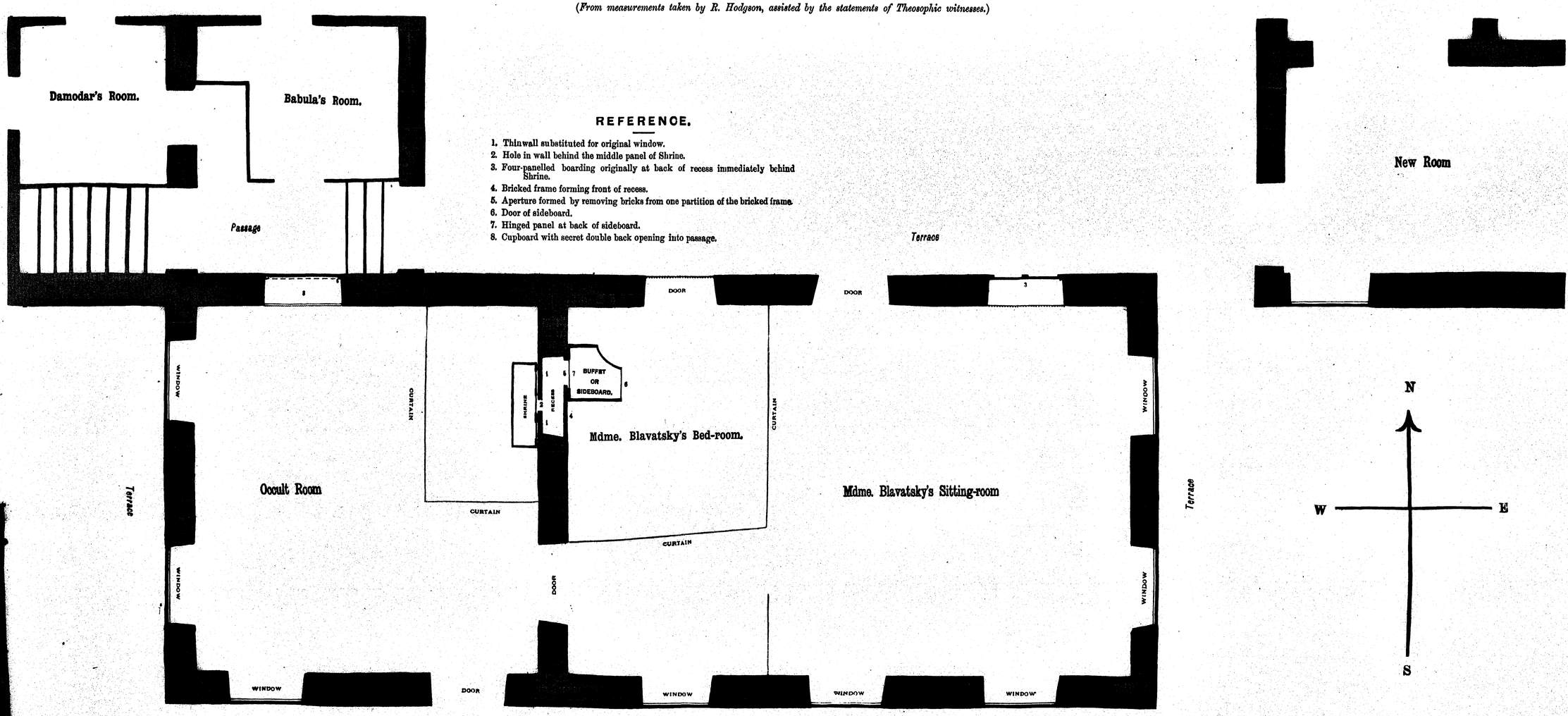
K.H. (VII.) is from a letter to Mr. Myers in 1884.

K.H. (Z.), the original of which I attribute to Mr. Damodar (*vide* pp. 294-297), does not represent one continuous extract. I obtained permission to reproduce different portions of the K.H. (Z.) document, which I directed to be placed together as in the facsimile. The original is in blue pencil, and much blurred, and several of the most important letters appear in the facsimile without their original characteristics. Thus the *a* of *sympathise* (l 6), is in the original document a typical specimen of the *beaked a* formation, and several of the *g*'s in the lithograph have lost all trace of a similar beaked formation which they exhibit in the original document. Still the correspondence with the original is close enough to enable the reader to see several important differences between it and K.H. (VII.), and especially that it contains no instance of the *left gap stroke*, of which he will find various instances in K.H. (VII.), received about the same time in 1884.

D (I.) and D (II.) represent two specimens of Mr. Damodar's undoubted writing in 1884.

PLAN OF OCCULT ROOM, WITH SHRINE AND SURROUNDINGS.

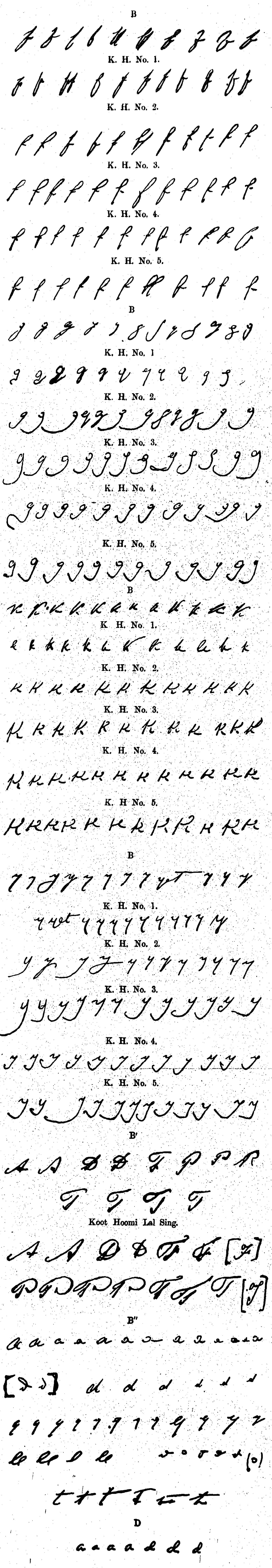
(From measurements taken by R. Hodgson, assisted by the statements of Theosophic witnesses.)



REFERENCE.

1. Thin wall substituted for original window.
2. Hole in wall behind the middle panel of Shrine.
3. Four-panelled boarding originally at back of recess immediately behind Shrine.
4. Bricked frame forming front of recess.
5. Aperture formed by removing bricks from one partition of the bricked frame.
6. Door of sideboard.
7. Hinged panel at back of sideboard.
8. Cupboard with secret double back opening into passage.

Scale, ½ of an inch to 1 foot.



B (I.)

My dear Brother,
And so you are at last resurrected? To hear from you—when I had given up all hope of such a fortune five months ago — is really as gratifying as it is unexpected. May the Heavens be praised and I do hope that all the "celestial" ~~heavenly~~ musicians" of the Asuras have not failed to blow into their instruments on that blessed day, when you have felt, at last, strength enough in you to answer to your

B (II.)

would ever looked at her! Last query. "Isn't it barely possible, that politics have something to do with it?" May be. Thus, in order to create a mutiny in India, she took in her party, two rabid English patriots ~~with~~ And, if the possible Ty of the mighty army of Sannyasis going to Russia to dethrone Alexander II, and the Russian Nihilists, crossing over to India to dethrone the Empress and proclaim the "Woman" their Empress — it looks like it." Enough!

