

II.

A DEFENCE OF PHANTASMS OF THE DEAD.

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The question whether aught in man survives the death of the body is of course, and undeniably, the most important which researches such as ours can ever hope to solve. It is more than this; it is the most important problem in the whole range of the universe which can ever become susceptible of any kind of scientific proof. Cosmical questions there may be which in themselves are of deeper import. The nature of the First Cause; the blind or the providential ordering of the sum of things;—these are problems vaster than any which affect only the destinies of men. But to whatever moral certainty we may attain on those mightiest questions, we can devise no way whatever of bringing them to scientific test. They deal with infinity; and our modes of investigation have grasp only on finite things.

But the question of man's survival of death stands in a position uniquely intermediate between matters capable and matters incapable of proof. It is in itself a definite problem, admitting of conceivable proof which, even if not technically rigorous, might amply satisfy the scientific mind. And at the same time the conception which it involves is in itself a kind of avenue and inlet into infinity. Could a proof of our survival be obtained, it would carry us deeper into the true nature of the universe than we should be carried by an even perfect knowledge of the material scheme of things. It would carry us deeper both by achievement and by promise. The discovery that there was a life in man independent of blood and brain would be a cardinal, a dominating fact in all science and in all philosophy. And the prospect thus opened to human knowledge—in this or in other worlds—would be limitless indeed.

Since, then, our researches carry us perforce into the neighbourhood of a question so vast as this, we must take care that we do not slip into assuming an answer without full consciousness of what we do. In *Phantasms of the Living* any answer whatever was expressly postponed. But evidence reached us which we could not refuse to examine; and Mr. Gurney, as my readers know, was at the time of his death actually engaged upon this very task. It fell to my lot to complete the paper which he had in preparation (*Proceedings*, Part XIV.), and to add another (Part XV.), which carried the evidence somewhat further. But those papers consisted mainly of a detailed exposition of testimony;

and dealt too slightly with the philosophical aspect of the question,—the degree of readiness or reluctance with which we ought to accept the hypothesis of man's survival, when matched with other hypotheses which, if less directly suggested by the evidence, may yet lie more assuredly within the realm of ascertainable law.

Mr. Podmore's criticism upon my views expressed in the above-mentioned papers comes, therefore, opportunely. It should be answered not only by actual rejoinder to its arguments, but by something of fuller statement as to the way in which our psychical evidence generally affects the doctrine of man's survival. For Mr. Podmore starts from a thorough belief in the reality of telepathy between living men, and endeavours to explain the so-called phantasms of the dead as being in reality generated by minds still clothed in flesh. His explanations, as he frankly admits, are many of them "far-fetched and improbable"; but he regards them as less far-fetched, as less improbable, than the supposition that anything in man survives the tomb.

For reasons presently to be given I do not regard Mr. Podmore's intermediate position as permanently tenable. In one sense, indeed, I should be glad to think it more plausible than I do; since it might prove a stepping-stone to the acceptance of evidence which I believe to be true, but which is too strange, too remote from ordinary experience, to be readily believed. For I fear lest as students begin to perceive how closely our evidence of telepathy between the living is linked with telepathy between the living and the dead they may suffer a kind of revulsion or backwater, from dread of the "mysticism" which to many minds seems somehow to adhere to the facts themselves, however careful the mode of their presentation.

But the strongest reason for immediate reply to Mr. Podmore's criticisms lies in the danger that those criticisms should operate upon possible informants in a way which he deprecates as earnestly as myself. Our investigation requires that a constant stream of evidence should flow in. It is only by perpetually gathering in fresh experiences at first-hand that we can maintain a real difference in value between our own colligations of actual facts and the loose speculations of *à priori* negation or of *à priori* credulity. The difficulty of collecting this evidence is very great already. It would be increased if possible informants were to suspect, however groundlessly, that their narratives were examined with any kind of prepossession, or their stranger experiences discounted as proving too much. On the other hand, this frank avowal of divergence of opinion between the two secretaries to whom evidence may be sent may suggest an additional motive to our correspondents to furnish materials which may help to decide the controversy in one way or the other.

I must insist again upon the deep importance of the amount and the quality of the records sent to us. The urgent question is not

how our evidence is to be interpreted in detail, but whether or no it is to be set aside altogether. Human testimony is on its trial. It remains, that is to say, to be seen whether Science can accord to honest testimony (of a kind which can rarely be confirmed by direct experiment) a confidence sufficient to bear the strain put upon it by the marvellous matters for which that testimony vouches. I believe that the veracity, the accuracy of our informants, taken *en masse*, will ultimately support that strain, and that the world will be convinced of veridical apparitions as the world has been convinced of meteorites.

Meteorites,—those other invaders from the unseen,—were until lately quite as scornfully rejected; and naturally rejected, so long as the evidence for phenomena so marvellous rested on antique tradition and peasants' tales. Then came a moment,—like the moment which our inquiry is traversing now,—at which inquiring men who had actually spoken with the peasants and seen the fragments believed that stones had fallen. And then suddenly the fall of meteorites was accepted as a natural phenomenon, an almost inexplicable but a quite undeniable fact. In recent papers I have endeavoured to exhibit—so to say—some specimens of meteoric dust. In the present paper I must try to show the hollowness of the negative assumption which for this inquiry corresponds to Lavoisier's famous dictum, "There are no stones in the air; therefore none can fall upon the earth."

I shall not, of course, debate *ab ovo* the well-worn question of a life to come. Rather I shall discuss in what way that ancient controversy is affected by the discovery of telepathy amongst the living; which I shall here follow Mr. Podmore in assuming as adequately proved. But I must indicate the starting-point from which my argument is to begin. My reader must understand that I am confining myself exclusively to the scientific aspect of the question. I therefore waive all reference to the fact that the majority of civilised men profess at least to believe that sufficient evidence of man's survival has long ago been attained. But, on the other hand, I protest against an opposite assumption which seems to me to be almost as narrow, almost as unphilosophical, as blind faith in instinct or in tradition can possibly be. Because we men, with our short and confined experience, have as yet no clear knowledge of thought or consciousness apart from the flow of blood through a ponderable brain, it is often assumed that it is indefinitely improbable that thought or consciousness can, anywhere in the universe, exist except in such a connection. This argument is cogent indeed against the practice of mummifying the dead,—against the expectation that the actual dust of outworn frames shall be revived by some startling decree. Life, as we know it, cannot persist in connection with disintegrated tissue, a desiccated brain. But what more than this can we affirm? Amid the infinite

possibilities of the Cosmos the persistence of discarnate life is *per se* neither probable nor improbable. On the *a priori* aspect of the question science can have no more to say.

I proceed to the more definite query as to how far a belief in telepathy,—in a communication between incarnate minds apart from the operation of the recognised organs of sense,—ought to influence our belief in the possibility of a communication between minds incarnate and minds discarnate,—minds, that is to say, for which the recognised organs of sense are altogether lacking. Mr. Podmore holds, as I understand him, that telepathy should make no difference at all; that here is simply a newly-recognised law of nature which we must henceforth allow for in the same definite manner as we allow for the laws (say) of chemical affinity;—and with the same presumption that any new combinations which we come upon are due to the action, under novel conditions, of this same identical force.

My own view is in one sense more cautious, but in another sense bolder. On the one hand, I do not venture to treat telepathy so freely as Mr. Podmore treats it,—to draw his hypothetical inferences as to forms of it to which experience has not yet introduced us. But, on the other hand, I regard telepathy, not as a fact standing alone and self-sufficing, but as a first hint of discoveries which cannot be circumscribed,—a casually-reached indication of some unknown scheme of things of which thought-transference, clairvoyance, apparitions at death, may be but subordinate effects or incidental examples. Unprovable as such an hypothesis obviously is, it has the advantage of putting us on our guard against other hypotheses which make more pretence to proof. The notion of *brain-waves*, for instance,—the analogy of the two tuning-forks which vibrate in unison,—was at first attractive to many minds. It seemed comparatively easy to add this new vibration to the numerous systems of vibrations which we know or suspect to be actually traversing space. Yet this fancy of brain-waves (from which, by the way, Mr. Gurney and I were from the first careful to stand aloof) has become less and less plausible, less and less explanatory, as evidence has accumulated. The cases on which such a conception might throw light are everywhere interwoven with cases where it seems wholly inappropriate.

And yet this idea of brain-waves had a possibility of definiteness. It was conceivable that it might have been the key to all the phenomena. There is not the same definiteness in the conception with which Mr. Podmore replaces it. As the key to all the phenomena inexplicable by more familiar causes he suggests *telepathy between the living*. But telepathy is not a simple and positive conception which we can manipulate with confidence. It is not a law at which we can arrive deductively from other known laws. Nor is it even—

like the law of gravity—an expression of a definite universal fact, which we can count upon although we cannot arrive at it deductively.

I probably go beyond Mr. Podmore in holding that the simplest case of true thought-transference, if once admitted, breaks down the purely physiological synthesis of man, and opens a doorway out of materialism which can never again be shut. And I agree with him in holding that in *Phantasms of the Living* a continuous connection has been traced between the smallest experiments in telepathy and such complex phenomena as the phantasmal appearance of a dying man to several persons together, or to a person who never knew him. But from this I infer—not that all these complex phenomena are merely varieties of the special phenomenon with which it was convenient to begin our inquiry;—but rather that a mixed multitude of obscure phenomena can now be seen to have a certain kinship, insomuch that the evidence for each class strengthens by analogy the evidence for the other classes;—while all classes alike are probably the outcome of laws too remote from terrene experience to admit of being grasped at present by minds like ours.

At the time when *Phantasms of the Living* was written it seemed to be accordant with scientific caution to treat all the supernormal phenomena there included as being—whatever else they might or might not be—at any rate instances of the direct influence of one mind upon another. But although I still hold this as true in the main, I should no longer wish to assert it of every case given in that book. Some of those cases, for instance, may be explicable by clairvoyance,—by some energy exercised by the percipient's mind alone, without there being any so-called "agent" in the affair at all. In view of this possibility and of those other still less defined possibilities towards which some of our evidence obscurely points, it seems to me unreasonable to treat telepathy as if it stood alone as a possible explanation;—as if there were no rival conceptions in the psychical field.

And, moreover, the evidential position itself has considerably changed during the past four years. A large part of our evidence for post-mortem apparitions has been collected since *Phantasms of the Living* appeared. And as our evidence now stands I find no rational halting-place between our smallest experimental transferences from mind to mind and apparitions generated by men long dead. I do not mean that each stage of the evidence is equally strong. There are—as has elsewhere been shown—abundant reasons, drawn from the mere ordinary facts of life, which make it much harder to prove a post-mortem apparition to be veridical than it is to prove the same thing of an apparition which coincides with death. But a fresh practical difficulty in making evidence cogent does not necessarily imply a philosophical gulf between the more and the less easily proved

phenomena. I suspect that could we see all our phenomena set out in their true relations, we might find that the gap between a phantom generated five minutes before death and a phantom generated five minutes after death was not so broad as the gap between the transference of a card from mind to mind and the impression on distant persons of a phantasmal personality. May not the importance which we attach to death be largely a subjective thing? a mere example of the way in which man's speculations on the universe are tinged with an ineradicable anthropomorphism? Who can say that there may not be quite other points in our chain of phenomena at which a dispassionate non-human expositor might feel it more logically suitable to open a fresh chapter?

My argument, says Mr. Podmore, stands in need of two assumptions;—that the dead still live, and that they can communicate with survivors. Elsewhere he assigns to me a third assumption,—that the dead are conversant with the aspect of their body after its death.

I prefer to put my theory in my own way,—as a single postulate which will carry with it all that I am endeavouring to show in detail. I assume, then, that the individualised energy which generates veridical phantasms is not coeval with the body. It has not, I mean, the same duration as the body; it may have pre-existed, and it may survive. As to the details of this conception,—power of communication, power of memory, &c.,—my view leaves us with regard to the behaviour of phantasms of the dead just where we stand in regard to the behaviour of phantasms of the living. It leaves us, that is to say, in a state of blank ignorance *à priori*,—an ignorance which can be dispelled by actual evidence alone.

Mr. Podmore believes, as I do, on the sheer strength of the evidence, that Mr. S. H. B., for instance (*Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., p. 104), was able by what we vaguely call an effort of will, to manifest a phantom of himself to several persons at a distance. Could we have anticipated this? Could we have predicted beforehand how that phantom would behave? whether it would seem to show intelligence or not? whether it would be perceptible to one person only or to more? whether Mr. S. H. B., as we actually know him, would have any recollection of the phantom's actions or no?

