

THE CHICAGO ADDRESS.

SIGNS OF THE TIMES:

From the Standpoint of a Scientist.

AN ADDRESS DELIVERED AT THE FIRST METHODIST CHURCH, APRIL 26, 1888,
UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE

WESTERN SOCIETY FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

— BY —

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"Per aspera ad astra."

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Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh Pa.

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DEDICATION.

TO
COL. JOHN C. BUNDY,
EDITOR OF THE RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL,
A FEARLESS DEFENDER OF THE FAITH AND LEADING
EXPONENT OF TRUE SPIRITUALISM, THESE
PAGES ARE INSCRIBED WITH
HIGH REGARD
BY
THE AUTHOR.

PUBLISHER'S NOTE.

Professor COUES' Address originally appeared in the RELIGIO-PHILOSOPHICAL JOURNAL of May 12, 1888, from the Author's notes. It was immediately issued from the JOURNAL's print in LIGHT, the leading English Spiritualistic periodical. Both these editions being practically exhausted, and the demand for the Address continuing, it is now republished in book form, from revised manuscript furnished by the Author. In its present form it is the only edition authorized by Professor COUES.

THE Signs of The Times

From the Standpoint of a Scientist.

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN:

Responding to the flattering invitation of the Western Society for Psychical Research, I have come from afar to address you to-night on a subject that has the most vivid interest. I congratulate myself on the privilege of speaking to this cultured and thoughtful audience, assembled in earnest to hear what poor words may do even scanty justice to the Signs of the Times in which you and I take living part. I wish to speak—not as the special advocate of this or that school of thought; not as an iconoclast of any established belief; neither as a Spiritualist, nor as a Theosophist, nor as one wedded to any doctrine—but simply as one thinking human being may address another when confident that his theme concerns them both alike. I should be guilty of intellectual recreancy did I fail to speak as I truly think; and I beg for my thoughts the same kindly

and sympathetic hearing that I would give to yours were our places reversed. I would not that this church should resound with words alone. There is another atmosphere about us than the air we breathe, a subtle element to stir, that an inner sense may catch its rhythmical pulsation and be moved in close accord.

THE WOMAN QUESTION.

And the first among the Signs of the Times is the "Woman Question." That is, indeed, not only first, but also last, and always. This is a sign whose full significance we shall see before I have done. And second, Spiritualism, well-named the "Mainstay of Religion and the Despair of Science." And third, Psychological Research, to which we turn wistfully for light upon the deeper problems of life. There is needed no Theosophy to discern in these three things a trinity of force that needs but some fulcrum on which to turn the world. These are the Signs of the Times we shall question to-night, whether they be only surface ripples to pass with the idle winds, or whether, indeed, such tremors portend a violent upheaval of ground considered secure. Never yet has a throe of nature come without fair warning. Nothing is born to live without premonitory pains. No alarmist I, who have faced the facts too many years for that! But history will fail to repeat itself, and such failure would mean that eternal cycles of time should swerve from an appointed course; that human progress should not be an orderly unfolding of man's destiny, but a spasmodic struggle against fate—history fails us, I repeat, if men now living do not witness, on the turn of this century, greater changes than any of us know as yet; do not experience in their own lives the full cumulative effect of spiritual and material forces which have been in silent operation for the past six hundred years. That is the law. That is the Law of Karma, escape from which the world has never known.

The progress of evolution, of development, is never in one straight line. It is revolutionary; it is cyclical; it returns upon

itself. Yet never back to its starting point, but always like a spiral coiling higher and higher; and every completed turn of the coils is marked by changes that seem to be catastrophes if viewed alone, but appear harmonious and necessary when seen in the light of all that has gone before. Nay, more; the greater revolutions of the wheels of Fate are ablaze with prophetic fire for those whose eyes can bear the light of an Ezekiel's vision. For the causes of yesterday become the effects of to-day, and these the causes of to-morrow in turn. This law remains, whether days, or years, or centuries are taken into account. It is the cycle of 600 years that I first call to your attention to account for what goes on to-day. This is not merely a political cycle of such length; not a round-up of human history only; but a far deeper and more necessary turning-point, a very astronomical period in the life of our planet. It is hard to realize this; hard to bring it home to our thoughts and feelings, that *now* is one of these turning points. Yet this is historically true; for revolutions—by some called revelations—have not failed to recur for twenty-four hundred years at least, at intervals of six hundred years. At each one of these periods the figure of a man has stood as the visible embodiment and very incarnation of the spirit of his time, the index of mighty issues of the fullness of time.

THE NAROS OR CYCLE OF 600 YEARS.

There are students of mystical lore, especially among the strange beings who call themselves Rosicrucians, who trace the naroses or cycles of 600 years much further back. I will be content to mention but four, each in the briefest word: In the year 1222 one of the greatest conquerors the world has ever seen was at the height of his glory; the great Mongolian chieftain, styled the "perfect warrior," had overrun the Eastern Continent and established his rule from what is now Turkey to far Cathay—sole monarch by right of might over millions of men left living witnesses of a million slain. The night of the dark ages brooded over Europe, while the heel of the conqueror stamped on the

neck of Asia. Five years later Genghis Khan, personification of brute force, was mouldering dust; and conjunctions of planets in the skies, those strange portents from heaven to earth, attested the turn of the cycle from whose initial point the spirit of light was to struggle with Europe for such ascendancy as we behold to-day, and take 600 years to reach her zenith.

Who or what before Genghis Khan? In the year 622—exactly 600 years before—the founder of Moslem was 40 years old. Then occurred the Hegira, and the initial impulse was given to one of the ten great religions of the world. Millions of men have gone to the Mountain, or the Mountain has come to them, under the banner of Mahomet, whose coffin has hung in the air ever since for millions of believers, the while that like countless throngs have crossed the thread of Alsirat to the Paradise of the Blest.

Unwind now the coil yet another 600 years. Need my Christian friends be told that the Star of Bethlehem had risen? The wise men had worshiped; the shadow of the cross was imminent on Calvary. The God-made man returned to his Maker; and by his life was kindled in the hearts of men a light never to be quenched, ever to flash athwart a world with growing splendor.

Uncoil the thread once more—yet another turn of the Wheel of Life that spins the web for 600 years. If there be a Buddhist here to-night, let him think of the time when his Lord Buddha brought from heaven the Light of Asia, that should burn through the ages till one-third of the human race should have caught its gentle, patient ray.

Verily hath the spirit been left without a witness never! That spirit, omnipotent, for weal or woe, is not for a day, but forever. Great incarnate Avatars or messengers speak to races and nations and epochs. Lesser angels or demons, as the case may be, speak to us every one, every day and hour, if so be it we can hear the voice of the silence within the heart.

And this is 1888. No further off than a life time of one man

is the finishing of the last 600 year cycle from 1222.* My friends, do you wonder that the times are critical? Not that we need expect the millennium, or prepare our ascension robes to-night; for the mills of the Gods can be trusted to grind on awhile yet. But we may recognize in what I have said some reason for the strange and otherwise inexplicable crisis which confronts us. I discern in it a kind of consummation or fruition of great social, intellectual and moral forces, which have long been stealthily at work. A glance at some recent steps we have taken will show where we stand.

THE INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF WOMEN.

For example, the woman question. I have just come from Washington and from the most deeply significant spectacle it has ever been my lot to witness. I mean, of course, the International Congress of Women. It was magnificent! With scarcely a metaphor, I may say this Mary is big with fate; this is a very pregnancy of the times overshadowed by a mighty spirit! My heart was sad as I sat in that vast throng and heard the burning words of appeal for rights--for rights only, not privileges or favors; for the right to be heard; for the equal rights of both sexes; for the right to abolish odious discriminations against the weaker by the stronger; for the right of equal education; for the right to take part in social reforms; for the right to promote social purity and temperance and every virtue; for the right to earn a living; for the right of political franchise; for the right to the pursuit of happiness in her own way. The thought came over me: What injury and insult the brave leaders of the movement, and through them every woman in the land, have suffered during the forty years of their wanderings in the wilderness of the arrogance and the ignorance of

*From the year 1222 to 1883 is exactly 666 years. The coincidence,—if it be nothing else, is more striking than had occurred to me in penning these lines. The Qabbalist may perceive the full significance of the numbers. "Here is wisdom. He that hath understanding, let him count the number of the beast; for it is the number of a man; and his number is six hundred and sixty and six."—[John, Revel., Ch. 13, v. 18.

my own sex, before so much as a sight of the promised land was theirs, or even a respectful hearing. But then came the glad revulsion of feeling. That is done with, and we are all so far ahead. As I listened to the addresses, I could not help pondering that strange thing which some of us know as psychic force or spiritual power; it seemed to me then, if never before, a reality.

Think for a moment of these things: Concentration of will-power; the fixed, firm,—if you will, grim determination of the great women who have led their cause for a life-time. Think of the fixity of purpose; of singleness of aim; of disinterested benevolence; of unselfish endeavor; of ardent aspiration; of fervid appeal; of personal example; of unflagging courage; of the contagion of enthusiasm,—can such forces be set in operation and be futile? No! a thousand times No! These are real forces, powers, principles, living and operative. The law of gravitation is not a fixeder fact in nature, than that such forces are the effectual and necessary causes of concrete results—hard, solid facts in human progress, not less substantial and enduring than the granite of which we rear material edifices. Such forces never ferment without leavening the lump; and the abundant leaven of the last Convention can be no more disputed than explained away. It is a grand result that we see to-day. It is all abroad; it is in the air; the birds are carrying the news; the flowers are nodding the tidings to one another, that woman's rights are secure in America.

Only ten years ago, such a convention would have been greeted with jeers and sneers from the lords of creation. A little further back, had it been attempted, the women might have been mobbed, as the anti-slavery heroes were before the cursed blot of human bondage and traffic was wiped from the shield of the nation with the blood of martyrs to the cause of liberty. A little further back, it would simply have been impossible; for women were still sleeping in unseen chains like those the African visibly wore amongst us. What does this movement mean

to us all,—not only to the women most concerned, but to their other halves? I will tell you: It is another Declaration of Independence. It means freedom, the watch-word of every true American; liberty, dear to every man's heart—to woman's not less dear; independance of thought to the uttermost; freedom of speech to the bounds of propriety; liberty of action to the verge of infringing another's equal rights—and these are priceless boons, without which man has not humanity's heritage.