B (III.)

would admit for one moment that a person as described — loose in her statements, talking nonsense, indiscreet and illogical — would be up to the size of such a gigantic fraud!

B (IV.)

phenomena at will, and throwing them by means of electric apparatus (!!!!! one said a lie. Bravo – Mahatma Dayanand! Now, when the teaching about a personal Iswar had to. I hope Sinnett, at least, nor Scott will believe what he says, since to my great

B (V.)

fine thing, but that since he wants it to be issued under the "A." of the T.S. why not sign it "an Anglo Indian Theosophist"

. . . . . .

signed. He also wants me to tell Mr S. that he (my Boss) has a mind to train one of his chelas to write in Mr Sinnett's handwriting; which,

B (VI.)

Angleterre

C. C. Massey Esqr
1. Albert Mansions
Victoria Street S.W.
London
England

B (VII.)

England

F. W. H. Myers. Esq.
Leckhampton House.
Cambridge
England

B (VIII.)

My Dear Mr Myers
There are situations in this life when brutal force destroys works of art, genius & patience in a few seconds. Truth hiding her nakedness in a well is no vain simile especially in our century. People will not have her, accustomed as they are, & preferring for their own ape selfish means to receive her only when dressed up in harlequin garb suiting their own prejudices & preconceptions. When friends tell me in their sympathetic letters that "truth must prevail" that it is eternal — I only laugh. When

B (IX.)

The night when the tricks of the worthy French mediums were found out I was not even in Cairo. I had gone properly to the Pyramids and the desert, since the mediums reproached me with preventing by my presence the "Spirits" to come. That there was never any such public scandal, which would have been dreadful, is proven by several things: (A.) Peebles in his book "Around the World" on p. 315 speaks very highly of me and shows them (the Coulombs) as Spiritualists —

B (X.)

military men more than any other, must remember, that the approaching act of the Eastern drama is to be the last and the decisive one. That it will require all our efforts, every sacrifice on our part, and requires far more careful preparations ~~than~~ in every direction than did the last war. They must remember, that to set idle now, when every one has to be busily preparing is — the highest of crimes, a treason to their their Country and their God."
"He who hath ears let him

K. H. (I.)

presence and interest. So "guide" you we will not consent. However much we may be able to do yet we can promise only to give you the full measure of your deserts. Deserve much and we will prove honest debtors; little, and you need expect only a compensating return. This is not a mere text taken from a schoolboy's copy book, this' it sounds so, but only the clumsy statement of the law of our order, and we can not transcend it. Utterly unacquainted with western, especially English, modes of thought and action, were we to meddle in an organisation of such a kind you would find all your fixed habits and traditions incessantly clashing if not with the new aspirations themselves, at least with their modes of realisation as suggested by us. You could not get unanimous consent to go even to the length you might yourself wish. I have asked Mr Sinnett to draft a plan embodying your joint ideas for submission to our chiefs this seeming the shortest way to a mutual agreement. Under our "guidance" your Society could not live — you not being men to be guided at all, in that sense. Hence, the world be a premature birth and a failure, looking

K. H. (II.)

My dear Brother, — Having no word to say to the first nine pages of your letter, "une tourneille de logique serrée et acerbe" as V. Hugo puts it — I began at page the tenth, for it is the only one containing a question. I read Chatterjee's letter — this second one — with all the attention I could bestow upon it, and do not find in it one word that could not be answered. His complaint is the echo of the wail of countless millions of human beings, ever since man began to think for himself. The world had interludes, periods of lull more or less prolonged, when, hypnotized by the clergy and under the influence of theological anesthetics called religion's pana

K. H. (III.)

a ten-fold fury, and their fiercest passions would be aroused. And verily, no demon could devise for man a more cruel torture than to let him in into our Secret. Tibet — our last refuge would be invaded and taken by millions of disarmed people alone, and — they would be welcomed and led on by the Brothers of the Shadow, who would then gain the upper hand.

But all this is the dream of a dreamer who is having a dream.

Yours in imagination

K. H.

[PLATE II.

K. H. (IV.)

A word from you pen, and over your signature, will impress even those who pretend to sneer at your ideas, ten times more than volumes of protestations and affirmations from all others — but one, and that one tangled

K. H. (V.)

into a disputation, a newspaper squabble over "cigarette papers" and "brooches". I did not ask either of you to defend dead. D, or figure as modern Don Quixotes fighting windmills for the honour of

K. H. (VI.)

lamentable characters those, and we thank you for the friendly and quite impartial introduction. If you would, however substitute the words "work for yourself and for humanity" for the

K. H. (VII.)

There is neither grand nor woeful deception, but are bound to keep within our laws & regulations.

I have good hopes that our lawyers may find less difficulty than any other in the correct appreciation of our true position. In his remarkable Essay on "A New Evangicism" he has expressed the idea that

. . . . . .

"A living dog is worth two dead lions". In the absence of such an abstract, improvable and imperfect God, perchance the presence of a still less perfect tho' less improvable one may prove of some benefit — even to himself — whom I thank for the interest taken in my chela — meliora

K H

K. H. (Z.)

It was just because the side of the understanding rightly the doctrine of the chief we can to be employed in this direction. It is only the intellectual men that can do rightly and to your fullest with being vigorously carried on. Such fortunately buried deep under a unstaining these latter for the high. Therefore provide the grand rarely attract our attention, for we magnet really as it were, to them. We give at times, only freeze necessarily.

R H

D (I.)

Memorandum.

Since it is considered desirable to collect evidence regarding the occurrence of occult phenomena during Mme Blavatsky's absence, I shall say here a few

. . . . . .

in private correspondence to theosophical friends in London and New York. Especially the account of

. . . . . .

After receiving this reply I went up to the shrine to look for the packet put by me there, but I found it had disappeared. The key being in

D (II.)

I had known that at that time you would be amidst so many people I would not have attempted to come. I thought 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

3. REPORT OF MR. F. G. NETHERCLIFT, EXPERT IN HANDWRITING, ON THE BLAVATSKY-COULOMB DOCUMENTS.

10, Bedford Row, W.C.
March 17th, 1885.

In compliance with your instructions, I have carefully examined and compared the several documents you have submitted to me for my opinion as a Professional Expert in handwriting, which are contained in Two Packets as follows :—

Packet 1.

Consists of an Envelope marked 3, in which is contained a slip of paper the writing on which commences, "The Mahatma has heard," &c. A Telegram in a different handwriting. An envelope addressed Madame E. Coulomb. A letter on green paper; and a letter on pink paper. In answer to the first question in my instructions the whole of these documents, with the exception of the Telegram, were written by Madame Blavatsky.

The Envelope marked 7 containing a scrap of ruled paper marked 10, the writing on which commences "*La poste*," &c., is by the hand of Madame Blavatsky.

An Envelope directed Mme. and Monr. Coulomb is likewise to Madame Blavatsky's hand.

An Envelope marked 10, containing a letter marked 2 the writing of which commences "*Ma belle chère amie*," is likewise by the hand of Madame Blavatsky.

* * * * * *

An Envelope marked 28 containing a letter of several pages written in violet ink. The whole of this is written by Madame Blavatsky.

