

PROCEEDINGS OF THE GENERAL MEETING ON
May 10th, 1889.

The thirty-second General Meeting of the Society was held at the Westminster Town Hall, on May 10th, 1889.

THE PRESIDENT, PROFESSOR SIDGWICK, IN THE CHAIR.

The President gave an address on the "Canons of Evidence in Psychical Research."

The following paper was then read.---

III

RECENT EXPERIMENTS IN CRYSTAL-VISION.

[The following paper is contributed by a lady, well known to the Editor, who prefers for the present to remain anonymous.]

It is proposed in the following paper to offer a short account of some recent attempts at Crystal-vision, experiments in which, for purposes of divination or clairvoyance, have been recorded from the earliest ages. I should have been glad to proceed to them without further preface; since, however, I have been unable to find in the British Museum Library any English book bearing directly upon the subject of Crystallomancy, I venture to prefix a few notes upon its history and method. Though the information obtainable upon the subject has, for the most part, no great evidential value, it is nevertheless historically interesting, for, just as the witch-stories contain the first hint of hypnotic suggestion, now so familiar, it may be possible to discern by examination and experiment whatever element of truth the traditions of mirror-gazing may contain, and perhaps to apply them to the elucidation or illustration of some of those questions of the sub-conscious workings of mind, on which, in spite of great recent effort, we have still much to learn.

Alike both in purpose and in method of use, and therefore for our present intention to be classed with the Crystal as a means of divination, were vessels containing liquid, usually water,—water in springs, mirrors of polished steel, liquid poured into the palm of the hand, and various objects having a reflecting surface, such as the beryl or other gems, the

blade of a sword,¹ and in Egypt, Persia, and in Europe in the Middle Ages—even the human finger nail.

With the use of one or more such means, we find that mirror-gazing in some form has been practised for at least 3,000 years, and that traces of it exist in the histories of Assyria, Persia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, China, Japan, India, possibly Nubia, and, in the form of cup-divination, according to Captain Cook, among the natives of the South Sea Islands. Ceasing to rank among manifestations of Divine power, though as to its influence on the minds and actions of those consulting it, taking a no less important place as the accredited work of the author of evil, mirror-gazing assumed a new importance in the history of Europe in the Middle Ages, reaching its highest development in the 16th and 17th centuries, and finding its exponents among the learned physicians and mathematicians of the Courts of Elizabeth, the Italian Princes, the Regent Catherine de Medici, and the Emperors Maximilian and Rudolph.

It is interesting to observe the close resemblance in the various methods of employing the mirror, and in the mystic symbolism which surrounds it, not only in different ages, but in different countries. From the time of the Assyrian monarch, represented on the walls of the North West palace of Nimroud, down to the 17th century, when Dr. Dee placed his Shew-stone on a cushioned table, "in the goodly little chapel next his chamber," in the college of which he was Warden at Manchester, the seer has usually surrounded himself with the ceremonials of worship, whether to propitiate Pan or Osiris, or to disconcert Ahriman or the Prince of Darkness. In the same way we find that in all ages, and alike in Greece, Rome, Persia, Egypt, India, as well as in later traditions of Europe, the seer, variously called Speculator, Scryer, Viewer, or Reader, was usually a child, "who had not known sin."

Before going further into the history of the subject, it may be as well to give some account of the method pursued, which, as has been said, is in all essential features the same under all circumstances; and for this I select the description given by Lane in his *Manners and Customs of the Modern Egyptians*,² written in Egypt, during the years 1833-4-5, which may then be compared with the traditions of antiquity.³

The curiosity of the author had been excited by Mr. Salt, the English Consul-General, who, on suspecting his servants of theft, sent for a Mughrébée magician. Mr. Salt himself selected a boy as Scryer,

¹ "Blade of a sword, buckle, or other shining object."—Plin. *Hist. Nat.*, xxxvii. ii.

² Vol. I., c. xii.

³ A gnostic papyrus in Greek, said to have been written in Egypt early in the Christian era, now preserved in the British Museum, describes a scene, in which Divination with the Bowl, under conditions very similar to those of Mr. Lane's story, forms an essential feature.

while the magician occupied himself with writing charms on pieces of paper which, with incense and perfumes, were afterwards burnt in a brazier of charcoal. After drawing a diagram in the boy's right palm into the middle of which he poured some ink, the magician desired him to look into it fixedly, when, after seeing various visionary forms as directed, the boy finally perceived the guilty person, who, from the description given of his dress and stature, was recognised as a certain labourer, who, on being arrested, confessed his crime.

This incident prompted Lane to further inquiries, and on a subsequent occasion other results were obtained, and the proceedings are described with greater detail.

First, invocations were written on paper by the magician, summoning his two Genii, then a verse from the Koran "to open the boy's eyes in a supernatural manner. . . . to make his sight pierce into what is to us the invisible world." These were thrown into a chafing-dish containing live charcoal, frankincense, coriander seed, and benzoin.

A boy of eight or nine years old had been chosen at random from a number who happened to be passing in the street, and the magician, taking hold of his right hand, drew in the palm of it a magic square, that is to say, one square inscribed within another, and in the space between certain Arabic numerals; then, pouring ink in the centre, bade the boy look into it attentively. At first he could see only the face of the magician, but proceeding with his inspection, while the other continued to drop written invocations into the chafing-dish, he at length described a man sweeping with a broom, then a scene in which flags and soldiers appear,¹ and finally Lane asks that Lord Nelson should be called for. The boy describes a man in European clothes of dark blue, who has lost his *left* arm, but adds, on looking more intently, "No, it is placed to his breast." Lord Nelson generally had an empty sleeve attached to the breast of his coat, but as it was the *right* arm he had lost, Lane adds, "Without saying that I suspected the boy had made a mistake, I asked the magician whether the objects appeared in the ink as if actually before the eyes, or as if in a glass, which makes the right appear left. He answered they appeared as in a mirror. This rendered the boy's description faultless."

Among the Greeks, various methods of divination by reflections on glass or water were used. 1. Hydromancy. This was practised chiefly at Patræ, a city on the sea coast of Achaia, where was a temple dedicated to Demeter. Before the temple was a fountain in which were

¹ It is perhaps worth noting that a lady mentioned by Lane—a friend of his own, who was invited to act as Scryer,—also saw a man with a broom, that the same vision is recorded by Dr. Dee, and that various accounts of Egyptian mirror-gazing, given by Sir G. Wilkinson and by Kinglake, speak of flags. Cp. Account of Lord Prudhoe, in *Noctes Ambrosianæ*.—Blackwood, Aug., 1831.

delivered oracles, very famous for the truth of their predictions. These were not given upon every account, but concerned only the events of diseases.¹ The manner of consulting was this: they let down a mirror by a small cord into the fountain, so that the lower edge might just touch the surface of the water, but not be covered by it; this done, they offered incense and prayers to the goddess, then looked upon the mirror, and from the various figures and images represented in it, made conjectures concerning the patient. 2. Lecanomancy, divination by a bowl containing water or a mixture of oil and wine. The Scholiast upon Lycophron believes this method to have been practised by Ulysses, and to have given occasion to the stories of his consultation with the ghost of Tiresias. 3. Catoptromancy, in which mirrors were used without water. Sometimes it was performed in a vessel of water, the middle part of which was called *gaster*, and then the divination termed Gastromancy (4), in which glass vessels were used filled with clear water, and surrounded by torches. A demon was invoked, and a boy appointed to observe whatever appearances arose by the demon's action upon the water. 5. Onychomancy,² "performed by the nails of an unpolluted boy, covered with oil and soot, which they turned to the sun, the reflection of whose rays were believed to represent by certain images the things they had a mind to be satisfied about."³ 6. Crystallomancy, "performed by polished and enchanted crystals, in which future events were signified by certain marks and figures."

We find still existing in India⁴ a mode of divination with mirrors (called "unjoun"—black lamps), which reminds us of the Greek hydromancy, in which a child, gazing into a mirror, sees the image of the sick person, whose recovery is in question. Indian magicians have also another process, which resembles that practised in Egypt. Incense, made after elaborate and careful rules, is burnt, and the remains collected, which, after being moistened with castor-oil, are poured into the hands of a child, who sees visions of spirits and demons.

Reinaud, quoting from an Arab MS., gives the following as the method of mirror-gazing among the Mussulmans:—

If one is in need of something, he writes on the edge of a mirror the names of Gabriel, Azrael, Raphael, and Asrafel, with words from the Koran, relating to the Omnipotence of God. He then fasts for seven days of strict retirement, and then, the mirror being held, either by himself, or by man,

¹ Cp. Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, Vol. I. cxi. Pausanias, vii., 21, 12. Bouché Leclercq, *Histoire de la Divination dans l'Antiquité*, II. 255.—Del Rio, *Disquis. Mag.*, Lib. IV. Quest. 6, Sec. 3.

² Boissard, *Trac. Div.*, c. v., p. 17.

³ Potter's *Antiquities of Greece*, Vol. I. cxviii.

⁴ Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, p. 433; cp. Herklot, *Mussulman and Hindoo Mirrors*, p. 375.

woman, or child, no matter who, he recites many prayers, and is enabled to see what he needs.¹

It may be as well to note here that the ingenious mechanical mirrors found in China, India, and Japan, the secret of which was examined by Mr. James Prinsep, Wolff, of Berlin, and Sir David Brewster, are concerned with purely physical magic, and appear to be in no way connected with our present subject.

Reinaud also refers to a Persian romance, in which it is mentioned that if a mirror be covered with ink and placed in front of any one, it will indicate whatever he wishes to know.

Pythagoras is said to have written on a steel mirror with human blood, and to have made his friends read the message by the light of the full moon, which appeared to reveal the message as a reflection from her own surface.²

HISTORY.

As has already been said, the history of cup and mirror divination takes us back to the earliest ages. The art of divination, of which this is one of the oldest forms, is ascribed to various sources. Æschylus³ refers it to Prometheus, Cicero⁴ to the Assyrians and Etrurians, Zoroaster to Ahriman, Varro to the Persian Magi,⁵ and a very large class of authors, from the Christian Fathers and Schoolmen downwards, to the devil.

There can be little doubt that the Cup of Joseph, "in which my Lord drinketh and whereby indeed he divineth,"⁶ was one used for magical purposes, though there are some who tell us that even here the mistranslator has been at work. The tradition seems the more probable, inasmuch as cups having special properties figure largely in the earliest Egyptian sculptures,⁷ having a further symbolic reference to Egypt as the cup of the Nile, and also to cycles or periods of time.

¹ Reinaud, *Description des Monuments Musulmans du Cabinet de M. le Duc de Blacas*. Paris, 1828. Vol. II., p. 9.

² "The moon's orb is round just as mirrors are, and there is a saying that those who are skilled in such matters can in this way bring the goddess down. There is, too, a trick of Pythagoras which is played by means of a reflector of this kind. When the moon is full, if anyone writes with blood anything he pleases on a mirror and holds it up to the moon, having previously bidden a friend to stand behind him, his friend, looking intently at the moon's reflected orb, will read everything which was written on the mirror as if it had been written on the moon."—Scholiast's Note on Aristophanes' *Nubes*, v. 750.

³ Æsch., *Prometheus Vincitus*, 492.

⁴ Cicero, *De Div.* I. i. and I. ii., *Clem. Alex. Strom.*, i. 326.

⁵ S. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei.*, vii. 35.

⁶ Greg. Naz. Works, Ed. Bened., ii. 137 and Plin. *Nat. Hist.*, vii. 56; Gen. xlv. 5-15; cp. Burder's *Oriental Customs*, p. 25.

⁷ *Nineveh and its Palaces*, Bonomi, p. 265; Ed. 1852. Hävernick, *Intro. to the Pentateuch*. Cardan, *De Rerum Variet.*, cap. 93.

The Persian poets make frequent allusion to the Cup of Giamschid, "in which could be seen the whole world and all the things which were doing in it,"¹ and to the existence of which they ascribed the prosperity of their ancient monarchs.

To the possession of such a vessel the Orientals ascribe the wisdom of Solomon,² and that used by Alexander the Great was probably of like mystic properties.³

The sculpture on the walls of the Hall of Divination at Nimroud, already referred to, represents the king as drinking or divining in the presence of the gods of Assyria.

The question as to the use and meaning of the Urim and Thummim is one upon which scholars and theologians, rabbinical and Christian, have hesitated in all ages to pronounce a decided opinion.⁴ I shall, however, venture to recur to this subject in another connection, and for the present will merely add that the earliest and best accredited traditions assert that the sacred gems worn upon the breast of the High Priest symbolised light, and were probably of some colourless stone, in which light was embodied in clearest purity, probably diamond or rock crystal.⁵

Of the practice of mirror-gazing among the Greeks, we have already spoken, and but little change seems to have occurred in the course of ages, from what we learn from Pausanias, who, travelling through Greece in the second century, visited Patræ in Achaia, and witnessed the practice of catoptromancy by means of a mirror suspended over water, with the usual incantations and burning of incense.⁶

The instances of divination by mirror or crystal gazing which occur among the Romans are so closely allied in kind and in method to those of Egypt and Greece as scarcely to need special mention.⁷ Varro tells a story of a child who was consulted as to the war of Mithridates,⁸ and

¹ Bonomi, p. 266.

² D'Herbelot s.v. "Giamschid" (=Vase of the Sun), *Occult Sciences*, 817. Cp. Psalm xvi. 5; xxiii. 5; also in reference to its superstitions, Babylon spoken of as a "Golden Cup," Jer. li. 7. Such was perhaps the cup made by Merlin. *Fæerie Queen*, III. 2, 19.

³ That a strong feeling still exists in the East on the subject of cup divination is illustrated by the following:—"When Seringapatam was stormed by General Harris and Sir David Baird, the unfortunate Tippoo Saib retired during the heat of the conflict to gaze on his divining cup. After remaining a long while in profound absorption he rushed desperately among the combatants in the breach, and fell there covered with wounds."—*Encyc. Met., Occult Science*. Elihu Rich.

⁴ Kimchi, Aben Ezra, S. Augustine, and many others meet us with such expressions as "Non constat," "Nescimus," "Difficile est invenire."

⁵ *Epistles to the Seven Churches*, Trench, p. 125.

⁶ Pausanias, VII., 21, 12.

⁷ Cicero, *De Div.*, i. 55.

⁸ Apuleius, *Apolog.* c. 41, Ed. Hildeb., p. 536. See also Cornelius Agrippa, *Occ. Phil.* B. I., ch. 57.

children, we learn, were consulted by Fabius. It is also said that a child foresaw by reading in a mirror the issue of the contest between Severus and Tullius Crispinus, and revealed the prophecy to Didius Julianus, by whom the oracle was consulted.¹

We learn from Pliny² that in the arts of divination the ancient Britons excelled even the Persians themselves, but we have no means of discovering whether any form of mirror or crystal gazing was known to them.³

The arts of the crystal seers, or as they were called in the Councils of the Church, "Specularii," seem to have passed, with but little change except in outward ceremonial, from the superstitions of the Pagan to those of the Christian.

Casaubon⁴ tells a story of a Latin Christian who was frequently mortified by seeing the opposite faction victorious in the games. He accordingly sought out Hilarion, a monk of great piety, who put into his hand a vase of water, in which he saw horses and chariots, and became aware that they were under magical spells. Hilarion dissipated the enchantment with the sign of the cross, and his client departed, giving thanks to God.

The Specularii, or those who inquired into the future with the aid of a mirror, had a large following in the Middle Ages, and are mentioned in the Councils of a Synod convened by S. Patrick and two others about 450,⁵ which shows that the infection had spread as far as Ireland.⁶ John of Salisbury, Bishop of Chartres 1177-1181, has left us a list of procedures against the Specularii, who were looked upon as heretics, and fell under the ban of the Church.⁷

S. Thomas Aquinas, writing about the same period, says that the peculiar gift of seeing visions possessed by children is not to be ascribed to any virtue of innocence or power of nature, but is the work of the devil; nevertheless, in spite of S. Thomas and John of Salisbury and a special condemnation from the Faculty of Theology in Paris,

¹ *Spartian Did. Jul.*, vii.; Bouché Leclercq. *Op. cit.*, Note, p. 341, Vol. I. "On prenait un miroir et un enfant y voyait l'image de l'avenir, non avec ses yeux qui étaient bandés, mais avec le sommet de la tête, probablement 'enchanté.' C'est de cette façon que Didius Julianus apprit sa chute prochaine, et l'avènement de Sévère."

² *Hist. Nat.*, xxx., 13.

³ "Il est probable que les druides tenaient d'une source orientale leurs doctrines sur la vertu des pierres, dont on retrouve des traces parmi les traditions populaires de l'Armorique et parmi celles des parties de la Grande Bretagne et de l'Irlande, où le druidisme s'est conservé plus longtemps. Les Ecossais attachent encore une vertu particulière à certaines pierres nommées cairn-gorm qu'on trouve dans leurs pays."—De Résié, *Sciences Occultes*, II. p. 98.

⁴ *Ad Spartian.*, c. vii. 250. Paris, 1603. Ed. Casaubon.

⁵ Brand's *Popular Antiquities*, III., p. 31.

⁶ *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, Maury, pp. 427-31.

⁷ John of Salisbury. *Polycrat.*, I., c. xii., 27.

1398, the *Specularii* continued to flourish,¹ and the art of mirror-gazing lingered on till the sixteenth century, when it received a new impetus, and soon reached its highest development, not in the hands of obscure charlatan or nameless heretic, but under the auspices of a Court physician or a University professor.