The woman question, as it is called, has a deeper significance than appears upon the surface. The "surface indications," as they say in the mining regions where we dig in the bowels of the earth for hidden treasures, are good. They are witnessed in the substantial benefits to accrue to women and hence to society from the triumph of their cause. But, viewed from my standpoint, which you know is that of a psychic researcher, this is a problem in psychic science which has worked out its own solution. And that this problem is involved in a still broader one I can easily show. That broader problem is not merely political, or social, or even worldly; for it is also spiritual. It is no other than Spiritualism.

Was it not the 40th Anniversary of the Woman's Rights Movement that was lately celebrated in Washington? What now was the year when the first faint raps at Rochester ticked off their message from the passing to a coming generation? That was in 1848, just forty years ago. They are twins, I may say,—these two great pulsations of the soul-life of the nation. Strangely unlike have they seemed to be—this orthodox sister and her unorthodox brother! But they were born of one blood, and that the same divine ichor which has sown the seeds of progress and reform wherever in the world mankind has passed to a higher estate. They grew up together, along parallel lines of evolution, though seldom did their faces turn to one another, so fixed were the eyes of each upon their respective goals. And as they thus grew side by side, the one never knocked louder at the gates of Congress than the other has knocked at the door of

the understanding of millions of Americans, begging to be heard. Upon the answer we give to Spiritualism more depends, for better or worse, perhaps, than upon our reply to any other problem which we are now called upon to solve. Spiritualism will not down,—and why should it? It has come to stay—and why should it not? It is no new thing; the seeming newness is our rawness; that is all. Spiritualism has been in the world since when man, being a spirit, became possessed of a body in which to inhabit the world. But that phase of it which we commonly call “American Spiritualism,” and which is now a great social and moral—I almost said a national—question, has grown up within the memory of some who are here to-night. This ghost no longer comes when church-yards yawn and graves give up their dead, smelling of mould and pointing a bony finger; it is all abroad by daylight, like any living wight; a truth most precious, or an error “most monstrous,---is everywhere we turn. Its advocates, real or nominal, tacit or avowed, have passed from the thousands into the millions in the United States. If the Spiritualists should band together as a political party, they might not elect a President, but they could turn either way the scale of a closely contested campaign. Their cause would be stronger than any one of the collateral issues in the struggle between our two leading political parties.

No doubt the woman question has suffered more from the apathy or indifference of women themselves, as a body, than from men’s antagonism or hostility. If, for example, a majority of the women of America really wanted to vote, they would have the ballot to-morrow. They do not want it, with its duties and responsibilities. I may add without offence that they are not fit for it yet, simply because they have not learned to need it. So long as any woman is satisfied with social tyranny, and scientific insolence, and religious intoleration, she is fit for nothing better than to slave on under these several lashes. Servitude suits the slave. When she ceases to be at heart a bond-woman, she will cease to be in bonds. Is there one woman be-

fore me who does not know exactly what I mean? If such there be, she wastes in waiting on my words much valuable time that belongs to her owner and proprietor, be that master the church, the state, or a mere man.

So also, no doubt, has the progress of Spiritualism toward any practical goal or substantial worldly reward suffered more from differences of opinion and ever fluctuating shades of belief in its own ranks than from the attacks of its enemies, or even from those reproaches which it has brought upon itself justly. Since every question of Spiritualism cuts literally deep into a man's soul—deeper than fame, or wealth, or power, or any temporal advantage, because it is not only for now but forever to his view—so does Spiritualism kindle and foster every passion, every emotion, every perturbation of the soul that is possible. On the one hand, a Spiritualist may be uplifted to the loftiest aspirations, the purest sentiments, the keenest vision of the soul; on the other, may he be bent down to the most grovelling aims, the coarsest vices, the very obscuration of the soul, to the loss of will-power, judgment, and conscience. Both these extremes are witnessed daily. Indeed, it is a giant of terrible, over-mastering potency whom he invokes who dares to "try the spirits," whether they be true or false. A genius more formidable than ever Aladdin rubbed out of his magic vase springs into existence whenever man trims the lamp of life to spiritual fire.

The ordinary oscillation of men, in their every-day business or pleasure, is a narrow sweep of the balance of fate, in comparison with the extent and intensity of vibration set up in the soul of one who dares stretch forth his hand to stir the Veil of Isis. Men who thrill to a thought and seek the skies, have most need to take their bearings well when they "hitch their wagon to a star," as Emerson advises. No wonder, then, that Spiritualism may prove a blessing or a curse; no wonder that its good and bad extremes are far from the ordinary experiences of men; no wonder that its phenomena are at once the mainstay of religion and the despair of science. Nor is it in any way remark-

able, either that Spiritualists should differ so widely regarding identical phenomena, or that busy men of every day should ignore or decry them as foolishness. But the question cannot be ruled out of court, nor can the court adjourn. The human court of appeal in all such matters is always in session, and the case perpetually recurs. How then shall the case be decided?

EVIDENCE OF THE TRUTH OF SPIRITUALISM.

Let us hear some evidence. Is it or is it not a fact, that the action of gravitation is sometimes overcome by a superior opposing force, so that things which ought to stay down go up instead? The answer of Spiritualism is: "Yes, that is a fact."

Is it a fact, that numberless other mechanical effects and physical movements result from the manifest operation of a force that is neither mechanical, nor physical, nor vital, nor mental, in any sense known to, or recognized by, the orthodox science of our day—a force whose origin or source, and whose means of manifestation, are alike ignored by science? And Spiritualism answers: "Yes, that is a fact, as well attested as any natural phenomenon to be found described in ordinary textbooks of the schools."

Is it a fact, that this mysterious force, of awful significance and most potent consequences, exhibits intelligence, volition, purpose, and all the other attributes of mind as distinguished from matter? Does it act, in short, as if it had a will of its own and knew what it was about? Does it show the quality of consciousness? And Spiritualism says emphatically: Yes, that is a fact: it does just that."

Up to this point, though we have gone pretty far, we are still on tolerably safe and easily conceivable ground. We have only established the fact that a certain mysterious force is identical with the powers of our own minds. It is the same force which I use to stand my body here and hold this paper and speak—a conscious exertion of will-power intelligently directed to certain actions by means of the control which my mind has over my body. But the next two questions we shall put to

Spiritualism, if answered in the affirmative, land us upon the shore of the Great Unknown:-

1. Is it a fact that this immaterial force which Spiritualism recognizes can and does act without any known means of communication between mind and matter—that is to say, without any physical body? Spiritualism answers: "Yes, it does so act, and therefore is not only a mental but a spiritual force." It is just as if I, standing here without any visible body, should be able to make this table move by a code of signals and answer for Spiritualism, "Yes."

2. Since this force can answer questions, what does this force proclaim itself to be when asked, "What are you?" The answer is usually to the following effect: "I am a disembodied spirit who still lives since my body died, and I am able to communicate with you who are still embodied."

Here is the pivotal point of Spiritualism. This is the answer, claimed to have been reiterated steadily a thousand times, in reply to the old, old question, "If a man die, shall he live again?" Faith, indeed, has whispered to hope throughout the ages that a man shall live again who has died to this world. Intuition universally senses the same thing. Every religion depends upon that faith. Every creed includes it; every church declares it with authority. But here and now comes Spiritualism offering to replace that faith with knowledge; to justify that hope by its own fruition; to prove that intuition by intellectual apprehension; to demonstrate the fact of conscious individual existence beyond the grave. No wonder the Church hates Spiritualism worse than it does the Devil. The Devil is useful to the church. Spiritualism is worse than useless. For, to prove a creed to be true is to kill that creed to all creedal intents and for all priestly purposes. Belief and dogma both rest on the evidence of things unseen; that is, upon ignorance of the facts in the case. To do away with ignorance by substituting knowledge—in other words, to produce the evidence and prove the point—is fatal to every dogma of ecclesiastical au-

thority, because every thing that is accurately known is Science and not Religion. Considering these and other points, I can conceive now no more momentous a question than this: Is Spiritualism true or is it false?

Thus far, I have been representing fairly what Spiritualism claims; but it is not right for me to be only a mouth-piece of another's thoughts. My audience has the right to demand of me what I, too, think or believe or know, else there would be no use of my being here to-night. I will not stand convicted of evading that point—not even if everything I say were to be proven wrong to-morrow.

THE OPINIONS OF A SCIENTIST.

My whole training in life has been that of a scientist, accustomed to cool, critical, skeptical, yet unbiased examination of any question that comes up, scrutinizing all things to the best of my mental ability, submitting all propositions to the test of verification by actual experiment. I hold my mind open on all sides ready to receive and entertain any idea that may seek lodging there. I have no preconceptions respecting what is naturally possible or impossible. I smile at the conceit which pronounces a thing "impossible," because that decision presumes to have discovered everything that is possible. To my mind, nothing I can conceive of is theoretically impossible, outside of mathematics or beyond some proposition that is logically contradictory in itself. To every deep thinker, one thing seems *a priori* about as likely or unlikely as another, because one unfathomable mystery underlies every phenomenon in nature. No explanation can satisfy the mind with anything short of the absolutely inexplicable. It is to me no more unlikely that a man's soul should live after his body, than that it should not. It is no more remarkable that he should have a soul, than that he should not have one. I only want to know. In the character of a scientist I am bound to be indifferent to the result of that knowing. Good and evil—right and wrong—virtue and vice—pleasure and pain—life and death—these are the gravest

possible questions of ethics and of religion, but they are no concerns of science. They are the fruits of knowledge or of ignorance, as the case may be; they are the applied logic of morals; but they do not subsist in that mere act or state of knowledge which is science. The scientist may *know* both good and evil, and choose the latter, and be a very devil of a scientist, literally, without derogation of his scientific character. So in this sense I can say: if I have a soul, it is well; if I have none, it is also well. I was not consulted on coming into existence, and my private tastes or wishes in this contingency are quite foreign to the question. Furthermore, I neither believe nor disbelieve on the authority of our Bible or any one of the twenty other sacred scriptures which we possess, or on any authority whatsoever, save the supreme arbitration of such reason and observation as I can bring to bear on a question. Sentiment is foreign to all such investigation. Religion is something aside from investigation, since it rests on faith in the evidence of things unseen, not on knowledge of things seen. Once more, I have no regard for consistency as a jewel, if by this phrase is meant that we must stick to our opinions whether or no. I would reverse every opinion I ever formed or could form, on proof of its wrongness, and be consistent with nothing but the laws of mind applied to the laws of evidence; for these intellectual laws are immutable in the human constitution. They are principles of eternal verity, above, below, behind, beyond which we can only posit the No-Thing called God.