An Envelope marked No. 11, containing a letter written in violet ink commencing "*Ma chère Madame Coulomb*," is all by the hand of Madame Blavatsky.

Packet 2.

An Envelope, postmark "Cambridge," containing a letter on foreign paper addressed to Mr. Myers in the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.

Scrap written in pencil commencing "Damodar send me," &c., in the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.

Envelope containing 2 sheets foreign paper dated Elberfeld, addressed to Mr. Myers, in the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.

A letter one sheet addressed to Mr. Myers commencing "You are very kind," &c., in the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.

A letter consisting of a sheet and a-half addressed to Mr. Myers

commencing "It does seem extraordinary," &c., in the undoubted handwriting of Madame Blavatsky.

* * * * *

On placing Madame Blavatsky's genuine or acknowledged handwritings in juxtaposition [with the doubted ones], I really cannot see that there has been any attempt to disguise the hand [in the latter]. Every characteristic of her handwriting may be traced throughout. Some of the writings appear more rapidly executed than others ; as will always be observed in looking at a mass of correspondence ; but all the writings I have mentioned as being positively written by Madame Blavatsky, are undeniably hers without disguise. If she intended any of them to be in a feigned hand, I can only say that the disguise is so flimsy that any Expert would not notice the attempt.

* * * * * *

(Signed) FREDERICK GEORGE NETHERCLIFT.

April 7th, 1885.

[The asterisks indicate the position of passages about Mr. Damodar's writing, and the K.H. writings to which Mr. Hodgson has referred on p. 282, as those which were originally submitted to Mr. Netherclift. No statements of Mr. Netherclift about the Blavatsky-Coulomb letters themselves have been omitted. A second batch of Blavatsky-Coulomb letters was submitted shortly afterwards to Mr. Netherclift, who returned them all in a packet along with the undoubted writings of Madame Blavatsky entrusted to him for comparison. This packet of writings was endorsed by him as follows: "The whole of the writings contained in this packet are by the hand of Madame Blavatsky, whether acknowledged to be genuine or otherwise. They vary in the degree of care with which they are written, but in my opinion there is no attempt to disguise the hand.—(Signed) F. G. N."]

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4. NOTE ON CERTAIN PHENOMENA NOT DEALT WITH IN MR. HODGSON'S REPORT.

BY MRS. H. SIDGWICK.

There are certain narratives of phenomena connected with the Theosophical Society which have been brought to the notice of the Committee, which have not come within the scope of Mr. Hodgson's investigations. The Committee think, however, that in forming a judgment of the whole evidence the reader should have before him as full an account as possible of all such phenomena as there seems to be a *primâ facie* difficulty in explaining by the recognised laws of nature, and they have, therefore, asked me to put together in the present note the residuum

of narratives with which Mr. Hodgson has not dealt, and to append such remarks as seem to me to throw light on them.

I may observe that all to which there will be occasion for me to refer were printed in our first report; the only partial exception being an incident described by Mr. Rudolph Gebhard (see p. 385), of which we had received no written account when the first report was printed, and which we, therefore, there very briefly mentioned. No later phenomena have come under our notice.

The phenomena I shall have to discuss consist of four cases of letters received in a mysterious manner, and four cases of supposed "astral" apparitions. The mysterious element can be easily eliminated in one of the letter-phenomena, and in the case of an apparition of which Madame Blavatsky was the alleged percipient. As regards the other cases of letters, it is difficult, I think, with our present knowledge, to suggest a completely satisfactory explanation; but with the evidence before us of an elaborate combination, under Madame Blavatsky's direction, to produce spurious marvels, I cannot attach much weight to this difficulty. The remaining cases of apparitions are undoubtedly interesting, but for reasons which I shall give later on, I do not think that stress can be laid upon them as evidence for the occult powers of "Mahatma M." and Mr. Damodar.

The following account is from Dr. Hübbe Schleiden, who is a well-known German savant and publicist, author of "Ethiopien," and other works. Madame Blavatsky was in England at the time of the incident.

Elberfeld, August, 1884.

Dear Madam,—You requested me to state to you the particular circumstances under which I received my first communication from Mahatma K.H. I have much pleasure in doing so.

On the morning of the 1st of this month Colonel Olcott and I were travelling by an express train from here to Dresden. A few days before I had written a letter to the Mahatmas which Colonel Olcott had addressed and enclosed to you, which, however, as I now hear, never reached you but was taken by the Masters whilst it was in the hands of the post officials. At the time mentioned I was not thinking of this letter, but was relating to Colonel Olcott some events of my life, expressing also the fact that since my sixth or seventh year I had never known peace or joy, and asking Colonel Olcott's opinion on the meaning of some striking hardships I have gone through. In this conversation we were interrupted by the railway-guard demanding our tickets. When I moved forwards and raised myself partly from the seat in order to hand over the tickets, Colonel Olcott noticed something white lying behind my back on that side of me which was opposite to the one where he was sitting. When I took up that which had appeared there it turned out to be a Tibetan envelope, in which I found a letter from Mahatma K. H., written with blue pencil in his well-known and unmistakable handwriting. As there were several other persons unacquainted to us in the compartment, I suppose the

Master chose this place for depositing the letter near me where it was the least likely to attract the unwelcome attention and curiosity of outsiders. The envelope was plainly addressed to me, and the communication contained in the letter was a consoling reflection on the opinion which I had five or ten minutes ago given on the dreary events of my past life. The Mahatma explained that such events and the mental misery attached to it were beyond the ordinary run of life, but that hardships of all kinds would be the lot of one striving for higher spiritual development. He very kindly expressed his opinion that I had already achieved some philanthropic work for the good of the world. In this letter were also answered some of the questions which I had put in my first-mentioned letter, and an assurance was given me that I was to receive assistance and advice when I should be in need of it.

I dare say it would be unnecessary for me to ask you to inform the Mahatma of the devoted thankfulness which I feel towards him for the great kindness shown to me, for the Master will know of my sentiments without my forming them into more or less inadequate words.—I am, dear madam, in due respect, yours faithfully,

HÜBBE SCHLEIDEN.

To Madame Blavatsky, Elberfeld, Platzhoffstrasse, 12.

Elberfeld, 9/11/84.

Dear Sir,—In reply to your question about the letter from Mahatma K. H., which I received in a railway carriage of an express train while in motion, I beg to say that it appears to me absolutely impossible that the letter could have been brought into the train by any supposed agent of Madame Blavatsky's. It is true we had not changed carriages since leaving Elberfeld, but the letter did not at all fall out of the air, but was found behind my back when I moved, and must, therefore, have been deposited between my back and the cushion of the seat against which I was lying. There was no possibility of getting there for any matter in one of the three or four aggregate states known to our Western science. Besides, Madame Blavatsky could have nothing to do with this letter, which was a reply to questions which I had written on Tuesday, the 29th July, and which left Elberfeld on that or the following day for London, addressed to Madame Blavatsky. Now, these questions could not have been delivered in London before Thursday or Friday of that week, and a reply could, in the ordinary postal way, not have been in Elberfeld before Saturday or Sunday. The event of my receiving the reply of the Mahatma, however, occurred on Friday morning, the 1st August. I may mention here that Madame Blavatsky assured me she never found my questions enclosed in the letter to her; these must have been taken out while in the hands of the post. My best proof of the genuineness of this phenomenon, I find, though, is the contents of the letter, for it was not only a reply to the said questions, but also referred to the conversation I was just at that time having with Colonel Olcott. I cannot doubt that this handwriting of the Mahatma must, therefore, have been precipitated by him at that very instant and transmitted to me by a magic process which lies beyond the power of ordinary men.—I am, dear sir, yours very truly,

HUBBE SCHLEIDEN.