The time was at hand in which men began to think for themselves, alike in literature, politics, and religion; when, just as a nobleman dared also to be a poet, a statesman to question a priest, or a country gentleman to inquire into the Divine right of kings, so despite the terrors of the Inquisition on the one hand, or the prosecutions of civil law on the other,² men of learning, repute, and acknowledged position began to inquire into the hidden secrets of natural magic.

At the time of the struggle between Francis I. and Charles V. we are told that the action of the French was influenced by a magician, who, by means of the reflections in a mirror, discovered to the Parisians the progress of events at Milan.

A little later, we find Catherine de Medici consulting a magician, who shows her by means of a mirror how long her sons would occupy the throne. I have not been able to discover if the seer on this occasion were, as seems very probable, Jean Fernel, Court physician to Henry II., who has recorded³ that he saw figures in a mirror which expressed their meaning in gesture so significant that even his assistants understood them.⁴

Pico de Mirandola (1463-94), himself a foe to astrologers, who had declared his death in his 32nd year, was nevertheless "infatué de la vertu des miroirs constellés, et assurait qu'il suffisait d'en faire fabriquer un sous une constellation favorable, et de donner à son corps la température convenable, pour lire dans le passé le présent et l'avenir."⁵

Johann Rist,⁶ an accomplished mathematician and scholar, tells of a crystal made by Wisbro in Augsburg in which were seen men and animals.⁷

¹ "Already (1456) were crystals used in England, and their inspection brought to a science."—*Die Sichtbare und die Unsichtbare Welt*. Max Perty, 1881.

² "En 1609 on brûla en place de Grève le Sorcier normand Saint Germain, pour avoir fait en compagnie d'une femme et d'un médecin, usage de miroirs magiques." *Le Mercure français*, 1609, p. 348.—Wierus, *Pseudo-Monarchia Dæmonum*, Lib. III., c. xii. 6.

³ Fernel, *De Abditis Rerum Causis*, I., xi.

⁴ Michael Nostradamus and Cosimo Ruggieri were Court astrologers to Catherine de Medici.

⁵ Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, p. 431.

⁶ Rist, a voluminous writer both in German and Latin, was the founder of a literary society under the title of the Order of the Swan. The essay quoted is one of a series apparently published monthly, and containing much quaint talk upon various subjects—mathematics, medicine, verse, music, magic—between himself and his friends.

⁷ *Die Aller-Edelste Zeit Verkürtung der ganzen Welt, von dem Rüstigen*, 1668, p. 253.

Aubrey, writing in 1696,¹ refers to the earlier practice of mirror or crystal-reading in Italy. The Earl of Denbigh, he says, when Ambassador at Venice, "did find one who did show him there in a glass, things past and to come"; and Sir Marmaduke Langdale when in Italy, went to a magician, who showed him in a glass a vision of himself kneeling before a crucifix, at which he, being a devout Protestant, was properly shocked, but the prophecy was fulfilled when he later became a Roman Catholic. "He told Mr. Thomas Henshaw this himself."

Bodin, a lawyer of some eminence in Toulouse (d. 1596), and author of works on demonology, gives a story of a fellow-townsmen, who used to divine by the finger nail of a boy.

It is interesting to note how universally the theory of devil-possession was held in regard to the stone, and even writers holding widely different views such as Naudé,² Cornelius Agrippa,³ and his pupil⁴ Wier or Wierus on the one hand, and their opponents Bodin and Del Rio⁵ on the other, all maintained the hypothesis, though they made use of it for different ends. Pomponatius,⁶ Fernel, and the persecuting De l'Ancre and his colleague Espaignol, also recognised a supernatural cause for the phenomena.

We now come to the period of Dr. Dee, who perhaps the greatest, is certainly the most voluminous exponent of the art of crystallogmancy in this or any other country. He is thus described by Hudibras:—

I've read Dee's prefaces before,
The Devil and Euclid o'er and o'er,
And all the intrigues 'twixt him and Kelly
Lescus and the Emperor would tell ye,
Kelly did all his feats upon
The devil's looking-glass, a stone; ⁷
Where playing with him at Bo Peep
He solved all problems ne'er so deep.

—Part II., Canto 3.

John Dee was born in London, 1527, was Fellow of Trinity College, Cambridge, visited the Low Countries in 1547, lived afterwards

¹ Aubrey's *Miscellanies*, pp. 129-30.

² Naudé, 1600-53, physician and librarian to the Queen of Sweden, author of *Apologie pour les Grands Hommes accusés de la Magie*.

³ See *De Incert. et Vanit. Scientiar.*, cxxvi.

⁴ Wier, for 30 years physician to the Duke of Cleves, and of high medical reputation.

⁵ Del Rio, 1551-1608.

⁶ Pomponatius, 1462-1525.

⁷ Mr. Hockley considers the stone here alluded to, to be one which, having come into the hands of Horace Walpole, was sold at the Strawberry Hill sale in 1842, and which he describes as "composed apparently of a flat circular and highly polished piece of cannel coal, about 6 inches in diameter."

in Louvain and Paris, and returned to England in 1551, when he became Rector of Upton-on-Severn. He was arrested under Mary, on suspicion of being attached to the cause of Elizabeth, who afterwards showed him much kindness,¹ and when in 1564 he left England to pay a visit to the Emperor, and fell sick at Louvain she sent two doctors to inquire into his condition. Later, Dee settled at Mortlake, where he became famous as an astrologer, and where in 1583 his library of 4,000 books was plundered by the people.

In 1582 Dee became associated with Kelly, with whom he was induced to go to Germany to visit Albert Lasky.² He was afterwards banished from Poland by the Pope's Nuncio, and in 1589 was recalled by Elizabeth to England. Through the influence of Archbishop Whitgift and Lady Warwick he was appointed Chancellor of St. Paul's, and two years after, Warden of Manchester College. On the accession of James I. he fell under suspicion and himself invited inquiry into his life. This was refused, and he retired to Mortlake, where he died in 1608.

His son Arthur, often mentioned in his book, was brought up under Camden and became Court physician to Charles I.

His account of his various experiments may be read in a thick folio volume, edited with a quaint and entertaining preface by Meric Casaubon,³ who belonged to the generation following that of Dee, and who examines the subject with much learning and care, though with an amusing air of superiority and condescension. He seems entirely to acquit Dee of the charge of charlatany and imposture, which has been brought upon him by some, for he says:—

I think no man will make any question but the poor man did deal with all possible simplicity and sincerity, to the utmost of his understanding at the time. And truly, this one thing excepted, his mistaking of evil spirits for good, it doth not appear by anything but that he had understanding and perfect use of his reason to the very last.

Dee's method differed so far from that of his predecessors that his scryer or seer, Kelly, could not be described as "unpolluted," or "one that had not known sin," for he seems to have been a well known scoundrel, to which recognition the fact that he had been deprived of both his ears, for some misdeeds in Lancashire, bore sufficient testimony. The child, who seems to be a necessary member of the *dramatis personæ* of crystal drama, existed, however, in Madimi, one of their

¹ "Her Majestie willed me to fetch my glass so famous, and to shew unto her some of the properties of it, which I did; her Majestie being taken down from her horse by the Earl of Leicester, did see some of the properties of that glass, to her Majestie's great contentment and delight."—*Diary of Dr. Dee*, March 16th, 1575.

² Referred to by Hudibras as "Lescus."

³ Meric Casaubon, son of Isaac Casaubon, Professor of Greek at Geneva, was a scholar and critic, Rector of Bleadon, in Somerset, d. 1671.

most frequent spirit visitors, with whom the story opens, and who is thus described :—

A pretty girl of seven or nine years of age, attired on her head with her hair rowled up before and hanging down very long behind, with a gown of Sey, changeable green and red, with a train that seemed to play up and down like, and seemed to go in and out behind my books, lying on heaps.

She was a bright, pleasant, little creature, anxious to make herself useful, even to the extent of wishing to learn Greek, Latin, and Syriac, in order to be helpful to Dr. Dee, and begging to be taught to spell. She seems to have had a dull time at home, to judge from her pleasure in the society of two old *savants* such as Dee and Kelly, but it usually happened that just as she was beginning to enjoy herself, her mother, a somewhat ill-tempered person, carried her off to her domestic duties, apparently the care of her younger brothers and sisters. They had also some 20 other visitors, who appear in the crystal in endless variety, from Angelicall Creatures and Spirituall Beings down to a Divel of Hell. Dee seems to have had a theory that the Crystal or Shew-stone was a means of testing the spirits whether they were of God, for he says they “had warrant that into the stone no wicked spirits should enter, but without the stone ill-doers might deal with them unless God prevented it.” However, if it be true of spirits as of men, that “by their deeds ye shall know them,” one would hesitate, after reading the history, to give adhesion to his creed in this particular.

Some of their visitors are described minutely. One is, “A woman like an old Mayde, in a red petticoat, and with a red silk upper bodies, her hair rowled about like a Scottish woman, the same being yellow.”

Another,—“A goodly tall man, aged, all in black, with a Hat on his head.”

We have also, “A young man sitting on the side of a ditch,”—“a multitude of young children,”—“a thin-visaged man,” and among the Angelicall beings, Esmeli, Gabriel, Michael, Nalvage, Uriel, as to whom Casaubon says, “Whether all Interlocutors I know not, because I do not remember, neither doth it much concern.”

They not only see these persons but hold long conversations with them ; the stone also produces other sounds, sometimes of a somewhat disturbing nature. On one occasion, Kelly says, “I have heard a voice about the Shew Stone very great, as though men were beating down of mud walls,—the thumping, shussing, and cluttring, is such.” Another time we read, “It thundereth in the Stone.”

The nature of the messages received is as varied as the style of the messengers. The Angelicall Beings usually relieve themselves of a good deal of “Sermon-like Stuffe,” somewhat stale and thin in quality, and with an affectation of originality, and an assumption of importance in

their teaching, with which in our own day we are tolerably familiar at the hands of our lady novelists. Madimi is a pleasant little chatterbox. The Scottish Mayde was apparently "on a journey, too busy-wise to stop talking," and somewhat offended by the persistence with which a man, whom she met on her way, inquired, like another historical character, "Where are you going to, my pretty Maid?" She answers, "Belyk you are of kyn to these men,"—some others she had met,— "for they are also desirous to know whither I go."

However unsatisfactory Kelly¹ may have been in private life, his sincerity with regard to the crystal seems fairly established by the following story.

It seems that, if contemporary history is to be trusted, Kelly had sold himself to the devil, who promised he should live 1,000 years. (He died at something like four-score.) Perhaps with a view to provide for so long a career, Kelly was anxious to sell his accomplishments to the highest bidder, and ungratefully left his master in the lurch on more than one occasion. Once, however, his designs were frustrated; though, by the way, I think the story ends in his receiving an addition to his salary. There appeared, after the usual preliminaries of prayer and self-mortification, "One in the very top of the frame of the Shew-stone much like Michael," and soon certain words are seen, which Kelly, not understanding the Greek character, declared to be "Ghybrish." Madimi, whose classical studies seem not to have advanced far, is of opinion that the language is Syriacke, in which she was supported by Dee, "but this he said," adds Casaubon commenting on the story, "to jeer at Kelly."

However, the message, as translated by Casaubon, runs thus:—

This fellow will overthrow this work His baggage is in a readiness And he doth very much endeavour To withdraw himself from this common friendship Take heed that you give him no occasion For he doth mightily plot by art and cunning How he may leave you for ever.²

The descriptions given of the Shew-stone itself³ are so fragmentary and conflicting that Casaubon is of opinion that Dr. Dee had more stones than one, which he accounted sacred, including the "Principal Stone"

¹ W. Scott, after describing the use of crystals, writes: "Dr. Dee, an excellent mathematician had a stone of this kind, and is said to have been imposed upon concerning the spirits attached to it, their actions and answers, by the report of one Kelly, who acted as his viewer. The unfortunate Dee was ruined by his associates both in fortune and in reputation." *Demonology and Witchcraft*, p. 339 seq.

² Kelly afterwards owned to Dr. Dee "that unless this had so fallen out he would have gone beyond the seas, taking ship at Newcastle, within 8 dayes next," p. 28.

³ Now to be seen in the British Museum. It is interesting also to know that Dee's library, the scene of his crystal visions, remains almost as he left it in Manchester College, difficult though it be to associate any hue of romance with a scene so blackened with dirt and money-getting.

and "this other stone," and "first sanctified Stone," usual "Shew-stone, and Holy Stone." In another place he says:—

The form of it was round, as appeareth by some coarse representations of it in the margins (not given in edition of 1659), and it seems to have been of a pretty bigness. It seems it was most like unto crystal, as it is called sometimes *Inspecto Chrystallo*,—*nihil visibile apparuit in chrystallo sacrato, præter ipsius crystalli visibili (sic.) formam.* . . . It is a secret of Magick which happily may be grounded, in part at least, upon some natural reason (not known unto us), to represent Objects (externally not visible) in smooth things.

Of the history of the stone, or how it came into Dee's hands, we can discover nothing. It appears in the very first scene, and is an important feature in almost every part of the story. In a letter to Rodolph, Emperor of Germany, Dee says (p. 223):—

The Holy Angels for these two years and a half have used to inform me . . . Yea, they have brought me a Stone of that value that no Earthly Kingdom is of that worthinesse as to be compared to the vertue or dignity thereof.

And in another place (p. 245):—

The Emperour, desirous to see the Stone brought to me by an Angel, willed me to come to-morrow also to diner.

Casaubon, in the absence of information as to its origin, suggests that the reader, if he please, may "find some satisfaction if he read the maner how it was taken away and restored, very particularly set down." Accordingly we tell the story (with some omissions) in Dr. Dee's own words:—¹

Not long ago there appeared a great flame of fire in the principal stone (both standing on the table before E. Kelly), which thing, though he told me, I made no end of my prayer to God. And, behold, suddenly one seemed to come in at the south window of the chappel, right against E. K. (But before that the stone was heaved up an handful high, and set down again well, which thing E. K. thought did signifie some strange matter toward.) Then, after the man that came in at the window seemed to have his nether parts in a cloud, and with spread-abroad arms to come toward E. K., at which sight he shrinked back somewhat, and then the creature took up between both his hands *the stone and frame of gold*, and mounted up away as he came. E. K. caught at it, but could not touch it.²

How long they had to wait for the recovery of the stone we are not told. They lost it on the 24th of April, 1587, and recovered it on Friday afternoon, about four of the clock, under the following circumstances:—Dee and Kelly had been taking a walk by the "little River," and were returning home when Kelly saw twain as high as my son Arthur, fighting by the River side with swords:

¹ The italics are Dr. Dee's.

² Page 19, Second Part.

and the one said to the other, "Thou hast beguiled me." Then I at length said unto them, "Can I take up the matter between you?" One said, "Yea, that you can." "In what is it?" quoth I. Then said he, "I sent a thing to thy wife by my man, and this fellow hath taken it from him."

Then they fought again, and the thief being wounded produced the stolen stone, and at the other's bidding, disappeared and on his return was asked: "Hast thou laid it under the right pillow of the bed where his wife lay yesternight?" after which they vanished.

And I, coming to my chamber, found my wife lying upon her bed, and there I lifted up the right pillow upon which she lay resting herself (not being well at ease) . . . and there I found my precious Stone, that was taken away by Madimi. Whereat E. K. greatly wondered, doubting the verity of the shew. But I and my wife rejoiced, thanking God.

One does not see why Madimi should be charged with the deportation of the Shew-stone, which had also other vicissitudes in its career. On one occasion Uriel appears, and after some preliminary "Sermon Stuffe" says, "This is the last time any shew shall be made in this Stone." However, the sentence is afterwards revoked, and the stone "dignified" by Nalvage, another, perhaps a rival, spirit. It was even "marvellously brighter than before." Sometimes the stone, on being consulted, gives no response, but remains "of his natural diaphinitie." On one such occasion we gather a small detail, which reminds us of the method pursued by a magician, Simon d'Achard, who was hanged in Paris in 1596 for the crime of mirror-reading, and whose plan was to write down the questions to which he desired an answer, and put the paper away with the mirror, in which the following day he read the message for which he sought.² Dr. Dee writes:—

Very long I prayed in my Oratory and at my deske, to have answer or resolution of divers doubts which I had noted in a paper,³ and which doubts I read over distinctly . . . but answer came there none, neither in the Stone did anything appear, no, not the golden curtain. . . . But I held on in a pitiful manner.

The surroundings of the Shew-stone seem to have been a matter requiring great attention. Even when on a passing visit to the Emperor we find that an oratory is arranged, and "the Angelicall Stone set in the frame of gold on the Table," and when at home, Dee frequently speaks of the oratory or sanctuary, also of "curtains" and "a veil." These curtains, however, are not to be confounded with another

¹ Part II., p. 23.

² Story told by De l'Ancre in *L'Incrédulité et Miséricence du Sortilège*. Paris, 1622, p. 774.

³ On another occasion, we read that Kelly left written questions in his window (p. 80). "Nalvage told him the devil had now taken away his questions. E. K. went down to see if it were true, and it was true."

"curtain" often mentioned, which "a man would think at first perchance . . . somewhat outward, but it will be found otherwise, it was seen in the Stone, and appeared of different forms and colours." It served in fact as a sort of drop-scene to distinguish between the acts, and was sometimes superseded by "a ball or cloud of smoak."