“SUBSTANTIALLY TRUE AS ALLEGED.”

Will you have the opinion of such a person as I have described, who for about ten years has studied, watched and followed the phenomena of so-called Spiritualism, and who speaks from personal experience with almost every one of them? Then let me tell you. I know that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are true, substantially as alleged. “Substantially true as alleged”—that is a broad statement to make. But I make it fearlessly, of knowledge in the premises. It is a re-

mendous admission to come from one who has any regard for his reputation as a scientist. It is almost scientific suicide; and when the news reaches the venerable Smithsonian Institution where I live, the wits will be asking if the remains of my reputation are to follow by express and have a decent funeral. But I had rather be right than in a wrong majority. Those persons who know the most are always and necessarily in the minority. These things must and shall be said—nay, repeated and reiterated, till the observed facts from which the truth of Spiritualism is inferred are recognized, explained, and accepted. Let these things be repeated in the face of every false dogma of the churches; let them be reiterated in the teeth of every wrong dictum of the schools. Time enough to hedge, when what are now the secrets of psychic science shall have become public property, respectable, fashionable, and popular,—perverted by the priest, and prostituted by the publican, as they surely will be in due course. But now that Error masquerades in the very garb of Truth is just the time to talk.

Let me not be misunderstood, however, and hereafter misquoted as saying that everything in Spiritualism is true, or that all the instances of the alleged phenomena are genuine—far from that! When I say that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are substantially true as alleged, I mean that every one of the several different kinds or classes of physical manifestations can and as a fact does occur. Granted, that most public exhibitions, particularly of that strangest of phenomena, materialization, are fraudulent,—knowingly, wilfully and shamefully intended to deceive. Granted, that most of the rest are obscure, perplexing and unsatisfactory, or unsuited to any investigation, though not intentionally fictitious. Granted, that yet others are illusory or delusive, and wholly misinterpreted. Yet, with all these admissions, and all these grave omissions for lack of evidence or through erroneous conclusions, the residuum not thus set aside is a vast array of natural phenomena which cannot be put aside, cannot be accounted for, as yet, and have

not yet been explained to the satisfaction of science or of average everyday common sense. In a word, we do not know what these phenomena mean, unless, indeed—a tremendous admission again!—*they mean what they say.*

PHENOMENAL SPIRITUALISM.

It would take me too far over an almost boundless field to traverse each one of the phenomena of Spiritualism, and repeat: This is a fact; that is a fact; the other is a fact. I must presume upon the acquaintance of my audience with the general drift of the Spiritualists' statements of fact, though, were I to draw upon the experiences of a Theosophist, I might add to the already sufficiently startling array of phenomena which are known to be true. But I must pass on to the next and most obvious questions. Supposing these things to be true, what are we going to do with them? What use shall be made of them? How shall they affect our thoughts and lives? How shall they be brought into the current of ordinary human affairs, that they be invested with a practical, not merely theoretical,—a vital, not merely a speculative,—interest, and be made subservient to human welfare and progress? There should be a niche in the Temple of Science for many a truth that now begs for a place; there should be room in every human breast for truth, even new truth. Else there is something wrong with science and with sentiment, and the times are out of joint indeed.

To face fearlessly, to answer honestly, to settle if possible, these questions, would seem to be the peculiar province of psychic research; and if such a thing as psychic science be possible, I have no fear for the result of the investigations now conducted in many cities besides Chicago, by men who are honest, who are intelligent, and who are not afraid to follow the truth as it seems to them, wherever it may lead. I am true to my own cloth. I have faith in science if in nothing else, and I am just the one to call most loudly for scientific methods to be applied to all subjects of human investigation. If Spiritualism or Theosophy is leading me a wild-goose chase over a treacher-

ous morass in the wake of a will o' the wisp, I want' to catch that ignis fatuus, and hold it up, and show that it is not the soul of my departed friend, but a quantity of carburetted hydrogen which shines in the dark—more likely, a good solid fleshy medium in spirit-robes of luminous paint.

We are all liable to be mistaken. We have all been deceived more than once. We are all equally interested to be set right and not deceived again. Human nature is mightily prone to the marvelous, and takes most kindly to the so-called supernatural. Miracles are much more interesting than the propositions in Euclid. A man is a religious animal. A God he must have, if he has to invent one, in case the ready-made article does not suit. It is a trite and a true saying, that people like to be humbugged. They want to believe so much, that they are willing to believe almost any thing that saves them the trouble of thinking for themselves. Else, what would become of this church, for example? Give us a respectable authority, to season with sanctity an incomprehensible unreality, and we are content. If there be a good Jesuit present, who understands his business, he knows that I know he is a very useful fraud who piously preaches a serviceable fable for the benefit of souls. So with every other pretender to knowledge not possessed and probably not attainable. Then is no creed true? No,—not one is the whole truth, because men have made them all, and man is not omniscient. Is a creed useless? No,—it is worse; it is pernicious,—so long as you fully believe it. Is any creed useful? Yes,—if it helps you to get rid of itself—not otherwise. When you have done with the farce of formulating your ignorance and mistaking it for a divine revelation of the wisdom of God, then you have been born again. Your creed is as valuable as an egg-shell to a chick—indispensable in embryonic stages of spiritual evolution, later only useful to settle coffee-grounds.

What wonder, then, human nature being what it is, that nothing is too palpably absurd to find believers! What won-

der, that persons be found to minister to that want for greedy gain, and prey upon the weak, the ignorant, the credulous! What wonder, that Spiritualism, like any orthodox superstition, continues to be shrouded in its own mystery, and encrusted with every folly and every frailty to which human nature can stoop. We are tempted to turn aside with a sigh, or a shrug, perhaps, and say: "Well, it may be true, but I will have nothing to do with it." I cannot tell you how often that thought has come to me, during my long haunting of spiritual circles. I used to feel as if I were a ghost myself, instead of one trying the spirits; my mind failed to explain what I saw, and often my heart sickened at the shams I witnessed, at the shameful impositions practiced upon the most sacred and holy emotions of the human breast. I was tempted to exclaim: "Is this the pursuit of truth? Then it is like fishing for the 'pearl of great price' in the gutter." But, as I said in the beginning, if Spiritualism stirs the lowest and worst part of a man's make-up, so does it also reach and move his very highest and best. It plays upon the whole gamut of his feelings and is equally potent to evoke harmony or discord, as the strings of the mind are swept by the unseen hand. That is a thrilling touch, indeed, which attunes the faith of the learned divine to diviner music still; which pitches the erudition of the scientist to a still higher key; which awakens the man of business to other thoughts than those of the store or office; which kindles the enthusiasm of the fanatic to heroism or martyrdom. That is a fateful thing, which fans the flame of every evil passion to a glare of self-destruction; which unsettles the weak mind and may provoke insanity. Yet the brooding of the Spirit on human waters moves to all these things and more; seldom does it fail to bring out and intensify all that there is of a man, for good or evil. Truly it is no light thing. What is to teach us how to handle it with safety at least, if not with advantage? What, but knowing more about it? To learn and to teach this knowledge is the purpose and the object of Psychic Research in whose name we meet.

SAFE GROUND FOR PSYCHICAL RESEARCH.

Gentlemen of the Western Society for Psychical Research, will you think me presumptuous if I try to point out some safe ground on which you may stand in this maze of doubt, and some lines along which your researches may profitably be pushed? Assuming, as I have said, that the alleged phenomena of Spiritualism are substantially true as alleged, how will you proceed to deal with them, and what shall you decide respecting them? For I need not tell you, it is one thing to establish a fact and quite another thing to explain that fact. Granted, for example, that a table will rise and hang suspended in the air, what holds it up? There is no hope that such an event, any more than the converse of it, namely, that the table stays down usually, can be *fully* explained; for I suppose the action of gravitation to be as utterly inexplicable a phenomenon as any other in the universe. But it is considered a fair and reasonable explanation of the table's staying down to say that it does so because it is an ascertained natural truth that matter attracts matter directly as the mass and inversely as the square of the distance. This is according to what is called the "law of gravitation," which is only a statement of an observed relation of cause and effect. So it would be a fair and reasonable explanation of the table's rising, if we had a "law of levitation" back of that phenomenon, to which to refer the fact, and thus bring it under a known category of cause and effect. But I can hold up any weight, not too heavy for me, by means of my muscles; and this muscular force is only the means or medium of the exercise of the real power which lifts the weight. The real reason why the weight is lifted is the *will-power* which is generated or liberated when I make the mental determination to lift the weight; and any mechanical device by which that will-power can be rendered more effective is, as it were, but an extension of the muscular mechanism of my body. In fact, no one can stir his little finger without, consciously or automatically, calling into action an immaterial force which counteracts the opera-

tion of gravity! So, also, any extra mental stimulus which may cause the muscles to contract more strongly, and enable one to lift more, is but another instance of the general fact of the action of mind upon matter. Such is the ultimate explanation possible to the science of our day; simply the action of mind on matter by the means of appropriate vital or mechanical devices. But you will not have failed to discover in this simple and trite illustration, the fact that the ultimate force here acting is not physical or mechanical, but mental or spiritual. Thus, instantly are we confronted with an actual existing force which does oppose, and can counteract, neutralize, and to some extent overcome, the force of gravitation.