To F. W. H. Myers, Esq., Cambridge.

A few months earlier a letter is said to have fallen in a railway carriage occupied only by Colonel Olcott and Mr. Mohini, in the express train between Paris and London. But Madame Blavatsky and Babula were then in Paris or its neighbourhood, and though Colonel Olcott and Mr. Mohini both maintain that the letter could not have been placed in the compartment before they started, in such a manner as to fall in the course of their journey, they have both shown themselves to be too inobservant and inaccurate as witnesses for their conviction on this point to be of much value. But in Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's case I do not feel able to make a definite suggestion as to how the letter reached him by natural means; for, as I have said, Madame Blavatsky was in England, and we cannot point to any known agent of hers whom we know to have been at Elberfeld at the time. Still, we cannot say that there were none, or even that one did not accompany Colonel Olcott and Dr. Hübbe Schleiden in the railway carriage. The relevancy of the Koot Hoomi letter to (1) Dr. Hübbe Schleiden's questions in his letter to Madame Blavatsky, and (2) to his conversation with Colonel Olcott, I am unable to treat as evidentially important, without more accurate knowledge as to the contents of the two letters, since I cannot regard it as improbable beforehand that the conversation should take the particular turn which rendered the Koot Hoomi letter appropriate. I do not profess, however, as I have said, to give a completely satisfactory explanation of the phenomenon. I am merely suggesting possibilities and giving reasons why I cannot, under the circumstances, attach weight to it as evidence of occult agency. Other simpler and easier explanations may suggest themselves to the reader's mind. It must be borne in mind that the training for adeptship under Madame Blavatsky's supervision is not unlikely to include orders which must be blindly carried out, to convey letters mysteriously to other people.

I give next Mr. Rudolf Gebhard's account of his experience, written out by him for Mr. Hodgson. This phenomenon also must, I think, remain without special explanation. It is unfortunate that Mr. Gebhard did not write an account of it at the time it occurred, as it is of course possible that, after an interval of three months, some important detail may have escaped his memory.

Adyar, December 31st, 1884.

DEAR SIR,—Complying with your request I shall give you in the following an account of a phenomenon as witnessed by me in my father's house some couple of months ago.

Before I describe what has happened, allow me to say a few words about myself; it will serve to show that I am better adapted than most other people to advance an opinion on these subjects.

Since my earliest boyhood I have always had a taste and a knack for conjuring tricks. When in London I took lessons there from a professional conjurer, Prof. C. E. Field, a man whom I consider to be one of the best

sleight-of-hand men I ever met. Later on I made the personal acquaintance of most of our leading performers in that line and exchanged tricks with them; there is not a single line of conjuring I am not acquainted with, may that be coin or card tricks, or the so-called anti-spiritualistic tricks in imitation of a spiritualistic séance. I then think that when such a phenomenon takes place in my presence, it is quite a natural thing for me to keep my eyes wide open, in order not to be deceived by a trick, and this is the reason why I think myself especially qualified to advance an opinion about the matter on hand.

Account of a Phenomenon that occurred in Elberfeld (Germany), on September —, 1884.

At 9 p.m. of the above named date a small circle of friends, Theosophist and non-Theosophist, were sitting in the drawing-room of my father's house (Platzhoffstrasse 12). Madame Blavatsky, who was one of the party, was seated on a couch in the middle of the room, and the rest were seated in a semi-circle around her.

Whilst the conversation was going on Madame Blavatsky suddenly looked up, and taking a listening attitude said there was something going on in the room, but that she could not then make out for certain what it was.

Mrs. H., an American lady and a clairvoyante, said that she had felt an influence since some time already, and Madame Blavatsky and Mrs. H. then saw like a ray of light going towards a large oil painting hanging over a piano in the same room.

My mother, sitting with her back to the piano and opposite a looking-glass, said that she had seen in the glass like a faint flash of lightning. After a minute or so Madame Blavatsky asked the party what they would like to take place, as she now felt sure that the "Master" would do something for us that night.

Different requests were made, but finally it was unanimously resolved "*that a letter should be asked for, addressed to my father, and treating on a subject that he should mentally wish for.*" (I draw your attention to the three points; nobody knew beforehand that the whole party would choose a letter; second, that my father should be the addressee; third, what subject my father might be thinking of. Madame Blavatsky did not influence our choice as she did not advance any suggestion.) Madame then said she saw something going on with the picture above spoken of and that probably we should find something there. I accordingly got up and examined that picture, but could not find anything. As the picture was fastened to the wall in a slanting position, the top part hanging over, I lifted it off the wall and examined carefully every inch of it. No letter! The space then between the wall and the back of the picture was fully eight inches and perfectly lit up, as there was a gas bracket on each side of it. I let the picture fall back and said I could not find anything, but Madame Blavatsky told me to try again, and I repeated my examination in the same way. Not contented with that I got up on the piano (a grand,) and there again looked behind the picture and passed my hand along the top of it, twice. Nothing! (I had been searching all this time for a letter, not for another article where perhaps a slip of paper had

escaped my attention.) I turned round to Madame Blavatsky, saying that I could find nothing, when she exclaimed, "There it is!" I turned sharply round and a *letter* fell down from behind the picture on the piano. I picked it up. It was addressed to *my father*, ("Herrn Consul Gebhard") and treated of the subject he had been *thinking* of.

Now I wish to draw your attention to some important points.

1. There was no secret receptacle either in the frame or at the back of the picture. 2. The letter was in size 5in. by 2½in. *not* folded up into a smaller compass. 3. I was the only one who came near the picture; all the others kept their seats except one gentleman, who got up, but whom I did not allow to handle the picture. Madame Blavatsky, seated all the time on the couch, distant four to five yards. 4. Between the time I last touched the picture and the moment the letter put in an appearance there elapsed from 15 to 20 seconds. After Madame Blavatsky had said "There it is," I turned round. The letter then had not appeared but came in view about one second after that. How could Madame Blavatsky have seen it? 5. The letter lay on the piano about *five inches off the wall!* The picture frame at the bottom part touches the wall, because as I said before the top part hangs over. Now there may be space enough for a letter, being flat against the wall, to glide through, but then that letter, continuing its way, *ought* to drop behind the piano (*i.e.*, between the wall and the piano and from there on to the floor), as the piano does not touch the wall. How can it be found five inches off the wall? 6. The subject my father had in his mind was known to me, because I knew he had that very morning received a letter from my brother in New York on some personal matter, and when the letter had been decided upon by the party I whispered to my father, "Ask for an answer on that letter, this morning," and he said he would.

I consider this a most complete phenomenon, and I challenge any conjurer of to-day to repeat it, and I am willing to pay £100 to see it done by a conjurer under the same conditions. Perhaps Mr. Maskelyne (Messrs. Maskelyne and Cooke, Egyptian Hall, Piccadilly), who has done already so much to detect mediumistic frauds (?), will take up this challenge.