We could have predicted none of these things; and neither can we make any prediction as to the intelligence, the memory, the perceptibility of a phantom—if such there be—which is generated after bodily death. And all that I assume is that whatever the energy may have been which generated the phantom of the living S. H. B., that energy was not dependent on the vitality of his bodily tissues. Can anyone show me that it *was* so dependent? or give reasons

why, in our absolute ignorance, my supposition is to be treated as so much less likely than the opposite one? I claim, indeed, that quite apart from any evidence to apparitions after death, and looking only to the class of cases set forth in *Phantasms of the Living*, there is good ground for holding that the energy in question is not bound up, in the same way as our conscious mental energies are bound up, with the physiological activity of the brain. The concomitant variations of bodily health and mental vigour form, as we know, an obvious argument for the view that with the total cessation of bodily functions our mental functions also must wholly cease. So far as our conscious mental activity goes, this exact concomitance admits of no provable exception. But so soon as we come to deal with manifestations of the unconscious self,—of the profounder strata of our being,—the case changes at once. Even in the hypnotic trance we observe a greater independence of certain corporeal conditions,—as when a hypnotised patient can talk freely in spite of a wound which, in his waking state, would keep him absorbed in his pain. This, of course, resembles rather a shutting off of certain bodily distractions than the development of any new mental force. Going a step further, we find hypnotic hyperæsthesia increasingly difficult to explain by anything that we know of concomitant bodily states. But when we come to telergy,—to the power of propagating influences or phantasms at a distance,—then the familiar parallelism between bodily and mental states assumes a quite strained and hypothetical air. At first, indeed, it might have appeared as though that parallelism still subsisted. We spoke of phantasms coincident with moments of death or crisis,—as though a strong upheaval of the conscious being disengaged some influence which might be felt afar off. But as further cases were gathered in it became clear that the “crisis” which facilitated telergic action was not necessarily a moment of conscious excitement or strain. Quite otherwise; for it was found that the “agent,” at the moment of the apparition, was often asleep, or fainting, or even in a state of coma. Not the moment of death alone, but also the hours of abeyance and exhaustion which precede death, were found apt to generate these appearances. Nor is the moment of death itself, under ordinary circumstances, a moment of impulse or exaltation. Far oftener it is an imperceptible extinction of energies which have already waned almost into nothingness.

It would, then, be nearer the truth to say that telergic action varies *inversely*, than that it varies *directly*, with the observable activity of the nervous system or of the conscious mind. And it follows that the presumption commonly urged against the conscious mind’s continuance after bodily decay loses much of its force when we are considering this new-found form of mental energy,—so much less manifestly dependent

upon bodily states. We come back—as I have before said—to a problem whose conditions are wholly unknown.

Turning now to Mr. Podmore's criticisms, we find that they fall into three classes. First, he gives reasons for regarding the narratives pointing to post-mortem apparitions as ill-evidenced. Secondly, he endeavours to show that the details of those narratives are not such as we should expect if the phantoms were really generated by the spirits of the departed. And, thirdly, he suggests ways in which those narratives may be explained by the agency of persons still living.

(1) Arguing for his first point, Mr. Podmore repeats a remark on which I have already insisted ;—namely, that the mythopœic instinct of mankind works in favour of a type of "ghost story" far more full-flavoured,—more pregnant with poetic justice or with curdling horror,—than our first-hand cases can generally claim to be. It is so ; and it was by considering those very cases in our privately-printed series to which Mr. Podmore refers in detail that we assured ourselves that so it was. There is nothing to be surprised at here. And, as I have said, the fact that the mythopœic drift is in that direction serves to my mind to heighten the presumption in favour of the genuineness of cases of post-mortem apparition so flavourless or so odd as most of those on which I rely ;—corresponding so poorly to that which man's fancy loves to feign. I have already explained what I hold to be the cause of the emotional barrenness, the fleeting insufficiency, of most of these projections upon terrene existence of influences whose centre is no longer among breathing men.

And with regard to the *amount* of that evidence which I hold as good, both Mr. Gurney and I have always stated that it was far less than the evidence for veridical phantasms among the living. It *must* be less,—as I have again and again to repeat,—because in our ignorance of how the departed "agent" is faring we cannot appeal to *his* history to show some coincidence with the moment when this phantasm is observed by his surviving friend. We have to leave out of account the great bulk of these *post-mortem* appearances,—these "visions of consolation,"—because we cannot cite some entry in a departed spirit's diary to prove that he was at that moment endeavouring to manifest himself to his friend on earth. But the evidence, with all its necessary restrictions, continues to accumulate ;—accumulates (like our other testimony) just in proportion to the amount of energy and care which are expended in collecting and testing the incidents now lying in the memory of many a percipient who will reveal them only to skilful persuasion. Mr. Podmore knows as well as I how miserably inadequate is all the energy at our disposal,—especially since the loss of our chief and ablest collector,—to garner up the harvest of first-hand evidence which lies ready for us on every side. To found a negative argument upon the small number of

cases yet encountered which point to man's continuance is rash indeed;—as rash as it was to argue against man's *antiquity* when only a few batches of flint implements had yet been discovered. It must never be forgotten that we stand at the very beginning of a quest which no assignable number of years will complete; and that thus far we have found that almost every solid nucleus of first-hand intelligent testimony to some special type of phenomenon has received with further search fresh corroboration at a rate which,—distinctly perceptible in the work of a few men for a few years,—might easily become overwhelming if a hundredfold our labour were applied to the task for a century.

(2) But going on from the charge of inadequacy in the bulk of evidence, Mr. Podmore proceeds to argue that the characteristics of such apparitions as seem *prima facie* to imply survival of death are difficult to reconcile with the hypothesis that the apparition seen is the manifestation of an intelligent entity, and suggest rather that it is to be attributed to casual hallucination. The absence of apparent motive in these phantasms seems to him to support that view.

I have already explained that, in my view, these phantoms, although emanating from a personal intelligence, do not represent the main current of that intelligence; and must be expected to behave—not as Mr. S. H. B. (to go back to that instructive example) would himself behave when calling upon friends, but rather as his projected phantom behaved;—with the same dreamy absence of apparent purpose, the same blank and fugitive appeal. I have contended,—not that this is all that is left, but that it is all that can usually reach us; that the gulf between disparate modes of existence is too great for any directer message to cross it. Nor do those special characteristics on which Mr. Podmore dwells seem to me inconsistent with my view of what these phantoms signify. I will take his objections in the order of rising importance.

(1) “The occurrence of phantasms resembling animals.” We are agreed that a phantasmal figure need not be directly generated by a mind or entity precisely resembling itself. Without, therefore, raising the question of the continued existence of animals after death, we may maintain that their presence among phantasms of the dead is no more of a difficulty than their appearance among phantasms of the living.

(2) “The liability of the percipients to casual and apparently non-veridical hallucinations.” To this I demur; and I should say, on the contrary, that in the cases cited by Mr. Podmore the other hallucinations which the percipients had experienced were of a type which, although not provably veridical, are at least so *possibly* veridical that they rather improve than weaken the evidence for the veridicality of the special apparition in question. Let us take one of the cases cited by Mr. Podmore (*Proceedings*, Vol. VI., p. 26,

Case IV.) as a fairly illustrative instance. In that case a lady sees a figure which she does not recognise; her husband then sees it, and recognises the aspect of his deceased father. Mr. Podmore regards the lady as the primary percipient here, and supposes that she infects her husband with the hallucination; although he does not explain how she manages to infect him with a phantom face and figure well known to *him*, and unknown to *herself*. But letting this pass for the moment, let us appraise the weight of the objection that this lady "had experienced a previous hallucination unshared; a circumstance which may be regarded as indicating some predisposition to sensory hallucination." What, then, was this previous hallucination? Was it a skeleton? a Turk's head? a semi-human "Mr. Gabbage"? did it take, in short, any of the familiar forms of morbid illusion? On the contrary, it was the consoling vision of her own father, seen shortly after his death. Now this vision, of course, was not *evidential*. She was mourning for her father, and grief and excitement may have summoned up a purely subjective figure. I refrain, therefore, from claiming that vision on my side; but I object equally to Mr. Podmore's claim;—to his reckoning it as subjective just because, from the very nature of the circumstances, it could not, even if veridical, have been *evidentially* cogent. Mr. Podmore describes a message from a man whose death is already known as "practically superfluous"; but this sternly *evidential* point of view is not always shared by survivors. Nor need the sorrowing girl's departed father have been of opinion (to quote Mr. Podmore's phrase about yet another case) that "after the fact of the death was known the message itself could no longer serve any useful purpose." For although it was, no doubt, "superfluous" for this gentleman to inform his daughter that he had died, he might deem it worth while to inform her that he was still living.

In short, the predisposition to sensory hallucination with which Mr. Podmore credits this lady and other percipients may quite possibly be a predisposition or sensitiveness to *veridical* hallucinations; just as in the case of many of the percipients in *Phantasms of the Living*, who have experienced several phantasms, each one of which proves to have been coincidental.

(3) Mr. Podmore's next objection deals with a fact undoubtedly perplexing;—but equally perplexing, I think, whatever be the theory which we adopt. I mean the fact that several different phantasmal figures have often been seen in the same house. I will refrain from expressing my view on this question until we have considered the theories which Mr. Podmore himself suggests for the explanation of these post-mortem phantoms generally.

Mr. Podmore's definition (p. 232) of the nature of the coincidences needed to make *post-mortem* apparitions *evidential* closely follows that

already given in several papers in these *Proceedings*; nor is it needful to dwell further on the cases which he cites where these coincidences have not been established. Such cases I had already dismissed from my argument as of no value.

Mr. Podmore suggests a possible explanation of the cases to which I do attach importance by one or other of the following hypotheses:—

(1) The *latency* of the hallucination; allowing a phantom generated at the moment of death to become first perceptible some time afterwards.

(2) The *contagion* of the hallucination; allowing a phantasmal perception to be communicated from the original percipient to the person or persons present with him.

(3) And, still further, a telepathic *infection* of the hallucination, from A, who has once seen it in a house, to B, who does not know A, and who has never heard of the hallucination, but who succeeds A as tenant of the house in question.

Of these theses I hold that (1) represents a real fact, although a fact manifestly incapable (as Mr. Podmore allows) of explaining the bulk of the evidence on which I rely. For (2) I have as yet seen no evidence which looks to me plausible; and (3) seems to me a rash suggestion, and likely to attract unnecessary attack.

The suggestion—made by Mr. Gurney in our earliest papers—that a telepathic impression might remain latent in the sub-conscious mind until some favouring circumstances carried it upwards into recognition,—remained for a long time with only rare and inferential support. But (as Mr. Podmore justly remarks) Miss X.'s experiments in crystal-vision have called attention afresh to this capacity of latency. The change which these experiments, if confirmed and repeated, will make in our conceptions on this point will be somewhat as follows. It has long been known that the sub-conscious mind can produce "after-images,"—more or less externalised pictures of some person or object previously seen. This is indeed our ordinary explanation of non-coincidental hallucinatory figures of known persons. But it was usually supposed that after-images represented mainly something on which the gaze had been often or strenuously fixed,—as, for instance, objects seen under the microscope. Miss X.'s experiments, on the other hand, suggest that anything which has come within the field of vision may be reproduced as an after-image, whether it has in the first instance been wittingly perceived or no. And some of these crystal-visions seem to have been telepathic; so that (although these contain no clear example of latency or development) we may conjecture by analogy that it is possible for impressions caused by telepathic impact from other minds to remain for some unknown period below the level of consciousness, and then ultimately to rise into perception in some hallucinatory

form. But in dealing with phantasms of the dead this possibility has already been expressly allowed for; and Mr. Podmore's remarks seem to add little to what has been said (for example) in *Proceedings*, Vol. V., p. 431.

I cannot, at any rate, follow him in thinking it possible that General Barter's vision of Lieutenant B. (Vol. V., p. 468) may be explained as "the development of a latent image." "The figure," Mr. Podmore says, "represented the agent as he was during life." But an essential part of the narrative is that it represented the agent decorated with a "New-gate fringe," as he never was when General Barter had seen him;—as he never was, indeed, when he was out riding anywhere, since he had only grown that appendage in the hospital during his last illness. Mr. Podmore is surely riding his theory as hard as Lieutenant B. rode his ponies if he supposes that a latent image of a casual acquaintance will vivify itself after nearly a year with change of aspect corresponding to actual fact,—and, moreover, with an accompaniment, which Mr. Podmore ignores, of marked hallucinatory sounds heard on several occasions by three persons at least. All I can say for that hypothesis is that it seems to me a shade less impossible than its author's alternative explanation of the incident, which will be discussed below.