If you will agree with me for the moment to regard this mental force as the exact opposite of material force; if you have found that material force obeys the law of gravitation; have you not already discovered a principle that may be called a "law of levitation?" A weight chooses to stay down, so to speak. I choose that it shall go up. What the weight will do in this case is entirely a question of which is the stronger of two opposing forces. In the language of the text-books, the weight must move in the line of least resistance, whether this be up or down, or in any other direction. And let me assure you, gentlemen, that if you clearly see and closely grasp this pivotal idea, so easy to illustrate when stripped of all details—this idea of the oppositeness of mental and material forces—all the rest of your inquiries are simply respecting ways and means by which the two powers or principles act in opposing each other. It is the old question of opposites,—of antagonisms, antitheses, antinomies—in which our individual lives, and apparently the very life of the universe, are involved. It is the case of rest and motion, of inertia and momentum, of action and reaction, of attraction and repulsion, in the physical world. In the psychical world, it is the distinction of light and darkness; of good and evil; of Ormuzd and Ahriman; of God and the Devil. The very existence of all that is, be it spiritual or be it material, depends

upon the co-existence of its opposite. This is a necessity of Nature. Such is the Law, to which neither Gravitation nor Levitation are more than incidental and ancillary.

EXPERIMENTS WITH A TABLE.

To continue my simple illustration respecting whether the table shall stay down or go up. (1) The materialistic scientist will tell you that it must stay down unless some stronger *mechanical* force sends it up. But we have just agreed that when a man lifts it, the mechanical muscular force he uses is only the means, not the real cause, of its rising;—that cause being the will-power of the man who lifts it. (2) The Theosophist will tell you that theoretically it is possible to will the table to rise, so that it shall rise without being touched. This would be the result of a spiritual power acting without any known mechanical or vital means of communicating that power. (3) And, I am sure, the Spiritualist will tell you that the table often rises by spiritual power that is not embodied in any physical organism. Which of these three statements of fact shall you find to be true? Are the last two statements verifiable? Every one knows and admits the first, the mechanical movements of matter, and their fair explanation is ordinary text-book science. But is there any sense, any truth, any possibility of being true, in either of the other two assertions, theosophical and spiritualistic, which I have quoted? Is it a fact, that matter may be moved by will-power without any known means of applying that power? Everything else, Gentlemen of the Society, starts from and hangs upon some initial point like this. As William Crookes used to put it, when he was learning the *a, b, c* of psychic research, science does not ask you to move mountains—science only asks you to move a thousandth of a grain of matter to a distance of a thousandth of an inch by any other than a mechanical force. Do this and prove it done; then you shall have crossed your Rubicon between the known and the unknown. Then you shall have set psychic research firmly on its legs on “the solid ground of nature to which trusts the mind that builds

for aye." Then you shall have securely founded the whole edifice of Psychic Science, against which neither the dictum of physical science nor the dogma of ecclesiastical authority shall ever prevail.

Pardon me if I seem to dwell on so very rudimentary a subject for psychic research. But if you would not have your body of doctrine, like a rope in the air, begin nowhere and end in nothing—a rope, too, of sand to fall in your eyes and blind you at a touch of orthodox science—you should settle this point of the possibility of moving matter without material contact first. Do not begin by quoting Scripture or by abusing the Bible; do not lean up against any scientific authority, nor throw any scientific authority overboard; do not be religious about it or sentimental, or hopeful, or fearful. Be yourselves unmoved; simply be scientific, rational, skeptical, acutely alive in your physical senses and mental processes, to find out whether or not the case be as I have said. You may expect the ghost of your dead friend to come and move the table for you; you may sit and contemplate your navel and say "Aum" to the table in hopes it will answer "tatsat"; you may project your astral body into it, if you can,—but in any event, by whatever means, first satisfy yourself that matter may be moved without material contact. Gentlemen, the whole case is yours if you can clearly make out this point. There is nothing in the claims of the most advanced Spiritualist or Theosophist that may not flow logically, scientifically, necessarily, from this initial movement.

Any psychic scientist will tell you that such motion has been demonstrated and established times without number.* I tell you the same thing. I know it to be a fact. But do not

* The literature of Spiritualism is full of such cases. The levitation of chairs, tables, pianos, and of human bodies, is a trite subject, though I have purposely presented it as if it were novel and still to be proven. Some of the most instructive cases for a beginner in such investigations are those recorded by the eminent physicist above mentioned, in which Professor Crookes has measured the extent of motion and the amount of force exerted, by means of delicate instruments devised and constructed for the purpose.

accept it on my assertion or any one's else. Prove it for yourselves; submit it to the test of your own experimentation, and subject it to verification by your own observations. Then you will know it; otherwise you may only believe it; and this difference between knowing and believing is just the difference between the science you seek, and the assertions of which we have all had an elegant sufficiency. Moreover, in so doing, you are cultivating the scientific frame and habit of mind. That scientific attitude, poised upon a sincere desire to know, and turning upon the love of truth, is one of two indispensable instruments in the laboratory of the Psychic Researcher.

TEST CONDITIONS.

I see by the glances among my audience that I am now challenged to explain how these assertions can be put to the test. Since I have said that matter can be moved without mechanical contact, how can such an experiment be tried? Every experiment requires proper instruments, properly working under proper conditions. The chemist must have his laboratory; the electrician his battery; the photographer his camera, chemicals, and dark cabinet; and so it is with the expert in any art, science or industry. What laboratory, and how stocked, does the psychist require for his experiments? Let me tell you a little story about this:

Once at a session of the National Academy of Sciences, I listened to a distinguished scientist, Prof. S. Weir Mitchell, of Philadelphia, who read a paper on the effect of changes of the weather upon pain. We know, of course, how rheumatic persons suffer in certain weathers; how persons who carry relics of the war in the shape of bullets in their bodies are like barometers to forecast the weather, so acutely sensitive have they become to meteorological influences. I admired the manner in which Professor Mitchell introduced his subject, by speaking of the difficulty he had found in securing suitable instruments for his investigation. It was no ordinary barometer, or thermometer, or rain-gauge, or weathercock, that he needed—he had all

those. What he required was an instrument that could *feel pain* and have sagacity enough to describe it accurately; a sentient and intelligent apparatus, to say just how much it was hurt when the wind changed. A *man*—his patient—was his instrument; the sick room was his laboratory; the weather was his test condition. The rest was simply a matter of recording carefully what pain was felt or not felt when the weather was so and so. Could anything be simpler?

THE ONE THING INDISPENSABLE.

And so I can assure you, Gentlemen of the Psychical Society, that, given your own fair and able minds, your only other indispensable apparatus is a suitable human organism. Your only necessary test conditions are patience and careful observation. Persons by whose means—that is to say, in whose presence—occurs the phenomenon of the movement of matter without physical exertion, and its apparent increase or diminution of weight without known or assignable cause, are not rare. They are in fact so numerous as to form a recognized class in every community. I refer, of course, to those who are commonly called *mediums*. Moreover, that strange action of the human organism, by means of which one or more of the phenomena known as mediumistic or spiritualistic are manifested, may be cultivated in almost any person. The rudiments of such faculties are so common, that I doubt if any dozen persons in my audience, taken at random, were to train themselves together for a few weeks, one or more of them would not be able to demonstrate the fact upon which I now dwell. The practical difficulty is quite another—it takes time, and time they say is money, and money is a terrible tyrant in these busy, eager days, when few can afford “to loaf and invite their souls” to make a table turn. “Loaf and invite their souls, did I say? I wonder how many have reflected how literally that agreeable and useful exercise may be taken! To the psychic scientist it is exactly true and entirely possible. I speak within bounds when I say, that if a dozen persons have the patience to form a circle, and

keep it unbroken, several nights a week for a month, doing nothing whatever but sit still around a table for an hour or two a night, the chances are a dozen to one that before the next moon they will have unknowingly, unintentionally and unexpectedly demonstrated the fact of material motion by immaterial means. They will have successfully performed that experiment in psychic science which proves all the rest to be possible. They will have rolled away the stone from the tomb in which has been buried the hopes of the thousands in this our matter-muddled generation.

THE SPIRITUALISTIC OR THE THEOSOPHIC EXPLANATION?

To pass on to the next stage of psychic research. I pray your patience while I speak very carefully. Suppose it to have been proven that matter has moved without material contact; what, or who, has been the mover? What, the means of the motion? Shall we fling up our hands, roll up our eyes, and believe that Genghis Khan, or Mahomet, or Washington, or John Brown, or any other ghost has been good enough to manifest his presence by making the table tip or rap out the letters of his name? I do not deny this possibility. I deny no possibility outside of mathematics. But I should say that the ghost-theory is so extremely improbable, involves such violent assumptions, and is so remote from ordinary experiences, that I should wish to exhaust the possibility of almost any other theory that might be adduced to account for the fact, before being driven to such an extraordinary explanation. Nor would I agree without proof that some Mahatmic adept had shot out from Thibet a ray of his majesty to upset the furniture. I should prefer to exhaust the capacity of the four walls of the room in which the experiment succeeded before seeking further. It is never wise to strain a point. It is not sensible to try abstruse and recon-dite conclusions, when any simple and obvious explanation will answer satisfactorily. As to the case in hand, I do not think it illogical to connect the movements of the table in some way with the persons who are present. Supposing, of course, all to

be acting in good faith, and taking the necessary precautions to be sure of that not "just for fun" some one relieves the monotony of the occasion with a little muscular exercise; supposing, in fine, the conditions to be strictly those called "test," I should like to see, first, if the absence of any one of the dozen made any difference in the result of the experiment. Suppose it makes no difference if A is not there; if B, C, and so on are absent, till at length but one person besides myself is left, and the table moves as before. Supposing, further, that the table will not budge for me alone. Then the experiment is reduced to its simplest terms: a piece of inanimate wood; a medium; a spectator. In other words: a psychic researcher conducting an experiment; his instrument of research, a medium; the result, motion of inanimate matter. Here, I think, the researcher should be bound to conclude that some influence proceeding from his apparatus did effect the observed result. Such an experiment has been successfully accomplished thousands of times; and it is neither necessary nor legitimate to invoke the spirits of the dead to account for the facts, until we have shown it to be impossible that the spirit of the living person should have produced the result, albeit by some means of which we may remain ignorant.