If there is any further information you want, I am entirely at your service.—I remain, dear sir, your obedient servant,

R. Hodgson, Esq., Adyar. RUD. GEBHARD.

I learn from Mr. Hodgson that, in reply to his inquiries, Mr. Gebhard stated that he did not think that a confederate could have thrown the letter without its being observed, but he did not seem to have previously contemplated the possibility of a confederate having been present.

The following is an account of another letter-phenomenon by a lady resident in London, and known to some members of the Committee:—

One morning in July, [1884,]I was called by Madame Blavatsky to her room where she was still in bed. She desired me to open a drawer and give her out a letter which was lying there closed and addressed. I did so. She asked me to notice that the letter was addressed in the handwriting of a person whom I knew, that it was fastened, and apparently had not been

opened. She then took a match and having lighted it proceeded to burn the letter. I protested against this being done, but she answered "It is the Master's orders," and further added, "You had better go to your room and meditate." I went upstairs into my room and shut the door. I remained there some time considering the whole affair. The window of the room, which was at the top of the house, was wide open and looked out into a garden. Before the window was a dressing-table on which was a pink cloth; there was no mirror on the table, only one or two small articles of toilet, and the sun was shining full into the room. I went to the window without any definite reason, and as I approached the table I perceived on the pink cover a large white envelope. I took it up, looked at it, and found that it was closed and evidently contained a letter, but there was no superscription. I had the letter in my hand for a little while and then looked at it again. To my great surprise I found that where, but a few moments previously, there had been a blank space, there was distinctly visible a name and address written in purple ink, in a handwriting which I well knew as being that of one of the Mahatmas. The name and address was that of the writer of the letter I had previously seen burned.

A phenomenon of this kind may be, and in this case was, as I understand, very impressive to the witness, without carrying conviction to other people. For it is impossible for them to feel sure that it was adequately distinguished from what, I suppose, we are all constantly liable to, the mere non-observation of something which was there all the time. It is possible also that some combination of substances may have been used instead of ink, which would become coloured (temporarily at any rate) by exposure for a few minutes to the air. A chemist, well qualified to give an opinion, tells me that he thinks such a combination might be used; but we have never seen and have no access to the writing in question, and without this it is of course impossible to obtain an expert's opinion of any value as to whether this particular writing could have been so produced or not. I do not myself think it likely that it was so produced.

As to a post-card received by Mr. Keightley in Paris, on which Mahatma M.'s initials were written, and a letter which Madame Blavatsky professed to read without opening, also in Paris, it is unnecessary to say more than that Babula seems to have intervened between the postman and the recipient in both cases. The letters probably came by an earlier delivery than that by which they appeared to arrive.

I proceed to "astral" apparitions. In August, 1884, Mr. Myers received the following letter from Mr. Pâdshâh, a young Parsee gentleman and a Theosophist.

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. Z.,* Mrs. X.,* and Miss Z.* 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 Society for Psychical Research; 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 Damodar'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 Society for Psychical Research. 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 the Society for Psychical Research.

Madame is going to-day to Elberfeld, and I shall open the answer as soon as Damodar 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.

The telegram received from Mr. Damodar in reply seemed distinctly irrelevant. It ran: "Master wants you here to-night don't fail look into your pocket."

On August 30th Mr. Myers proceeded to Elberfeld and inquired of Mr. Keightley (a Theosophist and a graduate of Trinity College, Cambridge, 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. Pâdshâh, reporting Mr.

* Fictitious initials.

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 occurred to her to consult her private note-book. This was said to be 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, *vid* Queenborough and Flushing. She at once asked Mr. Keightley to go and fetch the despatch-box. In the note-book was found the entry here translated, which was then seen by all present. It is written partly in Russian, partly in English. The words in italics are 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. Z., 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.*"

On Wednesday, September 10th, a letter from Mr. Damodar was received at Elberfeld by Madame Blavatsky in the presence of Mr. Keightley, who noted its registered envelope;* and believes that the letter had gone first to London and been forwarded to Elberfeld.

The letter—which all who have examined it believe to be in Mr. Damodar's handwriting—is as follows:—

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 sitting near you under a big looking-glass and who was that short old lady about? I think there were several others in the room at the time; but I could not make out how many or who

* Mr Keightley noticed that the envelope was registered, with *Damodar*, he believes, written in the corner, and that the letter was actually in the envelope—the letter being in Damodar's handwriting. But Mr. Keightley and Madame Blavatsky between them then lost the envelope. We have, however, ascertained that a registered letter answering to the description of this one reached London on September 7th. It left Bombay on August 19th, and therefore probably was sent from Madras on August 16th, or 17th.

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 Thibetan 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 Colonel Olcott 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 certainly cannot be said that the possibility of collusion between Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar is in this case excluded. But though on the one hand it may seem strange that a planned imposture should not have been better carried out, it must be observed on the other hand that there are points in the evidence which look decidedly suspicious. Of course, if there was imposture—as, considering what we now know about both Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Damodar, I cannot myself profess to doubt—we cannot be sure of discovering the precise *modus operandi* by merely reflecting on the phenomena intended to appear. But the following may be suggested as a possible course of events.

Let us suppose that some time in July, after she had begun her residence at Elgin-crescent, and could therefore describe the looking-glass and the lady, Madame Blavatsky wrote to Mr. Damodar telling him to post a letter on August 16th, such as that we have printed, and that she would take care to make it correspond with events in London; and further, that when the day came she performed more or less imperfectly—or perhaps only spoke of—her part of the programme, but forgot the "Master-wants-you-here-to-night-look-in-your-pocket" part. Let us further assume that the telegram to India was no part of the original plan, and that Mr. Damodar was left to his own devices in replying to it. It would not be unnatural that he should reply as he did, that being, in fact, the only thing he was supposed to have *told* her; about the trunk he was supposed to have *asked* her. I cannot regard it as at all satisfactorily established that Madame

Blavatsky had no opportunity of obtaining access to her note-book between the time when the telegram was sent to Mr. Damodar and the time when the book was shown to the party at Elberfeld; and I think the entry may have been made, or, at any rate, the last sentence added, in that interval;—either after Mr. Damodar's telegram was received, or at some previous moment, when it recurred to her memory that he was to be supposed to have made that remark about the Master. Thus all that occurred would be accounted for.

It is possible that the entry in Madame Blavatsky's note-book may have been made much earlier—at the time when she first communicated the plan to Mr. Damodar—and corrected afterwards; for the names of the persons present—Mrs. Z. and Mr. and Mrs. Oakley—are written in lead pencil over the original purple pencil, rendering what is underneath illegible. But I am not myself inclined to believe that the greater part of it* was written at this earlier date, because if it had been, I think that Madame Blavatsky's and Mr. Damodar's descriptions of the scene would have agreed better than they do. Madame Blavatsky's phrases, "I called, trying to find out some one near me" . . . "tried to make myself heard by Mrs. Z.," &c., do not correspond well with Mr. Damodar's question about the gentleman "sitting near" her.