But enough of Dr. Dee, whose book, however, I can recommend as very suggestive and entertaining reading, containing much which is unexpected, from what seems the first seed of certain modern theological heresies down to an early statement of the principles of Pepper's Ghost. The results attained by Cagliostro were so similar to those of Dr. Dee as scarcely to need special mention, though the fact that Cagliostro made use of a carafe of water constitutes a slight difference in method. Some interesting facts and illustrations of crystal-gazing are recorded by Boissard,¹ in which we have the usual elements—the mirror, incantations, and child seer; and one of the instances given is noteworthy as an example of clairvoyance, rather than of the Spiritualistic flavour of the Dee stories.

A man having committed a murder is fleeing from his country. On the way he goes to a magician for news of his wife. Incantations are performed, a child is called, and looking in a mirror describes a room, a lady, the details of her dress. She is flattening something in her palm, and laughs and talks with a young man who sits by.

The husband recognises his wife, and the room she occupies, but not the young man, and seized with jealousy, returns at the risk of his life to a village near home, whence he sends a messenger to his wife desiring an interview. The lady arrives much rejoiced at the unexpected meeting, and on being questioned, gives an account of the scene described, which agrees in every particular, even as to the dress she was wearing at the time. The mysterious young man turns out to be the husband's brother, for whom she was preparing a plaster which she flattened between her hands.

De l'Ancre gives a somewhat similar story also of a jealous husband, to whom a magician, reading in a glass, describes a scene which induces him to return home at once, to find that his wife had broken her arm which had been set by a surgeon-monk, the sight of whom had caused so much unnecessary anxiety.² Ben Jonson enumerates among the tricks of "the Alchemist," "taking in of shadows with a glass, told in red letters." In a note by Whalley, Ed. 1811, we read, "i.e. says Mr. Upton, letters written in blood, and he thinks it an allusion to a particular manner of divination with a glass mentioned by the Scholiast of Aristophanes in Nub. 760. I rather apprehend it an allusion to the

¹ Boissard, *Trac. Div.*, cap. v. pp. 15, 16.

² *L'Incrédulité et Mistréance du Sortilège*, De l'Ancre, p. 257. Paris, 1622. Readers of Sir W. Scott may be reminded of "Aunt Margaret's Mirror."

fortune-tellers of our author's day, and that these shadows were visions, taken by a beril, which is a kind of crystal, they had used to look into."

A crystal at Nuremburg is often referred to by writers of the 17th century,¹ in which a boy could read answers to any question asked and by which an important scientific difficulty (we are not told of what kind) was once decided. Unfortunately, the owner was seized with scruples as to its use, and finally broke it in pieces.

Among crystal-seers of importance in England after Dee's time, was a Mr. Compton of Somersetshire,² said to be a physician of repute, who, wishing to give proof of occult skill to a patient, Mr. Hill, asked him to look in a mirror, which (without the usual preliminary incantation, &c.) he offered for his immediate inspection. Mr. Hill then beheld his wife, who was many miles distant, "in the habit which she then wore, working at her needle, in such a part of the room, in which, and about which she really was, as he found upon enquiry when he came home. Compton . . . was an utter stranger to the person of his wife."

To the same period belong several seers, mentioned by Lilly,³ none of whom present any special features of importance. He also gives us a description of a crystal used in his time by a Mr. Gilbert Wakering, "a beril, of the largeness of a good big orange, set in silver, with a cross on the top, and another on the handle, and round about engraved three angels' names,—Raphael, Gabriel, and Uriel."

A similar description is given by Aubrey,⁴ of "a berill now in the possession of Sir Edmund Harley, K.B., at Brampton Bryan, in Herefordshire." It was originally used by a minister in Norfolk with a call, "afterwards a miller had it, and both did work great cures with it." Finally, "it came into somebody's hands in London, who did strange things with it, and was questioned for it, and it was taken away by authority."

The "call" seems to be the modern substitute for the earlier incantation. Examples are given by writers of the time; one quoted by Percy⁵ is headed "An excellent way to get a Farie," of which the conditions are:—

"First get a broad square crystal or Venice glass, in length and breadth 3 inch. Then lay that crystall in the bloud of a white henne, 3 Wednesdays or 3 Fridays."

And so on. Another, still more curious, quoted by Reginald Scot,⁶

¹ Sprenger, Introduction to his Edition of Plutarch's *De Defectu Oraculorum*; Casaubon in Introduction to *Dr. Dee*, and Bodin, *Fleau des Démons*, p. 129, Ch. II.

² *Saducismus Triumphatus*, Glanville, 1681, pp. 202-3-4.

³ *Life and Times of William Lilly*, 1602-81, pp. 234-5.

⁴ *Miscellanies*, J. Aubrey, 1696, p. 130.

⁵ From a MS. in the Ashmolean Museum. Probably the one referred to by Aubrey as "the call Mr. Elias Ashmole had."

⁶ *Discovery of Witchcraft*, Reginald Scot.

is called "an operation . . . to have a spirit enclosed in a crystal stone or beryl glass." This was a work of time, demanding not only "new and fresh and clean array," but the repeating of seven Psalms, several long prayers, sundry operations with fine bright swords, five days' fasting, and other tedious performances.

Lilly tells us of one Mortlack who had a crystal and a call for Queen Mab. "He deluded many thereby." Once, on trying in presence of a large company to no effect, he complained of adverse influence in the presence of Lilly, who adds: "I at last showed him his error, but left him as I found him, a pretending ignoramus."

Perhaps the latest historical example of mirror-gazing is that given by Saint-Simon¹, who tells in his Memoirs of a magician who predicted to the Duke of Orleans the fate of the princes through whose death he attained the position of Regent of France. The seer in this case was a girl, young and innocent, whose visions were perceived by means of a glass of water.

Some interesting examples of crystal-seeing are mentioned by Mrs. De Morgan,² whose comments upon them are as follows:—

Crystal-vision is a well attested fact, having its laws and conditions like other phenomena in this world of known and hidden causes, and a little careful observation may clear away some of that obscurity which has kept it as the property of witches and sorcerers. The Crystal . . . seems to produce on the eye of the seer an effect exactly like what would ensue under the fingers of a powerful mesmeriser. The person who looks at it often becomes sleepy. Sometimes the eyes close. At other times tears flow.

The following remarks to the same effect are from *La Magie et l'Astrologie* (Louis F. A. Maury, 1860).

Entre les principaux moyens de divination un grand nombre avait pour effet de déterminer une sorte de vertige, en agissant sur les yeux, et par conséquent sur le cerveau, à peu près de la même façon que dans l'hypnotisme le font des corps brillants. (p. 426.)

In one instance quoted by Mrs. De Morgan the percipient dwells upon the fact that the crystal vision is not interfered with by the normal vision, that she could discontinue her observation, occupy herself with other things, and return to find the scene as she left it. In my own experience, on the contrary, absolute fixity of gaze is essential to the very existence of the picture, which remains only so long as I can continue without relaxation either of attention or vision.

We have already seen that there seems a probability that the divination by the Urim and Thummim was in some way analogous to that by mirror-gazing. I venture to quote in this connection from Dean Plumptre who, in his article "Urim and Thummim," in *Smith's*

¹ Saint-Simon, Ch. clxi.

² *From Matter to Spirit*, p. 110.

Dictionary of the Bible, says in answer to the question, "In what way was the Urim instrumental in enabling the High Priest to give a true oracular response?"—

In some way they helped him to rise out of all selfishness and hypocrisy, out of all ceremonial routine, and to pass into a state analogous to that of the later prophets, and so to become capable of a new spiritual illumination. The *modus operandi* in this case may, it is believed, be at least illustrated by some lower analogies in the less common phenomena of consciousness. Among the most remarkable of such phenomena is the change produced by concentrating the thoughts on a single idea, by gazing steadfastly on a single fixed point.¹ The brighter and more dazzling the point upon which the eyes are turned, the more rapidly is the change produced. The life of perception is interrupted. Sight and hearing fail to fulfil their usual functions. The mind passes into a state of profound abstraction, and loses all distinct personal consciousness. Though not asleep, it may see visions and dream dreams. Under the suggestions of a will for the time stronger than itself it may be played on like "a thinking automaton."

Among recent examples of mirror-gazing some, at once the best attested, as well as the most striking, come to us from modern Egypt.² Some interesting remarks upon the question and its relation to the phenomena of Mesmerism may be found in an article by Mr. Hockley, in *The Zoist* (Vol. VII., p. 251, 1849-50), and it is said, though I have not been able to meet with any trustworthy account of the period, that the subject attracted great attention, especially in Lancashire, about the middle of this century.³ An interesting experiment, made in 1869, has recently been recorded by Mr. Dawson Rogers (*Light*, March 16th, 1889). He relates that he put a crystal into the hands of a lady, to whom its use was quite unknown, who, after gazing into it for a short time, minutely described a scene, in which a lecturer, apparently an Englishman, was addressing a foreign audience, while behind his chair stood the spirit of a North American Indian, who seemed, to some extent, to inspire his discourse. Some months later the lady was by chance introduced to the United States Consul for Trebizond, whom

¹ Cp. Maury, *La Magie et l'Astrologie*, pp. 430-31. After speaking of onychomancy and similar forms of divination by gazing, he adds: "Ces moines du Mont Athos qu'on avait surnommés umbilicains ou omphalo-psychiques, et qui croyaient voir, après avoir longtemps contemplé leur nombril, la lumière du Thabor, étaient dupes d'une hallucination de même sorte. . . . Cette secte des umbilicains parut dans la première moitié du seizième siècle. . . . La rondelle de métal percée d'un trou dont fait usage M. Phillips dans ses expériences d'hypnotisme, rappelle la forme de l'organe sur lequel ces moines fixaient leurs regards d'admiration."—Fleury, *Hist. Eccles.*, 7, xciv. c. ix.

² In addition to works already referred to, see Butler's *Court Life in Egypt*, pp. 238-242.

³ Crystal-seeing now very common,—a nine days' wonder of the Metropolis. Admitted as undoubted truth in Lancashire. Elihu Rich, *Encyc. Met., Occult Sciences*. "Catoptronomy still found in many villages."—*Dict. Infernal*, Paris, 1863, p. 145.

she recognised as the subject of her vision, and who believed it to refer to some occasion when he had given an address in that town. He also stated that other Spiritualist seers had given similar descriptions of the Indian spirit.

An interesting little volume has lately been brought to my notice, *Visionen im Wasserglasse*, by Adelina Frein v. Vay; geb. Gräfin Wurmbrand.

It is the record of about 90 experiments, extending over the years November, 1869—December, 1875. The authoress tells us that they were undertaken by the desire of her "Spirit Leader" (p. 3), who also explains their significance. Except that I can lay claim to neither "spirit leader" nor spirit visitants, and am responsible for my own explanations, I find that the experiences resemble mine in many respects. Frau v. Vay sees her pictures without distress or difficulty—sometimes like photographs, showing light and shade only, at others with their natural colouring, usually distinct in outline, though sometimes as mere cloud pictures; at times they are only of momentary duration, at others they remain some time, or melt gradually into new combinations (p. 4). The will of others does not influence her visions—concentration of sight and attention is all that is necessary. The "Spirit Leader" speaks of such picture-seeing as being as old as mankind, known to all the nations of antiquity, though not in our own day receiving the attention it deserves (p. 5). Though no attempt has been made at classification, I am inclined to think some such arrangement as I have ventured to suggest for my own would also meet all the cases in the record, which has been kept in an orderly manner. Frau v. Vay dictates the description of the picture while present before her to her husband, the "Spirit" contributes the interpretation, and the fulfilment is afterwards added in proper historical order.

EXPERIMENTS.

Those interested in such matters may perhaps be glad to learn that several persons have lately made experiments with the Crystal, which have been carefully recorded.

In attempting some examination of the result, I have for material several cases which I am permitted to quote at first-hand, as well as more than 70 of my own, of which I have kept notes, invariably made within a short time (at the furthest, an hour) of the occurrence of the experiment. Of these, I believe not more than two or three are of a kind to which I can assign no meaning, and even as to these I think it quite possible that some explanation may yet be forthcoming, several other cases having occurred, as will be seen, in which the source of the message or vision was not immediately evident.

The experiences of the different percipients have sufficient resemblance to each other, and to some extent to those recorded in history, to justify a provisional classification.

In the first place, we must treat the Crystal-visions on the analogy of other hallucinations, assuming that the part played by the Crystal is mainly to concentrate the gaze. This is evident from the variety of the means employed, already in part enumerated, and to which may be added many others which the imagination of the percipient may suggest, the crystal having maintained its position of preference, probably on the ground of convenience. From my own experience I would suggest a dark framed photograph, hanging on the same side of the room as that on which the light enters, as very effective. The reflecting balls, a favourite toy on a Christmas tree, which others have found suitable, always strike me as reflecting too much, and in too grotesque a manner, to be of use, and the same may be said of the back of a watch. The Arabs and Hindoos sometimes use a cup of treacle, the Chinese the palm of the hand alone; olive oil, lamp-black, and other liquids have all, as we have seen, their place amongst the methods of Crystal-seeing. The Crystal of the 17th century seers seems to have usually been cut and polished and mounted in a ring, but was occasionally used in its natural form. That spoken of as belonging to Mr. Dawson Rogers is of the latter kind. A glass or vase of water serves every purpose, but is obviously inconvenient to handle, especially if used in the dark. I can also recommend, particularly for daylight experiment, a good-sized magnifying glass placed on a dark background.

Assuming, then, that the crystal is used for the purpose of concentration, both mental and physical, we shall find that the visions follow the main lines of other hallucination, and may be :

1. After-images or recrudescient memories, often rising thus and thus only from the sub-conscious strata to which they had sunk.
2. Objectivations of ideas or images
(a) Consciously or (b) unconsciously in the mind of the percipient.
3. Visions, possibly telepathic or clairvoyant, implying acquirement of knowledge by super-normal means.

In seeking to illustrate the first of these three groups I hope to be forgiven, if I draw mainly from my own experience, not only because my own record is largely concerned with this class of vision, but because such stories contain so little of the marvellous that they are practically ignored by most writers on the subject.

The tendency of the conscious memory is so strongly in favour of picture-making that we may naturally assume this habit on the part of

that which is latent or sub-conscious. We notice this strongly in the child, whose play consists for the most part of a reproduction of some "fragment from his dream of human life," and it becomes still more marked among the uneducated, the grown-up children of our civilisation. One asks a poor woman after her rheumatism, or her flower garden, or her grandchild, no matter what, and she inevitably begins by telling you how on a certain day she was sitting, "as it might be *there*," and a friend dropped in just as you have done this morning, and so on—convinced that the assertion that the stones remain there unto this day, is as convincing an argument to your mind as to her own. The question often asked, "Is thought conducted in words?" may present many difficulties, but we are all probably agreed as to the tendency of recollection to the forming of pictures.

The revival of impressions or presentations, says Mr. Sully, has, as its physiological condition, the modification of the centres in some way and the production of a physiological disposition. Owing to this, though excitation of the centres can take place at first only through some peripheral stimulation it may subsequently become independent of it. Milton mentally picturing scenery after he had lost his sight, and Beethoven representing musical sounds after he had lost his hearing, are striking illustrations of this surviving central effect of external stimulation.¹

Such pictures sometimes occur in the Crystal when I am looking for something else, and may consist of a room I have seen during the day, a glimpse of some corner of a house where I have chanced to call, a sudden movement which has startled me, indoors or in the street, as when a maid has surprised me with an unexpected service, or the dog has run under a passing vehicle—something which has received but the slightest notice at the moment of its occurrence, but which recurs in intensest clearness when it presents itself in the Crystal. It is a matter of regret to me that for the present I am unable to compare notes upon this kind of vision with any other percipient, as one would be glad to know how far it depended upon the *habit* of visualising impressions. If, for example, I desire to describe a room in a friend's house, I return in recollection to the occasion of my last visit; I once more occupy the same chair, the carpet at my feet becomes visible, the furniture nearest to my seat, gradually the whole contents of the room, till walls and ceiling complete the picture, and I am able to give an inventory which would not disgrace an auctioneer's clerk. How much this idiosyncrasy may have to do with the clearness of my crystal-pictures, I leave to the wiser in such matters to determine.

(No. 7.) Here, for example, I find in the Crystal a bit of dark wall, covered with white jessamine, and I ask myself, "Where have I walked to-day?" I have no recollection of such a sight, not a common one in

¹ Sully, *Outlines of Psychology*, p. 222.

the London streets, but to-morrow I will repeat my walk of this morning, with a careful regard for creeper-covered walls. To-morrow solves the mystery. I find the very spot, and the sight brings with it the further recollection that at the moment we passed this spot I was engaged in absorbing conversation with my companion, and my voluntary attention was pre-occupied.

(No. 62.) To take another example. I had been occupied with accounts; I opened a drawer to take out my banking-book. My hand came in contact with the Crystal, and I welcomed the suggestion of a change of occupation. However, figures were still uppermost, and the Crystal had nothing more attractive to show me than the combination 7694. Dismissing this as probably the number of the cab I had driven in that day, or a chance grouping of the figures with which I had been occupied, I laid aside the Crystal and took up my banking-book, which I had certainly not seen for some months, and found, to my surprise, that the number on the cover was 7694. Had I wished to recall the figures I should, without doubt, have failed, and could not even have guessed at the number of digits or the value of the first figure. Certainly, one result of crystal-gazing is to teach one to abjure the verb "to forget," in all its moods and tenses. Perhaps the time may come when we shall relegate the waters of Lethe to the region of other myths, which exist only for the Royal Academician hard up for a subject, and try to endure the conjugating of some such verb as to "dis-remember."