Of many such physical manifestations which I might cite, a Theosophist who assumes that an embodied spirit may be the efficient agent, seems to strike at a simpler possible solution than would a Spiritualist who should presume that only disembodied spirits can act thus. I do not say as yet which of the two explanations is the true one, nor deny that either may be true according to circumstances, nor affirm that neither can be true. I am simply exercising due scientific caution in first testing the most probable theory, namely, that the live person present is the more likely operator than any dead person absent, before trying the least probable hypothesis. You will agree with me, that this is only the proper and reasonable prudence which psychic research demands, in order that its decisions shall either acquire scientific value or gain public acceptance.

Thus we are brought to the next stage of our inquiry; for, in our hypothetical case we have proved that the movement of the table depends upon the presence of our medium. Here we are confronted with the very *crux* of the problem. The whole question of Animal Magnetism leaps to the front. Do not be afraid, ladies and gentlemen, of the name of the thing—portentous though that name be, and suggestive of that dreadful “dweller on the threshold” of which our Theosophic friends speak with bated breath. I am not going to let the animal loose; but to describe him. It is not exactly on the threshold of your psychic research that you will encounter the creature, for you passed that threshold safely when the table first tipped. But you have now entered the place where animal magnetism must be met, tamed, trained and made your servant, not your master. Or else one of two things will happen: You will either abandon further research and retire discomfited from your pursuit with little to show for wasted time—or you will perish in the attempt to master one of the greatest forces in nature, to whose effect you have exposed yourselves.

ANIMAL MAGNETISM AND ITS DANGERS.

Most persons live and die in happy ignorance of the power of animal magnetism, just as most of us live and die practically ignorant of the anatomy and physiology of our own bodies; of the laws of life and death; and especially ignorant of the fact that Law, inexorable and inevitable, is as actively operative in the mental, moral and spiritual realms, as in the physical constitution of man. Perhaps they are wise who remain thus ignorant, as willing to forego the secrets of animal magnetism as those of the dissecting room, of the shambles, of vivisection. Much better back to our office or store or home, and attend to our ordinary business and enjoy our usual pleasures, than wander unguardedly in the laboratory of the magnetizer, at risk of an explosion. I am no alarmist, and I detest sensationalism. I speak as a sober scientist of some experience in psychic research when I say that animal magnetism is a force not to be touched

unguardedly—not to be investigated without every precaution. It is playing with no ordinary fire; it is more like arousing the lightning's flash, which may strike one dead in unskilful hands, and may cook a dinner or tick a message in the hands of one who knows how to use the subtile, mysterious force of electricity. The most delicate or the most formidable experiments in electric science, with powerful batteries and magnets—the most ticklish chemical processes whereby the explosives of commerce are manufactured—these are not to be attempted without full knowledge and every precaution on the part of one who has made them a study. Yet we understand these things much better than we do animal magnetism; by so much the more should we approach the latter warily and circumspectly; if possible, under the guidance of one who has made the subject a study.

But I hear you asking yourselves, if this magnetic potency is so universal and so dangerous, do we not run greater risk in ignorance of it than by making its acquaintance? That is a fair question, and one not easy to answer. Though we are all in a sense and to a degree at the mercy of currents of animal magnetism, yet ignorance of them does seem, strangely enough, to confer some immunity or to act as a barrier of some sort. Is not a child exempt from some dangers to which an adult may be exposed? Is not a prisoner's cell a safe retreat from some perils? Is not what is called a good tough hide a shield against some of the stings to which a more sensitive person is exposed? To be more explicit: A somnambulist may walk the housetops in safety during the mesmeric state, but it is dangerous to awaken him to a natural sense of the situation. The moment he becomes normally and rationally aware of his position, he is liable to lose control of his muscles and fall. We are all to some extent "sleep-walkers" in the darkness of bodily night, and cannot be safely aroused from our dreamy illusions until new faculties, suited to new conditions, are developed sufficiently. The somnambulist is actually in no danger, so long as he knows no danger. The peril comes with that knowledge. So, again, can we

in our normal state of mind, walk easily enough along the edge of a plank laid on the floor, or across a log that spans a rivulet. Place now that plank or log across a chasm, and who would venture? The imagination would be terrorized, the head would swim, and we should fall. Thus to realize a danger may be to incur it; thus, knowledge has perils—aye, and sorrows!—from which ignorance is its own safeguard. Thus, in the case of our hypothetical circle, sitting to develop mediumship, certain powers come into action, with certain consequences, which were latent before. Every activity, whether of soul, mind, or body, entails various consequences which would not have ensued but for that activity. Every action is a cause of some result or effect; and every such effect becomes in turn the cause of others still. And so with the formidable matter of animal magnetism, which faces the psychic researcher in the second stage of his investigations. For, observe: he will never learn anything by reading about it, nor even by witnessing it! He must study it experimentally. He must magnetize or be magnetized; he must practice the art of magnetizing or suffer it to be practiced upon himself. He must demonstrate it in person. He must be the magnet himself. All cannot act thus, for various reasons—some for one reason, some for another; nor can all men become doctors or lawyers or merchants or poets or thieves or murderers. There is no royal road here; no study or reflection or theorizing or speculating will avail much. This is the reason why much so-called psychic research is futile—utterly barren of results, unworthy the name of science, unworthy the name of some scientists, who fancy they can of course investigate it perfectly well because they are scientific persons. Never was greater delusion than this witnessed among people who are left at large! A blind optician—a deaf musician—a dumb rhetorician—a paralytic pugilist—these are the similes that suggest themselves when I think of the pretensions of some scientists to expertship in spiritual affairs. They will fail, and spin theories and beat the air. They fight a wind-mill in attacking Spiritualism

and Theosophy, because they themselves are not instruments whereby psychic research can be conducted. They will fail, where a sick sensitive of Reichenbach or a hypnotic subject of Charcot, or a responsive of Carpenter, will demonstrate a great fact in psychic science at a touch or a word or a look from one who understands the business. Remember, then, the instrument of research along this line, gentlemen, is always and necessarily a human being: either the experimenter's own person, or the person of some subject over which he has absolute control. All experiment is made on and by and with the bodies of men and women—nay, upon and by and with their very souls. *That is psychic research.* Psyche means soul. Think you it is to be lightly or ignorantly or blunderingly played upon? A thousand times, no! Here, blunder and crime are one and the same thing.

Recollect, then, that psychic research, if it mean anything, means the investigation of the human soul. Not of the body alone; that is physiology or anatomy. Not of the mind alone; that is psychology, of which you may learn from any text-book, only a step beyond ordinary physiology, such as every medical man studies. And animal magnetism is the key to the discovery of the soul that inhabits the body; it is the pass key to every mystery of life and death of the body, and to every secret we may hope to disclose respecting the conditions of the soul's existence after the death of the body. In using that key we open the way to all that was barred before. By this means we unlock every secret recess and unveil every mystery of the human being that is possible to scrutinize in our present state of existence. He must be a pretty brave man, and I think he should be a very honest, pure-hearted, truth-loving, kind and gentle man, who should undertake psychic research.

THE GREAT POWER OF THE MAGNETIZER.

Perhaps I can make it clear now that pursuit of this thing exposes one to dangers that otherwise might have slept. A person who has magnetized or been magnetized, is never after-

ward the same person exactly. The difference is not only mental. Of course, he has some new experiences and acquires some new ideas; but that is not all. The change is to some extent *physical*. It is like the difference between iron that has become a magnet, and this same metal before touching the lodestone. In one sense, and to some degree, it is true that we are never twice the same from moment to moment of our lives. The body is incessantly dying, and the finer principles are ceaselessly interacting. But this is true, to a conspicuous extent and in a particular sense, of the operation of induced or artificial magnetization, as in trance and the like peculiar states. The currents of animal magnetism, passing through the particles of the body, seem to make some actual bodily change. I would almost say some new or different molecular motion is set up. Certainly a current of ordinary magnetism passing through iron so affects the particles of the metal that they exhibit activities and produce visible effects that were before latent if not actually non-existent. How profoundly the whole being, physical, mental, moral, spiritual even, can be affected by this exquisitely subtle, unspeakably powerful force, few are fully aware.

The induction of complete trance by a magnetizer in his subject is the most astounding instance of the supreme control of one human being over another that the nature of man admits. One may kill another's body by any kind of mechanical violence, as a blow; or destroy life by poison, which disarranges the vital machinery fatally. But in neither case is the mind, still less the soul, at the mercy of the murderer. But the magnetizer can deprive a victim of mind without leaving a trace upon the body; he may make a lunatic or an idiot of a philosopher; he may make a criminal of a saint. He can call up at will the most fervent religious ecstasy; he can excite with equal ease the most malignant and furious passions. He can induce artificial lockjaw or complete catalepsy. He can paralyze the will, and blot out the memory. Love and hate—eve-

ry instinct, emotion and appetite, attends his sovereign pleasure. He can suggest crimes which his victim, forgetting the source of the suggestion, shall afterward commit at a given moment. He can cause various bodily sicknesses at will; he can make and unmake the most excruciating pains; he can render the patient insensible to pain and amputate a limb without the patient's knowledge. As to hallucinations of the mind he can produce at his will and pleasure, they are endless. The subject of his art shall see, hear, smell, taste, touch, what the magician pleases. He can induce somnambulism, clairvoyance and clair-audience, in some cases even to the extent of informing himself of what is occurring at a distance. I need not prolong this catalogue of his powers, to which it is not using figurative or extravagant language to apply the terms superhuman or magical, so far above ordinary powers and everyday experiences are these actualities of animal magnetism.*

The moral aspect of this case is a very grave one indeed; but it is obvious. Let me only say, it has come so far to the front, in France at least, as to require legislative action; and that upon it hinge some of the gravest medico-legal questions, to say nothing of the whole range of professional study of

* Lest I may seem, however, to have indulged a flight of my own imagination, let me cite some authorities which the reader may consult. I refer to no works on Spiritualism, Theosophy, and the like, for these are on trial just now, and therefore not competent witnesses. The reader may consult the publications, for example, of the London Society for Psychical Research—a body of men never yet suspected of leaning towards Occultism, nor indeed of knowing much about the objects of their own investigation. The published results of mesmerism or hypnotism, conducted on an enormous scale in France, as at Salpêtrière, are of great weight, judged from the most matter-of-fact professional standpoint. The American Journal of Psychology, edited by Professor G. Stanley Hall, of Johns Hopkins University, is mainly devoted to such topics; and the whole of the above paragraph might have been taken from its pages, so fully do my statements of fact fall within the bounds of orthodox psychology, however widely my own conclusion may be at variance with current opinion. Study of such exoteric publications is advisable, as preliminary to the attempt to grapple with the higher aspects of the case represented in the literature of esoteric philosophy.

alienism or insanity. Let me ask, also, if Theosophists are so far wrong, after all, when they say they possess some kinds of knowledge and some kinds of power which it is not expedient that every one should share? Let me ask the Spiritualists if, in this immense range of the possibilities of the spirit while still in the body, with that wonderfully organized apparatus at the command of trained intelligence and concentrated will-power, a good many of the phenomena ascribed to disembodied spirits, and supposed to be feasible to them alone—may not be fairly and safely referred to embodied intelligences?