There is another point which strikes me as somewhat suspicious about Madame Blavatsky's entry in her note-book, and which strengthens my impression that it was made after the telegram was sent. For what purpose was it made? Why, if it was merely as a record of an event interesting to herself, and not for comparison with an expected letter from Mr Damodar, should she put in so uninteresting a fact as that she was sitting under the looking-glass? But if it was intended for this latter object, it would have been natural to show it to some one at the time the sending of the telegram was being discussed, had it been then in existence, and thus to improve the test. I think it probable, therefore, that the entry was made after the telegram was sent, though very likely before the answer was received.

The allusion at the end of Mr. Damodar's letter is to an apparition of him seen by Mr. E. D. Ewen, of Chattisgarh, Central Provinces of India. Mr. Ewen, who is a Scotch gentleman of honourable repute, whose organisation is highly nervous, saw Mr. Damodar (with whom he was acquainted) in "astral" form, as he supposed, on May 23rd, 1884, in London. On his mentioning this at a meeting of our Society, on May 28th, Mr. Damodar was at once telegraphed to by Colonel Olcott (Mr. Myers being present) in the following words:

* It is noticeable that the first sentence is written in blue pencil, and the rest in purple, with the exception of the corrections in lead pencil. This suggests that the whole note was not written at the same time.

"Olcott to Damodar, Adyar, Madras. Have you visited London lately? write Myers full details." To this telegram no reply was received, from which it is a natural inference that Mr. Damodar was unaware of the vision, though he *may* have had other reasons for his silence. His mentioning it in his letter of August 16th proves nothing, of course, since there had then been more than time to acquaint him by post with the facts. We are thus left without any evidence to distinguish Mr. Ewen's experience from a merely subjective hallucination.

Two other visions I have to deal with. The first is an experience that occurred to Mr. Vsevolod Solovioff, Page of Honour to the Czar, and son of the tutor of the late Czar, and a Russian author of high repute. He describes what occurred as follows :—

"1 Octobre, 1884, Paris.

"Ayant reçu une lettre de ma compatriote, Mme. Hélène Blavatsky, dans laquelle elle m'informait du mauvais état de sa santé et me priait de venir la voir à Elberfeld, je me suis décidé à faire ce voyage. Mais puisque l'état de ma propre santé me forçait à certains ménagements, j'ai préféré m'arrêter à Bruxelles, que je n'ai jamais vu, pour me reposer, la chaleur étant accablante.

"Je suis parti de Paris le 24 Août. Le lendemain matin, au Grand Hôtel de Bruxelles où je m'étais arrêté, j'ai rencontré Mlle. A. (fille de feu ambassadeur russe à——et demoiselle d'honneur de l' Impératrice de Russie). En apprenant que je me rendais à Elberfeld pour voir Mme. Blavatsky, qu'elle connait et estime beaucoup, elle s'est décidée à m'accompagner. Nous avons passé la journée ensemble, comptant partir le lendemain par le train de neuf heures du matin.

"A huit heures, étant déjà complètement prêt à partir, j'entre chez Mlle. A. et je la trouve dans un grand embarras. Toutes ses clefs, qu'elle a l'habitude de garder toujours sur elle dans un petit sac et qu'elle a eu dans ce sac en se couchant, avaient disparu pendant la nuit, quoique la porte de sa chambre fut fermée à clef. Ainsi toutes ses malles étant fermées, impossible d'emballer les effets dont elle venait de se servir. Nous fûmes obligés de remettre notre départ jusqu'au train d'une heure de l'après midi, et fîmes venir le serrurier pour ouvrir la plus grande malle. Lorsqu'elle fut ouverte toutes les clefs que nous cherchions se trouvèrent au fond de la malle, *ainsi que la clef de cette malle, attachée comme d'habitude avec les autres.* Ayant à nous toute notre matinée, nous voulûmes faire une promenade, mais soudain je me sentis dans un état d'étrange faiblesse et en proie à un irrésistible besoin de dormir. Je me suis excusé auprès de Mlle. A. et me suis retiré dans ma chambre, m'empressant de me mettre au lit. Mais je ne pus m'endormir et restais les yeux fermés, lorsque tout à coup, dans l'état de veille, j'ai vu devant mes yeux fermés toute une série de paysages inconnus, qui se sont gravés dans ma mémoire avec leurs moindres détails. Lorsque cette vision fut dissipé, je me sentis remis de ma faiblesse et me rendis auprès de Mlle. A., à laquelle certainement j'ai raconté ce qui venait de se passer en lui dépeignant les paysages dans tous leurs détails.

"Nous sommes partis par le train d'une heure, et voici qu'après une

demi heure de route Mlle. A. me dit en regardant par la fenêtre : 'Tenez, voici un de vos paysages !' Je l'ai reconnu à l'instant, et jusqu'au soir j'ai revu, les yeux ouverts, tout ce que le matin j'avais vu les yeux fermés. J'étais content d'avoir raconté ma vision en détail à Mlle. A., car elle pouvait en attester la réalisation. Il faut dire que la route entre Bruxelles et Elberfeld m'est complètement inconnue, car c'était la première fois de ma vie que je visitais la Belgique et cette partie de l'Allemagne.

"En arrivant à Elberfeld le soir, nous nous sommes arrêtés dans un hôtel et nous nous hâtâmes de nous rendre auprès de Mme. Blavatsky dans la maison de M. Gebhard. Le même soir, les membres de la Société Théosophique qui entourent Mme. Blavatsky nous ont montré deux superbes portraits à l'huile des Mahatmas M. et Koot Houmi. Le portrait de M. surtout produisit sur nous une impression extraordinaire, et ce n'est pas étonnant qu'en revenant à notre hôtel nous en parlions encore et l'avions devant nos yeux. C'est à Mlle. A. de raconter ce qu'elle a vu et senti pendant la nuit suivante. Mais voici ce qui m'est arrivé :—

"Fatigué par le voyage, je dormais paisiblement lorsque tout d'un coup je fus réveillé par la sensation d'un souffle bien chaud et pénétrant. J'ouvre les yeux et dans la faible clarté qui entrait dans la chambre par les trois fenêtres, je vois devant moi une grande figure d'homme vétu d'un long vêtement blanc et flottant. En même temps j'ai entendu ou senti une voix, qui me disait, je ne puis préciser en quelle langue, bien que je le compris parfaitement, d'allumer la bougie. Je dois dire qu'au lieu de m'effrayer je restais tout à fait tranquille, seulement je sentais mon cœur battre avec une force redoublée. J'ai allumé la bougie et en l'allumant j'ai vu à ma montre qu'il était deux heures du matin. La vision ne disparaissait pas. C'était un homme bien vivant qui était devant moi. Et j'ai reconnu à l'instant même en lui le bel original du portrait que nous avions vu le soir. Il s'assit près de moi sur une chaise, et commença à me parler. Il parla longtemps, touchant les questions qui m'intéressent, mais la plus grande partie de cet entretien ne peut être rapportée ici car il s'agissait de choses tout à fait personnelles. Je puis dire, cependant, qu'entre autres il m'a annoncé que pour le voir *dans son corps astral* j'ai dû passer par beaucoup de préparations, et que la dernière leçon me fut donnée le matin même lorsque j'ai vu, les yeux fermés, les paysages que je devais revoir en réalité le même jour. Puis il me dit que je possède une grande force magnétique en voie de développement. Alors je lui demandai ce que je devais faire avec cette force. Mais, sans répondre, il disparut.