As regards Mr. Podmore's next point, the explanation of collective hallucinations by actual telepathic infection (without suggestion by word or gesture), I have little to add to my arguments in *Phantasms of the Living* (Vol. II., p. 282 *sqq.*). I there urged that if we wished to prove that hallucinations can be directly contagious we ought to produce instances of collective hallucination where other explanations were out of place,—where the hallucination was plainly a subjective affair, and could not, therefore, be independently caused in A, B, and C at the same moment. Nor should there be difficulty in producing such cases of contagion, considering that the great majority of hallucinations, and those the most persistent, are without question purely subjective affections;—being the result of delirium, disease, and insanity. No case of this sort, so far as I could then or can now discover, has ever been shown to be contagious, apart from suggestion by gesture or speech. And even among the casual hallucinations of sane persons I could not, and cannot, find any cases where a hallucination which is obviously purely subjective—as an after-image or a fantastic figure—has been shared by more than one person. I must save space here by merely referring to my earlier discussion; and must repeat my own provisional view that, until evidence of the kind suggested has been adduced, the fact that a hallucinatory sight or sound is perceived by two or more persons is *prima facie* evidence that this sight or sound—albeit not due to ordinary physical causes—yet has some generating cause outside the mind of either of the percipients.

It is to Mr. Podmore's *third* explanatory hypothesis, however, that I take the strongest exception. In this case he goes far beyond a suggestion which seemed to me when I made it to be an extreme outpost of the telepathic theory. In *Proceedings*, Vol V., p. 420, will be found a case where a Mrs. Green, in Ireland, had a terrifying dream (at once communicated to others) representing a very unusual scene of the accidental drowning of a niece personally unknown to her, which scene had occurred in Queensland more than 12 hours before the dream. In this case Mrs. Green's brother, the father of the drowned woman, learnt the news about the time of the dream. "His mind," I remark, "may have supplied the link between the actual scene and the dream in England, and the scene would be vividly present to him at the time when the dream occurred." Amidst the difficulties of this case, it seemed to me possible that the grief of Mrs. Green's brother (Mr. Allen) might have generated or reinforced the telepathic impression which gave rise to Mrs. Green's dream. For the first reception of the news of a daughter's violent death amounts in itself to a kind of crisis; and we may well suppose that Mr. Allen had never experienced such a moment before.

There is a great interval between this hypothesis and the way in which Mr. Podmore uses a similar theory to explain (for instance) the phantasmal sights and sounds experienced by Mrs. G., her two children, and servant in the house at X., with which so many members of our Society are now personally familiar (p. 259). In this case, a previous occupant, Miss Morris, who had been much annoyed by ghostly experiences in the house, left it in December, 1886. Towards the end of November, 1887, Mrs. G. entered the house as a new tenant. Mrs. G. did not know Miss Morris, and had heard nothing as to the house's history. Yet Mr. Podmore suggests that "the later experiences,"—*i.e.*, the ghostly troubles of Mrs. G. and her family,— "may have been started, if not wholly sustained, by thought-transference from Miss Morris, whose thoughts, no doubt, occasionally turned to the house in which she had suffered so much agitation and alarm."

Let us consider what this implies. Miss Morris, who had left the house for a full year when the new disturbances began (December, 1887), can hardly be imagined to have been still in a state of active panic. Still we may suppose, as Mr. Podmore says, that she at times thought over her past annoyances. The result of these fatal recollections should certainly teach us to control our thoughts as strictly as our actions. For the very first effect of Miss Morris's ponderings was "a deep sob and moan," followed by a thump and a cry of "Oh, do forgive me";—all disturbing poor Mrs. G., who had the ill-luck to find herself in a bedroom about which Miss Morris was possibly thinking.

Worse was to come, as the narrative shows (pp. 256 *sqq.*); and at last the unconscious Miss Morris drove Mrs. G. out of the house in despair. Surely on this view the peace of all of us rests on a sadly uncertain tenure! Many things—experiences quite other than ghostly—have happened in many houses on which former occupants may look back with feelings of regret or horror. There might indeed be a complex group of phantasms waiting for each new comer if the accumulated reminiscences of all previous inmates took ghostly form before his eyes.

I will quote but one instance more;—the alternative explanation given by Mr. Podmore for General Barter's vision of Lieutenant B. (see p. 284 above).

"It seems more plausible," he says, "to attribute [the vision] to telepathy from Lieutenant Deane, who had been well acquainted with the decedent during the last few months of his life, and who had left the percipient but a few minutes before. On the assumption that the vision had been due to the direct action of the deceased, its coincidence with Lieutenant Deane's visit remains unexplained."

Now, in the first place, I do not see much "coincidence" in the fact—no unusual one surely at an Indian station—that the Deanes had been making an evening call upon their friends and neighbours the Barters;—and I conceive that all that this visit had to do with the vision was that in reconducting his friends General Barter happened to find himself at the propitious place and at a propitious hour for the apparition to become visible. But, apart from this, consider what Mr. Podmore's view involves. Lieutenant Deane, as he walks home with his wife, forms so intense a mental picture of a deceased acquaintance to whom he certainly was not much attached;—he realises so vividly how Lieutenant B. would look if he were riding down the hill intoxicated after a "wet evening" at mess;—that his mental picture externalises itself in sight and sound for General Barter and General Barter's dogs. Now it is not logically inconceivable that telepathy might act in this way,—on the man at any rate, if not on the dogs. I am willing to admit that a picture strongly occupying A's mind might externalise itself to B as a phantasmal image in A's vicinity. But I repeat that it is an extraordinary thing that this power of transference of mental pictures should operate simply and solely in transferring mental pictures of dead persons, or (as in the case of the house at X. just quoted) in transferring mental pictures symbolising horrors experienced by the mental-picturer at the recollection of the imagined sight of dead persons. If General Barter had been in the habit—which he was not—of thus externalising pictures out of his friends' minds; if Lieutenant Deane had been in the habit—which he was not—of pondering with intense anguish on his dissipated comrade's fate,—

there might have been some plausibility in Mr. Podmore's view. But, as the case stands, we have a right to ask why the ordinary interests, the ordinary excitements of our neighbours,—their money-affairs, their love-affairs, and the like,—are not perpetually obtruding themselves upon us in phantasmal guise. Until they do so, it is hardly plausible to assume a transference of our neighbours' thoughts or memories as the explanation of this one special class of phenomena which point *prima facie* to the influence of the dead.

It was objected to us when we published our first evidence for thought-transference that such a possibility was contrary to the universal experience of mankind ;—that human beings were in actual fact constantly anxious to read each others' minds, and constantly unable to do so. To this we replied that the kind and amount of thought-transference to which our experiments pointed was not such as to be of importance in actual practice, or to obtrude itself upon the notice of anyone who was not carefully seeking it. Such has continued to be the character of our experiments ;—decisive (as we must hold) as to the reality of the power in question, but indicating also that that power is rare, fleeting, and inconspicuous. In the present state of our telepathic evidence we must avoid postulating sudden irregular extensions of this little-known power,—just in order—like the Ptolemaics—“ to save appearances,”—to cover somehow all the observed phenomena without recasting our much-strained theory. “Cycle and epicycle, orb in orb” ;—complex and elaborate indeed must be the reasoning which would explain by the action of the living the apparitions of the dead.

I recognise, however, that while dealing thus severally with Mr. Podmore's hypotheses I have not yet fully met the objections which he or others have urged against my own. Especially there remains an objection which, though capable of being turned against Mr. Podmore's view as well as against mine, becomes, no doubt, the more telling as more and more significance is attributed to narratives of haunting and the like. I refer to the large admixture of fragmentary, meaningless hallucinations of sight and sound,—mere vague noises, momentary lights, &c., which do not readily suggest intelligent agency. Mr. Podmore freely classes these hallucinations as purely subjective, and seems to suggest that telepathic hallucinations, due to other living minds, may be readily engrafted upon, or may readily engender, these merely delusive manifestations. I do not myself see much evidence for such conjunction of false phantasms with true ; but I admit that something more than this demurrer is needed from me ; that I ought to try to show in what way these inchoate, scrappy hallucinations are explicable on my own scheme. I do so with some reluctance ; for in passing from Mr. Podmore's view to my own I feel that I reject the *improbable* only to embark upon the *unprovable* and that my critics will hardly be at

the pains to separate what I regard as evidence from what I admit to be conjecture.

I have already urged that if once the possibility of a direct transference of ideas and impressions from mind to mind be established,—a transference independent of sensory organs, and not arrested by crowded cities or by breadth of sea,—then we must regard this far-acting power, this far-perceiving sensibility, as indicating the existence of a scheme of laws, a system of forces, of which our sciences of matter are as powerless to take account as our balances are to weigh the cosmical ether. Yet, like the existence and properties of that ether, these spiritual forces may conceivably be comprehended by inference,—detected in their inconspicuous interfusion with causes better understood. For the present, assuredly, our inferences, our conceptions, must be of the vaguest, most provisional character.

But there is one assumption which we in this century can no more avoid making than the savage could avoid ascribing the movements of nature to the action of spirits bent on his weal or woe. Where his conceptions were inevitably self-centred, ours,—be they true or false, wise or unwise,—are inevitably naturalistic, cosmical, evolutionary. And thus if there be any impingement whatsoever of a spiritual world (I use this term as readily, though vaguely, intelligible) on our mundane sphere, we are forced to imagine that impingement or interaction to be of such a kind as would be recognised by higher intelligences as subject to laws not primarily framed for subservience to human needs, or recognition by human intelligences. It must be something utterly different from the specially-authorized interferences which the mass of mankind continue to imagine in this one realm, although science has expelled them from every other. And it follows that since we have some evidence that such impingement exists, it is not fantastic but reasonable to consider, in a broad analogical manner, in what ways its manifestation might best accord with our notions of nature.

So far as we can judge from the behaviour of other laws or forces, which, while entirely removed from our direct cognisance, are yet inferred to produce occasional conspicuous physical effects, we shall be led to suppose that the vast majority of the effects produced by the unseen world upon our own are not definitely recognised by our intelligence. We are likely to note only a few emergent instances,—phenomena specially directed towards us, or specially incapable of being referred to ordinary laws. "Specially directed towards us," I say;—for we may conjecture that the law of intercommunication between the seen and the unseen may, like other laws of nature, be sometimes utilised by intelligences familiar with its bearings. "Specially incapable of being referred to ordinary causes," I say;—

for we cannot tell *à priori* after what fashion such influences may be perceived. Our ordinary apprehensions are not of the facts in nature theoretically most important, but of the facts in nature most important for the preservation of our own bodily organisms. We perceive low degrees of light because even a low light helped our ancestors to search for food; we do not perceive low degrees of electricity, because to those ancestors weak electricity was wholly unimportant. But the human organism has many capacities which are rarely manifested; and in every direction some few persons are found who perceive phenomena unimportant to man's life and unobserved by the multitude. The perception of certain psychical influences may be like the hearing of very shrill notes, or the perception of the presence of a hidden cat in the room,—an innate capacity which from its practical uselessness has never yet been fostered by the race, and which consequently reaches its higher grades only in a few chance individuals.

Or, again, these supposed psychical influences may present themselves as perceptions too feeble to allow us to recognise their supernatural character. Few phenomena are theoretically more important, or practically more continuous, than the fall of meteoric dust on the earth. Yet this dust has descended unobserved upon the heads of all men in all ages, and has only been recognised when the falling body attained a quite unusual size and weight.

The great majority of psychical influences may, on this analogy, be quite below the level at which they could attract our attention. They will disturb human life as little as the fall of cosmical dust disturbs weighing operations conducted in the open air. Then when they attain to a somewhat greater magnitude, they will be conspicuous but not recognisable. They will be vague, inchoate sounds or sights to which it will be hard to assign a distinct origin.

On the old view, that which was to be looked for (if anything was to be looked for) from the unseen world was an occasional definite apparition, induced by grave causes, and standing wholly apart from other phenomena. In my view, on the other hand, we must look for a miscellaneous interfusion among terrene phenomena of phenomena generated by extra-terrene causes.

This conclusion (from which I can see no logical escape) looks perilously like a return to the animistic superstitions of the savage,—or at least to the mediæval ascription of any specially puzzling circumstance to the agency of the devil. The reader will feel himself in danger of being drawn into the worst possible intellectual company,—into that credulous band who argue that because an incident might conceivably be supernatural, therefore it *is* supernatural,—and who resent any effort to refer their marvels to the action of ordinary laws. I must therefore at once

insist that my object is a quite different one. I am not going to rest any evidential claim whatever upon any phenomenon which might be due to ordinary physical causes, or to mere subjective hallucination. The cases to which we appeal as evidence must be not vague and inchoate but distinct and coincidental. All that I claim is that these vague phenomena, surrounding the distinct phenomena, should count as neutral ground ; —that they should not be used, as Mr. Podmore has used them, to *discredit* those distincter phenomena of which they form, in my view, an integral, though not an evidentially-valuable, part.

This, I repeat, is the full extent of the evidential, the controversial, use which ought to be made of these obscure phenomena. From a speculative point of view, however, there is more to be said. When we are no longer trying to prove that veridical phantasms do occur, but are assuming the fact of their occurrence and trying to explain their genesis and development,—then indeed these inchoate, rudimentary phenomena of sight and sound will acquire a *theoretical* importance which as *evidence* they cannot claim to possess.