MAGNETISM THE PASS-KEY TO PSYCHIC SCIENCE.

This brings me back to the position I am trying to hold, that of the scientist who looks at these things with an eye only to psychic research. This is the field that opens before you, Gentlemen of the Society, offering an abundant harvest. It is here that you can safely proceed from the well known to the less known, and thence to the unknown. Your feet are on solid ground. Your instruments are at command, in the persons of those whom you can use in your investigations. Have a care, only, I implore you, that the instruments be neither injured in themselves, nor turned against others. Whether you fully believe me or not, I know that animal magnetism gives you the pass-key to psychic science. It invests you with the Master's word* of the greater mysteries in the construction of an edifice more splendid than King Solomon's temple, and more enduring.

*As a matter of Masonic shibboleth, the "Master's word" is MAHABONE, or MOABON—variously spelled in different parts of the world. It has, or did have, an occult significance in connection with the story of Lot in the Bible, known, probably, to few Masons who have received or given it 'on the five perfect points of fellowship' in the third degree of "blue" Masonry. The writer learned it elsewhere than in the Lodge, and consequently violates no obligation here. No Theosophist has far to seek for the secrets of any occult fraternity in the world. There are two organizations at present from which nothing is hidden. One of these is the Theosophical Society of India. The other is the College of Cardinals at Rome. It is said that the old Roman augurs (whose successors now occupy the Vatican) could not look each other in the face without laughing. And behold how these brothers, F. T. S. and S. J., now love one another!

But of what avail is this key, if we know not how to use it? But for its purpose, it were merely a bauble to hang on the breast as a visible sign of authority. What is the use of the Word unless it be spoken to some good end

What, then, is animal magnetism? Is it a myth, a figment of the imagination, an idea only and thus purely immaterial, or is it a thing, a concrete objective reality? To define its substance or essence were impossible. The most learned electrician, who uses electricity most skilfully and successfully, is silent when asked, "Well, but what *is* electricity?" To define a much more subtle form of force or mode of motion called animal magnetism, were still more difficult. But it is a great point gained, and a great advance, made, when we clearly recognize and define its operation and effect. That it is a mode of motion, there is no question; for it is a force, and every force is a mode of motion of something. Heat is a mode of molecular motion of ordinary matter. Light is a mode of motion of a very delicate, tenuous, ethereal substance known to science as luminiferous ether. Electricity is another mode of motion; so is ordinary magnetism, as of the loadstone; so is galvanism, resulting from the chemical decomposition of various substances. But animal magnetism differs from all these in at least one respect, and that is one of supreme consequence. It is partly mental, not entirely physical; and it is capable of acting without any known medium of communication. This is an energy capable of communicating—what? Thought? Yes. Whatever be the substance that is stirred when this kind of magnetism acts and sets it in motion, *that* is the substance of mind which is moved. It is something in which consciousness, thought, volition, memory, and all other mental faculties severally take form. It is a conveyer of consciousness. It is the medium of changes of consciousness, by means of which one's state of mind may affect another's state of mind, without any known means of transferring the affection or making the cause take effect. No one now has the hardihood to deny the manifest and in-

cessant action of magnetism, for it goes on constantly under our eyes. The effect or result comes into play in the simplest acts of mesmerizing. The fact is established, explain it as we may. Mesmer's claims are verified by modern science, and recognized alike by those who differ most widely in their explanation of the actual phenomena.

Now since there is no known medium of transfer of the energy of animal magnetism; since there can be no transfer of any force without some medium of transference; and since there is probably no absolute vacuum in any space in nature, it is necessary to infer that there must be some substance which conveys this energy. What this substance is, in which magnetism subsists, in whose motions magnetism is manifested and set to work, I do not permit myself to say. Certainly it is no ordinary matter, as known to the chemist or physicist, for such matter can only act mechanically, whereas the substance of magnetism acts mentally. Yet it is material in one sense, for its motions constitute magnetic currents whose visible effect we can study. In very truth, there is such a substance, some of whose properties I could describe if I would. When I say it is "unknown," I only mean unknown to the materialistic science of our day, since it is not a kind of matter which can be investigated by the ordinary methods of the chemist or physicist, like any molecular solid, or fluid, or gas. But it has been known to *some* scientists for ages. It has been known longer than most of the sixty or more elements which the chemist describes; and it has received more names than any one of the chemical elements of the text-books. The oldest name of it that I know is "akasa," or "a'kasa." This is the Hindu name, given many centuries ago, perhaps by Kapila, the founder of one of the four great schools of Hindu philosophy. Theosophists and other occultists commonly call it the "astral fluid." I have often heard Spiritualists speak of it as "spirit-light." Some biologists, of the school to which I am supposed to belong, call it "psychoplasm," which literally means "soul-stuff"

or "mind-stuff." It seems to correspond in many respects with what Professor Crookes speaks of as "radiant matter," a supposed fourth state of matter (the solid, the fluid and the gaseous being the other three). Baron von Reichenbach named it "od." Such terms as "nervaura," "psychaura," "brain-waves," and "zoether," seem to point in the same direction. My friend, Professor E. D. Cope, with a bold stroke of genius imagined on theoretical grounds the possible existence of some such ethereal substance, which he called an "aesthetophore," or bearer of consciousness. I have myself taken the liberty of naming this child of my brain, and "biogen," as I call it, is already a word well known enough to have found its way into the dictionary. I am far from insisting that all these terms mean exactly the same thing. For instance, Reichenbach describes and names several different kinds of "od." But all these names face in one and the same direction, and probably indicate one and the same thing, under various aspects and from different standpoints of observation. The words show a more remarkable coincidence of opinion than might have been expected under the circumstances. I shall recur to the subject presently. Meanwhile, whatever we may call this *biogen*, it certainly has many remarkable properties, different from those of ordinary matter, and for the most part quite the reverse. The property which chiefly concerns us now, is that of sustaining consciousness and conveying thought. It carries mental images; and it is capable of reproducing in the mind of one person the thoughts that have been formed in the mind of another. It is the medium of all actual exchange of thought; for the words we use are merely conventional noises which we understand as a code of symbols agreed upon. It is the means of all genuine mind-reading. It is the substantial basis of all clairvoyant visions and all clairaudient sounds.

The real existence of this akasic or astral fluid is the secret of telepathy, or the affecting of one mind by another at any distance without physical means of communication. No fact

in nature is better attested than the fact of telepathy, which the London Society for Psychical Research has *re-discovered* and carefully demonstrated by thousands of cases, though that Society has given no hint that it knows the rationale of telepathy. Nay, more: This same biogen, in whose properties telepathy has its possibility and its realization, furnishes the material or substance which composes the bodies of those strange apparitions or phantoms, with which the public has become familiar, and has laughed at and stormed at, known in spiritualistic circles as "materializations." These alleged spirits of the dead are in most cases (I will not say exactly the percentage of cases, but in *most* cases) deliberate frauds! Such ghosts are the veriest humbugs in the world, gotten up for money to deceive the unwary, just as coolly and carefully as actors "make up" for their parts on the stage! These dummies and effigies represent the most flourishing department of the business of commercial Spiritualism. No ghastlier or more unholy imposture ever came out of Babylon or Rome than you may witness for a dollar to-day in Boston, New York, Washington or Chicago. But in case of the genuine thing, a materialization is for the time being a substantial reality, whose substance consists of this astral fluid in a temporary state of condensation, which renders it palpable and visible to our ordinary senses. I should like to say more just here, but must remember that I am addressing a public audience, and take to heart certain guarded words of St. Paul.

Let us instead draw a long breath here and see how far we have gone in the last few moments, during which I have been speaking of the properties of the astral fluid—from mesmerism through telepathy to materialization! It is a mighty power we have invoked; almost like magic rises the ghost we have conjured, to confront us and refuse to down. For the linking of these phenomena is so close, the chain of reasoning is so unbroken, that once the least phenomenon called theosophic or spiritualistic be proven, the rest follows as a matter of course.

The whole body of psychic science is fairly brought before you, needing only patience and care in your research to be clothed in proper vestments to stand before the world by the side of the orthodox physical science of our day. These two should never have been separated. Neither can live without the other. As the Latin poet says of the famous sisters:

— Facies non omnibus una,
Nec diversa tamen; qualis decet esse sororum —OVID.

THE BIOGEN THEORY.