(No. 68.) To quote again from my note-book,—this time an instance more satisfactory to myself. I had carelessly destroyed a letter without preserving the address of my correspondent. I knew the county, and searching in a map recognised the name of the town, one unfamiliar to me, but which I was sure I should know when I saw it. But I had no clue to the name of house or street, till at last it struck me to test the value of the Crystal as a means of recalling forgotten knowledge. A very short inspection supplied me with "H. House"¹ in grey letters on a white ground, and having nothing better to suggest from any other source, I risked posting my letter to the address so strangely supplied.

A day or two brought me an answer, headed H. House in grey letters on a white ground.

(No. 30.) The following illustration is in some respects similar. It was suggested to me, one day last September, that I should look into the Crystal with the intention of seeing *words*, which had at that time formed no part of my experience. I was immediately rewarded by the sight of what was obviously a newspaper announcement, in the type

¹ The entire word—one I know in no other connection—was supplied.

familiar to all in the first column of the *Times*. It reported the death of a lady, at one time a very frequent visitor in my circle, and very intimate with some of my nearest friends, an announcement, therefore, which, had I consciously seen it, would have interested me considerably. I related my vision at breakfast, quoting name, date, place, and an allusion to "a long period of suffering" borne by the deceased lady, and added that I was sure that I had not heard any report of her illness or even, for some months, any mention of her likely to suggest such an hallucination. I was, however, aware that I had the day before taken up the first sheet of the *Times*, but was interrupted before I had consciously read any announcement of death. Mrs. Henry Sidgwick, with whom I was staying, immediately sought for the paper, where we discovered the paragraph almost exactly as I had seen it. We each recorded our own share in the circumstance and carefully preserved the newspaper cutting.

(No. 71.) The following is a more recent example of word-seeing, which depended upon, as I believe, a revival of memory. It had occurred to me to write down some verses which I had once learnt some years ago and which I knew I could not recover should I ever forget them. I had no difficulty in recalling what I believed to be a correct version and was therefore, at first, surprised to read in the Crystal, a few days later, one verse, in which occurred the following line:—

"Clear by the mountain torrent, and soft by the lonely tarn,"

which I had written, and certainly had long believed to be, "clear to the mountain echo, and sweet by the moorland tarn." I believe the former to be the correct version, not only because the antithesis was characteristic of the style of the writer, but also because, as forming part of a description of a voice, this edition obviously conveys more meaning.

The question of association, as in all cases of memory, plays an active part in this class of crystal-vision. One of my earliest experiences was of a picture, perplexing and wholly unexpected (No. 11)—a quaint oak chair, an old hand, a worn black coat-sleeve resting on the arm of the chair,—slowly recognised as a recollection of a room in a country vicarage, which I had not entered and but seldom recalled since I was a child of ten. But whence came this vision, what association has conjured up this picture? What have I done to-day? . . . At length the clue is found. I have to-day been reading Dante, first enjoyed with the help of our dear old vicar many a year ago.

(No. 40.) One more illustration will suffice. We all know the mood in which it is impossible to recall some face with which we are thoroughly familiar. I have been speaking of M. and praising her beauty, but no effort will bring her countenance to my remembrance. The crystal is

near,—an album containing her picture across the room,—so I seek what I want in the crystal. In vain ; it remains, as Dr. Dee says, of its “natural diaphinitie.” I make another effort, this time not to see the face itself, but its counterfeit presentment. The Crystal shows me the open page in my album, and the left-hand portrait, but that of M. is covered by what appears to be the back of a photograph of a pinkish yellow colour, lying crookedly above it, which refuses to move. This is irritating, and I lay aside the Crystal and fetch the book. As I open it, out falls the photograph of which the back view had been presented to me, one which I had but a day or two before, promised to send to a friend, a promise I had carelessly failed (I may not say *forgotten*) to fulfil. There seems to be a curious struggle for supremacy between a voluntary and a non-voluntary faculty, a claim, as it were, of duty or conscience to have the first hearing.

(No. 28.) Sometimes the latent memory is less certain, more confused in its action, than in the cases above quoted. One day I had been seeking a medical prescription which I failed to find among my papers. After looking in many places, likely and unlikely, I concluded it had been accidentally destroyed, and dismissed the matter from my thoughts. Some hours later, without having consciously thought of my search meanwhile, I was occupied with the Crystal, which, after presenting me with one or two other pictures, suddenly showed a paper which by its colour and general appearance I recognised as the one in question. On further inspection, however, I observed, without being able to read the words, that the prescription was in the handwriting, not of my doctor, but of my friend E. As I have never yet found any Crystal vision to be absolutely without meaning, or deceptive in any particular, I resolved to follow up this indication in the only way which occurred to me, and finally found my lost prescription accidentally folded within one of E.'s letters, where it had remained, I have reason to believe, for more than four years. I may add that E. is a very frequent correspondent ; that this particular letter had been preserved quite by accident, and that there was no possible connection of ideas, either of time or place, between the two documents.

I give another illustration, of a rather different kind, of the same process of confused recollection, in which the part played by memory, though I think it undoubtedly exists, is of so undefined a nature that at first sight the case seems almost to belong to the third group—that in which we find trace of knowledge acquired by some kind of super-normal means.

(No. 18.) A small key had been lost, by a member of the household, to the great general inconvenience, and all other means having failed I applied to the Crystal for information. All that I obtained, after patient inspection, was a glow of red colour, which, as I had taken

every precaution against reflection, seemed meaningless, and so, concluding that a mere formless shining, so entirely new in my experience, could be merely an effect of weariness, mental or physical, I put the Crystal away. The following afternoon I was playing at the piano, paying no attention to what was passing in the room, when my ear was caught by the sound of a click. Before I had *consciously* recognised it as the snap of a purse, the red glow recurred to mind, and it flashed across my thoughts that A., the loser of the key, was the possessor of a scarlet morocco purse. Offering no reason, I begged to be allowed to handle it, and in an outside pocket found the missing object. I ought to add that, as it was all along supposed that the key had dropped from its ring on to the floor, the thought of the scarlet purse was not a *likely coincidence*, so unless it be assumed that the knowledge had been acquired telepathically from the lady who had herself placed the key where it was finally found, one is reduced to the supposition that I had unconsciously caught some accidental glimpse of its whereabouts.

Readers of Du Prel's *Philosophy of Mysticism* will be reminded of many examples given of a like exaltation of memory,¹ sometimes associated with some circumstance of excitement or stimulus, such as an attack of fever, of insanity, or delirium,—sometimes at the moment of death,² in a condition of somnambulism, or even in ordinary dream. Du Prel says, for instance (Vol. II., p. 33):—

“The true cause must be common to all those conditions, and is no other than the disappearance of the normal habitual consciousness and its content. Even the mere stopping up of the chief inlet of sense-impressions, blindness, as it usually exalts other psychical capacities, can also awaken the latent memory.”

Is it an over-stretching of analogy to compare the pre-occupation of the sense of sight by the fixity of gaze required for crystal-seeing,—in so far as it is an occasion of “wisdom at that entrance quite shut out,”—to a temporary blindness?

We now pass to the second group (2) Objectivations of ideas or images; and in proceeding with some illustrations of those consciously in the mind of the percipient, I am glad here to be able to draw upon the experience of others. In two cases the first experiment with the Crystal resulted in a vision of this sort.

My friend T. had never handled or even seen a Crystal before I put one into her hand, asking her to attempt to make use of it. The vision

¹ A recent probable example of the return of memory is that familiar to readers of the *Proceedings* of the Society for Psychical Research, of Mr. Schiller, who produced in automatic writing, passages in the Provençal dialect, which he was not aware of having ever seen or heard before.

² It is interesting to find this fact noticed by a writer of the 17th century. “Men sometimes at the hour of their departure do speak and reason above themselves.”—*Religio Medici*, xi.—Sir Thomas Browne, 1642.

which shortly presented itself was a face which, at first indistinct, gradually became clearer, till she was able to recognise it as that of a friend whom she had lately nursed in a fatal illness, and who, though not actually in her thoughts at the moment, was no doubt an ever present memory. In the same way G. on her first inspection of the Crystal saw the outline of a sheeted corpse which, without seeing the face, she felt assured was that of a near relative whose serious illness was a subject of deep regret to herself and her friends.¹

Speaking for myself, though I sometimes deliberately and intentionally call into the Crystal the creatures of my fancy, this reproduction of the more familiar subjects of recent conscious experience is very unusual with me, perhaps for the same reason that my remembered dreams are never,—contrary, I believe, to theory,—concerned with the thoughts and events of the past day, the surroundings of daily life, seldom even with the friends about me;—though if they go from home I at once have the pleasure of their presence in dreamland.

Just as a fanciful child will tell itself a story, I sometimes in a moment of idleness create a group of figures and put them in the Crystal to see what they will do, and so far is one's *conscious* a stranger to one's *unconscious* Ego, that I sometimes find their little drama so startling and unexpected that I watch the scene with curiosity and surprise.

I am unable to quote directly from the Crystal any example of this sort of vision, in any way worth the space it would occupy, but as it has already been submitted that the nature of the means used for concentration of gaze is of little consequence, I venture to subjoin the following.

I had been discussing with a friend the motto, "Noblesse oblige," and mainly for the sake of argument had supported the theory that the conduct illustrating the principles it involved was more likely to be an hereditary tendency than the result of external surroundings. The same evening, while sitting at the piano in the firelight, I had woven into my music a story in support of my argument, and had reached the climax, where the hero, having sacrificed all he most cared for, for the sake of his principles, was about to be re-instated in the opinion of his friends by the good offices of one who had appreciated the real heroism which underlay all the apparent inconsistencies of his career. I had conjured up a vivid picture,—the stately mansion, the group of friends gathered on the terrace, the distinguished officer who pleads the cause of the cast-off son of the house, the young man himself in whose countenance pride and affection struggle for the mastery. Just then,

¹ I am not aware that either friend has since had any unpleasant vision of the kind.

a flame suddenly shooting up from the wood on the hearth showed me the picture I had imagined, reflected upon the polished front of the piano,¹—carrying out my fancy with detailed exactness, except in one particular. The officer is dressed for riding, and his horse is held in the background by the hero himself in the dress of a private soldier, suggesting, as a better illustration of my theory, that he should be brought triumphantly through scenes of coarse temptation and an atmosphere of lower aims.

So far as crystal-vision is a revelation of one's unconscious self, it does not, so far as my experience goes, administer greatly to one's self-esteem. So grotesque and commonplace are the ideas which float to the surface, that one is tempted to be thankful for the silence of the "songs unsung." I give as illustration one or two, always with apology for their very trivial nature.

(No. 26.) I find in my note-book a memorandum of August 3rd, as to a vision of a corner of a room with a red carpet, and walls decorated in stripes of pink, white, and green, for which for many months I was unable to account. Only a few days ago I called on a friend whom I had not visited since July, and whose house had, I observed, been newly and handsomely decorated. A letter which she had written to me before leaving town in the summer was by chance referred to, and on returning home I sought it in order to settle a disputed point, and found that it was dated August 2nd and contained the information that her staircase had been painted and "looked at present like a Neapolitan ice." This, I doubt not, supplied the colouring of my picture.

(No. 63.) On March 9th I saw in the Crystal a rocky coast, a rough sea, an expanse of sand in the foreground. As I watched, the picture was nearly effaced by that of a mouse, so large that I could see only a bit of cliff above his tail. Two days later, I was reading a volume of poetry which I remembered having cut open, talking the while, certainly not consciously reading, on the day of my vision. As I turned over the leaves a couple of lines struck me as somehow familiar, though the book, a volume by Aldrich, was quite new to me.

" Only the sea intoning,
Only the wainscoat mouse."

These I imagine suggested the images.

(No. 74.) The remaining example was of a more practical kind. On March 20th, I happened to want the date of Ptolemy Philadelphus, which

¹ The writer of an article in *Blackwood's Magazine* upon "Georges Sand," tells us: "She used to seat herself at her mother's feet before the fire, gazing into an old fire-screen covered with green. In that fire-screen marvellous pictures would design themselves, as they were said to do in the pool of ink in the palm of the Egyptian sorcerers. . . . She shut her eyes and she saw it all still; when she opened them it was nowhere visible but on the fire-screen."—*Blackwood*, Vol. CXXI., p. 76.

I could not recall, though feeling sure that I knew it, and that I associated it with some event of importance. When looking in the Crystal some hours later, I found a picture of an old man with long white hair and beard, dressed like a Lyceum Shylock, and busy writing in a large book with tarnished massive clasps. I wondered much who he was, and what he could possibly be doing, and thought it a good opportunity of carrying out a suggestion which had been made to me, of examining objects in the crystal with a magnifying glass. The glass revealed to me that my old gentleman was writing in Greek, though the lines faded away as I looked, all but the characters he had last traced, the Latin numerals LXX. Then it flashed into my mind that he was one of the Jewish Elders at work on the Septuagint, and that its date, 277 B.C., would serve equally well for Ptolemy Philadelphus ! It may be worth while to add, though the fact was not in my conscious memory at the moment, that I had once learnt a chronology on a mnemonic system which substituted letters for figures, and that the memoria technica for this date, was "Now Jewish Elders indite a Greek copy."

It is easy to see how visions of this kind, occurring in the age of superstition, almost irresistibly suggested the theory of spirit-visitation. The percipient, receiving information which he did not recognise as already in his own mind, would inevitably suppose it to be derived from some invisible and unknown source external to himself. The use of the magnifying glass is a suggestive test of the degree of independence of the stratum of thought revealed by the Crystal, but obviously it cannot be readily or usefully applied except in a few instances where the object perceived is of a kind to admit of minute inspection. Unfortunately, the suggestion of its use was made to me but recently, so that I have had but two or three opportunities of applying it, but on each occasion with the result of acquiring additional information.

The messages, conveyed from one stratum of consciousnesses to another are indeed sometimes such as to mystify the percipient. ¹

An experience of this kind occurred in March, 1886, to Miss Z., a lady known to Mr. Myers, who has shown me the transcribed message. A number of letters appeared to her in the crystal, each letter seen

¹Nicetas, (*Andron. Conn.*, II. 9.) relates that the Emperor Andronicus Comnenus had recourse to Lethos, a diviner by hydromancy, in order to solve the question who was to be his successor, his intention being to defraud the revelation of its due by instantly destroying the person indicated. The water showed the letters SI, and upon being further questioned as to the period of his succession denoted, "before the Feast of the Exaltation of the Cross." The prediction was verified, for within the time named Isaac Angelus had succeeded to power, and Andronicus had been torn in pieces by his infuriated subjects. Elihu Rich, commenting on this story, tells us that "the devil spells as herecites the Lord's Prayer backwards. SI, when inverted, would fairly enough represent Isaac according to all laws of magic."—*Op. cit.*, p. 318. Cp. case of Kelly, already quoted, reading in Greek letters.

separately, of a bright red colour. At first they seemed to be absolutely meaningless, but it was at length discovered that they composed words, spelt backwards, in the following fashion :—

d e t n a w a e n o e m o s o t n i o j a e t a v i r p e l c r i c t s
u m e b g n i l l i w o t e v i g s e v l e s m e h t p u o t e h t t
c e j b u s

and the message at length became intelligible :—

Wanted a someone to join a private circle, must be willing to give themselves up to the subject.

In illustrating the third group, visions clairvoyant or telepathic, I have but few instances of my own from which to select examples. It would be easy to draw from a very large number of recorded cases; but as in this connection, even more than in our former examples, everything depends on the evidence, a large proportion of those which have come down to us are practically without value. However, I select a few, as fairly typical of the class.

For many reasons,—the gratification of a taste for the marvellous, the immediate possibility of testing their accuracy,—the greater interest to the on-looker,—the demand for something beyond the purely subjective,—the clairvoyant vision is that with which the greater number of seers seem to have been in all ages concerned. The fate of the sick, the detection of robbers, the recovery of stolen goods, the conduct of absent friends—some such question is the *motif* of the scene, let who will be the players.

Some recent cases have been already given from Lane's *Modern Egyptians*, with which we may compare the account given of a similar scene by Sir Grant Wilkinson.¹ The *mise-en-scène* is exactly as before—the boy, the magician, the perfumes, brazier, magic square, invocations, just the same probably as at any time for some hundreds or thousands of years. But the result was not satisfactory. Lord Fitzroy Somerset and the Queen were asked for, and the latter described by the seer as wearing black trousers and shoes, a white hat, red coat, black waistcoat, having whiskers, and presenting a glass tumbler.

Lord Nugent,² later, says that not one image evoked bore the smallest resemblance to the person asked for. The same author accounts for the success of the magician interviewed by Lane by saying that though known as Osman Effendi, he was really a Scotchman and may therefore be supposed to have had some sort of traditional acquaintance with the persons asked for, which he conveyed to the boy by means of leading questions. It is, however, fair to remember that Lane's experiences were not confined to dealings with one magician only. Sir Grant

¹ *Modern Egyptians*, Sir G. Wilkinson, Vol. I. 218-23. Similar accounts are given by Reinaud, *Description du Cabinet Blancs*, p. 401.

² Nugent, *Lands Classical and Sacred*, pp. 134-5.

Wilkinson, determined to avoid all chance of collusion, sent for a boy from a distance, and the evocations were all failures of the most ludicrous type, upon which the magician accused the young seer of lying, which, says Lord Nugent, "was no doubt true, but not the cause of the ill success."

One or two typical cases, in addition to some already given, may suffice for illustration before proceeding to such as have resulted from recent experiment.