Just as, in trying to trace the causes, say, of a paralytic seizure, we feel it needful to note all smaller symptoms which precede, accompany, or follow the principal shock, so also in tracking the genesis of a veridical hallucination we are bound to note all such minor hallucinatory percepts as have grouped themselves about the central phantasm. These subsidiary hallucinations cannot be meaningless, cannot be arbitrary ; they must in some way indicate the mode in which the unknown energy is operating to produce the main result.

A complete record should, I think, be made in the first place of the phenomena which do accompany veridical hallucinations, and in the second place of phenomena which are frequent in the hallucinations of the insane, or in the plainly subjective hallucinations of sane persons, but which are not observed to accompany hallucinations of a veridical type. Much of this task has already been performed by Mr. Gurney¹ ; and I will illustrate the value of these comparisons by referring to some cases where he has shown the various forms of connection of luminous appearances with veridical apparitions. Sometimes we have the phantasmal figure seen as though illuminated on a dark background. Sometimes it appears as in a disc or oval of light. Sometimes its contour is indistinct, and it resembles a luminous cloud, either for the first moments of its appearance or throughout all its stay. Sometimes there is no figure at all, but a phantasmal “ball of light,” or a brilliant diffused glow, which seems a sufficiently unique experience, and

¹ *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., chap. xi. : “Transient Hallucinations of the Sane,” and heading “Luminosity” in Index.

coincides sufficiently closely with a death, to have some claim to rank as a veridical phantasm. Now from all this I argue that the phantasmogenetic agency at work—whatever that may be—may be able to produce effects of light more easily than definite figures. I shall think it antecedently probable, therefore, that there will be many veridical hallucinations which will not get beyond this stage;—which will produce impressions of light and nothing more, yet which will be in reality of just the same type as those which rise into distinctness and recognition. When, therefore, in our accounts of “haunting” phenomena I read of brilliant phantasmal lights, apparently meaningless, I do not set them down as necessarily indicating a tendency on the percipients’ part to merely subjective hallucination. I claim that they must rank as ambiguous phenomena,—telling decisively neither for nor against some agency external to the percipient. And if they are witnessed independently by several persons, I say that they may then afford strong presumption that there *is* some agency external to the percipients, but unable to impress itself upon their minds in any more developed or personalised form.

A similar argument will hold good in the case of the *vague hallucinatory noises* which frequently accompany definite veridical phantasms, and frequently also occur apart from any definite phantasm in houses reputed haunted. As regards these inarticulate noises, there is of course always a possibility that they are real objective sounds, due to undiscovered physical causes. When a sound is sudden and never repeated it may often be impossible to explain it; but I think that when any sound, however vague or obscure, is frequently repeated, its physical cause, if physical cause it has, ought to be detected by careful investigation. Here, as in so many other parts of our inquiry, nothing is needed except just that careful and exact attention which has never yet been bestowed.

I might pursue this discussion of inchoate manifestations much further, and might suggest other phenomena, besides lights and noises, which may by analogy have some supernormal origin, but which must inevitably remain unrecognised. But for brevity’s sake I will go on to another cause of unrecognisability on which as yet I have but very briefly dwelt. I allude to the large part which *local attraction* seems to play in the generation of post-mortem phantasms. In *Phantasms of the Living* there were cases which suggested that during life, or at the hour of death, it was sometimes a local rather than a personal cause which induced or determined the apparition of the dying man. And in post-mortem cases—as our evidence has shown—this feature is still more prominent. To me it seems that it may well be only as an exceptional thing that any post-mortem phantom is recognised by any survivor. If once it is admitted that phantasms may be in some way

conditioned or attracted by that form of assemblage of influences which we term *locality*, it is plain that we transitory tenants of the earth's surface can have no claim to appropriate all the memories which may act upon the departed. If apparitions be the dreams of the dead, they will dream of affairs of their own in which we have no share. And if (as both Mr. Podmore and I hold) these phantoms are to be regarded as the reflections of some external mind, then I maintain—in opposition to him—that they do at least *primâ facie* resemble dreams of the dead rather than dreams of the living.

Dreams of the dead, I suppose, equally well with dreams of the living, may include figures which are not the figures of the dreamers themselves. Such, possibly, may be the explanation of the cases where several distinct figures are observed in the same house. As in certain cases in *Phantasms of the Living*, the subsidiary figures may possibly take their rise in the shaping imagination of the principal agent. But, apart from this, it seems to me that if we grant to locality any influence at all, we cannot predict in what way that influence may show itself. We need, I think, much fuller histories of what has happened in houses now “haunted” than we yet possess, before we can discuss the question of these multiple appearances with much hope of result. In one case—which we are not at liberty to cite in detail—at least six figures seen in the same house by persons not cognisant of its history have been plausibly identified with actual personages in the past. In this case the materials for recognition—both phantasmal and historical—happen to be unusually full. But in most houses—in such houses, for instance, as that at Prestbury, where various figures were seen—the memory of former tenants quickly fades, and no means are left by which the *revenant* can prove his identity.

The present paper has thus far been mainly concerned with *visual* manifestations of the dead, since these form the most convenient group for comparison with those phantasms of the living, from which I have tried to distinguish what I regard as real post-mortem apparitions. But my case for post-mortem manifestations does not rest upon apparitions alone.

It appears to me that there is an important parallelism running through each class of our experiments in automatism and each class of our spontaneous phenomena. Roughly speaking, we may say that our experiment and observation comprise five different stages of phenomena; viz., (I.) hypnotic suggestion; (II.) telepathic experiments; (III.) spontaneous telepathy during life; (IV.) phantasms at death; (V.) phantasms after death. And we find, I think, that the same types of communication meet us at each stage; so that this recurrent similarity of types raises a presumption that the underlying mechanism of manifestation at each stage may be in some way similar.

Again using a mere rough form of division, we shall find three main forms of manifestation at each stage; (1) hallucinations of the senses; (2) emotional and motor impulses; (3) definite intellectual messages.

I. And first let us start from a class of experiments into which telepathy does not enter, but which exhibit in its simplest form the mechanism of the automatic transfer of messages from one stratum to another of the same personality. I speak, of course, of post-hypnotic suggestions. Here the agent is a living man, acting in an ordinary way, by direct speech. The unusual feature lies in the condition of the percipient, who is hypnotised at the time, and is thus undergoing a kind of dislocation of personality, or temporary upheaval of an habitually subjacent stratum of the self. This hypnotic personality, being for the time at the surface, receives the agent's verbal suggestion, of which the percipient's waking self is unaware. Then afterwards, when the waking self has resumed its usual upper position, the hypnotic self carries out at the stated time the given suggestion,—an act whose origin the upper stratum of consciousness does not know, but which is in effect a message communicated to the upper stratum from the now submerged or sub-conscious stratum on which the suggestion was originally impressed.

And this message may take any one of the three leading forms mentioned above;—say a hallucinatory image of the hypnotiser or of some other person; or an impulse to perform some action; or a definite word or sentence to be written automatically by the waking self, which thus learns what order has been laid upon the hypnotic self while the waking consciousness was in abeyance.

II. Now turn to our experiments in thought-transference. Here again the agent is a living man; but he is no longer operating by ordinary means,—by spoken words or visible gestures. He is operating on the percipient's subconscious self by means of a telepathic impulse, which he desires, indeed, to project from himself, and which the percipient may desire to receive, but of whose *modus operandi* the ordinary waking selves of agent and percipient alike are entirely unaware.

Here again we may divide the messages sent into the same three main classes. First come the hallucinatory figures—always or almost always of himself—which the agent causes the percipient to see. Secondly come impulses to act, telepathically impressed; as when (in Madame B.'s case) the hypnotiser desires his subject to come to him at an hour not previously notified. And thirdly, we have a parallel to the post-hypnotic writing of definite words or figures in our own experiments on the direct telepathic transmission of words, figures, cards, &c., from the agent, using no normal means of communication, to the percipient, either in the hypnotised or in the waking state.

The parallel between the telepathic messages and the post-hypnotic

messages will thus be pretty complete if we regard the phantasmal figures of Mr. S. H. B., Baron Schrenck, &c. (so often referred to),¹ as really parallel to the phantasmal figures of Professor Beaunis, &c., which hypnotic subjects are made to see. I admit, however, that I do not regard these two classes of phantasmal figures as really parallel, for two main reasons. In the first place the *telepathic* phantasm (Mr. S. H. B.) is sometimes perceptible to more than one person, while the hypnotically suggested phantasm (as thus far known) is only perceptible to the person to whom the suggestion has been made. And in the second place, the agent who projects the telepathic phantasm (Rev. C. Godfrey, Mr. Cleave), is sometimes himself more or less conscious of being present with the percipient; whereas the hypnotiser who has ordered that a semblance of himself shall appear to his subject at a given date remains of course himself quite unaffected by the hallucinatory figure of himself which his subject's hypnotic self generates at the appointed hour.

I conceive, in short, that in telepathic cases there is a transmission from agent to percipient which differs profoundly in kind, and not only in degree, from any transmission of idea or impulse in which the agent employs normal means of suggestion, by voice or gesture.

III. We come next to the spontaneous phantasms occurring during life. Here we find the same three broad classes of messages;—with this difference, that the actual apparitions, which in our telepathic experimentation are thus far unfortunately rare, become now the most important class. I need not recall the instances given in *Phantasms of the Living*, &c., where an agent undergoing some sudden crisis seems in some way to generate an apparition of himself seen by a distant percipient. Important also in this connection are those apparitions of the *double*, where some one agent (Mrs. Stone, Mrs. Beaumont, &c.) is seen repeatedly in phantasmal form by different percipients at times when that agent is undergoing no special crisis.

Again, among our telepathic impressions generated (spontaneously, not experimentally) by living agents, we have cases, which I need not here recapitulate, of pervading sensations of distress; or impulses to return home (Skirving, &c.), which are parallel to the hypnotised subject's impulse to approach his distant hypnotiser, at a moment when that hypnotiser is willing him to do so.

And thirdly, among these telepathic communications from the living to the living, we have definite sentences automatically written, communicating facts which the distant person knows, but is not consciously endeavouring to transmit. A typical case of this kind (Mrs. Kirby's)

¹ *Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., pp. lxxxi-iv., 100-110; Vol. II., pp. 671-6. *Journal*, Vol. II., p. 307.

is given in *Journal*, Vol. III., p. 298; and there are others which must be cited in a future paper.

IV. Passing on to phantasms which cluster about the moment of death, we find our three main classes of cases still meeting us. Our readers are familiar with the *visual* cases, where there is an actual apparition of the dying man, seen by one or more persons; and also with the *emotional and motor* cases, where the impression, although powerful, is not definitely sensory in character. And various cases also have been published where the message has consisted of definite words, not always externalised as an auditory hallucination, but sometimes automatically *uttered* by the percipient himself or automatically *written* by the percipient, as in the case communicated by Dr. Liébeault (*Phantasms of the Living*, Vol. I., p. 293), where a girl writes the message announcing her friend's death at the time when that friend is in fact dying in a distant city.

V. And now I maintain that in these post-mortem cases also we find the same general classes persisting, and in somewhat the same proportion. Most conspicuous are the actual *apparitions*, with which, indeed, the preceding pages have mainly dealt. It is very rare to find an apparition which seems to impart any verbal message; but I give as Case I. in an Appendix a case of this kind. As a rule, however, the apparition is of the apparently automatic, purposeless character, already so fully described. We have also the *emotional and motor* class of post-mortem cases (as Moir's); and these may, perhaps, be more numerous in proportion than our collection would indicate; for it is obvious that impressions which are so much less definite than a visual hallucination (although they may be even more impressive to the percipient himself) can rarely be used as evidence of communication with the departed.

But now I wish to point out that, besides these two classes of post-mortem manifestations, we have our *third* class also still persisting;—we have definite verbal messages which at least purport, and sometimes, I think, with strong probability, to come from the departed.

Personally, indeed, I regard this form of evidence to *post-mortem* communications as the most cogent of all. If I have not hitherto touched upon it in this series of papers, this has not been from any indifference to it, but rather from a sense of its importance, and of the care with which it should be approached. I have endeavoured to lead up to it by another series of discussions on automatic writing and other forms of automatism, which may help to perform the preliminary task of showing to what sources *other* than communication from the departed we are bound to refer the enormous majority of genuinely automatic messages, however obtained. For in no part of our whole field of inquiry have error and delusion been more conspicuous than

in this. The ascription of the paltriest automatic messages to the loftiest names—human or divine; the awe-struck retailing of the halting verses of a “Shakespeare,” or the washy platitudes of a “St. John,”—all this has been equally repugnant to science, to religion, and to plain common-sense. And short of extravagance like this, in the case of the great majority of automatic messages, their claim to proceed from the departed has no valid foundation, since all the actual facts contained in them have been known to the writer, although they may be presented or discussed in a manner which the writer does not anticipate, and which may seem characteristic of a departed person.