But lest I may have overhauled the links of this chain too rapidly, let us retrace our steps for a moment. We have assumed or inferred the existence of this astral substance to account for the established facts of animal magnetism. We find that it has every proper character of a legitimate scientific theory, in that it is *a priori* probable; that if true it accounts for the facts; and that the facts have never been accounted for on any other theory in a way that will bear investigation. Science has two opposite, equally legitimate procedures in every investigation. Every one knows these: *a* induction and deduction. We may reason from particulars to generals, or conversely. In the former case, we establish our facts, and construct a theory to account for them. In the latter case, we imagine or invent a theory which seems reasonable, and proceed to try it upon the facts. If a single fact can be found to contradict our theory, it falls flat. If no fact disproves the theory, it stands; the more facts that sustain it, the stronger it stands. A theory constructed inductively is subject only to the limitations of observation, or the fallibility of reasoning processes. Such a theory is usually of slow growth, and correspondingly safe. The theory of gravitation is a good example. Of deductive theories, that of the luminiferous ether is an illustration. No one knows whether it is true or not. But the whole modern science of Light proceeds upon the assumption that it is true; no optical fact has been found to disprove that assumption; many such facts tend to support it; and the facts cannot be better accounted for on

any other theory. This is precisely the present state of the Biogen theory, as we have already seen. It has, therefore, as I have claimed, all the characters of legitimate deductive proposition in science, and the burden of proof is with those who dispute it.

Like the luminiferous ether in space, this biogenic or magnetic or astral substance is everywhere. It penetrates all space, probably; certainly it interpenetrates all matter, residing in matter side by side with the gross molecules which the chemist knows. It is in our bodies as well as in all other bodies, animate or inanimate. Animal magnetism, I repeat, is in all living animals, not excepting that one which crowns creation. It is, in short, a part of the composition of man; an element of the human constitution. If special proof of this were requisite, I should only have to point to the unquestionable fact that this magnetic force proceeds from the magnetizer at his will; and certainly nothing can be got out of a man that is not in him. This is obvious. In mesmerizing, the operator is often aware that *something has gone out of him*. Some influence has proceeded from him, which it is no irreverence to liken to the virtue that departed when the woman touched the hem of the garment. If there happens to be in my audience a good clairvoyant to-night, or some one easily open to mediumistic influences, that person may have actually seen something not visible to all, when I may have flagged at a time and then spoken with increased energy. Certainly I have been conscious in my own person of varying tension and relaxation of the magnetic currents, and I have no doubt that in time we shall have instruments to record these ebbings and flowings with the same accuracy that the sphygmograph now records by the pulse the varying tension of the arteries.

THE ASTRAL BODY.

I have spoken to little purpose if my remarks have not gradually led you up to the pivotal idea I wish to present—the existence of the astral body, as a substantial entity. For my

own part, I regard the astral body as proven. The demonstration is to me complete, from not one but many experiences I have had in my own person; from not one but many experiments I have made on the persons of others. But the popular verdict is—"impossible." The scientific verdict is the Scotch one—"not proven." It is to you, Gentlemen of the Psychical Society, that I appeal, to confirm or disprove the theory I advance. The evidence or testimony to the facts is established indisputably. The question remains as to the explanation of those facts of animal magnetism. I said that animal magnetism was the pass-key to psychic research, and then proceeded to discuss the manner in which that key is to be used. I indicated to what purpose it was to be turned. I meant to give you access to the very goal of sound psychic science, and I have done so. This is a demand for the recognition of the astral fluid as the medium of the manifestation of all spiritualistic phenomena, and the recognition of the twin fact, that a human being is partly composed of this same substance. On the heels of this very grave and momentous assertion, let me record a warning: You will make no satisfactory progress in psychic research along any other path than that which I have pointed out; and you will have no solid body of psychic science than that which incorporates the doctrine of the *astral human form*. This is the pivotal point on which all the rest turns—turns to sink, on the one hand, into some dull theory of nervous action, such as our textbooks of physiology teem with; or turns, on the other hand, to rise and melt away in the cloudland of the visionary enthusiast. Sometimes I tremble at the thought, that the whole affair may be a question between the fool and the fanatic. Be it so; then I will adopt fanaticism as a profession. I prefer to side with those who help the world to move, and do not believe that it turns with a mere crank.

THE BETTER WAY.

Though I can thus point the way, and perhaps help somewhat to find it, yet that way each one must tread for himself.

Those who have entered upon the path know this way; those that live the life discover these things. The whole secret cannot be imparted. Many have found it; but not all seekers are finders. Strangely enough, one must first become aware of the existence of the astral body in himself before he can use the faculties of that body in psychical research. An abortive, rudimentary or decayed spiritual body, such as many persons possess, is no fit instrument with which to discern supersensuous phenomena. Like the man in Mitchell's experiments on pain, who was the necessary instrument of investigation, the psychic researcher himself is the instrument of psychic research and the demonstrator of his psychic science. Just as the natural body, with its natural five senses and other natural or physical faculties, is the apparatus of investigation of ordinary material or physical phenomena, so is the psychic or astral body, with its senses and faculties, the instrument of research into extraordinary and non-material and non-physical phenomena. Most persons live and die with only the conscious exercise of their physical senses to guide their reason and enlighten their minds. Consequently, they know only those phenomena which address those senses. Hence they only become aware of material things. But there is an eye back of the outward eye. It is the inner, astral eye that catches ordinarily invisible rays. The clairvoyant's natural eye is shut when the other opens to the vision. There is an ear back of the outward ear. It is this that catches ordinarily inaudible sounds. The clairaudent's natural ear is shut when the voice of the silence is heard. All these and other senses and faculties of the psychic body must be brought into operation to determine the truths of psychic science. These are not imaginary, in the usual sense of that word. They are indeed among the results of the exercise of the faculty of imagination in its proper creative activity. **ALL REALITIES ARE IMAGINARY.** Only unreal appearances pass for facts. They only pass for facts because "all things are to the sense that perceives them what to that sense they appear to be" (Garretson).

Those who perceive things with the body only, perceive only bodily things. Those who perceive things with the spirit have the faculty of discerning spirits. This is almost a truism. It is necessarily axiomatic. But the thing is so simple that it is seldom found out. The majesty of truth is Oneness.

NATURAL MAGIC.

You have all heard of the practice of occultism; of so-called operative magic; of the training of adepts; of the developing of the mediumistic faculty—for such are phrases of the Theosophists and of the Spiritualists. But do I not invest these terms with a new or different meaning, not at all unreasonable or supernatural, when I speak of them as the exercise of the psychic faculties and the direction of such means to a desired end? Mediumship is, in fact, the activity of the psychic senses more or less intelligently and consciously open to impressions made upon them by psychic forces, whether these forces proceed from an intelligence still embodied, or from an intelligence which has left its tenement of clay. Far from me be it to say that this last is never true. On the contrary, I think it is true, and not very rare. If so, the claims of the Spiritualists,—their statement of what is called “spirit communication,” may readily be conceded. It is wholly within the bounds of natural scientific possibility, and nothing appears to forbid the most cautious person to entertain the idea. In this case, the interchange of thoughts and feelings and wishes and wits between us who are here and others who have gone on, becomes a fact in psychic science of the utmost possible moment. What is that “adeptship” of which we hear the Theosophists speak, if not the full activity of the psychic senses, trained to do the will of their master? They act under the conscious and intelligent operation of an expert in psychic science, and impress upon other psychic organisms the thoughts that the adept desires. If there be any truth in this, the claims of the Theosophists, which seem so wild, may after all be found within the limits of sober facts. They are certainly more amenable to verification by ex-

periment, than those of mediumship. For example, the alleged communication between two bodies of Theosophists, by the "projection of the double" or some similar means, is reducible to a simple experiment in psychic science. If any such communication be possible between trained adepts in the flesh, it should not be impossible between one such and another who has cast off the flesh.

In very truth, the relation between the spirit-world and the matter-world is that of substance and shadow. The latter does not exist apart from the former. All matter is but the evidence of spirit. That is an "evidence of things unseen" which may not have occurred to all readers of a certain book. The relation between the two is one of cause and effect. The interdependence is absolute; it is universal; it is everlasting; it is here; it is now. "I am that I am," says Jehovah. And when you make the same discovery respecting yourselves, you will cease to ask idle questions of Theosophy.

The phenomena of mediumship and of adeptship, if not fully explained, are capable at least of being brought under one broader law of equal applicability to both. They differ only in degree, not in kind. We see in them both the possibility of successful psychic research, the material for sound psychic science, and the probability that the pivotal propositions of the Spiritualist and of the Theosophist may become demonstrable theorems which, so far from refuting or antagonizing one another, do countenance and confirm one another, each rendering the other more likely to be established. That is a consummation devoutly to be wished by every lover of truth.

Do I then believe in spirits and in spirit intercourse? ASSUREDLY I DO! For am I not a spirit, like every one of you? Do I not communicate with this visible world by my natural body, my visible apparatus of relation with the phenomenal world, without being thereby shut out from my spiritual prerogative of communicating with such other spirits as I can reach, on another plane, by the spiritual body appropriate to that

plane of existence? Ask me for my authority for this statement, and I point first to the ascertained facts of psychic science. But if other authority be acceptable, I may quote one whom not many will be inclined to dispute when I repeat the solemn words: "There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body."

THE OUTLOOK.