A story told by Rist¹ belongs rather to that class of prophecies which tend to their own fulfilment. A girl, whose parents refused their sanction to her betrothal, interviewed an old woman who volunteered to show her in the Crystal how far her hopes of happiness were to be fulfilled. The girl, afraid to be left alone with the witch, induced Rist to be present at the interview, which he was thus enabled to describe at first-hand. The usual elaborate ceremonies were performed, and the crystal, wrapped in a yellow handkerchief, placed on a green bowl, which rested on a blue cloth decorated with pictures of dragons. The incantations completed, Rist and the girl are permitted to inspect the Crystal, in which they see the girl herself, attired as a bride, pale and timid, accompanied by her lover, also pale, wearing top-boots with spurs, and carrying pistols. The seers turn faint with fear, and the old woman hurries away, but they would indeed have been dull of imagination had not the story ended, as it did, with a runaway marriage.

The same explanation, a tendency of prophecies of this kind to suggest their own fulfilment, may be found also in a story told by Lilly.² A certain Dr. Hodge had a Crystal, which his partner John Scott wished to inspect, so the two went into a field near home, and Hodge, pulling out the crystal, bade his friend describe what he saw.

"I see," said Scott, "a ruddy-complexioned wench in a red waistcoat drawing beer." Hodge: "She must be your wife." Scott answered, "Nay, for he should marry a tall woman in London." Hodge answered, "he would not, but would marry the woman he now saw," and Hodge was right, for Scott soon found the tall lady had thrown him over, and after remaining disconsolate for two years he accidentally saw and recognised in an inn in Canterbury, the ruddy-complexioned wench drawing ale, whom he of course ultimately married.

I now proceed to offer some examples from my own note-book, beginning with three, as to which telepathy seems to offer a very plausible explanation.

(No. 23.) On the evening of Saturday July 28th, 1888, the Crystal

¹ *Op. cit.*, pp. 255-59.

² Lilly, *Life and Times*, p. 117.

presented me with a picture of a mediæval saint, carrying a rabbit. This I recognised as representing a stained glass window at a church in the neighbourhood, which I visit perhaps two or three times in a year, always sitting within view of this window. As I had not been there for many months, nor consciously pictured the spot since my last visit, I was puzzled to account for the vision. Early the next morning on waking I observed on my table a letter, which had probably lain there unnoticed the previous evening and which I found contained a request that I would, if possible, attend the early service at the church in question that morning.

The friend from whom this request came was an invalid who had come to London the day before for medical treatment, whom I had believed unable to leave his room, and from whom I had certainly not expected to receive any such message. In fact this attendance at church, which he then believed to be possibly his last, was only by special permission of the doctor and he did not leave his room again for between two and three months.

(No. 55.) On Monday evening, February 11th, I took up the Crystal, with the deliberate intention of seeing in it a figure, which happened to occupy my thoughts at the moment, but I found the field pre-occupied by a small bunch of daffodils,—a prim little posy, not larger than might be formed by two or three fine heads. This presented itself in various positions, in spite of my hurry to be rid of it, for I rashly concluded my vision to be a consequence of my having the day before seen, on a friend's dinner table, the first daffodils of the season. The resemblance was not complete, for those I had seen were loosely arranged and intermixed with ferns and ivy, whereas my crystal-vision had no foliage, and was a compact little bunch. It was not till Thursday, 14th, that I received, as a wholly unexpected "Valentine," a painting, on a blue satin ground, of a bunch of daffodils, corresponding exactly with my crystal picture, and learnt that the artist had spent some hours on Monday, previous to my vision, in making studies of the flowers in various positions.¹

¹ Readers of *Phantasms of the Living* may remember a case [I., p. 255 where Mr. Keulemans sees in his mind's eye a wicker basket of rather peculiar eggs, which, as it turned out, precisely resembled a basket of eggs which a friend at that moment was sending off to him. Mr. Keulemans says of these mental pictures: "There is no attempt on my part to conjure them up—on the contrary, they come quite suddenly and unexpectedly, binding my thoughts so fixedly to the subject as to render all external influences imperceptible." It would seem as though Mr. Keulemans (a professional draughtsman of noted accuracy) were able to get definite pictures transferred from the unconscious region of the mind without needing a crystal to aid in their fixation. In the *American S.P.R. Proc. IV.*, p. 515, two somewhat similar cases are given by "Mrs. J. G. W.," of whom Professor Royce speaks (p. 526) as of a valued correspondent. I abbreviate the cases. "About two years ago, as I sat in the back

(No. 64.) On Saturday, March 9th, I had written a somewhat impatient note to a friend, accusing her of having, on her return from a two months' absence on the Continent, spent ten days in London without paying me a visit. I was not, therefore, surprised when on Sunday evening she appeared before me in the Crystal, but could not understand why she should hold up, with an air of deprecation, what appeared to be a music portfolio. On Monday I received an answer, written the previous day, pleading guilty to my charge, but urging, in excuse, that she was attending the Royal Academy of Music, and was engaged there during the greater part of every day. This intelligence was to the last degree unexpected, for my friend is a married woman, who has never studied music in any but amateur style, and who, according to the standard of most ladies of fashion, had "finished her education" some years ago. I have since ascertained that she, in fact, carries a portfolio corresponding with the sketch I made of that seen in the vision.¹

I now add, also from my own experience, two further instances, for which, as it seems, telepathy affords no explanation, as to which I have no theory to offer, and which I can only leave to the reader to interpret as clairvoyance, or coincidence, or prevision, or whatever else he will.

(No. 36.) In January last I saw in the Crystal the figure of a man crouching at a small window, and looking into the room from the outside. I could not see his features, which appeared to be muffled, but the crystal was particularly dark that evening, and the picture being an unpleasant one, I did not persevere. I concluded the vision to be a result of a discussion in my presence of the many stories of burglary with

of the carriage, I saw, as it were, in the air, numberless pansies which appeared successively, and which I studied in detail as they floated in vision before me. Or reaching home I found a large basket containing pansies which had been left for me by a friend, and which included very many of the peculiar pansies which I had seen in vision on my way home."

"On another occasion [when similarly driving] I saw a succession of flowers called bachelors' buttons. On reaching home I found that a large dish of bachelors' buttons had been left for me by a friend, and every distinctive colour that I had seen photographed in the air had its representative flower awaiting me."

I am glad to find these parallels to the triviality of my own crystal-visions; and I would suggest that if—as one hopes may be the case—it becomes the general rule to *set down beforehand* any image of this kind which is thought to have "psychical" significance, then the record will be made easier if the images are deliberately *looked for* in the crystal, and thus distinguished from other more fleeting acts of inward visualisation. It remains, I suppose, to be seen whether such images insist on choosing their own time, or can be "called from the vasty deep" of the crystal at hours appointed for the experiment.

¹ Perhaps I may here mention a case, given in the *Proceedings* of the American S.P.R., Part IV., p. 467, which, though no *crystal* was concerned in it, seems to me to be curiously parallel to this small experience of my own. I abridge the narrative. A Mrs. M. L. M. writes that she was anxious to see a Mr. H., but was uncertain on

which the newspapers had lately abounded, and reflected with a passing satisfaction that the only windows in the house divided into four panes as were those of the Crystal-picture, were in the front attic and almost inaccessible. Three days later a fire broke out in that very room, which had to be entered from outside through the window, the face of the fireman being covered with a wet cloth, as a protection from the smoke which rendered access through the door impossible.

(No. 39.) A week later I had gone to my room for the night, after performing some small services for an invalid member of the household whom I had left comfortably settled, if not asleep. I was somewhat surprised when the Crystal showed me the same friend, sitting up in bed, and apparently in a state of alarm. As she is by no means a nervous person, and her illness was the temporary effect of cold, I could not account for the picture, but was sufficiently alarmed to provide myself with a book and await events, instead of myself going to bed as I had intended. About an hour and a half later I heard the rush of fire engines, and cries of "fire," and remembering our recent misfortune went to the door of my friend's room to ascertain whether she were startled by the commotion. Hearing her call my name I entered the room and found her sitting up in bed, much alarmed at having been aroused from sleep by so near a reminder of the enemy with which we were now familiar. It may be worth while to mention that as she showed no excitement whatever on the occasion of the immediate danger, I could not have anticipated any fear at that which was merely threatened.

All who, either in their own experience or in that of others, have considered the question of premonitions have probably found that a

what day he would call. "On the 19th [July, 1887] I was called out of the office, and, before going out, I put on the door a card having these words on it, 'Will return soon.' I was absent about an hour. On my return I came upstairs, but did not ask the [elevator] boy if anyone had called; nor did he tell me anyone had done so. As I came within a short distance of the door I saw some characters written upon the card I had left, and just below the printed words, 'Will return soon,' I stooped down and read, 'Mr. H. has been here, and will return.' As I looked the words faded away. I entered the office, and in a very short time Mr. H. came in. He had left no name or message. He had impressed my face upon his mind very strongly, with the intention of seeing if I would be in any way affected by it, or conscious of his approach." Mr. H. gives a concordant account, saying, "While on my way to call upon her, I impressed upon my mind very vividly the lineaments of her face, with the intention of learning if she would be in any way affected thereby, and if she would mention anything that would show that she had any knowledge of my visit before I saw her."

Unless we take this coincidence to have been accidental, we must, I suppose, assume that some telepathic influence from Mr. H. had reached Mrs. M.'s unconscious self, and externalised itself as a written message at the moment when Mrs. M. was looking at the card—a suitable surface for the hallucination. Did not Mrs. M.'s card play much the same part as the crystal which showed me my apologetic friend with her music-portfolio?

considerable proportion relate to the arrival of letters at the time or soon afterwards passing through the post, and have perhaps concluded that from such premonitions one must, as a rule, discount considerably for expectation, conscious or unconscious, for probability, and perhaps something also for telepathy. It is not therefore surprising that in my own record of crystal-visions about 14 per cent. are of this character. Though some of these are more or less interesting to myself, I cannot regard them for the most part as satisfactory evidences of clairvoyance. The following instance is, however, somewhat exceptional.

(No. 66.) On the evening of March 11th, being tired, I was about to go early to my room, when it occurred to me to wait for the last post, already late, that I might not be again disturbed by having the letters brought to my room. I took up the Crystal rather to pass the time than with much expectation of seeing anything; for as a rule when one is tired the concentration of attention necessary to crystal-vision is somewhat difficult to attain. However, I perceived a white object on a dark ground, soon becoming more clearly defined as a letter in a very large envelope torn at the edges as if not sufficiently strong to hold its contents. Another envelope, of ordinary size, lying at the top, concealed the address, and the writing on the smaller one was too much blurred to decipher. The vision was momentary only, or I might have applied the test of the magnifying glass, which is sometimes, though not always, of use in such cases. I thought it possible that the vision might be merely the result of expectation, but it seemed at least worth while, after making a note of the fact, —my invariable rule whenever possible,—to test its significance. As a matter of fact, the letters were lying on a seat in the hall, showing white against the dark polished wood—placed there possibly by someone leaving the house who had met the postman before he had time to ring. The letters were two,—the lower one, which had burst the envelope, was of the size of a sheet of letter-paper not folded, and was for myself, the upper one the usual size of a note, and not for me, which may have accounted for my inability to read the address.

The following cases are from the note-book of "G.," a lady already quoted, and both lend themselves to a possible explanation by thought-transference :—

She had lost sight of a friend whose address she had no opportunity of hearing, as it was unknown to all about her. She, however, submitted the question to the test of the crystal, and was so far rewarded as to discover, as the event proved quite correctly, that the place had a name of two words, each beginning with a capital; she also distinguished one letter and its place in the word. Encouraged by this success, she next consulted the crystal as to her friend's surroundings, and obtained a picture of the room, with many details as to shape,

colouring, and position of furniture; but her gaze was more especially attracted by a photograph frame, containing two portraits, which she knew he possessed, though she had no means of knowing anything of the frame in which they had been placed. This she described to me at the time minutely. The frame was double, of padded leather, dark in colour, and having a pattern which appeared indistinct, but was not any of those with which the shop-windows of the time had made us familiar, such as sprays of flowers, or flights of birds, or representations of drapery. It was not till about three months later that she saw the photographs in their actual frame, which she at once recognised as that of her vision, to which it answered exactly, even as to the indistinct outline of the pattern stamped upon the leather. The description of the room proved, however, wholly wrong in every respect, neither have we been able to identify it with any other which the same friend has occupied before or since.

As this paper aims merely at recording some cases of crystal-vision and does not profess to be in any sense an inquiry into its physiological explanation, or psychical significance, I shall have achieved my purpose if I suggest to others to attempt a wider and more systematic investigation for themselves. Having heard from trustworthy sources¹ of several persons who have been dissuaded from experiment by the disagreeable sensation it has produced, I think it worth while to say that neither to myself nor to any of the friends who have assisted me in the inquiry has the use of the Crystal, whether successful or no, been in any degree painful or unpleasant; and indeed the very weariness and exhaustion, mental or physical, which would make crystal-vision a fatigue, suffices in my own case to prevent its occurrence. On the other hand, it seems probable that it is only with a very few persons that the attempt at vision will lead to results of any kind whatever. I have already explained the very simple process; if darkness is desired, it is easy at any hour to veil the Crystal with a piece of black drapery, or to put it at the back of a deep half-opened drawer, nothing further being essential than to guard against reflection of surrounding objects; and, happily our enlightened age requires

¹ Mr. Dawson Rogers says that the lady whose vision has been already described found the sensation caused by holding the Crystal so disagreeable that she was compelled to desist, and continued the experiment only upon his persuasion, and with some reluctance. He has also communicated to me an interesting account of another percipient, who discontinued the practice of Crystal-gazing on account of its being accompanied by a painful sensation of pressure on the forehead. Mr. Hockley (*Op. cit.*, p. 265), speaking of a friend who had taken up a Crystal out of mere curiosity, without knowing its use, adds: "He felt so great an oppression of giddiness and alarm that he immediately replaced the Crystal, and was a considerable time before he could throw off the unpleasant sensations it had produced."

no stimulant of burning perfumes, or magic square, or muttered incantation.

It is perhaps a little discouraging to find from a recently published note of Mr. Traill's that by using the Crystal in the search for lost property I have rendered myself amenable to the law!¹ It appears that when in 1736 the Act of James I. against witchcraft was repealed, "punishment was very wisely provided for persons pretending to exercise any kind of witchcraft, sorcery, enchantment, or conjuration, or to discover stolen or lost property by any occult or crafty science." I can only hope that my effort at experiment may be taken rather as a proof of zeal for knowledge, otherwise Mr. Traill's further remark has personally a somewhat unpleasant flavour.

It may be doubted whether even the crystal globes of Dr. Dee himself would in these days continue to exhibit the same prophetic visions to his clients, if its magician owner had just "done time" under the oppressive sentence of a Manchester stipendiary magistrate.

But even in the service of morality, crystal-vision is not without its uses. That which reveals to us the unbroken continuity of life, the literal truth of our word "character," the presence of the past, the "what I have written, I have written," cannot but add to our sense of responsibility, for

—With the Nameless is not day nor hour,
Tho' we thin minds who creep from thought to thought
Break into "Thens" and "Whens" the Eternal Now.

¹ "Etcætera," *Eng. Illust. Mag.*, March.

IV.

AUTOMATIC WRITING.—IV.—THE DÆMON OF SOCRATES.¹

In offering here, after an interval of two years, a further instalment of the series of papers on Automatic Writing of which three have already appeared in these *Proceedings*, I must briefly remind my readers of what has already been attempted in the earlier essays. In the first paper (entitled "On a Telepathic Explanation of some so-called Spiritualistic Phenomena," Vol. II., p. 217), I tried to explain the nature of automatic writing, and illustrated the operation of unconscious cerebration in the messages given. In the second paper (Vol. III., p. 1), I gave cases where the message written conveyed intelligence not known to the writer, but known to some other person present in the room, or at any rate to some person still in the flesh. And I gave certain reasons for supposing that this telepathic information was received not by the normal consciousness of the subject, but rather by some subjacent or secondary consciousness. In the third paper (Vol. IV., p. 209), I discussed some cognate forms of automatic action, pushed in some cases so far as to suggest the formation of a fresh personality; and I argued that "the sleep-waking state, natural or induced, does not stand alone in its tendency to generate a secondary memory, a secondary manifestation of the self, but that this tendency shows itself whenever there is any habitual shaking-up of those elements"; any habitual alteration of the threshold of consciousness.²

And in this present paper I shall endeavour further to extend our range of analogies, and to show that automatic writing is but one among a whole series of kindred automatisms which have been intermittently noted, divergently interpreted, since history began. I shall try to show that this word-writing impulse is but one among a group of impulses which prompt to every form or element—vocal, visual, or auditory—of automatic verbalisation;—nay more, that the impulse to automatic verbalisation itself is but one leading member of a still larger group of kindred impulses which parallel automatically whatever our conscious will, our conscious perception can discern or decree.

As soon, however, as we begin thus widely to extend the province of our specific automatisms, we feel at once the need of some general definition which may indicate what it is that we are really seeking,—in

¹ This paper was read before a General Meeting, June 17th, 1887; but its publication has been deferred for want of space.

² The point at which the term 'a fresh personality' becomes appropriate is a mere question of verbal definition. Personality, as we know it, depends on memory and character, and character itself is largely a product of memory.

what points the automatism which here concern us differ from the multitude of actions, images, ideas to which such terms as *automatic* or *reflex* are commonly applied.