But a certain number of cases remain where the message given contains verifiable facts of which neither the writer, nor any one else present at the time, was—so far as can be discovered—previously aware. It then becomes our business to consider from what mind these messages can have been originated.

Some cases of this kind were cited and discussed in the Society for Psychical Research *Journal* for February, 1888 (Vol. III., p. 214, *sqq.*). Others may be found in “M.A. (Oxon’s)” *Spirit Identity*, now out of print. And four are given in an Appendix to this paper: Cases II., III., IV., V. All these were sent to me by our Corresponding Member, the Hon. A. Aksakoff, and three of them (II., III., IV.) have appeared in his new work, *Animismus und Spiritismus*. Case II., however, is here given with important additional matter sent to me by M. Aksakoff, and Case V. now appears, I believe, for the first time.

In considering such messages we must remember that there is a possible way of explaining almost any message without postulating the continuance of personal life after bodily death. It is conceivable that thought-transference and clairvoyance may be pushed to the point of a sort of terrene omniscience; so that to a man’s unconscious self some phantasmal picture should be open of all that men are doing or have done,—things good and evil photographed imperishably in some inexorable imprint of the past. In such a case, the apparent personality of one departed might be only some kind of persisting synthesis of the psychical impressions which his transitory existence had left upon the sum of things.

All this might be; but before such a hypothesis as this could come within the range of possible discussion by men of science there must have been a change of mental attitude so fundamental that no argument at present adducible either way could tell for much in the scale. For the present our business must be to collect the truth-telling messages, without pretending to any absolute certainty as to their source. But those who wish to prove continued personal identity must keep two needs in view;—first the need of definite facts, given in the messages, which were known to the departed and are not known to the

automatist; and secondly, the need of detailed and characteristic utterances; a moral means of identification corresponding, say, not to the meagre *signalement* by which a man is described on his passport, but to the individual complex of minute markings left by the impression of a prisoner's thumb.

When I consider how slight, how careless, how occasional, all experiment of this kind has as yet been—and yet what striking fragments of evidence have issued from these scattered attempts,—I cannot but hope that the systematic study of human automatism, human personality, may lead to the gradual discernment of personalities other than the automatist's, operating unspent in the penumbra of his unconscious self.

I will not push my arguments further. I do not pretend to accredit them with a cogency which they do not possess. I shall have accomplished all that seems at present possible if I leave my reader feeling that my suggestions, although obviously unprovable, are not obviously improbable; nay, that, were they once admitted, the phenomena, as thus far known to us, would fall easily and naturally into place. It must be for further evidence to decide a controversy which, however anciently debated, is barely yet becoming ripe for scientific discussion.

But before closing this paper I must refer to two objections of a moral kind with which my former paper has been met. It has been urged on the one hand that these apparitions form so sorry, so distasteful a spectacle that they serve to repel men from the study of psychical phenomena which seem to lead up to such a degradation or parody of the hope of eternal life. And on the other hand I have been rebuked—and here Mr. Podmore has joined in the warning—for attracting premature adherence to my theories by holding out an unwarranted expectation of the immortality which man's heart desires. These two objections, as will be seen, are self-contradictory; yet I cannot leave the one to answer the other, nor maintain that either of them is void of force. At different moments, and in different moods, I have felt both of them myself. And I think that, diverse as the charges seem, the reply that best meets the one best meets the other also,—and consists in something of explanation of the frame of mind in which, as I conceive, we should enter upon inquiries in which issues so vast as these are involved.

And first let me say that my own belief as to the attractive effect on men's minds of such prospect of survival of death as this evidence implies has undergone an important alteration. In the Introduction to *Phantasms of the Living* I insisted on the supposed danger which Mr. Podmore still fears—the danger of “taking advantage of men's hopes or fears,” of “gilding our solid arguments with the radiance of

an unproved surmise." It was natural to imagine that men would eagerly welcome any new light, however glimmering, on a prospect which they profess to regard as essential both to virtue and to happiness. But the wider experience, the first-hand knowledge of the real feelings of men, which this long investigation has necessarily brought with it, have greatly modified that original impression. I believe now that there is no danger lest arguments such as mine should be too eagerly accepted as falling in with my readers' wishes. I suspect, on the other hand, that if they are to take real hold of men's minds they will need to be driven home with far more of appeal and insistence than I can attempt to give them. For this is *not* what men desire—this inferential, incomplete demonstration that in some fashion or other there is something which survives the tomb. What men want is the assurance of personal happiness after death; or if they cannot feel this, they wish at least for such half-belief as may enable them to dismiss such speculations altogether. They do not desire to know more about death, but to avoid thinking of what they know already. A man will tell you in the same breath that he trusts to enter upon eternal happiness when he dies, but that he would rather not discuss such depressing subjects. Some weak spirits even invent for themselves a kind of new superstition—one knows not whether further removed from the temper of Plato or of Augustine—according to which there is something presumptuous or irreverent in allowing the mind to dwell or speculate upon the serious destiny and chief concerns of man. All this, I do not doubt, the ministers of religion well know. They know that besides those nobly trustful souls to whom all good seems natural and all high hopes assured, their flocks contain a large percentage of timorous spirits who ask only to be lulled into security and to be saved at any cost from fear. Such men certainly are not disposed to look too closely at the evidence for what they desire. It is not they who are influenced by any words of ours, or who are at the pains to follow the groping steps with which in these *Proceedings* we clamber to a dubious glimpse of that Promised Land which they have already mapped out to their satisfaction.

Our work, so far as I can tell, is mainly followed by readers of a very different type. There is an attitude of mind, becoming yearly commoner among educated men, which, although neither cynical nor pessimistic, yet regards the present without enthusiasm and the future without eagerness. There is an acquiescence in the life of earth, and a deep distrust of the unknown. With the advance of knowledge, with the quickening of imagination, a feeling almost new in the world has arisen,—a kind of shrinking from the magnitude of Fate. The words Infinity, Eternity, are no longer mere theological counters; they have taken on an awful significance from our growing realisation of astro-

nomical periods, of galactic spaces—"the gleam of a million million of suns." A soul from which the Christian confidence is withdrawn may well feel that it is going forth into the void,—not as a child to his Father's home,—but rather as a spark of sentiency involved amid enormous forces, and capable of unimagined pain. And thus it comes that men tacitly desire to make a compromise with Fate, to be satisfied with this mixed and fleeting life, and to ignore the possibilities of the Unknown.

Such, as I observe, is the prevailing temper which our evidence has to meet. That evidence does not attract, it rather irritates many of the best minds of our age. They are unwilling to reopen the great problem at all, and are naturally the more unwilling inasmuch as the new evidence itself seems so perplexing and grotesque. Perplexing and grotesque indeed! I answer; but it *is* evidence; and if any evidence there be, then neither can science continue to ignore the problem nor philosophy to assume the solution. What is needed is simply a dispassionate intellectual curiosity bent upon unravelling the indications of man's survival after earthly manhood with the same candid diligence which has so lately unravelled the indications of man's descent from the brute. We need not fear that men will be persuaded too easily into such a temper as this.

Rather is it to be apprehended,—and here I have in view a different group of objectors,—that even those men who care deeply about man's future—who welcome any rebuilding of philosophical fabrics which may encourage hope—will stand aloof from our scattered unintelligible facts, and will prefer their own "cloud-capp'd towers" to any rough foundation-stones which we can hope to lay.

Yet would there not be something cowardly in a refusal to accept the only definite facts attainable because they are not the kind of facts which we should have best liked to know? And would there not be something childish in the notion that the unseen world must consist of vague and ghastly objects—

Mockeries and masks of motion and mute breath,
Leavings of life, the superflux of death,—

simply because the apparitions which form at present our clearest indication of that world's existence are by their very nature fugitive and strange? As well might Columbus have turned back when the first drift-wood floated out to him from America, on the ground that it was useless to discover a continent consisting only of dead logs.

All such reluctances and hesitations as these will disappear as men learn, in a larger sense than ever before, "to see life steadily and see it whole,"—to maintain in this unfamiliar air the same dispassionate

curiosity and steady persistence of research by which alone objective truth in any direction has ever been attained by man. There is no fear lest the Cosmos itself be meaningless or incoherent; the question for us is whether we men are ever to have a chance of entering into its meaning, recognising its coherence; or are doomed to remain on the outside of all deep significance, and but to gaze for a moment on the enormous pageant as it sweeps by us with an unknown purport in obedience to an incognisable Power.

APPENDIX.

CASE I. [G. 192.]

[Communicated by Fräulein Schneller, sister-in-law of the percipient, and known to F. W. H. M., January, 1890.]

About a year ago there died in a neighbouring village a brewer, called Wünscher, with whom I stood in friendly relations. His death ensued after a short illness, and as I seldom had an opportunity of visiting him, I knew nothing of his illness nor of his death. On the day of his death I went to bed at nine o'clock, tired with the labours which my calling as a farmer demands of me. Here I must observe that my diet is of a frugal kind; beer and wine are rare things in my house, and water, as usual, had been my drink that night. Being of a very healthy constitution I fell asleep as soon as I lay down. In my dream I heard the deceased call out with a loud voice, "Boy, make haste and give me my boots." This awoke me, and I noticed that, for the sake of our child, my wife had left the light burning. I pondered with pleasure over my dream, thinking in my mind how Wünscher, who was a good-natured, humorous man, would laugh when I told him of this dream. Still thinking on it I hear Wünscher's voice scolding outside, just under my window. I sit up in my bed at once and listen, but cannot understand his words. What can the brewer want? I thought, and I know for certain that I was much vexed with him, that he should make a disturbance in the night, as I felt convinced that his affairs might surely have waited till the morrow. Suddenly he comes into the room from behind the linen press, steps with long strides past the bed of my wife and the child's bed; wildly gesticulating with his arms all the time, as his habit was, he called out, "What do you say to this, Herr Oberamtmann? This afternoon at five o'clock I have died." Startled by this information, I exclaim, "Oh, that is not true!" He replied: "Truly, as I tell you; and, what do you think? They want to bury me already on Tuesday afternoon at two o'clock," accentuating his assertions all the while by his gesticulations. During this long speech of my visitor, I examined myself as to whether I was really awake and not dreaming.

I asked myself: Is this a hallucination? Is my mind in full possession of its faculties? Yes, there is the light, there the jug, this is the mirror and this the brewer;—and I came to the conclusion: I am awake. Then the thought occurred to me, What will my wife think if she awakes and sees

the brewer in our bedroom? In this fear of her waking up I turn round to my wife and to my great relief I see from her face, which is turned towards me, that she is still asleep; but she looks very pale. I say to the brewer. "Herr Wünscher, we will speak softly, so that my wife may not wake up, it would be very disagreeable to her to find you here." To which Wünscher answered in a lower and calmer tone. "Don't be afraid, I will do no harm to your wife." Things do happen indeed for which we find no explanation—I thought to myself, and said to Wünscher: "If this be true, that you have died, I am sincerely sorry for it; I will look after your children." Wünscher stepped towards me, stretched out his arms and moved his lips as though he would embrace me, therefore I said in a threatening tone, and looking steadfastly at him with frowning brow: "Don't come so near, it is disagreeable to me," and lifted my right arm to ward him off, but before my arm reached him the apparition had vanished. My first look was to my wife to see if she were still asleep. She was. I got up and looked at my watch, it was seven minutes past twelve. My wife woke up and asked me: "To whom did you speak so loud just now?" "Have you understood anything?" I said. "No," she answered and went to sleep again.

I impart this experience to the Society for Psychical Research, in the belief that it may serve as a new proof for the real existence of telepathy. I must further remark, that the brewer *had* died that afternoon at five o'clock and was buried on the following Tuesday at two.—With great respect,

KARL DIGNOWITY,
Landed Proprietor.

Dober and Pause,
Schlesien,
December 12th, 1889.

The usual time for burial in Germany, adds Fraülein Schneller, is three days after death. This time may be prolonged, however, on application. There are no special *hours* fixed.

In conversation Fraülein S. described her brother-in-law as a man of strong practical sense and of extremely active habits.

We have received the "Sterbeurkunde" from the "Standesbeamte" Siegismund, Kreis Sagan, certifying that Karl Wünscher died Saturday, September 15th, 1888, at 4.30 p.m., and was buried Tuesday, September 18th, 1888, at 2 p.m.

Herr Dignowity writes again, January 18th, 1890:—

"Frau Wünscher told me that the time of the burial was settled in the death-room immediately after Wünscher's death, because relations at a distance had to be summoned by telegram. Wünscher had suffered from inflammation of the lungs, which ended in spasm of the heart. During his illness his thoughts had been much occupied with me, and he often wondered what I should say if I knew how ill he was."