What now, my friends, think you, are the real "Signs of the Times" when such questions as we have discussed to-night are to the fore? We know not, indeed, what a day may bring forth, when that day is on the turning point of one of the great natural cycles of the evolution of the human race. Not single and isolated are the spiritual phenomena we have so hurriedly reviewed. They are signaled by greater terrestrial disturbances than have been witnessed on an equal scale for many a day. Volcanic action has sunken parts of the earth's crust, and altered the coast lines of continents. The dust of the conflict of these Titanic forces has reddened the very sky. Earthquakes have shaken the solid ground; and not less active than these grand cosmic forces are the spiritual energies at work, exact counterparts of physical agencies. Men and women are shaken in the beliefs of a life-time. Things sacred and things profane seem melting indistinguishable in the single crucible of the mind. Every revered religious creed is fiercely assailed and hotly defended. The challenge of Science to Religion resounds. The counterblast of the Church to the State echoes back that defiance. Every where are old foundations shaken; every where the scaffolding of new structures is erected. The times are revolutionary in thought, in feeling, in belief. Nothing is too wild or fanciful to find its heralds; nothing is too securely grounded for attack. Emerson said: "Beware when the great God lets loose a thinker in the world." But lo! here are thousands of thinkers all around us, thinking for themselves with small deference to authority, and little regard for precedent, custom or established institutions. Thoughts are free and the thinkers are freed, as perhaps never before in the history of the

world. Who shall be the moderator in this vast throng where every one clamors to be heard? My eyes turn wistfully back to the fixed faith of bygone years—where is it? We must look forward, though in all the glare it takes a steady eye to discern undimmed the truth that is surely advancing. Physical science has well-nigh conquered the physical realm. May we not hopefully turn to psychical science to establish also her kingdom on the earth? The problem of the day is not a question of matter; it is a question of mind; and the problem of mind has ceased to be only a question of the intellect. It has become the cry of the soul for more light in the dungeon of the body! This cry goes up the loudest from the women of the land, because her soul's imprisonment is harder to bear than man's, and her duty to redeem a world is more imperative. A great convention of women is but an outward sign. The real sign most legible is the inward compact that woman's soul has made with her spiritual self. That is the covenant of a new dispensation to reincarnate the God in man, as the final triumph of spirit over matter. That is the law of life, here and hereafter. That is the Master's Word, forever lost and found again, that every man himself shall know and do the will of the Most High.

CONSENSUS OF THE COMPETENT.

The domain of Psychics and the realm of Spirit so long claimed by theological dogmatists as their exclusive possessions, and under their tyrannical sway, are being gradually thrown open to the world. Men of science and members of the learned professions are joining forces with the masses in a persistent and determined effort to explore these mysterious possessions, and to develop them in the interests of humanity at large. The enterprise is alluring; the prize magnificent; but the first is not without its dangers, and the last lies beyond the Mountain of Endeavor.

After reading the very able essay of Dr. COUES, on "The Signs of the Times," one of the first inquiries which will arise in the mind of him who has mastered it and desires to begin a search for himself will be: "How can I best learn to guard myself against error and where can I secure a competent and faithful assistant for the difficult work of scaling the mountain?" To all such inquirers the perusal of the following pages is respectfully commended.

In every activity of life, and especially in politics, religion and science, the newspaper has become the most powerful agent and the greatest disseminator of knowledge and opinions. In its particular field it is generally acknowledged that the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* has no equal; that it far surpasses all other similar publications in those features which commend a paper to educated, thoughtful, rational, earnest people. From a large number of fresh communications and opinions, the following are selected and spread on these pages as the testimony of representative men of wide reputation who, while differing with one another and with the *Religio-Philosophical Journal* in regard to many things, all agree in bearing testimony to the ability, courage, vigor, scientific spirit, and judicial fairness of the paper.

CONSENSUS OF THE COMPETENT.

Elliott Coues, A. M., M. D., Ph. D., Naturalist, Etc.

Gnostic Theosophical Society,

Washington, D. C., Sept. 21, 1888.

Editor Religio-Philosophical Journal:— The Journal is already recognized as the ablest exponent of Spiritualistic doctrine in America, and no Theosophist or Psychic Researcher can fail to note with satisfaction its persistent endeavor to place the phenomena of Spiritualism on a proper basis. . . . The world does like courage, candor, sincerity, earnestness and resolution, however much the cynics may decry these qualities; and they do not depend for their telling effect upon coincidence with logical truth or the reverse. They are in themselves moral forces, to which the intellect is only subservient.

Though I have allowed my name to become in some measure identified with the modern cult which is now widely known under the name of "Theosophy," and though I have acquired through this association some knowledge concerning which I think it inexpedient at present to take the public into my confidence, I am far from insisting upon the superiority of theosophical doctrines for all persons or all purposes. . . .

I recognize and endorse the Journal's "open-court" policy—its actual and not merely ostensible openness and judicial impartiality. Its columns are as open to those of my own communion as to the enemies of the cult I represent, if they have anything to say and know how to say it. . . .

Very truly yours,

ELLIOTT COUES, F. T. S., Pres't, etc.

B. F. Underwood, Author, Lecturer on Philosophical and Scientific Subjects, and Journalist:

86 So. Page Street, Chicago, September 29th, 1888.

Dear Colonel Bundy:—Although not a Spiritualist, I am, as I have been for years, an interested reader of the Journal, in which I find a great deal to approve and admire. . . . I wish to see all genuine psychic phenomena carefully and thoroughly examined. An independent, incorruptible journalism at this time needs encouragement, and it has no worthier representative than the Journal.

Sincerely yours,

B. F. UNDERWOOD.

CONSENSUS OF THE COMPEIENT.

R. Heber Newton, D. D., Rector of "All Souls' Church,"
(Protestant Episcopal), New York City:

Garden City, New York, October 30th, 1888.

Dear Colonel Bundy:....You know my position on the "anxious bench." "Almost persuaded" at times, and then again repelled by the superabounding fraud in the movement, I represent hosts of men who must be deeply concerned to see the Journal prosecute its fearless work, and sift out the true from the false, so that outsiders may be able to judge intelligently. Every one must hope that Spiritualism may be able to verify its superlatively important claims.....If Spiritualists really believe what they profess, they ought to back you up vigorously in the work you are doing. Nothing but such a work will enable the general public to believe.

Yours cordially,

R. HEBER NEWTON.

George H. Hepworth, Author and Journalist.

New York, September, 26th, 1888.

My Dear Bundy:— As you know, while I am not a Spiritualist, I have leanings that way; for all that is good, beautiful and true in the theory that our friends are not "lost, but gone before"; that they are never so far away as to be beyond reach; that "a cloud of witnesses" hold us "in full survey," and that the alarm bells in heaven are rung whenever we are in the pinch of dire distress, I have great admiration. For the large admixture of humbug, fraud and impudence, however, which stares us in the face at every turn, I have an unbounded and inexpressible contempt.

You have helped! by your able Journal to expose and drive these fiends, who coin cash out of bleeding and stricken hearts, to their holes. You have crushed them under your trip-hammer like filberts, and dragged them out into the light for the world's scorn and detestation.

All right! You have done, and are doing, a good work. We who are in the rushing tide of life, too busy with the affairs of this world to do more than wonder concerning the next, need some wholesome suggestions, good reading, solutions of difficulties, answers to doubts. You can help us amazingly to "bear the ills we have," if you can furnish us with a literature that has its base in undeniable facts. So I say, go ahead, and God spare you.

Yours sincerely,

GEO. H. HEPWORTH.

CONSENSUS OF THE COMPETENT.

Hudson Tuttle, Author, Lecturer on Philosophical and Scientific subjects, and Writer for the Press.

Berlin Heights, Ohio, September 28th, 1888.

My Dear Bundy:— That the Religio-Philosophical Journal has been able to maintain its fearless independence in the face of all opposition and to utter editorially and through its contributors much that was in advance of the general Spiritualist sentiment, and live to see these utterances finally accepted as truth and echoed in other channels, is something phenomenal and almost unprecedented. Such a record entitles its editor and publisher to the unlimited and generous confidence of the public. May the angels strengthen the hands of all connected with it.

Fraternally,

HUDSON TUTTLE.

M. J. Savage, Pastor of the "Church of the Unity," Boston, Author and Poet.

Colonel J. C. Bundy:—My Dear Sir: I know enough, through my own personal experiences, to feel sure that this psychic field is thoroughly worth exploring, and I feel equally sure that the path marked out by your spirit and methods, is the only way. You have so identified yourself with sense and honesty, that your victory will be their victory. I cannot help believing that, more and more, all clear-visioned and honest men will be with you. With all faith in you, and with all good wishes for your success, I am

Most sincerely,

M. J. SAVAGE.

Boston, October 8th, 1888.

H. W. Thomas, D. D., Pastor of "The Peoples' Church," Chicago, Illinois:

Dear Bro. Bundy:— The higher phases and interests of man's strange life must more and more come to the front; and in doing this, they must become more orderly, more systematic, and even scientific in form and statement; and as far as may be, more veritable in personal experience. But this will not, and can not come all at once; nor to all at the same time; it must wait upon the slow development of the higher in each one, and hence the need of such a Religio-Philosophical Journal of facts and experiences and reasonings and suggestions and of criticism, exposures even, as you have for years published.

Man is yet to come out upon that high and luminous way where he will realize that he is a spirit, and that he should emphasize that

CONSENSUS OF THE COMPETENT.

which is highest and best in himself and in his fellow beings; and to this end our age needs a spiritual philosophy, a spiritual religion, a spiritual literature; in a word, everything that helps to that higher state. May God bless you in your noble endeavors.

Affectionately,

H. W. THOMAS.

Chicago, Illinois, October 5th, 1888.

W. H. Herndon, Abraham Lincoln's old Law partner, Bosom Friend and Biographer.

Springfield, Illinois, November 26th, 1888.

Friend Bundy:— I am extremely busy reading proof-sheets of my Life of Lincoln, which I hope will be out—say in Feb. next. I admire your course—a heroic one, you well know; and wish you success in your struggle to uplift mankind. You are correct! everything is governed by law—matter and mind—nothing is lawless. Your method of arriving at truth, through observation, experience and reason, is the correct one; not discarding wholly the deductive. Go ahead just as you are going, and it will all end right in some, probably now unknown, direction; while it will prove what you are struggling for. I am most heartily with you in all this.

Your friend,

W. H. HERNDON.

E. P. Powell, Preacher, Journalist, and Author of "Our Heredity from God."

Clinton, New York, September 21st, 1888.

My Dear Bundy:—You know I am not technically a Spiritualist, but underneath even the terrible load of fraud and trash called spiritual, I believe there is the all-important fact that man is in evolution beyond the purely material stage. With your magnificent effort to defeat materialistic "Spiritualism," and give us the warm and vital oneness with Life—the All-Life, you have won the heartiest sympathy of not only myself but of all sincere workers and thinkers. Allow me as an outsider to extend you the warm right hand of an evolutionist.

Yours most heartily,

E. P. POWELL.

PUBLISHER'S STATEMENT.

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