"J'étais seul, la porte de ma chambre était fermée à clef. J'ai cru à une hallucination et même je me suis dit avec effroi que je commence à perdre la tête. A peine ai-je eu cette idée que j'ai revu à la même place l'homme superbe aux vêtements blancs. Il hochait la tête et en souriant me dit : 'Soyez sûr que je ne suis pas une hallucination et que votre raison ne vous quitte pas. Blavatsky vous prouvera demain devant tout le monde que ma visite était réelle.' Puis il disparut. J'ai constaté à ma montre qu'il était près de trois heures. J'ai éteint la bougie et je me suis rendormi immédiatement d'un profond sommeil.

"Le matin, en arrivant avec Mlle. A. près de Mme. Blavatsky, la première chose qu'elle nous dit avec son sourire énigmatique : 'Eh bien ! comment

avez-vous passé la nuit?' 'Très bien,' lui ai-je répondu, et j'ai ajouté, 'Vous n'avez rien à me dire?' 'Non,' fit-elle, 'je sais seulement que le Maître a été chez vous avec un de ses élèves.'

"Le soir du même jour M. Olcott a trouvé dans sa poche un petit billet, que tous les théosophes ont reconnu pour être de l'écriture de M., conçu en ces termes : 'Certainement j'étais là, mais qui peut ouvrir les yeux à celui qui ne veut pas voir?—M.'

"C'était la réponse à mon incredulité, puisque toute la journée je tâchais de me persuader que ce n'était qu'une hallucination, ce qui fâchait Mme. Blavatsky.

"Je dois dire qu'à peine revenu à Paris, où je suis actuellement, mes hallucinations et les faits étranges qui m'entouraient se sont complètement dissipés. "VSEVOLOD SOLOVIOFF."

This was certainly a striking experience. M. Solovioff tells us that he tried to persuade himself throughout the following day, till he received the note, that it was a hallucination, but it was very unlike the hallucinations that are known to occur to sane and healthy persons. I do not myself think that there is the same difficulty in supposing it to have been an unusually vivid dream. It will be observed that no satisfactory test of an objective origin is afforded by the occurrences of the next day. Madame Blavatsky's remark that the Master and one of his pupils had been with him, was a perfectly safe one. "The Master" would do either for Koot Hoomi or M., and the Chela would cover a considerable range of other possibilities; while, if Madame Blavatsky had been wrong in assuming that the question "Vous n'avez rien à me dire?" indicated that there had been an experience of some sort, the non-seeing of the Master could be accounted for by a want of sufficient development on the part of M. Solovioff; or in whatever way the non-seeing of the Chela actually was accounted for. The contents of the note found in Colonel Olcott's pocket added no confirmation, and the note might easily, it would seem, have found its way there by natural means without his knowledge. We have not the details of Mdlle. A.'s experience, but I believe it consisted in a dream or vision, more or less similar to M. Solovioff's. It is possible that, if we had the details, we might find it more probable than not that the dreams were telepathically connected: but the similarity of circumstances and conditions, of trains of thought and emotions, before retiring to rest, might easily lead to similar nocturnal experiences.

Since writing the above I have learnt that, owing to events which have since occurred, M. Solovioff no longer regards his experience as affording any evidence of occult agency.

If M. Solovioff's experience was a dream, we have no reason for regarding the following experience of Mrs. Gebhard, with which I will conclude, as anything but a waking one.

Mrs. Gebhard, of Elberfeld, well known to one member of the Committee, writes as follows with regard to an incident which occurred

at a meeting of the London Lodge of the Theosophical Society, on April 7th, 1884. On that occasion, Madame Blavatsky, who had come in unexpectedly, and was sitting among the audience, suddenly called to Mr. Mohini, as though she saw some one. Mr. Mohini joined her in a lobby, and appeared also to perceive some one, whom he saluted with respect. Colonel Olcott's speech, however, was not interrupted, and nothing was said to show who it was that Madame Blavatsky and Mr. Mohini thus greeted. At the end of the meeting, they both stated that they had seen Mahatma M.

"On the 7th of April last, being at a meeting of the Theosophical Society at Mr. Finch's rooms, Lincoln's Inn, I had a vision, in which I saw the Mahatma M. At the moment I was listening attentively to Colonel Olcott's opening speech to the Society. I saw standing on my right side, a little in front, a very tall, majestic-looking person, whom I immediately recognised to be the Mahatma, from a picture I had seen of him in Mr. Sinnett's possession. He was not clad in white, but it seemed to me to be some dark material with coloured stripes, which was wound round his form. The vision lasted only a few seconds. As far as I could learn, the only persons besides myself who had seen the Mahatma were Colonel Olcott, Mr. Mohini, and, of course, Madame Blavatsky. "MARY GEBHARD."

This may have been a *collective* hallucination, and as such would have been very interesting; but we have not the contemporaneous and independent accounts of Mr. Mohini and Colonel Olcott as to dress, &c., nor the evidence as to the time of the appearance, which would be required to prove this.

We have then, as I said at the beginning, three experiences, one of them adapted to corroborate the assertion that Mr. Damodar can project his "astral form," and the other two apparently confirmatory of the existence of Mahatma M., and in two out of these three cases the percipient was probably completely awake. It must, however, be remembered that one result of the investigations of the Literary Committee is that merely subjective hallucinations occur to sane and healthy persons considerably more frequently than is generally supposed; and secondly, that what makes these experiences available as evidence for Madame Blavatsky is her previous allegation that Mr. Damodar and Mahatma M. were liable to appear, while the expectation caused by this allegation may have operated in producing the hallucinations, or determining their form.

In any case, though the experiences are interesting and important in relation to the general investigations of the Society—yet in the absence of other evidence for the existence of M., or for Mr. Damodar's power of voluntarily appearing; and in the absence also of such evidence in each instance as we should require, if it stood alone, to distinguish it from a merely subjective experience—they cannot be held to prove any of the powers claimed for "Adepts" and their disciples.

5. DETAILS OF THE EVIDENCE REFERRED TO ON PAGE 207.

In July, 1879, shortly after he had urgently represented to Madame Blavatsky the desire of himself and other members of the Theosophical Society, in London, for independent proof of the existence of "Adepts," Mr. C. C. Massey found in the minute book of the Society a letter addressed to him, and purporting to come from one of the Adept "Brothers"; Madame Blavatsky being then in India. This discovery was made at the lodgings of a member of the Society (who was at that time a non-professional medium), and in whose custody the minute book then was. The book was brought to Mr. Massey by this medium in connection with the business of the Society. The medium will be here described as X., and the medium's "control" as Z.*

In May, 1882, Mr. Massey was shown a letter addressed to X. (who had then ceased to reside in this country), apparently in Madame Blavatsky's handwriting, dated 28th June, 1879, and contained in an envelope bearing the registered London post-mark, 21st July, 1879. He took a copy of the first part of the letter, which was as follows:—

MY DEAR GOOD FRIEND,—Do you remember what Z. told or rather promised to me? That whenever there is need for it, he will always be ready to carry any message, leave it either on Massey's table, his pocket, or some other mysterious place? Well now there is the *most important need* for such a show of his powers. Please ask him to take the enclosed letter and put it into M.'s pocket or in some other still more mysterious place. But he *must not know* it's Z. Let him think what he likes, but he must not suspect you had been near him with Z. at your orders. He does not distrust you, but he does Z.