Finally, Frau Dignowity (born Schneller) writes from Pause, January 18th, 1890:—

"I confirm that my husband told me on the morning of September 16th, 1888, that the brewer Wünscher had given him intimation of his death."

CASE II. [M. ant. 13.]

In *Proceedings*, Vol. V., p. 434, is given a case translated from *Psychische Studien*, February, 1889, pp. 67-69, which describes a communication made to Mdle. Emma Stramm concerning the death of a M. August Duvanel. M. Aksakof has kindly sent me additional matter of high interest bearing on this case, which I here translate from his letter dated May 9th, 1889 (new style). It will be well first to reprint the case as it stood in *Psychische Studien*, February, 1889, pp. 67-69.

On January 19th, 1887 (says M. Aksakof), I received a visit from the engineer Kaigorodoff, who resides in Wilna. He narrated to me the following circumstances. He had as governess for his children Mdle. Emma Stramm, a Swiss, from the town of Neufchâtel, who possessed the gift of automatic writing. At a séance held at nine o'clock on the evening of January 15th, at the house of Herr Kaigorodoff, at Wilna, the following communication was given in French in his presence. I have been shown the original, and quote this from a copy of it. The medium, who was in her normal state, asked :—

“Is Lydia here?” (This was a personality which had manifested itself at previous sittings.)

“No, Louis¹ is here, and wishes to impart a piece of news (*une nouvelle*) to his sister.”

“What is it?”

“A person of thy acquaintance passed away (*est partie*) about three o'clock to-day.”

“What am I to understand by this?”

“That is to say,—he is dead.”

“Who?”

“August Duvanel.”

“What was his illness?”

“The formation of a clot of blood (*d'un engorgement de sang*). Pray for the redemption of his soul.”

Two weeks later, Herr Kaigorodoff, who was again in Petersburg, showed me a letter from David Stramm, the father of the medium, dated from Neufchâtel, on January 18th, 1887 (new style); thus written three days after the death of Duvanel. This letter was received at Wilna on January 23rd. In it her father informs her of the event in the following words. I copy them literally from the original :—

“My much loved daughter. . . . I will now tell thee a great piece of news (*une grande nouvelle*). August Duvanel died on January 15th, about three o'clock in the afternoon. It was, so to speak, a sudden death, for he had only been ill a few hours. He was attacked by blood-clotting (*engorgement de sang*) when he was at the bank. He spoke very little, and everything that he said was for thee. . . . He commended himself to thy prayers. These were his last words.”

¹ The name of a deceased brother of the medium, who usually manifests at her séances. Louis died in 1869, aged 11 months. At the beginning of the séances, about the end of 1886, he was the first to communicate, announcing himself as his sister's “spirit protector.”—A.A.

The difference in time between Wilna and Switzerland is about an hour. It would thus be four o'clock in Wilna when Duvanel's death occurred, and five hours later this piece of news was communicated by automatic writing.

But who was Duvanel? And why should his death be "a great piece of news" for Mdlle. Emma Stramm? In reply to questions which I put to him in writing, Herr Kaigorodoff gave me the following explanation: "When Mdlle. Emma Stramm lived with her parents in Neufchâtel, this Herr Duvanel wanted to marry her. But he was met with a decided refusal on the part of the young lady. As her parents, on the other hand, were in favour of the marriage, and endeavoured to persuade her to consent to it, she resolved to leave her fatherland and take a situation as a governess. The last communication she had with Duvanel was some time before her departure, in the year 1881. She did not keep up any correspondence with him. She had seen Duvanel's family only two or three times in all. A year after her departure he left Neufchâtel, and remained in Canton Zürich until his death."

To this M. Aksakof adds, in a letter to F. W. H. M. (May 9th, 1889):—

"I have delayed answering your letter of April 1st, because on receiving it I wrote to Colonel Kaigorodoff and to Mdlle. Emma Stramm for further details, which seemed to me needful for the completion of our critical judgment on the Duvanel case. I have just received their letters, dated April 16th and April 18th.

I will begin answering your questions.

(1) This case was published in *Psychische Studien*, for February, 1889, but it had been written by me in February, 1888, which explains my saying that I had *lately* received it.

(2) I find in my book of memoranda a notice dated January 7th (19th) of M. Kaigorodoff's visit and his communication concerning the death of Duvanel.

(3) M. Kaigorodoff is a military engineer, living at present at Grodno, a seat of provincial Government in West Russia. In the autumn of 1886 M. Kaigorodoff endeavoured to hypnotise Mdlle. Emma, but soon she began to speak and write in mediumistic fashion. (M. Kaigorodoff was not wholly a novice in Spiritualism, having been present, some 10 years earlier, at a very elementary series of séances.) Automatic writing, however, seemed to fatigue the medium, and the method of trance-utterance was usually preferred. The medium saw and described the [deceased] persons in whose name she spoke. M. Kaigorodoff asked questions in Russian, and the medium answered in German or French. M. Kaigorodoff, who was a widower, naturally desired a personal and absolutely conclusive message from his wife. She (the influence speaking through E.S. as Madame Kaigorodoff) replied that she could give such a message only by impressing the medium during her ordinary sleep; and she effected her purpose by causing the medium to see, in a dream, a series of four scenes [tableaux]; which Mdlle. Emma described to M. Kaigorodoff and in which he recognised the perfect representation of an episode in his married life. These dream-communications form a special feature in the mediumship of Mdlle. Stramm; the same subject being sometimes thus treated for a week continuously.

[On this point M. Aksakof adds, February 15th, 1890: "M. Kaigorodoff

informs me of the following peculiarity of his wife's (he married Mdlle. Stramm as his second wife in 1889):—During her ordinary sleep, one can enter into conversation with her. She continues to sleep, answering questions, and describing the fantastic dreams which she sees. In her replies she generally uses the third person. On awaking, she remembers nothing. If during her sleep M. Kaigorodoff makes some passes over her face she immediately passes into magnetic (somnambolic) sleep; and the character of her conversation entirely changes. In her ordinary sleep 'spirits' never appear on the scene; in the secondary form of sleep, *always*. A few reverse passes, and the magnetic sleep gives place, with a sigh, to the ordinary sleep."]

(4) As to your question whether the communications have or have not included "many definite statements found to be untrue," [as is the case with so many similar series], M. Kaigorodoff cannot recollect any such statements. As an instance to the contrary, he reminded me of a prediction made March 2nd, 1887, of which he informed me in his letter of August 25th, 1887 (still in my hands). It was announced to Mdlle. E. that her sister (who is in Switzerland) would be delivered in five months of a boy, who would not live more than three or four years. Mdlle. Emma did not even know at the time that her sister was expecting a baby. In fact the sister was delivered of a boy at the end of July, 1887.¹

I pass on to the case of Duvanel, which needs some details to complete it.

The first question which presents itself to the mind is as follows: "What proof have we that Mdlle. Emma had not received a telegram announcing Duvanel's death?" I asked this question of M. Kaigorodoff by letter; I give an abstract of his reply.

(1) The death of Duvanel took place (by Wilna time) at about 4.30 p.m. On that day, from 7 p.m. till the beginning of the séance, M. Kaigorodoff, as he positively remembers, was constantly with Mdlle. E.; and even supposing that the telegram had been despatched half an hour after A.D.'s death (!), nevertheless it would have been impossible for a telegram sent from Switzerland to have been received and delivered at Wilna in the short interval between 5 and 7 p.m. On that day, moreover, Mdlle. E. did not leave the house after 3 p.m.

(2) All Mdlle. E.'s correspondence was addressed, care of Colonel Kaigorodoff.

(3) The telegram could not have been received without the knowledge of the servants and the children. There would have been no reason for keeping it secret.

(4) The relations of Mdlle. E. are poor persons, and there was not sufficient motive for the immediate communication of this piece of news.

But might not a telegram have been sent by the friends or family of Duvanel? Considering that all relations between Duvanel and Mdlle. E. had been broken off in 1881, such a telegram would have had no reasonable object. Moreover, in my letter to Mdlle. E., I had begged her to tell me what was the exact place of D.'s death and whether those who lived with

¹ One prediction has since proved erroneous; viz.,—that Madame Kaigorodoff herself would have a boy;—whereas her child is a girl.

him could have known her address. To this she replied in her letter of April 16th, 1889. "D. died in a little hamlet of the Canton of Zürich, called, I think, Hirsché, but I am not sure, for my brother [from whom I inquired] had himself forgotten the name. D. lived alone, and had only one brother, who lived in another town." Impossible, therefore, that a telegram should have been despatched immediately from that quarter.

When M. Kaigorodoff came to see me the second time, in January, 1887, with the letter of Mdlle. E.'s father, I was struck with the identity of the expression, "un engorgement de sang," employed in the trance-message, which was in French, and also in the father's letter, which was likewise in French, to explain the cause of D.'s death. This identity of phrase appeared very strange, not to say suspicious. I drew M. Kaigorodoff's attention to it, and begged him to ask the medium about it, as soon as a séance gave the opportunity. This identity of expression suggested a curious action of telepathy.

This is what M. Kaigorodoff's letter, just received, says on the subject :—

"On the day after the séance of January 3rd (15th), 1887, Mdlle. E., not expecting to receive a letter from her father with the confirmation of the fact of D.'s death, wrote to her sister in Switzerland, stating that she had had a vision as though D. were dead, and asking whether this was really the case. The dream was an expedient used because Emma's relations had no knowledge of Spiritualism, still less of E.'s personal proceedings in that direction. The letter of Mdlle. E.'s sister arrived 10 days after her father's letter. The sister, not knowing that their father had already announced D.'s death, desired to hide the fact from her [for a reason presently to be shown] and answered that D. was not dead, but gone to America."

M. Kaigorodoff, after a six weeks' absence, returned to Wilna at the beginning of March, 1887. At the first séance held, early in March, he begged of Louis (the controlling spirit) to explain the contradiction between the letters of the father and the sister of Mdlle. E. touching the death of Duvanel. The medium was entranced, and spoke in the name of Louis. M. Kaigorodoff took notes, and this is word for word the answer which was given :—

"He is dead ; only his sister does not wish that she should know of his death, because it was not of a stoppage of blood (*engorgement*) as I had written." (The message of January 3rd (15th), 1887, had been given by automatic writing, in French.) "I could not tell the truth frankly (*directement*), for her health would have been affected by it."

"Where and how, then, did he die?"

"He died in the Canton of Zürich ; but he killed himself, and she must not know it. She must remain ignorant of this, for if she learns, even indirectly, of his self-inflicted death, her health may suffer. You must not speak to her of the matter, for she suspects the truth."

"How does it happen, then, that the identical expression, *stoppage of blood*, is found both in your message and in the father's letter?"

"It is I who inspired him with that expression."

As you perceive, the case becomes increasingly complicated and interesting. In point of fact, Mdlle. E., some days after the message of January 3rd (15th) did in fact see in a dream Duvanel covered with blood (*ensanglanté*).

The contradictory statements in the letters (of her father and sister) led her to suspect that the truth was being concealed from her, and that there had really been a suicide. It was only in the autumn of 1887, when Mdlle. E. made a journey to Switzerland to see her relations, that she learnt all the truth, confirming the second message.

The fears of Louis and of her relations as to the bad effect which the news of the suicide might have upon Mdlle. E. were in fact exaggerated. For Mdlle. E. had left Switzerland in 1881, and up till the message of January 3rd (15th), 1887, had received no news of Duvanel. Some time after Mdlle. E.'s departure Duvanel left Neuchâtel for Geneva, where he was employed at a bank;—which explains the phrase in the father's letter, saying that D. had died of a stoppage of blood "while he was at the bank." But of late he had lived in a little hamlet of the Canton of Zürich. All this Mdlle. Emma learnt on her visit to her relations.

After all these facts, however, the problem as to the possibility of a telepathic influence from the parents of Mdlle. E. is not yet decided. To clear up this point we must know the exact day when the father of Mdlle. E. learnt the death of Duvanel, and we must know the details he then heard. If Mdlle. E.'s relations had heard the news of D.'s suicide on the very day of his death; and if it had been decided in family discussion that they would conceal from her the manner of his death, and adopt the expression "stoppage of blood";—then one might still conjecture that there had been a telepathic transmission of thought.

But the father's letter was written January 18th, and, as Mdlle. E. says [in her letter of April 16th, 1889], it is probable that the meeting in the train [when the father heard of Duvanel's death from Duvanel's brother] took place on the 17th, and thus *after* the sitting of January 3rd (15th). In that case, if telepathy there were, it would be needful to seek the inspirer (the "*agent provocateur!*") in some factor outside the minds of Mdlle. E. or her relations.

But this probability is not enough; and the essential question as to the day when Mdlle. E.'s relations learnt the death of Duvanel is not yet determined. I will write again on this point to the *ci-devant* Mdlle. Stramm, who is now Madame Kaigorodoff; for the Colonel in his last letter to me announces his marriage with Mdlle. Emma Stramm. I will beg her to ask her father to fix as precisely as possible the day of his meeting with Duvanel's brother. The reply shall be sent to you at once.