It would be interesting—but it would delay us too long—to analyse the whole series of so-called automatisms, or “self-moved” phenomena, in health and disease, and to show what, in each case, is the “self” which supplies the initiating power. In default of such further inquiry, we may at least point out certain main characters which unite in a true class all the automatisms which we are here considering,—greatly though these may differ among themselves in external form.

In the first place, then, our automatisms are *independent* phenomena; they are what the physician calls *idiognomonic*. That is to say, they are not merely symptomatic of some other affection, or incidental to some profounder change. The mere fact, for instance, that a man writes messages which he does not consciously originate will not, when taken by itself, prove anything beyond this fact itself as to the writer's condition. He may be perfectly sane, in normal health, and with nothing unusual observable about him. This characteristic—provable by actual observation and experiment—distinguishes our automatisms from various seemingly-kindred phenomena. Thus we may have to include in our class the occasional automatic utterance of words or sentences. But the continuous exhausting vociferation of acute mania does not fall within our province; for those shouts are merely *symptomatic*; nor, again, does the *cri hydrocéphalique* (or spontaneous meaningless noise which sometimes accompanies water on the brain), for that, too, is no independent phenomenon, but the direct consequence of a definite lesion. Furthermore, we shall have to include in our class certain simple movements of the hands, co-ordinated into the act of writing. But here, also, our definition will lead us to exclude *choreic* movements, which are merely symptomatic of nervous mal-nutrition; or which we may, if we choose, call *idiopathic*, as constituting an independent malady. But our automatisms are not *idiopathic* but *idiognomonic*; they may indeed be associated with or facilitated by certain states of the organism, but they are neither a symptom of any other malady, nor are they a malady in themselves.

Agreeing, then, that our peculiar class consists of automatisms which are idiognomonic,—whose existence does not necessarily imply the existence of some profounder affection already known as producing them,—we have still to look for some more positive bond of connection between them, some quality common to all of them, and which makes them worth our prolonged investigation.

This we shall find in the fact that they are all of them *message-bearing* or *nunciative* automatisms. I do not, of course, mean that they all of them bring messages from sources external to the automatist's own

mind. In some few cases (as in Mr. and Mrs. Newnham's case) we have seen that they do this; but as a rule the so-called messages seem more probably to originate within the automatist's own personality. Why, then, it may be asked, do I call them *messages*? We do not usually speak of a man as sending a message to himself. The answer to this question involves, as we shall presently see, the profoundest conception of these automatisms to which we can as yet attain. They present themselves to us as messages communicated from one stratum to another stratum of the same personality. Originating in some deeper zone of a man's being, they float up into superficial consciousness as deeds, visions, words, ready-made and full-blown, without any accompanying perception of the elaborative process which has made them what they are.

We may illustrate this statement by the example of post-hypnotic suggestion,—a phenomenon which will presently be found to fall readily into its place as a simple and typical member of our automatic series. Take, for instance, one of Mr. Gurney's experiments (*Proceedings*, XI., p. 319), where the subject has been hypnotised, told that "it has begun snowing," and then awakened. He then reads aloud, in a waking state, and meantime (in fulfilment of a previous order) his hand writes out the piece of information communicated to him in the hypnotic state: "It began snowing." Here the automatic script is plainly a *message* conveyed from the hypnotic stratum (so to say) of the subject's personality to himself and others occupying the ordinary level of waking consciousness. And we shall find as we proceed that such messages may emanate from, and may be conveyed to, various strata of personality by very various channels; while yet we discern as a common characteristic of all these cases the fact that the "message,"—be it verbalisation, picture, motor impulse, or other impression,—comes upon the recipient phase of personality as though from some extraneous source,—is presented as an automatic product whose initiation lies outside the conscious will.

Yet once more. We have made it clear to ourselves that the automatisms with which we have to deal are messages, and are not necessarily or obviously anything more. That is to say, they signify to us the fact, and only the fact, that some strain of intelligence, whether without us or within, which is not our conscious waking intelligence of the moment, is in some fashion impressing or informing the conscious self.

But there is yet another aspect of these automatic messages which we must bring out into strong prominence. Interesting though the mere fact of communication from one stratum of our personality to another may be, this is not the culminant interest which has attracted us to the present inquiry.

That highest interest lies, of course, in the nature of some of the messages thus received ; in the fact that (like the hallucinations dealt with in *Phantasms of the Living*) they are *veridical* messages,—that they correspond with objective facts not normally within the purview of the writer. The messages written by Mrs. Newnham, and showing a transference of thought from Mr. Newnham, have been the main, though not the only, examples hitherto cited of this class. More are to come ; nor can telepathy, as we as yet understand it, be invoked to explain all the cases which we shall have to consider. If, therefore, we are to label with a single epithet all automatic messages inexplicable on any ordinarily accepted hypothesis, we must use a term wider than *telepathic* ; we must call them *supernormal* ; implying by this term (as often already explained) that, whatever the precise nature of the powers involved in the production of these messages may be, they seem at least *primâ facie* to transcend human powers, as known to us at the present stage of evolution. The word “supernormal” is thus meant to beg as few questions as possible ; and so far as it connotes any theory as to the source or nature of apparently transcendent powers, it implies a disposition to seek the origin of those powers in some continuance of the same evolutionary process by which we explain—so far as explanation is possible—such powers as we do admittedly possess.

This, however, has not been the line on which a clue to supernormal messages has hitherto, in fact, been most often sought. It is on this admixture of the supernormal element in automatic messages that the doctrines of “Modern Spiritualism” have mainly been upbuilt. The Spiritualist unites—and sometimes not only unites but confounds—two beliefs for which little evidence has as yet been adduced in the pages of these *Proceedings*. He believes that effects are produced, without visible cause, on this material, ponderable world. And he believes that the spirits of the dead send messages through the automatic mediumship of living men. Now the acceptance of the *first* of these two beliefs would not, to my mind, carry with it any clear corollary as to the agency of departed spirits in the movements of matter thus inexplicably produced. Even if there be a force at work which is not that of the medium’s muscles exerted in the ordinary way, it by no means follows that that force should be referable to intelligences who exist apart from the medium, but who have once, like him, been men. But the *second* of the beliefs above referred to,—the belief that messages are received whose context proves their emanation from a departed spirit,—this is indeed for the Spiritualist, as I conceive the matter, the true *articulus stantis aut cadentis ecclesie*. And surely—if only there be any hope of a solution—the human mind can scarcely be engaged on any question of greater moment than this.

To resume, then ; we have realised that the automatisms which we

discuss are to be dealt with as independent, *idiognomonic* phenomena ; that they are to be recognised as *nunciative* or message-bearing, whencesoever these messages be derived ; and that it is especially the *supernormal* element traceable in some of them which claims our painstaking analysis.

But in the next place,—and this was in fact the reason for introducing at this point so much of general discussion,—so soon as we thus attempt to form a coherent conception of the class of automatisms which we seek to explain, it becomes obvious that there is no reason why such automatism should be observed in connection with the act of *writing* alone.

Indeed, when we selected *writing* as the first automatic phenomenon for discussion, this was avowedly a choice determined by mere convenience ; automatic script being a definite and easily perceptible phenomenon, and rapidly leading to intelligible results. And we soon found that it conducted us to a conception far wider than itself ;—namely, the conception of automatic *verbalisation* as a whole, including under this convenient word the four allied processes (two of them mainly sensory and two mainly motor), of word-hearing, word-seeing, word-uttering, and word-writing. I tried to show, in diagrammatic form (Vol. III., p. 51, *sqq.*), in what manner a “second focus of mentation” might initiate supernormal processes of seeing, hearing, or uttering words, as well as of writing them.

But even with this extension of our purview the limit assigned is still an arbitrary one. If this automatic impulse can affect the processes of verbalisation, it can presumably affect other processes, both sensory and motor. Have we any limit assignable *à priori*, outside which it would be useless to look for any externalisation of an impulse emanating from sub-conscious strata of our being ?

The answer to this must be that no such limit can be with any confidence suggested. We have not yet learnt with any distinctness even how far the wave from a *consciously*-perceived stimulus will spread, or what changes its motion will assume. Still less can we predict the limitations which the resistance of the organism will impose on the radiation of a stimulus originated within itself. We are learning to consider the human organism as a practically-infinite complex of interacting vibrations ; and each year adds many new facts to our knowledge of the various transformations which these vibrations may undergo, and of the unexpected artifices by which we may learn to cognise some stimulus which is not directly felt.

A few concrete instances will make my meaning plainer. And my first example shall be taken from those experiments in *muscle-reading*—less correctly termed *mind-reading*—with which the readers of these *Proceedings* are already familiar. Let us suppose that I am to hide a

pin, and that Mr. Sugden (*Proceedings*, Vol. I., p. 291), or some accomplished muscle-reader, is to take my hand, and find the pin by noting my muscular indications. I first hide the pin in the hearth-rug; then I change my mind and hide it in the bookshelf. I fix my mind on the bookshelf, but resolve to make no guiding movement. The muscle-reader takes my hand, leads me first to the rug, then to the bookshelf, and finds the pin. Now, what has happened in this case? What movements have I made?

Firstly, I have made no *voluntary* movement; and secondly, I have made no *conscious involuntary* movement. But, thirdly, I have made an unconscious involuntary movement which directly depended on conscious ideation. I strongly thought of the bookshelf, and when the bookshelf was reached in our vague career about the room I made a movement—say rather a tremor occurred—in my hand, which, though beyond both my knowledge and my control, was enough to supply to the muscle-reader's delicate sensibility all the indication required. All this is now admitted, and, in a sense, understood; we formulate it by saying that my conscious ideation contained a motor element; and that this motor element, though inhibited from any conscious manifestation, did yet inevitably externalise itself in a peripheral tremor.

But, fourthly, something more than this has clearly taken place. Before the muscle-reader stopped at the bookshelf he stopped at the rug. I was no longer consciously thinking of the rug; but the idea of the pin in the rug must still have been reverberating, so to say, in my sub-conscious region; and this unconscious memory, this unnoted reverberation, revealed itself in a peripheral tremor nearly as distinct as that which (when the bookshelf was reached) corresponded to the strain of conscious thought.

This tremor, then, was in a certain sense a message-bearing automatism. It was the externalisation of an idea which, once conscious, had become unconscious, though in the slightest conceivable degree,—namely, by a mere slight escape from the field of direct attention.

Having, then, considered an instance where the automatic message passes only between two closely-adjacent strata of consciousness,—externalising an impulse derived from an idea which has only recently sunk out of consciousness and which could easily be summoned back again;—let us find our next illustration in a case where the line of demarcation between the strata of consciousness through which the automatic message pierces is distinct and impassable by any effort of will.

Let us take a case of *post-hypnotic suggestion*;—say, for instance, the experiment of Mr. Gurney's (*Proceedings*, XI., p. 319), already cited. The subject had been trained to write with planchette, after he had

been awakened, the statements which had been made to him when in the hypnotic trance. He wrote the desired words, or something like them, but while he wrote them his waking self was entirely unaware of what his hand was writing. Thus, having been told in the trance, "It has begun snowing again," he wrote after waking, "It begun snowing," while he read aloud, with waking intelligence, from a book of stories, and was quite unconscious of what his hand (placed on a planchette behind a screen) was at the same time writing.

Here we have an automatic message of traceable origin ; a message implanted in the hypnotic stratum of the subject's self, and cropping up—like a fault—in the waking stratum,—externalised in automatic movements which the waking self could neither predict nor guide.

Yet once more. In the discussion which will follow we shall have various instances of the transformation (as I shall regard it) of psychical shock into definite muscular energy of apparently a quite alien kind. Such transformations of so-called psychical into physical force—of will into motion—do of course perpetually occur within us. But the nature of these is commonly much obscured by the problem as to the true efficacy of the *will* ; and it seems desirable to cite one or two examples of such transmutation where the process is what we call automatic, and we seem to detect the simple muscular correlative—the motor equivalent—to some emotion or sensation which contains no obvious motor element at all.

An easy, though a rough, way of testing transmutations of this kind is afforded by the dynamometer. It is necessary first to discover the amount of pressure which the subject of experiment can exert on the dynamometer, by squeezing it with all the force at his command, in his ordinary condition. After he has had a little practice his highest attainable force of squeeze becomes nearly constant ; and it is then possible to subject him to various stimuli, and to measure the degree of response ; that is, the degree in which his squeeze becomes either more or less powerful while the stimulus is applied. The experiments are, in fact, a sort of elaboration of a familiar phenomenon. I take a child to a circus ; he sits by me holding my hand ;—there is a discharge of musketry and his grip tightens. Now in this case we should call the child's tightened grip automatic. But suppose that, instead of merely holding my hand, he is trying with all his might to squeeze the dynamometer, and that the sudden excitation enables him to squeeze it harder—are we then to describe that extra squeeze as automatic ? or as voluntary ?

However phrased, it is the fact (as amply established by M. Féré and others¹) that excitations of almost any kind,—whether sudden and

¹*Sensation et Mouvement*, par Ch. Féré. Paris : Alcan, 1887.

startling or agreeable and prolonged,—do tend to increase the subject's dynamometrical power. In the first place—and this is in itself an important fact—the average of squeezing-power is found to be greater among educated students than among robust labouring men,—thus showing that it is not so much developed muscle as active brain which renders possible a sudden concentration of muscular force. But more than this ;—M. Féré finds that with himself and his friends the mere listening to an interesting lecture, or the mere stress of thought in solitude,—or still more the act of writing or of speech—produces a decided increase of strength in the grip, especially of the right hand. The same effect of dynamogeny is produced with hypnotic subjects, by musical sounds, by coloured light, especially red light, and even by a hallucinatory suggestion of red light. “All our sensations,” says M. Féré in conclusion, “are accompanied by a development of potential energy, which passes into a kinetic state, and externalises itself in motor manifestations which even so rough a method as dynamometry is able to observe and record.”

I would beg the reader to keep these words in mind. We shall presently find that a method apparently even rougher than dynamographic tracings may be able to interpret, with far greater delicacy, the automatic tremors which are coursing to and fro within us. If once we can get a spy into the citadel of our own being, his rudest signalling will tell us more than our subtlest inferences from outside of what is being planned and done within.

Further illustrations might easily be here given. But for brevity's sake I pass on to the automatic messages which form our special subject, trusting that the specimens above given of *motor externalisations* of unexpected kinds may have led the reader to feel that experiment alone can tell us how far such delicate motor indications may in fact be traceable ; how much of information may pass from one stratum of our consciousness to another, and in a form how strangely transmuted. And having now to deal with what I define as messages conveyed by one stratum in man to another stratum, I must first consider in what general ways human messages can be conveyed. Writing and speech have become predominant in the intercourse of civilised men, and it is to writing and speech that we look with most interest among the communications of the unconscious self. But it does not follow that the unconscious self will always have such complex methods at its command. We have seen already that it often finds it hard to manage the delicate coördinations of muscular movement required for writing,—that the attempt at automatic script ends in a thump and a scrawl. Does the history of animal communication suggest to us to try any easier, more rudimentary plan ?

The first communications of animals are by gesture ; and even when

sound is added this is at first only a specialised kind of gesture. The higher animals discriminate their calls ; man develops speech ; and the message-giving impulse parts into the main channels of movement—movement of the throat and movement of the hand. The hand-gestures—"high as heaven," "horned like a stag," and so forth—develop in their turn into the rude drawing of objects ; and this graphic impulse again divides along two channels. On the one hand it develops into the pictorial and plastic arts, conveying its messages through what may be termed a direct, as opposed to an arbitrary symbolism. On the other hand it assimilates itself to the laws of speech, it becomes ideographic ; and gradually merging direct into arbitrary symbolism it becomes alphabetical script, arithmetic, algebra, telegraphy.

But the word telegraphy suggests to us that in recent times a fresh beginning has had to be made in human communication ; modes have had to be invented by which a civilised man, disposing only of a few simple movements,—the deflections of the indicating needle,—might attain to the precision of grammatical speech. This, as we know, has been easily effected ; and the mere repetition of one or two simple movements at varied intervals suffices, to eye or ear, for all the purposes of an alphabet.

Now we shall find, perhaps, among the communications of the unconscious self parallels to all these varying modes of communication. But since the unconscious self, like the telegraphist, begins its effort with full knowledge, indeed, of the alphabet, but with only weak and rude command over our muscular adjustments, it is *à priori* likely that its easiest mode of communication will be through a repetition of simple movements, so arranged as to correspond to letters of the alphabet.

And here, I think, we have attained—perhaps for the first time—to a conception of the mysterious and much-derided phenomenon of "table-tilting" which enables us to correlate it with known phenomena, and to start at least from an intelligible basis, and on a definite line of inquiry.

A few words are needed to explain what are the verifiable phenomena, and the less verifiable hypotheses, connoted by such words as "table-turning," "spirit-rapping," and the like.

If one or more persons of a special type,—at present definable only by the question-begging and barbarous term "mediumistic,"—remain quietly for some time with hands in contact with some easily moveable object, and desiring its movement, that object will sometimes begin to move. If, further, they desire it to indicate letters of the alphabet by its movements,—as by tilting once for a, twice for b, &c., it will often do so, and answers unexpected by anyone present will be obtained.

Thus far, whatever our interpretation, we are in the region of easily

reproducible facts, which many of my readers may confirm for themselves if they please.