Also if he could treat L. L. with some Oriental token of love it would be right, but none of them must suspect Z. of it, therefore it is more difficult to make it to do it (*sic*) than it would otherwise be were it to be produced at one of your séances . . . &c.

Mr. Massey was not at that time at liberty to take the otherwise obvious course of communicating on the subject with Madame Blavatsky or X. (with neither of whom, moreover, was he then in correspondence), and it was not till some months later—autumn of 1882—that, the circumstances of the Society seeming to him to require the disclosure, he communicated the facts privately to friends in it.

It is noteworthy that a letter written by Madame Blavatsky to Mr. Massey on July 2nd, 1879, four days after the date of the letter to X., seems mainly written in order to say that the London Fellows of the Theosophical Society are not to have phenomena, and to explain why. She says in it: "I tell you as a fact that the desires of the London

* The suppression of these names is by request of Mr. Massey. It is not material to publish them for the present purpose.

Fellows have been the subject of earnest consultation among our Brothers. Some have been half inclined to gratify the wish for phenomena. . . . . But it has always ended in the unanimous conviction that to do this, would only degrade adeptship, and help the false theories of Spiritualism." Knowledge of the letter found in the minute book seems therefore to be implicitly denied. Mr. Massey endeavoured to obtain some explanation of it from Madame Blavatsky, but without success.

It was not until May, 1884, that, on receiving a letter from Madame Blavatsky—the first for several years—on [redacted] he sent her a copy of so much of the letter to X. as he had transcribed, and obtained in reply an acknowledgment that [redacted] all that part of it which concerned himself. The following are extracts from her letter:—

[redacted] Enghien, Friday.

All I have the honour now of telling you is—*on my theosophical word of Honour*,—1 That I am the author of but the first part of the letter you quote, *i.e.* a few hurried lines to X. after receiving [redacted] letter addressed to you and received by me at Girgaum, Bombay—asking [redacted] remind Z. of his promise and convey the letter to you by any means, [redacted] *they were occult.** My authorship begins with "My dear good friend"—and ends with—"he does not distrust you but he does Z." What follows after *has never been written by me*, nor have I any knowledge of it, all you may say to the contrary. Whether the remainder of it is harmless or not [redacted] whether you are at a loss to conceive *why* it should be forged—all this is flapdoodle for me. I *have not written it* and that's all sufficient *for me*; whatever it is for you. Who the devil may be "L. L." is immaterial; since the Masters do not evidently want me to see at the bottom of the trick. *It is forged*—that's all I know; as many other things were, and may be yet—for your special benefit, as I think. I had for years and entirely lost every remembrance of this letter and now it comes to me as a flash back with all its details. When Olcott spoke to me of it I had no clear remembrance of it and now I have. . . . . And now to the point. What do you find of so *deceitful* and *unpardonable* in this *first* part of my letter, which, as you think, is really the only one that incriminates me? I may be also lacking—in your code of notions of honour—"a sense of the commonest morality"—and if so, then all I can say, it must be so *in your sight*, surely not in mine. I have not, nor have I had, in writing it the smallest or faintest notion I was thereby *deceiving you*, trying *to impose upon you*, &c., &c. Do you call *withholding facts* one has no right to enter upon—deceiving? The letter forwarded to you *was* genuine, from as genuine a "Brother" as ever lived; it was received *phenomenally* by me in the presence of two theosophists who asked me what it was and whom I told it was none of their business. Was I *deceiving* them also? I was ordered to have it delivered into your hands, but was not told how and left to do the best I

* This proviso does not appear in the letter to X.

knew how. I asked Olcott, how I was to send it over to you and he said he did not know; and it was he who suggested Z. saying "Cant you send it over to him as it came to you and then have him deliver it to Massey if it is so difficult for you to send it direct?—I remember saying to him that it *was* difficult and that I would anyhow ask Z. to drop it somewhere. I do not know whether he understood what I really meant; and if he did, he has long ago forgotten all about it. But I remember it was through him that the idea about Z. came into my head. . . . . And would I have tried to deceive *you*, at that time, above all? You who had entire confidence* in me, who had declared as much in the Theosophist, you whom I was so proud to have in the Society, I could have cheated you like a *paid* medium! . . . to say that in the case of *that* letter I had plotted *consciously* to deceive you,—I say *it is this* which is an *infernal* lie—whoever says so! . . . . . In your case, Masters had forbidden me to help you in your dealings with mediums—to encourage them *even* with X., for fear you should never learn to discern occult from Spiritual phenomena; and this is why instead of writing to you—"Go to X. and you will get a letter from a Brother in Scotland through Z."—I acted as I have. That I saw nothing in it then, as I do not see now, of so dreadful, is only a proof that I have not received my education in London and that our notions of the honourable and the dishonourable differ. . . .

There are three points which may be specially noted in this letter. First, the part of the letter to X. acknowledged by Madame Blavatsky clearly indicates a plan of imposing on Mr. Massey as a manifestation of the power of the Mahatmas a phenomenon which she knew not to be due to any such agency. Secondly, the whole letter to X. as above quoted suggests a strong suspicion that she intended the phenomenon to be produced by perfectly natural and normal agency. This suspicion, however, would be most strongly suggested by the part of the letter which does not relate to Mr. Massey. Accordingly, Madame Blavatsky's method of dealing with the situation in which she finds herself placed is to acknowledge the authorship of the part of the letter which she had, apparently, some hope of explaining to Mr. Massey's satisfaction, while denying the authorship of the latter part. Her method of dealing with the Blavatsky-Coulomb correspondence is precisely similar. Thirdly, her explanation, however ingenious, is not perfectly consistent, for it is impossible to explain (1) Why she did not send the "Brother's" letter direct to Mr. Massey by post, unless she wished to make him believe it had reached him by occult means; (2) Why she made no allusion to it when she wrote to him about letters and phenomena on July 2nd, 1879, and stated so positively that there were to be no phenomena, unless she wished him to believe that she had nothing to do with it—that it had not passed through her

* It may be observed, however, that Mr. Massey's confidence in Madame Blavatsky had not prevented his urgent requirement of proof of the "Adepts" which should be independent of any such confidence.

hands; and (3) how a "Brother" in Scotland could be so ignorant of geography, or about Madame Blavatsky's occult acquirements, as to think it desirable to send a letter for Mr. Massey in London round by Bombay, instead of posting it himself at the nearest post-office.

The following further facts may be noted:—(1) That "K. H.," in letters which have been seen by Mr. Massey, avowed and defended Madame Blavatsky's authorship of so much of the letter as she herself afterwards admitted, and similarly denied the parts denied by her. (2) That X. absolutely denied to Mr. Massey all knowledge whatever of Madame Blavatsky's letter, or of having seen the letter enclosed in it before it was discovered by Mr. Massey in the minute book. (3) That "K. H.," in a letter which Mr. Massey has seen, attempts to reconcile this contradiction by suggesting that X. received the letter in a mediumistic state of trance or quasi-trance!

CONTENTS OF THE FOREGOING REPORT.