Thus, then, we have in this case of Spiritualistic communication: (1) the news of a death at a distance; (2) the manner of death; (3) the place of death; all unknown to the medium."

On June 24th (July 6th) 1889, M. Aksakof again wrote to me as follows: "M. Kaigorodoff has had the kindness to send me in original the letter of Madame Kaigorodoff's sister. I enclose a copy. As you perceive, the father learnt the news of Duvanel's death on January 17th, two days, therefore, after the death itself, and two days after the news of the death was received at Wilna in Russia. The circumstance that this news was heard by M. Stramm in a merely accidental way, and only on the day of the funeral, proves that in fact all relations between Duvanel and the Stramm family had been suspended. The letter of Mdlle. Bertha is dated from Rochefort; that is

a small town, at 20 minutes' railway journey from Neufchâtel; and it is there, strictly speaking, and not at Neufchâtel, that the Stramm family reside.

Copy of part of Mdlle. Bertha Stramm's letter to her sister, Madame Kaigorodoff, dated Rochefort, June 16th, 1889.

"Duvanel died January 15th, and papa learnt the news on the 17th, for he met Duvanel's brother, who was setting out for the funeral. The brother was to leave for America a few days later. It is I who have recollected this, by searching my memory, for papa is old and feeble and does not now remember anything of the matter. I cannot tell you the name of the village where the death occurred."

The principal points in this case may be summed up as follows :—

Duvanel dies by his own hand in a Swiss village, where he lives alone, having no relations except a brother living at a distance, whom Mdlle. Stramm had never seen (as M. Kaigorodoff informs us in a letter of May, 1890).

Mdlle. Stramm's father does not hear of Duvanel's death till two days later.

Five hours after Duvanel's death an automatic message announcing it is written at Wilna in Russia, by Mdlle. Stramm, who had certainly received no news of the event.

From what mind are we to suppose that this information came?

Thought-transference from survivors seems here out of the question;—unless it be in the form suggested above, of a kind of impersonal thought-transference,—a leaking-out of any fact known to any living mind in such a way that any other mind may become aware of it.

Leaving aside this extreme view, we may next attempt to account for Mdlle. Stramm's message on the theory of *latency*. We may suppose that the telepathic message came from the dying man, but did not rise into consciousness until an opportunity was afforded by Mdlle. Stramm's sitting down to write automatically.

But to this interpretation there is an objection of a very curious kind. The message written by Mdlle. Stramm was not precisely accurate. Instead of ascribing Duvanel's death to suicide it ascribed it to a stoppage of blood, "un engorgement de sang."

And when M. Stramm, three days after the death, wrote to his daughter in Russia to tell her of it, he also used the same expression, "un engorgement de sang," thus disguising the actual truth in order to spare the feelings of his daughter, who had formerly refused to marry Duvanel, and who (as her father feared) might receive a painful shock if she learnt the tragic nature of his end. There was, therefore, a singular coincidence between the automatic and the normally-written message as to the death;—a coincidence which looks as though the same mind had been at work in each instance. But that mind cannot have been M. Stramm's, as he was not aware of Duvanel's death at the time when the first message was written.

And here we must consider the explanation of the coincidence given by the intelligence which controlled the automatic writing. That intelligence asserted itself to be a brother of Mdlle. Stramm's, who died some years before. And this "Louis" further asserted that he had himself influenced

M. Stramm to make use of the same euphemistic phrase, with the object of avoiding a shock to Mdle. Stramm ; for which purpose it was needful that the two messages should agree in ascribing the death to the same form of sudden illness.

Now if this be true, and the message did indeed come from the deceased "Louis," we have an indication of continued existence, and continued knowledge of earthly affairs, on the part of a person long dead.

But if we consider that the case, as presented to us, contains no proof of "Louis'" identity,—so that "Louis" may be merely one of those arbitrary names which the automatist's sub-conscious intelligence seems so prone to assume ; then we must suppose that Duvanel was actually operative on two occasions after death,—first inspiring in Mdle. Stramm the automatic message, and then modifying in M. Stramm the message which the father might otherwise have sent.

CASE III. [M. ant. 14.]

"PSYCHISCHE STUDIEN," *December, 1889* (pp. 572-577).

From one of a series of articles by the editor, the Hon. Alexander Aksakof.

The sub-title of the section from which the following is extracted being :—"The identity of the personality of the deceased confirmed by the imparting of facts known only to the deceased, or which could only have been communicated by him."

I now return to my subject, and conclude this section with a case which I have received at first hand. It belongs not to the category of *facts which are known only to the deceased*, but to the category of those which *could only be imparted by the deceased*, for it relates to a political secret concerning a living person, which was revealed by an intimate friend of that living person for the purpose of saving him. I shall set forth this case in all possible detail, because I consider it a most convincing one in support of the Spiritualistic hypothesis. I will even express myself still more strongly. I consider that it affords as absolute a proof of identity as it is possible for evidence of this kind to present.

My readers are already acquainted with my sister-in-law, Mrs. A. von Wiesler, from the part she took in the family séances held with me in the years 1880-1883, after the decease of my wife. She has an only daughter, Sophie, who at the time of those séances was completing her studies. She had taken no part, either at our séances or at any others, and she had not read anything about Spiritualism. Her mother also had not joined in any séances except our own. One evening in October, 1884, during the visit of a distant relative, the conversation turned upon Spiritualism, and in order to please him a trial with the table was arranged. The séance, however, gave no satisfactory result. It only showed that the two ladies were able to get something. On Tuesday evening, January 1st, 1885, Mrs. von Wiesler being alone with her daughter, in order to divert her mind from some matters which made her anxious, proposed to hold a little séance. An alphabet was written out on a sheet of paper, a saucer with a black line as pointer served as a planchette, and, behold, the name Andreas was indicated. This was quite natural, for Andreas was the name of Sophie's father, the deceased husband of Mrs. von Wiesler. The communication presented nothing re-

markable, but it was nevertheless resolved to continue the séances once a week, on every Tuesday. For three weeks the character of the communications remained unchanged. The name Andreas was continually repeated.

But on the fourth Tuesday—January 22nd—in place of the customary name, Andreas, the name “Schura” was spelt out to the great astonishment of both sitters. Then, by quick and precise movements of the pointer, these words were added :—

“It is given to thee to save Nikolaus.”

“What does this mean?” asked the astonished ladies.

“He is compromised as Michael was, and will like him go to ruin. A band of good-for-nothing fellows are leading him astray.”

“What can be done to counteract it?”

“Thou must go to the Technological Institute before 3 o'clock, let Nikolaus be called out, and make an appointment with him at his house.”

This being all addressed to the young lady, Sophie, she replied that it would be difficult for her to carry out these directions on account of the slight acquaintanceship which existed between her and Nikolaus's family.

“Absurd ideas of propriety!” was “Schura's” indignant reply.

“But in what way shall I be able to influence him?” asked Sophie.

“Thou wilt speak to him in my name.”

“Then your convictions no longer remain the same?”

“Revolted error!” was the reply.

I must now explain the meaning of this mysterious communication. “Schura” is the Russian pet name for Alexandrine. Nikolaus and Michael were her cousins. Michael, quite a young man, had unfortunately allowed himself to become entangled by the revolutionary ideas of our Anarchists or Socialists. He was arrested, tried, and condemned to imprisonment at a distance from St. Petersburg, where he lost his life in an attempt to escape. “Schura” loved him dearly, and fully sympathised with his political convictions, making no secret of it. After his death, which occurred in September, 1884, she was discouraged in her revolutionary aspirations, and ended her life by poison, at the age of 17, on the 15th of January, 1885, just one week before the séance above described. Nikolaus, Michael's brother, was then a student at the Technological Institute.

Mrs. von Wiesler and her daughter were aware of these circumstances, for they had long been acquainted with “Schura's” parents, and with those of her cousins, who belong to the best society of St. Petersburg. It will be obvious that I cannot publish the names of these families. I have also changed those of the young people. The acquaintanceship was, however, far from being intimate. They saw each other occasionally, but nothing more. Later I will give further details. We will now continue our narrative.

Naturally, neither Mrs. von Wiesler nor her daughter knew anything as to the views or secret conduct of Nikolaus. The communication was just as unexpected as it was important. It involved a great responsibility. Sophie's position was a very difficult one. The literal carrying out of “Schura's” demands was, for a young lady, simply impossible, merely from considerations of social propriety. What right could she have, on the ground of simple acquaintanceship, to interfere in family affairs of so delicate a character? Besides, it might not be true; or, quite simply and most probab

Nikolaus might deny it. What position would she then find herself in? Mrs. von Wiesler knew only too well, from the séances she had taken part in with me, how little dependence can be placed on Spiritualistic communications. She counselled her daughter, in the first place, to convince herself of "Schura's" identity. This advice was followed without any hesitation as one way out of the difficulty.

On the following Tuesday "Schura" manifested at once, and Sophie asked for a proof of her identity, to which "Schura" forthwith replied:—

"Invite Nikolaus, arrange a séance, and I will come."

It will be seen from this reply that "Schura," who during her life had learnt to despise the conventionalities of society, as is the custom among the Socialists, remained true to her character, and again demanded what was an impossibility. Nikolaus had never been in Mrs. von Wiesler's house. Sophie then asked for another proof of her identity, without Nikolaus being brought in at all, and requested that it might be a convincing one.

"I will appear to thee," was the reply.

"How?"

"Thou wilt see."

A few days later Sophie was returning home from a soirée; it was nearly 4 a.m. She was just retiring, and was at the door between her bedroom and the dining-room, there being no lights in the latter, when she saw on the wall of the dining-room, in sight of the door at which she stood, a luminous round spot, with, as it were, shoulders. This lasted for two or three seconds, and disappeared, ascending towards the ceiling. Sophie immediately assured herself that it was not the reflection of any light coming from the street.

At the séance on the following Tuesday, an explanation of this appearance being asked for, "Schura" replied:—

"It was the outline of a head with shoulders. I cannot appear more distinctly. I am still weak."

Many other details, which I have passed over, tended to convince Sophie of the reality of "Schura's" identity, yet she could not bring herself to carry out that which "Schura" desired her to do. She therefore proposed as a suitable compromise that she should acquaint Nikolaus's parents with what had occurred.

This proposal aroused "Schura's" strongest displeasure, expressed by violent movements of the saucer, and by the sentence:—

"That will lead to nothing";—after which disparaging epithets followed, impossible to repeat here, especially applicable to persons of weak and irresolute character, with whom the energetic and decisive "Schura" had no patience—epithets which are not found in dictionaries, but which were expressions used by "Schura" in her life-time, and characteristic of her. This was confirmed in the sequel.

Nevertheless Sophie continued to hesitate, and at each successive séance "Schura" insisted more and more imperatively that Sophie must act at once. This is very important to notice, as we shall see later. This want of resolution on the part of Sophie was ascribed by "Schura" to the influence of Mrs. von Wiesler. From the beginning "Schura" had seemed to bear a grudge against Mrs. von Wiesler. From the first séance she addressed Sophie only. She never permitted Mrs. von Wiesler to ask a

question. Whenever she attempted to do so, she met her with a—"Be silent—be silent!" Whereas in addressing Sophie she overwhelmed her with the tenderest expressions.

How great was the astonishment and consternation of the ladies, when at the séance on the 26th of February the first words were:—

"It is too late. Thou wilt repent it bitterly. The pangs of remorse will follow thee. Expect his arrest!"

These were "Schura's" last words. From this time she was silent. A séance was attempted on the following Tuesday, but there was no result. The séances of Mrs. von Wiesler and her daughter were from that time entirely given up.

While these séances were being held, Mrs. von Wiesler naturally kept me informed of what transpired, and consulted with me as to what was to be done in view of the extraordinary character of "Schura's" requests. Some time after they had ceased, Mrs. von Wiesler, to satisfy her own conscience and to comfort her daughter, resolved to communicate the whole episode to the parents of Nikolaus. They paid no attention to it. Nothing was elicited that any fault could be found with. The family were quite satisfied in regard to Nikolaus' conduct. But it is important to bear in mind the fact that these Spiritualistic communications were made known to the parents before the final issue. When during the remainder of the year everything went on happily, Sophie became fully convinced that all the communications were only lies, and formed a resolution that she would never again occupy herself with Spiritualistic séances.