But beyond the simple movements—or table-turning,—and the intelligible responses—or table-tilting—both of which are at least *prima facie* physically explicable by the sitters' unconscious pressure, without postulating any unknown physical force at all,—it is alleged by many persons that further physical phenomena occur; namely that the table moves in a direction, or with a violence, which no unconscious pressure can explain; and also that percussive sounds or “raps” occur, which no unconscious action, or indeed no agency known to us, could produce. These raps communicate messages like the tilts, and it is to them that the name of “spirit-rapping” is properly given. But Spiritualists generally draw little distinction between these four phenomena,—mere table-turning, responsive table-tilting, movements of inexplicable vehemence, and responsive raps,—attributing all alike to the agency of departed spirits of men and women, or at any rate to disembodied intelligences of some kind or other.

The present paper is not concerned with the physical phenomena of Spiritualism, and I shall therefore leave on one side all the alleged movements and noises of this kind for which unconscious pressure will not account. I do not prejudge the question as to their real occurrence; but assuming that such disturbances of the physical order do occur there is at least no *prima facie* need to refer them to disembodied spirits. If a table moves when no one is touching it, this is not obviously more likely to have been effected by my deceased grandfather than by myself. We cannot tell how *I* could move it; but then we cannot tell how *he* could move it either. The question must be argued on its merits in each case; and our present argument is not therefore vitiated by our postponement of this further problem.

For the present there will for most of my readers be quite enough of novelty in my insistence on these *tilted responses* as a phenomenon easily induced by many normal persons, and closely akin to various other phenomena on which ordinary physiology is yearly laying an increasing stress.

With the single exception of M. Richet,¹ I am not aware of any writer, outside the Spiritualistic group, who has so much as shown any practical knowledge of this phenomenon,—still less endeavoured to explain it. Faraday's well-known explanation of table-turning as the result of the summation of many unconscious movements,—obviously true as it is for some of the simplest cases of table-movement,—does not touch this far more difficult question of the origination of these intelligent messages, conveyed by distinct and repeated movements of

¹ *La Suggestion Mentale* (see *Proceedings*, Vol. II., pp. 239 *sqq.*).

some object admitting of ready displacement. The only explanation that I have seen offered,—I am speaking, of course, of cases where fraud is not in question,—is that the sitter unconsciously sets going and stops the movements so as to shape the word in accordance with his expectation. Now that he unconsciously sets going and stops the movements is part of my own present contention, but that the word is thereby shaped in accordance with his expectation is often far indeed from being the case. An example cited at length in the *Society for Psychical Research Journal* for May, 1887, may illustrate the bizarre capriciousness of these replies,—their want of relation to anything anticipated or desired by the persons in contact with the table. Similar instances might be indefinitely multiplied; but anyone who is really willing to take the requisite trouble can satisfy himself on this point by experiment with a sufficiently varied list of trustworthy friends. To those indeed who have followed with any agreement my discussion of the *written* messages, this question as to the unexpectedness of the *tilted* messages will present itself in a new light. If the written messages originate somewhere outside the writer's consciousness, so too may the tilted messages;—even though we admit that the tilts are caused by his hand's pressure of the table just as directly as the script by his hand's manipulation of the pen.

It may be remembered that one of the pieces of evidence which I cited in order to show that *written* messages were not always the mere echo of expectation, was a case where *anagrams* were automatically written, which their writer was not at once able to decipher. Following this hint, I have occasionally succeeded in getting anagrams tilted out for myself by movements of a small table which I alone touched. I should add that although, as I have elsewhere mentioned, I have never succeeded in *writing* automatically, I have nevertheless, after some hundreds of trials, continued over 15 years, attained the power of eliciting by unconscious pressure tilted responses which do not emanate from my own conscious self. That they do, however, emanate from *some* stratum of my being—from that fragmentary and incoherent workshop where dreams are strung together—seems to me, as already indicated, the most probable hypothesis.

The anagrams—or rather jumbles of letters forming a short word—which I have myself obtained, have been of the simplest kind. But occasionally I have not at once recognised the word thus given, but have been aware of a distinct interval before the word which my own unconscious muscular action had thus confusedly “tilted out” was grasped by my conscious intelligence. This is a kind of experiment which might with advantage be oftener repeated; for the extreme incoherence and silliness of the responses thus obtained does not prevent the process itself from being in a high degree instructive. Here, again (as in the

automatic writing of the "Clelia" case), a man may hold colloquy with his own dream—may note in actual juxtaposition two separate strata of his own intelligence.

I shall not at present pursue the discussion of these tilted responses beyond this their very lowest and most rudimentary stage. They almost immediately suggest another problem, for which our discussion is hardly ripe, the participation, namely, of several minds in the production of the same automatic message. We have already met with something of this difficulty in our consideration of messages given when the hands of two persons were touching a planchette; but when the instrument of response is large, and the method of response simple, as with table-tilting, we find this question of the influence of more minds than one imperatively recurring.

Our immediate object, however, is rather to correlate the different attainable modes of automatic response in some intelligible scheme than to pursue any one of them through all its phases. We regarded the table-tilting process as in one sense the simplest, the least differentiated form of motor response. It is a kind of *gesture* merely, though a gesture implying knowledge of the alphabet. Let us see in what directions the movement of response becomes more specialised,—as gesture parts into pictorial art and articulate speech. We find, in fact, that a just similar divergence of impulses takes place in automatic response. On the one hand the motor impulse specialises itself into *drawing*; on the other hand it specialises itself into *speech*. Each of these classes of phenomena—automatic drawing and automatic speech—will need at a future time detailed treatment. At present I shall only briefly indicate their position among cognate automatisms.

Some of my readers may have seen what are termed "spirit-drawings,"—designs, usually in colour, whose author asserts that he drew them without any plan, or even knowledge of what his hand was going to do. This assertion may be quite true, and the person making it may be perfectly sane.¹ The drawings so made will be found curiously accordant with what the view which I am explaining would lead us to expect. For they exhibit a fusion of arabesque with ideography; that is to say, they partly resemble the forms of ornamentation into which the artistic hand strays when, as it were, dreaming on the paper without definite plan; and partly they afford a parallel to the early attempts at symbolic self-expression of savages who have not yet learnt an alphabet. Like savage writing, they pass by insensible

¹ Instances will be afterwards given to substantiate this statement. But, of course, like other automatic impulses, this impulse to decorative or symbolical drawing is sometimes seen at its maximum in insane patients. Some drawings of an insane patient, reproduced in the *American Journal of Psychology*, June, 1888, show a noticeable analogy (in my view a *predictable* analogy) with some of the "spirit-drawings" above discussed.

transitions from direct pictorial symbolism to an abbreviated ideography, mingled in its turn with writing of a fantastic or of an ordinary kind.

Automatic *utterance*, again, is a phenomenon rarer than those which we have thus far been discussing, and it has in consequence become much more closely associated with "professional mediumship." So-called "trance-speaking" forms a recognised calling; and many volumes of "inspirational addresses" have been printed in England and America. Many Spiritualists hold that the style and matter of these addresses afford abundant evidence that a mind higher than the medium's has been concerned in producing them. Without denying the possibility of such an interpretation, we must plainly be slow to infer the action of an external mind any improvement in the *quality* of the psychical product. Rather we shall treat these trance-utterances somewhat as we should discuss some passage in an ancient author which was suspected to be an interpolation, from but which was found in all the manuscripts. A mere difference in *style* would in such a case be far less convincing than the discovery in the disputed passage of some historical fact which the alleged author could not have known. Now "trance-addresses" are eminently barren of fact; they generally show little more than a mere power of improvisation, which may either be fraudulently practised, or may be a characteristic faculty of the unconscious self.

On the whole, it seems best to defer further discussion of these last two forms of active automatism—picture-drawing and trance-utterance—until we have seen what light *passive* automatisms may throw on the value of messages thus given from within.

The term "passive automatism" may sound at first, perhaps, somewhat fantastic; but it expresses a real relation between various methods in which a message from our unconscious self may reach the conscious self. For that message may take a sensory as well as a motor form; it may present itself in the form of a hallucination of sight or hearing just as well as in the form of tilts of a table or scrawls with a pencil. The automatism may be called *active* if it finds a motor channel, *passive* if it finds a sensory channel, but the impulse whence it originates may be much the same in the one case as in the other.

The study of automatic writing leads us directly to this conclusion. Beginning by considering automatic writing alone, we soon found that it presented analogies to various *asemic* troubles (or brain-disturbances influencing the recognition and reproduction of spoken or written words), and, moreover, that these asemic disturbances, in their various types, were spread over all the processes of verbalisation. They affected, that is to say, not the word-writing process alone, nor even the two *active* processes of word-writing and word-speaking alone, but also the comparatively *passive* processes of word-hearing and word-seeing. In the

scheme drawn out (*Proceedings*, Vol. III., p. 58, *sqq.*) a place was found for these supernormal sensory or passive phenomena, as well as for the supernormal motor or active phenomena which were then primarily under discussion.¹

Without reproducing the formulæ there given, we may say that all these speech-processes have a sensory as well as a motor side; and that if we observe an affection of one form of verbalisation—say, the act of word-writing—we are likely to come upon some analogous phenomenon, affecting the other forms of verbalisation—word-speaking, word-hearing, and word-seeing.

Now we have already recognised that there is such a thing as automatic word-speaking, strictly parallel to automatic word-writing; and we may therefore all the more confidently expect to find some form of automatic hearing and seeing of words. Nor indeed is there any reason why these twin forms of automatism—active and passive—should be confined to the region of verbalisation alone. Wherever there is a message from one stratum of our being to another, we may expect that message to be delivered sometimes in motor and sometimes in sensory terms.

Before going further, we may test the meaning of these assertions by applying them to the familiar subject of *dreams*.

According to the definition above suggested, dreams may be regarded as one form—the commonest form—of message-bearing automatisms; that is to say, they are phenomena, whose origin is within ourselves, but yet outside our habitual stream of consciousness. Thus they fulfil our definition of *automatisms*. And, again, they are certainly message-bearing or nunciative, although the message which they bring to the waking self is usually merely nonsensical, useless for any practical purpose. That is to say, in my view, the message which they bring comes from a stratum or phase of our personality which is chaotic and fragmentary. Nevertheless a message there is, a message conveyed by automatic action from the sub-conscious to the conscious or waking self; and my immediate object is to show that that message may, so to say, be communicated in either motor or sensory terms,—that there is no fundamental difference between dream-speech and dream-audition, between dream-gesture and dream-vision,—but that the message, such as it is, which the dream-stratum of our personality has to convey gets itself expressed by whatsoever mechanism it can in each instance work most easily—by whatsoever path of externalisation is worn the smoothest in that special brain. (I vary the metaphors as much as possible in order to guard against being understood to give any of them as a real transcript of the unknown processes which actually occur.)

¹ See the definitions of the formulæ, $xx' + HH'$ and $xx' + SS'$, *loc. cit.*

Now the "psychostatical conditions" of different brains,—the relative arrangements of their internal forces,—are illimitably various. But for present purposes the three main divisions, with which Mr. Galton and others have made the world familiar, will be enough. We have *auditory* subjects, that is to say, persons in whom the memory of sounds—of uttered words and so on—is clear and persistent, and who, if an idea is suddenly suggested to them, conceive it as though heard from some internal utterance. Thus, suppose that an auditory subject—or *auditive*—reads the words, "What is the largest quadruped?" He immediately imagines himself as *hearing* the word "elephant." Next we have the visual subjects who in a similar case *see* either the object itself or its printed name. A visualiser reading the above question will instantly imagine either the printed word elephant—or the picture of an elephant—or the look of the beast itself. Thirdly, we have the motor subjects, who imagine themselves either as *touching* the object suddenly suggested, or (much more frequently) as merely themselves uttering its name. A "motile" reading the above question will dimly imagine the movements of his own larynx in uttering the word elephant.

Of course we all of us, if we possess our full complement of senses, more or less combine all these three forms of memory. And probably the dreams of all of us contain images of all three kinds. But in the absence of external stimuli, our permanent psychostatical attitude will naturally determine our sensations more conspicuously than during waking hours. The visualiser will be more markedly visual in dreams, the imagery of the dream "motile" will be even more barren of auditory or visual elements than in his waking hours.

And, observe, that the very faintness and instability of the hallucinations which dreams offer to us affords a singular insight into the genesis of hallucination. We have here indeterminate hallucinations, which cannot be assigned to one sense or another in their entirety; nay, which sometimes seem to inhabit chambers of the brain in which the partition between sensation and motion is still indistinct.

The mental operations connected with a process so familiar as speech take place, for the most part, too easily and rapidly for us to note them. But if we think or dream in a foreign language, the consequent friction will reveal somewhat more than usual of our mental workings. I have felt (and probably many others have felt the same) a marked fatigue after dreaming when in France,—a fatigue which I found to depend upon the effort made in sleep to conduct conversations in French. I seemed in my dream to be hearing Frenchmen talk to me, and this might be thought to resemble an auditory hallucination rather than an act of utterance. But in reality the experience was motor rather than auditory; it was my own sub-conscious effort at French

speech which presented itself to me as a dream of hearing French conversation.

With other dreamers, again, when a dream-scene is vividly realised, gesture becomes interchangeable with vision. Within the limits of the dream itself it is often not clear whether we are performing an action ourselves or watching others perform it,—our centre of personality shifting to the focus of maximal intensity of the dream-operation. And the gestures of the excited dreamer illustrate this fusion of sensory and motor elements in a curious way. He dreams of a scene—say of tiger-hunting—in which he is actor. Most of his dream is a visual hallucination merely ; but when the tiger seizes him the stimulus spreads to motor centres and he struggles visibly in bed. Then, on awaking, he remembers the visual aspect of the dream, but *not* the motor message which it has already conveyed to the waking observer. To find a memory of *that* motor message—of his movements in bed—we should have to get down to a stratum of his personality profounder than dream.

On this last point, however, with its faint suggestion of possible strata below the dream-stratum, we must not at present dwell. The immediate object is to show that in this matter of messages communicated from one to another stratum of personality the *form* of the message—whether motor or sensory, whether an action or a hallucination—is a secondary, and in some sense an accidental matter. The impulse arising in the sub-conscious stratum may find its way to impress the conscious life by very various channels, according to the previous proclivities of the brain affected. Quite similarly, we can inspire by post-hypnotic suggestion either a motor act or a sensory hallucination. There, too, we enable a message to press upwards from the hypnotic to the waking stratum of the subject's mind ; but the channel by which that upward passage is made may be motor or sensory almost indifferently ;—the active automatism of some suggested action, or the passive automatism of some imaginary sight or audition. Considering all these things, therefore, I hold that in order to understand active automatism it is necessary to understand passive automatism as well. And among the various forms of passive automatism, or hallucination, the hearing of voices is one of the commonest, and may first be discussed here. But such discussion will involve a slight divergence from the main thread of our argument. We have thus far been mainly concerned with the *mode*, rather than the *substance*, of automatic communications, and we have dwelt willingly on perfectly trivial messages, if only the mode of their reception was such as to exclude the conscious operation of the mind. But in the case of the hearing of voices we must make rather a different choice. For whereas automatic writing is a phenomenon whose existence is not generally admitted, and which therefore

needs proof before explanation, hallucinatory voices are a very well-known phenomenon, only they are for the most part associated with insanity. We do not need, therefore, to prove that they *exist*; but, if we are to take them as worth serious discussion, we must select some instances where insanity cannot be alleged.

Or if this be saying too much,—for some writers will allege insanity wherever there is any markedly unusual psychological manifestation,—we must at least select some instances where no circumstance, except the voice itself, can be held to indicate insanity, and where the substance of the messages given is above and not below the normal level of human thought. To find a case of this sort,—a case where the messages conveyed by auditory hallucination have been unquestionably above and not below the level of ordinary waking sanity,—is of course not easy. We must not cite any modern example, where the repute for wisdom of the hallucinated person is yet undecided. Nor must we cite any case, like Mahomet's, of religious fanaticism or ecstasy, where genius has certainly been akin to insanity.

But there is one instance,—an instance well-observed and well-attested, though remote in date,—which will at once occur to every reader. The Founder of Science himself,—the permanent type of sanity, shrewdness, physical robustness, and moral balance,—was guided in all the affairs of life by a monitory Voice,—by “the Dæmon of Socrates.” This is a case which can never lose its interest, a case which has been vouched for by the most practical, and discussed by the loftiest intellect of Greece—both of them intimate friends of the illustrious subject;—a case, therefore, which one who endeavours to throw new light on hallucination and automatism is bound, even at this distance of time, to endeavour to explain. And this is the more needful since a treatise was actually written, a generation ago, as “a specimen of the application of the science of psychology to the science of history,” arguing from the records of the *δαιμόνιον* in Xenophon and Plato that Socrates was in fact insane.¹

I believe that it is now possible to give a truer explanation; to place these old records in juxtaposition with more instructive parallels; and to show that the messages which Socrates received were only advanced examples of a process which, if supernormal, is not abnormal, and which characterises that form of intelligence which we describe as *genius*. For genius is best defined—not as “an unlimited capacity of taking pains”—but rather as a mental constitution which allows a man to draw readily into conscious life the products of unconscious thought.

I have already urged that beneath the superficially conscious stratum

¹ *Du Démon de Socrate, &c.*, by L. F. Lélut, Membre de l'Institut. Nouvelle édition, 1856.

of our being there is not only a stratum of dream and confusion, but a still subjacent stratum of coherent mentation as well. This thesis, I think, is strongly supported by the records which have come down to us as to the Dæmon of Socrates. We shall see that the monitions which Socrates thus received were for the most part such as his own wiser self might well have given and that where the limits of knowledge attainable by his own inmost reflection may possibly have been transcended, they seem to have been transcended in such direction as a clairvoyant development of his own faculties might allow, rather than in such a way as to suggest the intervention of any external power. Let us try to analyse the nature of the "divine interventions" actually recorded by Socrates' contemporaries. The voice, it should be remarked, was always a voice of restraint; its silence implied approval. In the first place Xenophon's testimony completely establishes the *fact*. He desires, in defending his friend and master from the charge of impiety, to make as little as may be of the matter; but what he says is quite enough to prove—if such proof were needed—that the *δαίμων* is no metaphor, but is to be taken literally as a notorious and repeated incident in Socrates' life.

"First then," he says,¹ "as to his not worshipping the gods whom the city worships, what evidence was there of this? He sacrificed constantly, and obviously used the art of divination; for it was matter of notoriety that Socrates said that τὸ δαίμωνιον—the divine Providence—gave him indications; and this indeed was the principal reason for accusing him of introducing new gods."

The instances where such indication was given may be divided into three heads.

First come the cases where the warning voice—or its equally significant absence—gives proof of a *sagacity* at least equal to that of the waking Socrates; and decides him to action, or to abstention from action, which he professes always to have recognised as right and wise.

Next come the cases where the monition implies some sort of knowledge not dependent on any external source, yet not attainable by ordinary means,—as a knowledge of potential "rapport" (to use the term of the elder mesmerists), or special relation between two organisms.

And, lastly, come one or two doubtful cases where—if they be correctly reported—there was something like clairvoyance, or extension of the ordinary purview of sense.

The first of these classes contains the great majority of the recorded cases, whether small or great matters are concerned. And it is noticeable that the monition frequently occurred in reference to mere trifles, and had been a habitual phenomenon for Socrates from

¹ Xen. *Memorabilia* I. 1.

childhood upwards,—both of which points are eminently in analogy with what we know of other automatisms. Let us take first some trivial cases.

1. In the *Euthydemus* of Plato, Socrates is about to quit the palaestra; the sign detains him; young men enter, and profitable conversation ensues.

2. In the *Phædrus*, Socrates, when leaving his resting-place, is detained by the sign, which thus leads him to a discourse which he had not intended to utter—*Ἐγὼ δὲ μάστις μὲν*—"I am, it seems, a prophet," he then remarks,—but only just enough for my private use and benefit.

3. In the *First Alcibiades* the sign restrains him from speaking to Alcibiades until the latter is old enough to understand him aright.

There are also various cases where Socrates dissuades his friends from expeditions which ultimately turn to their harm. None of these are in our sense evidential; and in some of them (as in the case of the Athenian expedition against Syracuse) ordinary sagacity might have given the same warning. The case of Timarchus (Plato, *Theages*) is the most dramatic of these warnings.

Timarchus was sitting at supper with Socrates, and rose to go out to a plot of assassination, to which plot only one other man was privy. "What say you, Socrates?" said Timarchus, 'do you continue drinking; I must go out somewhither, but will return in a little, if so I may.' And the voice came to me; and I said to him, 'By no means rise from table; for the accustomed divine sign has come to me.' And he stayed. And after a time again he got up to go, and said, 'I must be gone, Socrates.' And the sign came to me again; and again I made him stay. And the third time, determining that I should not see, he rose and said naught to me, when my mind was turned elsewhere; and thus he went forth, and was gone, and did that which was to be his doom."

We cannot now tell what the evidential value of this case may have been. There may have been that in the countenance of one of them who sat at meat, which may have shown to Socrates that the hand of an assassin was with him on the table.

But, among these monitions of Socrates, a certain *silence* of the warning voice on one last occasion was held by Socrates himself, and has since been reputed, as the most noteworthy of all. This was when Socrates, accused on a capital charge of impiety, from which he might have freed himself by far less of retractation than has been consented to by many a martyr, refused altogether to retract, to excuse himself, to explain away; claiming rather, in one of the first and noblest of all assertions of the law of conscience as supreme, that he deserved to be supported at the public cost in the Prytaneum, as a man devoted to the mission of a moral teacher of men. The divine

sign, as has been said, came only to warn or to restrain ; when it was absent, all was well. And throughout the whole series of events which led to Socrates' death, the voice intervened once only,—to check him from preparing any speech in his own defence. Thereafter, by an emphatic silence, it approved the various steps by which the philosopher brought on his own head that extreme penalty which, save for his own inflexible utterances, the Dikastery would not have ventured to inflict.

“There has happened to me, O my judges,” he said in his last speech after sentence passed, “a wonderful thing. For that accustomed divine intimation in time past came to me very many times, and met me on slight occasion, if I were about to act in some way not aright ; but now this fate which ye behold has come upon me,—this which a man might deem, and which is considered, the very worst of ills. Yet neither when I left my home this morning was I checked by that accustomed sign ; nor when I came up hither to the judgment-hall, nor at any point in my speech as I spoke. And yet in other speeches of mine the sign has often stopped me in the midst. But now it has not hindered me in any deed or word of mine connected with this present business. What then do I suppose to be the reason thereof ? I will tell you. I think it is that what has happened to me has been a good thing ; and we must have been mistaken when we supposed that death was an evil. Herein is a strong proof to me of this ; for that accustomed sign would assuredly have checked me, had I been about to do aught that was evil.”

I dwell upon this incident ; for in the history of inward messages no such scene is likely to recur. We shall never again see such a man at such a moment drawing strength from the silence of the monitory utterance which came to him as from without himself, though it were from the depths of his own soul.

The next class of the Socratic monitions can only be briefly dealt with here. They touch on that singular phenomenon of so-called *rapport* which is to us at present and has long been in the eyes of Science an unexplained and a very disputable thing ; but on which recent hypnotic experiments are slowly bringing us to look as in some sense a reality. In modern terms we should say that the disciples of Socrates were influenced not so much by his instruction as by his *suggestion* ; and that some inward instinct—expressed by the monitory voice whose utterances we are analysing—informed him without conscious consideration whether his intending disciples were receptive to his suggestion or no. It is in the Platonic dialogue *Theages* that this aspect of the divine monition is most insisted on.

“I never learnt from you,” says a certain Aristeides to Socrates, “anything at all. You yourself well know this. But I always made progress whenever I was along with you, even if I were in the same

house but not in the same room; yet most when I was in the same room; and even in the same room I got on better if I looked at you when you were speaking than if I looked anywhere else. But I got on far the best of all when I was sitting near you and holding or touching you. But now, said he, all my then character has dribbled out of me." *Nῦν δέ, ἡ δ' ὄσ, πᾶσα ἐκείνη ἡ ἕξις ἐξέρρηκεν.*

I would not insist too strongly on an interpretation which may seem merely fanciful. But nevertheless we should be puzzled to find Greek words more expressive of the gradual dissipation and disappearance of a post-hypnotic suggestion,—the melting away of some imparted energy in well-doing as the subject is removed from the operator's influence. And that the possibility of some *rapport* of this kind should be indicated, not by conscious thought but by a message emanating from some sub-conscious phase of a man's being, this, too, is a phenomenon to which modern experience furnishes not unfrequent analogies.

The third class of Socratic monitions which I have mentioned rests on very slender evidence. We cannot be sure that the monitory sign ever warned him of anything which no possible sagacity of the ordinary kind could have led him to discover. As is natural in the beginning of such inquiries, the cases cited to illustrate this supposed supernormal knowledge are mainly interesting and important incidents; and it is precisely in relation to such incidents that some unconscious *guess* is likely to have been made. What we should like would be just what Plato has omitted;—specimens, namely, of the *trivial* cases where the divine warning saved the philosopher from some momentary mishap. Of this sort I can find one only; and that is merely a tradition, given in Plutarch's essay *De Genio Socratis*. Socrates, according to this story (which Plutarch puts into the mouth of a supposed eye-witness), is walking and talking with Euthyphron, but stops suddenly, and calls his friends to turn back by another street. Most of them follow him, but others keep on their way, and presently meet a great herd of swine who knock down some of them and befoul the rest. "Charillus" (who had thus braved Socrates' warning) "returned home with legs and clothes all full of mire,—so that we all remembered Socrates' familiar spirit, with roars of laughter, marvelling how the Divinity had care of him continually."

One more remark. Among the most singular incidents in Socrates' life were those pauses of immobility, frequently lasting for hours, and once, as reported, for a consecutive day and night, when he was inaccessible to any outward stimulus, and remained fixed as in a deep contemplation. Medical readers have seen that there must have been more than mere contemplation here; and Lélut has treated these accesses as a kind of *stupor attonitus*—of bewildered paralysis of all intellectual operation, such as is seen in minds overbalanced by some terrible

shock. I cannot accept the parallel, nor believe that symptoms so grave can supervene in robust health and disappear without leaving a trace behind. Nor, again, is there anything which suggests epilepsy. I believe the accesses to have been accesses of *ecstasy*, reached, as in some rare cases, without any previous hysterical disturbance; and indicating (as I hold) a sub-conscious self, so powerful and so near the surface that some slight accident sufficed to determine its temporary predominance over the whole man.

But I must leave here the story of Socrates, rich in unworked psychological suggestion, but cited here only as an example of *wise automatism*; of the possibility that the messages which are conveyed to the conscious mind from unconscious strata of the personality,—whether as sounds, as sights, or as movements,—may sometimes come from far beneath the realm of dream and confusion,—from some self whose monitions convey to us a wisdom profounder than we know.

The case, assuredly, is a marked one; but it may be thought to be too exceptional for the purpose of my argument. Socrates, it may be said, was too strangely above ordinary men to allow us to draw wider inferences from this unique example. It might be well if we could add a case not complicated by such towering genius;—a case where someone with no great gifts of nature, with no incomprehensible workings of the soul, had, nevertheless by monitory voices been taught wisdom and raised to honour,—and who, if so it might be, had testified to the reality of the inward message by some witness which the world could not gainsay. And such a case there is; there is a figure in history unique and marvellous, but marvellous in this point alone. One there has been who was born with no conspicuous strength of intellect, and in no high or powerful place, but to whom voices came from childhood onwards and brought at length a strange command;—one who by mere obedience to that monitory call rose to be the saviour of a great nation;—one to whose lot it fell to push that obedience to its limit, and to pledge life for truth; to perish at the stake rather than disown those voices or disobey that inward law.

I speak, of course, of Joan of Arc, the Maid of Orleans, the national heroine of France; whose name crowns the poet's list of those famous women of old time who have vanished like "the snows of yester-year."

La reyne blanche comme ung lys
 Qui chantoit à voix de sereine
 Berthe au grant pié, Biétris, Allys,
 Harembourges qui tint le Mayne
 Et Jehanne la bonne Loraine
 Qu' Angloys bruslèrent à Rouen,
 Où sont-ils, Vierge souveraine ?
 Mais où sont les neiges d'antan ?

I must be excused for dwelling on this signal example; for I believe that only now, with the comprehension which we are gradually gaining of the possibility of an impulse from the mind's deeper strata which is so far from madness that it is wiser than our sanity itself,—only now, I repeat, can we understand aright that familiar story. I shall not repeat its incidents in detail; but shall draw my citations from the only trustworthy source, namely, Joan's evidence, given in 1431, before Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais, and the other ecclesiastics who ultimately condemned her to be burnt alive. The condemnation was based on her own admissions; and the Latin *procès-verbal* still exists, and was published from the MS. by M. Quicherat, 1841-9, for the French Historical Society. Joan, like Socrates, was condemned mainly on the ground, or at least on the pretext, of her monitory voices; and her Apology remarkably resembles his, in its resolute insistence on the truth of the very phenomena which were being used to destroy her. Her answers are clear and self-consistent, and seem to have been little, if at all, distorted by the recorder. Few pieces of history so remote as this can be so accurately known.

On the other hand, the *Procès de Réhabilitation*, held some 20 years after Joan's death, when memories had weakened and legend had begun to grow, is of little value as evidence. Joan's credit must rest entirely on that testimony on the strength of which she was condemned to death.

Fortunately for our purpose, her inquisitors asked her many questions as to her voices and visions; and her answers enable us to give a pretty full analysis of the phenomena which concern us.

I. The voices do not begin with the summons to fight for France. Joan heard them first at 13 years of age,—as with Socrates also the voice began in childhood. The first command consisted of nothing more surprising than that "she was to be a good girl, and go often to church." After this the voice—as in the case of Socrates—intervened frequently, and on trivial occasions.

II. The voice was accompanied at first by a light, and sometimes afterwards by figures of saints, who appeared to speak, and whom Joan appears to have both seen and felt, as clearly as though they had been living persons. But here there is some obscurity; and Michelet thinks that on one occasion the Maid was tricked by the courtiers for political ends. For she asserted (apparently without contradiction) that several persons, including the Archbishop of Rheims, as well as herself, had seen an angel bringing to the King a material crown.

III. The voices came mainly when she was awake, but also sometimes roused her from sleep; a phenomenon often observed in our cases of "veridical hallucination." "*Ipsa dormiebat, et vox excitabat eam.*" (Quicherat, I., p. 62.)

IV. The voice was not always fully intelligible (especially if she was half awake);—in this respect again resembling some of our recorded cases, both visual and auditory, where, on the view taken in *Phantasms*, the externalisation has been incomplete. “*Vox dixit aliqua, sed non omnia intellexit.*” (Quicherat, I., 62.)

V. The predictions of the voice, so far as stated, were mainly fulfilled; viz., that the siege of Orleans would be raised; that Charles VII. would be crowned at Rheims; that she herself would be wounded; but the prediction that there would be a great victory over the English within seven years was not fulfilled in any exact way, though the English continued to lose ground. In short, about so much was fulfilled as an ardent self-devoted mind might have anticipated; much indeed that might have seemed irrational to ordinary observers, but nothing which actually needed a definite prophetic power. Here, again, we are reminded of the general character of the monitions of Socrates. And yet in Joan's case, more probably than in the case of Socrates, there may have been one singular exception to this general rule. She knew by monition that there was a sword “*retro altare*”—somewhere behind the altar—in the Church of St. Catherine of Fierbois. “*Scivit ipsum ibi esse per voces*”:—she sent for it, nothing doubting, and it was found and given to her. This was an unique incident in her career. Her judges asked whether she had not once found a cup, and a missing priest, by help of similar monitions, but this she denied; and it is remarkable that no serious attempt was made either to show that she had claimed this clairvoyant power habitually, or, on the other hand, to invalidate the one instance of it which she did in effect claim. It would be absurd to cite the alleged discovery of the sword as a proof of clairvoyance, any more than Socrates' alleged intimation of the approaching herd of swine. But when we are considering monitions given in more recent times it will be well to remember that it is in this direction that some supernormal extension of knowledge seems possibly traceable.

And, lastly, it must be observed that among all the messages thus given to Joan of Arc there does not seem to have been one which fell short of the purest heroism. They were such commands as were best suited to draw forth from her who heard them the extreme of force, intelligence, virtue, of which she had the potency at her birth. What better can we desire as the guide of life?

We need not assume that the voices which she heard were the offspring of any mind but her own, any more than we need assume that the figures in which her brave and pious impulses sometimes took external form were veritable saints,—the crowned St. Margaret and the crowned St. Catherine and Michael in the armoury of Heaven.

Yet, on the other hand, we have no right to class Joan's monitions,

any more than those of Socrates, as an incipient madness. To be sane, after all, is to be adjusted to our environment, to be capable of coping with the facts around us. Tried by this test, it is Socrates and Joan who should be our types of sanity; their difference from ourselves lying rather in the fact that they were better able to employ their own whole being, and received a clearer inspiration from the monitory soul within.

I have dwelt at some length on these two cases, far more remote in date than those to which it is our custom to appeal. But this has been because I held it essential to make my reader understand that the grotesque and trivial messages or monitions, with which in this inquiry we habitually deal, are not to be taken as covering the whole field of automatic action. Before we proceed to consider the question as to the action of minds external to the automatist's own, we ought at any rate to recognise that words given in these strange ways may in themselves be worth hearing,—that not the mechanism only but the content of automatic messages may sometimes deserve our close and serious attention.

My promised discussion on messages claiming an external source is still delayed for lack of adequate material. More cases are needed where facts are said to have been given which were not known to the automatist himself, or to any person present at the time. Some such cases we do possess—a few have been already printed in the *Journal*—but more should be forthcoming before they can be profitably compared and discussed.

And I cannot conclude this paper without making yet another appeal to Spiritualists, in England or elsewhere, for any evidence which they can send me bearing on this question of "spirit identity,"—on the possibility of proving from the *content* of automatic messages—however given—that the mind of some departed friend has in truth inspired them. For the few cases already received I have thanked my informants privately, and here thank them again. But it seems to me an extraordinary thing that if, as seems clear, there are some thousands of persons in the world who do actually believe that the dead can communicate with us by messages of this kind, these believers should apparently make so little effort either to prove or to conduct such communication. I am not thinking only of the paucity of the cases sent to myself, but of the barrenness, in this all-important particular, of all the Spiritualistic journals which I know. There is constant assertion that proofs of identity can be obtained by patience and care; but actual proofs—or even attempts at proof—are hardly ever forthcoming. Yet, without these, what reality is there in disquisitions on doctrine,—in lengthy "revelations" without any kind of guarantee? For my own part, I am anxious to see the Spiritualistic explanation advocated with

all possible industry and care. It is by far the most interesting hypothesis, and there are a few cases which tell strongly in its favour. I think it possible, too, that the attitude of receptiveness, which Spiritualists urge as necessary, may contribute to the attainment of proofs which, when attained, may have an objective and independent value. If so, now is the time to try earnestly to attain them, and to reinforce that alleged evidence to a continuing and ever-present intercourse between the living and the dead.

FREDERIC W. H. MYERS.