Another year passed without any special event. But on the 9th of March, 1887, the secret police suddenly searched Nikolaus's rooms. He was arrested in his own house, and within 24 hours was exiled from St. Petersburg. It came out later that his crime was taking part in anarchical assemblies—assemblies which were held in the months of January and February, 1885, exactly corresponding with the time when "Schura" was insisting that steps should *then* be taken to dissuade Nikolaus from taking part in such meetings. Only now were the communications of "Schura" estimated at their true value. The notes which Mrs. von Wiesler had made were read again and again by the families both of "Schura" and of Nikolaus. "Schura's" identity in all those manifestations was recognised as incontestably demonstrated, in the first place, by the main fact in relation to Nikolaus, by other intimate particulars, and also by the totality of the features which characterised her personality. This mournful occurrence fell like a fresh thunderclap on Nikolaus's family, and they had only to thank God that the errors of the young man were not followed by more fatal results.

In order to estimate this incident aright it is of great importance to establish the relations which existed between the two young ladies. I have requested Madame and Mdlle. Von Wiesler to give me on this, as on the previous points, a written memorandum in full detail; and from that memorandum I extract what follows [somewhat abridged here]:—

"In December, 1880, Madame Von Wiesler and her daughter paid a Christmas visit to Schura's grandfather, Senator N., where Sophie saw Schura for the first time. Sophie was then about 13 years old, and Schura even

younger. Sophie was astonished to see Schura's writing-table covered with books [and had a talk with her about favourite authors]. The two girls often saw each other at a distance in the recreation-room of their school during the winter, but Schura was soon transferred to another school. [They met once at a country-house without exchanging a word, and saw each other once across a theatre. Sophie, in fact, had had one childish talk with Schura; Madame Von Wiesler had never had any real talk with her.] Hence it is clear that the relations of these ladies with Schura were of the most distant kind, and that they could not know anything of her political secrets.

CASE IV. [G. 193.]

From *Psychische Studien*, March, 1889 (p. 131).

An extract from an article by the editor (the Hon. Alexander Aksakof).

"I am personally acquainted with the following case:—My friend and fellow student at the Lyceum, Privy Councillor (Geheimrath) Baron Konstantin K., told me, twenty years ago, that at the time of the death of his uncle, Baron Paul K., at Warschau, his will could not be found, though it was thoroughly searched for; and that it was discovered in a secret drawer (Fache), entirely in consequence of a communication received by Prince Emile Wittgenstein, in which the place was described."

In *Psychische Studien* for December, 1889 (pp. 568-9), M. Aksakof gives further particulars as follows:—

"Since the previous notice of this case, I have made the acquaintance of Paul von Korf, a son of Baron von Korf, who resides in the Port-strasse, St. Petersburg. He has given me the following account of the circumstances:—

"His father, General Paul von Korf, died at Warschau on April 7th, 1867. It was known that he had made a will, but after his death it could not be found. In the month of July, 1867, his sister, the Baroness Charlotte von Wrangel, was living with her sister-in-law, Madame D. von Obuchow, in the town of Plock (pronounced Plozk), not far from Warschau. Her mother, the widow of General von Korf, was travelling abroad; and in her mother's absence she was entrusted with the opening of her correspondence. Among the letters thus received and opened was one from Prince Emile von Wittgenstein (also abroad) addressed to the widow of General von Korf, in which he informed her that a spiritualistic communication had been received by him in the name of her deceased husband, indicating the place where his will would be found. The Baroness von Wrangel, who knew how much trouble the absence of this will had given to her elder brother [Baron Joseph Korf] who was engaged in the administration of the property, and who was at that time in Warschau, went at once, with her sister-in-law, to Warschau, to inform him of the important contents of the letter of Prince von Wittgenstein. Her brother's first words were that he had just found the will; and when the letter of Prince von Wittgenstein was read, it was apparent, to the astonishment of those present, that the place indicated in the spiritualistic communication where the will would be found was precisely that in which the Baron had at last found it.

“Baron Paul von Korf promised me that he would look for this letter of Prince von Wittgenstein’s, which he had in his hand less than two years ago, when arranging the family papers. But up to the present time he has not been able again to find it. He fears it may have been unintentionally destroyed with useless correspondence.”

In a letter dated St. Petersburg, February 26th, 1890, M. Aksakof adds the following particulars, with two letters, of which translations are here given:—

I. Original letter from Baron Paul Korf (son of the Baron Korf whose will is concerned) to M. Aksakof, countersigned by Baron Paul’s sister, Baroness Charlotte Wrangel, and testifying to the exactness of the fact as stated in *Psychische Studien*, 1888, p. 568.

“Petersburg, January 29th, 1890.

“SIR,—I have read with great interest your communication, inserted in *Psychische Studien* (p. 568), concerning the will of my late father. The facts are there related with perfect accuracy. I am afraid that I burnt the letter of Prince Emile Wittgenstein about a year ago, when I was arranging the papers of my late father, which were at his country seat.—Accept, &c.,

“(BARON) PAUL KORF.”

“I add my signature to that of my brother, to confirm the contents of his letter.

“BARONESS C. WRANGEL, NÉE BARONESS KORF.”

II. Copy of a letter from Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein, published in the work, *Souvenirs et Correspondance du Prince Emile de Sayn-Wittgenstein-Berlebourg* (Paris, 1889), Vol. II., p. 365.

“Warsaw, July 17th, 1867.

“It seems an age, my dear parents, since I have had any news of you ; my mother’s last letter was dated June 5th. I have occupied myself much with Spiritualism of late, and my mediumistic faculties have developed themselves in an astonishing way. I write often with great facility in various kinds of writing ; I have had direct communications from the spirit which haunts Berlebourg, a woman of our family who killed herself 102 years ago. I have, moreover, obtained a very singular result. One of my friends, Lieut.-General Baron de Korf, deceased some months since, manifested himself to me (without my having thought of him the least in the world), to enjoin upon me to indicate to his family the place where his will had been maliciously hidden ; that is to say, in a chest of drawers in the house where he died. I did not know that the family were looking for this will, and had not found it. Well, they found it in the very place which the spirit had indicated to me. It is a document of great importance for the management of his property, and for the settlement of questions which will arise when his children attain their majority. Here are facts which can stand criticism.

“EMILE WITGENSTEIN.”

III. Prince Emile Wittgenstein died in 1878, at Tegernsee, in Bavaria.

IV. As to the date of the letter of Prince Sayn-Wittgenstein to the widow of Baron Korf. Here is what I have been able to learn in a last interview with his son, Baron Paul Korf. The marriage of his daughter,

Baroness Charlotte Korf, with Baron Wrangel took place at Warsaw, June 17th, 1867. A week after that event the Baroness Wrangel left, with her sister-in-law, Madame Obuchow, for the town of Plock, and her mother went abroad. At that date the will had not been found. And since the letter of Prince Emile Wittgenstein to his parents, in which he informs them of the finding of the will by spiritual communication, is dated July 17th, 1867, it follows that the letter of Prince Emile Wittgenstein to the widow of Baron Korf, enclosing that communication, and consequently the communication itself must have been received between June 17th and July 17th, 1867.

V. As to the place where the will was found. I asked Baron Paul Korf : "Is it a fact that the will was found 'in a chest of drawers' (armoire) as was predicted in the communication?" He answered : "That is what both my sister and I heard."

VI. The elder son of Baron Korf who busied himself at Warsaw with the affairs of the inheritance was named Baron Joseph Korf, and has since died.

CASE V. [S. 3.]

For the following case also I am indebted to M. Aksakof :—

THE PÉRÉLIQUINE CASE.

Document I.—Copy of report of séance held November 18th, 1887, in the house of M. Nartzeff, at Tambof, Russia.

Present : M. A. Nartzeff [landed proprietor, belonging to the Russian nobility, in the Government of Tambof]; Madame A. Slepzof [aunt of M. Nartzeff]; Madame Ivanof [M. Nartzeff's housekeeper]; M. N. Touloucheff [official physician of the Municipality of Tambof].

The sitting began at 10 p.m. at a table placed in the middle of the room, by the light of a night-light placed on the mantelpiece. All doors closed. The left hand of each was placed on the right hand of his neighbour, and each foot touched the neighbour's foot, so that during the whole of the sitting all hands and feet were under control. Sharp raps were heard in the floor, and afterwards in the wall and the ceiling, after which the blows sounded immediately in the middle of the table, as if someone had struck it from above with his fist; and with such violence, and so often, that the table trembled the whole time.¹

M. Nartzeff asked, "Can you answer rationally, giving three raps for yes, one for no?" "Yes." "Do you wish to answer by using the alphabet?" "Yes." "Spell your name." The alphabet was repeated, and the letters indicated by three raps—"Anastasié Péréliquine." "I beg you to say now why you have come and what you desire." "I am a wretched woman. Pray for me. Yesterday, during the day, I died at the hospital. The day before yesterday I poisoned myself with matches." "Give us some details about yourself. How old were you? Give a rap for each year." Seventeen raps. "Who were you?" "I was housemaid. I poisoned myself with matches." "Why did you poison yourself?" "I will not say. I will say nothing more."

¹ We cannot here dwell on these physical manifestations, which (it is hoped) will be dealt with before long in a separate paper.

After this, a heavy table which was near the wall, outside the chain of hands, came up rapidly three times, towards the table round which the chain was made, and each time it was pushed backwards, no one knew by what means. Seven raps (the signal agreed upon for the close of the sitting) were now heard in the wall; and at 11.20 p.m. the séance came to an end.

Signed, A. SLEPZOF, N. TOULOUCHEFF, A. NARTZEFF, A. IVANOF.

I certify that this copy is in complete accordance with the original.

A. NARTZEFF.

Document II.—The undersigned, having been present at the séance of November 18th, 1887, at the house of M. A. N. Nartzeff, hereby certify that they had no previous knowledge of the existence or the death of Anastasie Péréliguine, and that they heard her name for the first time at the above-mentioned séance.

N. P. TOULOUCHEFF, ALEXIS NARTZEFF, A. SLEPZOF, A. IVANOF.

Tambof, April 6th, 1890.

Document III.—Letter of Dr. Touloucheff to M. A. Aksakof.

April 15th, 1890.

SIR,—At the sitting held at M. Nartzeff's house, November 18th, 1887, we received a communication from an intelligence giving the name of Anastasie Péréliguine. She asked us to pray for her; and said that she had poisoned herself with lucifer matches, and had died on the 17th of that month. At the first moment I did not believe this; for in my capacity as physician of the municipality I am at once informed by the police of all cases of suicide. But since Péréliguine had added that her death had taken place at the hospital; and since at Tambof we have only one hospital, that of the "Institutions de Bienfaisance," which is in no way within my official survey, and whose authorities, in such cases as this, themselves send for the police or the magistrate;—I sent a letter to my colleague, Dr. Sundblatt, the head physician of this hospital. Without explaining my reason I simply asked him to inform me whether there had been any recent case of suicide at the hospital, and, if so, to give me the name and particulars. I have already sent you a copy of his reply, certified by Dr. Sundblatt's own signature. The original is at M. Nartzeff's house, with the protocols of the séances.

Tambof, rue du Séminaire.

N. TOULOUCHEFF.

Document IV.—Copy of Dr. Th. Sundblatt's letter to Dr. Touloucheff.

November 19th, 1887.

MY DEAR COLLEAGUE,—On the 16th of this month I was on duty; and on that day two patients were admitted to the hospital, who had poisoned themselves with phosphorus. The first, Vera Kosovitch, aged 38, wife of a clerk in the public service . . . was taken in at 8 p.m.; the second, a servant in the insane ward [a part of the hospital], Anastasie Péréliguine, aged 17, was taken in at 10 p.m. This second patient had swallowed, besides an infusion of boxes of matches, a glass of kerosine, and at the time of her admission was already very ill. She died at 1 p.m. on the 17th, and

the post-mortem examination has been made to-day. Kosovitch died yesterday, and the post-mortem is fixed for to-morrow. Kosovitch said that she had taken the phosphorus in an access of melancholy, but Péréliguine did not state her reason for poisoning herself.

TH. SUNDBLATT.

Copy of letter certified by Th. Sundblatt and Alexis Nartzeff.

Document V.—Letter of M. A. Nartzeff to M. Aksakof, May 16th, 1890.

[M. Nartzeff writes a letter in English and one in French, which I abridge and combine.]

“In answer to your letter I inform you that my aunt’s housekeeper is not a housekeeper strictly speaking, but rather a friend of the family, having been nearly 15 years with us, and possessing our entire confidence. She could not have already learnt the fact of the suicide, as she has no relations or friends in Tambof, and never leaves the house.

“The hospital in question is situated at the other end of the town, about 5 versts from my house. Dr. Sundblatt informs me, on the authority of the *procès-verbal* of the inquest, that Péréliguine was able to read and write. [This in answer to M. Aksakof’s inquiry whether the deceased could have understood alphabetic communication.]

“Sittings were held at Tambof, April, 1885-October, 1889, but in no other instance were irrefutable proofs obtained. Generally the manifestations were of a trivial character. Twice or thrice we received communications apparently serious, but on inquiry these were found to be untrue.”

It is remarkable that this veridical message should have stood alone, but its correctness obviously was not due to chance.